

HARVEST GLEANINGS



Volume 2

1901

2H1

September 15, 1901

*Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
April 10, 1917*

OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD

Three Steps in the Plan to Save Man From His Sin

Bible House chapel, in Allegheny, Pa., was crowded when Pastor C. T. Russell spoke on Christ's resurrection. The text and discourse follow:

Dear friends, it is appropriate that we notice that the most important steps in the divine plan for the recovery of man from sin and its penalty are three in number. The first of these was our Lord's death as the redemption price of Adam and his race from the wages of sin—death. This we celebrated on its anniversary during the week just past. I am confident that I reflect the sentiments of all who participated on that occasion that it was a most blessed and refreshing season, and that our hearts took fresh courage as we considered the love of God manifested in the gift of His Son, who died for our sins.

The second of these important steps in the plan of salvation was our Lord's resurrection from the dead; for be it noted that the redemption could have profited us nothing whatever had the Redeemer Himself remained under "the curse" —the death penalty—which He bore for us. Had our Lord Jesus remained under the power of death He could never have saved us; for the salvation promised us is a resurrection from the dead, and a dead savior would be no savior at all — Himself under the power of death how could He have released Adam or any of his family?

The third important step in the divine plan of salvation is the second coming of Christ, to actually bestow upon the faithful ones of His church the blessings promised to them, and to actually proffer to the world in general opportunities for reconciliation to the Father secured by the redemption sacrifice. Our topic for today is the second of these important items our Lord's resurrection

from the dead, and we choose as our text the words of the apostle:

“Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive; but every man in his own order.” 1 Cor. 15:20-23

RESURRECTION OBSCURED BY ERROR

It is unfortunate that a false theory respecting the penalty of sin (death) has so engrafted itself upon the minds of Christian people as to distort their views and really make meaningless much that the Scriptures state respecting the resurrection of the dead. From the ordinary standpoint it would matter little to us whether our Lord Jesus arose from the dead or not—it would matter little whether anyone ever rose from the dead or not. The usual thought respecting resurrection is that it relates merely to the body and not to the soul. The theory is that the soul, so far from dying with the body, really becomes more alive without the body, and hence some speak of getting “free” from the body—being “liberated from

2H2

the prison house of clay.” To such as have been misled by such false conceptions of the facts as are implied in this language, the resurrection must mean to a greater or less degree a reimprisonment, a restraint of liberties, a limitation of powers and attributes.

Such persons in reading the Scriptures must feel more or less confused when they come across statements by the Lord and by the apostles and the prophets implying a great necessity for a resurrection an absolute necessity—implying the utter nothingness of the person in death if there be no resurrection for him. In the preceding context the apostle has been discussing this very subject with some who, apparently, had come under the teaching of Greek philosophies, called Platonic philosophy—the same error which so generally prevails among Christian people today. Note the apostle’s words, “If Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some amongst you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” or as some now would perhaps state it, there is no necessity for a resurrection from the dead.

The apostle could not agree with any such suggestion. In his theology, as in that which prevails throughout the Scriptures every hope of future life hinges upon a resurrection from the dead. The apostle states this in so many words: “If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen [if a resurrection of the dead is an impossibility, it must have been an impossibility in our Lord’s case, is the argument], and if Christ be not risen,

then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” Verses 12-18

FAITH VAIN WITHOUT A RESURRECTION

What strong language the apostle uses! He lays the whole stress of future salvation upon a future resurrection of the dead, and he unites the resurrection hope of mankind with the resurrection of our Lord. If Christ did not rise from the dead, no one will rise from the dead; if Christ did rise from the dead, it proves the possibility of a fulfillment of God’s promise — the hope of a resurrection for every member of Adam’s race sentenced because of Adam’s sin and redeemed by our Lord’s sacrifice.

All Christian faith is vain if there is no resurrection, all Christian preaching is vain, and all those who have gone down into death have perished are without hope of any future life anywhere or of any kind—if there be no resurrection of the dead. Read these words of the apostle over to yourself quietly at home, ponder their meaning, and you will agree with me that our Lord’s resurrection was a most momentous event.

The scriptural presentation of this subject is that God’s penalty for sin includes the soul as well as the body the intelligent and mental and moral qualities as well as the physical. From the scriptural standpoint Adam’s soul was sentenced to death, “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” It was necessary therefore, in order to Adam’s redemption, that whoever would pay his ransomed price to justice must die, not only physically, but in every sense of the word —must fill the conditions of the penalty.

In Adam’s case this penalty was represented in our Lord’s words, “Thou shalt surely die,” addressing the intelligence of Adam, and not merely saying, Thy body shall die and leave thee more alive than ever. The scriptural presentation of the sentence upon Adam is, “Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.” We have already seen on a previous occasion that the human soul or intelligence or existence is the result of a combination of life force (“spirit of life”) with physical organism, and that the death of the man is the death of the soul, resulting from the separation of the spirit or vital spark of life from the organism or body.

This penalty which came upon Adam has been transmitted in a natural way to all humanity as his children, as the text declares all who were in Adam at the time of his fall have inherited the dying qualities implied in his sentence.

The Scriptures represent that the whole world of mankind, thus dying, go into oblivion, into unconsciousness, into dissolution. Thus we see that the death penalty upon man took from him all the rights and privileges which had belonged to him as a creature of higher intelligence, endowed with the moral likeness of his Creator—the privilege or boon of everlasting life.

This special provision of God for man above the provision for the lower animals having been lost by disobedience, man really was, therefore, on the same plane as the brute creation —without any right in God's promise or any character of his own which could call to justice for everlasting life.

Whatever, therefore, God shall at any time proffer to man in the nature of a hope or prospect for eternal life must be wholly as a free gift on God's part, entirely independent of any rights or privileges with which mankind was endowed at the time of his creation—for all these were "lost." But our Lord Jesus explains to us the object of His first coming, saying, "The son of man

2H3

is come to seek and save that which was lost." Men by disobedience had "lost" the right to eternal life, and all the privileges and blessings and opportunities attaching to that great boon.

It was this life-right that man needed and that Christ came to give back to him. The Lord explains this in so many words, saying, I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) He tells us again that he came not to destroy men's lives but to save them—to save them from the death sentence, the death penalty under which the race had then been for more than 6,000 years. Luke 9:56

CHRIST'S SOUL DIED AND REVIVED

Our Lord explained further how He intended to give the world life, saying, "The son of man came not to be served unto, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:28) From this standpoint our Lord's life was laid down in death in exactly the same manner in which Adam's life was laid down, and for the very purpose of securing to Adam (and to the race in him when he was condemned) a release from the original sentence — a release from the death penalty.

In view of this, dear friends, what should we expect to find the Scriptures to teach respecting the character of our Lord's death? Do they teach, as is generally believed, that our Lord only appeared to die, but that in reality He did not die, and merely allowed His body to die on the cross? Not so; the Scriptures teach very explicitly that "He made His soul an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10). Again they tell us that "He poured out His soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12). They tell us further that eventually "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied" (Isa. 53:11). It is evident, then, from these Scriptures that our Lord's "soul" died and thus fully met the penalty against sinners "the soul that sinneth it shall die."

Whoever sees this clearly and distinctly sees that justice has been fully met, and that God, having thus laid upon His Son the penalty of Adam, can now be just in setting at liberty from death the soul of Adam and the souls of all of Adam's posterity, all of whom came under this death sentence through his disobedience, as the apostle most explicitly states the matter. Rom. 5:12

Not only have we this evidence that Christ poured out His "soul" unto death and made His "soul" an offering for sin for our sins but additionally we have the Scriptural testimony that His "soul" was delivered from death in His resurrection — thus proving beyond peradventure that he did pay mankind's penalty, that He did pay the "wages of sin" the soul that sinneth it shall die. The prophet David, speaking of our Lord, distinctly tells us that His "soul" was not left in sheol the grave, the death state. Psa. 16:10

Let us notice the Apostle Peter's testimony on this subject, as recorded in Acts 2:24-34. He is discussing our Lord's resurrection, in full harmony with the words of the Apostle Paul in our text. Does not the frequency of the Scriptural references to the resurrection of the dead and the infrequent mention of it in the pulpits of our day attest clearly what we have already been showing, namely, that a great and serious error has crept into the Christian faith which bears upon this subject, and which tends to make the word of God of none effect to them that are beclouded with the error? It surely does.

It must surely strike Christian people in general as remarkable that so much emphasis is laid upon the absolute necessity of the resurrection of Christ and of the church and of the world in the Bible mention of these matters, while the majority of Christian people have perhaps never heard the subject of the resurrection preached upon a single time in all their lives. Why? Because of the erroneous thought that men who have died know more than they knew before they died.

It all comes from the ignoring of the Scriptural testimony on this subject, to wit, that “the dead know not anything— so that their sons come to honor and they know it not, or to dishonor and they perceive it not of them. For there is neither work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.” Job 14:21; Eccl. 9:10

BEGAN AT CHRIST'S BAPTISM

The apostle Peter's argument is quite to the point. He was preaching on the day of Pentecost; he was charging home to his hearers the fact that they have crucified Jesus, and then in offset declares that God raised Him up from the dead—that it was not possible that He should be holden of death. It was the Father's promise that our Lord's faithful sacrifice of His life as the man Christ Jesus should not signify to Him an utter blotting out of His existence.

It would indeed mean the termination, the complete blotting out of Him as a man — His human existence, which He had assumed in exchange for a previous spirit existence, being given up as a “ransom” price for Father Adam and thus for all who were involved in Father Adam's disobedience. He could not rise from the dead as a man, as a human being, as flesh — his flesh being given once and for all and forever for the life of the world, for Adam and his race. Heb. 2:9; Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6

2H4

But nothing in this arrangement for the complete laying down of His life as “the man Christ Jesus” interfered with another arrangement which the Father provided, namely, that at the time of His consecration when 30 years of age, He should be “begotten again” of the Holy Spirit to a new nature- a spiritual nature, higher than human. This spiritual nature developed as the earthly nature of our Lord was sacrificed day by day in obedience to the Father's plan.

The new nature, however, was merely the new will, the spirit-begotten mind of our Lord, and was entirely (dependent upon His physical organization; and when, therefore, He was crucified, when He died, the new mind as well as the fleshly body was involved. With Him, as with all others, there was neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in sheol.

Our Lord's resurrection, therefore, was not as a man, hut as a spirit being-- such as He was before He undertook the work of man's redemption and left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was only that now His exalted position is still a superior one to that which He previously enjoyed. (Phil. 2:9) This is the

teaching of the apostle when he says: He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit.” Speaking of our Lord’s faithfulness unto death and the glorious exaltation to which it led, he says: He left the glory of the Father and took a bondsman’s form and was made flesh for the suffering of death- that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. And, being found in fashion a man, He humbled Himself even unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2:7-11; Heb. 2:9

St. Peter, after declaring our Lord’s resurrection from the dead, makes various quotations from the Prophet David, showing that our Lord’s resurrection and future glory were foretold. Then, proving that David was not speaking these things respecting Himself, but respecting Christ, he says: “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.”

The fact of his burial proved that David’s flesh did see corruption, that God did not deliver him from the power of death, and his sepulcher was a standing memorial, not of his resurrection but of his death and corruption and hope of a future resurrection through Christ. The apostle, in the words of our text, proceeds to show that David, as a prophet, foretold the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to be the heir of the throne of Israel and the world, as God has declared to David, and as He had previously declared to Abraham.

“This Jesus bath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses,” said St. Peter; and then he referred to the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit displayed in the eleven apostles as proofs that Jesus not only had arisen from the condition of death, but that He had ascended up on high to the Father and had sent forth the Holy Spirit, whose manifestations were generally perceived. As though to clinch his argument, and to prove that David was speaking of our Lord and not of himself, the Apostle adds in verse 34, “For David is not ascended into the heaven”—his prophetic reference therefore was to Jesus the one whom he represented in type and prophetically.

RESULTS FROM CHRIST’S RESURRECTION

As the fact of Christ’s death attests His love and devotion to us and that the penalty for the sins of the whole world has been fully paid, so His resurrection from the dead on the third day assures us that the Father was pleased with the sacrifice, that justice accepted it, and that therefore it will be possible to justly exonerate

the whole world of mankind from the Adamic sin and all the penalties and consequences, depravities and hereditary weaknesses which have come down to us through that original sin.

Cod can be just and yet justify all mankind from all things— from all the sins that are the result of our original impairment as a race, mental, moral, and physical degeneracy. The resurrection of Christ assures us further that God, who changes not, is carrying out the stupendous plan of salvation which He at first arranged, concerning which the Apostle prayed that the early church might more and more have the eyes of their understanding opened, that they might be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding.

This great, wide and deep and high plan of God relates to and has blessing for every member of our fallen race. As all who are in Adam shared his penalty, so all who shall come into obedient relation with Christ will in Him share the life which He has secured for the race. As yet only the church, only the “little flock have had the eyes of their understanding and the ears of appreciation opened to grasp the situation and to appreciate the love of God which passeth all understanding.

This ‘little flock—as we shall see, the Lord willing, next Sunday—is to have a special resurrection to spiritual favors and blessings and position, and from that standpoint in association with the Lord shall dispense blessings to the whole world of mankind in due time.

2H5

The due time for the world to have its resurrection privileges will be the next age, but this also we leave for consideration next Lord’s day. Today we are dealing with the fundamental fact that our dear Redeemer died for our sins, and, as the apostle expresses it, “rose again on the third day from the dead for our justification.” Blessed are our eyes and our ears which see and hear now of the grace of God! A special blessing comes to all of us who thus learn in advance of the world of the precious boon secured by the dead Redeemer’s death and which He loves to bestow. The bestowment of this blessing upon the world waits for the election of the church, the bride class, to be joint-heirs with Jesus in His heavenly kingdom.

In view of this wonderful outcome—in view of how much was dependent upon the Lord’s death, and then dependent upon His resurrection and is still dependent upon His coming in the power of His kingdom to pour out the blessings secured by His death—how much may we rejoice today and give glory to God that the grave no

longer holds our Master. We rejoice that the bars of the prison house of death have been broken so far as the church, His consort, is concerned, and that the hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall come forth — shall be released or have the opportunity of being released, from the bonds of death, as well as the bonds of sin, shall have the privilege of being delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

We do not wonder that farther along in the same chapter in which our text is found, the apostle—still discussing this momentous question of the resurrection of our Lord and its import of resurrection to the church and to the world — pointing down into the future accomplishment of divine promises, breaks out into the exclamation, “Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O, death! Where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” —victory over sin, victory over death!

Our Lord’s last great message to His people refers to the same victory, triumphantly saying: “I am He that was dead [not merely apparently dead, but really so] and, behold, I am alive forever more, and have the keys [the authority, the power over] death and hades [the grave or death state].” Rev. 1:18

1903

February 15, 1903

Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise, May 15, 1917

THINGS WHICH MUST SHORTLY COME TO PASS

**We See That the Blessing That Will Come
to the World Will Be the Trial
or Judgment of That Millennial Day**

Jan. 25—Pastor C. T. Russell spoke to a large and attentive audience in Allegheny Carnegie hall yesterday afternoon. His text was “Things which must shortly come to pass.” (Rev. 1:1) Pastor Russell said:

These words, true when our Lord uttered them, are no less true now, 1,800 years later. We are sure that the wonderful events with which this age is to close and the Millennial age is to open are now nigh, even at the door. There are some, however, who argue that the Lord and the Apostles must have been mistaken when they used such language; for say they, 1,800 years are not shortly.”

We reply that all depends upon the standpoint. From the human standpoint 1,800 years is a dreadfully long period, but not so from the divine. The prophet intimates this saying, “A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday.” Yes, responded the Apostle Peter, “Be not ignorant brethren of one thing, that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years.”

From the divine standpoint, therefore, the 6,000 years since Adam’s creation are but six days of a great week of which the Millennial age is the great Sabbath. Suppose now that the mechanic or the housewife had in mind a week of toil beginning with Monday morning and closing with Saturday night, and suppose that Friday morning had arrived — would anyone say nothing that the truth was being stretched if it were said “The week is far spent,” the work-time now is short; the rest that is promised will “shortly come to pass?” Surely these would be usual and proper statements. And so it is with the words of our Lord and His apostles. They were living in the beginning of the fifth thousand year day, and properly the holy Spirit in them recognized the promised blessings as nigh.

BECLLOUDING ERRORS AVOIDED

Possibly it has seemed peculiar to those who have attended these studies of time prophecy, that in the various prophetic measures thus far examined none have been referred to as marking the second coming of our Lord. This is the more unusual because our Second Adventist friends, who generally monopolize prophetic interpretation, bend all of their energies toward proving the time of the advent. To our understanding a misconception on their part, both of the object and manner of the second coming, has confused them. Holding as they do that Christ's second coming will be in a body of flesh and visible to mankind, and holding also as they mostly do that the object of His coming will be to gather His saints to Himself and to utterly destroy the remainder of mankind and the world itself with fire, they have been led to pull and twist the various prophetic time prophecies so as to have them all end at the same moment of the one day in which they expect Christ to appear, the judgment of the world to take place, and the burning to begin.

Delivered from both of these errors, we are prepared to apply the various prophecies just as they were intended, some expiring at one date and others at another date, and to draw from them their intended lessons. First of all, our eyes have been opened to a realization of the fact that the judgment of the world means its trial for life everlasting, and not its condemnation to the second death. We see that the world was condemned as a race because of original sin, that the whole world has been under this curse or sentence of death for now 6,000 years. We see that in much mercy God redeemed us from that curse or sentence of eternal death by the death of His Son, our Lord. We see that the only ones who are even reckonedly escaped from that death sentence are the few who have been blessed with hearing ears and understanding hearts. As the apostle declares of these, "We have escaped the condemnation which is upon the world." The great mass of mankind outside the Household of Faith are still under the original sentence—eternal death.

We see that God's object in giving some now a knowledge whereby they may escape this sentence, and reach life everlasting in Christ, is to the intent that He may gather out a "little flock" to be joint-heirs with His Son in the glorious Millennial kingdom.

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

We see that Christ and His overcoming church, His bride, constitute the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29) which

is to bless all the families of the earth during the Millennial age. We see that the blessing that will come to the world will be the trial or judgment of that blessed millennial day, and that the knowledge of the Lord and full opportunity are promised as incidental to the world's trial for life everlasting. This saves us from the thought that the church, the little flock, of Christ, alone have a part in the blessings secured from the atonement. It saves us too from the error of supposing that the second coming of Christ is the end of all hope, mercy and probation. It shows us, on the contrary, that so far as the generality of our race is concerned, that event is but the beginning of divine mercy and opportunity and trial for life eternal to the world.

A careful examination of the Father's word has assured us fully that our Lord Jesus left the glory and dignity and honor of His spiritual condition when He became a man, not that He might remain a man to all eternity, but that as a man He might give the ransom price for Adam and all his race. We see that He did this, and we have the clear scriptural testimony that the Father was pleased to honor Him, not merely with the same honor that He had before, but He was pleased to exalt Him far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named. We perceive the clear scriptural testimony that He was "put to death in the flesh, but was quickened in the spirit," and we perceive that after His resurrection, though still in the world for 40 days. He was but rarely with His disciples and but for a few moments on the seven occasions, and then in different forms, as proving to them and to us that, although He was the same Jesus, He was now "changed" and no longer human and subject to human conditions. To demonstrate this He appeared in the room with His disciples while "the doors were shut," and, departing, "vanished out of their sight." He appeared in flesh and garments as suited the convenience of the occasions, and thus manifested the same powers that He and associated holy angels had manifested in previous times; as, for instance, when the Lord and three angels appeared to Abraham and took dinner with him and talked with him and afterward went down and delivered Lot out of Sodom.

NO LONGER A MAN

We thus realize that our Lord Jesus is no longer a man, but, as the apostle declares, "The Lord is that Spirit," and "though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now, henceforth, we know Him so no more. We, therefore, are no longer expecting as do others that He will come a second time in the flesh. On the contrary, our expectations are, like those of the apostles, that we may be "changed" and made as He is, in order that we

may see Him as He is—not as He was at the first advent.
1 John 3:2

2H7

“Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but My Father only.”

It is not our intention to offer any evidences respecting the day and hour in the future in which our Lord will come; but we do wish to call your attention to this text, that all may know that it is frequently misapplied. It does not say that of that day and hour no man shall ever know. At the time of its utterance neither men nor angels nor the Lord Jesus Himself knew the time of His second coming; but when the second coming takes place the Lord undoubtedly will be aware of it before the time, and so also the holy angels who will be His escort; and there would be nothing inconsistent with the statement if some of the Lord’s consecrated people might have intimations respecting the event. Other Scriptures speak of “the day of the Lord,” signifying a period in which He will be manifested. For instance, the apostle tells us that “The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; and when they [the world] shall say peace and safety, then cometh sudden destruction upon them, as travail upon a woman with a child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” (1 Thess. 5:2, 3) Note how explicit is this declaration, and how clearly it divides between the church and the world—between the class who will know in advance respecting the day of the Lord and the class that will not know until the great trouble of the “day of wrath” is upon them.

PAROUSIA VERSUS EPIPHANIA

The Scriptures (Greek) use both of these words in referring to the second coming of Christ; but neither of them signify the same as our English word coming, viz., approach. We would like to make very clear the Scriptures’ teaching — that in the end of this Gospel age our Lord, at His second advent, will for a time be present but invisible, and that subsequently His presence will be revealed or made known. None will know of His presence until after He is here, only the thoroughly consecrated, Israelites, indeed, will know of the matter at all until the outward manifestation will be in the day of trouble — judgments coming upon present institutions. The early part of the Lord’s presence will be devoted to His church, as His words specifically inform us.

In giving the great prophecy of Matt. 25, the Lord tells us that in the time of His second presence He will gird Himself (that is, take the position of a servant,) and come forth and serve His people with “things new and

old,” “meat in due season for the Household of Faith.” This service will be rendered at a time when the world will not know of His presence, but will be saying that all things continue as they were from the foundation of the world. Another of our Lord’s parables represents that at His second advent He will call His own servants and reckon with them and reward them; he that has received the two talents and used them wisely will be rewarded; he who received the five talents and used them wisely and profitably will be rewarded. Their rewards are stated: Some shall be made rulers over five cities, others over ten cities — in the kingdom, shortly after it has been established. Evidently this testing of the church and determining its rewards will be before there is any manifestation to the world to the presence of the Son of man at His second advent. Afterward, when ready to begin dealing with the world, judging the institutions of the present time, the presence of the Son of man will be revealed “in flaming fire” —judgments.

DAY OF THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Allow me to call your attention to Matthew 24:37. Here a statement concerning our Lord’s second advent is distinctly made by Himself. It reads thus: “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.” This is evidently intended to be an illustration, but there is an incongruity in comparing the days of Noah and the coming of the Son of man. The difficulty is made clear when we find that the word here rendered coming is parousia, and does not mean coming, but means presence, as every Greek scholar knows. Now let us read the verse and see how plain it becomes, “As were the days of Noah, so shall also the presence of the Son of man be.” Ah, that is different; it is plain now. The days of the presence of the Son of man will in some respects resemble the days of Noah, preceding the flood. Now we turn to Luke’s account of the same discourse and read (Luke 17:26), “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” Now the two statements are in harmony, and we know to look for some correspondence as between Noah’s days and the days of the presence of Christ in the end of this age.

Is there anything to indicate what the correspondencies will be? Yes; it is specifically stated thus: “For as in those days which were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered into the Ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them away; so shall also the coming [parousia, presence] of the Son of man be.” Let us not lose the point of the illustration:

the Lord was not intimating that eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage

were wicked things in the days of Noah, which would be duplicated in the days of the presence

2H8

of the Son of man. The thought is that as the people of Noah's day knew not of the coming flood, but were going about their ordinary business, so also in the end of this age, in the time of the presence of the Son of man, the world will be going about its ordinary business, its eating and drinking, planting and building and marrying, totally unaware, unconscious of the time in which they are living—that it is the closing time of the gospel dispensation and the opening time of the great Millennial age, to be ushered in with a great time of trouble such as never was before.

This, it will be perceived, is in strict harmony with what the apostle said, namely, that the day of the Lord would come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, and that they would not escape, but, in harmony with the apostle's suggestion that "ye, brethren," would not be left in "darkness," should not we, dear brethren, be on the lookout to see by what means the Lord will inform us respecting the harvest time of this Gospel age, respecting the presence of the Son of man, and respecting the work that will be done in the time of His presence, and before His revealing to the world, before His epiphania in the time of trouble?

“BEHOLD, I COME AS A THIEF”

We will surprise many of you by what we are about to say on this subject of the time of the Lord's presence. What we say will not cause fear and trepidation to the hearts of any who are walking faithfully in the Lord's footsteps; and if our remarks shall serve to startle and awaken to a closer investigation of these matters any who have been more or less stupified by the spirit of the world, the spirit of pleasure, the spirit of greed, the spirit of selfishness, we shall rejoice in their awakening, and they also will have cause to glorify God on this behalf. We wish to point out to you, dear friends, that the Scripture prophecies which we examined on the three preceding Sundays, and others which we wish we had time to examine today, clearly teach that we are now living in "the days of the Son of Man"—in the parousia, in the time of the Lord's presence. Now, let none of us be alarmed, for we are not pointing you to a future date, but pointing back to the fall of 1874, and none of you—neither myself nor anyone else—had the slightest knowledge of the facts of the case when it occurred.

Our Lord said, "Behold, I come as a thief"—quietly, secretly, unknown, and so it has been; He came without your knowing it and without my knowing it. It is since His presence that the

light has shone particularly upon His word. He has indeed girded Himself and come forth to serve His people. I have been the recipient of His favors of His grace, of His truth, as respects things new and old. You also have been similarly favored, and it is our understanding of the teachings of the Word that, during this harvest time and before the great time of anarchy and trouble shall burst upon the world and smite present institutions, that all the Lord's true people, all who are Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile, will be brought to a knowledge of the Lord and of the truth, a knowledge of the divine plan of the ages and of the presence of the Chief Reaper in the harvest of this age.

It need not surprise us that all of the Lord's people do not receive the meat in due season at the same moment. It must be passed from one to another, for so illustrations in the Scripture intimate. I am today seeking to pass it to some of you, and you in turn will serve it to others, until all "the wise shall understand." But the Scriptures are equally explicit in the statement that "none of the wicked shall understand." Those who are of a rebellious attitude of mind and heart, who, even if God's true children, are cultivating in their hearts envy, malice, hatred, strife and other works of the flesh and of the devil are not in a condition to hear the voice of the Son of Man. His is the still small voice intended only for those who have an ear to hear, and this hearing is granted only to those who have hearts in accord with the Lord's spirit.

THE CHART ILLUSTRATIONS

Now, look with me at the chart and see how the various time prophecies, although making no mention of the second coming of Christ, clearly indicate and imply that His parousia, His presence, would begin in October, 1874. First, we call to mind the jubilee type, examined three Sundays ago. We remember how explicitly it indicated that the "times of restitution of things" — earth's great jubilee—were due to begin in October 1874. We remember the two lines of testimony on the subject—the law and the prophets—and how they both pointed to the same time. We remember that we looked about us to see evidences of any restitution work, and concluded that the appropriate thing to be sought would be the pulling by the people, the appeal for their rights, the claiming of inheritances, etc. And so we find that since 1874 this very work of blowing the trumpets, demanding rights and privileges and asserting claims and rights have been the order of the day.

Now let us notice the words of the Apostle Peter, uttered eighteen centuries ago. He said: "Times of refreshing shall come out of the face of Jehovah, and He shall send Jesus Christ, whom the heavens must receive [retain] until the times of restitution of all things." (Acts 3:19-21) Note these words particularly

—the heavens were to receive our Redeemer, to retain Him, until the restitution times. The lesson dearly would be that if restitution times chronologically began in October, 1874, the heavens no longer retain our Lord. This is an indirect way that the Scriptures teach that the Lord became present in 1874, yet your speaker was utterly unaware of the matter for nearly two years after the event, and then learned it, not from visions or dreams or other manifestations, but from the testimonies of the prophets as you are hearing them today.

PARTIAL FULFILLMENT IN 1799

We particularly wish that we had time to call to your attention what the Prophet Daniel calls the “days of waiting.” In prophecy he foretold of the rise of Papacy, and, as we have already seen, foretold the length of its dominion to be 1,260 prophetic days, literally years — exactly the same that is stated three times in the book of Revelations as measuring the prosperity of the great system which “wore out the saints of the Most High God” for 1,260 days, literal years. We would have liked to have time to show that the 1,260 years of papal dominion lasted from the year 539 to the year 1799 A. D. — from the time papacy was set up in power, until the time when its power was broken by Napoleon Bonaparte, who carried the pope a prisoner to France, and in so doing showed the whole world that the claims of the man who sat upon the papal throne that he was “another God on earth” and had power in heaven, earth and purgatory, were bombastic claims, unsupported by any real evidence of power.

We would have liked to have shown that the next period of 1,290 days, years, ended in 1829 with the beginning of the second advent movement of that period, and the great influence which it had upon its time. We would like to have shown that the 1,335 prophetic days, years, of the same prophecy reached to October, 1874 —ending exactly at the same place, at the time indicated by the jubilee. We call your attention to the words of the Prophet Daniel in connection with these 1,335 days. He said, “O the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh unto the one thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” What shall we say, dear brethren? Is it not so that those who have lived and patiently waited for the fulfillment of the Lord’s gracious promises have received a special blessing in this harvest time?—a blessing which began with and dated from the fall of 1874. Surely this is true —surely every step of our progress in the knowledge of the divine plan is a fresh cause for rejoicing. “He hath put a new song in my mouth, even the loving kindness of our God.”

GENTILE TIMES END A. D. 1915

Now notice the other prophecy respecting Israel's seven times of chastisement under the nations —2,520 years from the time the crown was removed from the head of their last king, Zedekiah, and down to the present time, and beyond to the year 1915. This prophecy indicates, if you please, the further end of the time of trouble in which we are living—between October, 1874 and 1915. A period of 40 years is thus appropriated, first to the gathering of the harvest of the Gospel age —the resurrection of the sleeping saints and the testing and proving and gathering to the Lord of the living members of the body, and finally the great time of trouble which will make ready for the full ushering in of the kingdom of glory and peace and blessing. The time appears long enough, yet not too long. Already the work of gathering the saints is well under way, and every year adds to the momentum of the truth, as well as to the opposition of the error. Eleven years or so remain, and as we look out we perceive that the whole world is getting awake.

Look at the church and see how infidelity under the name of higher criticism is invading the nominal sanctuary—how few are clean and free from the contamination. It is bound to make a division but, alas, so few will be found faithful to the Lord and to His word that the great majority, losing their faith, will have so much company in the matter that they will not realize for some time their fall from divine favor and grace. It will not take many years to accomplish this separation. Look at the world, and see how the love of money has bewitched all, so that little else than money or pleasure are ever thought of in civilized lands. See how this spirit of selfishness is working amongst the masses and the classes of the world in general, how these are being bound in bundles — into organizations, combinations and unions, and how the capitalistic class is being bound also into other unions, confederations, combinations, and trusts, and note that the same spirit is infecting churchianity and for the same reasons—for self-protection, for self-aggrandizement, for power. Think how far along these organizations are at the present times, and what the struggle will be when they are all thoroughly organized and the tug of war shall come. The Scriptures tell us distinctly how the battle will result, that Babylon the Great will fall, and that with her in the battle will go down the kings and princes and mighty ones of earth, and that a terrible time of anarchy will prevail, and the only bright spot in the future lies beyond in the gracious promises of the God of Heaven, that on the ruins of present institutions He will establish His kingdom.

JEWISH AND GOSPEL AGES PARALLEL

Now, look again, dear friends, at the subject discussed last Lord's day, the parallels of the Jewish and gospel dispensations. Note how all of these prophecies are harmonized and unified in this teaching of the parallels between the two Israels, the house of servants and the house of sons — the one under Moses, the mediator of the law covenant; the other under Christ, the mediator of the new covenant — the one founded to Jacob with his twelve sons, natural Israel; the other founded by Christ, the true Israel of God, with His twelve apostles. The house of servants, we have seen, began with the death of Jacob and lasted 1,811 years, until the first advent movement at the time of our Lord's birth, when all men were in expectation of Him, and when wise men from the East sought for Him. And likewise from the death of Christ, where this Gospel age began, 1,811 years reached to the second advent movement, which occurred in 1844.

We are not Second Adventists, nor would those people in any sense or degree recognize us or our teachings, but we do believe that the movement which culminated in 1844 was in some measure instigated by the Almighty, and that it had a powerful influence favorable to the truth. There the virgins, as foretold in Matthew 25, went forth to meet the bridegroom and he tarried, and they all afterward slumbered and slept until the morning, until the announcement, "Behold the bridegroom's presence." Thirty years after the advent movement at Bethlehem there was another advent movement at Jordan, when John proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, and when our Lord really entered upon His work. And similarly in the end of this age, as you will notice from the chart, 30 years from 1844 brings us to 1874, where the jubilee testimony proclaims to us the Lord's presence. Forty years from the time Jesus was baptized by John at Jordan, the Jewish nation was utterly overthrown in the greatest time of trouble that troubled people had ever known — their city was utterly destroyed. So likewise 40 years from 1874 reached to 1915, where the antitype of Israel, namely, Christendom, will have its utter overthrow in a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.

NOT ACCIDENTAL BUT PROVIDENTIAL

Are these things accidental, dear friends? We think not; they are all based upon the Scriptures, they are all simple and easy of demonstration, and yet they were all hidden by the method of their statement or by facts related to their interpretation, so that they could not be understood until now in God's due time, when He lifts the veil. Thus the Lord said to Daniel the Prophet, in respect to his inquiry of those times and seasons,

“Go thy way, Daniel for the thing is closed and sealed until the time of the end.” We understand, dear friends, that the time of the end began in 1799, more than a century ago, and that we have been in the time of the end ever since, and that the time of the end is another name for what another prophet calls “the day of his preparation.” Since 1799 we have been in the time of the Lord’s preparation for the Millennial kingdom. He has lifted the curtain, and light has shone in upon the world from every quarter, on mechanics, on chemistry, on every science and on every art.

SIGNS ALL ABOUT US

All of these things have served to make the day in which we live the grandest that the world has ever known; and yet these grand privileges and blessings are about to work out for our present civilization the great catastrophe of anarchy to which we have just alluded. The law of selfishness rules in the hearts of all classes, and causes envy, hatred, malice, strife, and, eventually, through socialism, will lead up to anarchy and wreck the entire social fabric.

All this is noted by the prophet, for he gives us in the same connection, after being told that the prophecy was “sealed until the time of the end,” a description of this time of the end— a description which fits so marvelously that it will surprise everyone who will examine it. Mark the words: “In the time of the end many shall run to and fro, knowledge shall be increased, and the wise shall understand, and there shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” Dan. 12:1, 4, 10

Note the four items. First, the running to and fro. What a marvelous fulfillment we see before our eyes — steamboats, railroads, bicycles, every contrivance for locomotion, and with ever-increasing speed and ever-increasing numbers. The whole world is running to and fro, just as the Lord indicated through the prophets would be the case in this time of the end. Could we hope to ever have a more particular fulfillment of any prophecy than this is? Surely not. Note the second point: Knowledge shall be increased. Not only is scientific knowledge increased, but the thought appears to be rather knowledge shall be generally disseminated. And it is all over Christendom, which is the world in prophecy. Education is progressing in a wonderful manner; children of 10 years are studying subjects which their great-grandfathers never thought of studying. In every land knowledge has been increased, and here is another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy. Could it

2H11

be plainer? Mark the third point: The wise shall understand—understand the vision which Daniel could

not understand, which Daniel was not permitted to understand, which Daniel was not intended to understand.

We are not, dear friends, posing as worldly wise. On the contrary, we are seeking the wisdom which cometh from above, the light which shines forth from the lamp which God has given us, His Word, and all who follow its leadings from the divine standpoint are the truly wise. This class may now understand; but as the context declares, "The wicked shall do wickedly; but none of the wicked shall understand." They will take their own course, and the plan of God and the Word of God will daily come to appear to them more and more foolish as their scientific minds grapple with their evolution theories and their higher critical difficulties. Is this part of the prophecy being fulfilled? Is the word and plan of God opening before His consecrated people as never before? It most assuredly is so! Note the fourth point: "There shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." The outlook from any standpoint, but particularly from the standpoint of those who are looking from God's standpoint, is that the time of trouble is nearing.

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE BREEDS DISCONTENT

We see that the prosperity of this time of the end is not conducive to happiness and peace; we see the whole world growing more and more discontented, although enjoying more of the blessings and favors of the Lord in temporal matters than ever before. We see that the secret of this discontent is knowledge. Knowledge is power—power for good or for evil, according to the sentiments of the heart. We must expect that only those hearts which are consecrated to the Lord and dominated by His spirit will receive this power of knowledge in such a manner as to profit themselves and their fellows; and since these are the small minority of the civilized world, we are not to be surprised that the knowledge and the power are about to wreck the present order of things. God will thus cause the wrath of man to praise Him, for, looking back, man will discover from the millennial standpoint what were the wickedness and errors of the present time as they cannot see them now, because they are so close to them and so vitally interested. They will see that selfishness lay at the foundation of present institutions in every sense of the word; even the benevolences of the present time are to some extent handicapped by selfishness. God wishes the whole world to have a terrible lesson on the result of selfishness in the cataclysm of trouble and disintegration which it will effect; He wishes all to learn that His way is not only the right of way, but the only way in which knowledge and liberty and power may be used to blessing and to profit.

Do these things appeal to you as both scriptural and rational—as being in accord with the word of God and the exercising of our senses, as they do to me? If so, I am sure that your hearts are leaping with joy at the thought that the dark night of earth’s sin and suffering will soon be at an end and the glorious morning of the kingdom soon be ushered in. And you will be solicitous respecting the things which must shortly come to pass—the things which are coming to pass day by day in the midst of which we are living, if this prophetic testimony and outward corroborations are trustworthy in any degree. What must we expect in the church? some one may ask. I answer that much depends upon what church we refer to. There are many churches of men, but only one church of the loving God whose names are written in heaven. The Scriptures everywhere show that the churches of men are more or less built upon error and are fencing in their various folds not only the Lord’s sheep, but the worldly goats—not only the Lord’s wheat, but the world’s tares. We do not understand the Scriptures to teach that the goats and tares are all coarse, rude and villainous and disreputable, any more than the sheep and wheat are all wealthy and polished gentlemen and ladies. The tests are along different lines, and we read, “The Lord knoweth them that are His” —regardless of outward garb, education, appearance or wealth. We further read that “the Lord looketh upon the heart,” and, again, that not many great, not many learned, hath God chosen, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom.

These then, the Lord’s poor, we are to expect to find in all the various wheat fields, behind all the various creed fences, intermingling with all the various bands of tares. The harvest work, so far as the wheat is concerned, will be the gathering out of these. The Lord speaks of Christendom or churchianity as a whole under the name of Babylon—the name which originally applied to the mother of harlots, but which has become appropriate to all her daughter systems as well. These are addressed by the Lord in His last message, saying: “Babylon is fallen, is fallen. Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:2-4

THE HARVEST SICKLE — PRESENT TRUTH

Our thought is, dear friends, that the Lord is sending forth present truth as a sickle to gather the true wheat from every part of the wheat fields not by

2H12

gathering them into another denomination or sect or party or name, but simply to gather them to the Lord —

to fellowship with Him and to fellowship with others of like precious faith. We are in no sense attempting to organize a sect or party. We are sick of churchianity, but thoroughly in love with the great Christianity which Jesus and the apostles founded, under the terms and conditions of which all of the Lord's people are brought into heart-to-heart fellowship, and need not the bands of sects and confessions to fasten them together. Having one spirit, the spirit of truth, they are one body, as the apostle has expressed it. 1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27

The fields are white for the harvest, and every day is making a cleavage between the nominal Christianity and the true Christianity, and the more apparent it becomes that the nominal systems are growing more and more worldly. The colleges and seminaries of every denominational shade have for years been turning out polished infidels, who no more believe in the inspiration of God's Word than they believe in the inspiration of Shakespeare or Dickens, and they are not slow to say this amongst themselves, though craftily, many of them disguise their infidelity before such members of their flocks as they fear would be shocked if they knew the truth; but as their numbers increase, their courage increases to boldness, and in their own circles they do not hesitate to speak of those who accept the Bible as foolish, and old fogies. Let us be glad to be counted fools for Christ's sake. Let us note, too, that the line of division is turning here on the same issue as at the first advent. At the first advent the question turned on the necessity for Christ's death as the sin offering, and so today it is turning on the same problem. Is Christ our Redeemer or merely a great teacher? All these "higher critics" claim the latter, that Jesus was a Great Teacher, but not a redeemer, and that no redemption was necessary. They hold the evolution theory that man, instead of falling from the image of God into savagery and depravity, has been falling upward, as they express it — coming from brute conditions up to the present status. This is the line of battle, let no one be deceived on the subject.

ABLE TO STAND IN THE EVIL DAY

We are living today, dear friends, in the time referred to by the apostle when he said, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." We are in the evil day—the day of trial, the day of testing, the day referred to by the prophet when he declared: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand." These thousands are already falling under the shafts of skepticism, higher criticism, evolution, etc., but the battle has already begun. There is still time for those who are the Lord's true people to hear the jubilee trumpet, to recognize the situation, and to put on the whole armor of God, that they may be able to stand in the evil day, and that they may help others to stand.

With this discourse this series of meetings comes to an end, but it is our earnest hope that amongst these interested faces and attentive ears there are a goodly number who will heed the apostle's words and put on the whole armor of God and be saved from falling with the great nominal church, Babylon, into infidelity, which has a form of godliness but denies its power. We hope to be permitted to serve you further, and assure you that it will afford us great pleasure so to do. The message that we give from the Lord's word belongs to you and to all who are truly His. We are glad to lend helping hands to all who will avail themselves of our offer.

May the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit guide us and all who are truly the Lord's consecrated sheep, in the right paths, to the Lord's glory and for our present and everlasting blessing. Amen.

TO grasp the two-edged sword, and forward rush upon the foe,
To hear the Captain's cry, to see the flash of answering eyes,
To feel the throbbing hearts of battling comrades in the ranks,—
That rapturous inspiration know, of warring for the Right,
The holy joy of following Him who points and leads the way!

2H13

September 20, 1903

*Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
March 6, 1917*

SEEK YE THE LORD, ALL YE MEEK OF THE EARTH

Stamford, Conn., Sept. 20, 1903—Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburgh, Pa., delivered two addresses to large and interested congregations here today, many coming from neighboring parts. We report one of his discourses, the text of which was, “Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.” Zeph. 2:3. He said:

Nearer and yet nearer yearly, daily, hourly comes that great event noted in both the Old and New Testaments and in our text styled, “The day of the Lord’s anger.” Elsewhere it is called the “day of vengeance and of recompense,” “the day of wrath, in which the Lord will do His work, His strange work, and bring to pass His act, His peculiar act.” It is described as a “cruel day” and symbolically pictured as a furnace of fire which will become so hot that figuratively the elements of society will melt, disintegrate, consume. The prophet describes it as a “time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.” Our Lord quoted this prophecy, gave it the stamp of His approval and assured His disciples that the like would never be heard of afterward. Awful as these descriptions of the future are we may thank God that we and others were incorrect in applying them to an everlasting future just beyond the portals of death. Thanks be to God that as the eyes of our understanding open to a proper interpretation of God’s word we see the consistency of His teachings that the dead world is really dead, unconscious, until the resurrection and not suffering purgatorial torments nor eternal, hopeless torments. Thank God that the day of wrath is to be an earthly experience, short, sharp and terrible, which will bring a lasting blessing to mankind, humble pride, rebuke selfishness and generally prepare mankind for the glorious epoch of equity under Emanuel’s kingdom — the Millennial Kingdom of the Christ.

Many will be inclined to say, thinking of God, why should we have even temporarily and in the present life such a visitation of the divine wrath as some of these Scriptures describe? Is God implacable, fierce, wrathful— after the fashion of weak,

vicious fallen humanity? We answer, No. God is Love. “The wrath of Almighty God” and the “wrath of the Lamb” are only the terms in which to express the condition of things as they would be because human imperfection and unsound judgment and imperfect language have no terms in which to express the true thought of God’s just indignation against sin, and loving determination that it shall be allowed in the end of this age to bring disaster upon itself. God is the very personification of love, but His wisdom foresees the necessity of teaching a great and lasting lesson to humanity along the lines of justice and humility. Divine love will now permit human pride and selfishness to wreck our present high civilization because divine wisdom and love stand ready now in the “due time” to take advantage of the wreck and the lessons it will teach by establishing upon the ruins of present institutions the kingdom of God’s dear Son, for which the Lord’s people have been praying for nearly 2,000 years, ‘Thy kingdom come, they will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.’”

“WHICH IGNORANCE GOD WINKED AT”

For centuries our fallen race has been permitted to measurably take its own course —only in certain extreme conditions to hinder utter corruption has divine justice and love interposed —as, for instance, at the time of the flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, etc. The apostle describing God’s attitude toward sin and sinners says, “The time of such ignorance God winked at.” (Acts 17:30) He did not interfere, did not chide, but proceeded with His own work of preparation for better things. After 4,000 years He sent His Son to be man’s redeemer and deliverer from sin and death conditions. When the divine program was thus far under way, the Gospel message was launched, inviting a “little flock” to evidence their loyalty to the Heavenly King in a narrow way in the midst of a crooked and perverse humanity.

This calling out of the elect and preparing of them for a share in the heavenly kingdom through trials and disciplines has progressed for more than eighteen centuries, and is now nearly completed. Meantime the Lord informs us that the world in general has neither

2H14

the eye of faith to perceive His goodness and gracious promises nor the ear of faith to believe the Gospel message; and hence such are entirely outside of His present provision, but fully provided for in the ultimates of His glorious plan. He assures us also, however, that some, especially in civilized lands, still maintain a partial ear and partial appreciation of righteousness, though they have not the full hearing of faith and such a disposition as would lead them to “Follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.” To these God sends a message assuring them that their original condemnation to death, extinction, has been set aside by the redemption provided in our Lord Jesus’ death, and hence that there is to be

an opportunity for return to divine favor granted to all mankind—to the “little flock” of the elect now in the present life, to the remainder of mankind in the future.

Because of this God commands all men everywhere to repent of sin, to turn from it, and in the language of our text to “seek righteousness and meekness.” Whatever progress any may make in the development of these divine standards in their hearts and lives will be that much of gain to them in the future when during the Millennial Age they shall be on trial, on test, to demonstrate their willingness or unwillingness to come back into full harmony with God in righteousness and perfection under the blessings of the Millennial Age. Every downward step avoided and every upward step that may be taken is that much of assistance to the one making the endeavor as respects his eternal future and his reaching the more quickly and more surely the blessings of the life eternal and his avoidance of the “second death” and “everlasting extinction.” Acts 5:23

About a century ago we reached what the Lord and prophets described as the “time of the end,” the particular outward indications of which were very particularly delineated, and these we see are being fulfilled all about us today. Thus we have an outward demonstration that we are in the “time of the end” —not the end of the world by burning or other destruction, but the end of the present age or epoch, the time for the ushering in of the new epoch, the new dispensation, the reign of Christ. The description of this time of the end is so simple that even a child can discern its fulfillment today. The prophet says that “In the time of the end (1) many shall run to and fro, (2) knowledge shall be increased, (3) the wise shall understand, (4) there shall be a time of trouble such as never was.” Dan. 12

The wonderful traveling of our day and its insistent compulsory education are most accurately described by the first two points of the prophecy. The third tells how those of the Lord’s people who are rightly in harmony with Him will not be in darkness at that time, that that day shall not overtake them as a thief, but wise with the wisdom from above they will understand the times and seasons in which they are living. The fourth point of prophecy is still future. In some respects it has already come; in others it will not have its culmination and awful finish for several years.

A century ago Divine Providence began to lift the veil of ignorance and superstition from mankind. The result has been a most wonderful awakening and progress in every direction. Arts, science, inventions have enlightened the world, and a better understanding of the Bible has come to the remarkably few who are seeking for it in the right attitude of heart and in the divinely appointed manner. The blessings of science have made the world

incredibly, wonderfully rich in a remarkably short time, but instead of these divine favors properly affecting the minds and hearts of mankind and drawing out their gratitude toward the eternal parent and leading them to a greater sympathy toward one another the reverse has been true.

“THE ANGELS HELD THE WINDS”

The majority of mankind do not note the divine declaration that these wonderful blessings of our day are but a prelude to the great millennial blessings near at hand. They hearken not to the divine message that the century past is “the day of His preparation” for the kingdom of His dear Son.

Instead of faith, love and obedience, infidelity has come in under the name of higher criticism and evolution theories, and the higher critics have accounted for all of this progress by claiming that it is another step in an evolution process with which God has nothing whatever to do. Indeed, the advanced thinkers are disposed to entirely discredit the thought of a personal Creator, and to claim that Nature is God, and things have come to pass under the laws of Nature.

The wonderful blessings now enjoyed by the world, instead of producing love, joy, peace, contentment, are producing the very reverse of these, anger, hatred, strife, disappointment, because of the perversity of the fallen mind, its selfishness, its greed. It is this very condition of the human heart, its misapplication of divine favors, which is about to bring upon mankind the awful cataclysm of trouble referred to in the text as the “day of the Lord’s anger.” In one sense of the word it will be the day of human passion inspired by human selfishness and greed which will wreck the present institutions in anarchy, according to the portrayal of the Scriptures. It is properly called, however, the “day of the Lord” because up to that time God had been

2H15

holding in check human passion and avarice and the influence of the fallen angels, the demon of the New Testament, and because at the appropriate time the four angels that hold the four winds, and have preserved the world from itself, from its own passions, ignorance and selfishness will be withdrawn. In this sense of the word it is the “day of the Lord’s anger,” in which He will bring to pass His act, His strange act, and will permit to come upon mankind strong delusions that the falsehoods which have been preferred to the divine truth may be manifested and a great lesson be learned by angels and men -

“SEEK YE THE LORD”

Our text pointing down thus to our time, our day, seems to be an exhortation, not to the Church, but to a class in the world favorable to righteousness and meekness. The Church, of course, is assumed to be in this attitude — already loving righteousness and ready to lay down life itself in the defense of righteousness, in the service of righteousness, and the Church is supposed also to be cultivating all the graces of the holy spirit, of which meekness is one. When, therefore, our text exhorts, “Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth,” which have been working in harmony with divine justice, it implies that the class addressed has not yet sought the Lord. We all, perhaps, can recognize the class addressed. Some of them are inside and some outside of nominal church membership — honorable people, upright in word and in deed, and withal meek, humble-minded, not boastful, not proud. This class of noble people ought to belong to the true Church of Christ — ought to be, we should think, of such an attitude of heart as would make the Gospel of Jesus specially attractive to them, but, as we all know, some of this class are to be found outside as well as inside of the true Church of Christ. Let us remember the Apostle’s exclamation that the Gospel call at the present time is heard and appreciated by not many great, wise, rich or noble, but that God’s call is responded to chiefly by the ignorant. The reason for this is not far to seek; the more degraded realizing their greater needs of an uplift are the more ready to seek divine mercy and favor, and to harken to the invitation to surrender their all and to become followers of the Redeemer in the narrow way.

The noble amongst mankind realize that naturally they are better than some who have accepted Christ and entered into covenant relationship with Him. They say to themselves: Those more degraded ones need a Savior, and it is well that something takes hold of them and assists them, but we do not feel so much our need — and hence they hesitate about accepting Christ as their Savior, their Justifier. Failure to take this step hinders them from seeing and appreciating the next step; namely, a full consecration to the Lord and begetting by His holy spirit and introduction thereby into the school of Christ and to joint heirship into the exceeding great and precious promises and to a share with Christ in His nature and kingdom and glory.

The class addressed in our text, the meek, who love righteousness, justice, are becoming more and more awake to the fact that a great crisis upon Christendom is at hand. They perceive that pride, boastfulness, selfishness and inequity have gotten hold of nearly all the influences which control the world at the present time — both amongst the rich and amongst the poor — the principles are the same though the powers and opportunities vary. This class perceive that the hour of

retribution is nearing when society in general will seek a readjustment itself. These hope that the readjustment will come in peaceably, perhaps along the lines of Christian Socialism or what not. On the other hand, however, they perceive that the influences operating in Socialism, while well-intentioned, well-impulsed, are really selfish and that one social revolution would be required to follow another continually, because of the innate pride and selfishness of the human heart. Hence we address the open ears and open eyes of the small but noble, respectable class of humanity and urge them in the words of our text that even though they should not go so far as to make a full consecration to the Lord, they should at least seek knowledge as to His divine plan in respect to the relief which all may recognize to be so greatly needed at the present juncture. We assure these that their convictions are right, when they conclude that the power of wealth as it is entrenched today in the world of unionism amongst men as we see it today is also exceeding great and that the struggle which we see impending will have mighty giants and all that that the Scriptures portray in the words, "Time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" is impending.

"SEEK MEEKNESS, SEEK JUSTICE"

This exhortation comes at a time when worldly wisdom is advising the very reverse. Worldly wisdom has concluded that the weak man has no show and that to follow the injunctions of our text would make one a fool. Worldly wisdom perceives that however much the meek shall inherit the earth by and by they inherit very little of it in the present time. It therefore cries to all its votaries that the course of wisdom is to lift the head high and to pretend to be far more than one is and to make great boasts and to remember that nearly all the success of the world today has been

2H16

attained along these lines and therefore none should be backward about coming forward and making a bluff with the rest. We live in a day when all classes think that it is quite the proper thing to keep up an outward appearance of justice, but to see to it that no such fanatical view of justice be taken as would in anywise hinder the grasping of at least their share, or a little more of the world's riches and benefits.

In taking our stand with the Bible and its exhortation to meekness and justice we are risking the good opinion of all of our worldly wise friends and neighbors who have already marked such a course as "out of date."

Nevertheless, we are of the Lord's people, and we believe that there are all over the world some who belong to the class addressed by the Lord and the

prophets. To these and for their sakes we read out the message of our Lord's text: Seek righteousness — continue to seek it, to follow its way; seek meekness — continue to seek it, to follow it, to follow along in that way.

What will be the reward of such if they will thereby lose in the present strife for wealth and position to the proud, the arrogant and the unjust — what reward will they have for taking the proper course? One reward is specified in our text and another we know of through other Scriptures. Our text declares: "It may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." This word "hid" signifies protected, covered, shielded. It does not of necessity signify that God will specially shield and protect such, for if that were the intention we believe that it would be stated in positive terms without the "may be." The thought we gather is that comparatively few have in the past and shall in the future follow the paths of justice and equity, righteousness, so far as possible in all the dealings of life, and avoid pride, ostentation and boastfulness and cultivate a meek and quiet spirit — these, of course, would naturally in the course of human events be shielded, protected from much of the strife and venomous murder spirit of that time, of which the Scriptures declare, "There shall be no more peace to him that goeth out or him that cometh in, for every man's hand shall be against his neighbor." The proud, the boastful, the overreaching and unscrupulous may prosper for a time, but in so doing they will attract attention to themselves, from the effects of which they will subsequently suffer, when the restraints of the present time shall give place to the lawlessness which the Scriptures portray.

The reward which will come to this class of humble-minded, equitably disposed people will be theirs after the new dispensation shall have been inaugurated, respecting which He that sat upon the throne said:

"Behold, I make all things new." In this new dispensation the proud, the haughty, the unjust will be much discredited. As we read, "The proud and all who do wickedly shall be as stubble in that day; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that is shall leave them neither root nor branch." (Mal. 4:1) Not only will they suffer specially in the time of trouble, but the fire of divine anger in opposition to unrighteousness and pride will follow into the future against some so that they shall have tribulations to overcome their deeply seated injustice and self-conceit and boastfulness. On the other hand, under the new order of things, when 'justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet,' those who have now come into heart harmony with these principles will be greatly advantaged, will find the highway of holiness, will find a way of joy, as they shall go upward to greater and greater heights of character until they shall reach

the full perfection of human nature from which Adam fell and to which he and all his posterity, if they will, may return through the merit of Christ's sacrifice.

JUSTICE AND HUMILITY CHRISTIAN GRACES

Turning to the Church we are not surprised to find that these two qualities, justice and humility, are set forth in the Scriptures as essential to the development of the proper character on the part of God's very elect. How often do we read to the effect that "God resists the proud and shows His favor the humble." And do we not remember the words of the Apostle on this subject, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." How evident it is to know in the Scripture set before us that the downfall of Satan was through his pride and disloyal ambition. His fall from being Lucifer, the bright and glorious angel of the Lord, to be Satan, the adversary or opponent of the Lord, was a terrible one, and all brought about through his permission of a spirit of pride to enter into his heart, as the Scriptures explain it. Undoubtedly it is very unbecoming for any creature to be either proud or boastful, seeing that all that we have, all that we are and all that we hope ever to be are of God's grace, love, will. We cannot urge too strongly upon those who have taken up the cross to follow the Master's footsteps. Let them follow His example in humility and remember Him who was rich and for our sakes became poor. "Christ also hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." And the Apostle exhorts, "Let this same mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Many Christian people seem to but imperfectly appreciate the quality of justice, either in God or in humanity. In so doing they are making a great

mistake. Justice is the foundation of His throne, is declared by the Almighty. Every act, every dealing, every promise of God we may be sure is fully squared with justice. Although God is love, that love cannot be exercised on our behalf except along the lines of justice; and hence we read that the love of God was manifested through an exhibition of justice. “Herein was manifested the love of God that He gave His only begotten Son” that we might have eternal life —He gave Him as a ransom for our sins through the merit of which “God can be just and yet the justifier” of those who believe in Jesus. Our Lord Jesus, the express image of the Father, must have had His full likeness in respect to justice, and the divine command to all of the elect church is that if they would make their calling and election sure they must be conformed to the image of God’s Son.

By reason of original sin and the degradation of 6,000 years under the reign of sin and death our race has suffered an unbalance of mind as well as of the entire physique, and hence we all more or less need readjusting along every line, and especially along the lines of justice and love, because the quality of selfishness so strongly developed by the fall overbalances both justice and love in its endeavors to rule our hearts and lives. The Church, God’s new creation, is undergoing process of gradual transformation, not in the shape of the head, but in the sentiments of the heart. In the Apostle’s words, we are thus “being transformed by the renewing of our minds,” and again, “we are being changed from glory to glory.” The glorious justice which belongs to the Almighty, and which at first belonged to our human nature when it was in the image of God, but which was lost through sin and the fall, must be regained by the heirs of the kingdom. This is a part of the test that is upon them in accordance with which they are exhorted to overcome the world and its spirit of lovelessness and injustice. Thank God it is not demanded of these that they must get the victory to so full an extent that they will never make a mistake or transgress these principles of the flesh. On the contrary, as the Apostle says, “We have this treasure of the new mind in earthen vessels.” We thank God that His arrangement for the Church is that here love and justice will be adjudged of the Lord not according to the letter, but according to the spirit — according to the mind, the will, the intentions, as the new mind shall endeavor to exercise itself through the imperfect medium of the fallen flesh. This new mind of justice, love, humility being in you, rejoice exceedingly and count that its development is of priceless value, and be willing to undergo all lessons of the Father’s provision arranged for when you entered the School of Christ.

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.” Rev. 3:5.

The Pittsburgh Gazette, November 30, 1903

THE NARROW WAY— AND OTHER WAYS

WASHINGTON, D. C. Nov. 29—Pastor C. T. Russell of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract society, Allegheny City, delivered two discourses to large audiences in the Columbia theater today. At 2:30 p.m. Pastor Russell's topic was "The Narrow Way —and Other Ways," and at 7:30 p.m., "The Great Consummation."

The text for the afternoon was from Matthew 7:14: "Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it." Pastor Russell said:

Our study of the chart of the ages on last Sunday, we trust, assists us in "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" so as to apply this text in its proper place. Our Lord uttered these words at the first advent, hence just at the close of the Jewish age and at the opening of the gospel age (pointing to the chart). We are not to expect that this narrow way will continue in the future indefinitely during the millennial age, etc. The way of righteousness is narrow at the present time because this gospel age is a part of "this present evil world," or dispensation, during which Satan is the prince or ruler. The millennial age belongs to the new

2H18

dispensation after the establishment of Christ's kingdom and the binding of Satan and the annulling of his blinding influence. In that glorious day the way of righteousness will not be narrow and difficult, but easy, and the way of unrighteousness will be hard, a difficult way; because all the influences then will be favorable to righteousness and contrary to sin, whereas now the general influences are favorable to sin and unfavorable to righteousness. It is this that makes the Christian way a narrow and difficult one.

CHRIST'S MISSION ON EARTH

Looking back we perceive that this narrow way to life did not exist in the Jewish age and previous ages. It may be a surprise even to Bible students to notice that there was no way of life at all previous to the coming of our Lord to be the redeemer and life-giver. To this thought agree the words of the apostle that "Christ brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Tim. 1:10) That is to say, that although God had implicitly promised a future life in the promise made to Abraham and in the various promises of restitution "spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets," nevertheless, he had not shown how it would be accomplished and by whom it

would be accomplished. But when the Lord Jesus died for the sins of the whole world it manifested the divine love and sympathy for the world; it showed how God could be just and yet be the justifier of all who would believe in Jesus and obey Him; it brought to light Jesus as the great seed of Abraham and God's gift of immortality to him and to the overcoming church, His bride; and it brought to light the future everlasting life opportunities to be granted to the world through the glorified church during the millennial age.

Since this subject is clearly seen but by few, let us pause to examine the testimony of scripture respecting any offer of life everlasting, either by a narrow way or by any other way, prior to our Lord's advent and his proclamation of the gospel.

Previously God's dealings had only been with Abraham and his seed, the Israelite. All others, as the apostle declares, were without God in the world — alien, strangers, foreigners from the commonwealth of Israel. (Eph. 2:12) Evidently then there was no way of life open to the world prior to the redemptive work of Christ. The law given to Israel did indeed give that nation a different path or course from the remainder of the world. It was a narrow way and they thought it to be a way of life, but, as the apostle explains, they found it to be a way of death. (Rom. 7:10) The apostle most distinctly declares that the law covenant justified none of them —conducted none of them to life everlasting. Hear Him, "The law made nothing perfect." (Heb. 7:19); "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight (Rom. 3:20), combating the Jewish notion that somehow or other the giving of the law to their nation justified them.

MUST OBEY THE LAW

The apostle points out that not he that receiveth a copy of the law nor he who hears the law is justified by it, but only he who obeys it — he who doeth the things required by the law. (Rom. 2:13) The apostle points out again that the difficulty lay not in the law given to Israel which was "just, holy, and good" (Rom. 7:12) the difficulty lay in the Jews themselves; they were like all other people of the world, fallen—sinners. Our Lord corroborated the apostle's statement that none of the Jews were justified by the law saying, "Did not Moses give you the law and yet none of you kept the law?" (John 7:19) The apostle Paul again declares, "A man is not justified by the works of the law for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," (Gal. 2:16) And again He says, "that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident." (Gal. 3:11) The sum of the whole matter is that while the Jews had a blessing in the way of divine instruction through the law, yet because unable to keep its requirements, they were specially condemned by it, and this special condemnation that was

on the Jews more than on the other nations of the world is in the scriptures called the curse of the law.”

Our Lord’s redemptive work was not only necessary to relieve the world of mankind from the incubus of original sin entailed through Adam, but additionally upon the nation of Israel for the cancellation of the special curse or sentence upon that nation through its failure to comply with the terms of the law covenant. Hence the apostle says of Christ, “He was made a curse for us” —the Jews. (Gal. 3:13)

The apostle explains that the giving to Israel of the law covenant with its typical sacrifices, “which could never take away sin,” was merely a foreshadowing of the better hopes built upon the better sacrifices of this gospel age. (Heb. 10:1) We trust that all present discern clearly, then, that the narrow way belongs exclusively to this gospel age, and not to any time previous nor to any time future. It began with our Lord Himself, who was the forerunner in this way, and who has invited the gospel church to walk in His steps — His steps of self-denial, of self-sacrifice.

NARROW WAY OF LIFE

As already intimated, this way is a sacrificial way, a narrow way, because of the evil and fallen conditions everywhere abounding. To walk with the Lord in holiness of will and so far as possible in holiness of life

2H19

means to be so different from humanity in general as to be thought peculiar, to be more or less shunned by the children of this world. It means more than negative opposition to the world, too; it means to take a positive stand for the Lord, for the truth of His word, for righteousness in general.

The whole world has been begotten once to life as children of Adam, but Adamic life having been corrupted and forfeited at its very fountain, the result is that the world is a dying world, physically, mentally and morally— all the natural tendencies being toward sin and death. This way or tendency of the world our Lord described as the broad road which leads to destruction —unless they are rescued from it by Him the result would eventually be destruction for all — not eternal torment, but destruction, as our Lord declared.

The way of the Lord in this present time is made narrow and difficult and hard to find because the Lord seeks only a very choice class at the present time — the little flock to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom. The self-sacrificing, nevertheless, in the present time, not only appeals to a small proportion of

those who enter it and who would run with patience in the race set before them in the gospel. It serves to develop in them faith, obedience, gentleness, love, and thus to “make them meet (fit) for the inheritance of the saints in light” —the kingdom inheritance — as joint heirs with Christ to bless the world of mankind. Col. 1:12

There is no other way of life open at the present time than this narrow one, hence it behooves all who name the name of Christ and affect to become members of His consecrated band to sit down and count the cost before making the consecration so that there may be no looking back after once they have put their hand to the plow. These are said to be begotten again — begotten not of the will of the flesh, not of man, but begotten of truth. (John 1:13; James 1:18). These who walk in the narrow way are scripturally called “new creatures in Christ Jesus.” (Second Corinthians 5:17)

A CHANGE OF NATURE

For them is provided in God’s plan a total change of nature, so that in the resurrection, instead of returning to their former estate or being perfected as human beings, they will be perfected as new creatures, as spirit beings. The resurrection of the overcomers of the church is described in First Corinthians 15: 42, 44. He declares respecting their death that they are sown animal bodies and respecting the resurrection that they are raised spiritual bodies; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in dishonor, raised in glory. It will thus be seen that the narrow way of this gospel age has attached to it exceeding great and precious promises that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature — spiritual nature.

As already intimated the very fact that the millennial age is provided in the divine plan —the very fact that Christ and his church associated with him as the seed of Abraham are to bless the world all the families of the earth during the millennium — the very fact that all this will be after Satan shall have been bound—implies that the way of life in the future will not be so narrow, so steep, so rugged, so difficult to find and so difficult to walk in as is the narrow way of this gospel age.

Respecting the way of life in the future — during the millennial age — the prophet expressly declares that it shall be a broad highway instead of a narrow way or a by-path.

Instead of being full of stumbling stones and difficulties and trials he declares that all the stumbling stones shall be gathered out, instead of having besetments from the adversary who goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour and from many ravenous beasts in human form. He declares that no lion shall be there or

any ravenous beasts, and that nothing shall injure those who seek to go upon that highway of holiness. Let us quote His words from that chapter which so graphically describes the blessings of the millennial age and which opens with the declaration: “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.”

THE WAY OF HOLINESS

The quotation reads, “And a highway shall be there, and a way, it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it: but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men though unwise, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isa. 35:8-10

All who in the narrow way have learned what it means to “fight the good fight” against the world, the flesh and the devil under present conditions and who additionally have attained a reasonable measure of growth in the knowledge and grace of the Lord, will be glad indeed to know that in the divine plan the world of mankind when called to human perfection —to “restitution of all things spoken by all the holy

2H20

prophets” —will find the way an easier one than do we who now are pressing along for the heavenly prize.

The way in which the world will be invited to walk toward God and toward holiness, the “highway” of holiness leading up to perfection of character, will be in many respects similar to the highway of holiness that was open to Adam and Eve before they sinned. Although they were perfect so far as organization was concerned and therefore perfect in good character so far as character is a matter of creation, nevertheless it was necessary that they should pass through trials and testings that would develop and prove their obedience to God and loyalty to principle. It was in this very testing that they failed and came under the sentence of death, and God’s provision through Christ is that they and all their children (except the elect) should have the opportunity of returning to full perfection of human nature and along a very similar path to that on which they originally fell.

The divine arrangement for our first parents in Eden was not a narrow way of sacrifice and painful dealings with the world, flesh and devil, but quite to the contrary. They were perfect and surrounded by everything necessary to

their comfort and prosperity, and the whole test, therefore, was respecting their loyalty and obedience to God and His regulations. The world similarly, during the millennial age, will be freed from battlings with the adversary—who will be bound, restrained—and freed from the besetments of the world now prevailing. They will still have the weaknesses of the flesh to contend with and to overcome and to get rid of, but they will have compensations along this line through the grace of Christ, the great Redeemer and Mediator whose grace will be sufficient for them.

RETURN OF THE REDEEMED

What joy it brings to our hearts to think of the wonderful provisions of the millennial kingdom, and the highway that shall be there for the return of all the redeemed of earth from the broad road in which they were going down to destruction, to the highway opened up through the merit of Him who so loved the world as to give Himself a ransom for all.

But now returning to the narrow way of this present time. It is this way that most interests all of the Lord's people here present. It is not for us to decide whether we would prefer human restitution with the world, requiring a period of one thousand years for perfecting, or whether we would choose to be begotten of the Spirit and have a shorter trial in the present life and experience the change in the resurrection. God has given us no choice in the matter during this age, only one class is called and that is the church, as the apostle, says, "Ye are all called in the one hope of your calling." It is for us to appreciate this calling, to see how great it is, that no other invitation that God has ever given or ever could give would be so great, so grand, so wonderful as this call to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord as the bride, the Lamb's wife.

We exhort you then, dear brethren, that in the language of the apostle we all lay aside every weight and every easily besetting sin and that we run with patience the race set before us—our heavenly race, the race for the spiritual prize of joint-heirship in the kingdom. So doing let us make our calling and election sure and realize that God is giving us now a knowledge of his future blessings for the world of mankind so that our hearts may rest the more confidently upon Him, that we may appreciate His character the better and love Him and serve Him the more fervently.

THE GREAT CONSUMMATION

Pastor Russell's evening discourse upon "The Great Consummation" was based upon this text: "Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord God of Hosts a

consummation, even determined upon the whole earth.”
Isaiah 28:22 He said:

By this time my audience is fully aware that contrary to Second Adventists' views and the views of Christians in general, I am not expecting that the end or consummation of the present dispensation will be in a literal fire that will reduce our earth to a cinder. On the contrary my hearers have noted our expectations and the scriptures on which we base them, that the end or harvest of the present gospel age will be a time for the reaping of the fruitage of this age—the gathering of the ripe wheat, the saints, into the garner, into the kingdom of glory and the symbolic burning of the symbolic tares and stubble preparatory to the ploughing and reaping of another age which will follow this one — the millennial age. When, therefore, we announce that according to our understanding of the teachings of the scriptures we are now living in the harvest time of the gospel age — in the great consummation mentioned in our text —the statement is not an absurd scarecrow to alarm the ignorant and the wicked, for we are fully persuaded of the truthfulness of the scriptural declaration, “None of the wicked shall understand.” (Dan. 12:10) The announcement that we are now living in the end or harvest time of the gospel age is, however, a message full of importance to the Lord's people —to all who profess to be members of spiritual Zion. To these it means that a crucial test is upon the church which will

2H21

fully separate the merely nominal Christians, the tare class from the genuine Christians, the wheat class of our Lord's parable. Matt. 13:24-30

THE LORD'S FIRST ADVENT

Our Lord's first advent was in the harvest time of the Jewish age more than 1,800 years ago. Then His message and that of His apostles served as a sickle of truth and as threshing instruments to separate in that professedly holy nation the Israelites indeed from others. In that harvest time our Lord represented Himself as the chief reaper, and the winnowing of the threshed wheat to separate it from the chaff of that nation was a part of the ministry of the Truth at that time. The result was the gathering of the Jewish wheat to a higher plane — from the house of servants into the house of sons. (John 1:12-13) Subsequently the chaff of that nation was burned, that is fiery trouble came upon them, which the apostle declares was “wrath to the uttermost upon this people. (I Thess. 2:16) The fire of trouble destroyed the national existence of the Jews, though it did not destroy them as a people.

The last of the prophets, John the Baptist, referring to Christ's work as a reaper of that age said, "His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge His threshing floor; He will gather His wheat into the garner [gospel favor], but burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" [the time of trouble which consumed the Jews nationally]. (Matt. 3:12) He referred to the same thing when he said at another time respecting the work and results of our Lord's ministry, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matt. 3:11) The Holy Spirit baptism came upon the Israelites indeed, the baptism of fire, of trouble, came upon the others—wrath to the uttermost." Of that trouble the Apostle Paul speaks saying, "What if God willing to show His wrath endured the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction." (Rom. 9:22) Our Lord speaks of the same saying of the coming trouble: "These be the days of vengeance that all things which are written may be fulfilled for there shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people." Luke 21:22, 23

CHRISTENDOM THE PARALLEL TO JUDEA

In our published writings, familiar to many of you, we have not only set forth the prophetic teachings, which to us clearly indicate that we are now living in the harvest time of the gospel age, but, additionally, we have shown that the Jewish age was a prototype of the gospel age. Hence the harvest of the Jewish age gives us clear conceptions of what may be expected in the harvest time of the gospel age. Here as there we must expect the gathering of the wheat into the garner; we must expect the burning of the tares, as in the end of the Jewish age there was a burning of the chaff, for thus the Lord's parable relating to the present age explains the matter. But we are today on a higher plane —on the plane of the spirit instead of on the plane of the flesh, on the plane of sons instead of on the plane of servants, on the plane of spiritual Israelites instead of on the plane of natural Israelites:

hence we must expect the gathering into the barn due at the end of this age to signify the gathering of the elect church to the Lord at his second advent in power and great glory —the consummation of the long-promised first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality —the divine nature.

As the wheat and the tares represent only those who profess to be God's people, God's church, this parable does not relate to the world in general, and consequently the burning of the tares pictures rather the troubles and fiery trials coming upon professed but not real Christians rather than troubles coming upon the heathen world. For instance, it is not the field (the "world") that is to be burned, but the tares. Nevertheless, nominal Christendom of today occupies so prominent a place in

the forefront of the world that the great disturbances coming upon it must of necessity have world wide influence. Moreover, as the chart of the ages illustrates, the harvest of this age and the end of this evil world or dispensation terminate together. This implies that there is to be at the present time not merely a reckoning with spiritual Israel, as there was a reckoning with natural Israel eighteen hundred years ago, but that at the same time that the reckoning shall come with spiritual Israel the consummation or reckoning time will come with the whole world of mankind. Here evil in every form is to be overthrown; the great adversary, Satan, is to be bound that he shall deceive the nations no more, that the light of the truth may in due time shine into the whole world and scatter its darkness and give a correct knowledge of the divine character and plan.

FINAL DEFEAT OF SATAN

The Scriptures intimate that the prince of this world will not suffer his house or institutions to be broken up without a contest. One of our Lord's parables thus illustrates the matter, that if the master of the present dispensation knew at what hour he would come as a thief unknown to the world to overthrow present institutions built upon selfishness—financial, ecclesiastical and social the prince of this world would resist and seek to maintain control and possession. (Matt. 22:43) This is not to be understood to signify that Satan could really resist the Almighty power when the due time shall have come for his overthrow and

2H22

binding, when Emanuel shall "take unto Himself his great power and reign" as the representative of Jehovah. (Rev. 11:17) Rather, it gives us the suggestion, elsewhere set forth, that God's plan in dealing with Satan and present evil institutions is not so much to overpower them and crush them as to permit their selfishness to wreck them.

On every hand we see these disintegrating forces at work. We see labor controlled by the spirit of selfishness, bent upon obtaining a larger share of this world's goods and growing daily more impatient of delay. We see capital selfishly entrenching itself in huge combinations behind laws which were doubtless equitable enough in their day, but which do not meet all the new conditions of the wonderful period in which we are living, which in the Scriptures is called "the time of the end" and the "day of God's preparations" —making ready for millennium. (Dan. 12:4,9; Nahum 2:3) We see selfishness in business, tariff wars which bid fair to lead to bloody wars in various directions. We see the real and nominal Christians, wheat and tares, are more or less

involved on both sides of this question of selfishness and strife; we see that all these things are rapidly tending toward the great time of trouble with which this age and this present evil dispensation shall end — the close of the night of weeping preparatory to the millennial morning of joy. We note through all the prophecies ominous words respecting the great time of trouble this will be when the Lord shall call for judgment, for justice to be meted out, when the hour of His judgment shall come, and when the various forces, already well prepared, shall clash in selfish fury.

A TIME OF STRIFE

The prophet Daniel describes this time and marks its date at the standing up of the great prince. He declares that it shall be a “time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” The trouble with which the Jewish age closed was an awful trouble, a foreshadowing of the coming trouble but not so great, neither so widely extended. The trouble of the Reign of Terror in the French revolution was an awful one, but not so great as this time of trouble that is coming, respecting which one of the prophets declares there shall be no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in, to him that buyeth nor to him that selleth, because every man’s hand is against his neighbor’s. (Ezek. 8:10) The strife of nations and of parties, of unions and of combinations, will extend to the individuals of the world and produce an individual conflict and strife. Our Lord Jesus the great Prophet quoted approvingly Daniel’s prophecy about this great time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, and our Lord adds the consoling words, “Nor ever shall be.” (Matt. 24:21) We are glad that this time of trouble will practically end the trouble of this world; that there never will be such again; that on the ashes of present institutions the Lord Himself will rear a kingdom of righteousness which shall establish justice throughout the world on a basis not of selfishness, but of love and justice.

We are aware that our words seem like idle tales to many especially to the worldly wise, the higher critics and evolutionists. The apostle Peter more than eighteen centuries ago declared the scoffing unbelief that might be expected at this present time. Speaking of those who should be interested in the second coming of the Lord and the consummation of this age, he declares that, instead of following the Scriptures and the Scriptural hopes, they will be following the ungodly, higher critical desires of their own worldly minds, and he represents them as saying, “Where is the promise of His presence?” and declares that from their standpoint all things continue as they were from the beginning of the world — that they see no reason for expecting a harvest and a change of dispensation. (2 Pet. 2:4) It is not our province, dear friends, to give ears or eyes to any; we merely call to the attention of those who have the hearing ear and the understanding heart the things which

the word of God clearly sets forth as being now due of accomplishment.

BE NOT MOCKERS

Our text implies that many who hear the present message will be inclined to disregard it, and the prophet warns such, saying: "Be ye not mockers;" do not scoff at this matter, lest your bands be made strong; lest the blindness and ignorance and misunderstanding of the divine plan, so general in the world today, shall bind you hand and foot and hinder you from entering into the joys of the Lord, from the understanding of His plan, and hinder you also from making the preparation of heart necessary to secure to you a place in the kingdom.

In the context the prophet points out the lessons of husbandry that there is one preparation of the soil for one kind of grain, another preparation for another kind of grain, and that there is one way of reaping and threshing one kind of grain and another way of handling another kind; and furthermore he points out that the husbandman does not spend all of his time in one part of the great work, but step by step the matter proceeds to the completion — the gathering of the crop. Thus the Lord gives a lesson to His people. We are to expect in the operations of grace plowing, harrowing, seed-sowing, watering and weeding,

2H23

ripening and harvesting. And we are to expect different crops — as, for instance, there was one crop dealt with during the Jewish age and a harvest in the end of that age, and another crop has been dealt with and will be dealt with during this gospel age and will be harvested in the end of this age, and still a different crop during the millennial age and harvested at its close. He who has plain lessons from nature and forgets to apply them under the Lord's direction in studying the operations of the divine arrangements will remain in measurable ignorance of the divine plan.

Who can intelligently study the Scriptural record of God's dealings with the nation of Israel and to perceive the deep plowing of that people in their Egyptian bondage, the harrowing of that people in their wilderness experiences, the sowing among them of the law, the weeding and culture given them as a people throughout their age and the harvesting that came in the end of that age. And what Israelite, indeed does not know something of the plowshare of sorrow and of trouble in his own heart experiences which first prepared him to become a true disciple of the Lord?

EVIDENCES OF DIVINE ORDER

Surely all Israelites, indeed, can recognize the harrowing experiences which tended to make their hearts ready for the truth; which cannot see when and where the word of Truth was planted in their minds, their hearts; which cannot see how it was first the shoot, then the stalk, then the ripened grain; which cannot realize that trying experiences were necessary to take away the weeds which would have choked them as the Lord's true wheat and made them unfaithful? Which of the true Israelites does not long for the harvesting time, when all the true wheat shall be gathered to the plane of spiritual perfection and glory —when they shall be forever with the Lord and co-laborers with Him in the glory time that shall follow.

The great time of trouble with which this present evil dispensation closes is the plowshare of trouble which God will use in breaking up the fallow ground of the whole world to prepare it for the great planting of the restitution times, when the whole world of mankind shall have the care of the great superintendent, who, we are assured, will yet see of the fruits of the travail of His soul and be abundantly satisfied. This thought that the coming trouble will bring righteousness to the world is abundantly borne out by the statement of the Scripture that “when the judgments of the Lord are abroad the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness” (Isaiah 26:9)

Now, dear friends, if such a harvesting as we have noted is progressing, how does it find you and me? Does it find us thoroughly loyal to the Lord and to the principles of righteousness which represent His government, or does it find us living in a cold or lukewarm condition, striving to walk with the Lord and to walk with the world at the same time, striving to serve God and to serve Mammon at the same time? We are not to expect that that gathering of the parable of the wheat will mean that at the present time the Lord will take hold forcibly upon those who are his and compel them to enter the garner; rather we are to expect here a procedure somewhat similar to that which took place at the first advent. We are to expect, then, that the gospel of the kingdom will be announced, and that all the Israelites indeed will be glad to hear the joyful news. We are to expect that it will be an attraction for such, that it will attract them away from the errors and falsehoods which to a greater or lesser degree have been blinding all, not only during the dark ages, but since. We expect that it would attract all of this class from every denomination not to a new denomination, but to a closer heart-fellowship with the Lord Himself—that their union should not be a sectarian one, but a heart-union with the Lord and with all of like precious faith in Him and in His Word.

THE GATE OF GOD

The scriptures represent that in the end of the age the three will be so abundant as to practically overwhelm the wheat and obscure it; and this whole class, wheat and tares, throughout the whole spiritual world called Christendom and divided into hundreds of sects and parties, teaching more or less of divine truth and more or less of human tradition, is now to be dealt with Babylon. The Lord applies to the whole mass the name Babylon. The name has a double significance: primarily it means the gate of god — the gateway by which the world of mankind might pass from the world and sin to God and to righteousness and eventually have a share in the Lord's resurrection; but through the operation of Satan and inherent selfishness much of the good of Babylon became beclouded and much of it became replaced with error, so that today the name Babylon as applied to Christian people means not a gateway to God, but a gateway to confusion, mixture.

We have not the time, and this is not the place, to enter into an elaborate discussion of this subject, and to set before you the scriptural evidences that we have reached the place where the Lord declares Babylon's day of favor ended and her day of retribution began. Looking back to the Jewish age and its harvest we can know the particular moment when the Lord said to nominal Israel, "Your house is left unto you desolate," and so we can trace to the year 1878 the parallel of this —the Lord's rejection of

2H24

Babylon and the declaration that Christendom as a whole is rejected from any longer being recognized as His.

Do you ask, then, what the Lord would expect His true people to do today? We answer that for our day there is a particular message of the Lord, and that in the same breath that it declares that Babylon is fallen, is fallen; from divine favor, rejected as fleshly Israel was rejected and for similar reasons, there comes additionally the message, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev.18:3)

THE TEST OF TRUTH

Let it be distinctly noticed that these words recognize that the Lord's people have been in Babylon, and that they were not considered blameworthy for being there until the appointed time — until her rejection, until their eyes being opened they perceived wherein she had erred and misled them away from the Lord and the beauty of His word and plan into doctrines of devils, which wholly misrepresent the divine character and plan. These words apply not to those who see nothing of what

we see, who have no ears to hear the present message. They apply not to those who consider the doctrines of the nominal churches thoroughly satisfactory and scriptural. They apply merely to those who have the hearing ear and the discerning heart to know the difference between the voice of the true shepherd and the voice of strangers, to know the difference between the true gospel of God's dear Son, redemption through His blood, from the gospel of higher criticism and evolution; they are for those who can discern to some extent at least between the doctrines of devils, which misrepresent the divine plan, and the doctrine of redemption, ransom and restitution, which the word of God sets forth, He that hath an ear let him hear. He that hath not an ear for the truth, and no eye to discern the beauty of the divine plan in contrast with the horrible confusion of sectarianism, is not addressed by these words, but should stay in Babylon and be bound more and more tightly into her various bundles for the great day of trouble which is rapidly approaching.

As the Lord left a period of time in the end of the Jewish age between the utter rejection of that people and the culmination of the time of trouble and wrath upon them, so here He has left a space of time in which His people are to come out of her before she shall be utterly swallowed up as a great millstone cast into the sea. Those who are truly the Lord's people, yet refuse to abandon the false systems and their false teachings, make themselves proper subjects for a share in the plagues that are coming upon Babylon, because knowing her errors and blasphemies against the divine character they become participants in those blasphemies to a larger extent even than do many of the tares who constitute Babylon, and who might be said to know no better because they do not truly know the Lord.

1904

The Pittsburgh Gazette, January 11, 1904

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES NEARLY RUN OUT

**Prophetic Testimonies to Show the
Approach of the Millennium**

Pastor Charles T. Russell gave his second chart talk in the Allegheny Carnegie Music hall yesterday afternoon. His theme was "The Times of the Gentiles Nearly Run Out," in which he took up prophetic testimonies to show

that the millennium is near. About 800 persons heard Mr. Russell's discourse, which was as follows:

I take for my text our Lord's words: 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.' (Luke 21:24)

These words were a part of our Lord's great prophecy to His apostles, covering the period from His death to His second advent. He had just declared to them the coming trouble upon the Jewish nation,

2H25

which would result in its complete overthrow, and in the words of our text He intimated that the nation, the Holy Land its capital, Jerusalem, would be under the dominion of others for a considerable period of time until a certain period of Gentile domination which had been foretold should be accomplished or fulfilled.

Before our Lord's death, before the rejection of Israel from being the Lord's peculiar people, before the breaking down of the "middle wall of partition" (Eph. 2:14), the whole world was divided into two classes, namely, Israelites, or God's covenanted people, and Gentiles, or those who were not in covenant relationship with God. Thus the term Gentile included not only barbarians, but also the most civilized peoples of the world outside of Israel. With the beginning of the gospel dispensation another class was introduced, namely, spiritual Israelites—God's people under the new covenant arrangement.

DIVIDED INTO THREE CLASSES

Now, therefore, the world may be divided into these three classes first, the Jews (or such of them as maintain their original covenant relationship with God and have not departed into unbelief, and for whom there is still reserved a share in the Lord's provision for the future) (Rom. 11:26-29); second, spiritual Israelites (not all who are called Christians, but all true believers in the Lord, who have entered into covenant relationship with Him through Christ the consecrated, "Israelites, indeed") third, the remainder of mankind, whatever their nationality, station, color or sex, are all, from the divine standpoint, "Gentiles—outside of the special covenants and promise of the Lord which pertain to the present time; but not outside of the blessings which the Lord designs to shower upon the world during the millennial reign of Christ, during the "times of restitution of all things" which He has spoken.

It is well that we get this glorious view of the matter well before our minds, because otherwise we are apt to become confused as we attempt to study His Word, which clearly

distinguishes the consecrated believers, both Jews and Christians, from the remainder of the world, however educated, talented, gentle or benevolent some of the latter may be. They are still “Gentiles” if they have not positively and thoroughly united with the Lord Jesus as members of His consecrated church, “His body.” It will be seen from this definition that the common terms Christendom, Christian nations, etc., are misnomers, calculated to mislead the mind, because really the majority of people in all these so-called Christian nations are “Gentiles” according to this, the divine, standpoint—because not as yet vitally related to the Lord. According to this standard, it will be perceived that quite a large proportion of the membership of the various sects of Christendom are really “Gentiles,” since only a small proportion of them make any pretense to a full consecration to the Lord and vital union with Him.

JERUSALEM UNDER GENTILE DOMINION

Noticing carefully the wording of our text, we find that the Lord does not say that the Jews were about to come under Gentile dominion; to have so declared would not have been the truth. As a matter of fact, the Jews had no positive government of their own for centuries before the Lord’s advent. They lost their national independence when Nebuchadnezzar, the world’s first conqueror, overthrew their government, subjected them and took them prisoners into Chaldea. Later, when the kingdom of Medo-Persia succeeded to universal empire, and King Cyrus under divine direction permitted the return of the Jewish people to their own land, he did not restore to them their national liberty or self-control. They became a subject nation, and so continued. When Alexander the Great, as the representative of the Grecian empire, became the world’s emperor, he succeeded to the power of the Medes and Persians, and the land of Israel became vassal to him. And so, in turn, when the Romans became the rulers of the world, Greece and all its possessions passed under Roman control, and in no sense regained the national liberty taken from them by Nebuchadnezzar. So, then, in our Lord’s day Israel was dominated by the Romans. We remember the record in Luke 2:1, that it was about the time of our Lord’s birth that Caesar Augustus sent forth a decree that the whole world should be taxed. Israel as one of the subject nations of Rome, was under this tax.

In view of these facts of history, our Lord’s words are seen to signify that this condition of things would continue for a time — that Israel would continue to be subject to the Gentile kingdoms. His disciples, in harmony with his teachings, had been expecting the establishment of the kingdom of God. Not understanding, they had anticipated that the kingdom would probably be established in their day and asked our Lord,

“Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6) The reply was, “It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father hath put in His own power.” It was best that they should not clearly, distinctly know the particulars respecting the future, yet in this prophecy our Lord, for their benefit but especially for our benefit, because we are living in the close of this gospel age has given a hint or suggestion in our text which is interesting to us, and was intended so to be. His words not only show that the

2H26

Gentiles would continue to hold sway for a time, but clearly show also that the time of their domination of the land of Israel is limited, fixed in the divine arrangement, and the statement “until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” gives a clear intimation that these times or years of Gentile rule were foretold.

DAWNING OF A NEW EPOCH

We must assume that the prophecies written aforesaid for our admonition are to be understood as they become due — though it evidently was not the Lord’s intention that they should be understood much before the time of their fulfillment. It was so at the Lord’s first advent. Respecting the second advent and the events of the world connected therewith, there is a great deal said in the Scriptures—in both the Old and New Testaments; and the apostle intimates that when the due time shall come for understanding the matter, the Lord’s faithful, earnest, devoted, truth-seeking people will be rewarded — that they will not be left in darkness. The apostle, in speaking of the great time of trouble which will introduce the millennial kingdom, declares that it will come “upon the whole world as a thief and as a snare;” but, addressing the church, the consecrated, the spiritual Israelites, he says, “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of the light, and children of the day.” 1 Thess. 5:4,5

The dawn of the new day — the dawn of the millennium is now breaking over the world. The majority of men are so engrossed with earthly things — financial matters, sectarian matters, worldly philosophies, etc., and so choked either with the superstitions of the dark ages or with pride of their own attainments in the present, that they are giving no attention to the clear evidences that a new epoch is dawning upon the world. The laboring classes, however, are waking up, and having little of wealth or luxury or science or religion to interest them, they are speculating respecting the morning that they perceive is coming. Some of them are awe-stricken and fear-stricken; others are wild in their speculations respecting the prospects and possibilities of the future. They need trained

minds and benevolent hearts to direct them and prepare them for the glorious prosperity of the new era. But those who they most respect and trust, and who are in the places of authority, are blind to the changing situation and engrossed selfishly in cornering the advantages falling within their reach at this time. Misled, some by the superstitions of the past and others by the philosophies of this world, these teachers, leaders of the world, neglect entirely the divine revelation and see not the divine purposes connected with this new epoch that is dawning. Only the “Israelites indeed” are to clearly see and to understand the situation —nor is it possible for them to make these things known except to such as are “Israelites indeed,” and who, therefore, having the hearing ears.

A PROPHETIC FOREVIEW

As children of the light, as the Lord’s consecrated people, let us not look to philosophies of the present day but to the Lord for wisdom respecting the new epoch. Neither let us look to the creeds and teachers of the dark ages. Let us look to the Lord. Let us look into His word for an explanation of the wonderful changes which we perceive all about us today — the explanation of the social, political, financial and religious unrest which bespeaks the coming of what the Scriptures term a “time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” Let us use the key which our Lord gave us in our text. Let us seek to know what he meant by the “times of the Gentiles” and when they will be “fulfilled.” If the due time for these matters to be understood has not yet come, we will at least be manifesting to our heavenly Father our interest in the great plan which he is working out, and will be none the worse for the time spent in seeking an understanding of His word. If the due time for understanding has come, our search will be rewarded —we will not be any longer in darkness, but will know whatever is now due to be understood respecting the divine times and seasons, as they relate to the kingdoms of this world and the establishment on their ruins of the kingdom of God’s dear Son, which shall rule and bless all the families of the earth.

We turn to the Old Testament Scriptures to which our Lord referred. In the book of Daniel we find recorded dream pictures of the course of this world’s history. The first of these is recorded in Daniel 2:28-45. This is Daniel’s narration to King Nebuchadnezzar of the latter’s dream and of the divinely inspired interpretation of its meaning. In introducing the matter Daniel says: “There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and who hath made known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.” Daniel then rehearsed what the king had previously dreamed and forgotten, the vision of a great image whose head was gold, whose breast and arms were silver, his belly was of brass, his

legs were of iron and his feet were of iron and clay mixed. In the vision the king had seen this great image and then had witnessed its destruction, for a stone came out of the mountains without human cutting and smote the image upon the feet, as a result of which smiting the entire image became as chaff, which the wind blew away.

THE DREAM PROPHETICALLY EXPLAINED

Daniel proceeded to give the king the interpretation of this dream which the Lord had provided; namely, that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was represented in the head of gold of the image. It was the first universal empire of earth. The breast and arms of silver represented the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, which succeeded that of Nebuchadnezzar; the brass belly represented the kingdom of Grecia, which overthrew and succeeded the Medo-Persian empire; the legs of iron represented the Roman empire, which overthrew the Grecians; and the feet and 10 toes, which mingled the iron and the clay, represented the extension of the Roman empire to our day—the iron still representing the civil government of the Roman type, and the clay representing the pseudo-religious element of present-day government, in which civil and religious power mingled and combined. The stone taken from the mountain without human hands represents the true church of Christ, of which the clay in the feet of the image is but an imitation, having the form and color of stone, but not its power and strength. The church has been God's kingdom ever since its establishment at Pentecost, and has been in process of development, but it has been in the embryo condition, separated distinctly from earthly government and power and authority—“a subject to the powers that be.” But the vision shows that the time is coming when this kingdom of God will smite the earthly kingdom — secular and pseudo-religious. The result will be the utter destruction of these earthly governments.

Let not this suggest for a moment that we are preaching anarchy, or endeavoring to induce the Lord's consecrated people to attempt the overthrow of the kingdom of this world. To our understanding the kingdom which is to do the smiting is the spiritual kingdom—beyond the veil, the Lord of glory and His resurrected church with Him and like Him. The consecrated ones on this side the veil may see in advance of others what is coming, because of the enlightenment through the word, but they have no commission and no desire of heart to battle with carnal weapons, to assume to take possession of earthly governments. On the contrary, they are all children of peace — peaceable and peacemakers — gentle, kind, merciful, loving, “doing good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially unto the household of faith.”

A DAY OF VENGEANCE

The prophecy pictures, nevertheless, what will actually transpire. The Lord Jesus at the appropriate time will take unto Himself His great power and begin His reign — a reign of righteousness which the world will not see, neither comprehend, until it shall have broken in pieces the kingdoms of this world as a potter's vessel under the rule of the "iron rod" of Justice. (Rev. 2:27) While it is now the mission of the Lord's people in the flesh to make known the good tidings of the Lord's truth and grace, and as ambassadors of God to urge upon all the acceptance of these, it is now the due time also for them to announce what would not have been true at an earlier time, namely, "The day of vengeance of our Lord, the day of recompense." This time of trouble coming upon the world, which will apparently and actually come through the breaking loose of human passions, will be fully under the control of the spiritual invisible kingdom forces, which have now assumed control of the affairs of this world. To the worldly things may appear to continue as they have been from the foundation of the world (Second Peter 3:4), but it is in appearance only. Actually the change of dispensation is due, the divine forces are in control and it is a part of the divine program to permit the wrath of man to work out a share in the judgments of the "day of wrath." Thank God! this day of wrath is not a time of future roastings in eternal torment, but it will be found bad enough a present time of trouble in the close of this age, in which there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth a time of trouble referred to by the apostle when he says, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the mercies that shall come upon you.

But look again at the prophetic dream and its prophetic interpretation; and see a more glorious condition to follow. The stone which smote the image became exceeding great and filled the whole earth. This signifies that God's kingdom shall become worldwide. It means the fulfillment of that part of the Lord's prayer which says, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven" —it means the establishment of the millennial kingdom and the blessing of all the families of the earth.

ANOTHER PROPHETIC PICTURE

In the picture already considered, earthly dominions are represented from the standpoint — as great, grand, colossal, but when God would give a picture of the same Gentile kingdoms of His servant Daniel, he pictured them differently —namely as terrible, ye terrible, beastly governments, killing and devouring one another. Just so it is today. Some read with wonder and admiration the history of the doings of Alexander the Great, his armies, his battles, the number of killed and wounded and prisoners; they read of the wars connected with the Roman conquest

of the world, and of Napoleon and his ambitious attempt to establish the fifth monarchy in the world, contrary to the prophetic picture of the divine arrangement. Another reads these same bloodcurdling stories with horror, thinking of the wounds, the sufferings, the destruction of life, and the breaking of the hearts of the dear ones who loved them.

This picture given to Daniel is recorded in Daniel, seventh chapter. Here the same Gentile kingdoms are illustrated by beasts instead of by metals; Babylon is symbolized by a lion, Medo-Persia by a bear, Greece by a leopard and Rome by a great and terrible beast — stronger and more ferocious than any in nature of which Daniel had knowledge. This we have illustrated in the chart. This last beast in the vision was peculiar in every respect, and in various ways it corresponds to the beast which the Apostle John saw centuries later, as recorded in the book of Revelation, having seven heads and 10 horns. The 10 horns represented 10 powers or 10 divisions of the beast's power, and are recognizable in the divisions of the Roman empire as they exist and have existed in Europe for centuries. The 10 horns on this last beast, we notice, correspond exactly with the 10 toes of the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

The prophet's attention was drawn especially to this last beast which represents the Roman empires more powerful than any of its predecessors; and he noted several of its peculiarities among the horns, one of which he declared had a mouth and eyes, and looked more stout than his fellows, three of whom were plucked up in his interest.

INTERPRETATION OF COMMENTATORS

So far as we are aware, all Protestants and commentators from Luther down interpret this beast to be the Roman empire, and this particular horn to mean the papal hierarchy. The eyes represent the wisdom of papacy, the crowns represent the widespread authority exercised by it —widespread today, but still more widespread proportionately during the dark ages. In the dream the prophet saw that this particular horn had a mouth which "spake great things," and that this horn "made war with the saints and prevailed against them until the ancient of days interposed his judgment."

To our understanding this judgment of the ancient of days upon that horn or papal power was expressed through Napoleon Bonaparte, who broke the spell of papal influence over Europe, and, fearlessly taking the pope a prisoner to France, showed that the great boastings of power in heaven, on earth and in purgatory were merely bombast. Nevertheless, the prophet declares that even after the judgment had set he

heard the voice of great words which the horn spake. And so we find that it was as late as the year 1870 that the boastful words of papal infallibility were pronounced by the head of this horn, shorn, however, of its power to persecute those who differed.

The prophet says that he watched still further the proceedings and beheld until the beast was slain and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame. (Verses 9, 12). The fulfillment of this last part is still future, but we believe very near. The Roman beast still lives, the papal horn with the other horns or divisions of the power still have influence and control in the world, but the remainder of the prophecy will be fulfilled as surely as the previous parts were. The other beasts lost their dominion, but prolonged their lives, but this beast will not only lose his dominion, but at the same time will lose his life; for the Roman power will not be transferred but destroyed. This picture of the destruction of the last of the great beast governments of the earth is about to be fulfilled, and the burning flame with which it will be destroyed fitly symbolizes the great time of trouble with which this present age is to end, according to all the statements of scripture.

KINGDOM OF GOD'S DEAR SON

Now for the more glorious vision: What is to supersede these beast governments? The prophet answers in accord with all the testimonies of scripture, saying, "I saw in the night visions, and beheld one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before Him. And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom which shall not be destroyed." This is Messiah's kingdom, for which God's people have been praying these many centuries, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. His dominion of the world will not be of the beastly kind, but will be as much higher than this as man is higher than the brute beasts. It will be the kingdom of God's dear Son, the kingdom which is to rule the world, not for the purpose of destruction (vs. 14), nor for personal aggrandizement, but for the specific purpose of uplifting the entire human family, which this same one, as the man Christ Jesus, purchased with His own precious blood.

Continuing his description of the kingdom of God (vs. 27), Daniel says, "And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high. His kingdom is an everlasting

kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.” What a glorious prospect is here held before us! Is it any wonder that all the prophets and the apostles looked forward to this glorious kingdom, of which our Lord also spoke repeatedly, not only in His parables but also after His resurrection and ascension, when speaking to His people through his servant John in the symbols of Revelations. “Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.” “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my father in his throne.” In the last quotations from the prophet Daniel he mentions particularly the church as associated with Christ in the kingdom under the whole heaven given, to the people of saints of the most high.

THE FACTS OF HISTORY CORROBORATE

Now, dear friends, we have had the prophetic picture of the Gentile kingdoms, and history corroborates this picture down to the present time. These are the Gentile kingdoms whose times God has before indicated: so to speak a lease of power had been granted them, and God’s kingdom could not come until these kingdoms should have run their courses —until their lease of power expires. It is not yet expired, evidently, for this last beast has still its influence and still speaks great swelling words, although unable to persecute the saints since its ‘judgment’ in 1799, when its persecuting power was taken away.

This fourth beast of Daniel all Protestant expositors agree is the same symbolized in Revelations. There in chapter 11, the power of the peculiar or papal horn is shown to be 3½ times or years—1,260 days, 42 months. This time has been fulfilled as symbolic time, each day a year. Papacy as one of the Gentile powers ruled the world for 1,260 years from 538 A. D. to 1799 A. D. This fulfillment of three and a half times clearly shows that the full seven times of the Gentiles will be 2,520 years.

Let me call your attention to the fact that there was a particular time at which God recognized these Gentile governments, and a particular time when His recognition of them as lessons of the dominion of the world will expire. This is shown in both the visions referred to. Both visions show the beginning of Gentile times and lease of power in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, and both show the termination of this power down here somewhere, a little ahead of our day. Now in proportion as we are interested in the heavenly father’s plan, and in these details of it which he has furnished us, we will be anxious to know all that He is willing to let us know respecting these matters.

We will state what we shall endeavor to prove, so that you may follow each step of the argument and demonstration. We expect to show that the “Gentile times” referred to by our Lord in our text are seven times, or seven years, not literal years of course —symbolic years. A symbolic year in scripture usage consists of 360 days and each symbolic day represents one year in actual time — “a day for a year.” Thus each “time” or year represents 360 years, and seven times would represent 360×7 —namely, 2,520 years. This period we understand to be the full measure of the permission of Gentile nations to rule over the Jews and the world in general. We expect to show just where those 2,520 years began, and just where they will end, namely, A..D. 1915.

WHOLE FABRIC WILL CRUMBLE

By that time we believe that the great time of trouble will have crushed the life out of the present representatives of Roman power, political and ecclesiastical, as represented in the fourth beast and his horn, including the peculiar horn that spoke the great, swelling words. Or, as represented in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, by that time the force of the spiritual kingdom of God will have been exercised upon the feet representatives of the great image of Gentile power, and the whole fabric will have crumbled to pieces. By that time, therefore, we hope that the spiritual kingdom will have been fully inaugurated, and that very shortly after that great trouble that people of the earth —humbled to the dust by the failure of the grandest attainments of civilization under the law of selfishness —will be glad to hearken to him who speaketh from heaven. The scriptures show that the blessings of the millennial kingdom after the time of trouble will be first manifested toward the Jews who will be responsive, and who at the time will recognize the hand of the Lord in the world’s affairs. The prophet represents them as mourning for the Lord Jesus as for an only son, and declares that at that time “the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and of supplication, and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced.”

After Israel’s acceptance of the kingdom, and the beginning of blessings to them through it, the prophet tells us that “Many peoples will go and say, Let us go to the mountain of the Lord’s house; He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For the law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the glorified spiritual church, The Christ), and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the earthly representatives of the heavenly kingdom.)”—Isa. 2:8

Now follow me carefully, gaining all the assistance you can from the chart. You can review what I am now saying at your leisure at your homes, for many of you

2H30

have the second volume of Millennial Dawn in which these matters are presented. Isa. 2:3

DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS

Nebuchadnezzar's government was in existence a considerable time before this lease of universal power came to it. Israel was recognized of the Lord as His kingdom — typical of the coming kingdom — so that of David it was said that he sat upon the throne of the Lord, and of Solomon it was said that he sat upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord in the room of his father David, and the descendants of David continued on the throne at Jerusalem until the days of Zedekiah, their last king. It was in Zedekiah's day that Nebuchadnezzar came with his army and took him and his nobles and princes, etc., into captivity. There the earthly kingdom of God, the typical kingdom, ceased forever, as is clearly shown by the words of the prophet to Zedekiah, as follows: "O, thou profane and wicked prince, whose time is come that iniquity should have an end, remove the diadem, take off the crown. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it — until He come whose right it is, and I will give it unto Him." (Ezek. 21:25-27)

It is this interregnum — this period between the taking off the diadem of the typical king and the establishing of Messiah's kingdom — that is given to the Gentiles. During this period one people after another, with one government after another, and one religion after another, have tried what they could do in the way of bringing rule and order to the world. Not in every respect have these earthly governments been worthy of condemnation; but, taken as a whole, none of the Lord's people would be satisfied with any of them as they appear to us, and as they appeared as a whole to Daniel — more or less ferocious and beastly — surely far from what we are hoping God's kingdom will prove to be when it shall be established. The Lord has thus been giving the world during the seven times of the Gentiles an opportunity to see what men can do for themselves, and when the end of the highest attainment shall be demonstrated to be trouble, confusion and anarchy, the world will become heartsick with its own failure, and, as the prophet has declared, the Lord's kingdom shall be hailed as the "desire of all nations." (Haggai 2:7)

TIMES DEFINITELY STATED

We might assume the Gentile times to be seven times. When we find that they would fit so well to all the circumstances and conditions, we might feel tolerably sure that this complete number had been applied in the divine arrangement. But we are not left to guesswork; the times are finitely stated in two ways:

First, Nebuchadnezzar had another dream, in which he saw a great tree and heard a proclamation made against it that it should be cut down, yet that the root should be preserved. Daniel interpreted this dream to represent the overthrow of King Nebuchadnezzar himself, and that the declaration that seven times should pass over him signified that he should dwell as a beast of the earth for seven years. The record of the prophet is that the matter was so fulfilled. But at the end of the seven years Nebuchadnezzar's reason returned to him, as we read, "At the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned unto me, and I praised the Most High and honored Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom from generation to generation." (Dan. 4:34) Here we believe was the picture or type of man's experience during the period of the great image of which man was the head. And we rejoice to think that at the conclusion of the symbolic "seven times" (A..D. 1915) mankind will return to a reasonable and proper view of the Almighty and of their responsibility to Him, as did Nebuchadnezzar, the representative, in his experiences.

It will be noticed from our text that Israel was particularly identified with these times of the Gentiles — trodden down by them for these seven times. Turning to Leviticus, we find recorded blessings and cursings of an earthly temporal character. If Israel would obey God faithfully, they would be blessed above other nations; if not, certain evils would befall them. The conclusion is stated thus: "And I will walk among you and be your God, and ye shall be My people . . . but if ye will not hearken unto Me, and will not do all these commandments... I will set My face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies; they that hate you shall reign over you . . . And ye shall sow your seed in vain; for your enemies shall eat it . . . and if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, than I will punish you seven times more (further, or additional to their previous chastisements) for your sins." (Lev. 26:17, 18, 24, 28)

This threat of "seven times" of punishment is mentioned three times. The various punishments previously mentioned evidently referred to the several captivities of the Israelites to the Assyrians, the Moabites, the Midianites, the Philistines, etc. During all of these God's care continued over them, and when they cried unto Him, He heard them and answered and delivered them from their enemies. (Judg. 3:9-15) These chastisements having failed, He applied the threatened "seven times." Removing the crown permanently, Israel as well as the world was subject to

bestly powers for the seven times of the Gentiles. Thus it befell them, according to God's warning, "If ye will not for all this (previous chastisement) hearken unto Me, then I will punish you seven times."

SEVEN TIMES OF PUNISHMENT

We find, then, that the seven times of Israel's punishment and the seven times of Gentile dominion are the same; that they began with the captivity of Zedekiah, and, as will be seen from the chart, they terminate with the year 1915. According to the best obtainable evidences on the subject, synchronized with the Scriptural testimony, Zedekiah's captivity took place in October, 605¼ years before A. D. 1. If we will add to this 1914,4 years, we will have the year, October, 1915, as the date for the end of Gentile supremacy in the world — the end of their lease of 2,520 years, which will not be renewed. Instead, He whose right the kingdom is shall take possession of it. This, therefore, marks the date when the Lord Himself shall assume control of the world's affairs, to end its reign of sin and death, and to bring in the true light of the knowledge of God and the wholesome restraints that will be profitable to the fallen world, and the encouragements and assistances and every good thing helpful to man — to the end that the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets shall bring blessing to as many as are willing to receive the divine favor of life everlasting upon the terms of obedience to the divine arrangement.

Our interest in these matters is profound.

They not only indicate that we may lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that the church's redemption draweth nigh; but we may also rejoice with the world that the blessed morning of the millennial kingdom is at hand, even though we must weep with them also in the dark hour of trouble which will precede the sunburst of the millennial kingdom. The lesson to us, dear friends, as to those who are seeking to be heirs of the kingdom, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, is that we shall set our affections on things above, and seek to conform our lives to the divine requirements, that we may be counted meet, fit, for the kingdom to be prepared, that we may be used of the Lord in connection with that kingdom for the blessing of the world. And how much of preparation we all need to fit and prepare us to be the future judges and blessers of the world in association with our dear Lord and Redeemer! "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.

Our next discourse will be on Jewish and gospel parallels — type and antitype — in this room at 3 p.m. next Sunday. The grace of the Lord be with us all, preparing us for a share with our Lord in the grand fifth universal kingdom which is to bless the world

gloriously, according to all the gracious promises of the word.

January 25, 1904

Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise, May 15, 1917

THINGS WHICH MUST SHORTLY COME TO PASS

Jan. 25—Pastor C. T. Russell spoke to a large and attentive audience in Allegheny Carnegie hall yesterday afternoon. His text was “Things which must shortly come to pass.” (Rev. 1:1) Pastor Russell said:

These words, true when our Lord uttered them, are no less true now, 1,800 years later. We are sure that the wonderful events with which this age is to close and the Millennial age is to open are now nigh, even at the door. There are some, however, who argue that the Lord and the apostles must have been mistaken when they used such language; for say they, 1,800 years are not “shortly.”

We reply that all depends upon the standpoint. From the human standpoint 1,800 years is a dreadfully long period, but not so from the divine. The prophet intimates this saying, “A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday.” Yes, responded the Apostle Peter, “Be not ignorant brethren of one thing, that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years.

From the divine standpoint, therefore, the 6,000 years since Adam’s creation are but six days of a great week of which the Millennial age is the great Sabbath. Suppose now that the mechanic or the house -wife had in mind a week of toil beginning with Monday morning and closing with Saturday night, and suppose that Friday morning had arrived—would anyone say nothing that the truth was being stretched if it were said ‘The week is far spent,’ the work-time now is short; the rest that is promised will “shortly come to pass?” Surely these would be usual and proper

2H32

statements. And so it is with the words of our Lord and His apostles. They were living in the beginning of the fifth thousand year day, and properly the holy spirit in them recognized the promised blessings as nigh.

BECLoudING ERRORS AVOIDED

Possibly it has seemed peculiar to those who have attended these studies of time prophecy, that in the

various prophetic measures thus far examined none have been referred to as marking the second coming of our Lord. This is the more unusual because our Second Adventist friends, who generally monopolize prophetic interpretation, bend all of their energies toward proving the time of the advent. To our understanding a misconception on their part, both of the object and manner of the second coming, has confused them. Holding as they do that Christ's second coming will be in a body of flesh and visible to mankind, and holding also as they mostly do that the object of His coming will be to gather His saints to Himself and to utterly destroy the remainder of mankind and the world itself with fire, they have been led to pull and twist the various prophetic time prophecies so as to have them all end at the same moment of the one day in which they expect Christ to appear, the judgment of the world to take place, and the burning to begin.

Delivered from both of these errors, we are prepared to apply the various prophecies just as they were intended, some expiring at one date and others at another date, and to draw from them their intended lessons. First of all, our eyes have been opened to a realization of the fact that the judgment of the world means its trial for life everlasting, and not its condemnation to the second death. We see that the world was condemned as a race because of original sin, that the whole world has been under this curse or sentence of death for now 6,000 years. We see that in much mercy God redeemed us from that curse or sentence of eternal death by the death of His Son, our Lord. We see that the only ones who are even reckonedly escaped from that death sentence are the few who have been blessed with hearing ears and understanding hearts. As the apostle declares of these, "We have escaped the condemnation which is upon the world." The great mass of mankind outside the Household of Faith are still under the original sentence — eternal death.

We see that God's object in giving some now a knowledge whereby they may escape this sentence, and reach life everlasting in Christ, is to the intent that He may gather out a "little flock" to be joint-heirs with His Son in the glorious Millennial kingdom.

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

We see that Christ and His overcoming church, His bride, constitute the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29) which is to bless all the families of the earth during the Millennial age. We see that the blessing that will come to the world will be the trial or judgment of that blessed millennial day, and that the knowledge of the Lord and full opportunity are promised as incidental to the world's

trial for life everlasting. This saves us from the thought that the church, the little flock, of Christ, alone have a part in the blessing secured from the atonement. It saves us too from the error of supposing that the second coming of Christ is the end of all hope, mercy and probation. It shows us, on the contrary, that so far as the generality of our race is concerned, that event is but the beginning of divine mercy and opportunity and trial for life eternal to the world.

A careful examination of the Father's word has assured us fully that our Lord Jesus left the glory and dignity and honor of His spiritual condition when He became a man, not that He might remain a man to all eternity, but that as a man He might give the ransom price for Adam and all his race. We see that He did this, and we have the clear scriptural testimony that the Father was pleased to honor Him, not merely with the same honor that He had before, but He was pleased to exalt Him far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named. We perceive the clear scriptural testimony that He was "put to death in the flesh, but was quickened in the spirit," and we perceive that after His resurrection, though still in the world for 40 days. He was but rarely with His disciples and but for a few moments on the seven occasions, and then in different forms, as proving to them and to us that, although He was the same Jesus, He was now "changed" and no longer human and subject to human conditions. To demonstrate this He appeared in the room with His disciples while "the doors were shut," and, departing, "vanished out of their sight." He appeared in flesh and garments as suited the convenience of the occasions, and thus manifested the same powers that He and associated holy angels had manifested in previous times; as, for instance, when the Lord and three angels appeared to Abraham and took dinner with him and talked with him and afterward went down and delivered Lot out of Sodom.

NO LONGER A MAN

We thus realize that our Lord Jesus is no longer a man, but, as the apostle declares, "The Lord is that Spirit," and "though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now, henceforth, we know Him so no more.

2H33

We, therefore, are no longer expecting as do others that He will come a second time in the flesh. On the contrary, our expectations are, like those of the apostles, that we may be "changed" and made as He is, in order that we may see Him as He is—not as He was at the first advent.
1 John 3:2

“Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but My Father only.”

It is not our intention to offer any evidences respecting the day and hour in the future in which our Lord will come; but we do wish to call your attention to this text, that all may know that it is frequently misapplied. It does not say that of that day and hour no man shall ever know. At the time of its utterance neither men nor angels nor the Lord Jesus Himself knew the time of His second coming; but when the second coming takes place the Lord undoubtedly will be aware of it before the time, and so also the holy angels who will be His escort; and there would be nothing inconsistent with the statement if some of the Lord’s consecrated people might have intimations respecting the event. Other Scriptures speak of “the day of the Lord,” signifying a period in which He will be manifested. For instance, the apostle tells us that “The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; and when they (the world) shall say peace and safety, then cometh sudden destruction upon them, as travail upon a woman with a child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” (1 Thess. 5:2, 3) Note how explicit is this declaration, and how clearly it divides between the church and the world—between the class who will know in advance respecting the day of the Lord and the class that will not know until the great trouble of the “day of wrath” is upon them.

PAROUSIA VERSUS EPIPHANIA

The Scriptures (Greek) use both of these words in referring to the second coming of Christ; but neither of them signify the same as our English word coming, viz., approach. We would like to make very clear the Scriptures’ teaching—that in the end of this Gospel age our Lord, at His second advent, will for a time be present but invisible, and that subsequently His presence will be revealed or made known. None will know of His presence until after He is here, and only the thoroughly consecrated, Israelites, indeed, will know of the matter at all until the outward manifestation will be in the day of trouble—judgments coming upon present institutions. The early part of the Lord’s presence will be devoted to His church, as His words specifically inform us.

In giving the great prophecy of Matthew 24, the Lord tells us that in the time of His second presence He will gird Himself (that is, take the position of a servant,) and come forth and serve His people with “things new and old,” “meat in due season for the Household of Faith.” This service will be rendered at a time when the world will not know of His presence, but will be saying that all things continue as they were from the foundation of the

world. Another of our Lord's parables represents that at His second advent He will call His own servants and reckon with them and reward them; he that has received the two talents and used them wisely will be rewarded; he who received the five talents and used them wisely and profitably will be rewarded. Their rewards are stated:

Some shall be made rulers over five cities, others over ten cities—in the kingdom, shortly after it has been established. Evidently this testing of the church and determining its rewards will be before there is any manifestation to the world of the presence of the Son of man at His second advent. Afterward, when ready to begin dealing with the world, judging the institutions of the present time, the presence of the Son of man will be revealed “in flaming fire” —judgments.

DAYS OF THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Allow me to call your attention to Matthew 24:37. Here a statement concerning our Lord's second advent is distinctly made by Himself. It reads thus: “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.” This is evidently intended to be an illustration, but there is an incongruity in comparing the days of Noah and the coming of the Son of man. The difficulty is made clear when we find that the word here rendered coming is *parousia*, and does not mean coming, but means presence, as every Greek scholar knows. Now let us read the verse and see how plain it becomes, “As were the days of Noah, so shall also the presence of the Son of man be.” Ah, that is different; it is plain now. The days of the presence of the Son of man will in some respects resemble the days of Noah, preceding the flood. Now we turn to Luke's account of the same discourse and read (Luke 17:26), “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. “Now the two statements are in harmony, and we know to look for some correspondence as between Noah's days and the days of the presence of Christ in the end of this age.

Is there anything to indicate what the correspondencies will be? Yes; it is specifically stated thus: “For as in those days which were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered into the Ark, and knew not until the flood came and

2H34

took them away; so shall also the coming (*parousia*, presence) of the Son of man be.” Let us not lose the point of the illustration: the Lord was not intimating that eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage were wicked things in the days of

Noah, which would be duplicated in the days of the presence of the Son of man. The thought is that as the people of Noah's day knew not of the coming flood, but were going about their ordinary business, so also in the end of this age, in the time of the presence of the Son of man, the world will be going about its ordinary business, its eating and drinking, planting and building and marrying, totally unaware, unconscious of the time in which they are living—that it is the closing time of the gospel dispensation and the opening time of the great Millennial age, to be ushered in with a great time of trouble such as never was before.

This, it will be perceived, is in strict harmony with what the apostle said, namely, that the day of the Lord would come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, and that they would not escape, but, in harmony with the apostle's suggestion that "ye, brethren," would not be left in "darkness," should not we, dear brethren, be on the lookout to see by what means the Lord will inform us respecting the harvest time of this Gospel age, respecting the presence of the Son of man, and respecting the work that will be done in the time of His presence, and before His revealing to the world, before His epiphania in the time of trouble.

“BEHOLD, I COME AS A THIEF”

We will surprise many of you by what we are about to say on this subject of the time of the Lord's presence. What we say will not cause fear and trepidation to the hearts of any who are walking faithfully in the Lord's footsteps; and if our remarks shall serve to startle and awaken to a closer investigation of these matters any who have been more or less stupified by the spirit of the world, the spirit of pleasure, the spirit of greed, the spirit of selfishness, we shall rejoice in their awakening, and they also will have cause to glorify God on this behalf. We wish to point out to you, dear friends, that the Scripture prophecies which we examined on the three preceding Sundays, and others which we wish we had time to examine today, clearly teach that we are now living in "the days of the Son of Man"—in the parousia, in the time of the Lord's presence. Now, let none of us be alarmed, for we are not pointing you to a future date, but pointing back to the fall of 1874, and none of you — neither myself nor anyone else — had the slightest knowledge of the facts of the case when it occurred.

Our Lord said, "Behold, I come as a thief" —quietly, secretly, unknown, and so it has been; He came without your knowing it and without my knowing it. It is since His presence that the light has shone particularly upon His word. He has indeed girded Himself and come forth to serve His people. I have been the recipient of His

favours of His grace, of His truth, as respects things new and old. You also have been similarly favored, and it is our understanding of the teachings of the Word that, during this harvest time and before the great time of anarchy and trouble shall burst upon the world and smite present institutions, that all the Lord's true people, all who are Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile, will be brought to a knowledge of the Lord and of the truth, a knowledge of the divine plan of the ages and of the presence of the Chief Reaper in the harvest of this age.

It need not surprise us that all of the Lord's people do not receive the meat in due season at the same moment. It must be passed from one to another, for so illustrations in the Scripture intimate. I am today seeking to pass it to some of you, and you in turn will serve it to others, until all "the wise shall understand." But the Scriptures are equally explicit in the statement that "none of the wicked shall understand." Those who are of a rebellious attitude of mind and heart, who, even if God's true children, are cultivating in their hearts envy, malice, hatred, strife and other works of the flesh and of the devil are not in a condition to hear the voice of the Son of Man. His is the still small voice intended only for those who have an ear to hear, and this hearing is granted only to those who have hearts in accord with the Lord's spirit.

THE CHART ILLUSTRATIONS

Now, look with me at the chart and see how the various time prophecies, although making no mention of the second coming of Christ, clearly indicate and imply that His parousia, His presence, would begin in October, 1874. First, we call to mind the jubilee type examined three Sundays ago. We remember how explicitly it indicated that the "times of restitution of all things" — earth's great jubilee — were due to begin in October, 1874. We remember the two lines of testimony on the subject — the law and the prophets — and how they both pointed to the same time. We remember that we looked about us to see evidence of any restitution work, and concluded that the appropriate thing to be sought would be the pulling down, overturning, of present institutions to make way for the glorious things promised. We saw that in the dawn of the typical jubilee year in Israel there would be commotion, blowing of trumpets, the arousing of

2H35

the people, the appeal for their rights, the claiming of inheritances, etc. And so we find that since 1874 this very work of blowing the trumpets, demanding rights and privileges and asserting claims and rights have been the order of the day.

Now let us notice the words of the Apostle Peter, uttered eighteen centuries ago. He said: "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of Jehovah, and He shall send Jesus Christ, whom the heavens must receive [retain] until the times of restitution of all things." (Acts 3:19-21) Note these words particularly — the heavens were to receive our Redeemer, to retain Him, until the restitution times. The lesson clearly would be that if restitution times chronologically began in October, 1874, the heavens no longer retain our Lord. This is an indirect way the Scriptures teach that the Lord became present in 1874, yet your speaker was utterly unaware of the matter for nearly two years after the event, and then learned it, not from vision or dreams or other manifestations, but from the testimonies of the prophets as you are hearing them today.

PARTIAL FULFILLMENT IN 1799

We particularly wish that we had time to call to your attention what the Prophet Daniel calls the "days of waiting." In prophecy he foretold of the rise of Papacy, and, as we have already seen, foretold the length of its dominion to be 1,260 prophetic days, literally years — exactly the same that is stated three times in the book of Revelations as measuring the prosperity of the great system which "wore out the saints of the Most High God" for 1,260 days, literal years. We would have liked to have time to show that the 1,260 years of Papal dominion lasted from the year 539 to the year 1799 A. D. —from the time Papacy was set up in power, until the time when its power was broken by Napoleon Bonaparte, who carried the pope a prisoner to France, and in so doing showed the whole world that the claims of the man who sat upon the papal throne that he was "another God on earth" and had power in heaven, earth and purgatory, were bombastic claims, unsupported by any real evidence of power.

We would have liked to have shown that the next period of 1,290 days, years, ended in 1829 with the beginning of the second advent movement of that period, and the great influence which it had upon its time. We would like to have shown that the 1,335 prophetic days, years, of the same prophecy reached to October, 1874 —ending exactly at the same place, at the time indicated by the jubilee. We call your attention to the words of the Prophet Daniel in connection with these 1,335 days. He said, "O the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh unto the one thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." What shall we say, dear brethren? Is it not so that those who have lived and patiently waited for the fulfillment of the Lord's gracious promises have received a special blessing in this harvest time?—a blessing which began with and dated from the fall of 1874. Surely this is true — surely every step of our progress in the knowledge of the

divine plan is a fresh cause for rejoicing. "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even the loving kindness of our God."

GENTILE TIMES END A. D. 1915

Now notice the other prophecy respecting Israel's seven times of chastisement under the nations —2,520 years from the time the crown was removed from the head of their last king, Zedekiah, and down to the present time, and beyond to the year 1915. This prophecy indicates, if you please, the further end of the time of trouble in which we are living—between October, 1874 and 1915. A period of 40 years is thus appropriated, first to the gathering of the harvest of the Gospel age —the resurrection of the sleeping saints and the testing and proving and gathering to the Lord of the living members of the body, and finally the great time of trouble which will make ready for the full ushering in of the kingdom of glory and peace and blessing. The time appears long enough, yet not too long. Already the work of gathering the saints is well under way, and every year adds to the momentum of the truth, as well as to the opposition of the error. Eleven years or so remain, and as we look out we perceive that the whole world is getting awake.

Look at the church and see how infidelity under the name of higher criticism is invading the nominal sanctuary — how few are clean and free from the contamination. It is bound to make a division but, alas, so few will be found faithful to the Lord and to His word that the great majority, losing their faith, will have so much company in the matter that they will not realize for some time their fall from divine favor and grace. It will not take many years to accomplish this separation. Look at the world, and see how the love of money has bewitched all, so that little else than money or pleasure are ever thought of in civilized lands. See how this spirit of selfishness is working amongst the masses and the classes of the world in general, how these are being bound in bundles — into organizations, combinations and unions, and how the capitalistic class is being bound also into other unions, confederations, combinations, and trusts, and note that the same spirit is infecting churchianity and for the same reasons —for self-protection, for selfaggrandizement, for power. Think how far along these

2H36

organizations are at the present time, and what the struggle will be when they are all thoroughly organized and the tug of war shall come. The Scriptures tell us distinctly how the battle will result, that Babylon the Great will fall, and that with her in the battle will go down the kings and princes and mighty ones of earth, and that a terrible time of anarchy will prevail, and the

only bright spot in the future lies beyond in the gracious promises of the God of Heaven, that on the ruins of present institutions He will establish His kingdom.

JEWISH AND GOSPEL AGES PARALLEL

Now, look again, dear friends, at the subject discussed last Lord's day, the parallels of the Jewish and gospel dispensations. Note how all of these prophecies are harmonized and unified in this teaching of the parallels between the two Israels, the house of servants and the house of sons — the one under Moses, the mediator of the law covenant; the other under Christ, the mediator of the new covenant — the one founded to Jacob with his twelve sons, natural Israel; the other founded by Christ, the true Israel of God, with His twelve apostles. The house of servants, we have seen began with the death of Jacob and lasted 1,811 years, until the first advent movement at the time of our Lord's birth when all men were in expectation of Him, and when wise men from the East sought for Him. And likewise from the death of Christ, where this Gospel age began, 1,811 years reached to the second advent movement, which occurred in 1844.

We are not Second Adventists, nor would those people in any sense or degree recognize us or our teachings, but we do believe that the movement which culminated in 1844 was in some measure instigated by the Almighty, and that it had a powerful influence favorable to the truth. There are virgins, as foretold in Matthew 25, went forth to meet the bridegroom and he tarried, and they all afterward slumbered and slept until the morning, until the announcement, "Behold the bridegroom's presence." Thirty years after the advent movement at Bethlehem there was another advent movement at Jordan, when John proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, and when our Lord really entered upon His work. And similarly in the end of this age, as you will notice from the chart, 30 years from 1844 brings us to 1874, where the jubilee testimony proclaims to us the Lord's presence. Forty years from the time Jesus was baptized by John at Jordan, the Jewish nation was utterly overthrown in the greatest time of trouble people had ever known — their city was utterly destroyed. So likewise 40 years from 1874 reached to 1915, where the antitype of Israel, namely, Christendom, will have its utter overthrow in a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.

NOT ACCIDENTAL BUT PROVIDENTIAL

Are these things accidental, dear friends? We think not; they are all based upon the Scriptures, they are all simple and easy of demonstration, and yet they were all hidden by the method of their statement or by facts related to

their interpretation, so that they could not be understood until now in God's due time, when He lifts the veil. Thus the Lord said to Daniel the Prophet, in respect to his inquiry of those times and seasons, "Go thy way, Daniel for the thing is closed and sealed until the time of the end." We understand, dear friends, that the time of the end began in 1799, more than a century ago, and that we have been in the time of the end ever since, and that the time of the end is another name for what another prophet calls "the day of his preparation." Since 1799 we have been in the time of the Lord's preparation for the Millennial kingdom. He has lifted the curtain, and light has shone in upon the world from every quarter, on mechanics, on chemistry, on every science and on every art.

SIGNS ALL ABOUT US

All of these things have served to make the day in which we live the grandest that the world has ever known; and yet these grand privileges and blessings are about to work out for our present civilization the great catastrophe of anarchy to which we have just alluded. The law of selfishness rules in the hearts of all classes, and causes envy, hatred, malice, strife and, eventually, through socialism, will lead up to anarchy and wreck the entire social fabric.

All this is noted by the prophet, for he gives us in the same connection after being told that the prophecy was "sealed until the time of the end," a description of this time of the end — a description which fits so marvelously that it will surprise everyone who will examine it. Mark the words: "In the time of the end many shall run to and fro, knowledge shall be increased, and the wise shall understand, and there shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." Dan. 12:1, 4, 10

Note the four items. First, the running to and fro. What a marvelous fulfillment we see before our eyes — steamboats, railroads, bicycles, every contrivance for locomotion, and with ever-increasing speed and ever-increasing numbers. The whole world is running to and fro just as the Lord indicated through the prophets would be the case in this time of the end. Could we hope to ever have a more particular fulfillment of any prophecy than this is? Surely not. Note the second point: Knowledge shall be increased. Not only is scientific knowledge increased, but the thought appears to be rather knowledge be generally

2H37

disseminated. And so it is all over Christendom, which is the world in prophecy. Education is progressing in a

wonderful manner; children of 10 years are studying subjects which their great-grandfather never thought of studying. In every land knowledge has been increased, and here is another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy. Could it be plainer? Mark the third point: The wise shall understand—understand the vision which Daniel could not understand, which Daniel was not permitted to understand, which Daniel was not intended to understand.

We are not, dear friends, posing as worldly wise. On the contrary, we are seeking the wisdom which cometh from above, the light which shines forth from the lamp which God has given us, His Word, and all who follow its leadings from the divine standpoint are the truly wise. This class may now understand; but as the context declares, “The wicked shall do wickedly; but none of the wicked shall understand.” They will take their own course, and the plan of God and the Word of God will daily come to appear to them more and more foolish as their scientific minds grapple with their evolution theories and their higher critical difficulties. Is this part of the prophecy being fulfilled? Is the word and plan of God opening before His consecrated people as never before? It most assuredly is so. Note the fourth point: “There shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” The outlook from any standpoint, but particularly from the standpoint of those who are looking from God’s standpoint, is that the time of trouble is nearing.

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE BREEDS DISCONTENT

We see that the prosperity of this time of the end is not conducive to happiness and peace; we see the whole world growing more and more discontented, although enjoying more of the blessings and favors of the Lord in temporal matters than ever before. We see that the secret of this discontent is knowledge. Knowledge is power — power for good or for evil, according to the sentiments of the heart. We must expect that only those hearts which are consecrated to the Lord and dominated by His spirit will receive this power of knowledge in such a manner as to profit themselves and their fellows; and since these are the small minority of the civilized world, we are not to be surprised that the knowledge and the power are about to wreck the present order of things. God will thus cause the wrath of man to praise Him, for, looking back, man will discover from the millennial standpoint what were the wickedness and errors of the present time as they cannot see them now, because they are so close to them and so vitally interested. They will see that selfishness lay at the foundation of present institutions in every sense of the word; even the benevolences of the present time are to some extent handicapped by selfishness. God wishes the whole world to

have a terrible lesson on the result of selfishness in the cataclysm of trouble and disintegration which it will effect; He wishes all to learn that His way is not only the right of way, but the only way in which knowledge and liberty and power may be used to blessing and to profit.

Do these things appeal to you as both scriptural and rational — as being in accord with the word of God and the evidences of our senses, as they do to me? If so, I am sure that your hearts are leaping with joy at the thought that the dark night of earth's sin and suffering will soon be at an end and the glorious morning of the kingdom soon be ushered in. And you will be solicitous respecting the things which must shortly come to pass — the things which are coming to pass day by day in the midst of which we are living, if this prophetic testimony and outward corroborations are trustworthy in any degree. What must we expect in the church? some one may ask. I answer that much depends upon what church we refer to. There are many churches of men, but only one church of the living God whose names are written in heaven. The Scriptures everywhere show that the churches of men are more or less built upon error and are fencing in their various folds not only the Lord's sheep, but the worldly goats — not only the Lord's wheat, but the world's tares. We do not understand the Scriptures to teach that the goats and tares are all coarse, rude and villainous and disreputable, any more than the sheep and wheat are all wealthy and polished gentlemen and ladies. The tests are along different lines, and we read, "The Lord knoweth them that are His" — regardless of outward garb, education, appearance or wealth. We further read that "the Lord looketh upon the heart," and, again, that not many great, not many learned, hath God chosen, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom.

These then, the Lord's poor, we are to expect to find in all the various wheat fields, behind all the various creed fences, intermingling with all the various bands of tares. The harvest work, so far as the wheat is concerned, will be the gathering out of these. The Lord speaks of Christendom or churchianity as a whole under the name of Babylon — the name which originally applied to the mother of harlots, but which has become appropriate to all her daughter systems as well. These are addressed by the Lord in His last message, saying: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen. Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:2-4

THE HARVEST SICKLE—PRESENT TRUTH

Our thought is, dear friends, that the Lord is sending forth present truth as a sickle to gather the true wheat from every part of the wheat fields not by gathering them into another denomination or sect or party or name, but simply to gather them to the Lord — to fellowship with Him and to fellowship with others of like precious faith. We are in no sense attempting to organize a sect or party. We are sick of churchianity, but thoroughly in love with the great Christianity which Jesus and the apostles founded, under the terms and conditions of which all of the Lord's people are brought into heart-to-heart fellowship, and need not the bands of sects and confessions to fasten them together. Having one spirit, the spirit of truth, they are one body, as the apostle has expressed it. 1 Cor. 12:12, 13-27.

The fields are white for the harvest, and every day is making a cleavage between the nominal Christianity and the true Christianity and the more apparent it becomes that the nominal systems are growing more and more worldly. The colleges and seminaries of every denominational shade have for years been turning out polished infidels, who no more believe in the inspiration of God's Word than they believe in the inspiration of Shakespeare or Dickens, and they are not slow to say this amongst themselves, though craftily, many of them disguise their infidelity before such members of their flocks as they fear would be shocked if they knew the truth; but as their numbers increase, their courage increases to boldness, and in their own circles they do not hesitate to speak of those who accept the Bible as foolish, and old fogies. Let us be glad to be counted fools for Christ's sake. Let us note, too, that the line of division is turning here on the same issue as at the first advent. At the first advent the question turned on the necessity for Christ's death as the sin offering, and so today it is turning on the same problem. Is Christ our Redeemer or merely a great teacher? All these "higher critics" claim the latter, that Jesus was a Great Teacher, but not a redeemer, and that no redemption was necessary. They hold the evolution theory that man, instead of falling from the image of God into savagery and depravity, has been falling upward, as they express it — coming from brute conditions up to the present status. This is the line of battle, let no one be deceived on the subject.

ABLE TO STAND IN THE EVIL DAY

We are living today, dear friends, in the time referred to by the apostle when he said, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." We are in the evil day — the day of trial, the day of testing, the day referred to by the prophet when he declared: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand." These thousands are already falling under the shafts of skepticism, higher criticism, evolution, etc.,

but the battle has already begun. There is still time for those who are the Lord's true people to hear the jubilee trumpet, to recognize the situation, and to put on the whole armor of God, that they may be able to stand in the evil day, and that they may help others to stand.

With this discourse this series of meetings comes to an end, but it is our earnest hope that amongst these interested faces and attentive ears there are a goodly number who will heed the apostle's words and put on the whole armor of God and be saved from falling with the great nominal church, Babylon, into infidelity, which has a form of godliness but denies its power. We hope to be permitted to serve you further, and assure you that it will afford us great pleasure so to do. The message that we give from the Lord's word belongs to you and to all who are truly His. We are glad to lend helping hands to all who will avail themselves of our offer.

May the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the fellowship and communion of the holy Spirit, guide us and all who are truly the Lord's consecrated sheep, in the right paths, to the Lord's glory and for our present and everlasting blessing. Amen.

A LITTLE WHILE

A LITTLE while, our warfare shall be over;
A little while, our tears be wiped away;
A little while, the power of Jehovah
Shall turn our darkness into gladsome day.

2H39

February 1, 1904

*Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
February 13, 1917*

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

DOCTRINES ARE POISONOUS

“The Oathbound Covenant” was the subject of Pastor Russell's address in Belaire, O., yesterday afternoon, and in the evening he took for his subject, “What Think ye of Christ?” The audiences at both places were large and attentive.

For his text in the evening Pastor Russell took the words of the apostle, speaking for the truly consecrated church of Christ, found in 1 Peter 2:7: "To you who believe He is precious." Pastor Russell spoke as follows:

Many would have us think that it makes no difference what we believe respecting our Lord Jesus Christ or other subjects; that the important question is: "How do we live?" We yield to no one in the importance to be attached to holy living, yet we fully concur with our text and the entire Scriptures when we affirm that what a man believes has much to do with his conduct in life, and still more to do with his acceptance by the heavenly Father.

FAITH AND WORKS

The matter of faith and works, and which is more important, is thoroughly discussed in the Scriptures, and faith is given the place of primary importance and with evident propriety. The Apostle Paul sets forth most distinctly that a man is justified by faith and not by works that if judgment of the Almighty were according to works none of us could be justified because none of us could possibly do perfect works. "There is none righteous, no, not one; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The fall has brought imperfection to every member of Adam's race—has affected each one mentally, morally and physically; so that, as the apostle again declares, we cannot do the things that we would, and if God should mark iniquity against us —should judge us along the line of works —none could stand the judgment or test; all would be condemned again — to the second death.

JUSTICE HAS BEEN SATISFIED

The Scriptural proposition set before us is that our Lord Jesus has paid for Adam and his race the demands of justice, and that in the present time all who accept of Him, become His disciples, shall be judged not according to their works, but according to their faith, according to their hearts, according to their good intentions. Of this class the Apostle declares: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1) That peace with God, that realization of forgiveness of sins and acceptance of Him, cannot come to us on the score of good works, but does come to the believer through faith in the Perfect One who died on our behalf, the 'just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

The Apostle James is supposed by many to contradict this declaration of the Apostle Paul; but not so. He says: "Show me thy faith without thy works, I will show thee my faith by my works." Jas. 2:18) He does not say I will show thee my works without my faith and that I am

justified without faith. The thought he would inculcate is that faith, although it is the important thing, the basis of our justification before God, if it be not followed by fruitage of good works —resistance of sin and endeavors for righteousness —gives evidence that it is dead; just as a tree that fails to put forth leaves, buds, etc., in the springtime gives evidence that it is dead. The apostle's thought is that while faith is the important thing—that the Lord's judgment of us is according to our faith and not according to our works, nevertheless He will expect to find in us such works as we are capable of, and will assuredly judge that if there are no works of righteousness, no efforts manifested along the line of opposition to sin, then surely in such an one the new life, the spirit of the Lord, has ceased.

Get the thought: We have good works, all of them that we could possibly produce; yet at their very most and very best they are imperfect and could never make us approved or justified in God's sight. But we can have faith in the Lord Jesus and in His sacrifice for the covering of sins, and our impure hearts can desire and aim for the things pleasing to the Lord, and can repudiate entirely everything displeasing to Him. And this new mind, this new will, can assuredly exercise a considerable degree of control over our mortal bodies,

VARIOUS BELIEFS OF CHRIST

In the apostle's day the question of belief or disbelief in Christ was a very radical one—in some respects quite different from the same question today. This belief in the Lord Jesus included: (1) That He was the Messiah, the long-promised King of Israel, who was to lift up that nation out of the dust and use it as the instrumentality and mouthpiece in making known the divine law to the world, and in uplifting the world of mankind from sin, degradation, etc., to harmony with God, and eventually to eternal life to those who would prove loyal and obedient. (2) It meant also a belief that these blessings from Messiah had been postponed by reason of Israel's rejection of Him, and by reason of the divine intention to complete the elect Bride class, the "Royal Priesthood," with selections of holy ones from all the families of the earth. (3) It meant the belief that when this work of selecting the church would be accomplished, Messiah would come again in power and great glory to establish amongst men the kingdom of righteousness long promised — to fulfill the blessings of the great "Oath-bound Covenant," which we discussed this afternoon. (4) It meant an acceptance of Jesus by all who would be his footstep followers in the present age and by consecration lay down their lives as joint-sacrifices with His in the prospect of being associated as joint-heirs with Him in the kingdom. (5) It meant still further an

appreciation of why our Lord Jesus died; that it was necessary that He should die, and thus pay the penalty for the sins of the whole world before He could bless, either the church or the world.

Each of these propositions had opponents. Both Jews and Gentiles rejected the thought that Jesus was a king, and that he would ever exalt Israel and use that people as the instrument in blessing other nations. Both Jews and Gentiles also rejected the thought that faith in his blood was necessary to acceptance with God—that mankind are by nature sinners, aliens, strangers, foreigners and enemies through wicked works. They could apply such thoughts to some extent to the very degraded, but as for the philosophers and the upper classes, including the Scribes and Pharisees, the thought of their own unworthiness before God was repugnant. Were they not the teachers of the common people, and therefore better certainly than the general herd? And what grander blessing could come to the common people than to lift them up to the intelligence, dignity, etc., of these teachers? The apostle expresses this thought, saying: “Christ is to the Jew a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness.” 1 Cor. 1:23

SELF-RIGHTEOUS HYPOCRISY

The Jews, having been under the tutelage of the Law Covenant for centuries, had clearer conceptions of sin and of divine justice than had the remainder of the world, even the Greek philosophers. They recognized sin, especially in its grosser forms, as illustrated by the publicans and sinners; but themselves affected a holiness to God, made long prayers to be heard of men, did their alms in public to be seen of men, and in general gloried in their outward appearance of generosity and righteousness and reverence. They had the form of godliness but not its power; they had the outward works but not the inward faith and obedience to principle.

Our Lord explained this, saying that they made clean the outside of the cup, while within it was corrupt. He intimated most clearly that in God’s sight the judgment would be reversed—that the poor publican, at heart contrite, though outwardly less reverential and holy, was nearer to the Lord than the one who outwardly was holy but inwardly was boastful and recognized not his defects. No wonder, then, that when our Lord’s ministry and that of the apostles under the power of the Holy Spirit on and after Pentecost had gathered out of the Jewish nation all the Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile—no wonder that the remnant stumbled over Christ and His teachings, which reprovved them, and which reproof they were not humble enough to hear and to receive. They stumbled, they fell from divine favor to

disfavor, with its appropriate chastisements. They stumbled over that stumbling stone—Christ, the Saviour from sin.

WORLDLY WISDOM SELF-DECEIVED

We can see likewise how our Lord Jesus with his message of forgiveness was “to the Greek foolishness.” The Greeks were philosophers who, under the lead of Plato, Socrates and others, had developed certain theories respecting man — theories which very closely correspond to the “evolution” of the present time. They seem to have held to the natural development of man, and looked forward in a philosophical manner to a future, assuming that the intellect of man and his superiority to the lower animals in some manner warranted, yea, guaranteed, the thought that he could not die; and that when death apparently set in the man was really more alive than ever before — that he had passed to a spirit world where he likewise would have opportunities for progression or evolution according to his obedience to principles of righteousness. To these philosophers the story of man’s fall and of God’s sentence upon him as a sinner, and that on this account death reigns in the world, and the only hope for man is by resurrection from the dead, and that the

2H41

only hope of a resurrection lay in the redemption accomplished by Jesus, and it was for this purpose that he had previously left the glories and honors of a spirit condition with the Father and had become a man, that he might pay the penalty which Justice held against mankind — by dying the just for the unjust. We can readily see that this simple story, which based everything upon Jesus and which tore their philosophies to shreds, would be difficult for the world-wise Greeks to accept.

The Apostle having marshalled these facts before his readers, declares in the words of our text that while it is true that our Lord was thus rejected by the religious class, the Jews, and disdained by the philosophic class, nevertheless to those who believed, who saw in Jesus the fulfillment of the divine prophecies and promises, and who have come into heart relationship with him through faith and obedience, and who, believing, are trusting in the precious promises — “to you who thus believe He is precious.” You alone know, understand and appreciate the value of this Messiah—and you have this faith because you neither trust in your own schemes, theories and philosophies, as do the Greeks and worldly-wise, neither in your own self-righteousness.

MANY GREEKS ATTRACTED

It is noteworthy here that many Greeks were attracted to the early Christian church by reason of their recognition of the wisdom of some of our Lord's teachings. His Sermon on the Mount, for instance, his interpretation of the law, etc., appealed strongly to the philosophical minds of the Greeks. They said:

“Here is a great teacher, and here is an intelligent class of people following his teachings, and by them being separated from the lower tendencies of their own natures. We can accept some of these teachings ourselves; we can benefit by them; we can fraternize in many respects with these Christians. Only they carry the matter too far in claiming that their great Teacher, Jesus, redeemed them by His death and made them acceptable to God. If we could only get them to renounce this feature of their teachings, they would be a very valuable acquisition to our numbers, for there is a great deal of philosophy in the teachings of their great Leader — barring this peculiarity that He taught that He gave his life to save them from the penalty of sin. Get this out of His teachings, and get out also His declaration that He would come again and establish a kingdom under the whole heavens, and we Greeks could well unite with these Christians, and might well be proud of them.”

And so it was that the movement which began five days before our Lord's death, when certain Greeks made a visit to Jesus (John 12:20), continued; and for several centuries there was quite a commingling of the Greeks and of the Christians — to such an extent that Grecian philosophy engrafted many of its tenets upon Christian doctrines, so that as early as the third century we find these Grecian philosophies prevalent, and today they may be said to predominate in the Christian church. The Christians of today who are not more or less tintured with these Grecian philosophies are few and rare. The number who still hold with the early church to the teachings of Jesus and the apostles as we have already referred to them — accepting Him as the coming king, and accepting His death as the atonement price for our sins — these are still as they were in our Lord's day, in comparison to the world at large, and in comparison to Churchianity at large, but a “little flock.”

A STONE OF STUMBLING

The apostle as well as the prophets frequently referred to the Lord Jesus as “a stone of stumbling,” and all the indications are that the vast majority of those who come into contact with our Lord and His teachings stumble over them. Thus Peter states the matter in the context: “Unto you which believe, He is precious, but for such as disbelieve, the stone of stumbling and a rock of offense;

for they stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye should show forth the excellency of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."—Verses 7-9

The statement that those who stumbled were "appointed" or predestinated to stumble must seem a hard saying to those who have misunderstood the divine plan, and who suppose that all these who stumble over Christ fall into eternal torment. To consider that God had so arranged his plan that they would thus stumble, and had appointed them to such a stumbling, would be inconsistent with divine justice as well as love. But when we get a right view of the matter, all is clear. We see that this call appertains to the call of the elect church to be the royal priesthood; that those who are called and who are of the right condition of heart to compose the elect-bride of Christ, and to be His joint-heirs in the kingdom, and as a royal priesthood to be the associates of the great high priest in His work of the millennial age in blessing all the families of the earth—then all is plain. We see that those who stumble are in no sense threatened with an eternity of torture, nor will many of them even stumble into the second death. Their loss, however

2H42

will be a serious one, for they will lose all the exceeding great and precious things which God hath in reservation for the church.

FIRST ATTAIN CHARACTER

It was entirely proper that God should predestinate that none should be members of the glorious bride and joint-heirs unless they in the present life attain a character-likeness of His dear son. The apostle thus expresses the matter clearly in Romans 8:29, saying, "Those whom He foreknew He also predestinated to be copies of the likeness of His son — for Him to be a firstborn among many brethren." In thus predestinating or predetermining that none could be associated with Christ in the kingdom except they manifested a likeness to Him while on trial in the present life, the Lord was equally predestinating that those who would not copy the Lord's character in the present life should be rejected, and that their rejection would be indicated by their stumbling into error, by which they would be separated and marked as different from the faithful "little flock" who shall inherit the kingdom. Those who are faithful in heart will be guided in respect to their knowledge of the Lord, that they may not walk in darkness, but, as the apostle declares, may be able to show forth the excellencies of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His

marvellous light. The very clear intimation is that only these will be thus guided of the Lord in their understanding of the truth, and that others will, on the contrary, be in darkness on every subject, and will stumble about in uncertainty accordingly.

We call attention to another scripture which speaks of this rock of offense, and of those who are stumbling over it. The Prophet Isaiah says (8:12-16), “He shall be for a sanctuary (a place of safety—to a class already described); but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel.” The context shows that the Lord through the prophet is speaking particularly of spiritual Israel, living in the close of this gospel age. He describes the present tendency to denominational union, saying that the Lord’s faithful people should not join in such confederacies which ignore the truth for an outward apparent union; and that His people should not share in the fears that are harassing churchianity—fear lest their denominational lines and numbers be broken; but should fear the Lord and should sanctify Him in their hearts—not giving His place to sectarianism and reverencing **it**.

A ROCK OF OFFENSE

It is to this class that in this harvest time the Lord will be a “sanctuary” as the Prophet David expresses it, describing again our day and the trials that are coming upon all who have named the name of Christ. He says, “He that is in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” —under divine protection and care. No evil can befall him there, but on the contrary he shall be blessed. For the others who do not sanctify the Lord in their hearts, but instead are reverencing men and human institutions and creeds of the dark ages, and who for the fear of disrupting these will be calling for and striving for organization, union, confederacy—of these the Lord declares that they will stumble, and that Christ will be the stumbling stone over which they will fall and wreck their faith. The Lord then called the attention of the prophet to the fact that this stumbling at the present time of spiritual Israel, at the end of this gospel age, is the parallel or antitype of the stumbling of fleshly Israel in the end of the Jewish age. “He shall be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel.”

Some will perhaps say, we see readily enough how fleshly Israel stumbled in their harvest time, because they rejected Jesus as their Savior and “Knew not the time of their visitation” (recognized not the opportunities and privileges that were theirs). But how shall we understand Christendom of today, nominal spiritual Israel, to be stumbling over Christ as a stone of stumbling and rock of offense? Does it not, on the contrary, appear that with Bibles in the hands of

Christian people everywhere — and practically the whole civilized world, church attendants — does it not seem that it would be impossible for us to even think of Christendom stumbling today? —over Christ as a stumbling-stone and rock of offense?

THE CHURCH'S DEVELOPMENT

We answer, that this is the tenor of the scriptural records throughout; for instance note again Psalm 91. Note the fact that it was from this psalm that Satan quoted to our Lord the words, "He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. That they may bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Our Lord rejected Satan's literal application of this to His literal feet; but how clear is the application to the symbolical feet of Christ? This figure of the body of Christ is a prominent one throughout the Scriptures —Christ the head, and the church His body. The Church as such as the bride or body of Christ has been in process of development for over eighteen centuries. The apostles and primitive church may be recognized as the shoulders, arms and hands, through which the whole body has been blessed and cared for; and the other members of the body represent the truly consecrated of the Lord from the

2H43

time of the apostles down to the present time; while, if we are correct in understanding that we are living in the end or close of the Gospel Age, and dawning of the millennium, we ourselves would naturally and properly represent the "feet" members of the body of Christ. We are to recognize that from the days of the apostles to the present time there has been a nominal body of Christ as well as a true body of Christ; and so today there are nominal feet members and true feet members. The verse under consideration points us to the feet class of the end of this age and assures us that the true feet will not stumble over the stone of stumbling. The intimation is that all except the true feet members will stumble here.

The preceding verse shows us the proportions of those who will stumble to those who will not stumble, saying, "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Because thou hast made the Lord, even the Most High, thy habitation." (Psa. 91:7, 9.) Those who stumble will evidently not have the Lord for a sanctuary. As a matter of fact we note that a great many today who name the name of Christ and are prominent in Christian work are more interested in their sect and its prosperity than they are interested in the Lord and the great plan which He is outworking— more interested in the members of their sect and their prosperity (even though these do not give

evidence of sanctification of spirit) than they are interested in the Lord's faithful ones outside their own sectarian fences.

MINISTERS OF GOD

This scripture not only intimates the enormous numbers of churchianity that will fall in comparison with the few true members of the Lord's body who will not fall, and intimates over what they will stumble —namely, the stone of stumbling, the rock of offence, Christ—but additionally it shows that the special power of God will be manifested on behalf of His faithful ones to prevent them from stumbling—otherwise they would fall with the others. This power of God in this symbolical language of the psalm is called “His angels”—His ministers, to who He is said to give a “charge,” a message concerning the “Feet,” by which they shall hold them up, protect them from stumbling, etc.

These ministers are even now at work in the world. Since 1875 they have been bearing up the feet class—bringing assistance to all those who are truly the Lord's people. They have a message from the Lord—not a new revelation, but an unfolding of the original message given through our Lord and the apostles. Our Lord Himself is the chief servant or minister in connection with this helping of the feet, and the apostles also lend a hand; for are not all the truths which are now assisting the Lord's people to stand the “good tidings” through the Lord and the apostles? Our Lord indeed prophesied that in the end of this age He would gird Himself as a servant and come forth and serve the household of faith the “feet” members of His own “body.” (Luke 12:37) He tells how He will bring forth from the storehouse of truth things new and old, sending them to the feet members at the hand of fellow servants, colaborers with Him. Indeed, each one receives this privilege to break again and distribute the nourishment that will give strength and ability to stand in what the apostle calls “this evil day.” Eph. 6:13

THE DAY OF TRIAL

We might multiply citations from the New Testament which point down to our day as a time of special trial and testing, in which (amongst professed believers), “every man's work shall be tried so as by fire,” and when it will be necessary to “put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand in that evil day.” The apostle describes our day to Timothy, saying: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, through the hypocrisy of men who speak lies.” He again writes: “This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud revelers, disobedient to parents, unthankful,

unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderous, without self-control, fierce, not lovers of good, perverse, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.” When addressing the church at Thessalonica (2 Thess. 2:10,12), the apostle again describes the serious times that shall prevail in the end of the age, referring particularly to Satan’s power now to be manifested, “with all deceit of unrighteousness in them that perish (fall away from the truth), because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in injustice and untruth.”

This falling away in the close of this age is referred to by our Lord in His message to the seven churches. Addressing the last phase of the church, Laodicea, representing the living nominal system, the Lord declares that while it feels rich and wise and great, it knows not that it is miserable and poor and naked and blind. It lives in the day of His knock, but the knock must be heard individually and responded to if the

2H44

Lord would come in and sup with the individual, in the sense of feeding him with the heavenly food and giving him strength for the trials and burnings of the day in which we are living. The great majority of Laodiceans, as is there intimated, will not hear the knock, will not know the time of their visitation, and will be “spewed out” of the Lord’s mouth —rejected from being any longer His medium in communicating His message to the world. Rev. 3:14,18

BABYLON IS FALLING

Under another figure the Lord calls this Laodicean church Babylon —mother and daughters — a family name. He pictures her (Rev. 18:1-4) as a great city or religious system of many wards, and declares of the present time, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, come out of her my people, that ye may not be partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For in one day shall her plagues come — death and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire — destroyed as a system. We are already in the day in which Babylon is falling (from divine favor), though the day of her severe plagues and punishments is still future. A little space remains in which the Lord’s true people are to hear His voice, the “charge” or message which He gives to His “angels,” His ministers, concerning the feet class — to bear them up, to sustain them, to hinder them from stumbling, falling, as the masses shall fall. Our Lord in His great prophecy of the end of the age again told of this falling, saying: “There shall arise

false Christs (false systems claiming to be the body of Christ, the church) and false teachers, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray (from the Truth, from the faith), if possible, the very elect.” Matt. 24:24

Our Lord’s words just quoted show clearly where much of this trouble will arise. Sectarianism, which has grown in wonderful proportions, has become fortified and is Babylon. The vast majority of those who compose these systems are merely nominal —Christians of the kind mentioned by the apostle in the quotation already given. They have a form of godliness, but lack the power, the spirit of it; they love sectarianism though they love not the Truth; so that now, when in due time the Lord sends forth the Truth as meat in due season, it becomes a test, and distinguishes between the true and the imitation —between those who love the Truth and those who love popularity and churchianity. The Truth lovers will be drawn and attracted to the Truth as to a magnet, the others will proportionately not be attracted, and will feel an opposition to the Truth and more and more a sympathy for the error, the philosophies of men, etc. Thus the breach will grow wider and wider, and eventually we may expect only the very elect to be held by the Truth, which to them will be the power of God to uphold them, to keep them from stumbling.

MANY FALSE TEACHERS

In addition to these false systems, and apparently to some extent outside of them, will be false teachers. The Apostle Peter pays his compliments to these and locates them in the present time in no uncertain terms. He says: “As there were false prophets amongst the people (of Israel), so there shall be (future —in the end of the Gospel Age) false teachers amongst you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying that the Lord bought them, and shall bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the Truth shall be evil spoken of.” (2 Pet. 2:1,2) Here again we have the false teachers, the Truth unpopular, and the majority falling into error. “Many shall follow their pernicious ways,” few, therefore, will be able to stand—a little flock, not many great, not many wise, not many learned, chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom. “A thousand shall fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand.”

We see these false teachers as distinctly as we see the false Christs (false systems), claiming to be bodies of Christ, claiming to be the church —while really there is but one church (the one body of Christ — all truly consecrated believers under the one head.) Theosophy is such a false teacher, outside the Church of Christ entirely; Christian Science is such a false teacher, outside the Church of Christ entirely; the so-called New Thought movements are false teachers, outside the

Church of Christ entirely. These are all outside the Church of Christ, because in no sense do they profess the essence of Christian doctrines. True they all acknowledge Christ as a great Teacher—they could not do otherwise—even devils and the devilish must acknowledge His teachings to be grand. But a belief that Jesus lived and died, and the belief that He was a good man and a great Teacher, are not the essence of Christian faith; it goes far beyond all this, and specifically acknowledges Him as the Redeemer “by whose stripes we are healed,” “who died for our sins according to the Scripture, and rose for our justification.”

EVOLUTIONISTS NOT CHRISTIANS

False teachers have also arisen in all the various sects of Christendom—teachers who like Dr. Briggs and other of the “Higher Critic” school, have for 25 years in particular been poisoning all the various systems of churchianity—introducing the snares which will stumble all except the true feet members of the body

2H45

of Christ. These so-called higher critics, plainly named, are infidels who have no belief in the Bible as an inspired revelation of the divine purpose. Neither do they recognize Christ as a Redeemer. Placing Him on a level with Shakespeare, Moses, Confucius and Plato, they are pleased to recognize Him because His name is popular in the civilized world.

The poisonous doctrines these men have been sending forth through all the students of all these seminaries and colleges for the past 25 years have been affecting Christianity in every quarter, in every denomination; so that today it is a rare thing to find a minister in any pulpit who fully and frankly will avow his faith in Jesus Christ as the Redeemer, and that His death was a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, a sacrifice which justice demanded, provided and accepted as the offset to Adam’s original transgression, and as the purchase price of the world, securing to it in due time a release from the tomb. The occasional one, who will frankly and without equivocation declare that he heartily accepts the death of Jesus as the ransom price for the world’s sin is usually a country minister, not college bred, one who has not a seminary course, or one who has read and to the extent has profited by the presentations of millennial dawn on this subject.

DEATH THE PENALTY

To some it may seem strange that the doctrine of the ransom—that Christ was man’s substitute and paid the penalty of the race by His death—which has been held

firmly by even nominal Christians and in all the creeds, should so quickly become a “stumbling stone.” The secret lies in the great increase of knowledge and stimulation of thought in our day. The creeds of Christendom which says that Christ died to release us from the Adamic penalty are thus far in harmony with the scriptures, but when they proceed to say that the penalty of original sin was eternal torment, and that Christ redeemed us from eternal torment, they are in violent opposition to the scriptures, which declare that the penalty for original sin was death, and that Christ’s death secured for Adam and his race a release from that death sentence.

Churchianity having in mind the teachings of its various creeds and not having in mind the scripture teaching, has concluded correctly that if the penalty upon the race was eternal torment, and if Christ paid that penalty for the race, it would have necessitated His going to eternal torment; and since He did not go to eternal torment, but to glory, they argue that He could not have been the substitute or Redeemer. The reasoning is sound enough, but the premises are false. The scriptures do not declare that eternal torment is the penalty; that theory was invented during the dark ages. The scriptures do declare that the penalty is death, and that Christ paid that penalty, and that the payment of it was the redemption price for the life of the world. Here is the secret of the power of the error upon those who have been error-taught and creed-instructed.

The effect is not only the repudiation of the ransom, but in due time, as their eyes open, the repudiation also of the eternal torment theory as being inconsistent with reason. But still believing that the teachings of their creeds is the teaching of the Scriptures, and still having in mind certain twists given to certain parables, many are losing faith, not only in the ransom but also in the entire Bible. They are making shipwreck of their faith, and proportionately everything that was formerly established in their minds in the nature of a religious hope becomes dim and uncertain. They are grasping after the theories of the philosophers and occultists; they are becoming more and more blind to the truth. As the apostle declares, Christ is to some a stumbling block and to others foolishness, but to us who believe, He is precious. To us who believe, the light of this twentieth century, by the grace of God is bringing a larger understanding of the Word of God and a fuller appreciation of the divine promises, and broader and deeper hopes, which are the anchorage to our souls, sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the veil.

Seeing, dear brethren and sisters, the great test which is upon Christendom —seeing that the vast majority are about to stumble over Jesus as a rock of offense, rejecting Him as a Redeemer, let us see to it that, as the

apostle forewarns us, “we put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand in this evil day.” Let us not think either that we can put on this armor by merely an intellectual knowledge of the divine plan; let us remember that it is only those who receive the truth “in the love of it” that will be able to stand, that will have the necessary assistance rendered them, that will be borne up by the good tidings of great joy — the message explanatory of the Heavenly Father’s plans, so necessary to our sustenance, strength and standing in this present evil day.

Let us hold fast the confidence of our rejoicing, the foundation of our faith — the fact that Christ died for our sins, that His sacrifice was a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Every doctrine which does not square with this doctrine of the ransom may be at once set down as spurious, unscriptural and calculated to entangle and snare and stumble. All of the new theories — evolution, higher criticism, Christian Science, theosophy, spiritism, Mormonism, all can be tested and settled by this invaluable measure —the

2H46

ransom. “If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

The Pittsburgh Gazette, February 8, 1904

PASTOR RUSSELL TALKS ON BAPTISM

Criticising Views Generally Held

Asserts That It Has Been Buried
Under Forms and Ceremonies

INCONSISTENCIES ARE SHOWN

Pastor Charles T. Russell spoke to a large audience in Bible House chapels Allegheny, yesterday. His subject was “Baptism,” and in his address Mr. Russell said true baptism had been lost sight of during the dark ages and buried under forms and ceremonies. The discourse was followed by a baptismal service. Mr. Russell’s address follows:

Christian people are a unit in understanding that the New Testament teaches baptism, although there is a great diversity and confusion of thought respecting its mode and significance.

The great falling away from the faith, alluded to by the apostles in the New Testament, had gained such headway by the second century that very superstitious views respecting baptism had gained control in the nominal church by that time. Water baptism was supposed not only to bring the subject into relationship with God by canceling past sins, but also to bring him certain graces or favors from God as a member of the Church of Christ, which could not otherwise be secured. Hence, at that early day, not only did believers seek baptism for themselves, but also for their children; and because infants could neither believe nor enter into covenant promises for themselves, an arrangement was made by which other than the parents might become sponsors for such children—“spiritual parents.” They solemnly promised that the children should believe in the Lord and would in His ways, and obligated themselves to see to their religious training. These were called god-fathers and godmothers.

Both the teachers and those taught of that period progressed rapidly to formalism and elaborations of the symbols and of their meaning. Special fonts for baptismal purposes were built outside the churches in the third century. They consisted of a private room which connected with an outside porch, the latter being open to the public, in whose presence the baptismal vows were taken, after which the subject was baptized in the font privately. The officiating minister exorcized the candidate, to cast out devils, blowing in his face three puffs of breath, as representing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

CONSECRATION OF THE WATER

The water in which the baptism took place was consecrated by an elaborate formula, constituting it sacred water, a part of the formula being exorcism or casting out of evil spirits from the water. The candidate was stripped of clothing, as representing the complete putting off of the old man, and was baptized three times, once in the name of the Father once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the Holy Spirit. All this was done outside the church, to intimate that the candidate was not yet a member of the church and could not be a member until, by this procedure, he was inducted. After the baptism service, the candidate for membership wore white clothing until the following Sunday. Later on the separation of the baptistry from the church ceased, and the baptismal pools were built in the churches.

The Roman and Greek Catholics still maintain to a considerable degree the elaborate ceremonial of the third century, with slight modifications suitable to our day.

It is not surprising that Protestants of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, having inherited these traditions and

participated in them, would be considerably under their influence, and that while divesting themselves of much of the extreme ceremony, they maintained the same general views and customs. Even today otherwise intelligent people have a superstitious fear respecting what might be the everlasting future of their children dying in infancy without having been baptized —hence, without having received remission of sins, and without having been inducted into membership in the church.

In harmony with these superstitions, we find that

2H47

although every effort is made in all denominations to keep all power, privilege and authority in the hands of the clergy and out of the hands of the laity, nevertheless it is very generally the custom that in extreme cases, where an infant is not expected to live, and where the services of a clergyman cannot be secured in time, any person may perform a baptism service — the thought being that no risk is to be taken in respect to the child's eternal welfare. The privilege of the laity under such circumstances is clearly recognized even in the Roman and Greek Catholic churches; and in the rubric of the Church of England in the time of Edward VI, the matter was ordered thus: "Pastors and curates shall often admonish the people that without great cause and necessity they baptize not children at home in their houses; and when great need shall compel them so to do that then they minister it."

VIEWS OF ENGLAND AND ROME

We quote the following explanation of baptism from the authorized Roman Catholic catechism (page 248):

"The first and most necessary sacrament is baptism," "because before baptism no other sacrament can be received," and "because without baptism no one can be saved."

"In baptism original sin and all sins committed before baptism are forgiven; the temporal as well as the eternal punishment is remitted by baptism." "In baptism we are not only cleansed from all sin, but are also transformed, in a spiritual manner, made holy, children of God, and heirs of heaven."

The Lutheran church holds to a very similar statement on the subject.

The Church of England, though with a slight varied ceremony, attaches the same significance to infant baptism. The following extracts from the Book of Common Prayer shows this:

“Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin; and grant that this child, now to be baptized therein may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children.”

“We receive this child into the congregation of Christ’s flock; and do sign him with the sign of the cross.”

“Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ’s church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits.”

“We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit.”

The Westminster Confession, Art. 28, says: “Baptism is a sacrament.. a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins,” etc. It declares it to be applicable to infant children one or both of whose parents are Christians, but not to other infants. It adds, “Although it be a great sin to condemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.”

Attaching less importance to baptism, Presbyterian rules permit none but ministers to perform the service, and by its ministers laying stress upon the importance of baptism, and comparatively few knowing of the last quoted clause, it follows that Presbyterians as well as others fear the consequences of their infants dying unbaptized.

As illustrating this matter, an anecdote is told of a certain doctor who was called late at night to attend a dying infant. He arrived just a moment in advance of a clergyman, sent for at the same time. It being evident that the physician could do nothing further for the child, he at once stepped aside, while the minister hastily took a bowl of water, sprinkled a few drops in the face of the child, saying, “I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” The child a moment or two after expired, and as the doctor and the minister left the house together the former remarked to the latter, “You arrived just in the nick of time; two minutes more and you would have been too late. May I ask what kind of shoes you wear?” “Congress gaiters,” responded the clergyman. “Ah how fortunate!” said the doctor, “Had you worn laced boots you would not have been in time, and think what disaster that would have meant for the child!”

True, many of the more enlightened Christian people would deny any such false, superstitious thought as that God would hand over an unbaptized infant to devils, to eternally torment it, or do anything else to its detriment.

Nevertheless, many of these same people manifest great concern if by any means one of their children should die without this ceremony; and some of the more illiterate certainly have a most positive belief in the necessity of the rite and a most torturing fear of the consequences if it is omitted; so strong is the influence coming down to us from the centuries of false beliefs — “the dark ages.

INFANT BAPTISM REPUDIATED

Amongst those who recognized that baptism is enjoined upon believers, and that one person cannot believe for another, infant baptism is repudiated as being unscriptural. Moreover, the same people

2H48

generally hold that nothing constitutes the baptism commanded by our Lord and the apostles except an immersion in water. These call attention to the fact that the Greek word signifying baptism, baptize, has the significance of immerse or cover or plunge or completely make wet, and that wholly different words are used in the Greek when sprinkling or pouring or raining are referred to.

These believers in immersion in water generally practice one immersion, backward, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, though a few practice it face forward three times, once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, once in the name of the Holy Spirit. The explanation of the latter form is that Christ bowed His head forward when He died, and that, hence, His followers should be immersed in the likeness of His death, face -forward. It does not seem to occur to these Christian friends that Christ was not buried face downward, and that the Father and the Holy Spirit neither died nor were buried at all, and that, therefore, such symbolizations are wholly inconsistent, and that the significance of the words “in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit would properly be — by the authority of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit —that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit concur in enjoining the baptism of believers.

Of those who practice one immersion backward, there are two large denominations, viz., “Baptists” and “Disciples,” who, nevertheless, perform the service with very different sentiments respecting its significance and the results. The views of the “Disciples,” otherwise calling themselves “Christians” (and frequently, without their consent, designated as “Campbellites”), is that baptism (immersion in water) is for the remission of sins, and that such as have not been immersed in water are yet in their sins, “children of wrath.” This view of the subject cuts off the great mass of humanity except

infants (whose original sin they seem to ignore), and even professed Christians of nearly all denominations — Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, United Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, etc. — would thus be marked as sinners, unjustified before God, and, therefore, exposed to the wrath of God, in whatever way that expression shall be understood; and by nearly all, including the “Disciples,” it is understood to mean an eternity of torture.

FORTIFIED BY CERTAIN TEXTS

This is a hard position to take, not in respect to the world only, but in respect to the mass of Christian professors, and we do not wonder that our “Disciple” friends generally avoid pressing the question to so extreme a statement, although the logic of the proposition is evident to them, as to all others who will give it consideration. We cannot accept this to be a correct view of baptism — to us it is neither scriptural nor reasonable. We cannot believe that the Lord has made the eternal welfare of our race dependent on their knowledge of, and their obedience to, any such institution.

Nevertheless, our “Disciple” friends fortify themselves with certain texts of scripture which are not to be overlooked; viz., John’s preaching to the Jews for repentance and remission of sins; the preaching of the apostles at Pentecost, to the Jews, to believe and be baptized for repentance and remission of their sins, and to call upon the name of the Lord, washing away their sins. (Matt. 3:6; John 4:1-2; Acts 3:38,41.) We will consider these scriptures in due time, and see how and why they are applicable to the Jews only, and never applicable to Gentiles, and that when certain Gentiles of the church at Ephesus confessed that they had been baptized with the baptism of John—unto repentance and remission of sins — the Apostle Paul commanded them to be baptized again in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 11:3-5

Our Baptist friends, while no less strenuous in their advocacy of immersion in water as the only baptism, set up a totally different claim respecting its efficacy. They deny that it is for the remission of sins, which they claim can only be experienced through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. They hold, however, that baptism is the door into the church, and that only those who are immersed have really entered the church, and that others should not expect nor be granted the privileges and blessings belonging to the church, either in the present life or in the life to come.

In harmony with this Baptists in general decline to welcome to the communion table any not immersed in water, saying that the communion table is not for the world, but only for the

church, and that none are in the church except those who have passed through the door of water baptism. The few Baptist churches which in recent years have relaxed this rule have done so in contravention of their theory. In illustration of this subject we quote from a recent article by the Rev. J. T. Lloyd in the Religious Herald. He says:

“Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost—nothing else is baptism. Baptist churches are the only Christian churches in existence. Pedobaptists (child-baptizers) have no right to the Lord’s Supper. Whenever they partake of the Lord’s Supper they partake unworthily, and eat and drink damnation to themselves.”

2H49

DOOR INTO THE CHURCH

If the Baptist theory be the correct one, it follows that all members of other denominations of professed Christians who have not been immersed in water have deceived themselves in thinking that in any sense of the word they belong to the church of Christ. Because, say our Baptist friends, immersion is the door into the church; whoever has not been immersed is not in and not of the church of Christ, which is the body of Christ. We do not wonder that our Baptist friends, and especially those of the highest standard of heart and intellect, hesitate to press upon the public these, the only, logical conclusions of their belief. To do so would be to bring down upon them the indignation and contumely of many whom they are bound to respect as Christians, notwithstanding their theory to the contrary. But what would it mean if this Baptist theory were true? We answer that, according to all the different creeds of Christendom, it would mean only immersed persons would be saved, and that all the remainder, of all denominations, would be lost; for is it not the theory of all the creeds that only the church is to be saved, and that all others are hastening to destruction or eternal torment or some other awful future the destiny to which is fixed at death?

We are bound to dissent from all the foregoing as imperfect human theories, whose inconsistencies are dearly manifest. The mere statement of them carries instant conviction of their erroneousness to every intelligent and unprejudiced mind. We cannot admit that either the Disciple denomination or the Baptist denomination, or both of these, constitute “the church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven,” to the exclusion of all the unimmersed of other denominations. We cannot admit that, when the Son of Man sowed the good seed of the Gospel in the field, the wheat was all brought under Baptist fencing, and that the tares were all outside. Nor can we even admit that all the

wheat is to be found amongst those immersed in water, and all the tares as well, so that all Christians would be excluded from the Lord's parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13.) We claim that all these conflicting theories are wrong — disapproved of God. We claim that all sects and denominations are contrary to the Divine institution — one head, one body, one faith, one baptism. We are not claiming that the Lord's church, the new creation, has many members, but admit that it is in all a "little flock."

This being true, it is very evident that the Baptists and Disciples, as well as others, have made very serious mistakes in respect to what baptism is, and in respect to the blessings and privileges it confers. We have briefly reviewed the situation up to the present time, to the intent that it may be manifested to all that there is something radically wrong in respect to all the various theories now prevalent on the subject of baptism, and that we may all, therefore, be the better prepared to go reverently and prayerfully back of all human traditions and theories to the Word of the Lord, which confessedly is an important one — a divine institution. It is only after we see clearly the confusion involved in all the various theories of Christendom that we are thoroughly prepared to appreciate the simplicity of the divine message on this subject.

SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY ON BAPTISM

The Jewish ritual contains various formulas respecting the cleansing of vessels and washing and sprinkling of unclean persons, etc., but nothing respecting baptism (baptizo, immersion) such as John preached in the end of the Jewish age. John's baptism was for Jews only, who were already recognized as typically cleansed by the atonement day sin offerings. To these John's baptism signified repentance from recognized sin, violations of the Law Covenant, and a typical cleansing from them — a return to a condition of righteousness of heart or desire. Jews thus repenting of sin and symbolically cleansed, or washed, were counted as restored to a condition of harmony with God, previously enjoyed under their Law Covenant. The motive back of John's preaching and baptizing was a preparation of the people for the kingdom of God and for a revelation of Messiah, which John's preaching declared to be imminent, and for which the people would need to be in a condition of heart-readiness if they would receive and appropriate blessing.

Hence, John did not baptize his believers into Christ, but merely unto "repentance," bringing them back to a condition of harmony with Moses, etc., in which condition, as "natural branches" in the olive tree (Romans 11:16-21), they would not need ingrafting into Christ for Christ would to them take the place of Moses,

who for the time merely typified Christ. Let it be remembered, too, that this, called “John’s baptism” and said to be “unto repentance and remission of sins” and “washing away of sin,” was not applicable to any except Jews; because Gentiles, not being baptized into Moses, and not being of the typical house of servants at any time, could not by repentance of sin come back to a condition which they never occupied. Gentiles who believed in Christ must, therefore, be inducted into his house of sons in a different manner. They, as the apostle explains, were the wild olive branches, “by nature children of wrath,” strangers, aliens, foreigners from the commonwealth

2H50

of Israel.

No amount of repentance and reformation would make these strangers and aliens members of the typical house of servants, to whom alone would come the privilege of passing by faith in Christ from the house of servants into the antitypical house of sons. If others would become branches in the olive tree (Christ), whose root was the Abrahamic promise (Gal. 3:16-29), they must be ingrafted into the places left vacant by the breaking off of the “natural branches” of the original olive tree — the house of servants, whose hearts were not in a proper condition to accept the Messiah, and who, therefore, could not be accepted of Him as members of His house of sons (John 1:12).

To every “Israelite indeed,” already thus consecrated and bound to Moses even unto death, and with all their hopes of life anchored in him, it was but a small remove to accept Christ in his stead, and as his antitype; and to understand that their pledges under the law to Moses were now transferred by divine arrangement to Christ, “the Mediator of the New Covenant.”

With the Gentiles the matter was altogether different, and their acceptance of Christ would properly signify all that was covenanted by the Jew to Moses and subsequently transferred to Christ. It should not surprise us, therefore, to find the Scriptures teaching a very much wider and deeper meaning to baptism as applied to those believers who were not Jews, not under the law, not in Moses, and not, therefore, transferred from Moses to Christ. To these baptism meant all the radical change that is pictured by the Apostle Paul (Rom. 11) by the ingrafting of the wild olive branches into the good olive tree. It meant a complete transformation.

BAPTISM INTO CHRIST’S DEATH

“Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

“Therefore, we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.” Rom 6:3-5.

We, who are by nature Gentiles, cannot do better than accept this very complete explanation of the true baptism addressed by the Apostle Paul to the believers at Rome —many, if not all, of whom had been Gentiles, “children of wrath.” In three verses here the apostle deals most thoroughly with the subject of baptism as it applies to us. These verses are very generally used to prove all the various doctrines of baptism, but quoted especially by our brethren, who recognize baptism as signifying immersion in water. Let it be clearly noticed, however, that the apostle makes not one word of reference to water baptism. Water baptism is merely a symbol, or picture of the real baptism; and the apostle, in these verses explains, from various standpoints, the true, the essential baptism without which no one can be considered a member of the body, or Church of Christ, while all who receive this baptism, of whatever name or place, color or sex, are to be counted as members of the ecclesia, members of the new creation.

The apostle is addressing those who are already members of Christ. He says: “Know ye not that so many of you as were baptized into Jesus Christ” —we pause here to notice that he does not say, so many of us as were sprinkled with water, nor, so many of us as were immersed in water, but, “So many of us as were baptized (immersed) into Jesus Christ” — as members of His body, the church. What is it to be immersed into Jesus Christ? How do we get into the body of Christ? The apostle answers that we were baptized into it, and, hence, are now counted as members of our Lord, members under Him as our head, members of “the church which is His body.”

But let us inquire particularly what was the process by which we came into membership in Christ Jesus. The apostle answers the question in his next statement, “So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death.” Not a word about our being baptized into Him by being baptized into water. No, no! How evident it is that if we were baptized a thousand times in water it would not bring us into membership in the body of Christ! But, accepting the apostle’s statement, we realize that our union with Christ, our membership in His church, or ecclesia, whose names are written in heaven, dated from the time that we were baptized into His death. But, when and how were we baptized into the Lord’s death? We answer that this baptism into death with the Lord, this overwhelming, or burial of ourselves, our flesh, which resulted in our

incorporation by Him as members of His body, as new creatures, took place at the moment when we made the full surrender of our wills to Him —consecrating our all, to follow and obey Him, even unto death.

The will represents the entire person and all that he possesses. The will has the control of the body, hands, feet, eyes, mouth and brain. It has the control too, of the pocket, the bank account, the real estate. It controls our time, our talent, our influence. There is not a thing of value that we possess which does not properly come under the control of the will; and, hence, when we surrender our wills to the Lord, or, as

2H51

the Scriptures sometimes represent it, our “hearts,” we give Him our all; and this burial of our human wills into the will of Christ is our death as human beings. “Ye are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (Col. 3:3.) This death, this burial, is our baptism into His death. Henceforth, from the divine standpoint, we are not to count ourselves as human beings, of human nature, of the earth, earthy, and as having earthly aims, objects and hopes, but as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

THE OLD WILL DIES

The instant of this burial or immersion of our wills into the will of Christ is followed by our begetting to newness of life —to a new nature. As our Lord consecrated His human nature unto death, in the doing of the Father’s will, and yet did not remain in death, but was raised from the dead to a newness of nature, so we who thus are consecrated become “dead with Him,” sharing in His consecration, are not left in a death state, but may instantly rise through faith to a realization of our kinship to the Lord as new creatures. Thus the apostle declares: “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of Christ dwell in you.” (Rom. 8:9).

To the world all this is a “hidden mystery.” They do not appreciate our faith —justification in the Father’s sight, but regard us as other men, who are yet in their sins. Likewise, they see no reason why we should sacrifice or consecrate our wills to the Lord — to be dead as human beings, that we may have a share with Him as new creatures. Neither do they see our consecration and its acceptance, nor appreciate our figurative resurrection to newness of life, newness of hopes, newness of ambitions, newness of relationship to God through Christ. We trust, indeed, that they may see some fruitage in our lives, but we cannot hope that it will be such fruitage as will to them appear to be good or wise or

profitable under present conditions. “The world knoweth us not (as new creatures) because it knew Him not.” 1 John 3:1

In all this believers are but following the footsteps of Jesus — taking up their cross to follow Him. Being holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from the sinner race, he needed not to wait for any sacrifice for sins, for he “knew no sin,” —but immediately upon reaching the age of manhood under the law (30 years) He hastened to make a complete consecration of Himself, a full sacrifice of all His earthly interests, hopes, ambitions and desires—that He might do the Father’s will only. The language of His heart as He came to John at Jordan, was prophetically foretold, “Lo, I come —in the volume of the book it is written of me — to do thy will, O God. I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy law is written in my heart.” Psa. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:7

Our Lord, thus consecrating Himself to the Father’s will, realized that his outward baptism symbolized the surrender of His earthly life and nature, already immersed, or buried, into the Father’s will, even unto death. His water immersion was merely a symbolical representation of the baptism, or burial of his will, which had preceded it. From this standpoint His baptism was full of meaning to Him, though not to John, who greatly marveled that He who “knew no sin should be baptized, whereas the baptism of John was a baptism only for transgressors against the Law Covenant — for the remission of sins.

None but our Lord Jesus Himself understood fully why it thus “behooved” him to fulfill all righteousness. None but He realized that while such an immersion (figurative cleansing from sin) was not necessary for Him, as though He were a sinner, yet it behooved Him who was the prospective head of the prospective body to set an example in Himself that would be appropriate as a lesson full of meaning to all of his followers, not only to those “body” members which were of the house of Israel after the flesh, but to those members also who were still aliens, strangers and foreigners. It behooved him to symbolize the full consecration of his will and all that He had, even unto death, that we coming after, might follow in His steps.

WHEN JESUS’ BAPTISM WAS FINISHED

That our Lord did not receive the water immersion at the hands of John as the real immersion, but merely as its figure, or illustration, can be readily demonstrated. In evidence mark His words about the time of the Last Supper: “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished” (Luke 12:50). Here our Lord shows that His baptism was not the water baptism, but the death baptism —baptism into death, in harmony with the divine arrangement, as man’s redemption price, or sin offering.

Having consecrated Himself to this death-baptism at the earliest possible moment, when He attained 30 years of age, and having during the three and one -half years of His ministry carefully carried out the provisions of that consecration — “dying daily,” pouring out His soul unto death, using up His life, His energy, His strength, in the service of the Father, in the service of His followers, and in a large sense, in the service of His enemies. Finally, realizing Himself near the close of this death-baptism, when it would be fully accomplished, and feeling the weights, the trials, the difficulties, growing heavier and heavier each moment, and having not a sympathizer—”Of the people there were none with Him” — not one who

2H52

understood the circumstances and conditions, and who could share His grief by offer of sympathy, encouragement or consolation, then longing for the end of the trial, He exclaimed, “How am I straitened (in difficulty) till it (my death-baptism) be accomplished.” (Luke 12:50.) His baptism was fulfilled shortly after, when He died, crying, “It is finished.”

The whole world is dying, and not merely the Lord and the church, His body; but the world does not participate in Christ’s death, as does the church, His body. There is a great difference. The whole world is dead with father Adam under his sentence or curse; but our Lord Jesus is not of the world, not one of those who died in Adam. We have already seen that His life was holy and separate from all sinners, notwithstanding his earthly mother — that he was not under condemnation. Why, then, did He die? The Scriptures answer that He “died for our sins,” that His death was a sacrificial one. And so it is with the church, His body, baptised into Him by baptism into His death —participants with Him in His sacrificial death. By nature children of Adam, “children of wrath, even as others,” they are first justified out of Adamic death unto life, through faith in our Lord Jesus and His redemptive work; and the very object of that justification to life out of Adamic condemnation to death is that they may have this privilege of being baptized into Jesus Christ (made members of His body, His ecclesia) by being baptized into His death —by sharing death with Him as joint-sacrificers. Ah! what a wide difference there is between being dead in Adam and being dead in Christ!

UNION WITH CHRIST

This mystery of our relationship to Christ is sacrifice, in death-baptism now, and the resulting relationship and union with Him in the glory that is to follow, is incomprehensible to the world. It should, however, be appreciated by the Lord’s faithful, and is asseverated repeatedly in the Scriptures. “If we suffer with Him we

shall also reign with Him;” “if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him.” We are “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him (if we experience death-baptism with Him as His body members) that we may be also glorified together.” (2 Tim. 2:12; Rom. 6:8, 8:17)

In the fourth verse of the text we are examining the apostle repeats the same thought from another standpoint, saying, “Therefore are we buried with Him by baptism into death.” Again no suggestion of water baptism, but a most positive statement of death-baptism, our consecration unto death. Proceeding, the apostle carries forward the picture, stating the wherefore or reason of our baptism into Christ’s death, saying, “Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Only indirectly does the apostle here refer to our share in the First Resurrection, when we shall share the glory of the Lord in his kingdom; he refers chiefly to the present life. All who make full consecration of their lives to the Lord, to be dead with Him, to be joint-sacrificers with Him in the service of the Truth, are to reckon themselves while living in the world as being separate and distinct from others around them. They covenant to die to earthly things which so engross others, and may, therefore, use them only as servants to the New Creation. New creatures become alive through the Redeemer to heavenly things and prospects which the world around us see not, understand not. In harmony with this our lives in the world should be new, distinct, separate from those of others about us; because we are animated with the new spirit, new hopes, new aims—the heavenly.

Coming to the fifth verse, the apostle still makes not the slightest reference to water baptism, although some, at first, might think otherwise of his words: “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.” If this being planted together in the likeness of His death be understood to mean water baptism, it would be laying more stress upon water baptism than any teacher in the world would be willing to admit. What is it that as Christians we most earnestly hope for? Is it not that we may share in the Lord’s resurrection, the “First Resurrection?” The apostle expressed this as the grand ideal and hope before his mind, saying: “That I might know Him and the power of His resurrection (as a member of His body, His church), and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” (Phil. 2:10,11.) Now to understand Rom. 6:5 to mean that a share in Christ’s resurrection would be the sure result of an immersion in water would be to make this passage contradict every other passage, and to outrage reason. Why should a planting or burial in water result in a share in the first resurrection? We are safe in assuming that thousands have been planted, or buried, or

immersed in water who will never share in the first resurrection — the Christ resurrection.

But when we understand this verse, in harmony with the two preceding it, to refer to baptism into death, to planting in death, in the likeness of Christ's death, then all is plain, all is reasonable. Having been called of the Lord to be joint-heirs with His son, and to suffer with Him, and to be dead with Him, to live with Him

2H53

and to reign with Him, how sure he may feel that if we are faithful to this call, if we are planted or buried into His death, like as He was buried into death —as faithful soldiers of God and servants of the truth —we shall eventually get the full reward which God promises to such, viz., a share in the first resurrection —to glory, honor and immortality.

DEMONSTRATION OF THE ARGUMENT

Baptism into death is the real baptism for the church, as it was the real baptism for our Lord; water baptism is only the symbol, or picture of it to us, as it was to Him. This is conclusively shown by our Lord's words to two of His disciples, James and John, who requested that they might have His promise that eventually they should sit with Him, the one on His right hand and the other on His left hand in His kingdom. Our Lord's answer to them was, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am (being) baptized with?" Their avowal of their willingness to share, not only His ignominy, but also His baptism into death, our Lord approvingly answers, "Ye shall, indeed drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." (Mark 10:35-39) Whoever of His called ones are willing at heart for these experiences, the Lord will grant them the privilege—and also His assistance. Such shall indeed be immersed into Christ's death, and, as a consequence, have a share with Him in the first resurrection and in the kingdom glories appertaining thereto. That our Lord here made no reference to water baptism is evident; for these two disciples had been with Him from the beginning of His ministry, and as His representatives had been baptizing multitudes in water, "unto repentance and remission of sins"—John's baptism. (John 3:22, 23; 4:1, 2; Mark 1:4) Our Lord's inquiry respecting their willingness for a share in His baptism was not misunderstood by the apostles. They had no thought that He wished them to be baptized again in water; they understood well that it meant the baptism of their wills into His will and the Father's will, and, accordingly, their participation with Him in His sacrifice — dying daily, laying down their lives for the brethren, to the finish, unto death actual.

We have already called attention to the various water baptisms in vogue amongst Christian people, and almost universally misunderstood by them to be the real baptism; we have shown how false and inconsistent are the tests which are based upon these water baptisms, which cannot affect the heart, and which at very most are symbols, but not seen to be symbols by their advocates, because they do not clearly discern the real baptism into death with Christ. How simple and yet how accurate becomes this test of real baptism, as respects the church of Christ—the “body,” the ecclesia, whose names are written in heaven—not depending upon earthly enrollment! This true baptism is, indeed, the door into the true church, for no one can be admitted and accepted as a member of the church, the body of Christ, and have their names written in heaven as such, except first he has experienced this baptism of His will, of His heart, into death with Christ, and has thus been inducted into membership in His church, which is “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1:24) Ah, yes! Such believers, making such consecration, such baptism into death with the Lord, must all be true “wheat” —not one of these is a “tare.” The water door may let in “tares” as well as “wheat” into the Baptist church; but the baptism into death as a door will admit only the wheat class into the true church, because none others will care to come under the conditions, though some may imitate them in a measure, as the “tares” are imitations of the “wheat.”

ALL TRUE CHRISTIANS IMMersed

From this standpoint it will be observed that there may be members of the true church — baptized into Jesus Christ, by being baptized into His church —amongst Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Roman Catholics, etc., as well as amongst Disciples and Baptists. On the other hand, undoubtedly the great majority in all denominations (including Disciples and Baptists immersed in water) have neither part nor lot in “the body of Christ,” the true ecclesia, because of not having come through the real door into the real church, by the real baptism into “His death.” This proposition is incontrovertible.

Having thus laid all the stress, as the apostles does, upon the true baptism, we turn to the symbol of it, the water baptism, and inquire, first, Is the symbol proper or necessary to those who have the real baptism? Second, If so, which is the proper symbol?

The testimony of the Lord and the apostles clearly indicates the propriety of the symbolical or water baptism, because not only they themselves were baptized with water, but taught water baptism in respect to others — not Jews only, but also Gentile converts. We have already shown that our Lord Jesus’ baptism was separate and distinct from that of John’s baptism to the Jews in general — that it was not unto repentance for remission

of sins — that John did not understand the matter; and that our Lord in thus instituting a symbol of His own death, did not attempt to explain what John and others of that time could not

2H54

have understood, because the Holy Spirit was not given, for Jesus had not yet accomplished His sacrifice for our sins, nor been glorified so as to present the sacrifice on our behalf.

We note the commission given by our Lord to the apostles, and to us through them, as recorded in Matt. 28:19-20: “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name (by the authority) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” This commission has applied to this entire gospel age, and under it all the ministers of the truth today labor. The Lord did not here refer to the Pentecostal baptism of the Spirit, because it was not in the power of the apostle thus to baptize any one. The Lord himself, and He alone, had this authority and retained it. It was, however, granted to the apostles, and to all the faithful teachers of the Lord’s word, to instruct people respecting the grace of God in Christ —respecting their justification, and respecting their sanctification, or consecration, or baptism into death with Christ, if they would be partakers of His new nature and coming glory. And the baptizing included also the symbolical, or water baptism, which was to be the outward sign by which the inward or heart-consecration of the believer would be made known to his fellows, even as our Lord himself first made the heart-consecration to the Father, and then symbolized it in water.

TEACHINGS OF THE APOSTLES

That the inspired apostles so understood their commission and ours is evident from all their teachings. They first taught the people respecting the grace of God in the work of redemption, encouraging them to believe unto justification of life. They next urged upon them a full consecration of heart, saying, “I beseech you, brethren (no longer sinners and aliens, but justified through faith in Christ, and, hence, designated members of the “household of faith,” or “brethren”), by the mercies of God (a share of which you have already received in your justification), that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy (justified), acceptable to God, your reasonable service.” This was the invitation to consecrate, or sacrifice, or to be “baptized into His death.” So many as heard the word gladly, in the proper condition of heart, appreciatively, were baptized —not only really baptized in their consecration vow, but also

symbolically baptized in water, as an outward testimony of this.

Notice the following testimonies that baptism was the custom of all of the apostles —not merely with the Jews, but also with the Gentiles. We read of the people of Samaria, “When they believed Philip . . . they were baptized, both men and women (not children).” (Acts 8:12) The Ethiopian eunuch converted by the preaching of Philip was also baptized in water. (Acts 10:44-48) Again we read, “Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.” (Acts 18:8) Again we read, “Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshiped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things spoken by Paul . . . She was baptized and her household.” (Acts 16:14-15) The Philippian jailer, when he had believed, was baptized by Paul and Silas in the prison. (Acts 16:33) Again we read, “I baptized also the house of Stephanus.” 1 Cor. 1:16

True, the apostle in this last case mentions how few he had baptized, but this, undoubtedly, was because of his thorn in the flesh, his imperfect eyesight; and the few whom he baptized probably received this service at his hands because no one else suitable to perform it was conveniently at hand. He thanked God that he baptized so few; but this does not imply that he had changed his mind in respect to the propriety either of the real baptism or of its symbol; but in view of the fact that a dispute had arisen in the church — a sectarian or faction spirit leading some to say, “I am of Paul,” others, “I am of Apollos,” others, “I am of Peter,” etc. —the apostle was glad that he could say he had baptized very few of them himself, lest any of them might be led to claim that he had been making personal disciples, baptizing them in his own name instead of making disciples for Christ, and baptizing them into the name of Christ.

A DIVINE INSTITUTION

In the light of these plain declarations of scripture respecting the precept and practice of the Lord and the apostles, it would be a bold man indeed who would declare that symbolical or water baptism is not taught in the scriptures; or that it was taught as applicable only to the Jews; or that it was intended only as an introductory work. It is surely with good reason that all Christian people respect water baptism as of divine institution. If any are inclined to still controvert this question, we have no quarrel with them, but believe that if such an one is honest and has performed in his heart the true baptism of his will into the will of the Lord —if he has become dead to self, and to the world, and alive toward God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, God will reveal this matter also unto him in due season. Phil. 3:15.

Meantime, we shall rejoice with such that they have found the real baptism, and become participators in it, and we congratulate them upon the truth that it is far better to see and enjoy the real baptism while blind to the symbol, than it would be to see the symbol and be blind to the reality. In view of this, however strongly we favor the symbolical baptism, we could not

2H55

base Christian fellowship upon it, but only upon the real baptism into death with Christ. All, therefore, who confess the Lord as their Redeemer, and confess a full consecration of heart and life to Him, we accept as brethren in Christ Jesus, members of the Ecclesia, whose names are written in heaven —new creatures in Christ, whether by birth Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, male or female, baptized with water or not baptized with water.

On the other hand, let it not be forgotten that every item of knowledge brings not only an increase of privilege and joy, but also an increase of responsibility. Whoever, therefore, comes to see the beauty and authority of the water symbol, comes at the same time to another test as respects the deadness of his will —respecting his real baptism into death with his Lord. A failure to obey as to the symbol under these circumstances, it will readily be seen, would mean a withdrawal of the sacrifice and thus a failure to make his calling and election sure.

We will not attempt a discussion of the multitudinous pros and cons as between sprinkling, pouring and immersion, as to which was the original apostolic mode of performing symbolical baptism. We will suggest, however, that no infant could possibly be in the condition of mind and heart which would permit it to make a consecration or baptism of its will into the will of Christ, so as to become dead with Him to self and to the world. We will insist, further that the symbolical baptism could not be performed prior to the real baptism, with any validity; because symbolical baptism is intended to be merely the outward expression or confession of what has already transpired between our hearts, our wills and the Lord in secret.

PRIOR NEED OF CONSECRATION

These things being true, it follows that the great majority of Christian people have never had symbolical or water baptism, since they could receive it only after intelligently making their consecration vow. The immersion of adults prior to consecration would be no more efficacious than an ordinary bath, no more of a symbolic baptism than the sprinkling of an unconsecrated infant. It behooves all, therefore, to inquire earnestly which is the true water baptism, the

true symbol designed by our Lord, and to obey it promptly. And every consecrated heart, “dead indeed” to self-will and worldly opinion, will be on the alert to know and to do the will of the Lord in this and every other matter. Such alertness is implied in the expression, “Alive toward God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:11.)

Suppose that the confusion on the subject of the mode of baptism were so complete, and the testimony concerning the procedure of the early church so confused, that we had nothing whatever to guide us in determining whether the apostolic mode of water baptism was by sprinkling or pouring or immersing, we are now in a place where, seeing clearly what constitutes the real baptism, it is possible for us to see clearly what would and what would not constitute symbols or pictures of it. Scrutinizing every form practised, one only seems at all to picture death and burial with Christ. We fail to see any symbol of death to the world and self, and with Christ, in many or few drops of water upon the forehead, or in a pailful of water poured over the person. If there is any symbolical likeness of death in either of these we are unable to perceive it.

But when we come to consider immersion, we see at a glance a wonderful, a striking, a remarkable, a fitting illustration of all that is implied in the real baptism to death. Not only does the Greek word baptizo signify submergence, covering, burying, overwhelming, but the whole procedure connected with one immersion backward into the water in the name of Christ is a most striking picture of a burial, fitting in every particular. The administrator in the symbol represents our Lord. As the candidate goes to him, so we in our hearts go to the Lord for baptism. Confessing that we cannot of ourselves become dead to self and to the world, we give ourselves into the hand of the Lord asking Him to accept the will for the deed, and requesting that, our wills being given up, He will bury us into His death—that He will cause such experiences, such disciplines, assistances and chastisements as will best enable us to carry out our covenant of consecration.

When the candidate has surrendered his will the administrator gently lets him down into the water, and while he is thus on his back, helpless in the water, he furnishes a complete illustration of our powerlessness to assist ourselves while in death; and as the administrator raises him to his feet again we see in the picture just what our Lord has promised to us — to raise us up from the dead in due time by His own power. We make no attempt to constrain the consciences of others who differ with us; but it seems to us evident from the fitness of this symbol that its author was the Lord. Who else could have arranged so complete a picture or symbol of the entire matter?

Whoever has already performed the real baptism — whoever has already given himself into the hands of Christ, to become dead with Him, buried in the likeness of His death, and then sees the beauty of this symbolic picture, must, we believe, feel an intense desire to fulfill it in his own case. The language of his heart must surely be: “I delight to do Thy will, O my

2H56

God!”

What advantages will accrue from obedience to this symbol? We answer that the advantage does not accrue on the fulfillment of any one part of our consecration vow, but will only be ours if we seek to fulfill all the requirements, first and last —everything included in the full surrender of our wills to the Lord’s will, and a full endeavor to walk in His steps. But while the full advantage will accrue at the end of the journey, in the first resurrection, and its glory, honor and immortality, there is a measure of advantage to be enjoyed even now. The satisfaction of mind, the peace of heart, the fact that, like our Lord, we have endeavored to “fulfill all righteousness”—these contribute to that peace of God which flows like a river, regularly and steadily and forcefully, through the lives of those who are His — the peace of God that passeth all understanding in our hearts.

TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLE

The apostle’s testimony is that there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.” (Eph. 4:4-6) It follows that, as there is only one proper baptism, so there can be but one proper symbol of it; and Christian people in general are agreed that immersion in water corresponds most closely to the meaning of the scriptural language. As illustrations of this agreement, note the following comments from persons who, though probably really baptized into Christ’s death, had become confused, so that they did not know how to identify its water symbol, and concluded that it is immaterial.

John Calvin, Presbyterian, says: “The very word ‘baptizo’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive church.” Institutes, Book IV, chap. 15, & 19.

Dr. Macknight, Presbyterian: “In baptism the baptized person is buried under the water.” “Christ submitted to be baptized; that is, to be buried under water.”

Dr. Philip Schaff, Presbyterian: “Immersion, and not sprinkling, was unquestionably the original, normal form. This is shown by the very meaning of the Greek

words 'baptizo,' 'baptisma,' 'baptismos.' (History of Apostolic Church, p. 568)

In a later publication (1885) he writes further on these "comparisons" that they "are all in favor of immersion, rather than sprinkling, as is fully admitted by the best exegetes, Catholic and Protestant, English and German."

Martin Luther, Lutheran: " 'Baptism' is a Greek word, and may be translated 'immersion.'" "I would have those who are to be baptized to be altogether dipped into the water." (Luther's Works, vol. 1, p. 336)

John Wesley, Methodist: " 'Buried with him by baptism' —alluding to the ancient method of immersion.

Wall, Episcopalian: "Immersion was in all probability the way in which our blessed Saviour, and for certain was the most usual and ordinary way by which the ancient Christians did receive their baptism." (History Infant Baptism, vol. 1, p. 571, Oxford, 1862)

Dean Stanley, Episcopalian: "For the first 13 centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word 'baptize' —that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water." (Christian Institutions, p. 17)

Brenner, Roman Catholic: "Thirteen hundred years was baptism generally and regularly an immersion of the person under water." (Historical Exhibition of the Administration of Baptism, p. 306)

"The whole person was immersed in water." —Kitto's Encyclopedia.

"Baptism, that is, to dip, or immersion." —Encyclopedia Americana.

"Baptism was originally administered by immersion." —Brande's Encyclopedia.

"Baptism means immersion." —Smith's Bible Dictionary

"Baptize, to dip in or under water." —Liddell & Scott's Greek Lexicon

"To immerse, to sink." —Robinson's Greek Lexicon

To immerse, submerge, sink." —Greenfield's Lexicon.

A symbolic baptism in water concluded the service.

* * * *

There is never a sin nor a sorrow,
There is never a care nor a loss,
But that we may carry to Jesus,
And leave at the foot of the cross.

The Pittsburgh Gazette, February 22, 1904

“WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS”

Large Audience in Bible House Chapel, Allegheny,
Listens to Sermon

INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY

“Wars and Rumors of Wars” was the subject of Pastor Charles T. Russell’s discourse in Bible House chapel, Arch Street, Allegheny, yesterday afternoon. Notwithstanding the unpleasant weather a large audience was present. The text and discourse follow:

“Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass, but the end is not yet.” Matt. 24:6

Our text is a part of our Lord’s great prophecy respecting this gospel age—from the close of His earthly ministry, in giving Himself as the redemption price of the world, to His second coming in power and great glory as the king of the world, to establish righteousness amongst men and to lift up and bless so many as will accept His favor, of all the families of the earth. Some have misunderstood our text to signify that every war rumor may be regarded as implying the end of the age. The proper understanding of it, however is the reverse of this—that when the Lord’s people shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, they are not to be alarmed or confused thereby, neither to anticipate that necessarily this meant the end of the age. As we look back and see how wars have been of frequent occurrence during the past nineteen centuries, we see the propriety of our Lord’s warning to his followers that the mere fact of war would prove nothing to them respecting the question He was discussing in answer to their inquires.

DANIEL’S DESCRIPTION OF COMING EVENTS

The Lord had referred to Daniel’s prophecy saying that Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, and the minds of his followers being thus directed to that prophecy, they would naturally be impressed with the two great visions therein recorded, which pictured the history of earthly dominion to its close: (1) The great image whose head of gold represented the empire of Babylon, whose breast and arms of silver represented the kingdom of Medo-Persia, whose belly and sides of brass represented the empire of Greece, whose legs of iron represented the Roman empire, and whose feet and toes

represented the present divisions of the Roman empire in Europe. In thinking of the close of this age, the end of world power and the establishment of the kingdom of God, they would be particularly interested in Daniel's description of how the new kingdom would supplant present institutions. The symbolical picture is that of a stone, representing God's kingdom, smiting the image of earthly government in its feet — "in the days of these kings" representing Europe in the present time. The description shows a total wreck of earthly government, which becomes "as the chaff of the summer threshing floor" which the wind carried away, no place being found for it, while the "stone," symbolizing the "kingdom of God's dear Son," is pictured as enlarging until it fills the whole earth. Naturally enough, such a graphic description would lead the reader to expect some kind of a terrible war in the end of the age, accomplishing the complete destruction of present institutions.

In another vision recorded by Daniel these same earthly governments are represented by successive wild beasts: the first a lion — Babylon; the second a bear — Medo-Persia; the third a leopard—Grecia; the fourth a terrible monster—the Roman empire, whose ten horns represented the continuing of power down to the present time — corresponding to the ten toes of the image. Here again the climax, the end of earthly governments, is tragically pictured. One like unto the Son of man assumes command, the beast is slain, etc., representing the fall of present institutions at the inauguration of the kingdom for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven."

We can readily see, then, that the early church —left without any definite information respecting the time for the establishment of the heavenly kingdom —needed our Lord's caution that they should not think that each new war signified the end of the age. He would have them look in other directions for the evidences of the consummation of the present time and the inauguration of the new dispensation. We will not here undertake to trace and show the signification of the Lord's great prophecy and that its various features have met fulfillment. The majority of you already have this in one of the chapters of Millennial Dawn, vol. 4. The scriptural evidence we have already presented, showing that we are nearing the time of the great consummation — that the end of Gentile times

2H58

will be reached in 1915 —is not dependent upon "wars or rumors of wars," but is established and we believe strongly entrenched by various lines of scriptural testimony which, although wholly different, concur in their testimony.

THE BATTLE OF THE GREAT DAY

But while “wars and rumors of wars” are not the signs to which we are to look as indications of the end of the age, nevertheless when the signs do indicate that the end of the age is near, the scriptures, we believe, imply that we may expect wars to be connected with inauguration of the new dispensation. One thing is certain: The world is not ready to vote Jesus as their king. Emperors, kings, presidents, governors, captains of industry and finance, no more than the religious leaders, are prepared to surrender themselves and their stewardships to the new king. As Jesus was rejected by the Jews at the first advent, because they were not in heart readiness to appreciate the object and manner of His coming, so likewise and the scriptures indicate that it will be with nominal spiritual Israel, Christendom, at the second advent. “He shall be for a stone of stumbling and rock of offense to both the houses of Israel.” The clear intimation of Malachi’s prophecy (Mal. 4:6) is that, if Christendom were in the proper attitude of heart, the Lord’s second coming would be effected in a peaceful manner, and the kingdoms of this world would be gladly transferred to Him whose right the dominion is—to Him who bought the world with His own precious blood, and whose reign is designed to bless and uplift mankind. But the same prophecy indicates that, because of the unreadiness of heart, our Lord’s coming will be to “smite the earth with a curse” —with a great affliction — “a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” Daniel 12:1

The climax of this “trouble” or “curse” is clearly set forth as anarchy—the most awful calamity that could befall the world. Leading up to this anarchy, the scriptures clearly put commercial strife and combination, “every man’s hand against his neighbor” —every man selfishly seeking merely his own interests. We already see clear evidences that such a condition of things is rapidly approaching. We have seen this in the light of God’s Word for 30 years, but as we get nearer and nearer to the climax the matter becomes more and more apparent to all, whether enlightened by the Word of God or merely guided by their own judgments. In one sense of the word this social strife and anarchy will be a great “battle,” the skirmishing of which is already beginning. This may be “the battle of the great day of God Almighty,” and possibly the only kind of battling intimated in the scriptures as connected with the closing of this age. But we think not. In our judgment a great war amongst the nations of Christendom is to be expected — a war which will sap the vitality of Christendom financially and undermine the power and influence of its aristocracy and ruling classes, and will awaken more and more the lower classes to grasp, through socialism, what they esteem to be their rights, liberties, advantages, etc. Possibly civil war and ultimately anarchy will thus be precipitated, for we are not to expect that the ruling classes, the wealthy and the aristocracy will quietly

submit to having their so-called vested rights, their social position and their political power wrestled from them without a struggle — a struggle which will be to the death.

UNDER THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

The Revelator, when picturing the conditions that will prevail at the beginning of the sounding of the seventh symbolical trumpet (which we understand began its symbolical sounding in 1875 and will continue for a thousand years), says, “And the seventh angel sounded. . . - and the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldst give rewards to Thy servants the prophets, and to Thy saints and to them that fear Thy name, small and great, and shouldst destroy them which corrupt the earth.” (Rev. 11:15-18) This does not say that there will be war amongst the nations in connection with their overthrow, yet the expression “the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come,” seems to give color to the thought that there will be contention amongst the nations —war. Again, the Lord seems to imply the same thing when addressing His faithful church, He says, “To him that overcometh and keepeth My words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers.” Rev. 2:26, 27

Joel’s prophecy seems to describe matters in the end of this age, and seems to picture a general war amongst the nations at this time. Another prophecy tells us of the abandonment of war and the turning of swords into plowshares and of spears into pruning hooks, and that the nations shall learn war no more. But Joel’s prophecy locates itself in the end of the age, before that great time of peace shall be inaugurated, and it implies a general war amongst the nations as being one of the matters pertinent to the end of this age. The particular portion to which we refer reads, “Proclaim ye this amongst the nations: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men let all the men of war draw near let them come up. Beat your plowshares into

2H59

swords and your pruning hooks into spears let the weak say, ‘I am strong... Let the nations bestir themselves and come to the valley of Jehoshaphat (judgment) for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread ye, for the winepress is full, the vats overflow for their wickedness is great.” (Joel 3:9-13) Similarly the Lord describes in Revelation (14:18-20) the harvesting of the vine of the earth, differentiating it from the “true vine,” which is Christ. (John 15) The Revelator says, “Thrust in thy sickle and gather in the vine of the earth (nominal

Christendom), which is fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth and cast it into the winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as one thousand six hundred furlongs.”

From all these scriptures, and others as well, and from our general judgment of what might be expected to be the Lord’s method of weakening the nations preparatory to their overthrow in anarchy, we are inclined to anticipate that the war so recently begun between Japan and Russia may prove an entering wedge for a general conflict amongst the powers of Christendom. Were Russia wise she would undoubtedly ask the mediation of others and patch up a peace speedily on the best terms obtainable; but the Russians are a very arrogant, self-conceited and proud people, and we fancy that it would be quite impossible for them, so large a nation, to humble themselves to so small a nation as Japan. It is far from our intention to prophesy respecting the future. Indeed, as we have already shown, prophecy in general is meant to be understood after its fulfillment, and to be a demonstration to us that the Almighty knew of the world’s affairs in advance, and that men have not shaped events according to prophecy, nor could they, because they understood not the prophecies. When, therefore, we speak of a general war, we must be understood as merely speculating—merely giving our guess, the only foundations for the guess being the bare outline statements of the scriptures we have already cited.

POSSIBILITIES OF A GENERAL WAR

We see every opportunity for the enkindling of such a war, notwithstanding the fact that every civilized nation dreads war. If they engage in it at all it will be because it has been practically forced upon them as the result of previous action, and pride—which will not permit them to retract. For instance, we see that during Russia’s engagement with Japan, Great Britain is improving her opportunities for satisfying her land hunger and extending her empire of India into Tibet, China. Possibly, also, she may make some advances into Persia, which Russia also covets. How the matter will eventuate no one can certainly tell, but it would not be at all surprising if the bitterness and opposition enkindled by adverse interests and selfishness might bring these two nations into conflict, especially as England is already allied to Japan.

On the other hand we see France and its excitable, volatile people greatly chagrined at the defeat of their friend and ally, Russia; and while not willing to precipitate a conflict which might bring great disaster upon themselves, we can readily surmise conditions which might bring the French into the same conflict. The

German emperor's activity and ambition and general disposition to present "the mailed fist" is well known, and we can hardly understand why he is not already thrusting himself forward in some manner in connection with the present conflict. We may be sure that, unless ill health prevents it, he has in mind some project for satisfying Germany's "land hunger" in the vicinity of China.

Meantime China, awakening from her long sleep, is becoming infused with the spirit of war, and, either independently or as an ally of Japan, she is prepared to be a great factor in the world's affairs in the near future, though just how may not be apparent at the present time. Her millions of people under the guidance of Japanese officers would certainly be a power that would require counting.

ANOTHER FACTOR— RELIGIOUS AMBITION

It may appear strange to consider religious ambitions a factor provocative of war; but it is true, nevertheless, that misguided emotions, supposedly religious, have been potent factors in many wars. Just now the apathy of the public of Christendom on religious subjects is noted. All the more those of religious proclivities are looking for another issue more popular than personal redemption, faith in the precious blood and consecration to the divine service. They have been seeking it in "social uplift" schemes, which have been more or less successful; and now the "civilization" of the uttermost parts of the earth is a popular scheme. We are told that the conversion of the world is merely a question of dollars, yet no explanation is offered as to why the lands of discontent, of murders, of suicides, etc., are specially lands of dollars — the lands in which money is plentiful.

Christianity does not wish to acknowledge that it is not progressing with leaps and bounds toward the goal it has set for itself, contrary to the word of God, namely, the conversion of the world. Hence, when individual conversions at home become scarce, and

2H60

real vital Christianity is at a low ebb, the more ado is made about affairs in foreign lands, and the impression is given and received that civilization is Christianization, and that Europe and America, being civilized, are therefore Christianized! Populations are counted en masse as Christian, and they look abroad to foreign lands as "other worlds to conquer." We should be glad, indeed, to see the blessing of true Christianity carried all the world around; but since this is evidently not practicable, we should be glad to see the lesser blessings of

civilization spread everywhere. But when we reflect that with its blessings go also its blights and evils, we incline to believe that for the few years remaining between now and the setting up of the Kingdom, the heathen world would be just as well off if left alone in its blindness, and contentment therewith, as if confused and made discontented by modern civilization, and Christianity with its unscriptural teachings and creeds brought down from the dark ages.

But our opinion on this subject is not the popular one. Those who very rarely preach about eternal torment in their own pulpits become enthused for mission work, and entuse others on the score of saving the heathen from an eternity of torture. The heathen are easily pictured as being in great danger, or as crying out to Christianity for help, and public sympathy is easily aroused. A "holy war" for the opening up of China to the gospel would evidently be a very popular movement, and would attract many volunteers from even those who make no religious pretensions themselves, and live little better than heathen under much more favorable conditions.

BISHOP'S MISSIONARY SERMON

That such a carrying of the war to foreign countries would not be harshly thought of is evidenced by the following extracts from Bishop Fowler's (Methodist) "Great Missionary Sermon," recently delivered. He said:

"If the storm breaks upon the world too suddenly, and all the other powers stand back and leave the contest to the English-speaking peoples, we even then can defend our rights, save the world from Russian absolutism and meet the high obligations thrust upon us by a friendly Providence; provided, that the strife is like the old Talke-Knife strife of the Swedes, where the contestants were bound together by a rope around their waists and, each armed with a stout knife, fought the mortal combat to the finish; provided that we understand its decisive character and have but one argument, and that, war to the bitter end; that we have but one plan, and that, victory or death, and that we have but one purpose, the absolute control of the Pacific, cost what it may. With such convictions and purposes we can help liberty to her final triumph, and secure civil and religious freedom to mankind forever.

"So God has made ready his channels, and can easily cut the leashes of storm and tempest about the centers of English-speaking peoples, these homes of liberty and Christianity. It is for us to merely use the defences offered us."

The bishop then proceeded to say to the assembled mission-workers that the great Methodist church is only "playing at saving the world." That, if an earnest effort were made to straighten the traces, the M. E. church

alone, instead of struggling to raise one million and a half, could raise more than three hundred million dollars a year for missions. "But with even one-third of that amount of holy consecrated money what could we not accomplish!" exclaimed the bishop, and added, "The world's salvation is reduced to a question of dollars and cents! We have the blood of the atonement; we have the resurrection of the Son of God; we have the gospel; we have the experiences of saving grace; we have the theology and a host of scholarly believers; we have the material agencies, Bibles, presses, steamboats, railroads, and an open world—everything ready and waiting— all we lack is money." And yet he concludes — "This generation of believers will see the salvation of this generation of sinners, and the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ." This last remark will be noted as in sharp contrast with the Methodist view presented recently by E. L. Eaton, D. D., who assured us that these things would not occur for "fifty thousand years —yet."

CURSES AND BLESSINGS OF WAR

All good and benevolent people must surely deprecate war as being in a large degree a relic of barbarism and totally opposed to the spirit of love. Nevertheless, wars have done their part in breaking the chains of superstition and teaching valuable lessons to our poor fallen race. From our standpoint, there was nothing unreasonable in our Lord's commanding Israel to war with the surrounding nations, for we see that, according to the scriptures, the slaughtered ones went not to a place of eternal torment, but into the death-state, "sheol," "hades," the grave. We see that in God's plan arrangements have been made whereby "all that are in their graves shall ultimately "come forth," be awakened, that they may be brought to a knowledge of the truth to the intent that by obedience to it they may yet regain all that was lost by the fall, and eventually become possessors of eternal life in the paradise God has promised to establish throughout the world during the

2H61

millennium. From this standpoint the loss of life in war is not more serious than its loss in pestilence or fire or flood or any disaster. But from the standpoint of the majority of Christian people, the soldiers are usually recruited from those who are not Christians, and who, according to all the creeds of Christendom, would at death pass into indescribable-torment of everlasting duration. One might suppose that we would feel free to encourage war or at least feel no serious opposition to it; that the chief opponents would be those who hold the eternal torment theory for all except those who are "born

again of the Lord's Spirit," and whose sons are enlisted in these wars. But, strange to say, the reverse is true. It is ours to advocate peace and concession in every possible manner, while enthusiastic advocates of the eternal torment theory have been war promoters and advocates and defenders in nearly every instance for centuries. This inconsistency shows that at heart those who profess the eternal torment doctrine do not believe it. Otherwise, surely, none would be recruited for the armies except the young saints. And, by the way, it does look as though this were the thought of some in the organization of "Boys' Brigades" in the various churches, and the drilling of them for the slaughter that is coming. Nevertheless, so far as we know, morality and not Christianity is the test or standard for membership in the "Boys' Brigades."

It would be easy to fill a volume on the cruelty of war, the sufferings it entails not only upon the fighters, but also upon their loved ones at home, and in this connection its degrading influence should not be lost sight of. Unquestionably, to those engaged in warfare, unless under very peculiar circumstances, fighting for a just principle, war must certainly be very brutalizing.

Nevertheless, wars have served a great purpose in the divine plan. They have stirred up nations and kindled ambitions, and have had much to do with social uplift. We can even see some particulars in which the present extensive military establishment in Europe has proven advantageous, notwithstanding the momentous cost entailed upon the nations and the maintenance of so many men in an unproductive pursuit. For instance, the peasantry of France and Germany and Austria, as notable examples, have been awakened from their lethargy, brought into contact with the outside world, and been taught lessons of great value to them, not only from books but also from the experiences of life through which they have passed. As an educative process alone, the present army arrangements of Europe are working wonders for the people. Far better, you may say, that these youth should have been educated otherwise than in army life; but we reply that they would not otherwise have been educated at all. People can, will, must pay for army expenses, while they will not as a rule pay with the same liberality for educational matters — the United States being an exception to the rule.

THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER AND WARFARE

In the scriptures the true believer, justified by faith, and wholly consecrated to the Lord, is sometimes spoken of as a soldier who is expected to "fight a good fight;" but the apostle is careful to inform us that these are not to battle with carnal weapons, but are to be armed with the whole armor of God's word and to be skillful in the use of the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. These are the only Christian soldiers known to the

scriptures. They are comparatively a little flock, a small company; their captain is Justice; their fight is not with carnal weapons, neither is it against flesh and blood. Instead of seeking to destroy men's lives, these soldiers of the cross are pledged to lay down their lives for the brethren (1 John 2:16), to fight a good fight against sin in themselves, to defend others, to help others likewise to overcome sin— "to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10)

Very evidently, anyone who would belong to this little army of the "King's own" would of necessity be separated from the world in its main objects and purposes. We are not to expect that the world in general will understand and appreciate the privilege of enlistment in this army. The joy which comes to these through victory over self and sin would partake largely of a torment to the worldly, who have not become acquainted with the captain, who are not interested in the glorious objects ultimately to be attained, and whose aims are of the earth earthy. Truly, the apostle declares, "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not" — our Captain.

It is difficult for many of the Lord's true followers to learn that they must not expect everybody to enlist with them; that they must be content to let the world enlist in its own warfares, fight for its own projects and fight out its own ambitions, and that the soldiers of the cross must take a different path and fight under the command of the Captain of our salvation, and be content so far as the world is concerned to give the word of counsel and advice only "to him that hath an ear to hear" — not to expect all to hear and obey and to enlist with us, but to remember that the "King's own is in all a little flock to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom in due time. (Luke 12:32) We must be content with the Lord's promise that by and by, after our testings and trials are over, after we shall have demonstrated our loyalty to the Lord, His word and the principles of

2H62

righteousness, after we shall have fought a good fight and shall have finished our course and have attained the crown of righteousness laid up for them that love the Lord's appearing, then we shall be privileged to bring to the world of mankind what shall ultimately prove to be the "desire of all nations" — the dominion of the heavens.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

It will not be very long, dear fellow soldiers of the cross, until the battle will be over, the victory won; for the “King’s own” are called to victory and not to defeat. Our enlistment is in accord with the great plan of the ages which our Father previously mapped out, and we know that all His purposes shall be accomplished, that His Word which went forth for the calling of this little flock to joint-heirship with Jesus in the kingdom which is promised to be established and to bless all the families of the earth—that word cannot be broken, its fulfillment is sure. Yea, its fulfillment is nigh, even at the door.

Though we are in the world, but not of the world, we, nevertheless, are more or less affected by every matter which affects our neighbors; and hence in the great battle that is now impending between truth and error, between princes and people, between money and labor, and with more or less of right and wrong on both sides of all questions, the “King’s own,” the soldiers of the cross, will have some very trying experiences. It is the present time that the apostle emphasizes as “that evil day” — the period of special trial in the end of this age, saying, ‘Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in that evil day, and, having done all, to stand.’ Analyzing these words, we see them to signify that in the end of this age there would be special trials of severe testing; but the apostle’s language also implies that the Lord will make special provision for the protection of His faithful ones, and that this will be an armor of truth, of knowledge, of information granted to them from the great armory, His Word, the Bible. The exhortation that we should take it implies that the Lord will not force it upon any, but to those who are in the right attitude of heart the doors of the armory will be open, and the proper armor supplied in due season, and that they must demonstrate their loyalty and obedience to the Captain by seeking this armor and putting it on. Those who do not thus yield obedience to the Captain’s word will not have the protection necessary for this time, and, as intimated in the text by the apostle, they will not be able to stand in this evil day. Soldiers of the cross in previous times had not so much of the armor supplied, neither did they need the special armor that is needed now. They did not live in “this evil day.” The head knowledge that our grandfathers had respecting the divine plan will surely prove insufficient in this day of so-called higher criticism of the scriptures, evolution theories, theosophy and Christian Science. Whoever has not the proper armor necessary for the present time will be pretty sure to fall in this evil day, this day of special trial and testing; but he who puts on the armor of God, he who possesses the fruits of the Spirit, the Apostle Paul assures us shall never fall, but so doing an entrance shall be abundantly administered unto him into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Many of the tests of this evil day are already upon us, and, as the prophets have foretold, “A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand.” (Psa.

91:7) These are falling away from the faith because in many instances they were not spiritual Israelites indeed, but as the Lord declares through the prophet, "Wherefore, because this people draw nigh to me with their lips while their hearts are far from me." The Lord wants as members of the "King's own" those who are at heart loyal to Him, loyal to all who have His Spirit and loyal to righteousness and truth. If we are ashamed of Him, ashamed of His brethren, or ashamed of His Word, we are not of the kind that He is seeking now. Those who are to be with Him, to share His throne and glory and to join with Him in the great work of emancipating the world from the power of sin and death during the millennium, must all be loyal at heart, to the core, and the various trials and testings now permitted will demonstrate the degree of loyalty. Let us, dear brethren, be loyal; and even if the time should come when we shall be misunderstood by our neighbors and friends, the children of this world, let us put our confidence in the Lord; let us fight the good fight of faith against sin and error and selfishness within and without, and thus doing lay hold upon eternal life.

* * * *

There is never a path so hidden,
But God will show us the way,
If we seek for the Spirit's guidance,
And patiently wait and pray.

The Pittsburgh Gazette, February 29, 1904

GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT

Pastor Charles T. Russell of the Bible house, Allegheny, addressed two large and interested audiences at Cumberland, Md., yesterday. In the afternoon his discourse was on "The Oath-Bound Covenant." In the evening his text was "Godliness With Contentment is Great Gain." 1 Tim. 6:6. His evening address in full follows:

Infidelity assails the scriptures as being opposed to progress and advancement, and in proof cites various passages, as "Be content with such things as ye have;" "Be content with your wages;" "Be careful for nothing," and our text, etc. But in this as in other matters,

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
and scan God's word in vain;
"God is his interpreter
and he will make it plain."

Unbelief is generally blind—inclined to take things from the wrong standpoint—and hence, as the apostle has pointed out to us repeatedly, the world by its wisdom knows not God. The believer, on the contrary, assuming that there is superhuman wisdom in the divine word, investigates from that standpoint, and, as the Lord promised, "He that seeketh findeth." The believer, in proportion to his consecration and Christian development, finds more and more that the testimonies of the Lord's "Word are sure, making wise the simple." (Psa. 19:7) A wide difference should be recognized as between Christian contentment, which is based upon godliness, and worldly contentment, which is based upon slothfulness—love of ease, selfishness. The scriptures everywhere condemn the latter and everywhere commend the former.

CHRISTIANITY INCITES TO PROGRESS

Looking all about us to the civilizations of India and China and in the barbarisms of Africa and other parts of the world, and comparing these with the civilization of Europe, which has spread to America, we see clearly that Christianity must have had something to do with the wonderful progress of all the people who come under Christian civilization. True, they are no more contented than people of other lands—not nearly so much so. Nowhere in the world is godly contentment so lacking as in so-called Christendom. How should we account for these facts, which are incontrovertible? How shall we understand the fact that Christianity has incited to progress yet

has not developed large godliness nor great contentment — the very teachings which the apostle inculcates in our text? We answer that the teachings of Christianity are in some respects revolutionary, while in other respects they are extremely conservative. The revolutionary tendency has affected the masses of Christendom, while the conservative features of the teaching have been received and appropriated by, comparatively, only a few—the consecrated, the saintly.

True Christianity, whose mouthpiece is the Bible, is the foe of superstition, ignorance, prejudice, slavery of thought. Where else, in what other teachings or writings than the scriptures—in what other holy books of the world—do we find such liberty-inspiring teachings as are presented in the Bible? Every male and female, bond and free, rich and poor, are plainly informed that they have all one standing before the bar of God—that they are all sinners, because all children of the one parentage, because all affected by the fall; and that all need a Savior and that all who would have salvation now must be saved in exactly the same manner—by faith and obedience. Where else do we find a clerical class entirely ignored as respects any superiority—the whole Church of Christ being called a “royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people?” Where else do we find such statements as those of our Master, “All ye are brethren and one is your Master, even Christ . . . He that is greatest among you shall be your servant.” (Matt. 23:8-11) It is these teachings of the Bible that show that “of one blood God created all the families of the earth,” and that “He is no respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34)

These teachings, wherever they have gone, have served to inspire self-respect amongst the lowly and to inspire humility amongst the great. The teachings of scripture are leveling in their character, and, without entering into politics or world government in any degree, the influence upon those who are taught of God through His book are contrary to aristocratic ideals. True, nominal Christianity (Churchianity) has not always stood for these noble things. On the

2H64

contrary, it has frequently supported autocratic government by kings and emperors and popes and priests; but the difficulty has never been with the Bible and its teachings, but with the perversion of these. During the dark ages, when the teachings of the Bible were not communicated to the people, but, instead, the traditions of men, ignorance and superstition and priestcraft flourished and with them autocracy. But in the dawning of the Reformation, with the uncovering of the Word of God, with the lifting from it of the sackcloth of the foreign tongue, with the publishing of it in the languages of the people, human rights began to be

recognized, and the wheels of progress in every direction began to turn.

No one can be a true child of God, “taught of God,” and have reached an advanced position in the school of Christ, without having come to an appreciation of the spirit of liberty, which is associated with the spirit of the truth —without wishing liberty of conscience for himself, and without wishing to grant similar liberty to others. The difficulty with bigots, who would burn one another at the stake for their conscientious convictions, is that they are deficient either in godliness or knowledge, or both.

COUNTING GAIN GODLINESS

The context shows us why the apostle introduced the words of our text. There were in his day, as there are today, many who could grasp certain features of Christianity and enjoy them without appreciating its most valuable elements. For instance, amongst the Jews some were attracted to the teachings of Christianity by the liberty which it held out to them in respect to what they should eat and drink. The law had typically marked some articles of diet clean and some unclean, and the avoidance of the unclean was sometimes inconvenient and sometimes called for self-denial. The fact that Christianity imposed no such restrictions, but instructed its followers to eat such things as were set before them, asking no questions for conscience sake, and assured them that to the pure all things were pure — that under the New Covenant the soul was not defiled by the things that entered into the mouth, and gave to each one the liberty and responsibility of choosing such a dietary as would be to his own convenience and for his physical well being —these liberties of the Christians were attractive to some of the Jews who failed to appreciate the much grander privileges and blessings of the gospel.

Combating the influence of this thought the apostle wrote, saying, The advantages of the kingdom of God (the church of the present time, the embryo of the coming kingdom) consisteth not in liberty as respects meats and drinks, but chiefly, more particularly, it consists of the righteousness and true holiness inspired, and in the blessings of peace and joy which come with these. He exhorts the brethren to think so little of the liberty respecting diet that they would be willing to sacrifice their liberties in these respects for the good of others at any time — that the blessings and joys of true relationship with God might be extended to others who might be in danger of stumbling over the thought that such dietary liberties would be sinful, expressing the sentiments of his own heart, the Apostle Paul, who loved liberty as much as any, declared himself willing to eat no meat of any kind forever if thereby he could be the more helpful to any who are seeking the way of the Lord. Rom. 14:17

THE HUMBLEST RICH IN CHRIST

The apostle points out elsewhere that the most humble, the most disadvantageously circumstanced as respects the present life, was really an heir of all things by reason of his union with Christ. He had already emphasized the fact that earthly conditions weigh nothing in the Lord's judgment, and hence that some occupying menial positions in the present life might really in God's estimation be far grander and far nobler than their masters and employers. He had already shown that God's favors to His people in the present time are to be chiefly expected along the lines of spiritual welfare, and that earthly difficulties, trials and disadvantages, persecutions, etc., were to be expected by the Lord's people as chiselings and polishings, fitting and preparing them for greater usefulness in the present life, and particularly qualifying them for the glorious honors and authority of the new dispensation, when the embryo kingdom of the present time would be the kingdom of glory. In verses one and two the apostle shows that this new relationship to the Lord, which is by faith, is not to be understood as affecting the interests of this present life, so that servants under the yoke of slavery should become high-minded, assertive and generally unfaithful to the obligations of their positions. He would have them recognize the Lord's knowledge of their conditions and the Lord's power to open up some other arrangement for them if such were His will, and if He saw a change of arrangement to be for their highest, their spiritual interest, as His people. He would have them rest not only as contentedly as they did before they received the gospel message, but more contentedly. Their godliness should not breed in them discontent, but make them joyful in the prospect of the future deliverance and the kingdom blessings, and appreciative of the fact that had they been rich or great in worldly matters they might have had no "ear" for the heavenly promises—"exceeding great and

2H65

precious."

Likewise those serving believing masters should not conclude that the new relationship in Christ absolved them from responsibility to the master, because He was a brother, and because one is our Master even Christ. In spiritual things there is but the one Master, but the one Dictator, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all;" but in secular matters under the present conditions there are of necessity differences amongst the brethren. Neither the apostle nor we would wish to imply that the believing brother or master or employer of others should in no respect be influenced by the principles of his religion in his dealings with his

employees. Quite the contrary, so surely as he would become a follower of the Lord and taught of Him, his faith would affect his thoughts and words and doings in many respects and toward all men. The thought would be that this believing brother and employer should regulate his conduct toward all his employees as much in accord with the divine instruction and the Golden Rule as it might be possible to do under present selfish conditions. Thus, not only the believing employees would be benefited by their master's faith and works, but also the unbelieving employees. The believing employee should be content with the same treatment which he would recognize to be proper toward the unbelieving employee; he should be content with the same Golden Rule that should govern all the affairs of the Lord's people, whatever their position in life.

THOSE WHO STIR UP DISCONTENT

The apostle points out in the context, that some, unable to appreciate the real advantages accruing to the believer, see only temporal advantage, and to these the first and practically only thought is gain —personal advantage as a result of godliness. It would appear that in the apostle's day certain features were stirring up the brethren along the line of earthly advantage through Christianity rather than along the lines of spiritual advantages. Such had grasped only those features of Christianity which would be agreeable to their selfish propensities. They should be treated as false brethren in the church, stirrers up of discontent, "consenting not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ," and to the doctrines which are in accord with godliness. Our Lord Jesus, both by word and example, taught that our labor and strife should not be for the meat that perisheth, nor for food and raiment, nor for earthly advantages and honors, but that we should seek chiefly the kingdom, and should rely upon our heavenly Father to supply us all earthly things according to our needs in His estimation.

Such as oppose these same doctrines of the scriptures — such as merely stir up the minds of the people along the lines of selfishness, sowing in their hearts the seed of discontent, the apostle assures us are not teachers of the truth, but "proud, knowing nothing as he ought to know it, doting about questions and strifes of words" —stirrers up of envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings and perverse dispositions of men of corrupt minds, and lacking the real truth of the divine revelation. Their mistake, he assures us, is in reckoning godliness according to the gain that could be made of it in the present life. There are numerous teachers of this kind in the world today. No doubt many of them are sincere, as were those in the apostle's day. There are Socialists, for instance, from

conviction, breeders of discontent, because they believe this the way to bring eventually a blessing to many. Good and bad motives commingle in their reasoning and in their teachings, but the sum of their difficulty, as the apostle points out, is that they have received merely a smattering of Christian teachings and have not discerned its essence at all; they are talking about matters which they do not understand.

TRUE GODLINESS AND TRUE CONTENTMENT

The godly contentment which the apostle would inculcate is of the kind that is “not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” It finds contentment in being in accord with the Lord, and finds the divine plan so grand, so superior to anything that human ingenuity could devise, that it rejoices to adopt the divine will in every particular. It says, in the language of the poet,

“Content, whatever lot I see,
Since ‘tis my God that leadeth me.”

It begins with the true appreciation of personal unworthiness and a proportionate appreciation of divine goodness. It sees through the light of the word that through disobedience a death sentence came upon all the human family. It sees that whatever measure of life and health and strength we possess by nature is so much of divine favor to which we have no proper title. It is appreciative, therefore, of the present life, with its sorrows and trials and difficulties — realizing that present conditions are quite good enough for a race of convicts, under the death sentence. It rejoices in divine mercy when made aware of the mercy of God in Christ; that to secure for mankind an opportunity for resurrection and a future life, the Lord Jesus left the heavenly glory, came down to human conditions that He might take the place of Adam—that He might redeem Adam from the sentence of death, whereby not only he, but all who

2H66

had come under the sentence through him, would be released from that penalty or curse. Learning that in God's due time the curse will be rolled back from the world, and the blessing of the Lord will reach every creature through the millennial kingdom, it rejoices in this gracious purpose of God, and is satisfied to await His time.

When informed that a further feature of the divine plan is the selection during this gospel age of a "little flock," chiefly of the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs with Christ in the glorious millennial kingdom, godly contentment overwhelms us with the thought of divine goodness and grace, and gladly accepts the proffer even when assured what the terms or conditions will be—to be not of the world, to be misunderstood by the world, to be counted peculiar, to practice self-denial not only as respects sin but also self-sacrificing as respects human rights, to thus suffer with Christ as a member of His body, the true church.

Godly contentment, fed by the "meat in due season of the Lord's word, grows stronger and stronger and more and more appreciative until, as exemplified in the Apostle Paul himself, it is able to "rejoice in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope which maketh not ashamed" — that blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ — that glorious hope of becoming heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away—that blessed hope of which we spoke this afternoon, the hope based upon the "oath-bound covenant" of God, of which the apostle says, "Which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the veil" —the hope of becoming thus, with Christ, members of the seed of Abraham, which shall during the millennial age be privileged to participate in the great work of the kingdom, the work of blessing all the families of the earth with a knowledge of the Lord and with the life which He purchased with His own precious blood for so many as will obey Him.

"GREAT GAIN" OVER WHAT?

This is the godliness and this is the contentment which the apostle in our text declares to be great gain. It is a great gain over what we possessed as natural men, without God and without hope, or with little appreciation of God and little hope. It is a great gain, too, as respects even the present life, for, as the apostle elsewhere declares, it has "the promise of the life that now is, and also of the life which is to come." (1 Tim. 4:8) The advantages of the life which is to come we have already

considered; let us now glance at some of the advantages in this present life. We are aware that many sincerely believe that the Lord's people who have godliness are miserable, and their condition anything but enviable. This is because the worldly mind measures the Lord's people by its own standards and from its own standpoint; the worldly think how destitute of joy and blessing the life would be for them were they in a condition which they imagine the Lord's people to be in. But they are not in that condition. The world is continually seeking for happiness, seeking for pleasure, like the hunter who forever hunts but finds little. On the contrary, the Lord's true people have found the pearl of great price; they have found that which satisfies their longings as nothing else can do; they have secured the happiness, the joy, the peace, which the world is seeking after, but vainly, because seeking in the wrong direction.

Speaking of this same class controlled by godly contentment the Lord says, "My peace I give unto you—not as the world giveth give I unto you—let not your hearts be troubled neither let them be afraid." (John 14:27) Not all of the Lord's true people have reached the degree of peace and joy in the Lord and the godly contentment which the scriptures assure us is the portion the Lord designs for his consecrated ones; but as we thus hold out before you the scriptural declaration of our privileges, it is our hope that each will be stimulated to more firmly lay hold upon this blessed condition for the present life, which the Lord designs should be for our comfort and joy in the Holy Spirit. The apostle speaks of this same condition, saying, "Let the peace of God which passeth all understanding rule in your hearts." (Phil. 4:7) This peaceful condition is to be the rule; anything else is to be the exception and more and more the rare exception. These goodly fruits of Paradise grow freely in the garden of the Lord, even in this present time. Let us partake of them freely and have the refreshment and rest in the Lord which he designed for us, and proportionately we will be letting our light so shine before men that all those whom the Lord hath similarly called to joy and peace and blessing may more and more be attracted, that they with us may journey onward joyful, even in the narrow way, toward the heavenly kingdom.

DISCONTENT AMONGST THE RICH

The lesson which the apostle crystallizes in our text he still further amplifies in the verses following it, in which he addresses the rich and exhorts them to contentment, as in the preceding verses he exhorts the poor and the servants to be content. The gospel of the Lord Jesus is adapted to all conditions. The common leveling of humanity was not the design of the Lord

for, nor is it applicable to, present time arrangements and conditions. Not until the “little flock” shall reach the kingdom will they reach a plane of full equality; and ever then the scriptural assurance is that amongst those enjoying a participation in the Lord’s resurrection, the first resurrection, there will be differences. “As star differeth from star in glory.” It was in the divine design that humanity should not reach a general level. The great leveling time will be during the millennial age, and the leveling processes are represented by the symbolical language that every mountain shall be brought low and every valley shall be exalted. Yet even in the Millennial age —subsequently, as we understand the scripture — there will be law and order and some of humanity will be chosen as representatives of these necessary conditions. Anarchy and lawlessness are contrary to every feature of the divine plan.

The apostle’s argument is that they who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition, because the love of money is a root from which springs evil of every kind. The essence of the apostle’s argument is that we who have experienced the grace of God in the forgiveness of our sins, and who have been called by Him to joint-heirship with His Son in the kingdom that will bless the world shortly, should consider of chief importance the things and conditions which would assist us in making our calling and election sure. He would have us see not only that riches might be a hindrance to our faithful running in the race in the narrow way, but that even the will to be rich, the desire to be rich, might become a stumbling-stone to us.

THE RICH NOT LESS NOBLE THAN THE POOR

It is not because some of the rich are not equally as fine characters as some of the poor, and hence equally as acceptable to the Lord as the poor, that the Lord declares that “not many rich, not many wise, not many great, not many mighty” shall attain joint-heirship in the kingdom; but because riches and honors and fame are apt to entangle and to draw the heart’s affections and zeal away from the heavenly things to the good earthly portion being enjoyed. Hence it is that, while many of the rich are noble, yet “not many rich and not many noble” will attain a place in the kingdom. Riches bring with them their trials and their snares, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

The apostle does not say that riches send men to eternal torment and flame, but that they tend toward their destruction — the loss of destruction of their usefulness in the highest sense possible in the present time, the destruction of their

hopes and interests, etc., in the kingdom in the future, and, if they do not reform, the tendency would be eventually to lead them down to the second death — to utter destruction — to annihilation — the end of all who will not come eventually into accord with the divine arrangement. The apostle's thought is that the tendency of money under present conditions is downward and deathward.

DISCONTENT — COVETING MONEY

There are many who have “the love of money” who have little of the money itself. The injury comes not so much from the money as from the love of it, hence these money lovers without the money are in as great danger, or possibly greater danger, than many of those who possess the wealth. As the apostle points out, “some coveting after money have erred from the faith and pierce themselves through with many sorrows — possibly without getting the money they coveted. We think of Judas in this connection, and remember how his difficulty was the love of money, how he was willing to sell his Master into the hands of his enemies. And we think of some today who are willing to sell the Master's representatives — His truth and His brethren — some who are ready to deny these because of their love of money. We can only say that they have the spirit of Judas and not the spirit of the Lord.

We can only warn those who feel in their hearts such a craving, such a covetousness for money, that they are in great danger — danger as respects this present life, that instead of crowning themselves with wealth and honor they are piercing themselves with many sorrows, wounds of conscience, wounds from friends, wounds from every quarter. We can only admonish, in the language of the apostle, that the Lord's people having food and raiment in reasonable quality and quantity, should be satisfied, content and thankful — should not spend strength in amassing wealth or in worldly ambitions. On the contrary they should begin to enjoy the Lord, to rest their hearts with contentment on Him, to study and rejoice in the glorious “things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him,” to enjoy “the peace of God which passeth understanding ruling in their hearts,” and to engage with zeal in the service of the Lord; that enjoying His peace and His favor and the glorious hopes, they might communicate the same to all, “even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

In conclusion, then, dear friends, let me urge upon you that you daily and heartily seek to live the new life, as new creatures in Christ Jesus;” to enjoy in this present time the privileges and peace which are properly ours through Christ Jesus our Lord — rest in His finished work as the ground of our peace with God; rest of heart in His promises that those who seek

2H68

first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness shall have all their necessities supplied according to divine wisdom; rest in the thought that divine wisdom is superior to all other wisdom and superior to any of our own plans and projects. While active in the Lord's service, seeking to let our light shine out before men, seeking to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His, seeking to be "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit serving the Lord," the peace of God

will dwell in us richly, and we shall be content with the results of His work; content that having done all in our power to do, the Lord will graciously accomplish His own great purposes in us in His own due time; content with the thought that all things are working together for good to us and to all who love God, the called ones according to His purpose; content too that the divine plan for the world will in "due time" justify the long ages of expectancy under the reign of sin and death. "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

March 14, 1904

*Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
March 20, 1917*

GOD'S BOOKS OF REMEMBRANCE

March 14. — Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny spoke twice yesterday at the Auditorium in Cincinnati. The morning discourse was on God's Books of Remembrance. The speaker took for his text Malachi 3:16-17: "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels." Pastor Russell spoke as follows:

Words are but pictures by which we convey thoughts. Thus considered, the words of our text are not limited to books shaped and bound after the ordinary custom of our day, nor to books written and rolled as a scroll after the manner of books of olden times when these words were penned. Rather we should take the broader thought, namely, that a book is a symbol of a permanent record, no matter how the record is made, by pen or type impression or by the impress of memory. The God revealed in the Bible differs totally from the gods of the heathen. One noticeable difference is that the heathen gods are all represented as being so great, so dignified, so distant, as to seldom notice their subjects, and then usually in anger and

with punishments. But the God of the Bible, on the contrary, reveals Himself as one who, though great, looks down in compassion upon His creatures, taking interest in every incident and affair of their lives, and especially interested in those who are devoted to Him. Repeatedly we are assured that He remembereth our frame, that He knoweth we are dust, that He looks with compassion, sympathy, yea, with love, upon His creatures, notwithstanding their fallen condition. Our text and various other records of the Scriptures emphasize this thought, not only that the Lord takes notice of the interests of His people, but that He takes a permanent or lasting note of their loyalty— that their fidelity to Him is not forgotten and will surely have a reward, even though for the present time circumstances may seem to contradict this, and the Lord's faithful ones may seem to be neglected and in no sense advantaged above their enemies.

LISTS OF GOD'S FRIENDS

God's books of remembrance are frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, but never as records of evil, of sin, nor of sinners. Only of the good does God keep record according to the instruction of this symbol. It may be profitable to notice just why this is so. It is because the whole race of mankind came under condemnation through the disobedience of our first parents. The sentence of death passed upon all without exception. There was no need of writing the names of the condemned ones, for all were condemned; but when God, in great mercy and compassion, provided a redemption of the world through the death of His Son, the proclamation of mercy and forgiveness went forth. During this Gospel Age, while mankind is still in bondage to sin and death, and while the god of this world, Satan, still holds control over the masses of mankind, blinding them through sin and superstition and ignorance and prejudice against the Truth, against God and against righteousness, the few who exercise faith in God are specially pleasing to Him. God does not change conditions so as to interrupt the faith of these or make it unnecessary; but, while testing or proving their faith, He promises them the greater proportionate blessings in future. It is this class that is addressed in our text and respecting whom it is declared that their names are written in a book of the Lord's remembrance, which signifies that this class, specially pleasing to the Lord, will not be forgotten by Him,

2H69

and that He has special rewards for them when His due time for giving the rewards shall arrive.

To be thus written in the book of God's remembrance signifies His friendship, His love, His blessing. And as the divine disfavor meant the sentence of death upon

Father Adam and upon his race, so the securing of divine favor through Christ implies a return to the favor originally lost and to the everlasting life which God originally purposed for all of His intelligent creatures in accord with Himself. In other words, favor with God meant life everlasting, and divine disfavor means the loss of life everlasting—means the second death — means extinction. Thus the sentence of death that came upon the whole race of man is now being offset to some extent, because through Jesus a way of return to divine favor and to everlasting life has been opened up, and those who secure the divine favor thus have their names written in God’s remembrance as His friends. It does not surprise us, therefore, to find this book of remembrance elsewhere styled the “book of life.”

But, while the names of the Lord’s faithful ones are now written in this book of life, in this book of His remembrance, as amongst His friends, and those whom He approves and desires shall enjoy His favor forever, nevertheless, life itself is not secured now, it is not granted now — merely the promise of it may now be enjoyed. Our names are thus figuratively written in the book of life, in the book of God’s remembrance, from the moment we exercise the proper obedient faith in Christ and make our consecration to walk in His steps; but unfaithfulness on our part would cause our names to be blotted out of this book; hence, having come into full relationship, our great concern must be to so faithfully continue in His love and service that He will not blot out our names —that He will continue to esteem us worthy of His love and favor through Christ down to the very close of this present life; and that then as a result of this we may be granted a share in the first resurrection in which we will get back the life conditions, the perfect conditions, absolutely and free from imperfection and death.

SOME NAMES TO BE BLOTTED OUT

This thought is repeatedly presented to us in the Scriptures: I quote you our Lord’s words in His message to the churches (Rev. 3:5), “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed with white raiment, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before my Father and before His angels.” The same thought is presented to us in another form in Daniel’s prophecy (12:1). Speaking of the resurrection at the close of this Gospel Age, the message is, “At that time my people shall be delivered every one that shall be found written in the book.”

Not only are the Lord’s faithful people of this Gospel Age interested in this book of life, but the world of mankind during the next age, the Millennial Age, will be

similarly interested, though not in the same book of life. The book of life now open is merely for the overcomers of this present time — those who overcome through faith —those who are now called in advance of the world of mankind. With the end of this age this book of life will be permanently closed, for the call of this Gospel Age is a spiritual call, “a heavenly calling,” a “high calling,” to a change of nature —to life everlasting on a spirit plane and not as human beings.

With the dawning of the Millennial Age the divine plan will reach the world in general, and the divine proposition of blessing does not offer a spirit existence to mankind, but a human, earthly existence, which through the Apostle Peter is explained to be “restitution” (Acts 3:19-21) to all that was lost through the fall —to an earthly life, to an earthly Eden, “Paradise restored,” recovered from the curse. The new conditions properly enough call for new tests, and likewise the different reward of everlasting earthly perfection and life implies a different record, a different book of remembrance from the one now open, in which only those granted a share in the heavenly calling are recorded.

It is in full harmony with this thought that we read in Revelation (20:12), in the picture of the Millennial Age and the judgment or trial then granted to the world of mankind, these words — “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened which was the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things written in the books according to their works.”

ONE CHANCE FOR EVERY MAN

We who now believe in the Lord Jesus rejoice that our faith in Him secures to us a new trial for eternal life. In the first trial our first parents represented themselves and all of their posterity in their failure, and consequently all shared their penalty, death. It was because Christ redeemed us from that sentence of death that we have this trial for eternal life in this present time, and it is because of this same sacrifice for sins that ultimately the whole world will have a trial for everlasting life — through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood. This Gospel Age is the trial time for the few that now have ears to hear and hearts to obey and to walk by faith; the next age, the millennial period, will be the world’s trial day, when those who have not now ears to hear and eyes to

2H70

see God’s grace in Christ shall have their eyes of understanding opened and their deaf ears unstopped, and be brought to a knowledge of the truth.

The text just quoted (Rev. 20:12) gives a picture of the world's day of trial for life everlasting. The great white throne beautifully represents the justice and purity of the trial, a full, fair opportunity to be granted every creature to come to a knowledge of God and to a knowledge of His gracious arrangements, and, if they will, to attain to the divine favor and blessing of life everlasting. The dead small and great standing before the throne represents how the world of mankind, including those who have gone down into the great prison house of death, shall during the Millennial Age come forth to the blessed opportunities and privileges of the millennial trial time. The expression "and the books were opened" refers to the general unsealing of the knowledge of truth in that time —particularly it refers to the books of the Bible which are now sealed, dark and incomprehensible to the majority of mankind, but which then shall be opened and clearly understood by the whole world. The truths which will test mankind during the Millennial day will be the very ones which the Lord has emphasized in His blessed book—the words of the Lord Jesus and the apostles and prophets. Thus our Lord declared in advance, "My words shall judge you in the last day" — the Millennial day of a thousand years length. All who will ever come into harmony with God must reach that harmony on the basis of obedience to the divine requirements, the essence of which divine law is love for God and for mankind.

ANOTHER BOOK OF LIFE TO BE OPENED

During that time of testing and proving "another book of life will be opened." The overcomers in that time will not be joint-heirs with Christ in the heavenly kingdom and sharers in the heavenly glory, for such is not the divine provision nor the divine offer. Those exceedingly great and precious promises are for the little flock who during this Gospel Age are faithful even unto death, following in the footsteps of Jesus. Nevertheless, the blessing God has in store for the world is a wonderful blessing—far greater than mankind in general is able to conceive. All those who under those conditions pledge themselves to obedience to the Lord and His kingdom of righteousness will have their names written in that book of life. For the entire thousand years, to its very close, those names may remain written, and will not be blotted out except through a direct violation in letter and in spirit of the contract under which the names were written. And at the close of that period a general test will be applied to them all to prove whether or not they are at heart, as well as outwardly, loyal to the Lord and to the principles of His government, the principles of righteousness. If found disloyal in any degree, their names will surely be blotted out, for nothing is more dearly set forth in the word of God than that all sins, and every person and thing having the slightest sympathy with sin shall be blotted out of existence by that time; so that the new

dispensation, the eternity beyond the millennium, will not only be totally free from sin, but, additionally, all who will enjoy that eternity will be such as love righteousness and hate iniquity.

That the class mentioned as written in the Lord's book of life during the millennial age is a different one entirely from the class whose names are now being written is evident in another manner, by the declaration that those of the millennial age will be "judged according to their works." On the contrary, we who are now being judged are tried for life everlasting, are judged according to our faith—"According to thy faith be it unto thee." Our faith must be corroborated by our works, but under present conditions our works cannot be perfect because of weaknesses of the flesh and imperfections of our surroundings. Only our faith and intention can be perfect now, and according to these the Lord deals with us. During the millennial age, on the contrary, faith will be a comparatively easy thing, and hence not an adequate test. Then, too, works of righteousness will be more and more possible as the world of mankind make progress out of the sin and death conditions of the present time, up, up, up, by restitution processes, nearer and nearer to the perfection that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.

But we are specially interested in our own conditions of the present time, although we greatly rejoice to see in God's Word the blessing and peace provided for all the families of the earth, and which shortly, in due time, will be put within their reach through the glorified Christ Jesus and the Church, which is His body. Deeply interested in the writings of our own names in the book of life, the book of God's remembrance, we turn again to our text to note some of the conditions therein set forth, that we may be the better prepared to make our calling and election sure — to make sure that our names are written in the Lord's great record and that our course in life may be such that He will not blot them out.

NOW WE COUNT THE PROUD HAPPY

The context clearly describes the conditions as they have prevailed through the period known as "this present evil world" —the period in which evil prevails and righteousness is at a discount, the period in which

2H71

"the prince of this world" works and rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and those who are faithful to the Lord are not only in a small minority, but are discredited with the majority and obliged to endure hardness as good soldiers — the time to which our Lord referred, saying, "Marvel not if the world hate you; ye

know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own. "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven!" If such be your experience for righteousness' sake, be assured that your names will be written in the Lord's book of remembrance and not blotted out. Verse 15 says: "Now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." These words describe the present time, when the prince of this world flourishes and when his followers are numerous, and when the followers of righteousness and true holiness of heart are correspondingly repressed and disdained by the world. The Lord in our text is giving His people the proper thought, to offset the discouraging outward circumstances of the present time. From the human standpoint they might have expected that their becoming the Lord's followers would have meant an increase in worldly prosperity and an immunity from the tribulations, had it not been for the Lord's distinct statements on the subject, assuring all who would be His followers that they must take up their cross if they would follow Him, and that through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom. The consolation is that the Lord knoweth the sincerity of our hearts and of our loyalty to Him and to the principles of His righteousness — that the Lord makes a record of this matter, so that there will be no danger that even a hair of our heads should fall or a solitary disadvantage come to us through obedience to Him that would not be known to and appreciated by Him and ultimately have its reward.

It is in view of the exceeding great and precious promises which the Lord has set before His people in the word, and which they see with the eye of faith, that they are enabled to withstand the trials and difficulties and persecutions and evil speakings associated with the narrow way in which they are called to walk as true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. To these, in proportion as they exercise faith in the Lord, the promises of the future will much more than compensate for the sacrifices and self-denial of the present life. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up my jewels."

There is a precious thought here — the class which the Lord is now selecting, the Bride of Christ, the Little Flock which shall be joint-heirs with Him in the kingdom, are to know that in the Lord's sight they are specially precious — "jewels." They are to know that then God so loved the whole world as to provide through Jesus a great salvation, which shall ultimately extend its opportunities to every member of the race of Adam and give all an opportunity to come to a knowledge of God and to obedience to His laws and correspondingly to everlasting life.

He made a special provision, first, for those loyal to Him during this present evil time, when sin so abounds — these are His special jewels, His loved, His own.

GOD'S JEWELS BEING POLISHED

And this thought of being ‘jewels’ carries with it an explanation of the trials and difficulties which the Lord permits now to come upon these. The trials and difficulties of life are but the polishings by which these jewels are being prepared the more perfectly to reflect the glorious light of the goodness of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. In view of the blessings and glories of the future this jewel class may well esteem, as the apostle did, that present trials and difficulties are but light afflictions working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. With this thought before the mind, we can well overlook the things of this present time, which are but transitory, and keep the eye fixed upon the heavenly things which God hath promised to them that love Him.

Incidentally the Lord mentions a fact that is apparent to us all, namely, that this jewel class that “feared the Lord” rather than feared man, and that hearkened to the Word of the Lord rather than to the creeds of men, that feared not what man might do or say unto them, but rather were careful to secure the Lord’s favor and blessing — these “spake often one to another.” Such are drawn together—their love for the Lord and for righteousness naturally and properly draws them to others who have the same love, and this is the Lord’s intention — that they should speak often one to another respecting Him and His promises, upon which their hopes are built—that they should encourage one another in the narrow way and build one another up in the most holy faith. As the Apostle expresses the matter, they should forget not the assembling of themselves together — and so much the more as they see the day drawing on.

It does not surprise us either that our text declares that when the Lord’s faithful ones come together to talk of Him and His righteousness and His promises and His plans, and to stimulate each other’s faith and to develop one another and to stir up one another’s pure minds by way of remembrance of the Lord’s Word —it does not surprise us to be informed that the

2H72

Lord hearkens, listens, that He takes note of their sentiments of loyalty and faith, and that these things are associated with them in the divine remembrance —these things mark them as His people, the ones whom He is pleased to bless, and who will be blessed ultimately by

being received to Himself as joint-heirs with the Lord in the kingdom.

THEY THAT THOUGHT UPON GOD'S NAME

Some who draw near to the Lord with their lips, but whose hearts are far from Him, think upon their own "name" —their own honor; others think upon the "name" or honor of the sect or party with which they are identified; but those whom the Lord will remember as His jewels will be those who think upon His "name," His honor. Let us be of this class. And such a respect for the divine "name" or honor, will surely not only hinder us from associating that holy name with prevalent false doctrines, "doctrines of devils," which misrepresent our Heavenly Father as purposing the eternal torment of nearly all of our race, but will on the contrary make us zealous in pulling down of such falsities which got their start in the "dark ages" and are "blasphemies" against our God whose name is love, and whose mandate is that all the wilfully sick shall be destroyed—not tormented.

Brethren, as fellow pilgrims in the narrow way, in the footsteps of our Lord, we are met together today after the manner described in our text. We are speaking one to another; not in the words of man's wisdom, not along lines of evolution and higher criticism, not along lines of business and pleasure, but along the lines of our Heavenly Father's direction for the study of His Word, for our mutual edification and upbuilding in the knowledge of the grace of God. We, then, according to our text, may realize the Lord's presence with us, that He hearkens to our songs of praise, to our petitions, to our rehearsing of His Word and promises, and that He is with us for our blessing, for our comfort, for our strengthening. As a result of this day's gathering in His name, may we all be the better prepared for the future polishings and testings which we must properly expect to be a part of our lot, that by these we may be made ready for the heavenly kingdom and its glorious opportunities for blessing the world.

It will not be very long that the wicked shall flourish as the green bay tree, as the Psalmist describes; it will not be very long that Satan will be the prince of this world; it will not be very long that he that would live godly shall suffer persecution and opposition. Very soon the prayer which our dear Master taught us will be fulfilled, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Very soon the great adversary himself will be bound that he shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years of Christ's reign are ended; very soon we shall be changed from the earthly conditions to the heavenly conditions, be like our dear Redeemer, see Him as He is and share His glory; very soon the great time of trouble which is now overhanging the world will burst and pass away, and prepare the world for the millennial

blessings; very soon the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, so that none will need say to his neighbor, “Know thou the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least of them even unto the greatest;” very soon the grand consummation of the divine plan will thus be accomplished. Let us be glad and rejoice and give glory to our Lord, and seek more and more faithfully to walk in His footsteps even to the end of the journey. His grace be with us all.

The Pittsburgh Gazette, March 21, 1904

CHRIST, OUR PASSOVER

DATE FOR THE LORD’S SUPPER

Even standing room was a premium in the Bible House chapel, Allegheny, yesterday at 3 p.m., when Pastor Charles T. Russell spoke on the significance of the Lord’s Supper, after announcing that the date for its annual celebration, according to the custom of the primitive church, will fall this year on March 29 and be celebrated at Bible House chapel and by readers of the Watch Tower publications all over the world on that date at 7 p.m. All who recognize themselves as members of the “Church of the Firstborn whose names are written in heaven” (Heb. 12:23), were cordially invited to participate.

His text and discourse follows:

“Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” 1 Cor. 5:7-8

Notable among the experiences of typical Israel was

2H73

the Passover. The Feast of the Passover, celebrated every year for seven days, began with the fifteenth day of the first month. It celebrated in a general way the deliverance of the people of Israel from the bondage of Egypt—but particularly the passing over, the sparing alive of the first-born of that nation during the plague of death which came upon the Egyptians, and which, as the last of the plagues, finally compelled them to release the Israelites from their compulsory servitude. The passing over of the first-born of Israel became a precursor of the liberation of the whole nation of Israel, and their passing safely over the Red Sea into freedom from the bondage of Egypt.

We can readily see that such a portentous event would properly be commemorated by the Israelites as intimately identified with the birth of their nation; and thus it is celebrated by the Jews unto this day. Spiritual

Israelites are interested in those events, as they are interested in all the doings and arrangements of their Heavenly Father, both in respect to His typical people, Israel after the flesh, and in respect to the whole world of mankind. But we have a still deeper interest in those matters which occurred in Egypt, in view of the fact that the Lord has revealed to us the “mystery” that those things which happened unto natural Israel were intended to typify and foreshadow still grander things in the divine plan respecting anti-typical Spiritual Israel — the “New Creation.”

SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES ALSO WAIT

In reference to these spiritual things, the apostle declares that the “natural man receiveth them not, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; but God hath revealed them unto us (the New Creation) by His Spirit” (1 Cor. 2:10-14). God used the apostles as His mouthpieces to give us certain dues whereby, under the guidance of His Spirit, we may understand the deep things of God. One of these clues is found in our text. Following the apostle’s indication, we see clearly that Israel according to the flesh typified the whole people of God — all who shall ultimately become His people, down to the very close of the millennial age; that the Egyptians represented the opponents of the people of God, Pharaoh, their ruler, representing Satan, the prince of evil and darkness; and Pharaoh’s servants and horsemen representing fallen angels and men who have associated or who will associate themselves with Satan as opponents to the Lord and His people.

As the people of Israel longed for deliverance and groaned under their taskmasters, yet were weak and unable to deliver themselves, and could never have freed themselves from the yoke of Egypt had it not been for the Lord’s intervention on their behalf, and His appointment and sending of Moses to be their deliverer, so we see the world of mankind at the present time and throughout the past, groaning and travailing in pain together under the exactions of “the prince of this world” and his minions, sin and death. These hundreds of millions of humanity have a craving for liberty from bondage to their own sins and weaknesses, as well as for release from the penalties of these — pain and death. But without divine aid mankind is powerless. A few make a vigorous struggle and accomplish something; but none get free. The entire race of Adam is in bondage to sin and death, and their only hope is in God and in the antitypical Moses, who He has promised shall deliver His people in His appointed time — bringing them across the Red Sea—representing the second death, in which Satan and all who shall affiliate or sympathize with him and his evil course shall be everlastingly destroyed, as was typified in the overwhelming of Pharaoh and his hosts in the literal Red Sea. But the Lord’s people “shall not be hurt in the second death.”

DELIVERANCE OF THE FIRST-BORNS

The foregoing is the general picture; but, inside of it, and yet a part of it, was another, a particular picture, which related not to mankind in general and their deliverance from the bondage of sin and death, but only to a special class among them — “The firstborn.” Corresponding to these as their antitype, we have brought to our attention by the inspired Word, “the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven”—the New Creation. In the type the first-born occupied a special place — they were the heirs; a special place also in that they were subjected to a special testing or trial in advance of their brethren. They became liable to death before the general exodus, and when the exodus did occur these firstborn ones had a special place in it — a special work to do in connection with the general deliverance, for they became a separated class, represented in the tribe of Levi. They were separated from their brethren, giving up entirely their inheritance in the land, that, according to the divine arrangement, they might be the teachers of their brethren, ministering to them in holy things.

This tribe or house of Levi clearly represents “the household of faith,” which is represented in turn by the preparatory royal priesthood, which gives up inheritance in earthly things on behalf of the brethren, and shall by and by constitute actually the royal priesthood, whose chief priest is the Lord, and which shall bless, rule and instruct the world during the millennial age. As the first-born of Israel in Egypt

2H74

were subject to death, but were passed over, escaped it, and losing the earthly inheritance became a priesthood, so the antitypical church of first-borns in the present time is subject now to the second death, having their testing or trial for everlasting life or everlasting death in advance of the remainder of mankind, and passes from death unto life, through the merit of the Redeemer’s blood—death.

Becoming participants in their Lord’s grace, they renounce, or sacrifice with Him, the earthly inheritance, the earthly portion, the earthly life, that they may attain heaven and its “life more abundant.” Thus, while the church of the first-born, the New Creation, “all die like men” (Psa. 82:7), and in respect to earthly things seem to lose and renounce more than do others, nevertheless, though the natural man understands it not, these are “passed over,” or rescued from death, and, as the royal priesthood, will, with their chief priest, Jesus, be made partakers of glory, honor and immortality. These, whose passing over occurs during the night-time of this gospel age—before the millennial morning dawns, and its sun

of righteousness arises — are to be the leaders of the Lord's host, to bring it forth from the bondage of sin and Satan. Mark how this agrees with the language of the apostle, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together" — "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God" — waiting for the complete passing over of the church of the first-born in the first resurrection, to glory, honor and immortality. —Rom. 8:22,19

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER LAMB

But, now, another feature of the type is important. In order to effect the passing over of the first-born, and the consequent deliverance of the Lord's people in the type, it was necessary that the Passover lamb should be slain, and that its blood should be sprinkled upon the door-posts and lintels of the house, that its flesh should be eaten that night with its bitter herbs, and with unleavened bread. Thus each house of Israel represented "the household of faith," as each lamb represented "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and the first-born of each family represented the Christ, head and body, the New Creation. The "bitter herbs" represented the trials and afflictions of this present time, which all the more serve to whet the appetite of the household of faith for the lamb and the unleavened bread. Moreover, as each household was to eat with staff in hand and girded for a journey, it represented that the antitypical first-born and the household of faith who would thus partake of the lamb during the night time of this gospel age would be pilgrims and strangers in the world, who would realize the bondage of sin and death, and be desirous of being led by the Lord into from sin and corruption — into liberty of the sons of God.

It was in harmony with this type of the killing of the Passover lamb on the 14th day of the first month — the day preceding the seven days' Feast of the Passover, celebrated by the Jews—that our Lord died, as the antitypical Passover lamb, "the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." At no other time was it possible for our Lord to have finished in death the sacrifice which he began when he was 30 years of age in his baptism unto death. Hence it was that, although the Jews sought many times to take Him, no man laid hands on Him, because "His hour was not yet fully come." John 12:8, 30

As the Jews were commanded to select the lamb of sacrifice on the 10th day of the first month, and to receive it into their houses on that date, the Lord appropriately offered Himself to them on that date, when five days before the Passover, He rode into the city on an ass, the multitude crying, "Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" "He came unto His own, and His own (as a nation) received Him not, but as many as received Him (individually) to them gave He liberty to become sons of God." The

nation, through its representatives, the rulers, instead of receiving Him, rejected Him, and thus identified themselves for the time with the adversary. Nevertheless, by God's grace the blood of the new covenant was sprinkled upon the house of Jacob also, and upon all who desire harmony with God, and they were partakers of the merits of the lamb —yet they refused to eat of the antitypical lamb —they lost the opportunity of becoming as a nation the first-born ones, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people of Messiah —they lost the opportunity of sharing in the advance passing over and becoming members of the New Creation, with life more abundant in glory, honor and immortality; but we are glad to be informed elsewhere in the scriptures that they will, nevertheless, have a glorious opportunity of accepting the lamb of God, of eating, appropriating, His flesh, His sacrifice, and of thus escaping the bondage of sin and death, under the leadership of the Lord and of His faithful brethren, spiritual Israel, the antitypical church of the firstborn. Rom. 11:11-26

OUR LORD'S MEMORIAL SUPPER

It was at the close of our Lord's ministry, on the 14th day of the first month, in "the same night in which he was betrayed," and in the same day,

2H75

therefore, in which he died, as the antitypical lamb (the Jewish day being reckoned as beginning at sunset, for this very purpose), that He celebrated with His disciples the typical passover of the Jews —eating, with His twelve apostles, the typical lamb which represented himself, His own sacrifice for the sins of the world and the "meat indeed," in the strength of which the life, the liberties and the blessings of the sons of God are alone obtained. The eating of this supper on the night preceding our Lord's death, and yet the same day, was made possible by the Jewish custom, which began each day, not at midnight, but in the evening. The Lord evidently arranged all the affairs of Israel in conformity with the types which they were to express.

As Jews "born under the law," it was obligatory upon our Lord and His apostles to celebrate this type, and at its proper time; and it was after they had thus observed the Jewish supper, eating the lamb with unleavened bread and herbs, and probably also, as was customary, with "fruit of the vine," that the Lord —taking part of the unleavened bread and of the fruit of the vine remaining over from the Jewish supper, the type, instituted amongst His disciples and for His entire church, whom they represented (John 17:20), a new thing, that with them, as the spiritual Israel, the church

of the first-born, the New Creation, should take the place of, and supplant the Jewish Passover supper. Our Lord was not instituting another and a higher type of the Passover. On the contrary, the type was about to begin its fulfillment, and, hence, would be no longer appropriate to those who accepted the fulfillment. Our Lord, as the antitypical lamb, was about to be slain, as the apostle expresses it in the text, "Christ our Passover (lamb) is slain."

None accepting Christ as the Passover lamb, and thus accepting the antitype as taking the place of the type, could any longer with propriety prepare a typical lamb and eat it in commemoration of the typical deliverance. The appropriate thing thenceforth for all believers in Jesus as the true Passover lamb would be the sprinkling of the door posts of the heart with His blood: "Having their hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil" (from present condemnation —realizing their sins propitiated through His blood, and that through His blood they now have forgiveness of sins.) These henceforth must eat, or appropriate to themselves, the merits of their Redeemer —the merits of "the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:6) By faith they must partake of those merits, and realize that as their sins were laid upon the Lord, and He died for them, so His merits and righteousness are imputed to them. These things they eat, or appropriate by faith.

If then, "The Lord's Supper" took the place of the passover supper, yet not as a higher type — the antitype having commenced what was it? We answer that it was a memorial of the antitype — a remembrancer for His followers of the beginning of the fulfillment of the antitypical Passover.

DELIVERANCE OF THE ANTITYPICAL FIRST-BORNS

Thus to accept our lamb, and so to commemorate His death for us, means expectancy regarding the promised deliverance of God's people, the antitypical first-borns, and therefore signifies that those appreciating and memorializing intelligently while in the world shall not be of the world; but shall be as pilgrims and strangers, who seek more desirable conditions, free from the blights and sorrows and bondage of the present time of the reign of sin and death. These partake of the true, the antitypical unleavened bread; they seek to have it in its purity, without the corruption (leaven of human theory, blight, ambitions, selfishness, etc.), that they may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. They partake also of the bitter herbs of persecution, in accord with the Master's word, that the servant is not above His lord, and that if the Lord himself was reviled and

persecuted and rejected, they must expect similar treatment because the world knoweth them not, even as it knew Him not. Yes. His testimony is that none will be acceptable to Him whose faithfulness will not draw upon them the world's disfavor. His words are, "Whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution." "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven." Matt. 5:11, 12; 2 Tim. 3:12

When our Lord instituted his memorial supper, generally called the Last Supper, it was, as above stated, a new symbol, built upon and related to the old Passover type, though not a part of it, being a commemoration, or memorial of the antitype. As we read, he "took bread, and when He had given thanks He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you (this represents me, the antitypical lamb;) it represents my flesh. This do in remembrance of Me." Our Lord's evident intention was to fix in the minds of his followers the fact that He is the antitypical lamb to the antitypical first-borns and household of faith. The expression, "This do in remembrance of me." implies that this new institution should take the place with His followers of the former one, which must now become obsolete by reason of fulfillment. "After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, this cup is the New

2H76

Testament (covenant) in My blood" —the blood of the covenant —the blood which seals the new covenant. "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me." We would not understand this to imply the doing of it without respect to times place, etc., but as signifying that henceforth when this cup and unleavened bread were used as a celebration of the Passover, it should on every occasion be considered a celebration, not of the type but of the antitype. As it would not have been lawful, proper or typical to celebrate the Passover at any other time than that appointed of the Lord, likewise it is still not appropriate to celebrate the antitype at any other time than at its anniversary. 1 Cor. 11:25, 26

The apostle adds: "For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come." (1 Cor. 11:26) This shows us that the disciples clearly understood that thenceforth to all the Lord's followers the annual Passover celebration must have a new meaning; the broken loaf representing the Lord's flesh, the cup representing His blood. Although this new institution was not laid upon His followers as a law, and although no penalties were attached for failure of its proper observance, nevertheless the Lord knew well that

all trusting in Him and appreciating him as the antitypical Passover Lamb would be glad to take up the memorial which He thus suggested to them. And so it is still. Faith in the ransom continues to find its illustration in this simple memorial, “till He come” — not only until our Lord’s parousia, or presence, in the harvest or end of this age, but until during His “parousia” one by one His faithful ones have been gathered to Him, beyond the “veil” there to partake of it “anew in the kingdom.”

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER STILL APPROPRIATE

The original celebration of the memorial of our dear Redeemer’s death was, as we have seen, upon a particular date — the 14th day of the first month, Jewish reckoning. And the same date, reached by the same method of counting, is still appropriate, and will appeal to all who are inquiring for the “old paths” and desirous of walking therein. This annual commemoration of the Lord’s death, etc., as instituted by our Lord and observed by the early church, has been revived of late among those coming into the light of present truth.

The Hebrew year begins in the spring, with the first appearance of a new moon after the spring equinox. The 14th day is easily reckoned, but should not be confounded with the feast week, which began on the 15th and continued for a week following it — the Jewish celebration. That week of unleavened bread, celebrated by the Jews with rejoicing, corresponds to, typifies the entire future of a Christian — especially representing the entire year until His next celebration of the memorial supper. With the Jew the sacrifice of the lamb was a means to the end; a start for the feast of the week, which had his special attention. Our memorial relates entirely to the killing of the lamb, and hence belonging to the 14th of Nisan (the first month). Moreover, we are to remember that with the change of counting the hours of the day, the night of the 14th of Nisan would correspond to what we would now call the evening of the 13th.

It is not surprising that, as more and more the real meaning of the Lord’s symbolical supper was lost sight of, the proprieties attaching to its annual observance were also neglected. This becomes more plain of comprehension as we come to understand the history of the matter, as follows:

After the apostles and their immediate successors had fallen asleep — somewhere about the third century — Roman Catholicism was becoming influential in the church. One of its false doctrines was to the effect that while Christ’s death secured a cancellation of the past guilt, it could not offset personal transgressions after the believer had come into relationship with Christ — after baptism; but that a fresh sacrifice was necessary for such

sins. On the basis of this error was built the doctrines of the mass, which, as we have heretofore explained, in some detail, was considered a fresh sacrifice of Christ for the particular sins of the individual for whom the mass is offered or sacrificed — the fresh sacrifice of Christ being made to appear reasonable by the claim that the officiating priest had the power to turn the bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ; and then, by breaking the wafer, to break or sacrifice the Lord afresh for the sins of the individual for whom the mass is performed. We have already shown that from the divine standpoint this teaching and practice was an abhorrence in the sight of the Lord — “the abomination which maketh desolate.” Dan. 12:31; 12:11

BANEFUL ERROR EXCLUDED TRUTH

That false doctrine did make desolate, and in its wake came the church’s multitudinous errors, the great falling away or apostasy which constituted the Roman system—the chiefest of all anti-Christ. Century after century rolled around, with this view the predominating one, the controlling one throughout all Christendom, until, in the sixteenth century, the great reformation movement began to stir up an opposition and, proportionately, began to find the truth which had been hidden during the “dark ages” under the false doctrines and false practices of anti-Christ. As

2H77

the reformers were granted additional light respecting the entire testimony of God’s word, that light included clearer views of the sacrifice of Christ, and they began to see that the papal theory and practice of the mass was indeed the “abomination of desolation” and they disavowed it, with varying degrees of positiveness. The church of England revised its prayer book in 1552 and excluded the word mass.

The custom of the mass practically took the place of the annual celebrations of the Lord’s memorial supper; for the masses were said at frequent intervals, with a view to cleansing the people repeatedly from sin. As the reformers saw the error of this they attempted to come back to the original simplicity of the first institution, and disowned the Romish mass as being an improper celebration of the Lord’s memorial supper. However, not seeing the close relationship between the type of the Passover and the antitype of our Lord’s death, and the supper as a memorial of the antitype they did not grasp the thought or the propriety of its observance on its annual occurrence. Hence, we find that among Protestants some celebrate monthly, others every three

months, and some every four months — each denomination using its own judgment—the “Disciples” celebrating weekly, through a misunderstanding of the scriptures. They base their weekly celebration of the supper on the statement of the Acts of the Apostles to the effect that the early church came together on the first day of the week, and at such meetings had “breaking of bread.” Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7

But these weekly celebrations were not commemorations of the Lord’s death. On the contrary, they were love feasts, commemorative of His resurrection, and of the number of breakings of bread which they enjoyed with Him on several first days during the 40 days before His ascension. The remembrance of these breakings of bread, in which their eyes were opened and they knew Him, probably led them to meet on each first day of the week thereafter, and, not improperly, led them to have together a social meal, a “breaking of bread.” The cup is never mentioned in connection with these, while in every mention of the Lord’s memorial supper, it occupied fully as important a place as does the loaf.

ANNUAL DATE STILL REVERENCED

The introduction of the mass, and its frequent observance, might have been expected to have entirely made void the annual celebration of our Lord’s death on its anniversary; but not so. The original custom of the early church to celebrate the great central fact, and the very foundation of her existence, continued, although the celebration of the supper at its appropriate time ceased, superseded by the numerous sacrifices of the mass — and thus this one particular memorial lost its meaning.

For centuries it was the custom to count the date of our Lord’s crucifixion according to the Jewish calendar, as we have already explained it; but subsequently, with a view to cut loose so far as possible from Jewish institutions, a change in the method of counting the date of the death of Christ, our Passover, was instituted. “The Ecumenical Council” of Nice decreed that henceforth Easter should be celebrated on the Friday following the first full moon after the spring equinox. This not only fixed the celebration of the Lord’s death universally on a Friday, called “Good Friday,” but additionally it insured that the celebration would rarely indeed be exactly in accord with the Jewish celebration of the Passover. The difference in the method of counting, be it remembered, is that the Jews then waited and still wait until the spring equinox, and begin their month with the first new moon thereafter, and keep the Passover at the full of that moon, on the 14th day. This change occasionally makes a difference of nearly a month between the two methods of counting.

As the sun is the symbol of the spiritual kingdom of God, so the moon is the symbol of the law covenant, and of the people who were under the law covenant. Thus there was a special appropriateness in our Lord's being crucified by them exactly at the full of the moon, and that by God's predetermination as concerned the time, so that they could not take Him previously, though they desired to do so, because His "hour was not yet come" (John 7:30, 8:20). His crucifixion at the full of the moon, and the fact that the moon immediately began to wane, points a lesson to the effect that there Israel brought upon itself as a nation a divine rejection, or casting off for a season, symbolized by the waning of the moon, which represented their national decline. Corroborative of this we quote from a recognized authority, McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia: "The churches of Asia Minor celebrated the death of the Lord on the day corresponding to the 14th of the month Nisan, on which day, according to the opinion of the whole ancient church, the crucifixion took place. The western churches (Rome), on the other hand, were of opinion that the crucifixion should be annually commemorated on the particular day of the week on which it occurred—i. e., Friday.

"Thus far the controversy between the Asiatic (Greek) and the Western (Roman) churches had only concerned two points, viz.: (1) whether the day of the week or the day of the month on which the death of Christ occurred should be commemorated; (2)

2H78

whether the fasting ought to be terminated. Now a third point in dispute arose, as to the day when the 14th of Nisan really occurred. Many of the church fathers are of the opinion that, according to the original calculation of the Jews up to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, the 14th of Nisan had always been after the spring equinox, and that it was only in consequence of that miscalculation of the later Jews that the 14th of Nisan occasionally fell before the equinox. They therefore insisted that the 14th of Nisan, which for both parties within the church determined the time of Easter, should always be after the equinox.

NEW CALCULATIONS OF EASTER

"As the year of the Jews is a lunar year and the 14th of Nisan always a full-moon day, the Christians who adopted the above astronomical view, whenever the 14th of Nisan fell before the equinox would celebrate the death of Christ one month later than the Jewish Passover. As the Christians could now no longer rely on the Jewish calendar, they had to make their own calculations of the time of Easter. These calculations

frequently differed, partly from reasons already set forth, and partly because the date of the equinox was fixed by some at the 18th of March, by others at the 19th, by others at the 21st of March. The Council of Arles in 314 endeavored to establish uniformity, but its decrees do not appear to have had great effect. The subject was, therefore, again discussed and acted upon by the Ecumenical Council of Nice, which decreed that Easter should be celebrated throughout the church after the equinox on the Friday following the 14th of Nisan. It was also provided that the Church of Alexandria, as being distinguished in astronomical science, should annually inform the Church of Rome on what day of the calendar the Ides of Easter should be celebrated, and the Church of Rome should notify all the churches of the world. But even these decrees of the Council of Nice did not put a stop to all the difference, and it was reserved to the calculation of Dionysius Exiguus to gradually introduce uniformity of practice into the old church. Some countries, like Great Britain, did not abandon their ancient practice until after a long resistance. At the time of Charlemagne uniformity (in observing Friday and in disregarding the Jewish reckoning of full-moon day) seems to have been established, and thereafter no trace is to be found (of the observance) of the *quarto decimani* (the celebration according to the actual day—the 14th of Nisan, the full moon after the spring equinox”).

The same authority says of the Passover: “It was the representative (Jewish) festival of the year, and in this unique position it stood in a certain relation to circumcision as the second sacrament of the Hebrew church. (Exod. 12:44) We may see this in what occurred at Gilgal, when Joshua, in reviewing the divine covenant, celebrated the Passover immediately after the circumcision of the people. But the nature of the relationship in which these two rites stood to each other did not become fully developed until its anti-types were fulfilled, and the Lord’s Supper took its place as the sacramental feast of the elect people of God.”

WE, BEING MANY, ARE ONE LOAF

An additional significance to the memorial supper is pointed out by the Apostle Paul, who says:

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread (loaf) —one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” 1 Cor. 10:16-17

The apostle, under the guidance of the holy Spirit, here sets before us an additional thought respecting this memorial instituted by our Lord. He does not deny, but affirms, that primarily the bread represents our Lord’s broken body, sacrificed on our behalf; and that the cup represents His blood, which seals our pardon. But now,

in addition, He shows that we, as members of the ecclesia, members of the body of Christ, the prospective First Borns, the New Creation, become participators with our Lord in His death, sharers in His sacrifice; and as He has elsewhere stated, it is a part of our covenant to “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1:24) The thought here is the same as that expressed by the words, “We are baptized into His death.”

Thus, while the Lord’s flesh was the loaf broken for the world, the believers of this gospel age, the faithful, the elect, the New Creation, are counted in as parts of that one loaf, “members of the body of Christ;” and hence, in the breaking of the loaf, after recognizing it as the sacrifice of the Lord on our behalf, we are to recognize it, further, as the breaking or sacrificing of the whole church of all those consecrated to be dead with Him, to be broken with Him, to share His sufferings.

This is the exact thought contained in the word “communion” — common-union, common-participation. Hence, with every annual celebration of this memorial, we not only recognize the foundation of all our hopes as resting in the dear Redeemer’s sacrifice for our sins, but we revive and renew our own consecration to “be dead with Him, that we may also live with Him” —to “suffer with Him, that we may also reign with Him “ How grandly comprehensive is the meaning of this divinely instituted celebration. We are

2H79

not putting the symbols instead of the reality; nothing, surely could be further from our Lord’s intention, nor further from propriety on our part. The heart-communion with Him, the heart-feeding upon Him, the heart-communion with the fellow-members of the body, and the heart-realization of the meaning of our covenant of sacrifice, is the real communion, which, if we are faithful, we will carry out day by day throughout the year —being daily broken with our Lord, and continually feeding upon His merit, growing strong in the Lord and in the power of His insight. What a blessing comes to us with the celebration of this memorial! What a burning of heart for further appreciation and growth in grace and knowledge, and for further participation in the privileges of the service to which we are called, not as respects the present, but also as respects the future!

It will be noticed that the Lord includes the cup, for which we praise God. “Is it not the communion (common-union, common-participation) of the blood of Christ?” Oh, what a thought — that the truly consecrated, faithful “little flock” of the New Creation

throughout this gospel age has been Christ in the flesh; and that the sufferings and trials and ignominy and death of those whom the Lord has accepted and recognized as “members of His body” in the flesh, are all counted in as parts of His sacrifice, because associated with and under Him who is our Head, our Chief Priest! Who that understands the situation, who that appreciates the invitation of God to membership in this Ecclesia, and the consequent participation in the sacrifice unto death now, and in the glorious work in the future, does not rejoice to be accounted worthy to suffer reproaches for the name of Christ, and to lay down his life in the service of the truth, as member of His flesh and of His bones. What matters it to these that the world knows us not even as it knew Him not! (1 John 3:1) What matters it to these though they should lose the choicest of earthly blessing and advantages. “I count all things but loss and dross.” “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.” (Phil. 3:8; Rom 7:18)

THE ONENESS OF THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST

Another thought is in respect to the mutual love, sympathy and interest which should prevail amongst all the members of this “one body” of the Lord. As the Lord’s spirit comes more and more to rule in our hearts, it will cause us to rejoice in every occasion to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, but especially unto the household of faith. As our sympathies grow and go out to the whole world of mankind, they must grow especially toward the Lord, and, consequently, especially also toward those whom He recognized, who have His spirit, and who are seeking to walk in His footsteps. The apostle indicates that the measure of our love for the Lord will be indicated by our love for the brethren, the fellow-members of His body. If our love is to be such as will endure all things and bear all things in respect to others, how much more will this be true as respects those fellow-members of the same body, so closely united to us through our Head! No wonder the Apostle John declares that one of the prominent evidences of our having passed from death unto life is that we love the brethren. (1 John 2:14) Indeed, we remember that in speaking of our filling up the measure of the afflictions of Christ, the Apostle Paul adds, “for His body’s sake, which is the church.” (Col. 1:24)

The same thought is again expressed in the words, “We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (1 John 2:16) What a brotherhood is thus implied! Where else could we hope to find such love for the brethren as would lay down its life on their behalf. We are not now speaking of how the Lord may be pleased to apply the sacrifice of the church, represented in the “Lord’s goat” as a part of the atonement day sacrifices. We merely,

with the apostle, note the fact that, so far as we are concerned, the sacrifice, the laying down of life is to be done in the main “for the brethren” — in their service. The service for the world belongs mainly to the age to come, the millennium. Under present conditions, our time and talents and influences and means are, more or less, mortgaged to others (the wife or children or aged parents, or others depending on us), and we are obligated also to the provision of “things needful,” “decent” and “honest in the sight of all men,” for ourselves. Hence, we find comparatively little left at our disposal for sacrifice, comparatively little to lay down for the brethren, and this little the world, the flesh and the devil are continually attempting to claim from us, and to divert from the sacrificing to which we have consecrated it.

The Lord’s selection of the church, during this time when evil prevails, is to the intent that surrounding circumstances may prove the measure of the love and loyalty of each to Him and His. If our love be cool, the claims of the world, the flesh and the adversary will be too much for us, and attract our time, our influence, our money. On the other hand, in proportion as our love for the Lord is strong and warm, in that same proportion we will delight to sacrifice these to Him —not only to give our surplus of energy and influence and means, laying these down as we find opportunity in the service of the brethren, but, additionally, this

2H80

spirit of devotion to the Lord will prompt us to curtail within reasonable, economical limits the demands of the home and the family, and especially of self, that we may have the more to sacrifice upon the Lord’s altar. As our Lord was for three and a half years breaking His body, and for three and a half years giving His blood, His life, and only finished these sacrifices at Calvary, so with us —the laying down of our lives for the brethren is in small affairs of service, either temporal or spiritual, the spiritual being the higher, and hence the more important — though he who would shut up his compassion toward a brother having temporal need would give evidence that he did not have the spirit of the Lord ruling in his heart in any proper degree.

April 11, 1904

Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise, July 24, 1917

CHOOSING THE BETTER PART

REWARDS FOR THE RIGHTEOUS

(Pittsburgh Gazette, April 11, 1904)

Pastor C. T. Russell discourses on “Choosing the Better Part” in the Bible House chapel, Allegheny, yesterday. His text and discourse follow:

‘Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.’ Luke 10:41 -42

Every day and every hour we are confronted with conflicting interests and propositions. We are continually making choice between these, either actively choosing or passively taking what we know will come if we refrain from action. The value of proper choice on these various propositions is but imperfectly understood and appreciated by the young. More and more as the years advance and we learn lessons of experience, we form what is called judgment; that is to say, we learn the importance of choosing rightly—that our future lives will depend much upon ourselves, upon the shape we will give them by accepting or rejecting good or bad impulses and opportunities.

This has always been true to a considerable extent, but it is more true in our day than it ever was before, because we live in a time of larger opportunities than were at the disposal of our forefathers. Invention, machinery, the mail, the telegraph, the telephone, the printing press, multiply manifold our opportunities both for good and for evil, so that really our experiences and opportunities may be said to be at least seven-fold those of our forefathers. What a responsibility this places upon us — upon all men, and especially upon those who have been enlightened by divine truth and adopted into the family of God and commissioned to be ambassadors for God and to let their light so shine before men as to glorify the Father in heaven.

The earliest illustration of opportunities missed is recorded in the Scriptures. Father Adam and Mother Eve in the Garden of Eden, under divine favor, had an opportunity to choose between life and death. True, the matter did not present itself to them in exactly this form — temptations usually take as attractive a form as possible. To Mother Eve it did not seem to be a choice between life everlasting and the death penalty, because she believed the serpent rather than God. God had said that disobedience to His command in eating the forbidden fruit would result in death, but the adversary contradicted the Lord and caused Mother Eve to believe that the Lord had selfish, sinister motives in connection with the command; that he feared that she and Adam would become as wise as himself if they partook of the fruit, and that the penalty of death attached to the act of disobedience was merely a threat to deter them from securing wisdom. Mother Eve made choice between

believing God and believing Satan; she chose to believe the latter, and followed his suggestion to her subsequent sorrow.

FAITH IN GOD ESSENTIAL

Thus temptations come to us; we are allured to the choice of things that are evil by misrepresentation. Our first lesson, therefore, should be, Let God be true,

2H81

though in so doing all others be stamped as untrue. Mother Eve made a bad choice through her lack of faith in God. Let us not similarly err; let us have full confidence in our Creator—in His word, in His character, in His plan. The result will prove such a course a wise one, for this is choosing God rather than Satan. Choice or test next came to Father Adam, not through the serpent, but through his wife. The apostle assures us that Adam was not deceived. He knew perfectly that the death penalty which the Lord had attached to disobedience would surely be inflicted. Nevertheless he yielded to his wife and partook of the forbidden fruit; seeing that Eve had disobeyed, he reasoned unwisely that he must cast in his lot with her. Adam may be said to have practically committed suicide, though the poison of disobedience was a slow acting one. He made a great mistake, and chose a wrong course. He should have said to himself, my first responsibility is to my Creator, “to my Lord I will be true.”

Adam should have trusted that the Lord would overrule and direct the matter in some way, so that His obedience would not bring an everlasting blight upon them, but in some manner work out a blessing in due time. We are confident that this would have been so—that he did not choose the good part, but the evil when he chose his wife’s love and fellowship rather than that of his Creator. He lost heavily by this bad choice, and the effect of his error still exists in his race, as the apostle declares, “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin, and so death passed upon all men for all are sinners.” Rom. 5:12

This same choice of life and death is not upon all men since the fall because, as the apostle declared in the quotation just presented, we have shared in the penalty of Father Adam’s disobedience. Choice terminated when the death sentence was pronounced. We never had perfect life except representatively in Adam. The world, therefore, is not called upon to choose between eternal life or eternal death, for all are born under the death sentence, “born in sin and shapened in iniquity, in sin

did my mother conceive me.” Only a clear knowledge of the Redeemer and His work could justify from that sentence and such knowledge and faith few possess now. Only after such a justification from the original death penalty could one be on trial for life or death everlasting.

Nevertheless, there are opportunities for choice of another kind continually presenting themselves to mankind. Almost all have learned that while the sentence of death is upon every member of Adam’s family, it is nevertheless possible for us to either hasten the dying processes by a sinful course of life, or retard them by careful, abstemious endeavors toward righteousness. The world’s choice, therefore, is between hastening down the broad road, giving loose rein to their passions, or on the other hand seeking to restrain these and to go down more slowly. What opportunities are open to the world every day and every hour!—we are not now speaking of the church, but of the world, of those on the “broad road” and not of those who have entered the straight gate into the narrow way’ that leads to life. Our exhortation to the world in general on the broad road, going down under Adam’s sentence to death, is that they slow up, that they be more wise, that they exercise self-restraint, that they curb their passions, appetites, follies which they have inherited. We urge such moderation in the interests of the present life, in the interest of the example to others, in the interest of any children they may beget, whom they would carry with them to some extent with every step into degradation, mental, moral and physical.

GOD’S PROPOSITION TO ABRAHAM

After mankind had been about 2,000 years on “the broad road,” the Lord made a proposition to Father Abraham which, in the Scriptures, is designated the primary statement of the gospel. It was but a vague statement and little understood by Abraham, even as an acorn, but imperfectly represents the oak whose possibilities are in it. The Lord intimated to Abraham that it was His intention in the future to bring a blessing upon the world of mankind—to give some relief or assistance to the children of Adam, who for 2,000 years then had been on the “broad road” with no hope of any kind extended toward them. God further intimated, that, if he would exercise faith and obedience, He would be pleased to use him and his posterity in connection with the proposed blessing of the race. Here was a choice — to continue in the way of his father, Terah, who is reputed to have been an idolatry, to have remained at the family homestead, following in line with the home arrangements, etc., or to leave the homestead and friends and, exercising faith in God’s promise, to go into the land of Canaan, which at that time was a wilderness. Thus taking his stand with God, trusting in His promises of a future blessing, would mean to Abraham practically cutting himself off from friends and neighbors and relatives.

Abraham chose the “good part;” he exercised faith in God and was obedient to the divine directions, and the apostle declares that thus he became heir of the promises. He might have chosen otherwise, in which event he would have had his portion with the remainder of the world, and the Lord, would have found some one else to execute His purpose. Abraham

2H82

made indeed a splendid choice, and his faith in God and in His promises was abundantly rewarded. However, as to whether or not he got a good reward depends upon the standpoint of observation. From the worldly standpoint he got nothing—he lived in the wilderness, had no son until nearly a hundred years of age, and later was tested in his faith as to whether or not he was willing to give up the son in whom the promises centered. The Scriptures declare that he was faithful in all these particulars, always choosing the good, the better part, and yet did not receive the blessings God promised him—for instance, the land of Canaan. He never owned it, as Stephen points out in his discourse (Acts 7:5); he never got so much as to set his foot upon it. The only portion that he ever owned was the cave of Machpelah, where he buried his wife Sarah; and that cave did not come as a gift from God, but was purchased for money.

The Lord assures us that Abraham chose the good part and that although he did not receive the blessings promised to him in Canaan, this also is a portion of the greater blessing, for it means that he is to receive those blessings in the future—and this means his resurrection from death. We may be sure that eventually when, raised from the dead, Abraham receives the fulfillment of the gracious promises made to him, he will find them exceedingly abundantly greater and better than he could have asked or thought. (Heb. 11:38-40) Abraham’s good choice brought him some blessings during his earthly life, for even then he was known as the “friend of God”—even then he was privileged to have the peace of God passing all understanding ruling in his heart—he was privileged at all times to feel that the Lord was his God, his protector and his guide. He surely had much advantage every way over others not in covenant relationship with the Lord.

JACOB CHOSE BETTER THAN ESAU

In due time Abraham’s grandsons, Esau and Jacob, made a choice—the one a good choice and the other a bad one. We are familiar with the circumstances; the brothers were twins, but Esau, being born first, was, according to the divine arrangement of the time, the heir of the promise made to Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. Esau set his heart more upon hunting and such things,

and cared little that he had inherited a share in the great promise made to his grandfather, Abraham — cared little that by birth he was in the line of posterity through which the great blessing of God was ultimately to come to the world of mankind. Jacob, on the other hand, greatly respected that promise and greatly regretted that by the accident of a moment he was not the elder son, the first-born son of Isaac, to inherit the patriarchal blessing. Here was a case in which nature had thrust the favor upon one and equally deprived the other of that privilege.

Nevertheless, in the Lord's providence a test came to both of these young men — a test of their faith in the divine promise and of their appreciation of the privileges which had come down to their family.

The test came along the line of appetite. Both were hungry; Jacob had a mess of pottage, Esau coveted it, and by mutual agreement between the two the matter took the form of a test, the choice as between the pottage and the inheritance of the divine promise made to Abraham. Esau preferred the pottage and was willing to part with his interest in the promise, which he did not feel sure would ever be fulfilled anyway; Jacob, on the contrary, preferred the promise, in which he had full faith, and was willing, yea, glad to give the pottage for it. It was a fair transaction in that each one got what he preferred. In the Lord's estimation the faith of Jacob, leading to self-denial for the sake of a blessing and the inheritance of the promise was a good choice, such as he could approve. It proved that Jacob had faith, obedience and self-sacrifice which the Lord could approve, and it was on account of this that before their birth the results were so declared — the Lord wishing to show his foreknowledge respecting which would be the acceptable and which the unacceptable one in the line of the fulfillment of the promise. Similarly Esau demonstrated that he had not the faith and obedience and self-denial that would make him suitable to be the heir of the promise.

Jacob chose "the good part," and it was not taken from him; but here again, as in Abraham's case, the good choice did not yield all of its fruitage in Jacob's lifetime. On the contrary, it brought him hardships, trials and difficulties. For the sake of that inheritance of a promise which has not yet been fulfilled—which was, therefore, purely a matter of faith — Jacob was obliged to forsake his father's house entirely, not only thus parting with the elder son's large share in the patrimony, but additionally he left in the hands of his brother the share of the younger son. He forsook all interest in his father's earthly estate that he might possess in full the Abrahamic blessing. Jacob chose that good part which was not taken from him — of which he is still an heir. He got none of the blessing in his day except the peace and

joy and prospect, but he is an heir to certain promises of blessing in the future which he believed to be sure, and which we believe to be sure. When the due time shall come and Abraham shall be resurrected and receive his share in the promise, we may with equal

2H83

positiveness look for Isaac and Jacob to be joint inheritors with him in the things which God hath promised.

JOSEPH AND OTHERS CHOSE GOOD PART

Coming down the stream of time we see Joseph in Egypt, and how in the Lord's providences testings came to him —how because of his faith his brethren hated him and sold him into slavery. We see, nevertheless, that instead of losing his faith in God he continued it and continued to seek to please the Lord. We find him in the house of Potiphar, one of the prominent officials of Egypt, as a servant; we find that he was faithful to the principles of righteousness and to the responsibilities of his relationship to his master. We see how this course of virtue apparently worked out greatly to his disadvantage temporarily, but that his faith in the Lord continued, and eventually we see under the Lord's providence his exaltation to the throne of Egypt. We perceive that he chose "that good part" and got a blessing, not a small part of which was the fact that he was made a type of the Lord Jesus, who after being tested in all points, has been highly exalted and is yet to be the great ruler upon the throne of the world, which Egypt's throne typified.

Later on we see Moses tested. The choice came to him whether or not he would be associated with the rulers of Egypt, as one of its princes, and thus as one of the oppressors of Israel, his people, or whether he would renounce his adoption into the royal family and take his stand with the people of Israel, thus sharing their ignominy, sharing their persecution, and losing the pleasures of the court of Egypt and the honors and distinctions associated therewith. Moses' respect for God and for the promise made to Abraham led him to renounce the earthly favors and opportunities, and he was thus prepared to be the leader of Israel out of Egypt, and a type of the great Messiah who ultimately shall lead all who desire to serve and worship God out of Egyptian darkness and Egyptian bondage — out of sin and death into the liberty of the sons of God. Moses chose that good part also, and he, like the others, has not yet received the real blessing that God promised —he, too, awaits the millennial kingdom, through which all the blessings of God are to be bestowed and all the promises of God are to be fulfilled.

Later on in Israel's history we note how their prophets made choice; as an illustration we hear the Prophet Elijah calling upon the people who had gone into idolatry, saying, "If Jehovah be God, serve Him; if Baal be God, serve him." Elijah left no doubt as to what was his faith and his service. It meant for Elijah trials and difficulties in the present life, with joy and blessing in the Lord and confidence in His guiding hand; and it meant for him more still in the future, when all the faithful of the Lord shall receive reward at the inauguration of the millennial kingdom.

OUR LORD'S CHOICE OF THE BETTER PART

With our Lord's first advent changed conditions were obtained. No longer was it an opportunity to a few, who happened to be in the line of Abraham's posterity through Jacob, to merely hope for glorious privileges in the future; those privileges began to arrive with our Lord. Himself the first to walk in "the narrow way," as the captain or leader of all who would walk in his steps, our Lord made choice and chose the better part. "Before the world was" He was in glory and honor with the Father. Already He had been used of the Father as His special agent in the creation of angels and men, when the Father proposed to him that he should become man's Redeemer, at the expense of laying aside his glory as a spirit being, that he might become a human being and so be a suitable ransom for man's redemption — giving a perfect human life for the perfect human life Adam had forfeited by sin, thus redeeming Adam and incidentally redeeming all who had lost life through him. It was a choice — nothing is said in the Scriptures to indicate that it was in anywise compulsory for our Lord to decide as He did in this matter.

So far we know, our Lord might have claimed that He had already kept the divine law and would always keep it, but that He did not choose to resign the spiritual conditions for the human and then to lay down life entirely as a sacrifice for men. So far as we discern the principles at stake, such a course would have brought no condemnation to the "only begotten one." On the other hand, however, a reward was attached to the Father's proposition, and this reward was a sufficient incentive to our Lord Jesus, and He gladly and willingly undertook the work. The apostle speaks of this reward, saying of our Lord, "Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, disregarding the shame and now set down at the right hand of the majesty on high." (Heb. 12:2) The apostle does not particularize respecting this "joy," but we can readily imagine in what it chiefly consisted: (1) He joyed or delighted to do the Father's will — he had confidence in the Father that obedience to Him, whatever it might cost would bring eventually

pleasant and happy results. (2) Partaking of Father's spirit, He sympathized with mankind; and perceiving the Father's gracious plan, He joyed or rejoiced in co-operating with that plan for man's uplift out of sin and death during the millennial kingdom.

2H84

Our Lord's choice was evidently still left open to Him after He had humbled Himself and laid aside the glory which He had with the Father and became a man. It still devolved upon Him at 30 years of age, the age of perfect manhood to choose whether or not He would continue as a perfect man to exercise his rights and privileges and to live forever a protected life, such as He would have a right to as a perfect one under the terms of the law. "He that doeth these things shall live." (Rom. 10:5), or whether he would continue in the course on which He had already started to carry out the Father's plan and to become man's Redeemer, and incidentally to return to the heavenly conditions with exceeding glory. We find Him prompt in His decision. Immediately on reaching the age of 30 he presented himself to John for baptism, by that act witnessing his consecration unto death, in harmony with His Father's plan. His heart attitude is stated by the prophet, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart." For the three and a half years of His ministry, we see Him maintaining promptly, unalterably, this choice, and gradually laying down his life day by day, doing the will of Him that sent Him — His life, His vitality, going out continually to the relief of the sick whom He compassionated as part of the "groaning creation," for which He was dying. We perceive his fidelity to his choice at the cost of every earthly interest — "even unto death, even the death of the cross."

Did our Lord make a wise choice? Did He choose the better part? Or were His opportunities and life wasted, as many who saw Him and knew Him supposed? We answer that a life used in harmony with the divine invitation could not be wasted; the results were sure to be glorious and grand; and so the apostle testifies in our Lord's case. Personally he got a great reward; "him hath God highly exalted and given him a name, position, authority, above every name (next to the Father); that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:10-11)

Nor was this personal exaltation all of our Lord's reward — it was but the beginning of it. His millennial kingdom and its opportunities and privileges for returning mankind (redeemed by His death) to human perfection is still future. It is in this kingdom that He declared He would come as the Father's representative, with power and great glory, that as the foretold

“seed of Abraham” He might accomplish the predicted blessing of “all the families of the earth” —the great uplift, social, moral, mental and physical of the groaning creation — the great trial, opportunity or test which must come to every man to prove whether under favorable conditions and full knowledge he would be obedient to God and thus worthy of eternal life, or disobedient and thus a proper subject of the second death.

The rewards of our Redeemer’s choice of “that good part” extend still further—beyond the millennial kingdom. That kingdom will come to an end when it shall have accomplished its designed purpose in the uplifting of mankind. Then, as the apostle particularly points out, Christ will “deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father”—(1 Cor. 15:24, 28)—that the restored race may thenceforth be accountable directly to the Father as the great King of the universe —without any intermediary or mediator. But the glory of our Lord and His privileges and service will not end there, for the Scriptures declare that a part of His reward was the divine nature, and association with the Father in His throne; not merely the throne of earth, of the millennial kingdom, which will end at the close of the thousand years —but association in the kingdom of the universe, an honor, dignity, etc., beyond our power to appreciate. Who can doubt that our dear Redeemer chose wisely the better part, and that its advantages will never be taken from him.

SATAN’S MISERABLE CHOICE

On the other hand, in contrast, the apostle holds up to our attention the opposite course of Satan, one of the chief angels, who attempted to make a choice which the Heavenly Father did not proffer to him, and this constituted rebellion—sin. Satan’s ambition was aroused as he beheld our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Eden, and beheld that, although “a little lower than the angels” in glory and dignity, they possessed a power which the angels did not have — a procreative power, the ability to multiply their kind. Thinking of these as like the angels, among whom he had never seen death, Satan concluded that the capture of this first pair, the bringing of them under his control, would mean an enlargement of his influence, and that he could take these as a nucleus of power and reign as chief or god over the earth.

In line with this was the original temptation presented to our first parents to lead them to disobedience to God and to cause them to think of Satan as their real benefactor. Although the project lost much of its attraction to Satan when the sentence of death came upon the race —when sin was followed by mental, moral and physical degeneracy, and sorrow and pain and death, and when Satan himself, because of disloyalty, was cut off from

fellowship with the holy angels — nevertheless he has pursued much this same course with mankind ever since. For now 6,000 years he has endeavored to manifest himself as an angel of

2H85

light, and, on the contrary, has endeavored to picture the Almighty to men as an evil one. And he has succeeded to a large extent, as is witnessed by the misconceptions of deity among the heathen, and as well in the creeds of Christendom. Alas! How evil was the course, the choice of Satan! How pernicious was its effect upon himself and upon all associated with it! How terrible, how far-reaching are the baneful effects of sin! The Scriptures reveal to us that the matter has not yet ended — that eventually Satan shall be destroyed in the second death with all who wilfully and intelligently become followers of his evil course and who, therefore, are called his “angels” or servants.

MANY TOO BLIND TO CHOOSE

The mass of mankind today, resting under the divine sentence of death, and blinded by the ignorance, superstition and misrepresentation which the god of this world, Satan, has brought upon them, are all, as the Scriptures express it, lying under “the Wicked One.” They are too depraved to make any choice, they see too indistinctly. God will not give them the great final choice for life or death under present conditions, seeing that their decision could only be injurious to themselves. He will defer their opportunities for choice until conditions are more favorable than now —until the millennial kingdom time —until the Sun of Righteousness shall have arisen and shall have chased away the “gross darkness that now covers the people with ignorance and superstition.” (Isa. 60:2) Then they shall have their choice of good or evil, life or death; not because God owes them such an opportunity, for He owes them nothing. The whole race was justly condemned to death because of Father Adam’s transgression. The ground upon which God purposes to give them a future trial under favorable conditions is His grace, His mercy, His love, manifested in Jesus and the redemptive work which He accomplished — a “ransom for all to be testified in due time.” 1 Tim. 2:6

In the meantime, before the appointed time for the kingdom and the world’s trial for life or death, the Heavenly Father has caused a message to go forth, which, although open to Jew and Gentile, bond and free, all have not the “ears to hear,” all have not the eyes to see.” The great mass of mankind are blinded and deaf so far as the message of this Gospel age is concerned. The apostle expresses the situation, saying: “The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.” (2

Cor. 4:4) The assurance of the prophet is that the time draws near when “all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped.” But now to those who do hear even a little and who do see even a little of the grace of God in Christ and to whom righteousness, as they catch a glimpse of it, is attractive, the Lord holds out during this Gospel age a special privilege and call. It is the privilege of being justified by faith—of being counted of the Lord, not according to the weaknesses of the fallen conditions of the flesh, but according to the will or intention of the mind. This is the new covenant provision secured through the dear Redeemer’s sacrifice of Himself on man’s behalf.

The call is (to such as thus hear and believe) to consecrate their lives to the Lord—to look unto Jesus, accept Him as their pattern and walk the “narrow way” in His footsteps. It is a choice, it is not compulsory, just as it was not compulsory in our dear Redeemer! But would it be profitable to follow Him, to walk in His steps? He forewarns all who would start that it will mean cross-bearing to be His disciples—that it will mean that the world will despise or hate them as it despised and hated Him; that the world will misunderstand them and say all manner of evil against them falsely, as it did against Him; that a man’s foes shall be they of his own household, even as Judas betrayed Him. But He assures us also that “if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him;” “if we die with Him, we shall also live with Him.” The terms of the proposition are so clear set forth that the Bible student who misreads them and concludes that it is an offer to be carried to the skies on flower beds of ease is inexcusable. The Master pointed out, also, that we need not expect many great or wise or learned, according to the course and estimation of this world, to be our companions in this “narrow way;” that they will chiefly be “the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom,” and altogether but a “little flock.”

ARE WE CHOOSING THAT GOOD PART?

Throughout this Gospel age those who have heard the gospel message with more or less distinctiveness have opportunities for choosing between the service and rewards of God and Mammon. How are we choosing on this question? If as the apostle implies, this opportunity for choice was a great favor toward our Lord Jesus, if a great reward came to Him through obedience, how much more would it be wise for us who are “by nature children of wrath,” overwhelmed in sin and its troubles, to accept the divine favor with the great glory, honor and immortality attached and the privilege of joint-heirship in the kingdom? What do we choose, dear brethren? I trust that you as well as myself have decided and will never change that decision—that we will follow the Lord

“through evil report and through good report,” and be faithful to Him and His cause and to His word and to His
2H86

brethren even unto death. This surely is a superlatively grand choice. We thus choose “that good part.”

Having remarked that the acceptance of the gospel call is not compulsory, and that an avoidance of the narrow way” is not subject to a punishment of eternal torment nor even to the punishment of wilful sin, namely the second death —either to our Lord or us — it is proper that we point out that an acceptance of the gospel call changes matters completely. Thenceforth we are on trial, the result being unalterable, namely:

Our consecration to walk the “narrow way” in our Lord’s footsteps implied a good degree of knowledge, and our acceptance by the Lord, our adoption into His family of sons implied a further increase of knowledge in the school of Christ. Such favors and such knowledge, the apostle points out, bring responsibility and make the results momentous for life or death everlasting. His arguments are presented cogently in Hebrews 6:4-8 and 10:26-31. However, we are to remember that temptations and weaknesses cannot sweep such into second death, but only wilful, deliberate sin against light and knowledge. Straying ones will receive “stripes” for their correction and recovery and only the wilfully evil will be counted among the “wicked” whom the Lord declares shall be “destroyed” in the second death.

GOOD, BETTER AND BEST CHOICES

Our text refers to a choice between two good things, and intimates that those who are truly the Lord’s may choose good or better. The thought of our text, therefore, seems to apply with special force to all those who have become sincerely the Lord’s people. Martha chose a good part, she was indeed “not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,” and in all this her course, so far from being subject to reproof was, we are sure, highly appreciated by the Lord. Our Lord’s contrast as between the two sisters, and His giving of special approval to the course of Mary would probably not have been brought out had not Martha murmured against her sister, thinking her indifferent to the proper hospitality of the home. Our Lord, who appreciated both of the sisters, took the opportunity to show to Martha that while her course was certainly estimable and certainly appreciated, nevertheless the course of Mary was still more appreciated. Martha loved the Lord so that she wanted to do for Him; Mary loved the Lord and the things which the Lord loved and delighted to talk about, to such an extent that she could not forego the pleasure of His company and fellowship. Much as she would have liked to have joined with her sister in preparing an elaborate feast to His honor. Mary appreciated more than Martha the spiritual

food which the Lord was dispensing, the kind of which He spoke to His disciples when, at the well near Samaria, they prayed Him saying, "Master, eat," and He answered, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of. It is my meat and my drink to do my Father's will," He declared again.

As those who have already chosen the Lord, chosen the gracious promises, chosen the righteousness, and who thus choosing have rejected sin and Satan and the world and selfishness—to such there is a lesson in our Lord's words to Martha. Having thus chosen, the good in all these respects, we are to discern that from the Lord's standpoint there may be better and best as well as good. The lesson would seem to be that while endeavors in the Lord's service in temporal matters and in spiritual matters are right, are commendable, are appreciated by the Lord, there is at the same time something that the Lord may appreciate even more. He appreciates most all those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, those who "eat His words," those who "sit at His feet," those who delight in His glorious plan and rejoice in the radiance of its unfolding.

Aside from the importance of choosing the right in all the affairs of life, and realizing that the slightest mistake may have a bearing upon all the subsequent affairs of our lives, the special lesson we would impress is that while activity in His service is a sign of our love for the Lord, a still higher mark of our esteem would be indicated in our fellowship with Him in prayer and in the study of His word. Mary did not spend all her time at the Lord's feet listening, but when a favorable opportunity of this kind came to her, it was not passed by. She chose it, she got it, she got a blessing with it, and was doubtless the better prepared for subsequent activities. So it should be with the Lord's people; they should not think that time taken for communion with the Lord and for study of His word is wasted time. On the contrary they should realize that to thus spend some time at the Master's feet, drinking in His word and His spirit, will be a preparation for them for the trials of the service, and for wiser activities in it, and that such a course will have His approval. Let us choose the best part, every way, the part most pleasing to our Lord.

* * * *

Dear Lord, oh, let my life be so,—
Its perfume when the tempests blow,
The sweeter flow!

2H87

May 15, 1904

*Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
June, 12, 1917*

GOD IS TEACHING THE WORLD A GREAT LESSON

That Sorrow from Sin Must Come

(From the Pittsburgh Gazette, 1904.)

Portland, Ore., May 15—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., spoke twice here today to large and attentive audiences. The afternoon topic was “The Oath-Bound Covenant,” from Hebrews 6:17-19. The evening text and discourse follow:

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” —Psa. 30:5

“The night of weeping” mentioned in our text began with the disobedience of our first parents in Eden when they brought upon themselves — and in a general way upon all of their posterity then in Adam’s loins — the death sentence because of sin. The dying processes which began there and which increasingly persist in our race are the fruit of the original sin, augmented by individual transgressions against the divine standard of righteousness. The result is woe, woe, woe — mental weakness, difficulties, troubles, moral deflections, bringing pain and sorrow to the individual as well as to his friends and neighbors, and physical weakness, disabilities, diseases — all culminating in the pronounced sentence, “The wages of sin is death.”

Some one may perhaps say, all do not weep; some are very joyous, very hilarious, go to the theaters, go to the ball rooms, to various public entertainments. See what joy and happiness there is in the world. See how some know nothing about the weeping in the present time. Not so, we answer. God is teaching the world a great lesson respecting the “exceeding sinfulness of sin;” and while all may not receive the lesson in the same manner nor with the same celerity, nevertheless its weight is felt by every creature to some extent, sooner or later. The Apostle Paul truly wrote of the world, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together—waiting.” The most gay, the most hilarious, the most buoyant of spirit know something at least of this “groaning” which has come to all mankind. They resolve for the time at least they will not think of the sorrowful side. They would drown the sorrows in pleasure but cannot succeed. An aching heart and an aching body are frequently masked by a smile or by boisterous hilarity. There is mental, moral or physical difficulty in their families, in their households, in every individual, and the Scriptures well declare that “each heart knoweth its own bit-

terness.” It is perhaps well that we all learn to some extent to cover our sorrows and bitterness of heart, our disappointments in life, from the world. The poet has well said:

“Go bury thy sorrow, the world has its share;
Go bury it deeply, go hide it with care.
Go bury thy sorrow, let others be blest;
Go, give them the sunshine; tell Jesus the rest.”

Were it not for our constant contact with sorrow, trouble, death, to what extent might the fallen nature go? As it is, surrounded by death, surrounded by suffering, with sorrow and trouble impinging upon us at every turn in life, how absorbed the great mass of mankind are in the interests of the present life, how willing many of them are to sacrifice principle and every noble interest and instinct in their endeavors to acquire fame, etc. —even though continually reminded that these can be theirs at most and at best for but a few short months or years. Evidently the experiences permitted by the Lord to come upon mankind are, under present conditions, none too severe to give them the needed lesson —that sin bears an evil fruitage and must ultimately be destroyed if peace and joy and righteousness and divine favor and eternal life are to be properly granted to mankind.

A SYMBOL OF IGNORANCE

Bible students will recognize the figure of night as one common to the Scriptures when describing matters and affairs in connection with “this present evil world” in which sin abounds, in which the “curse” or death-sentence rests upon humanity, in which the “prince of darkness” is the “prince of this world.”

2H88

(John 14:30 All are familiar with the statement of the prophet that “darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people” (Isa. 9:2), which is tantamount to our Lord’s expression that “the whole world lieth in the wicked one.” (1 John 5:19) Not only is this figure of darkness and night, trouble and weeping presented to our attention as the present lot of humanity in general, but the Lord’s people, the consecrated, the saintly, are referred to as sharing with the world many of the experiences of this night time, yet as possessing something which in a measure offsets the darkness and gives them a measure of light — the divine favor and the divine revelation of the good purposes of God yet to be accomplished for the world of mankind. Thus the apostle, after speaking of the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain, mentions the church also, saying, “We ourselves also groan within ourselves — waiting,” but not for the same things for which the world in general waits. Rom. 8:23

The prophet gives a pictorial suggestion of what it is that differentiates the condition of the church so largely from that of the world, saying, as the representative of the church prophetically, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, a lantern to my footsteps.” (Psa. 119:105) The Apostle Peter corroborates the Prophet David, saying of the church, “We have a more sure word of prophecy to which we do well that we take heed, as unto light which shineth in a dark place until the day dawn.” (2 Peter 1:19) Our Lord corroborates the same thought, saying of Himself, of His own ministry, “The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” (John 1:5) again He spoke in reference to His faithful followers of this Gospel age, the royal priesthood, saying, “No man should light a candle and put it under a bushel, but rather on a candlestick, that it may give light unto all that are in the house,” and “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Here we have the same thought of the prevailing darkness—the darkness which hateth the light, which is in opposition to the divine will and arrangement—the darkness of sin and selfishness and meanness of the fallen human nature.

How true are these scriptural declarations, these scriptural pictures, to the facts as we see them all around us today! How few in the highest, fullest, truest sense of the word are “children of the light,” lovers of truth and righteousness and purity and goodness—devoted to these and opposed to everything that is unrighteous, impure and sinful. We see in fact all about us that the candle light and lamp lights which the saints are holding up in the world are powerless to overcome the great mass and density of darkness and of sin which oppose purity and absolute righteousness on every hand. The experiences of the past and of the present leave no room to hope that the Lord’s people ever could completely dispel the darkness of sin, ignorance, prejudice, superstition, selfishness, etc., from the world. They could never bring about that glorious condition of things which the Lord taught us to hope for, namely, that God’s will should be done on earth as it is done in heaven. This same thought is presented in all the pictures of the Scriptures portraying this subject; the density of the darkness is portrayed, the feebleness of our lights is shown in the illustration, and the hope held out is that God in His due time will dispel the darkness of the night by causing the “sun of righteousness to arise with healing in its beams.”

SUNLIGHT OF HAPPY DAY

Who is this sun of righteousness whose arising will scatter and dispel all the powers of darkness and vanquish them forever? What power is this that is likened to the sunlight in comparison to a light of a lamp or a tallow candle’s feeble flicker? It is the Lord—the Messiah—the great King so long promised—the King of glory.

But can we expect so much from the second coming of the “man Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all?” No! The man Christ Jesus gave Himself; His sacrifice was complete and forever! He is the man Jesus no longer. He is now the Lord of glory, not only far above man’s plane and condition, but, as the Scriptures declare, “far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named.” As the man He suffered for our sins — “for the sins of the whole world.” He was made flesh, as the Scriptures tell us, for this purpose — “for the suffering of death —that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” Heb. 2:9

Having taken the human nature merely for that purpose, and having accomplished that purpose in His death on Calvary —having given Himself as the “man Christ Jesus,” a ransom for our sins, He is now a New Creation, a New Creature, raised to this newness of life by the divine power in His resurrection. He is now the Lord of glory, “now the Lord is that spirit.” He, whose coming as Messiah the world awaits, is the one whose glory is pictured by John the Revelator as shining like the noonday sun. He is the same one who revealed Himself but a moment to Saul of Tarsus, who was blinded by the sight, which he describes as above the brightness of the sun at noonday. These are pictures of the Lord’s present glory which the natural eye cannot see without a miracle such as was wrought for St. Paul.

We do not wish to intimate that the Lord himself

2H89

will shine out to the whole world with a literal brightness such as Saul of Tarsus beheld. No. That is described as being a miracle. St. Paul says of it: “Last of all He was seen of me also as of one born before the time.” He was seen of the apostle as the church, born in resurrection power, will ultimately see Him, as the Apostle John explains — “We shall see Him as He is, for we shall be like Him.” (1 John 3:2) Because being like Him, spirit beings, sharers of His glory, the church will not suffer as did Saul of Tarsus when he saw the Lord before the time. In such a manner the world will never see the Lord—never see Him as He is. The promise so to see Him is only for the church. To the world it is said: “Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more.” (John 14:19) Neither would it be to the advantage of the world to thus see the Lord, and to have their physical eyes injured, as were the eyes of Saul of Tarsus.

As in the Scriptures referred to, that which constitutes the present time a night time is moral darkness, a darkness of ignorance, prejudice, sin and selfishness, so likewise correspondingly the light of the new dispensation does not mean a physical light, but a moral,

intellectual, enlightening influence which will pervade the whole world and bring the light of knowledge and truth to every creature. That glorious morning now near at hand is the millennial morning of joy referred to in our text. Our Lord refers to its sun in Matthew 13:43, saying: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

"SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN"

We have spoken of the Lord and His kingdom and the reign of righteousness which it will inaugurate as being the great sun of this new dispensation, but, blessed thought! Glorious anticipation! The Lord's faithful ones from Pentecost to the end of the age —the royal priesthood, the "bride" class, the "body" class, the "living stones" for the glorious temple — are to be "joint heirs" with the Lord of glory in this kingdom, and therefore to be parts of this "sun of righteousness," which is to bring enlightenment and blessing to mankind in general. No wonder the apostle speaks in ecstasies of such a hope as the "high calling," the "heavenly calling!" No wonder he exhorts us to "lay aside every weight and every besetting sin and to run with patience the race set before us," that we might attain unto such a glorious inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. (1 Pet. 1:4) No wonder that he counted all earthly things but loss and dross that he might win Christ (win a place in the anointed, a membership in His body, in His bride, the glorified church), that he might be found in Him, that he might have a share in His resurrection to glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature. No wonder he rejoiced to count all other things unworthy of comparison, and was glad to suffer with Christ that he might also reign with Him. The same prospect, the same inducements, the same hopes, the same reasons for fidelity, belong to the elect even yet, and will be ours until the election is complete, the sufferings of Christ ended and the glories of the kingdom begun.

The privilege of participation as integral members of the sun of righteousness that is to arise upon the world with healing in its beams is granted to those who in this Gospel age have been justified by faith and obedience and sanctified through the Spirit and tested and found faithful in letting their lights so shine before men as to glorify the Father. Our Lord was the first of these: His indeed was a great light in the darkness. The apostles were brilliant lamps, burning brightly and showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us from darkness into the marvelous light. The faithful all the way down have been light-bearers before the world, and it is in keeping with the divine character as well as the divine word that these should be honored in the future with the privilege of showing forth the divine glories in divine power and majesty when the due time shall come. The matter is so stated by our Lord in the parable of the wheat and tares. He pictures the wheat as the children of the kingdom and shows how the adversary sowed tares so as to almost

swamp the wheat; how both were to grow together until the harvest time; how the harvest, in which we are now living, would be the time of separation, and how the wheat would all be gathered into the garner —into the heavenly state or condition. Then follows the forceful picture to which we refer— “then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father; he that hath an ear let him hear.”

The apostle presents the same thought under another figure to which we have already referred. After telling that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain during this night time, he intimates that they are waiting for something—they know not what. We know, because we have the lamp, God’s Word; they are waiting for the kingdom, “for the manifestation of the sons of God” in kingdom power and glory. We, the church, on the contrary are waiting for adoption, for transference from present unfavorable conditions to the promised glorious conditions which the Father hath promised to them that love Him — “Now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be (how wonderful, how glorious, are the blessings the Father hath in reservation for us), but we know (and it is satisfactory to us, it satisfies every query) that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as

2H90

He is.” His manifestation will be in conjunction with the manifestation of all the sons of God, the enthroned royal priesthood, under Him their high priest, the captain of their salvation.

But what of the morning of joy? Will it not be a morning of weeping and sorrow to all except the glorified church? Oh, no! Praise God! The promise is to the contrary —it is to be a morning of joy to all of the world of mankind. At present, under the prince of this world, the prince of darkness, they are blinded to the goodness of God and the glorious features of His character —some more grossly blinded than others. But with the morning of joy comes the binding of Satan, that he shall deceive the nations no more for the thousand years. (Rev. 20:2) The pictures, though different, correspond. Christ, the prince of righteousness and truth, coming in power, beginning His foretold reign of blessing, means the restraint of Satan and his power, symbolized by the great chain and the bottomless pit. In the other picture, the sun of righteousness rising, the darkness of sin and ignorance and prejudice disappear proportionately; and, as these disappear, the sorrow and sighing, the mourning and the trouble causing them also to fade away, until ultimately, in the noontide of the millennial age, the true “knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the water covers the great deep” —not a vestige of darkness

and superstition, ignorance or sin shall remain, and consequently, not a particle of sorrow or weeping or pain or trouble, which have endured throughout all the night of sin from the time of Father Adam to the close of this Gospel age.

Mark how the Lord presents this matter and assures us of these results through the Prophet Isaiah, foretelling the glories of the Millennial kingdom in which the New Jerusalem government will be established among men, exercising its power through the earthly Jerusalem, speaking through its appointed ministers. He says: "Behold I create new heavens (spiritual ruling powers) and a new earth (society reorganized); and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind in the sense of being longed for —the new heavens and new earth will be so vastly superior). But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create (in the new order of things); for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, neither the voice of crying. There shall be no more thenceforth an infant of days, neither an old man who hath not filled his days; for one dying an hundred years old will be as a child — a sinner an hundred years old he shall be accursed (sentenced to death)." Isa. 65:17-20

The purport of this is that under the new condition of things that propagation of species will cease and none will die except for wilful sin, and not even then without having a full, fair opportunity with corrections and chastisements, and this for an hundred years. The one thus cut off as a sinner because found wilfully disobedient to the laws of the kingdom after an hundred years of disciplinary testing, will be but an infant, but a child—but, obedient to the laws of the kingdom, he might live at least until the close of the millennial period— until the great searching of hearts which will take place at the close of the millennial day, to demonstrate those not only outwardly, but at heart loyal to God and the principle of righteousness which he represents. We are not informed as to the proportion of the ones who will stand this final testing, but are assured that it will be a general trial or test that will come upon the people that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. It will fully and thoroughly demonstrate those loyal to the Lord and those willing to obey and those who are disobedient. The latter class shall be completely destroyed, that the former may all be received into the eternal fate of blessedness following the millennium.

RETURN OF THE RANSOMED HOSTS

The Lord describes the millennial blessedness again through the same prophet in somewhat similar language. The entire 35th chapter describes the millennial kingdom conditions and closes with the words, “The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” “The man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time,” so we know who are meant by “the ransomed of the Lord” — all men. In what way will they return? Let the Apostle Peter answer us: He says “Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord (Jehovah), and He shall send Jesus Christ, whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” This returning mentioned by the apostle —returning to the former estate. The whole world, that has fallen into sin and death, sorrow and trouble, during this night, is to have the glorious opportunity in the morning of returning to God, to harmony with Him, and to all the blessings of God that were lost through father Adam’s disobedience, through the fall, through the curse, the sentence of death.

Mark the Lord’s word again through the same prophet, referring to the same glorious time of blessing in the morning, recorded in Isa. 25:8. Here the

2H91

kingdom of God is not symbolized by a city, neither by the sun of righteousness, but by a mountain — the usual figure or symbol throughout the Scriptures representing the strong foundations of government in the world. The Lord through Prophet Daniel foretells that a little stone, the church, now being taken out of the mountains of earth without hands, shall in due time be used of God in smiting Satan and the kingdoms of darkness which he has established in the world through his blinded votaries. After telling about the smiting, the prophet foretells that the stone is to “become a great mountain (kingdom), and fill the whole earth.” Daniel explains that this mountain represents the kingdom of God—the kingdom for which we pray, Thy kingdom come, that Thy will may be done on earth as in heaven. Dan. 2:35, 44

We quote the prophecy of Isaiah already referred to: “In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy (swallow up, put away) in this mountain the covering of face (the shame) that is over all peoples, and the veil (ignorance, superstition,

etc.) that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory (forever), and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth. Jehovah hath spoken it.” — Isa. 25:6-8

Our Lord, in the great revelation He sent to His church after He had ascended upon high, reiterates this promise of the coming morning in which He, as the Son of Righteousness, will dispel the noxious vapors of ignorance and prejudice, and all the darkness of sin and trouble, and the curse, which is upon the world. The special declaration is that “There shall be no more curse” — God’s special sentence against sin and sinners will be entirely removed. The ground for this was laid in the great sacrifice which our Lord gave—which He finished on Calvary. This intervening time is granted as an opportunity for the selection of a little flock from amongst men to constitute the bride, the lamb’s wife—a little flock, who, under the inspiration of the divine message and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, will develop the character likeness of God’s dear Son (Rom. 8:29). These are granted the privilege of filling up of being associated with our Lord in the sufferings of this present time—their little sacrifices, not worthy to be mentioned, and of no value of themselves, are counted in with the great atonement sacrifice of Christ, and the lifting of the curse, the application of the great atonement to the world in its blessing, waits until these shall have been selected.

Thus seen, the groaning creation is waiting for the shining forth, in kingdom glory and power, not only of the great Son of God, our Lord, but also of those sons of God whom He is “not ashamed to call His brethren,” and that are to be participators with Him in the glories that shall be revealed, and in the dispensing of the blessings that shall lift the curse and bless all the families of the earth. Note the reference to these matters in our Lord’s promise that in the new heavens and the new earth conditions, when the New Jerusalem shall have come down from God, and the kingdom has been established amongst men, God will thus through His appointed way establish His kingdom, and through His appointed sons of glory, God will wipe away all tears from off every face, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things shall then have passed away. Death shall thus have been swallowed up in victory, a blessed opportunity coming to every member of the race, a blessing which will be made perpetual, eternal, to all those who will receive it upon the Lord’s terms of obedience — all others being cut off from all life in the second death.

It is the great privilege of the Lord’s faithful ones to anticipate the joys of the “morning”—by faith in and obedience to their Lord and His word. Even in this “night” of sorrow and weeping, when the whole creation

is groaning, these have a hope that is an anchor to their souls, sure and steadfast;" and they have the "lamp" of the divine word upon their pathway which enables them to rejoice in tribulation and brings them peace that passeth all understanding while pressing toward the mark for the great prize. Verily "Songs in the night He giveth."

* * * *

Only a little while to spread the *truth* abroad,
Only a little while to testify for God,
Only a little while, the time is fleeting fast,
Only a little while, earth's sorrows all are past.

2H92

June 26, 1904

Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise, June 5, 1917

FAITH DELUSIONS HELD BY MANY

*All that are of the Truth will Love the Truth;
Contrariwise—the Truth will be Repellant
to All who have not its Spirit*

(From Pittsburgh Gazette, 1904.)

Philadelphia, June 26.—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., addressed large audiences twice here today. His afternoon topic was, "God's Oathbound Covenant With Abraham and What Its Fulfillment Will Mean to All Nations." The evening discourse was from the text, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2:11, 12. In full it was as follows:

The Scriptures everywhere emphasize the truth—that the divine revelation, in its purity and simplicity, is the power of God by which he is, at the present time, appealing to those who have an ear to hear and the desire of heart for righteousness. But to suppose, as most people would be inclined to interpret, that by our text the apostle meant to say that all who do not receive the truth in its purity and simplicity would on that account be damned to an eternity of torture, would be to greatly misunderstand the apostle's meaning and the entire spirit

of the gospel. Such an understanding of our text would not only imply the torture of the heathen, who have no knowledge of the divine truth, but would include also the great majority of Christian people whose perceptions of truth are surely rather vague and largely mixed with errors and traditions of men which have come down from the Dark Ages.

Our Presbyterian friends have one view of the truth, recognizing an election according to divine favor and through a knowledge of the truth. Our Methodist friends hold a different view and deny all election, holding that, as God is no respecter of persons, the Presbyterian or Calvinistic view must be in error. Roman Catholics declare that, election or no election, God's only provision for salvation is through their church and its apostolic succession of authority. Our Episcopalian friends agree with much that the Romanists say on this subject, but hold that the Romanists have departed from the purity of the faith, and that the Episcopalians have the only pure and proper line of apostolic succession and are, therefore, the only proper church of the Lord, membership in which is essential to salvation.

Our friends of the Disciple denomination call out that all the foregoing friends are in serious error, that the proper thing is "baptism for the remission of sins," and that unless they get their sins remitted by an immersion in water their views of election, free grace, church relationship and apostolic succession are all in vain — "Ye are yet in your sins" and subject to the penalty of sin — which they say is eternal torment. Our Baptist friends call aloud that they agree to a considerable extent with the pronouncements of the Disciple denomination, except that they do not understand that baptism is for the remission of sins — that, to their understanding, sins are remitted merely upon the exercise of obedience, of faith in the great redemptive work of Christ. But, say they, after your sins have been forgiven in order to be saved you need to become members of the Church of Christ, and the only door into the Church of Christ is the door of baptism — immersion; whoever, therefore, comes not through this door is not a member of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and cannot participate in its salvation — is consequently lost — damned.

Now, dear friends, let us imagine a sincere seeker after truth listening to all this babel of confusion, this strife of tongues. We can only imagine him saying in bewilderment with Pilate of old: "What is truth?" With truth so mixed with error and confusion as to cause perplexity to the great mass of the most intelligent and advanced Christians, and then to understand our text to mean that whoever does not believe the pure truth will be damned to an eternity of torture, is to suppose something too unreasonable to discuss. It must be

evident to every one of you that there is something about our text which is not generally understood.

“DAMNED” SHOULD BE CONDEMNED

The most prominent difficulty, which we take up first, is this word damned. That word, as at present used, totally misrepresents the apostle’s meaning. The revised translation is preferable here; it uses the word

2H93

“condemned” instead of the word “damned.” The fault, however, is not to be charged entirely to mistranslation, but rather to a gradual change in the English language. In olden times the word “damned” did not necessarily and uniformly carry with it the thought of demons and pitchforks, flames and eternal torment, but rather the thought of condemnation. Take an illustration of this outside the Scriptures:

Shakespeare causes one of his characters to make the remark that another “was damned with faint praise. His meaning is evident to all — that it is possible to speak words of praise and commendation in such a manner as to imply condemnation instead of an approval. This is the thought which should be attached to the word “damned” where. ever it is found in the Scriptures. It signifies that the person or thing or class referred to has had some measure of trial, and has not passed it successfully and has been condemned.

Nor should we have the thought either that condemned signifies utter loss, for it has not such significance. We do indeed speak of a man being condemned to the gallows for a crime, but the thought of condemnation attaches with equal force to every member of a class at school who on examination fails to pass it. Those who pass at all, either with first honors or lower ones, are all approved as fit for the next step of education, but those who fail to pass are all condemned as unfit, as disapproved in connection with the matter for which they were examined.

Another point to be noticed particularly in the examination of our text is that it has no reference whatever to the world of mankind in general. When it says “that they all might be damned” — condemned —it is not referring in any sense of the word to a condemnation of the world, but solely to a class in the church that in the end of this age shall fail to pass the divine inspection, fail to graduate, fail to attain the class honors of Christ’s millennial kingdom to which the whole church of this present time has been called. We have on previous occasions called attention to the fact that this Gospel age is not the world’s day of judgment or trial, but the church’s day of discipline and testing.

We have also called attention to the fact that the Scriptures are written not to the world, but to the church — to those who have heard the voice of the Lord, and, hearing, have left the world to become the Lord's people.

Convince yourselves of the truthfulness of our statement by examining the opening paragraph of each of the epistles. They are addressed to the saints, to the faithful, to the believers, and not in any sense to the world. And these epistles do not discuss the politics or interests or matters of the world, but simply and solely the interests of the church, of the saints, of the consecrated believers, of the household of faith. It is true, however, that the apostles recognized the fact that a great falling away was to occur in the church, by which the standards of truth and righteousness would be greatly lowered and Christian ideals greatly disturbed; and that, while outwardly the numbers of professors would greatly increase, the "saints" still would be the small minority, still the "little flock."

SEPARATING WHEAT FROM TARES

The context shows that in the words of our text the apostle had reference to a sifting out which would occur in the end of this Gospel Age, a separating of the true church, the saints, from the general mass of merely nominal professors who draw nigh to the Lord with their lips, while their hearts are far from Him —those who have a form of godliness, but in their lives show that they have not its power, have not its spirit.

The apostle, in verses 13-17, makes clear that he was not accusing the Thessalonian Church of needing such a drastic sifting and separating process. He recognized that its members were begotten of the truth and sanctified by the truth, were being polished and prepared for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ — the kingdom. In the preceding context he has shown that the great falling away was hindered for a time, but would ultimately prevail, as had been declared through the prophets. We, from our standpoint of today, can see how thoroughly his prediction was fulfilled—what a dreadful falling away the church of Christ had into ignorance and superstition—under the deceptions of the adversary, whose work our Lord referred to in His parable of the wheat and the tares. "An enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat"—false doctrines producing false or imitation Christians and generally swarming and confusing the interests of the true wheat.

In the parable the Lord declares that the wheat and the tares should grow together in the general nominal church system, elsewhere called Babylon or confusion, because of its mixture of truth and error, wheat and tares —until the end of this age, and then He would cause the

separation to take place and would gather the wheat into the garner of the kingdom and condemn tares to be burned, that the entire field might be cleansed and made ready for a new sowing of the pure seed. In our text the apostle has in mind this very harvesting process, by which the wheat and the tares are to be separated in the end of this age. Our Lord declares that the tares shall be bound in bundles, and that the wheat shall be separated from these bundles and be gathered together into His garner. Our text shows that the sickle which will reap the harvest of

2H94

this age will be the sickle of truth; and the same picture of the same great event is given us by our Lord in the symbolical book of Revelation, when, picturing our time, He says: "I looked, and behold a white cloud, and on the cloud I saw one sitting like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hands a sharp sickle. And another messenger came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, "Send forth the sick and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.' And he that sat upon the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped." Rev. 14:14-16

This sickle of truth, dear friends, the Lord is now thrusting here, there, everywhere, for the purpose of gathering, not the tares, but the wheat. All that are of the truth will love the truth, will be attracted to it; contrary-wise the truth will be repellant to all who have not its spirit. Thus the Lord is fulfilling His prediction through the prophet, "Gather My saints together unto Me, saith the Lord those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." — "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up My jewels." Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:17

NOBLE PEOPLE AMONGST TARES

But there are two sides to the question; there is not only a gathering of the jewels or in the other figure the reaping of the wheat, by the sickle of truth, but, contrary-wise, there is another work to be progressing simultaneously among the tares. And here I must pause to say that to my understanding there are a great many fine, noble people among the tares who have neither part nor lot with the wheat, because they are not of the same nature, not begotten of the truth, not adopted into the family, not members of the elect class. The tares are begotten of error — false doctrine. They are not entirely to be blamed for this, nor are they to have any eternal torment as a consequence of it. The adversary, using human instrumentalities, has sent forth a perverted gospel in the name of the Lord, has sowed tare seed in the Lord's wheat field. He has declared the Lord our God a great tyrant, who has prepared an eternity of torture for all who will not become

identified with His cause in this present time. Under these misapprehensions of fact thousands upon thousands, millions, have given a nominal assent to Christ and made profession of loyalty to Him which they have never really meant. They have become sham wheat, imitation wheat, tares; they have become professors who draw nigh with their lips while their hearts are far from the Lord. They are not entirely to blame for this, neither are they to profit by it. The fact that they have been making false professions as a result of false doctrines received does not make them fit for, neither entitles them to a place in, the kingdom class. The Lord has not hindered them from associating with His saints, nor has He hindered them from using the name and claiming that they are members of His church, but all the while the apostle's words have been true, "The Lord knoweth them that are His," and He equally well, all the while, has known them who were not His, who were merely deceived tares. The tares have received a certain amount of advantage from their attempt to imitate the wheat. It has made some of them more respectable than they otherwise would have been, and thus they have had full compensation for any self-denials which their tare conditions have involved.

The Lord, who knoweth His own, might indeed choose them out without in any sense of the word making them manifest to the world and distinguishing thus between the wheat and the tares, but His plan is otherwise. In the harvest of this age the separating shall be effected and be manifested to all, to the intent that all may thereafter profit by the lesson — to all eternity.

HOW DELUSIONS ARE SENT

When the apostle in our text declares that God shall send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned, He is speaking of this tare class, the imitation wheat class, and of the means which the Lord will use to separate them from His true ones in this harvest time. The statement, "He shall send," in so far as it would imply God's active cooperation in evil doing, would give the wrong thought, for the Scriptures, everywhere declare that His work is perfect, that there is no unrighteousness in Him. Hence this part of our text must be understood as signifying that the Lord at this time will be willing that strong delusions should come upon the nominal church for the purpose of testing, sifting, separating the wheat from the tares. So far as we are able to understand from the Scriptures, the great adversary is ever and always the agent in the propagation of evil — active to the extent that divine providence permits His activity, as is implied in the prayer which our Lord taught us, saying: "Abandon us not to temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Only as we are delivered from the machinations and deceptions of the evil one can we hope to stand at all against the "wiles of the devil," of whose devices, as the apostle says, we

are not ignorant. But the Lord is willing to deliver the righteous, and to some extent, in their interest, has spared also the tare class throughout this gospel age, and allowed both to grow together until the harvest time. Now, however, in the harvest time, the order of

2H95

divine procedure will be changed to suit the circumstances; the wheat, the saints, will be specially protected, specially cared for, while the tares, the nominal Christians, will be exposed to the baneful influences of error.

The apostle's thought here is much in line with his statement respecting God's procedure with the world in general in ancient times, as he mentions the same in Romans 1:24-26, 28-32. He here declares God also "give them up" because they "changed the truth of God into a lie." "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." This, we may be sure, would be the uniform procedure of our Heavenly Father, of whom the apostle declares, "God tempteth no man." He merely abandons to the tempter, or to the evil-preferred course, those who choose the wrong way. As He gave over the world of mankind in general, as shown in the discourse in Romans, so in the harvest of this age, as shown in our text, the Lord will give over or abandon to temptation all in the nominal church in our time, and will give His special aid and special attention only to those who are at heart loyal to Him.

In various Scriptures the Lord intimates that He is represented by His word, His doctrine, and our text is one of these instances. Those who love the Lord surely will love the truth, His message, will love it in its simplicity, will desire it in its purity, will be ready to lay down their lives for the truth. Those who love not the truth, but prefer error, thereby show that they are not of the particular class whom the Lord is now seeking out — that they are not begotten again of the spirit of the truth. Note the terseness of the apostle's statement: "They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." The intimation is that even if these had gone so far as to get the truth itself abstractly, if they did not love it, if it was not to them the most precious thing in the world, they would be counted unworthy to retain it, if it was not the most precious thing in the world, they would be counted unworthy to retain it in this harvest time and would be deprived of it. "For this cause, God shall send them strong delusions" — to take the truth entirely from them — that as they preferred the error they might have the error — might believe a lie, untruth.

The object is stated, that they all might be condemned—that all professing Christians thus preferring error to the truth, taking pleasure in the error and not in the truth, might be manifested as not being Christians at all, but merely imitations—not wheat at all, but merely tares.

A GREAT SHAKING TIME

We see then that the lesson of our text and various parables of our Lord respecting the end of this age, as well as many other testimonies by the apostles, all indicate that the end of this Gospel age will witness such a shaking among Christian peoples as has never before been known. It will differ from other shakings, too. The persecutions of the church in bygone times may properly enough be considered as shaking and siftings, but the siftings with which this age will close will be the most momentous of any the church has ever known. Our Lord, speaking of it, says, “If it were possible even the elect would be deceived,” but this will not be possible because the Lord will uphold them, will shield them, will guide them through His providences, through His word, through His servants. These will have an ear for the truth, and will hear the message and will recognize the Master saying of the lapping time by which the present age will merge into the Millennial age: “Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in that evil day.” Eph. 6:13

This is the shaking time mentioned by the apostle in Hebrews 12:26-28. He is discussing the events connected with the close of the Gospel age, declares that now the voice of the Lord, the voice of the truth on every subject, shall shake the whole earth—society in its every department. And not only so, but it shall shake the heavens, the spiritual institutions of this present time—that everything unsound, untrue, imperfect, unstable, may be utterly, completely removed, to the intent that the unshakable things, the verities, may remain. The apostle points out that that true church, sifted and separated from all false professors, will constitute this kingdom of God, which will thereafter under the headship of Christ, the great King, dominate the whole world, bringing blessings to every creature and glorious opportunities for righteousness and general uplift to the image and likeness of God. The same shaking time, we recall, is referred to prophetically in the ninety-first psalm, where a suggestion is given as of the wide difference between the whole number of those professing to be the Lord’s people and those who are His real friends—between the nominal and real church, for the prophet declares: “A thousand shall fall at Thy side, ten thousand at Thy right hand.” A thousand to one shows a large discrepancy between professed followers of Christ and those who are truly His and who shall never fall, but unto whom shall be administered an

abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. 1:11

WHAT STRONG DELUSIONS?

Some of these strong delusions are here now, and the Lord's true people ought to be able to discern

them. In calling attention to these be it noted that we shall not on this occasion depart from our usual custom of making no personal attacks — of speaking evil of no man. It is necessary, however, that we call attention to the errors, and part of our object is to shield, to assist, to protect from these delusions those who may at heart be loyal to the Lord. By the Lord's grace we have been permitted to assist some such, and we thankfully await further privileges and opportunities at His hand.

We note spiritism as one of the prominent deceptions of our day, one that already has wrecked the faith of many, and that, we believe, is destined to sift out many more. Spiritism flourishes because of the errors which prevail among Christian people. Were the latter not blinded by these errors, spiritism would be powerless to do them injury. One of these errors is that Christian people of nearly all denominations have accepted heathen philosophies instead of and in contradiction to the word of God on the subject of man's conditions in death; human philosophy says that the dead are more alive than they ever were previously; the Bible declares, "The dead know not anything," and that their hope is in a resurrection from death at the second coming of our Lord; And if there be no resurrection from the dead our hope is vain, Christian faith is vain, and all that have fallen asleep in Christ are perished. Eccl. 9:5; 1 Cor. 15:14-18. The Bible points us for hope to the Lord Jesus and His declaration that He has the keys of death and of the grave — that is, that He has the power to call forth the dead and that in due time He will exercise this power. (Rev. 1:18) The Bible gives us the Master's own words, saying: "Marvel not; for the hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth." John 5:28-29

The Bible's testimonies from first to last are consistent, harmonious. It starts out with the declaration of Adam's perfection, life and harmony with God in His image and likeness; it talks of his disobedience and his fall thereby under the sentence of death —the loss of all life —it points us to Jesus as the One who bought the world by giving His life in exchange for that of Adam, through whom all lost life. It tells us that as a result of this redemption Jesus has become the life-giver to the world, and that none can obtain life except through vital union with Him, "He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son hath not life." Thus Jesus is God's appointed channel by which the world may obtain reconciliation, restitution, life everlasting, or, refusing it at His hand, their portion will be the second death, without hope of recovery. In accord with this is our Master's word, "I am the resurrection and the life."

PREFERRING LIES TO TRUTH

Our text speaks of a class who loves lies — who prefer the untruth. And so scores have indicated to us their preference for the untruth rather than the truth on this subject. They admit that all the circumstances and conditions seem to favor the scriptural statement that the dead are really dead—that the dead know not anything—and that their only hope will be the resurrection; but, say they, we prefer to believe it otherwise — we prefer to think of them as being more alive than ever, etc. We answer, you must take your choice; if you love the untruth better than you do the truth, it evidences the fact that you are not begotten of the spirit of the truth. Such mark themselves as the very class whom the apostle refers to in our text, saying: “They received not the love of the truth” “for this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” — untruth.

To these already prejudiced in favor of the untruth, already preferring to believe the contrary of what the Scriptures teach, to these strong delusions have come, and others are still coming. The great adversary, Satan, with his associated company, spirit beings, fallen angels, is ready to help these to prove the error which they wish to have proven. Their communications are through mediums who have “familiar spirits.” The spirits personate the dead, speak for them, describe scenes and incidents and give names. They sometimes tell secrets, supposed to be known only to the dead and to the one seeking communication. More and more they are obtaining power to materialize, to take forms resembling those of humanity, resembling those whom they personate, whether old or young. Thus those who love the lie rather than the truth have “strong delusions” which becomes to them almost irresistible. Already careless of the divine message, and willing rather to have their own way than the Lord’s word, they become less and less interested in the Scriptures and more and more interested in spiritism. Their faith in the Lord wanes more and more, until under this delusion, they gradually come to reject the scriptural teachings entirely, especially as respects the atonement, the point attacked by all errors — the citadel of Christian faith. Faith in the atonement of Jesus having gone, all of the Christianity that was previously possessed is gone. That person has fallen, that person is no longer one of the Lord’s people, because those who deny the ransom of Christ deny the very hub, the very center of the divine plan. Their confidence in Christ is gone; He is no longer their Savior and they are no longer His

2H97

people.

THE “WISDOM OF MEN”

Another of these delusions of our day, gradually creeping over the whole Christian profession, is the doctrine of evolution, which usually goes hand in hand with higher criticism, which is but another name for the infidelity, disbelief in the Bible as the Word of God. This delusion is sweeping from their feet thousands and hundreds of thousands who could not be touched or in any wise influenced by spiritism, because of a different mental caliber and makeup. This strong delusion has already swept from their standing in Christ many of the ablest professing Christians in the pulpits and in the pews, and this wave of infidelity garbed in Christianity, this strong delusion of Satan draped in a garment of light to deceive, is rolling rapidly over the entire Christian world. Well may we ask with the apostle, “Who shall be able to stand”—“in this evil day.” Eph. 6:13

Look again at our text, note how faithfully the apostle is pointing out the difficulty of these evolutionists and “higher critics.” They received not the truth in the love of it; they neglect the Word of God, they preferred science, “falsely so called;” they preferred Platonic philosophy, with its teachings that the dead are alive, and that some of them are in glory and others in torment everlasting. They reject the scriptural teaching respecting the nature of man, his fall, his penalty, his redemption and his coming restitution through a thousand-year resurrection by judgements. They leaned rather to their own understanding and preferences. What they wanted to believe of these subjects led to much wrestling of the Scriptures, and finally, disgusted with their own twisted conceptions of the book, it has led them to a repudiation of it in every sense of the word except in name. They still select their texts from the book, though they generally preach far enough away from the context, and indeed many of them would use the book no more were it not that it still has an influence upon the “common people,” who are slower to accept their higher critical and evolutionary theories, but who, nevertheless, are useful in making up a crowd as well as in the taking up of a collection.

These evolutionists and “higher critics” do not believe in the fall of man from the image of God into sin and its penalty, death—they could not so believe and be evolutionists, etc. Consequently they do not believe in a redemption from the fall, for how could man be redeemed from a fall if he never had a fall? Consequently they do not believe in Jesus as a Redeemer. Consequently they do not believe Him at all, in the scriptural sense of the term; for it is as Redeemer that the

Scriptures set forth our Lord as an object for our faith — that Christ died for our sins and that He rose again for our justification — that as by a man (Adam) came sin and death, by a man (Christ) should come redemption, righteousness and life everlasting to as many as would receive the favor properly. Not being believers in Jesus, as the world's Redeemer who bought us with His precious blood, these evolutionists and higher critics are not in any sense of the word Christians, according to the scriptural definition of that term, no matter how moral and exemplary or well educated or noble they may be. We are not saying, for all this, that they are eternally lost or that they will have an eternity of torture or anything of the sort. God forbid. We are merely pointing out that these are under the influence of one of these strong delusions of the end of the age, which is manifesting them to be separate and apart from the church of Christ. They are in danger of falling from faith, for they have already fallen from the faith "once delivered to the saints."

The mighty wave of this "strong delusion" is sweeping more and more rapidly over the whole professing church of Christ, and it comes mainly from its pulpits, from those who are trusted and supported as shepherds by a too confiding flock, who, instead should give more earnest heed to the things which they have heard from the divine word itself and less and less attention to the "traditions of the elders." Mark 7:3, 8, 9

DOCTRINES OF DEVILS

It is the same with Spiritualists —only, as a rule, spiritism deals with a less intelligent class, though two of the royal families of Europe are claimed to be under its spell. At first it is merely the amusement, the entertainment of communicating with dead friends, that attracts; but later a spirit of self-conceit would spring up to congratulate yourself that God and the holy spirits passed by those who seem to be greater and nobler and purer, and deigned to speak to you and communicate with you. The spirit of pride thus engendered is called "Spiritual uplift." Subsequently, if you are of a conscientious turn and really inclined to morality, there will be revelations and communications purporting to come from Christ, and you will be instructed to pray, and certain trivial matters will be held up to you as woeful crimes. But the whole tendency will be toward immorality, sensuality, darkness. Progressing, you will find yourselves deceived by messages that will come to you. You will be led into temptation, possibly into sin, immorality; and if then your heart hungers for righteousness and you seek to escape, the next

2H98

operation of these demons personating the dead would be to assure you that you have already lost all

opportunity for return to the Lord, that you had committed the unpardonable sin, etc., and might just as well give up all attempts to return to holiness, purity, etc. It is commendable to the instincts of many that, although believing a lie and preferring it to the truth, they nevertheless instinctively dread spiritism, and realize that in some sense of the word it is demonism, though the particulars they do not understand because they have neglected the study of the Word of God.

In conclusion, dear friends, let us not be too sure that none of us are in danger in respect to these strong delusions which are to make so thorough a sifting and separating of wheat from tares in this, the harvest of the Gospel age. Let us heed the prophetic words of the apostle when he said: "Take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand in that evil day."

Let us study the word more carefully than ever, and not only let us study it, but let us also apply it to ourselves. As the apostle intimates, let us put on the whole armor — the helmet of salvation, an intellectual covering, a knowledge of the divine plan; also the breastplate of righteousness, an appreciation of the covering that is provided in and through the merit of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice; let us take the shield of faith, full confidence in the wisdom and power of our God and full trust in His word; let us take the sword of the spirit, too, the word of God. Let us learn how to use the word of God skillfully for our own defense, for defense against error, for the defense of all those who shall come in line of our influence; and let us put on finally the sandals, the gentleness, the patience, which are the preparations which the gospel gives for our work through life as valiant representatives of the Lord and His truth, beset by all the trials and difficulties of the narrow way in which we follow our Master.

July 15, 1904

Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise, July 17, 1917

REGENERATION

The Words of Our Master: “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” John 3:7

(From Pittsburgh Gazette, 1904.)

The crowded condition of the Bible House chapel yesterday made it extremely warm notwithstanding the good ventilation. There is some talk of other arrangements for those Sundays on which Pastor Russell is at home. The Pastor said:

We choose for our text today the words of our Master, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.” (John 3:7) Our Lord addressed these words to Nicodemus, a ruler of Israel, who was above the average in piety, and was considerably impressed with what he had heard respecting the Lord’s teachings. He desired a personal interview, but being prominent he came at night, that the common people might not be encouraged thereby and that the ecclesiastical leaders might not be offended. Similarly there are people today hindered, as was Nicodemus, by their station, education, reputation, etc., from taking a stand for the truth. Their riches and reputation are hindrances to them. How hardly shall they that have riches and who love the honor of men be able to adjust themselves to the conditions imposed by the Lord’s dealings in this present time! Their worldly wisdom and prudence are their stumbling blocks.

It is not our thought, however, to specially discuss Nicodemus. We want to understand our Lord’s meaning of our text. It must be as true today as it was at the time of the utterance, and you and I and all of the Lord’s people, and all who desire to become the Lord’s people, are as vitally interested in the Master’s terms as Nicodemus could possibly be.

Years ago our Methodist friends had almost a monopoly on this term “born again,” the expression being considerably avoided by Christians of other creeds. However, all the creeds of Christendom acknowledge the necessity for regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and this is the same thought that is conveyed by the words “born again.”

But while the necessity for regeneration is thus acknowledged, we note with deep regret that the doctrine is generally ignored in all the pulpits of

Christendom —neither the words nor the thought of regeneration as necessary to acceptance with the Lord, are kept before the people —not even the Methodist brethren continue to make prominent the doctrine under their favorite term, “born again.” Why is this the case? We are sure that none will claim that the Gospel has in any wise changed within the last 50 years, however much the appreciation of it has changed. If acceptance with God in our Lord’s time and 50 years ago was only upon the terms of regeneration of heart, and if no change in the Gospel has since occurred, this doctrine should be as precious and as important as it ever was in the eyes of the Lord’s people. Why has it dropped out of sight?

REGENERATION IS IGNORED

The reason is that Christian people have been doing more thinking of late than they did formerly—they have been using their reason more, and their faith is more logical than it once was even though it be less scriptural. They reason that if only those who are born again are to secure eternal life — if only those regenerated by the Holy Spirit and who bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, are to be saved from an eternity of torture —then will not only the entire heathen world but almost the entire bulk of Christendom be lost, eternally lost. Their love for their neighbors and friends and general sympathy for the heathen and for all mankind, backed by a certain amount of timidity on their own account, lead them to prefer not to believe this doctrine not to believe the Master’s words, “Ye must be born again.” They prefer to believe almost everything outside of the most positive devilishness will eventually pass muster and secure eternal life and glory. They prefer this thought on their own account as well as generously on behalf of friends and neighbors.

True, these friends would not openly deny the Master’s words. Even secretly, even in their own hearts, they do not like to deny the words of Him who spake as never man spake. But from preference they pass by these and others of the Master’s testimonies respecting discipleship and its requirements of crossbearing, etc., and prefer to think upon other statements of Scripture which do not so particularly mark the narrowness of the way and the fewness of those who find it. They encourage themselves to think that they are becoming broader minded and larger hearted, and that somehow or other there must be some mistake in the matter, for they are certainly not more generous of heart than was the Master Himself.

Here we see the mixture of truth and error and how it confuses. It is surely true that none of the Lord’s people are

more generous-hearted than the Master Himself— “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” But the statements respecting the narrowness of the way and the necessity of being born again to enter the kingdom are equally true. How, then, can the seeming inconsistency be harmonized? How could the Lord eternally torment all except those who walk in His footsteps in the narrow way —the comparatively small number even amongst Christians who have been “begotten again” by the Holy Spirit?

There is just the difficulty in the minds of the majority of the Lord’s people; the unscriptural theory that eternal torment is the wages of sin confuses their judgment upon this subject as upon almost every other religious topic. We must first learn to take the Lord at His Word, and when He tells us that the wages of sin is death we must not wrest and pervert the Scripture and delude ourselves into thinking that death means life, and then that it means torment, flames, devils, pitchforks, etc. After we see that the wages of sin is death, that “the soul that sinneth it shall die,” we are relieved of one great difficulty that stood in our path. From this standpoint we can see that if only a few were ever born again, if the great majority of mankind lost all and suffered the extreme divine penalty against sinners, it would mean not their torture, but their everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord — and the glory of His power —the second death, without hope of a recovery, resurrection, etc.

ERRORS ARE STUMBLING BLOCKS

If, additionally, another difficulty be removed from our minds, it will help us still further. This second difficulty is the misimpression which has gone abroad amongst Christian people that the divine plan of salvation will be finished at the second coming of our Lord. The scriptural teaching is the very reverse of this, namely, that only a special class—the little flock, the body of Christ, the heirs of the kingdom, the Bride, the spiritual class — are now being selected. The Scriptures teach that the second coming of our Lord and the association of His church with Himself in the kingdom, power and authority and rule, will begin the great blessing of the world of mankind, of the masses, “every creature.” How many Scriptures we could quote in support of this if time permitted! We content ourselves with reminding you of the Apostle Peter’s words respecting the matter: “Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord and He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you:

Whom the heavens must receive (retain) until the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21)
Take another scripture on the subject from

2H100

the Apostle Paul's writings. He declares: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now — waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God"—the glorified church of which Christ is the Head, the kingdom of God's dear Son, who is to bless the whole world with knowledge and assistance and restrain Satan and every evil influence.

Whoever will study his Bible from this standpoint will gain the light necessary to a full appreciation of our Master's words in our text. Such as do this will see clearly that the special class which the Lord is selecting from amongst the world during this Gospel Age must all be born again in order to be members of the kingdom — they must all be born of the Spirit because, as the Master explains in our context: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," and "Flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Hence those who would constitute the kingdom of heaven class must be born of the Spirit — must become spirit beings by regeneration.

THE SECOND BIRTH

The birth of the spirit will usher the church of Christ, by the first resurrection, into the spirit condition. In other words, the birth of the spirit is the resurrection. We quite agree with our Methodist brethren of olden times that this expression, "Ye must be born again," has to do with the Lord's people in the present life as well as in the resurrection — that the new life to which we will then be born fully and completely has its beginning in the present life when we are begotten of the holy Spirit or regenerated, as many of the creeds express the matter. There is no conflict between us on this point, but we call attention to two facts which, rightly appreciated, throw great light upon this subject.

(1) A birth may be said to have a beginning and a completion: the beginning is the begetting, the end is the birth, the interim is the period of gestation and quickening, form development, making ready for the birth. No child is ever born that was not first begotten.

(2) This transaction of birth, which begins at begetting and culminates at the birth, in the Greek language, in which the New Testament Scriptures were written, has but one word to represent both the begetting and the birth. Take your Greek Testament or your Greek-English Concordance and you can readily prove to yourself what I say. You will find that the Greek word "gennao" is sometimes translated beget or begat and sometimes born — about an equal number of times each

way — once it is rendered “conceived” (Matt. 1:20), and likewise once rendered “delivered” (John 16:21).

The translators of our common version seemed not to have been sufficiently critical in dealing with this word, and in numerous instances have translated it born when they should have translated it begotten; in numerous other instances they have rendered the word begotten when they should have rendered it born. The difficulty arises in transferring the thought from the one language to the other. Whenever the word “gennao” is used figuratively respecting the beginning of the work of grace in the heart it should be translated begotten or begetting; and whenever it refers to the completion of this work of grace, in the resurrection, it should be rendered birth or born. We are begotten of the Spirit in the present life with a view to our birth of the Spirit in the resurrection.

Hold this thought respecting the meaning of the word “gennao” while we investigate further the significance of our text, “Ye must be born again.” Remember that the preaching of our Lord and the apostles in the end of the Jewish age was “The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.” The Jews had been waiting for the coming of Messiah and His establishment of the kingdom for many centuries. Their expectations were based upon God’s promise to Abraham, confirmed with an oath. Messiah must come through the Jewish nation. These were settled facts. When, therefore, Nicodemus and others of his time heard of Jesus and the claim that He was the Messiah, and when they knew something of His wonderful teachings and works, queries were awakened in their minds as to whether or not these things were true, and it was to investigate this matter that Nicodemus visited Jesus on this occasion.

He recognized Jesus as an inspired teacher, and yet everything connected with His claim of Messiahship seemed so unreasonable, so unlikely, that he could not think of becoming His disciple unless the matter were more clearly demonstrated to his mind. The conversation was probably much longer than narrated in the Gospel, which gives merely the pith of our Lord’s discourse. Nicodemus was perplexed as to how God’s kingdom could come without earthly riches, without soldiers, etc., to break the power of the Roman yoke and to master the world. Our Lord gave him an entirely new thought when He told him that the kingdom of heaven would be so different from what he was expecting. He told him plainly that “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;” the kingdom of God will be a spiritual one, and all who will be members of it will be spirit beings, as invisible to mankind as are the angels at the present time. The Apostle Paul emphasizes this

matter further, saying, "Flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God." We who expect to enter the

2H101

kingdom must be all "changed."—1 Cor. 15:51.

A SPIRITUAL KINGDOM

Nicodemus had never heard of a spiritual kingdom. He was looking entirely for an earthly one, and hence inquired how a man could ever be born again of his mother after he was old — failing totally to realize our Lord's meaning. Answering him the Lord pressed the subject further, explaining that begetting and birth of the flesh produced a fleshly being, while begetting and birth of the spirit would produce a spirit being. (Verse 6.) Nicodemus was slow to grasp the thought and our Lord proceeded to give an explanation of His teaching. Still Nicodemus could not comprehend the thought of a spirit being; to him it seemed as though an invisible spirit being would be nothing. Our Lord then gave an illustration of the matter, which we paraphrase and elaborate in line with His words, thus:

The wind bloweth where it pleases; you cannot see it, but you can hear the sound of it. You can note its power as it slams a door or uproots a tree, but because it is invisible and intangible you can neither tell whence it came nor whither it goes. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. All those constituting members of the glorified kingdom class will be spirit beings. "born of the Spirit," invisible as the wind. They can go and come, and mankind cannot know whence they come nor whither they go. They will be present among men with full power, full control, but invisible to men. This, Nicodemus, will be the character of the kingdom of God, so different from what you have expected. This is the kingdom which I am now announcing, and if you and the nation of Israel would be a member of it, marvel not that I say unto you, ye must be born again to become spirit beings; and in order to be thus born again in the resurrection you must be begotten again now; for none will ever be born of the Spirit who is not first begotten of the Spirit.

HOW CHRIST WAS "BORN AGAIN"

In harmony with the foregoing, note the fact that our Lord was declared to be in His resurrection "The first-born among many brethren," and "the first-born from among the dead." His brethren, the church class, the little flock of this Gospel Age, will all be born in His spirit-likeness in the first resurrection, as it is written, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with

Him a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:6) Our Lord’s resurrection is referred to three other times as a birth from the dead, but our common version has beclouded the thought by giving the word begotten instead of born. These instances are in Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5. These are quotations from the Psalms, and that they refer to our Lord’s resurrection is evident from the apostle’s explanation in Acts 13:33.

Our Lord was begotten of the holy Spirit at the time of His baptism, and the new spirit creature there begotten was born at His resurrection. Likewise His followers are begotten at the time of their full consecration, and if the new creature prospers the time of “quickenings,” of activity in the Lord’s service, even in this mortal body, will be discernable; and if the growth in grace and knowledge and love—in the divine likeness, continue the result will surely be in each case a birth of the spirit — to the new nature, in the “first resurrection,” described by the apostle, saying: “It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” 1 Cor.

15:43-45

If now we have the matter clearly before our minds, let each make a little personal inquiry of himself.

(1) Have I heard of the grace of God in providing through the sacrifice of Christ for the forgiveness of my sins and for the sins of the whole world? Have I believed this and accepted the divine favor? Are my sins forgiven? Am I thus justified by faith before God?

(2) Have I heard the great Gospel message that divine favor is yet to reach every creature through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood? Have I heard of God’s purpose to gather from among mankind a company of holy ones, who love righteousness and hate iniquity, and who are glad to follow in the footsteps of their Redeemer in sacrificing earthly interest that that they may become participators with Him of the heavenly nature and its inheritance, the kingdom?

(3) Have I heard that this selection of a class began with the Jews, and include from that nation all who are Israelites indeed; and that these not being enough, according to the divine arrangement, the opportunity to come into this kingdom class and be joint heirs in it has been extended to so many from amongst the Gentiles as might have the hearing ear and the obedient heart? Has this invitation come to me and have I heard in the sense of accepting the same?

(4) Do I now understand from the Master’s explanation of the subject that all who will be sharers with Him in the Kingdom must be, like Him, sharers of the “divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4) and spirit beings, and that in order

to be a spirit being and to participate in that resurrection to spirit nature I must now be begotten of the holy Spirit, and must then be chastened and developed and fitted for the spirit conditions?

2H102

(5) Have I accepted the conditions? Have I consecrated my justified self wholly and unreservedly to the Lord for time and for eternity—including all that I possess of time, talent, influence, everything?

(6) If I have thus done, if I have received a begetting of the Spirit, if I can, therefore, count myself a new creature in Christ Jesus, to whom “all things have become new,” am I living to the extent of my ability even in the present life in accord with the new mind, the new nature? Am I thus developing it at the expense of my old nature? Am I thus making my calling and election sure?

(7) Have I before my mind the hopes and ambitions which the Lord enjoined upon His faithful through the apostle, saying: “Set your affections on things above and not on things of the earth,” “for your citizenship is in heaven.” Am I living for the flesh, or am I living for the spirit? Am I ignoring the interests of the spiritual existence which, if faithful, I shall enter upon in the resurrection birth, or am I neglecting these and in danger of becoming a castaway so far as this great kingdom privilege is concerned, in my endeavor to grasp the transitory things of this present life, which are not worthy to be compared with the glorious things which the Lord has in reservation for them that love Him?

THE WORLD’S REGENERATION

In what we have said, and, indeed, throughout the New Testament, the regeneration of the church is the topic, because this Gospel Age is chiefly intended for the development of the little flock, the bride class, the kingdom class. Nevertheless, the Scriptures point out that those of the world who would attain eternal life in the next age must pass through experiences somewhat like those through which the church is now passing; in other words, the world must be born again or regenerated — not, however, to spirit nature, as in the case of the church, but regenerated to human nature. When the apostles asked the Lord what they should have as a reward for their loyalty to Him He answered:

“Ye that have followed me in the regeneration shall sit upon 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel.” (Matt - 19:28) In other words, those who now follow the Lord through evil report and through good report in “the narrow way,” those who are now begotten to the spirit nature will by and by be born of the spirit and be exalted to share with the Lord in the throne of the world, and this will take place “in the

regeneration” —in the time when the regeneration of the world will be the great matter in hand, the great and all-absorbing work of the thousand years of Christ’s millennial kingdom. O Lord, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.”

Regeneration signifies to generate again — to give life a second time. Father Adam was the first life-giver or generator of our race. What life we have enjoyed came to us in God’s providence in a natural way through Adam as our father or generator. But by reason of sin Father Adam failed to give us everlasting life, hence we have of him only the dying and imperfect conditions of the present time.

Our Lord Jesus became man that He might redeem Father Adam and his family and his estate. He bought the whole with His own precious blood. Our Lord Jesus, is, therefore, by a divine arrangement, the owner, the Master of the world. So far His purchased possession is practically untouched, unrecovered. In the divine plan only a special class has yet been reached —a mere fragment of the whole. Thousands of millions of the race are still in the great prison-house of death, and He who bought them has the right to bring them forth from the tomb, to make known to them the terms upon which they may have eternal life and to render them such assistance as they may need in returning to the perfection of human nature lost in Eden by the first disobedience.

Thus we see that what Adam, the first father of the race, attempted to do and failed of doing, Christ as the second Adam or Father of the race proposes to accomplish—for so many as will profit by their experiences in sin and death, for as many as will accept eternal life upon divine conditions clearly understood and made thoroughly possible to them. It is in harmony with this that the prophet declares that our Lord Jesus eventually shall be called not only “the Prince of Peace,” but also “the Everlasting Father” —the Father who gives eternal life. Thus the whole world of mankind, except those who will be destroyed in the second death, will eventually become children of Christ by regeneration, by rebirth —not born of the Spirit to a spirit nature, but a return or restitution to perfect human nature—to all that was lost, with a superb amount of knowledge and blessing superadded.

While the saved, the regenerated of the world, will be properly classed as the children of Christ, the church of this Gospel Age is not so classed. We are not begotten of the Spirit by our Lord Jesus, but by the Heavenly Father; and so we are told that we shall be children of our Father in heaven; and so the apostle again declares: “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us.” And so our Lord Himself recognized the matter, saying

to His followers: “I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.”—John 20:17.

2H103

July 24, 1904

*Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
March 13, 1917*

USING THIS WORLD, NOT MISUSING IT

(From the Pittsburgh Gazette, 1904.)

Toledo, O., July 24—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached here twice today to large audiences. This afternoon at 3 p. m., at the Valentyne theatre, his topic was “God’s Oath-bound Covenant to Abraham and His seed.” The evening subject was: “Using This World, Not Misusing It.” His text was, “Be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.”—1 Tim. 6:17. He said:

Never was there a time when the whole world seemed more intent upon the accumulation of wealth than now. So manifest is the spirit of hunger for riches that some one has compiled a mock prayer which, by its exaggeration of the spirit of the world today, may help to bring home to the hearts of some a realization of their own danger of idolatry. When we speak of the “world” we use that term as our Lord used it, saying to His disciples, “Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world.” The Lord’s disciples were chosen out of the professed people of God, the Jewish ecclesiastical system, and those who did not follow His teachings were, therefore, the “world” under His definition. So then we see that the same “world” today, namely: Christendom is considerably given over to idolatry—to the worship of Mammon, to the worship of money. Viewed from this standpoint as a highly-colored picture of the general attitude of Christendom today, it may be profitable for us to read in your hearing this that some one suggests is the real attitude of the civilized world. Profit to us of this mock prayer will be in proportion as we shall discern its impropriety and shall resolve by the grace of God that neither the prayers of our lips nor the condition of our hearts nor the actions of our lives shall in any manner indicate to others that such is our prayer—that we are idolaters of this kind.

“WORLD’S PRAYER TO ITS IDOL”

“Oh! Almighty Dollar, our acknowledged governor, preserver and benefactor: We desire to approach thee on this and every other occasion with that regard which should ever be cherished for exalted greatness. Almighty dollar, without thee in the world we can do nothing, but with thee we can do all things. When sickness lays its paralyzing hands upon us, thou canst provide the tenderest of nurses and the most skilful physicians. And when the last struggle of mortality is over and we are being taken to the last resting place of the dead, thou canst provide for us a band of music and military escort to accompany us to that place, and, last but not least, erect over our retiring place a magnificent monument to perpetuate our memory with a living epitaph. And while here amidst the misfortunes and temptations of life, if we are accused of crime and brought before magistrates, thou, almighty dollar, canst secure for us a talented lawyer, a favorable judge and a jury, that we go scot free. Be with us, we pray thee then, in all of thy decimal parts; for thou art the one altogether lovely and the chief among ten thousand. There is no condition in life where thy potent and all-powerful charms are not felt. In thy absence how gloomy is all the household and how desolate the heartstone! But when thou, almighty dollar, art with us, how gleefully the beefsteak sings on the gridiron, how genial is the warmth that anthracite coal and hickory wood diffuses through thy apartment, causing the awakened soul to break forth in acclamations of joy! Almighty dollar, thou canst adorn the gentleman, feed the jackass; and, when an election is to be carried, thou art the most potent argument of politicians and demagogues — the umpire that decides every contest! Almighty dollar, thy shining face bespeaks thy wondrous power! In my pocket make thy resting place! I need thee every hour! I need thee!!!”

GOD’S WILL BE DONE

The prayer of the true Christian is quite to the contrary of the foregoing. To him the Lord his God is first—He is trusted, is loved, is obeyed at any cost to the extent of his ability. Briefly summed up by the poet, he says:

“One prayer I have, all prayers in one,
Tis to be wholly Thine;
Only Thy will, O Lord, be done,
And, Lord, that will is mine.

2H104

The common impression in the world is that to accept the Lord’s will and to seek to walk in His ways, is to forego all the pleasures and enjoyments of life and to become very sad and disconsolate. This view of the matter should be corrected on every suitable occasion by those who really know the ways of the Lord.

It is not our claim that worldly people are Christians and merely do not know it and that their various pleasures

are proper to the Christian. On the contrary, we stick closely to the Scriptures, and admit that faithfulness to the Lord and to His word and to all who have His spirit, and in general; adherence to all the principles of righteousness are sure to bring the Lord's people more or less into a condition of separateness from the world. So the Lord intended and foretold, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." But, admitting that faithfulness to these principles will interfere with the accumulation of wealth, so that not many great, not many rich, not many wise, will be found amongst the Lord's people; admitting also the force of our Lord's words, "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you — the servant is not above his Lord." Nevertheless, the Lord's people want to appreciate more and more and to emphasize the fact that there is a joy and peace and blessing in connection with obedience to the divine guidance which is not to be secured by any other course or from any other quarter. These blessings from the Lord upon His faithful ones more than compensate them for the losses of earthly friendships and wealth and fame, securable to them by their natural talents in other directions.

The misanthropic view of Christian life which prevailed during the Dark Ages and led many to monasteries, nunneries, cloisters, etc., was largely induced by misconceptions of the divine character and plan. Under Satan's delusions of that dark time the flames of hell and the imagined shrieks and tortures of deceased friends in purgatory or hell, cast a shadow upon the lives of many who mourned not only for their friends, but who were in torment of fear as respected themselves. From their standpoint of misconception, they imagined that the Heavenly Father wished them to go about in sackcloth and ashes, making themselves miserable continually in the present life, so that they might themselves escape some of the miseries they anticipate for the future. It was in comportment with this spirit that the poet wrote, "Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers, have all lost their sweetness to me."

This is all wrong, dear friends, and the world in general to some extent has awakened to a realization of the error, while convents and monasteries have become unpopular in proportion as the darkness has lifted; and this despite the fact that many still cling to the theory of eternal torment. The difference is that while hell is still theoretically acknowledged, it is now assumed that all civilized people, church members and their friends and relatives, will escape it. Nevertheless, the Roman Catholic church still insists upon the baptism of infants, lest, dying unbaptized, they should go to hell — still insists that in the case of a child in danger of dying at the moment of birth, baptism should be performed with a special instrument for the purpose before the risk is taken. And many

Protestants, while they deny any thought of infants being in danger of eternal torment for lack of baptism, are, nevertheless, quite nervous if their child be taken seriously ill before the baptism ceremony has been performed. Thus they evidence that some of the old darkness of superstition and error still clings to them.

How glad we should be that in divine providence our eyes are opening more and more to see that this doctrine of eternal torture is not taught in the Scriptures, and is based entirely upon misrepresentations of certain parables and dark sayings and symbols, with not a single literal statement in its support - As I cannot take the time here, dear friends, to discuss the question, I invite any who are still in doubt respecting the scriptural teaching concerning hell, to drop me a postal card at Allegheny, Pa., requesting a free pamphlet on "What Say the Scriptures About Hell." This pamphlet discusses the matter in a thoroughly reverent spirit, examines every text containing the word hell, and makes very plain just what the Scriptures do teach and what they do not teach on this matter along this line.

CORRECT VIEWS OF LIFE

Some of you have noticed that in our hymn book we have changed the stanza already quoted to make it read the very reverse — "Sweet prospect, sweet birds and sweet flowers, have all gained new sweetness to me." This is as it ought to be; for although the apostle declares, "If in this life only ye have hope in Christ, ye are of all men most miserable," yet the hope in Christ is not merely for the things of the life to come, but also for this present life. The joys and blessings of the life to come, shining into the hearts of the Lord's people, illuminating them, disperses the gloom and sadness to such an extent that the Christian, rightly instructed in the Word of the Lord, and properly filled with His spirit, is the most happy person in the world. Others, the world, are seeking joy and happiness —the Christian finds these when he finds Christ.

The apostle speaks of our minds —our new views of life guided and directed by the Father's word — as being "the spirit of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7) As a

2H105

matter of fact the whole world realizes that it is unsound of mind, of unsound judgment — that it errs frequently on many subjects. Nor is the Christian more favored naturally in these respects than others. Often he is less favored, being, as the apostle says, "Chiefly of the poor of this world." However, from the time he takes the Lord as his guide, his counselor, he has a wisdom superior to his own by nature, and this wisdom of a sound mind is

‘The mind of Christ.’ In proportion as it is received, all the affairs of life may be recognized according to their true weight, their true value; in comparison with the things of the life to come, for which the present life is to the Christian a schooling-time of preparation. From this standpoint of the new mind, taught of God, the Christian realizes that the sufferings of this present time — trials, difficulties, self-denials — are unworthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us —Rom. 8:18

“GIVETH US RICHLY ALL THINGS”

Our text intimates that the Lord’s people are not to be morose and disconsolate; because the Lord has made full provision for their enjoyment. The apostle is discussing the riches of this present time, and urging that the Lord’s people do not put their confidence, their trust, in these — that we remember the uncertainty of worldly riches. Our getting of such riches would be uncertain even if we sought them, and our keeping of such riches would be uncertain even if we got them. The apostle urges that our trust and confidence should be in the living God, that is, in the God who is the fountain of our life, of all blessing, who assures us of His good will toward us, and that all things of life are ours to be richly enjoyed.

To the worldly-minded man this proposition is false -He reasons that we cannot enjoy that which we do not have. He sees not the fallacy of his reasoning and indeed many of the Lord’s dear people have not sufficiently learned to take the Lord’s standpoint in such matters. If we look at these things from the world’s standpoint we will fail to have the joy; we must view them from the Lord’s standpoint if we would enjoy them rightly. This proper standpoint, as expressed by the apostle, is, “All things are yours... things present or things to come, all are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God.” 1 Cor. 3:21-23

To many this statement by the apostle seems untrue, but we answer that it is true to each one of the Lord’s consecrated people in proportion as each can take that standpoint of view and by faith appropriate it to himself. From this standpoint the church, the Lord’s consecrated ones, are His sole charge, the sole objects of His providences in this present time. True, He has a glorious provision for the world, in the age that shall follow this one, in the Millennial age; but now the church, of which Christ is the head, is the sole beneficiary of the divine favors, arrangements, providences, etc. “All things are working together for good to those who love the Lord.” They are the “happy objects of His grace, destined to behold His face,” and all the heavenly powers are so disposed as to favor and to forward their highest interests. “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” (Psa. 34:7) “Their angels (messengers) do always have access to the face of my Father.” Matt. 17:10

Who shall lay anything to the charge of these who love the Lord, who are trusting in the precious blood, who are seeking to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit? It is Christ who died; it is God, who once condemned, who has now justified them freely from all things; all things are working on their behalf for good. They should recognize these conditions set forth in the Scriptures, that they may the more heartily rejoice in all the present experiences of life, knowing that even its trials and difficulties are working out the greater blessing in the future by preparing their characters—polishing, testing and preparing them for the heavenly kingdom—for co-operation with their Lord and Master in the great work of blessing the world, soon to be inaugurated.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE PRINCIPLE

Let us illustrate how the Lord's people can richly enjoy all things as though they were the actual possessors of them now. As they look abroad upon the beautiful fields and orchards, forests, lawns, gardens, etc., they can enjoy the beauty of all of these just as much as can those who hold the title deeds. They can look at the outside at least of many of the beautiful and expensive homes of earth, not to mention the grand public edifices, they can admire and enjoy the architecture of these and think of the blessings and comfort of the occupants. The fine horses and carriages of their more wealthy neighbors they can enjoy, too, without having the care and responsibility of them.

But, you ask can not others than the Lord's people equally enjoy these matters? We answer no. There are various things to hinder others from deriving pleasure from such matters. In their hearts is selfishness, envy, malice, hatred, strife, to a greater or lesser degree. If they cannot have the beautiful, the grand, they prefer that others should not have them either; they envy the rich. Nor does this failure to "richly enjoy all things" apply merely to the poor of the world; many who are rich in this world's goods and have need of nothing are

2H106

unhappy nevertheless, because of a failure to "richly enjoy all things." Many of the most cultured, the most wealthy, the most favorably situated, are very unhappy, and not only do not enjoy the things possessed by their neighbors, but do not properly enjoy the things possessed by themselves.

The selfishness which belong to our race by nature is deeply ingrained, and it requires not only the begetting of the Holy Spirit, but considerable growth in grace and in the *fruits* of the Spirit to arrive at the position where we can take a proper view of all things surrounding us

and enjoy them and render thanks to God and be happy. Many of the wealthy lose their interest in their own possession when once they see themselves outclassed by someone who previously had been no more wealthy than themselves. It requires the peace of God and love and benevolence toward our fellow creatures to enable us to richly enjoy the prosperity of others and enjoy the blessings of nature and of art which, by God's providences, are all about us. The true child of God, even though his home be plainly furnished and his food and raiment such merely as would be comfortable and moderate, can look out with joy and peace and satisfaction upon all creation, and can rejoice in whatever he may see of the happiness and prosperity of others —because his heart has been freed from that spirit of selfishness which produces covetousness, envy, strife, and which poisons and discolors everything that is beautiful and attractive of the good things of this present world.

The child of God has abundant opportunity for cultivating the very highest tastes as he passes along the city streets and sees the rich window displays of elegant wares. He is not immediately seized with the desire to possess some beautiful work of art, to hang it up and call it his own. He is content to take good view of it, to enjoy it in the possession of other, and we believe gets much more real pleasure from it than the owners. Indeed, he has a pleasure in not “owning” extravagant things — in having sacrificed his “rights” in these respects for a share with Christ in self-denials in this present life, and in the future inheritance of “glory, honor and immortality” eternally. He is content and very thankful to have such things as reasonably contribute to his present comfort. Such is the happy being, the child of God, who recognizes that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, such trust not in uncertain riches, but in the God who is the fountain of life and blessing, and who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

NOT ABUSING THIS WORLD

The apostle inculcates the same thought in 1 Cor. 7:31, where he urges that the Lord's people shall use this world as not abusing it. That is to say, not misusing the things of this present time, or, more exactly in the thought of the original, perhaps, using this world without using it to the full —using it in moderation. In another place he exhorts us to let our moderation be manifest to all men. The teaching of the Scriptures everywhere is that the people of God should be well balanced in their minds —not extremists. True, the world will think us extremists because we are willing to sacrifice all earthly things for the heavenly things —because such a course seems to the world, with its lack of faith in heavenly things, to

be unwise, unreasonable. But to us, from our standpoint of faith in the divine promises, moderation in the use of the things of this present time means the use of them in such a manner as will contribute to our interests in the life to come. This is the wisdom which cometh from above —first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, etc. —Jas. 3:17

Our text implies that ability to enjoy richly the things of this present time means a trust in God rather than a trust in ourselves or a trust in others or in wealth. And how often we see it to be the case that those who are self-confident, those ‘who trust in the arm of flesh, and those who trust in and make an idol of riches, find in the end that their trust, their confidence, has been misplaced, and that life as a whole under such circumstances is a failure, that it does not bring them the joy, the peace, the satisfaction but merely discontent, disappointment — they have strife and unhappiness.

Trust in God as the giver of all blessings, and a thankful acceptance of the portion granted us, implies that we have approached God in His appointed way and been accepted; that we have recognized ourselves as sinners who by nature have no claim upon divine attention, but who, having heard of the grace of God in Christ, have accepted divine favor through faith in the blood. It implies more than this, that having accepted God’s grace we put our affairs in His hands; that we have accepted His proposition that by a full surrender of ourselves as natural beings we should be accepted of Him, adopted into His family, as spiritual new creatures in Christ. It implies further that having taken these steps our faith firmly holds to the divine promises that all things are ours and are working for our good and for our highest spiritual interests. From this standpoint we can indeed have confidence toward God, and face all the mutations of this present life with perfect composure, knowing that He careth for us and that we have cast all of our care on Him.

“AN HUNDRED-FOLD MORE”

The statement of our text that “God hath given us

2H107

richly all things to enjoy,” and the other Scripture cited that “all things are ours” because we are Christ’s and as such are God’s, reminds us of a still different statement of the same matter by our Lord Jesus. The apostle inquired of our Lord what special favor would be granted to them in view of the fact that they had made a full self-surrender of all the interests of life to become His followers and servants in the truth. The Lord’s answer is applicable to all of His followers from the days of the apostles to the present time —applicable to all that

walk in His footsteps in the narrow way, and who thus faithfully make their calling and election sure to joint-heirship with Him in the heavenly kingdom, soon to be established. He said, "There is no man that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive an hundred-fold" now, in this time-houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, everlasting life. Mark 10:29-30

Alas! that we must say it! but there are very many professed followers of our Lord who have had no such experience as is here detailed. It must either be the fault of the Master, and His word does not prove true, or else it is the fault of those who would claim this promise—that they do not faithfully come up to the conditions; that they do not lose or sacrifice everything in the interest of the Lord and the gospel, and hence have little opportunity for getting back an hundredfold. If nothing is sacrificed in the Lord's cause, this promise of an hundred-fold would mean no increase -On the other hand, to those who have sacrificed and who have thus proven faithful to their consecration to walk in the Master's footsteps, there is a depth of meaning in these words. They find themselves in fellowship of heart with others who are walking in the same narrow way ,and amongst those who are truly the Lord's there is a fellowship of heart, between the old and the young, as between parents and children and between others as brethren and sisters. All losses sustained as result of faithfulness to the Lord and His message are compensated an hundred-fold indeed, and more - This can be understood and appreciated only by those who have had experiences in this line; others must not judge nor condemn untried the Lord's promise. As we have already seen, too, these same faithful ones by reason of growth in grace and love and benevolence, are able to enjoy all the possessions of their neighbors and their friends more than do their worldly neighbors and friends. An hundred-fold more is a very small statement of the matter. Indeed, we think our Lord could truthfully have said that we enjoy houses and lands, etc., a thousand-fold more than anything we have sacrificed for His sake.

Let us learn, dear brethren and sisters, more and more, to take this divine standpoint in viewing life and our surroundings. Under such conditions every day's experience, even in the present life, will be an hundred-fold better, happier, more joyous with the true joy of the Spirit than would be possible under other conditions; and this in turn will be manifest in our outward life, and not alone to ourselves. "Singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord," we can receive all the experiences of life—the painful as well as the pleasurable—with joy and thanksgiving, and with the realization that they all are working out good for us, valuable experiences and character developments to fit us for the kingdom. More than this, these joys of heart will be manifest in our

faces. The heart that is happy finds expression in the face just as the contents of a book are told by the index. The lines of care and worry which belong to the cares of this life, and being troubled about many things, striving for the unattainable things and being grieved over failures, will give place in the Lord's people to lines of countenance indicating faith, trust in the Lord, rest of heart, fixity of purpose —peace with God and, so far as lieth in us, so far as possible on our part, with our fellow men.

The typical temple of old was not built in a day, neither the glorious temple of the future, the Body of Christ, the Church now in process of development and perfecting for the kingdom. As "living stones," the shaping, chiseling, polishing, requires time. We must not expect to have the full appreciation of all the gracious promises of the Lord at the beginning of our Christian way; but we should have them before our minds as indicating the objective point of our attainment in the Christian life. We should keep looking toward the "all things" that are ours, endeavoring to realize the fact more and more. We should be looking toward the "hundred-fold more in this present time" and seeking to appreciate the blessings as they are coming to us or are within our grasp to be used. We should learn more and more not to trust in uncertain, earthly riches, but speedily begin to "richly enjoy all things," realizing that our Heavenly Father is at the helm and is guiding us as His children into all the exceeding riches of His grace and loving kindness, which He has promised to them that are in Christ Jesus, members of His body, the church.

2H108

October 2, 1904

*Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
January 23, 1917*

LESSONS DRAWN FROM ST. LOUIS EXPOSITION

(From Pittsburgh Gazette)

St. Louis, Mo., Oct. 2, 1904—A three day's convention of "Believers in the Atonement Sacrifice of Christ," "A Ransom for All," began here yesterday, with a good attendance from all parts of the Middle West and South. This is the third convention of these people this year. In May they held one for the Pacific coast in Los Angeles, and in August one for New England in Boston. Eight speakers are on the program for the present convention,

and all thus far heard have shown marked ability as well as reverence in handling their topics.

Pastor C .T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., was the speaker this afternoon. He had a large audience. His topic was, "Spiritual Lessons from the Great St. Louis Exposition." His text and discourse follow:

"O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge be increased." Dan. 12:4

Innumerable are the lessons to be drawn from the great Exposition which has attracted and is attracting to this city hundreds of thousands of visitors from all parts of the globe. Like the great world which it in miniature represents, it contains lessons for the wise and for the foolish, matters of interest for the good as well as for the evilly disposed. The profitableness or unprofitableness of a visit to such an exhibit depends largely upon the mind and heart of the visitor. Some see nothing to interest them except the follies of the "Pike," and these are by no means an inconsiderable number, we are sorry to believe. Others more noble -minded are interested in the general manifestation of the world's progress, testified to in every department of this great exhibition. We have all heard of the sailor who had visited all the principle ports of the world, but could give little account of them except their saloons and dance halls. And so it is sure to be in respect to world exhibitions. Some see nothing in them ennobling, but rather appear to draw evil inspirations from every quarter. Others of loftier mind are stirred to the depths of their hearts and quickened to fresh appreciation of the privileges of our day, to fresh laudable ambitions to do their part in ministering to the physical, mental and moral uplift and comfort of the whole world.

MARVELS OF THE EXPOSITION

These latter, whom we sincerely hope constitute the majority of those who have visited and will yet visit this Exposition, stand amazed as they behold the progress made by the world within the last century, and particularly within the last few decades. Their ideals and standards are elevated by contact with the best material things which the world has to show in attestation of its own progress from darkness to light. Those in the agricultural department are specially interested in the labor-saving machinery and in noting the fact that it has nearly all been invented within a century. They marvel as they contrast the implements of today with those of the year 1800. In the horticultural department they contrast the wonderful development accomplished in fruits and flowers, the infinite varieties of today compared with those of past times. In the electrical

department they see wonders of our day; and when they think of the fact that these are of recent production, and that a hundred years ago none of them were known, they are amazed, and disposed to inquire, "How did the world get along without these conveniences? and at the present rate of progress what may we not expect within another century or another thousand *years*?"

They view the exhibits made by the schools, and remember that free schools are comparatively recent innovation and that only the favored parts of the world yet have them. They note the skill and mental development of children of 5 and 10 and 12 years of age; they thoughtfully reflect on the marvelous change in this respect — that knowledge is so generally disseminated in our day. Those of reflective mind call up the fact that the forbears of these children only a short distance back were comparatively ignorant, whether they came from the sunny lands of France and Italy or from the emerald islands of Great Britain or from the great plains of Central Europe. Some of them will call to mind the fact that, not remotely in the past, a law was passed by the British parliament permitting that any peer of the realm, any member of the house of lords, unable to write his name should be permitted to make his mark instead on official documents. How almost incredible this seems in this our day of general,

2H109

free and even compulsory education, when even the little tots have advanced to the degree testified to in their share of the exhibits in the educational department.

But perhaps no part of the Exposition is more interesting to the thoughtful than the machinery department — to note how under some peculiar impulse the human mind has suddenly broken forth in the last century so as to construct machinery whose operation is almost miraculous. They are inclined to say, "How did the world ever get along without machinery? How did mankind succeed in being comfortable without the innumerable conveniences of our day, which are but on recent invention?" In this department the printing press has properly an important place assigned to it, where all can see in contrast the advances, the progress made from the earliest and crudest endeavors to put thought into tangible form for the instruction of others, down to the most modern mechanism, whose accurate and rapid movements and marvelous particularity in every detail are testified to by the large journals of every quarter of the world. With what difficulty do we realize that the first newspaper in the world was published in Venice in 1630, and that the first in England was in 1665, and that those were the merest handbills in comparison to the metropolitan newspapers of our day.

Annexed to the machinery department we find the transportation exhibit, in some respects showing more wonderful and rapid development than any other. It is almost inconceivable, yet fully testified to by history as well as by these exhibits, that a hundred years ago there was not a steamship in the world—that the first, the *Claremont*, built by Robert Fulton, had its trial passage of the Hudson river in the year 1807. Thousands have viewed with interest and curiosity the samples of locomotives of early times, and contrasted these with the steam giants which, girded with superhuman power, rush hither and thither at almost lightning speed, with long trains of passengers and goods. How difficult it is for us to realize that the first steam railroad was put into operation less than 75 years ago between Albany and Schenectady, New York—in 1831 A.D.

We might continue with profit our study of these and other marvels, and might draw from them many helpful lessons respecting what man has done and what man may yet accomplish, and no one can accurately measure the profitable lessons which may be drawn from these exhibits, which represent an outlay of nearly \$50,000,000. To the thoughtful mind the exhibition rightly considered is of incalculable value — more helpful than a year in college — giving a wider scope of information than a year spent in travel at a cost of thousands of dollars and with every advantage. But we must hasten, for our particular interest centers in the spiritual lessons to be drawn from this great Exposition.

TWO VIEWS OF MODERN WONDERS

Pondering the meaning of the wonderful developments of the past century, two explanations present themselves:

First —To the average mind these wonders speak of a new evolutionary development of our race - Indeed, the Darwinian evolution theory, which has captivated and now dominates civilized thought, was no doubt suggested largely by an attempt to explain present conditions as related to those of the past. From this standpoint the evolution theory seems logical —much more so than when it is thoroughly investigated in the light of facts.

The claim that mankind sprang from monkeys by an evolutionary process and that the intervening 6,000 years has marked a gradual rise in the intellectual development of humanity, appeals strongly to the superficial reasoner as being substantiated by present-day conditions and progress, illustrated by the great exposition now being held in this city. But the facts of history do not bear out such a conclusion, and, therefore, do not substantiate such a premise. Were we to ignore history and merely follow this course of reasoning backward, the logical conclusion would be that men were monkeys four or five

centuries ago—not to consider what they would have been 6,000 years ago. If we look at the modern locomotive and railway train and mail service and compare these with the first locomotive and train service of 1830, only 75 years ago, and to measure the past according to this ratio of increase in knowledge, skill, etc., we would be forced to think of the people of the seventeenth century as being almost devoid of mechanical skill.

But what do the facts of history attest? Instead of monkeys in the seventeenth century we find Galileo and Sir Isaac Newton; in the sixteenth century we find Luther and Shakespeare, and the thoughts of these great men are so great that they are revered today, and many are of opinion that no works written in our time are superior to theirs in depth and breadth of intellectual power. Let us go further back, far beyond the date that modern inventions would lead us to look for monkeys among our ancestors, and find the great Apostle Paul as an illustration of intellectual power and logical reasoning, more than 1,800 years before steamboats and locomotives were invented. Let us go further back and four centuries before the Christian era find Socrates and Plato, whose philosophy, however erroneous, still to a large extent dominates

2H110

the most intellectual members of our race today. Still further back we come to Solon, the great philosopher and publicist of Athens, and yet further back was the renowned Solomon the Wise, king of Israel, whose proverbs are published today in every land for their recognized wisdom.

A little further back, ten centuries before the Christian era, was King David of Israel, whose psalms are recognized as touching the hearts and sentiments of mankind more widely and more deeply and more thoroughly even than the writings of Shakespeare. How is this? If evolutionary processes have been the method by which our race has attained to present-day blessings and prosperity, should we find great minds all along through the past—minds whose products have refreshed and inspired the best heads and hearts of the world from their day until the present time, and whose words are quoted not only by Shakespeare, but by every living author and public speaker of note throughout the world today — and quoted, too, approvingly and with the conviction that the quotation carries weight with the intelligent?

ANCIENTS FAR FROM MONKEYS

The present boasts of its laws, and well it may. Truly no other age ever had better or wiser laws, however much they may be improved to adapt them to our new conditions. But when thinking of these laws, how few consider that the basis upon which they all were built was that great system of law which, by divine arrangement, was instituted in the nation of Israel through the great law-giver, Moses. The trouble with the majority of people is that they have never carefully studied those wonderful laws and do not appreciate them. We can well sympathize with the attorney who, having made a study of the matter, exclaimed, "Where did Moses get those laws?" Admitting that the laws of Moses were of divine inspiration, we still must concede that the human intellect through which those laws were given to the world must have been sufficient to have appreciated and grasped them, since Moses was not only the giver of the laws but the enforcer of them also - Where, then, are the evidences of his close relationship to the monkey at a period 3,500 years before our first crude locomotive was constructed?

At that date, too, we find that not Israel alone was above the plane of the monkey, but that other nations also possessed civilization of a high order. The Chinese had the great Confucius more than 2,400 years ago; several centuries still further back the Greeks had their great lawyer Lycurgus and their great poet Homer, and centuries before that the Egyptians manufactured glass, and that of a kind which we are unable to duplicate today, elastic glass. Moreover, the tempering of copper, the secret of which is not now known, was practiced in those early days, as is testified by tools which have been found. It was at a still earlier date than any of these things that the great pyramid of Egypt was built—461 feet high, 746 feet square at the base, and covering twelve acres — and still reckoned as one of the great wonders of the world.

If the people of those early days —4,000 years ago — had the skill to construct that wonderful building, which could not have been duplicated one century ago, does it look as though they were monkeys or very much nearer to the monkeys than we are today? When we learn with astonishment that the great stones in this structure are so closely laid that the thin edge of a knife can scarcely be inserted between them, and when we remember that there is not another building in all the world that exhibits so masterly construction as this, it assures us, dear friends, that there is a great mistake in the theory of Evolution, which would link people of the world of the immediate past as well as of the remote past with monkey-men - I am confident that no one in this audience has the ability to lay such masonry as the Great Pyramid exhibits.. I am confident that with all the machinery and acknowledged skill of our time in such

matter, no mason in the world would undertake such a contract of laying stones in so exact a manner as we find them in the Great Pyramid in far-off Egypt.

We might go further back and find in the records of the only history of that early period of the world—in the Bible—the record of the first man and of how his children were inventors of musical instruments, workers in iron, steel, etc., but we desist, merely calling attention to the fact that the wildest Evolutionists are forced to admit that the human family sprang from one original pair, as the Scriptures declare; and hence, if the Evolution theory were true, it would merely prove that one pair of monkeys and no more ever reached the plane of humanity, the likeness of God, and that no others have ever since so attained. But such an admission, as all may readily see, would mean death to the Evolution argument.

THE BIBLE VERSUS EVOLUTION

Seeing the lameness of the Evolution theory, its general inconsistency in the light of facts, let us, dear friends, grasp more firmly the history and revelation which God has provided for us—the Bible. Let us assure ourselves of the consistency of the divine presentation, the very reverse of that proffered us by evolutionists, which we have found unsatisfactory. The Scriptural assurance is that God created our first parents under favorable conditions in a specially

2H111

prepared garden, in His own image—His own character likeness with mental and moral qualities capable of appreciating right and wrong, justice and injustice. Not only does Genesis tell us of the fall of our first parents and point out the hope of the world to be a recovery from sin and its penalty, death, but it points out also the particular line or channel of the human family through which God would send deliverance—through the seed of Abraham. The Scriptures give us the history of Abraham's posterity, through whom the divine blessing for the uplift, the saving of the world, was to come, and they point out Jesus as that Saviour, showing His lineal descent through the nation of Israel from Abraham to whom the promise was made.

We find in the same Scriptures that this Jesus received His name, which signified Savior, because it should be He who would redeem His people and become the Savior of the world. We find that in the divine plan it was ordered and arranged that this Messiah should die for the sins of the whole world, and thus by meeting the divine penalty against the lost race, make possible their release from sin and death. We see also that the

opportunity to be thus associated with Him in His coming reign of righteousness was properly offered “to the Jew first;” and that when all the Israelites indeed of that nation had been selected, the rest, blinded by worldly wisdom, lost the favor, the opportunity, of joint-heirship with Christ in His kingdom, which then opened to the world in general —whosoever would have an ear to hear and a heart to obey and to walk in the narrow way, taking up the cross of self-denial.

The Scriptures give us an account of all these matters, and, moreover, points us to the prophecies by which we see that the Lord foreknew that only a part of the Jewish nation would prove to be Israelites, indeed, and, accordingly, foretold the offer of joint-heirship with Messiah in His kingdom-work of blessing the world would be extended to the Gentiles “to take out of them a people for His name” to be members of His bride, the elect church. (Acts 15:14) These matters are all consistent with themselves and with the facts as they come down in history.

The great Apostle Paul, writing under inspiration, explains to us how it came about that some of the race are so sunken in degradation — how some lost more rapidly and more completely than others the original image and likeness of God, in which our first parents were created. While telling us that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God, that we are all fallen through one man’s disobedience (Rom. 5:12), he tells us how the most degraded of the race reached their miserable condition. He says (Rom. 1:18) that the wrath of God is revealed, manifested, in these degraded people — as retribution for their wrong course. Why the wrath of God is thus revealed in these brutish offshoots of the race of Adam, he says (verses 21-28): “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves. Who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.”

Let no one misunderstand the record. It does not say that God brought this degradation upon them, but that these most degraded sections of the human family brought the degradation they are in upon themselves by their neglect of the divine regulations. God merely permitted them to take the course which they, as free moral agents, chose. And all the facts agree with this thought, for we perceived that all through the past, as well as in the present time, those people most influenced by the divine message are the ones that not only are preserved from

the deepest degradation, but proportionately as they receive and obey the divine instruction it uplifts them.

Let us now view this great St Louis Exposition from another standpoint, from the Scriptural standpoint. Let us see how the divine word explains the wonderful epoch in which you and I are privileged to live, the most wonderful period of the world's history thus far.

PREPARATION FOR THE MILLENNIUM

The Scriptural explanation of the wonderful progress which we see all about us, as emphasized by the St. Louis Exposition, is that we are in the dawning of the great millennial age. That coming epoch in the Scriptures is sometimes called "The day of the Lord," and sometimes "The Day of Jesus Christ," respecting which the apostle tells us that "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years." The Apostle Peter under Pentecostal influence refers to this glorious millennial day, saying: "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must receive (retain) until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:19-21

Erroneous theologies have turned reason as well as the Word of God upside down in our minds, and it

2H112

requires a little time to get things straightened out again and to discern that, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than man's ways: That the second coming of Christ is to usher in the millennium of divine favor toward the world, and not to end probation and hope. That kingdom for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come" will rule the world with "a rod of iron" and establish judgment—justice. It will promptly punish all evil-doing as well as reward all well-doing. And the prophet declares: "When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Isa. 26:9

Hastening on, we remind you of the many utterances of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah respecting the glorious millennial kingdom, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea, when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears unstopped, when the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich shall be upon the earth, when the curse shall be removed, "rolled away, happy day." Jeremiah, Hosea, David, Amos, Joel, Ezekiel, yea, all the holy prophets, have spoken of this glorious time of restitution, in which not only all the Gentiles shall be blessed, but when natural Israel, cast off from divine favor when Messiah was rejected and crucified, shall look upon Him whom

they have pierced, because, as the apostle declares, the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and of supplication. On this point I commend to every one of you the remarkable words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 11:25-33.

The present time, dear friends, is called in the Scriptures “The day of His preparation” —God’s preparation for the great millennial day. In other words the wonderful inventions and discoveries of our day are here not because this is a “brain age,” but because the Lord’s “due time” has come to get the world ready for the wonderful blessings yet in store for it.

Whoever gives the subject a thought must readily concede that the grandeurs of the perfect time which God hath promised must needs be brought about either miraculously or through natural means. All will be ready to admit that the divine plan generally avoids miracles. In other words, when the “due time” for it came the Lord gradually lifted the curtain, the veil of ignorance and superstition that so long has enveloped the world; and as He did in olden times among the Israelites, so today He has done throughout the world, namely, He has quickened the perceptive faculties and powers of certain individuals here and there, with the result that we have about us the wonders of a new world within the last century—the vast majority of them since 1875. Nor are these wonders at an end. As we draw nearer and nearer to the time for the promised blessings of the kingdom, all the etceteras essential are coming forth forward, nearing perfection, and yet all great electricians, chemists and scientists in general tell us freely that as yet they know little about the various elements with which they are constantly in touch, and that they believe the world is on the eve of greater and more astounding discoveries than any that have yet come to us.

“THE TIME OF THE END”

The majority of Christian people, together with Second Adventists, totally misunderstand the portion of our text which refers to “The time of the end.” It does not mean the end of time, but the time of the ending or closing of the present order of things and the period of the gradual introduction of the new order of things. We have not time here to present to you the Scriptural proofs showing that this “time of the end” began A. D. 1799—to so many as desire we can supply this and many proofs on the subject in print. We have already been in the time of the end for 105 years, and it is our understanding that there will be 10 years more of this “time of the end” before the active operations connected with the establishment of the Lord’s reign in all the earth — which active operations will consist of a world-wide “time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.”—Dan. 12:1.

We have now come to the point where our text becomes the key of this discourse. We quote it again:

“O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even unto the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased.” I remind you that the prophet had received of the Lord a vision which had perplexed him greatly, to understand which he had made prayer with fasting. An angel had been sent him to explain a certain portion of the vision, but he left other portions unexplained, and Daniel was solicitous respecting the unexplained parts, but was told that all that pertained specially to “his people” and all that was proper for him to understand had already been expounded, and that this remaining part of the vision which he did not understand was not for him to know. As the Apostle Paul declares, “These things were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” 1 Cor. 10:11; 1 Peter 1:12

Daniel’s exclamation, “O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?” got the answer, “Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end.” It is our conviction, dear friends, that we now well understand these matters which Daniel was not permitted to understand, and that our knowledge of them is not the result of superior wisdom

2H113

and ability, but because we are living “in the time of the end” — that the time has come for the words of the vision to be unsealed, and for all who are the Lord’s truly consecrated people to be no longer in darkness respecting these things.

VOLTAIRE VS. SIR ISAAC NEWTON

Four characteristics of this period called the time of the end are mentioned in our text and its context. One of these is that the wise of the Lord’s people in this time of the end would understand the prophecy which Daniel was not permitted to understand. We hold, dear friends, that many of the Lord’s people already understand this matter, and that others are gradually, day by day, throughout the whole world, coming to an appreciation of it. This is one of the inward evidences, to be understood best by those whose eyes are widely opened, but the other evidences furnished, I trust, we all can discern. The second is of this character —namely, “Many shall run to and fro.” What does this signify? It undoubtedly points us to the steamboat, the locomotive and the wonderful travel hither and thither which has come to the world through these inventions.

No prophecy could ever be more literally or more truthfully fulfilled than this one is. We are now living in this time mentioned by the angel. His words are, “In the time of the end many shall run to and fro.”

We have already referred to Sir Isaac Newton, the great astronomer and earnest Christian and Bible student. He wrote a commentary on the book of Daniel, and was particularly interested in the verse which constitutes our text, "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." In his comments he wrote, "I should not be surprised if the time would come that men would travel at the rate of 50 miles an hour." We do not wonder that at the time it was written many considered the statement an absurdity, just as many have considered absurd all the glorious promises relating to the future. The noted infidel Voltaire wrote much against the Bible and declared that so far from inculcating knowledge and wisdom it made men foolish. As an evidence of the baneful influence of the Bible, Voltaire mentioned Sir Isaac Newton and his comment on our text, saying: "Note the baneful effect of Bible study, as illustrated in its effect upon the great mind of Sir Isaac Newton, the astronomer. In his advanced years he became a great student of the prophecies, to such an extent that his judgment was sadly unbalanced, and he wrote in one of his Scripture comments, 'I should not be surprised if the day would come that men would travel at the rate of 50 miles an hour.' Poor old dotard!"

Which of these able men with keen minds was best able to foresee coming events — Voltaire, the "higher critics," who sneered at the Bible, or Sir Isaac Newton, the humble, faithful Bible student? The contrast becomes all the more marked when we remember that Sir Isaac Newton discovered the law of gravitation in 1666, nearly a century before the power of steam was discovered by Watt and the power of electricity by Franklin, and that Voltaire, on the contrary, wrote his sarcastic comment after both of these forces had been discovered and were known to the world and when the steam engine was in process of development. Let us, dear friends, set to our seal that the Lord is true and that His Word cannot fail; and if we admire the faith and perception of Newton in anticipating our day by more than two centuries, let us, who behold the fulfillment of these prophecies, not close our eyes to their real significance. The fulfillment proves —unmistakably proves—that we are living in "the time of the end."

"KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED"

The third evidence or proof respecting "the time of the end" is that then knowledge would be increased. Cast your mind over the whole world and note that this part of the prophecy also is unmistakably in process of wonderful fulfillment today. Your wonderful World's Fair testifies to it. Knowledge is increased greatly, universally. Children from 10 to 14 have knowledge communicated to them upon almost every subject, and

education is not only free but compulsory. If our conditions do not fulfill this prophecy, pray tell me what would fulfill it. I offer that no prophecy ever has been more clearly, more positively fulfilled than is this one.

The fourth testimony of the angel respecting the great time of trouble closing “the time of the end” is not yet fulfilled; but on every hand we can see that the precedent conditions are ripening. This fourth feature is expressed in the words, “And there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.” From other prophetic Scriptures we glean that this great trouble lies 10 years in the future. It will be ushered in at the expiration of what the Scriptures designate the “times of the Gentiles,” October, 1914 A.D.

Looking all about us, dear friends, we see brewing the elements which will produce that greatest trouble ever known in the world — a time of trouble which the Scriptures depict as most awful, a time in which the passions, the frenzy of mankind will know no bounds, and before which all law and order and all institutions—civil, social and religious—will go down in an awful anarchy. Thank God for the blessed

2H114

assurance that this great storm of trouble, called in the Scriptures, “the fire of God’s anger,” is not designed to destroy either the earth or its people, but to be a great lesson to man of the utter failure of his greatest efforts — a lesson which will demonstrate that, while knowledge is power, it can be a power for evil as well as a power for good, and that knowledge is of real advantage, of true value, only to those who are in heart accord with the Lord.

It is the knowledge that is being spread abroad in the world today that is preparing for this great trouble that is coming, and herein we perceived the wisdom of the divine plan in holding back this knowledge, in permitting the curtain of ignorance to hold in check the ambitions and selfishness which knowledge is sure to bring to the unsanctified heart. Knowledge and all these inventions of today are, on the one hand, permitting some to become the masters of the world —millionaires, billionaires —permitting trusts and magnates to so get hold upon the financial strings that within another 10 years the millions of the world will be like so many puppets, moved by these combinations and trusts, which will not only regulate the price at which the world may supply its necessities and luxuries, but regulate also the price of labor which must be paid in exchange for these. Knowledge, on the other hand, has awakened the masses to such an extent that they never again would return to serfdom —rather they would die.

All of ordinary perception have already discerned these signs of the times, and as we measure the increasing momentum by the past we are very safe to say that 10 years from now, the end of Gentile times will indeed bring the predicted time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. Our Lord Jesus quoting this same prophecy added a few words saying, "No, nor ever shall be." Thank God with the trouble "the desire of all nations shall come," the blessing of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, Messiah shall reign, and with him will be His joint heirs, his footstep followers, his elect bride.

Dear friends, if to any extent these suggestions of the spiritual lessons to be drawn from the St. Louis Exposition appeal to your hearts and heads as reasonable, scriptural, I urge you to make further examination. We cannot expect that the worldly will be deeply interested in these things, for in this very same chapter we read: "None of the wicked shall understand." Our hope is that the Lord will bless this discourse to the comfort and further awakening of some of "the very elect," those whom the prophet in this chapter declares to be the truly "wise," who shall understand. I will be glad to hear from such and to freely render assistance, which so many need. Freely we have received of the Lord and freely we will, in His name, dispense it to others. I thank you for your attention, and trust that the Scriptural lessons of the St. Louis Exposition may be long profitable to us in connection with its bearing upon the divine teaching respecting the time of the end.

December 18, 1904

*Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
January 16, 1917*

HOPE OF THE WORLD IS GOD'S PROMISE

God's Oath Bound Covenant with Abraham

Miamisburg, O., Dec. 18, 1904—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny addressed a large audience at the Opera House here today on, "God's Covenant with Abraham and His Seed; Oath-Bound and Immutable."

This article was republished in Pastor Russell's Sermons, pp. 52 7-537, entitled, "The Oath-Bound Covenant."

1905

2H115

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, January 8, 1905

TO HELL AND BACK WHO ARE THERE?

Lynn, Mass., Jan. 8—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny addressed a large audience here today on “To Hell and Back—Who Are There.” He prefaced his discourse with the remark that the topic might seem sensational, but it would be found to be otherwise—that many might think he intended to speculate beyond what is written in the Scriptures, but they would find themselves mistaken, as he would confine himself strictly to the Word of God. His discourse follows:

“The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” Psalm 19:7

Let us give heed to our text, dear friends, and realize that of ourselves we know nothing about the future, and that no other human beings know any more about the subject than we do. From God alone can come the information which we seek respecting the dead. Let us realize this fact and give the more earnest heed to the testimony of the Scriptures, which, as our text declares, are able to make wise the simple—the honest, the sincere, the unprejudiced, the unsophisticated. Heathendom has its own peculiar hells and purgatories, but none of them more revolting, more horrible, than those presented to our attention by the various denominations of Christendom. Quite evidently all these various conceptions came from one common origin, and our view of the matter, dear friends, is that Satan himself was the author of this terrible doctrine, which has made millions unhappy, and sent thousands to insane asylums. “Yes, but,” perhaps you will say, “if loyal to the Bible we must believe in hell!” In which theory of hell must we believe, dear friends? Which is the scriptural theory respecting hell?

THE INFERNO OF CATHOLICS

Our Catholic friends, Greek and Roman, outnumber Protestants more than two to one. These divide Inferno into two parts, the easier and milder of which is called purgatory. Catholic doctors of divinity have given us detailed accounts of the terrors of purgatory too awful for me to attempt to describe. Many of you are familiar with Dante’s Inferno, illustrated by that great artist, Dore. It represents poor humanity in the future enduring various torments for hundreds and sometimes thousands of years, and the mercy that it holds

forth is that, by virtue of masses and prayers and fastings of many friends, the period of this torture may be somewhat lessened. The Pope, you know, on his jubilee year is accustomed to release many from purgatory, presumably in part to make room for others hastening hither from all parts of the world at the rate of 85 per minute.

Our Catholic friends assure us that all go to purgatory except a few, called saints—who go direct to heaven and after several centuries are canonized and afterward prayed to by Catholics—and heretics, for whom there is something worse than purgatory prepared. They tell us that even Popes and Archbishops and Bishops go to purgatory, and need to remain there for a while at least to be prepared for the heavenly conditions. Perhaps you noticed recently an account of the death of Archbishop Elder of Cincinnati, O., and his recorded last words, which I quote: “Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now at the hour of death! Amen!” The Archbishop had no thought that he was freed from sins and no longer a sinner, but a saint; and his co-religionists evidently had no doubt of the king either, for you notice from the papers also that masses were said on his behalf—for the peace of his troubled soul, supposed at the time to be in anguish in purgatory in preparation for heaven. Doubtless many of you noticed also on the occasion of the death of Pope Leo XIII, similarly prayers were said for the peace and rest and comfort and ultimate liberation of his soul from purgatory. There would be no object in saying masses for those believed to be in heaven—such would be beyond the need of masses. Masses are said for sinners, for their release from sins and the penalty of sins, according to the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

THE PROTESTANT HELL

The Protestant view of the subject we hold to be less reasonable than that of Catholics. Theoretically they take the same position respecting the unfitness of mankind for heaven and admit that the heavenly promises belong only to those who walk in the narrow way—not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. They admit that the great mass of Protestants are not saints, either, but to their shame be it said they have a theory respecting hell which not only makes it as awful as the human mind can imagine, but it affirms that there is no hope of recovery for any who enter it. We ask ourselves, “Do Protestants mean this? Do they believe it?” Admitting that few are in that condition of holiness and purity of heart which would fit them for the divine presence and favor, do they believe that all the remainder, their neighbors, friends, brethren, sisters, parents,

children, are passing rapidly into an eternity of torture beyond the power of tongue to describe? We answer that they do not believe it; that their actions speak louder than their words.

Protestants assume great liberty in dealing with the subject, of which they admit they have no personal knowledge. One will tell us that he does not believe in the literal flames and literal roasting by literal devils with literal pitchforks in literal ovens, but believes that it will be a gnawing of conscience, some place, somewhere, he knows not where; somehow, he knows not how; but he is as sure as he lives that it is all going to take place just as he has pictured it in his imagination. He feels himself infallible on this subject. Another tells us that he thinks there will be some fire and some gnawing of conscience, but he does not know where or how. Another tells us that he believes there will be no fire, that the punishment of the wicked will be their compulsory association with each other, and that they will get so satiated with their own company and sinful course that they will loathe their existence, but must continue it under these conditions to all eternity. Where? How? He knows not. He believes himself infallible on this particular point, though not so in his earthly affairs, his financial ventures, matrimonial engagements, etc—just on this one point he is infallible.

“GOD IS NOT UNJUST”

We ask these various infallible wise men why any such horrible conditions should be continued everlastingly? In what sense would God be glorified by the perpetuation of such conditions? In what way would He take pleasure in the pain or suffering of His creatures, however wicked? The answer of Jonathan Edwards to this question was that God’s people would be so changed after death that they could look over the battlements of heaven and see their own parents, or children, or brothers, or neighbors in the most awful torture and turn around and praise God the louder. But few in our day would give this answer to the question. They prefer to avoid it; they realize that they have no reasonable answer.

We ask them another question—If mankind, under present conditions tend to die without such awful torture as you describe for the future, would they not die much more quickly under those tortures? Is it not the tendency of all suffering to destroy? Would it not then be more reasonable to expect that at sometime in the future these tortures which they describe would terminate in some natural way—lead to the destruction of the individual, of the mind, of the body, of every power? “Oh, but,” they answer, “God will preserve them in being; He will supply them life. Only by His power can they be made to endure such suffering at all, and He will see to the

perpetuation of the life so they may suffer on and on and on eternally. If that be true, dear friends, if these teachers be infallible, the race might well be sorry that the Almighty has so much power, or that, having the power, He did not use it in some better cause.

We return to the questions and ask, what evil could any human being commit in the brief span of an hour, or a day, or a month, or a year, or a century that would justly merit an eternity of torture such as this you describe? The reply is that our entire race was born under the curse, under condemnation, and that now God has provided a Savior, and only those who will accept Him can be saved—saved from hell, saved from eternal torment. They tell us that this sentence or curse of our race to hell came upon us as a penalty for Father Adam's disobedience in Eden in the eating of the forbidden fruit, and that only those who accept of Christ can be saved from this terrible doom. But we reply that surely such a penalty would be unjust. To suppose that God would pronounce a curse of eternal torment upon 20,000,000,000 of Adam's race because of his disobedience in eating an apple is to accuse the Almighty of the grossest injustice, not to say lovelessness.

Dear friends, surely these teachings are not from the word of God. Surely God is not the author of these terrible hallucinations which have been upon our race for now centuries. They have come down to us from the Dark Ages; practically all the creeds of Christendom were formulated in the Dark Ages or immediately after them. None of them will stand the light of present-day enlightenment and reason—none of them will stand the light of scriptural investigation. If the Scriptures tell of these various things, why do not these Doctors of Divinity point us to the chapter and verse and give us the particulars in detail? and why are they not of one mind? Why have they such diversity of views on a subject, which, from their statement is the most awful and most important possible to be thought of? It is all a huge mistake, dear friends, as we hope to show you when investigating.

HELL FROM SCRIPTURE STANDPOINT

In the Old Testament Scriptures of our common English version the word hell occurs 31 times, but the original Hebrew word of which hell is the translation occurs many more times—66 times in all. Why did not the translators give us the full benefit of all these occurrences of the word sheol in the Hebrew text? Were they anxious to cover up this question of hell so that they might translate the word otherwise as often as possible? No, there was another reason; and when we point out that other reason it will make clear to every one of us, I

trust, that the 31 times that the word hell occurs in the Old Testament are all erroneous: that the word hell

2H117

should not have been in the Old Testament at all—at least it should not be there with the meaning which is ordinarily attached to the word. Sheol in our common version Bibles is 31 times translated hell, 31 times translated grave, and three times translated pit, and it should have been translated tomb or hidden state in every instance.

I would not be understood as charging the translators with a deliberate attempt to blindfold people, and hence will mention an extenuating fact, namely, that since the translation the English language has experienced considerable change in respect to this word hell as well as in other respects. In old English literature we find the word hell used in speaking of thatching a house or pitting potatoes for winter use. To hell a house means to cover it, to hell potatoes means to cover or hide them from the light, frost, etc. If the word hell were still used in this sense there would be no need of this discourse, but the gradual change of the word signifying to cover, to secrete, to bury, to entomb, to mean a place for torturing humanity, makes necessary that we expose the error and thereby free our minds from the bondage of superstition which for centuries has beclouded the divine character and hindered us from having the proper appreciation of our Creator.

The word sheol, as every Hebrew scholar knows and will admit, signifies the dark, the hidden, the state of death. It has not in it the remotest suggestion of fire, or flames, or pitchforks, or devils, or torture, or anguish. Let us see this from the Scriptures themselves.

The first occurrence of sheol in the Scriptures is in Genesis 37:25, where it has been translated grave. Here Jacob is represented as mourning for his son, Joseph, supposed to have been killed by the wild beasts. He is represented as saying, I will go down into sheol mourning for my son. He meant that nothing would comfort him as long as he should live, that he would mourn for his son until his last breath. The second occurrence of the word sheol is in Genesis 42:38. Jacob again is the speaker. He refers to his favorite son, Benjamin, and tells his other sons if they return from their journey and bring not Benjamin with them they will surely bring his gray hairs down in sorrow to sheol—to the grave, to the tomb, to death. Has anyone any doubt as to the propriety of this translation, grave? Does any sane person think that the translators should have rendered the word sheol here by our common word, hell? Surely not! Jacob had no desire, we may be sure, to go to a place of eternal

torment, and made no suggestion of the kind, nor was there any such thought ever before his mind. The devil had not yet formulated this terrible God-dishonoring doctrine.

JOB'S PRAYER TO BE HID IN SHEOL

We have all heard of the troubles of Job, and in the Scripture narrative respecting him we are told of Job's prayer to the Lord in these words, "Oh, that Thou wouldst hide me in sheol until Thy wrath be overpast! Then shalt Thou call and I will answer Thee." Who thinks for moment that Job was praying to go to eternal torment? No sane person so thinks. The translators were evidently correct again in rendering sheol by our English word grave. Job realized that himself and all the world of mankind at the present time are living under the divine curse or wrath justly imposed upon our race—not a wrath of the future, which will torment the masses of mankind, but a wrath which is on the world now, which is permitting us to go down under the sentence of death through various troubles, pain, sorrow, sicknesses, weaknesses, into sheol. Job felt that if it were the Lord's will he would be glad to die speedily, as the burdens of the present life were more than he felt himself equal to bear. However, he had no desire to remain forever in the grave. On the contrary, he had information respecting the divine plan which gave him the understanding that in due time the Lord would deliver the world from this curse, the sentence of death, from the tomb and from all the weaknesses which have come upon our race through the original death sentence.

It is to this resurrection hope that Job referred, saying, "Thou wilt call and I will answer thee." His words remind us of the teachings of the Lord Jesus, who said, "Marvel not, the hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth." This was Job's hope, this was the meaning of his prayer, "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave until thy wrath be overpast. Then thou wilt call and I will answer thee." He will share in the general blessings of the Millennial age, when, in harmony with the divine plan, Christ our Lord, who has redeemed the whole world with His precious blood, with the sacrifice of Himself, shall be King over all the earth, to lift up and to assist every creature back from the weaknesses and imperfections of this dying condition to the perfections and glories of Eden, lost and redeemed and to be restored to so many as will come back into harmony with God, in God's due time.

King David under the smiting hand of the Lord was sore distressed and fearful that his death was near. Mark his prayer: "O save me for Thy mercies' sake. For in death

there is no remembrance of Thee; in the grave (sheol) who shall give Thee thanks?" Evidently David was expecting to go to the grave, but desired that his life might be prolonged for a time and promised that the result would be to the Lord's praise. His argument

2H118

is plain—that if he went to the grave he could neither praise God nor serve Him. There is no suggestion in his words of an eternity of torture or that he thought of going there.

The wise man gave advice, a portion of which is frequently quoted, the remainder being neglected because its wisdom has not been discerned, having been beclouded by the smoke of the Dark Ages. He says: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is neither work nor device nor wisdom in the grave (sheol) where thou goest." (Eccl. 9:10) Solomon refers to the death state into which all have gone, both good and bad.

HEZEKIAH'S VISIT TO HELL DELAYED

The godly King of Judah, Hezekiah, was sick unto death and expected to die, but he prayed to the Lord for a prolongation of his life and his prayer was answered, his life being miraculously extended for 15 years. In his account of the matter he says: "I said in the cutting off of my days I shall go down to the gates of the grave (sheol). I am deprived of the residue of my years... But Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption, for Thou has cast all my sins behind Thy back. For the grave (sheol) cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee." Isa. 38:10-17-18

Note Hosea's use of the word sheol in the familiar text, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave (sheol)—I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plague (subduing); O grave (sheol), I will be thy destruction." Hosea 13:14

From this last testimony, dear friends, we have the assurance that whatever is meant by the word sheol—whether it means, as we claim, the death state, or whether it means, as others claim, a place of eternal torment—it is to be destroyed, "O sheol, I will be thy destruction."

Let us follow this quotation from the Old Testament to the New Testament, where the Apostle Paul quotes it in I Corinthians 15:54, 55. He is discussing the resurrection of the dead, and declares, "As all in Adam die even so all in Christ shall be made alive, every man in his own order." He describes the first resurrection as being that of the church, blessed and holy, and shows that all others

shall have opportunity for coming completely out of present imperfections, up, up, up, to full release from sin and death if they will, “every man in his own order.” But he proceeds to show that this general release of the world from death will be during the Millennial age—after the close of this gospel age, after the resurrection of the church, the first resurrection the chief resurrection. His words are:

HADES, SHEOL, GRAVE, EQUIVALENTS

“When this corruption shall have put on in-corruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality (when the entire church of the first-born shall be completed) then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

The word grave in this last quotation is hades, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word sheol. The Apostle here translated the word sheol into Greek in which the New Testament is written. Can we have any clearer evidence, dear friends, that sheol of the Old Testament and hades of the New Testament alike signify the death condition? and God’s proposition is that He will destroy sheol, destroy hades, liberating mankind therefrom as prisoners from a pit or prison house.

Note another use of the word sheol in the Old Testament, quoted in the New: King David, speaking prophetically of Christ says, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol, the death state), neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.”(Psa. 16:10) The Apostle Peter quotes this (Acts 2:27), translating the Hebrew word sheol into the Greek word hades. He explains the meaning of both words as referring to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the state of death on the third day.

THE KEY OF HELL IN GOOD HANDS

We see that Justice condemned our race to death—to the tomb—to destruction. We see that our Lord Jesus died for the deliverance of mankind from destruction. In view of this redemption death is not spoken of in the Scriptures as annihilation, but is frequently called a sleep, and the thought is given that a general awakening shall take place in the morning of the next age, the Millennium. Under another figure this death state, the tomb, sheol, hades, is described as a great prison-house, in which all who die are figuratively represented as prisoners, bound hand and foot, unable to release themselves. Our Lord Jesus, by His death, is declared in the Scriptures to have secured the key of this prison-house—the authority, the control of all the prisoners, to do with them as He may please.

Our Lord referred to this prison when He quoted the words of the Prophet Isaiah and applied them to Himself, declaring that He would open the prison doors and set at liberty the captives. (Isa. 61:11; Luke 4:18) Our Lord made no attempt to open earthly prisons. At the very time he used these words John the Baptist was languishing in prison, and our Lord made no effort to deliver him. His work is a greater one—the deliverance of all that are in the grave. This work He declares He

2H119

will accomplish at His second coming. His words are, “The hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth.” (John 5:28,29, R.V.) The saints, the holy, will come forth to glorious perfection in what is known as the first or chief resurrection; the remainder of mankind will come forth to enjoy the blessed privileges and opportunities of the Millennial age, in which the judgments of the Lord will be abroad in the earth, causing the inhabitants to learn righteousness.

After our Lord’s resurrection and ascension He sent a message to His people in which He declared: “I am He that was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore and have the keys of death and hades (grave).” This is in keeping with the entire scriptural proposition that the dead are not in bliss, neither in torment, but dead, and needing an awakening by resurrection promised by the Redeemer.

Thus seen, your friends and relatives and neighbors, as well as mine—the world in general—have been going down to hell, into death, into the tomb, for the past 6,000 years. If we follow the guidance of the inspired word we know just where they are, and hear the divine message saying, “The dead know not anything.” More than this, we hear the same word declaring that all in the grave shall come forth—as Job expressed it: “Thou shalt call and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.” Job 14:15

Thus the Lord’s word assures us of the deliverance of all from the Adamic death penalty, because Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man— to be testified in due time.

NOT UNIVERSAL SALVATION

While we do find in the Scriptures a universal redemption from the universal curse or death sentence, we also find that those released from the Adamic sentence will all be required to stand trial, each on his own account. No longer will the race lie under Adamic condemnation. The individual trial which

will come to each will be decisive. Those who will obey the voice of that great Teacher shall live—everlastingly—under blessed conditions. Those who will neglect or refuse to avail themselves of the great privileges thus secured to them through Christ will die the second death—be annihilated, be utterly destroyed without hope, for Christ dieth no more. One redemption and one full opportunity based upon it is all that God’s word proposes. It is sufficient. Any who will not choose righteousness and hate iniquity under the favorable conditions which the Lord proposes for their trial will surely be unworthy of the gift of God, eternal life.

Those who have the ears and eyes of faith, and are blessed with ability to grasp the evidences of Divine favor in Christ at the present time, are specially blessed. He that hath an ear let him hear; let him not wait for the blessings of the future. We who now hear and obey may make our calling and election sure to a part in the heavenly kingdom to glory, honor and immortality as spirit beings, joint-heirs with our Redeemer. The blessing for the world is to reach it during the millennial age, through the agency of the “little flock,” the “saints,” whom God is selecting during this gospel age. The general blessings of the world will be very great, indeed, but not comparable to those provided for the “elect.” I urge that so many of us as have the ear and eye of faith lay aside every weight and run with patience in the race, that we may make our calling and election sure to the great blessings placed within our reach.

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, January 16, 190.5

HUNGER OF THE SOUL; HOW TO SATISFY IT

IMPROPER DIET OF THE SOUL

Pastor C. T. Russell addressed his home congregation yesterday in Bible House Chapel, Allegheny, at 3 p. m., on “Soul Hunger, and How to Satisfy It.” His text was Matthew 5:6, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” He said:

The human heart has its hungers and appetites as well as the human body; and as the latter’s cravings are various, so are the cravings of the former. These appetites or cravings, mental or physical, are either natural or depraved, and should be dealt with accordingly. If we imagine the perfect man we must picture in him such physical cravings or appetites as would be reasonable and proper—such as would require neither undue cultivation nor undue restraint. But, alas, we are aware that the race is so fallen from perfection that, as the Scriptures declare, the whole course of nature is deranged so that with the majority health can only be

preserved by giving careful attention to diet, using the experiences of others as a guide and assistance to judgment, whose decree must be enforced by the will power. So also the various appetites of the heart, the mind, the soul, in our fallen condition, require regulation through knowledge applied and enforced by the will; otherwise our soul hunger is sure to lead to distress rather than to the pleasure we anticipate and desire.

This soul hunger is not confined to any particular class; it is common to the entire human family. Some of its appetites are, (1) craving for sympathy and fellowship; (2) craving for ease and comfort; (3) craving for name and fame, for "honor amongst men," whether on a high or a low plane; (4) craving for pleasure. Each individual has his special preference, choice or appetite, his special craving, but more or less all have a measure of all these cravings, just as our physical appetites call for meats, vegetables, etc., some having special preference for one kind of diet more than for another.

IMPROPER SOUL DIET

We may assume that, as usual, the holiday season witnessed considerable transgression by many of the dietary proprieties. As a result some have had unfavorable experiences physically—loss of appetite and sickness. They have lost their appreciation of some of the appetizing temptations of the season, temporarily, at least; a revulsion of feeling followed the temptation and gratification of depraved cravings.

Similarly, crises are sometimes brought about in respect to our soul hungerings, because we have fed them improperly, producing discomfort and disappointment instead of the hoped-for pleasure. For instance, the man or woman whose heart has specially yearned for pleasure and who has sought to satisfy it through the ordinary channels of the world, finds but disappointment, finds that the only pleasure enjoyed was in the pursuit of pleasure, and that in proportion as anything was grasped the pleasure died. Another, whose special craving had been for honor amongst men, or for name and fame, finds that in proportion as he attains his object he grasps a bubble. He who hungered for ease and for comfort found that, in proportion as he attained these, they were not what he really sought—that physical ease and comfort are not usually accompanied by mental ease and heart rest. He or she who craves sympathy and fellowship, after sacrificing much to attain these, has usually found disappointment, vexation of spirit, loneliness. The general condition of all is expressed in the words of the poet: "All that my soul has tried left but an aching void; Jesus has satisfied, Jesus is mine!"

But, alas, how few can appreciate the latter half of this poetic statement! How few have found Jesus; how few have found

satisfaction of soul hunger, the peace, the rest, the joy, the fellowship, the satisfaction of ambition, the loving companionship and pleasure of soul attainable in this direction and not elsewhere. It is to such that our text is specially addressed. It admonishes us all that soul hunger can find no true or lasting satisfaction aside from the Lord and the blessings and joys of his arrangement.

WHAT IS RIGHTEOUSNESS HUNGER?

Righteousness is the condition of being right—not wrong, not in error. That which is right is that which is true; hence to love righteousness is to love truth, honesty, uprightness. Everything that is right in God's sight, right according to the perfect standard, is embraced in this word righteousness.

The majority of mankind have little or no appreciation of righteousness. Born in sin, shapen in iniquity, our appetites for righteousness must be cultivated. All that the natural man has in this direction is the realization that selfish and unrighteous appetites cannot be satisfied; he is very apt, indeed, to think that all men are like himself, dissatisfied. Only from the one quarter, the Word of God, do we get radical, positive teaching on this subject of righteousness; only from that quarter do we obtain information respecting the satisfactory food for our souls.

The Scriptures point out that the only reasonable and proper course for all to pursue is that the Lord be recognized by each heart; that His way, His plan, be accepted and adopted as the rule of our hearts and lives; that his blessing and our fellowship with him shall be pre-eminently the satisfaction of our heart-longings for sympathy; that the ambitions set before us in the divine plan shall be accepted as above and beyond all others; and that the blessings associated with righteousness and with fellowship with the Lord are the only satisfying ones.

HUNGRY SOULS FILLED

No one can come to the Lord truly hungering and thirsting after righteousness and at the same time love sin. He may, indeed, realize a weakness toward sin, a craving of the fallen flesh in that direction, but his will, which the Lord regards, must be set firmly, positively, toward righteousness. This implies that to some extent he has had acquaintance with sin and has found it unsatisfactory; that the craving of his soul, his heart, for the things that are right, pure and good have been so directed of the Lord that he has learned to despise sin and desire righteousness, not only outwardly but inwardly. It means also, usually, that the person has tried,

has grasped after righteousness, has sought to appropriate

2H121

it and has been unable to do so—has realized himself a fallen being, depraved in his appetites, both mental and physical.

The Lord's providential care is over such to bring to their attention the great Saviour from sin—Jesus—who not only delivers us from the penalty of sin, death, but also assists us in overcoming sin and will, eventually, if we abide in Him, under His care and instruction, bring us off conquerors, victors, through the resurrection “change” promised.

The hungering and thirsting thus began while we were yet sinners, before we had found Jesus—the bread from heaven which alone can satisfy. He who never hungered or thirsted for righteousness is wholly unprepared to come to Jesus; hence, amongst the most unlikely ones to receive the Lord's favors in this present age are those who are morally of a superior class and who feel less, therefore, their need of divine aid. They are not satisfied, but they are less dissatisfied than some who have tasted and tried the various selfish condiments proffered them for the satisfaction of their soul hunger. For this reason those who are the least impaired mentally and morally are found to have the least heart hunger for righteousness and to constitute but a small majority of those who come to the Lord to be fed, to be soul satisfied with the bread from heaven—the Lord and His gracious messages and promises.

STEPS OF GRACE

The primary condition necessary to approach to the heavenly table and its soul-satisfying viands is a regard for righteousness, for truth, and a recognition of personal unworthiness. Hence the first step toward the table is the acceptance of Christ as a personal Savior, and an acceptance of His work “finished” at Calvary as the basis for an approach to God. The forsaking of sin and acceptance of Christ as our sin-bearer and justifier before the Father brings us to the condition which the Scriptures term “justified by faith.” There, as the Apostle declares, we find peace with God—rest of heart in the realization that while we are still imperfect, God, henceforth, is willing to accept us and our best endeavors as perfect. We must differentiate between actual perfection and this reckoned perfection, for, although the Lord and all who are His and who sit at His table recognize such believers as “holy and acceptable” (Rom. 12:1), nevertheless they also realize that this is but a reckoned standing, the one thus admitted to the

Father's family and table having still the weaknesses of the flesh as formerly, which must now be battled against.

Those who have taken this step toward God and the table, spread with the heavenly bounties that satisfy soul hunger, are figuratively spoken of as covered with a white robe of righteousness—covered with the merit of the Redeemer's purity, imputed to all who believe in His redemptive sacrifice and who seek to walk in His ways. A beautiful figure of this justified standing was an ancient custom of the Jews, that all the guests at a marriage supper should put on an outer robe provided by their hosts. Thus clothed, the rich and the poor were, for a time, on a common level as guests. So it is with all who come unto God through Christ, accepting the terms of the Gospel call; they are on a common level—all sinners covered, justified, with the merit of Christ, the "wedding garment."

THE SECOND STEP TO THE TABLE

While the first step of justification is all important, it does not admit to the Lord's table except in the sense that it prepares us for it, makes us acceptable to the Lord. The second step is that of full consecration to the Lord—a full renunciation of our own wills, recognized as imperfect, warped, twisted by inherited weaknesses and surrounding temptations. With a full consecration to the Lord and full acceptance of His will as instead of our own, we are inducted into all the privileges of sons of God—"heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with Him." Rom. 8:17.

This position as sons was reached through the Lord's providence as a result of our hungering for righteousness, and our coming in the divinely appointed way to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. We may now partake to full satisfaction. We hear our text, the Master's words, addressed to all such: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." But as it is necessary to have the appetite, necessary to hunger and thirst, before we approach the Lord and His supplies, so we find that it is only in proportion as we have a deep hunger and thirst that we will partake liberally of the blessed provisions. Quite evidently many of the Lord's people reach His table without having a very keen appetite—such are easily satisfied. Our appetites for the spiritual good things of the Lord's table are largely in proportion to our experience in seeking satisfaction in other quarters.

The foregoing explains why it is that religious revivals frequently follow financial panics. When the mind and heart are pursuing earthly things, and then hope's brilliant coloring is cast over all of life's affairs in anticipation of various successes, the Lord and His proffered peace and blessing and satisfaction are overlooked or not appreciated. It is often, as the poet declares:

“When all around my soul gave way
Christ then became my hope and stay.”

Many, indeed, of the Lord’s people can look back and rejoicingly say that their trials and difficulties have

2H122

thus indirectly worked out for them their greatest blessings, by leading them to look away from themselves and the world to Him who is the mighty to save, and whose voice, speaking peace, can alone give satisfaction, and whose fellowship can alone give comfort and rest and the confidence sought.

Similarly, the beginning of each new year is a favorable time for heart reformations, not only because of the suggestions of new things and new revelations at the beginning of each year, but largely, also, because of heart disappointments, heartaches, etc., incidental to the holiday season. With nearly everyone there is more pleasure in hope, in anticipation, than in realization, and the reaction occasioned by disappointment of selfish hopes and ambitions has the tendency to turn the mind to the Lord. And this is not only true of those who are first coming to the Lord, but also true of those who have come to the Lord’s table, especially if their attention has been turned from the heavenly promises and hopes to earthly things, which are sure to be all more or less disappointing. The present, then, dear brethren and sisters, is a specially favorable time for us to consider afresh the privileges we enjoy of being fed, refreshed and strengthened with the good things of the divine word—the right things, the true things, the things of righteousness.

CULTIVATING AN APPETITE

The Lord’s people who have had experience will know that their appetite for spiritual things can be cultivated, encouraged, developed. We recognize this principle in our animal appetites—that they need guidance, cultivation, and the same applies with still greater force to our spiritual appetite. He whose appetite for spiritual things is deficient should tempt himself to eat even as he would do with his physical appetite. Nothing is more conducive to a spiritual hunger than approach to the throne of grace. As the hunger is thus awakened we should go freely to the Scriptures, the storehouse of divine, gracious promises, and should select from amongst the exceeding great and precious promises therein those most tempting to our appetites. If faint and discouraged from opposition we should partake of such promises as assure us in the Lord’s own words, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” If discouraged by reason of failure to do as well as we might have done in

any case we should partake of the promises, which assure us that “He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust;” “He was tempted in all points like unto us, yet without sin;” that He is our competent high priest, sympathizer, mediator on our behalf. 1 Cor. 10:13

Should we feel discouraged, downcast, overwhelmed by the opposition of the world and the adversary let us partake of the promises which assure us that “All things are working together for good to them that love God,” and that “Greater is He who is for us than all they that be against us.” If tempted to think of God as no longer interested in us, no longer mindful of us, no longer sympathetic with our endeavors to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, let us remember the apostle’s suggestion that “If God so loved the world while we were yet sinners as to give His son for our redemption, much more does he love us now that we have hungered and thirsted after righteousness and have approached His table, coming by the way of the all-prevailing name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

“THEY SHALL BE FILLED”

The Lord’s people who follow the above course outlined in the Scriptures get filled in this present time—get repeatedly filled as full as the present poor earthen vessels will contain. But still there is more to follow, and with the filling comes the enlargement of our hearts, our capacities, our appreciations, and still further filling and a further enlargement and so on. The course of the proper child of God, therefore, is one of progress from start to finish. But the finish in perfection will not be in the present life—will not be until our change in the first resurrection. Then we shall be like our Lord and Redeemer, and see Him as He is and share His glory.

We leave our subject here, merely reminding you all afresh that there is nothing in unrighteousness to fill any man; that there is a filling power in righteousness, and that there is but one way to come to this fountain of life eternal and present and everlasting blessings. Let us not deceive ourselves and trudge along tediously day after day, year after year, looking for satisfaction, comfort, rest, peace of heart, joy, in earthly things. Let us realize that these are to be found only by those who find the Lord, and that to these, because of the new joy which comes into their hearts, there are new experiences. To these the beauty of every flower, bird and every noble song is enhanced in value, to these the only things lost are the things that are not worth having, the things which belong to sin and selfishness, which they desire to be rid of and with which they are glad to part.

We have already intimated that hungering and thirsting for righteousness includes the thought of hungering and thirsting for the truth. Alas, how many of those professing to be the Lord’s consecrated people seem not to have learned a love of

righteousness in the sense of loving the truth, hating untruth. Nowhere is this more manifest than in the various religious creeds. We hear continually from men and women that they are careless of the truth, that they are day by day acting

2H123

a falsehood before God and man in that they profess certain creeds, doctrines, which they are free to say privately they do not believe, have not believed for years. If all true Christian people could be gotten to the point of so loving righteousness, truth, that they would renounce and denounce their bondage and would stand forth for the truth and alone, it would make a revolution amongst the Lord's people that would be a blessing indeed to every one of them.

It would not, indeed, affect the masses of the nominal churches, for the masses make no profession of love of righteousness, love for truth—the masses are children of this world, who hunger and thirst for the prides and ambitions of the present life, for the honors of men, for the peace and comfort which money can secure; they are comparatively ignorant of the meaning of our text, a hunger and thirst after righteousness.

“GIVE YE THEM TO EAT”

Righteousness is so interwoven with its various parts and elements, justice and injustice, truth and error, holiness and sin, that whoever is careless in one element is deficient in all; whoever hungers and thirsts after righteousness in one of its phases, is sure to hunger and thirst for it in all; whoever loves justice and righteousness will surely love the truth; whoever loves the truth will surely love righteousness and justice. Let us, then, dear brethren and sisters, more and more cultivate our appetites for righteousness in every sense of the word, with the Master's assurance that our satisfaction shall be complete. Already it satisfies our longings as nothing else can do, and by and by we shall be fully satisfied when we awake in His likeness.

One of our Lord's miracles illustrates a lesson on “Soul Hunger.” He was surrounded by hungry thousands, the supply of food seemed inadequate—two barley loaves and five small fishes. The disciples were about to send the people away unfed, but our Lord said to them, “Give ye them to eat.” As the disciples divided the portion it increased and was more than sufficient for all. Similarly the whole world has a soul hunger and only the Lord's disciples, “His brethren,” know of the food which will really satisfy. His message to such is, Give ye the multitude food that they may eat to genuine satisfaction. Those who attempt so to do, now are richly blessed, but find the world so blinded with selfishness that but “few,” a “little flock,” hunger and thirst after

righteousness at its present cost—the renunciation of glittering bubbles of earthly hopes.

Thank God for the divine promise, that soon the Lord's presence and His millennial kingdom will bind Satan and every evil influence, and open the blinded eyes of all humanity to an appreciation of the truth, showing them clearly the only table of the Lord at which soul-hunger can be satisfied. "The knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth." Who can doubt that then the many will hunger and thirst for righteousness and be filled and that comparatively few will then starve willfully to death—the "Second Death."

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, January 22, 1905

CHRISTENDOM IN GREAT DANGER, BUT THE VERY ELECT PROTECTED

DEVIL'S GOSPEL AND CHRIST'S

BUFFALO, N. Y., Jan. 22—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., delivered two addresses here today to intelligent audiences. His afternoon topic was “God’s Oath-Bound Covenant to Abraham and His Seed.” His evening discourse on “Christendom in Great Danger, but the Very Elect Protected,” we transmit in full. The text was: “God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie; that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thess. 2:11, 12

The statement of the Apostle James, that God tempteth no man, is not to be understood as a contradiction to the language of our text. God tempteth no man to sin, to do wrong, but He has at various times sent or permitted siftings and testings among those who are nominally His people—to separate the true from the false. Sometimes a great truth becomes the sifting or separating cause, as at our Lord’s first advent. There our Lord’s presentation of Himself in the flesh to the covenanted nation, Israel, as the long-promised Savior, Deliverer and King, became to that people as a whole — A test, separating the Israelites indeed from the mass of the nation — separating the wheat from the chaff. Our text tells of the end or harvest time of this gospel age, and of how the Lord will now permit or ‘send” strong delusions for the purpose of sifting and

2H124

separating the true from the false among those who have named the name of Christ. We hold that, according to the Scriptures, we are living in this harvest period, and that the sifting of the wheat from the tares has begun, and that the strong delusions mentioned in our text are coming upon Christendom.

THE FALLEN ANGELS

The Scriptures bring to our attention a class of spirit beings which fell from divine favor before the flood. These, we are told, have from that time until the present day been confined in chains of darkness in Tartarus—the circumambient air of this planet. The story of these fallen angels is briefly stated four times —in Genesis

6:2; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6. The Old and New Testament records are thus in agreement. Additionally, however, we have a multitude of scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, which refer to these fallen angels as “demons”—unfortunately mistranslated “devils” in our common version. Without exception these demons are represented as cunning, deceitful, treacherous, devilish and as having a special malignant attitude toward mankind, and as taking special delight in misleading and deceiving humanity, particularly along irreligious lines and immoralities.

We call to your remembrance the Apostle’s statement regarding this matter, to the effect that God’s people have their struggle or contention, not with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in influential positions. Again the same Apostle points out to us that Satan is the chief leader of these spirits or demons and declares that we are not ignorant of his devices, his intrigues, his deceptions; again he styles him as wily, adroit, cunning. He informs us that the heathen world, while thinking they are worshiping God, are really deceived by these demons; their religious theories and practices are really demonology instead of theology. Eph. 6:12; 2 Cor. 2:11

Looking back into the Old Testament we find that the evil spirits were intent upon misleading the Israelites as they did mislead other nations. We see that God came to the relief of his covenant people by instructing them that all those holding communion with these demons who personated the dead should be banished from the nation or be destroyed. These “mediums” in those days were called necromancers, wizards, witches, etc. The demons affected to represent their deceased relatives and friends, and personating these, sought to mislead the hearts of the people from the true teachings of the Lord and His word through Moses and the prophets. We see the same work in progress today, with similar tendencies and similar results to those who heed them. The necromancers of today are called spirit mediums, the soothsayers are called clairvoyants or clairaudients. Through these the fallen angels, the demons, seek in various ways to delude and ensnare humanity, and with growing success. They still personate the dead; they still perpetuate the first lie told by Satan in Eden, when he assured our first parents that disobedience to God did not bring death as its penalty. God pronounced the penalty, “Dying thou shalt die;” Satan contradicted the Lord, saying, “Thou shalt not surely die.” Genesis 3:4

GOSPEL OF DEVILS VS. CHRIST’S

The human family is in great distress through the fall; mental, moral and physical imperfections are manifest everywhere; “there is none righteous, no, not one.” As a consequence, all are agreed to the Apostle’s broad statement, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together waiting.” (Rom. 8:22). Naturally enough

the groaning ones seek for the cause of their trouble as well as for a remedy. The Bible sets forth as the cause of all earth's woes and sorrows the brief statement, "By one man sin entered the world and death by sin, and thus death passed upon all men, for all are sinners." It sets forth the remedy also, namely, "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures," and at His second advent he will introduce "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:3) This, in brief, is the gospel of Christ.

The gospel of the demons contradicts this from the first to last. It denies that man ever was created in God's image and likeness; denies that he ever fell from it into sin and death; denies that Christ ever redeemed us, and holds that we need no Redeemer; that a process of evolution is at work which is lifting mankind from a mean and low brute beginning upward, to ultimately make of the race gods, and that all that is necessary for this grand result is time. As for death, demonology denies that there is death and claims that what seems to be death is really a change from a low form of life to a higher form. This demon teaching is to be found among all the heathen peoples and in all their religious writings, but is not at all sanctioned in the Scriptures. They teach to the contrary, as we have shown, that death is the penalty for sin; that it is a real penalty, a real death; that the dead are really dead, and that there is neither wisdom nor device nor knowledge in the grave (sheol), whither all go, and that the hope of the race lies in a resurrection, and that the hope of a resurrection lies in the redemptive work of our Lord's first advent and in the glorious power and authority which He will exercise at His second advent.

A pertinent question for each of us, dear friends, at
2H125

this moment is this: To which of these teachings do we give adherence? Are we holding fast "the faithful Word of God," or are we giving heed to these seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, against which the Lord and Apostle gave so many warnings? Is our theological faith an anchor of hope holding us firmly to the truth as set forth by the Lord, or are we to any extent following in the original falsehood told by Satan and perpetuated by the lying spirits—the falsehood that death is not death, that our dead friends are more alive than ever before, etc.? If this be the case let us at once begin a thorough examination of the divine Word, assured that error never sanctifies, but is always injurious, and that our Lord was right when He prayed for His disciples, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth, Thy Word is Truth."

How consistent is the Word and plan of God, which, so far from speaking of death as the angel God has sent, assures us that death is our enemy, which already has taken from us many of our loved ones, blighted our lives, and will ultimately destroy us except as we become united to the great Life-giver, Jesus. Those who do not see that the dead are dead, do not catch the full weighty import of the blessed assurance that Christ is the Life-giver, and that He came into the world and died for our sins that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. Nor do they see the real beauty that lies in the promise of a resurrection from the dead, for if none are dead how could there be a resurrection of the dead? Only those who clearly and distinctly see the Scriptural teaching on this subject are fortified against the delusions of these demons, built upon this erroneous feature of theology, which not only has permeated all heathendom, but similarly has permeated all the creeds of Christendom, and to a large extent has made of no effect the Word of God respecting our redemption from the grave and the hope of the resurrection from the dead at the second coming of Christ. 1 Cor. 15:12, 13

CHRISTENDOM RIPE FOR DELUSIONS

The erroneous belief that the dead are alive has been to some extent for centuries offset by another error, namely, that the majority of them are confined to a place of torment—purgatory or otherwise—and a small minority were far off enjoying the bliss of heaven, all of which hindered the thought that they might be communed with through mediums. Besides there has been a kind of horse sense prevailing which has restrained many from having great confidence in spirit communications. While faith was expressed a doubting fear was associated with it, and this doubting fear was increased by finding that some of the spirits seeking communion were “lying spirits,” and although others made different presentations they were all more or less held in doubt and fear. Now, however, we are coming to a time when all intelligent people question the fables of the Dark Ages respecting hell and purgatory, fire, devils, pitchforks, etc.

Consequently it daily becomes easier for spiritists to find sympathy for their claims that the spirits of the dead are hovering around the living, that our atmosphere is full of them, that they are not confined in heaven nor in hell. This thought has been aided by many sermons on funeral occasions, depicting the dead as hovering over the friends gathered at the funeral, the assurance being given that if the dead could only speak he would say to the weeping ones, “Weep not,” etc. All of this unscriptural guess-work, presented in the name of the Bible, and in the name of the truth and in the name of intelligence, has had its effect upon the masses, who are now thoroughly perplexed as respects the place and

condition of their dead friends. A growing intelligence forbids the thought that a God of love and justice has consigned them to the care of devils in eternal flames of fire or other torture.

Inquiries of the clergy respecting the place and condition of the departed bring no satisfaction; the few who still tell of tortures in infernal regions are less and less believed, and the others of increasing number who deny that the dead are in tortures are unable to give any answer respecting their whereabouts. No wonder the confiding sheep are perplexed. Oh, that they would look to the Word of the Lord, that they would remember “the Lord is my Shepherd,” that they would seek from the inspired source the knowledge which their souls crave! Oh, that they might learn that the hope set before us in the gospel of Christ is the hope of the resurrection of the dead! Mark the clearness of the Apostle’s statement on this subject — If there be no resurrection of the dead, then they that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 1 Cor. 15:17,18

At the present juncture spiritism alone offers proofs along the lines on which both Catholics and Protestants have so long been teaching the people. At the moment when the recognized shepherds are silenced by the questioning of their flocks, the evil spirits, the demons, the fallen angels, operating through spirit medium, clairvoyance, etc., offer not only answers to the people, but so-called proofs. They produce messages from their loved ones, and even intimate that the credulity which accepts such messages is a praiseworthy faith, and that the deluded ones are really ranking high from the spiritual standpoint because of their intercourse with spirits—that the majority of mankind are not thus honored by the spirits because of lack of faith. Is it any wonder that attention is being drawn more and more to these spirit manifestations?

2H126

Have not the entire teachings of all the world on this subject of death prepared the hearts of the people for this very deception that is now repeatedly coming forward and will soon engulf the great majority?

As the teachings of the higher critics and evolutionists gradually destroy the faith of the people in the Bible as the Word of God, they proportionately set them free to look in any and every direction for the solution of the questions which at some time comes to every reasoning being — questions respecting the origin of life, the meaning of death, the hope for a life eternal beyond the grave. Following these general preparations for the strong delusion, we now see its first manifestations — that is laying hold of prominent pillars of the social,

religious and scientific world. It approaches the people from different standpoints:

THREE DIFFERENT STANDPOINTS

First—Through hypnotism these evil spirits are misguiding the medical profession as well as the curious, and in the claimed interest of health and morals hypnotism is rapidly breaking down the will power of the people and making the masses more and more ready for the seductive approach of the spirits through what is known as clairaudience, or the power of hearing and communing with the spirits inaudibly to others. Instead of stamping out this dreadful scourge, with its demoralizing influence so wide reaching and calculated to give the fallen spirits access to so many of the lowest members of the race, the physicians have been deceived into supposing that hypnotism is merely the exercise of some human quality or power hitherto unknown, and calculated to prove a great blessing in the cure of disease, etc. As a consequence hypnotism is being brought into great favor and being taught in the great medical colleges of Christendom, and doctors are being turned out who to a large extent use hypnotism in their practice. Journals devoted to hypnosis freely tell that it aids them in their practice, and that it is frequently used without the knowledge or consent of the patient.

Second—The second line of attack which is becoming more and more prevalent is through clairaudience. The evil spirits, after first enticing the victim through curiosity, and sometimes through pretended ignorance of some things on the part of the spirits, lead on from one deception to another until finally they have the mastery, and their subject is practically helpless as well as hopeless under their control. Unquestionably many being treated as insane—and their number is increasing alarmingly throughout Christendom—are such possessed or obsessed persons. Their brains are not really unsound; their possession or control by evil spirits produces the confusion of ideas and language and the unreasonableness of conduct which closely corresponds to mental derangement.

Third—The third line of attack by the evil spirits upon the people is coming through the influence of the world's notables. We have all heard from time to time of how spirit mediums and clairvoyants have been called in for counsel by many of the crowned heads of Europe. It is even hinted that the Russian policy which led to the present war was more or less influenced from this quarter. The newspapers of the world have been publishing broadcast reports of investigations of spiritism and occultism made by Mr. William T. Stead, editor of the Review of Reviews, who announces faith in the phenomena of spiritism. He evidently labors under the common deception that the manifestations are from people who are dead (more alive than ever).

In America we have as an investigator along these lines, Rev. I. K. Funk, D.D., a noted Methodist, whose opinions, carrying great weight, have been spread broadcast through the Associated Press. He also has made investigations, and is satisfied that the phenomena of spirit manifestations is in many cases genuine, and, of course, he credits the manifestations to the dead, of whom the Scriptures declare, "The dead know not anything." Additionally we have Professor J. H. Hyslop, formerly teacher of logic and ethics in Columbia University, New York, now a leading light in the American Society for Psychical Research, whose testimony also carries weight. His investigations of spiritism have convinced him that there is something beyond human power connected with the phenomena. He has had for a medium Mrs. Piper, a lady of education and wealth, who associates herself in this manner in the interest of science, truth. The latest tests have been along the lines of telepathy. I quote the professor from the New York American thus:

"Telepathy is not a matter of thought waves. The solution is so simple as to be astounding. Messages are carried from mind to mind by spirits. Mediumistic qualities are necessary, but possessed of these and able to get into touch with the spirit world, telepathy should become as easy of accomplishment as the telegraphing of a message by wire.

"In these experiments we use Mrs. Piper, who was sent to England in care of the British society. She was allowed to come into contact with no one not in league with the persons making the experiment. We began our experiments with long distance telepathy in the hope of eventually getting a message across the Atlantic, but failed time after time. Finally we scored a success. The experiment was conducted in a manner to eliminate any trace of fraud or deception; it was sent in English and transferred in Latin."

Can anyone question that a message sent in one language and delivered in another was more than mere thought transference? Professor Hyslop reasons correctly when he declares that such matters are the work of spirits. But, alas, he is still ignorant of the fact, which is explained in the Bible only, that these spirits are not the spirits of the dead, but the fallen spirits, the angels which kept not their first estate—demons.

Thus we see that demonism is gradually getting a hold upon the masses of the people through the educated and scientific, and who can doubt that these cunning demons will gain the mastery to the extent the Lord will permit them to do so? Well did our Lord teach us to pray “Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” The evil one and his helpers are more than a match for humanity. The Lord’s people knowing this, and being not ignorant of his devices, resist the adversary, flee his snares, and trust only to the guidance of the Lord’s Word and Spirit.

SCIENTISTS ARE DECEIVED

Professor J. H. Hyslop, already referred to, has recently written an article for the World Today, in which he says:

“That there would be great difficulties in communicating, if spirits actually existed, would naturally be taken for granted by intelligent people. The silence of so many discarnate spirits throughout the ages, if they exist, would be sufficient proof of that fact as well as what we know of the difficulties of communications between living people when they have no common language as a means of it. But there happen to be additional reasons for this difficulty and they should be mentioned, in order that the layman (I ought not to mention it to the Scientists) may see and appreciate the reason why our communications take the form which they do. The first of these is the abnormal mental and physical condition of the medium, specifically to illustrate, as in the case of Mrs. Piper. But this is not the chief reason that the communications are adverse or confused or lacking in the kind of information wanted. The reason for these characteristics is deeper still. It is that the communicator is himself in an abnormal mental condition while communicating. It may be compared to a delirious dream, or to certain types of secondary personality in the living, or even to the trance of Mrs. Piper, in some of its aspects.”

Here we see that the Professor is entirely hood-winked. He does not see that the spirits are leading him on, feigning at times inability to communicate, to spur

him and others on to greater efforts to secure the communications. Mark how the spirits were able not only to understand in English, but also to transmit the message in Latin, as we have just seen according to the Professor's latest experiment.

New York dispatches published in the daily press under the date of January 5 say:

“Discussing Psychical Science in an address tonight before the American Institute for Scientific Research, in the home of C. Griswold Bourne, Rev. R. Heber Newton, D. D., made the assertion that the spirits of the dead communicate with the living; that telepathy is a power possessed by many men and women, and that clairvoyance is an established scientific fact. He said in part:

“‘Clairvoyance was nothing but a Will o’ the Wisp, but it is now a confessed power of certain organizations. Molly Fancher, over in Brooklyn, has proved stronger than the credulity of our savants. The belief in the existence of unseen spirits and of their power of communication with us in the flesh is one of the oldest, most widespread and most insistent beliefs of man, and it is

REVIVED STRANGELY IN OUR DAY.

“‘For the first time in the history of man these powers have been scientifically investigated in our day. Already the result is that a considerable number of eminent men of science have had the courage to avow that, after allowing for delusion, fraud and every possible hypothesis of interpretation, they have been driven to the ultimate solution of the problem—the belief in the actual communication of the spirits of those whom we call dead with the living.

‘Anyone who walks with his eyes open, ready to hear what men have to tell, will find stories pouring in upon him from men whom he cannot mistrust as liars, and whom he knows to be sane and sensible, which will stagger him. These experiences are not at all confined to the seance and the medium. Their most impressive forms occur in the privacy of the home without a professional medium present.’”

“Stagger him” expresses the matter well. The very fact that people have been taught that witches, wizards, necromancers and mediums were all frauds, and that the casting out of devils by our Lord and the Apostles was false and based upon erroneous conceptions of those days—all these misstatements of facts make people all the more curious now to investigate spirit phenomena—now, in the very time that our text tells us God will send or permit it as a strong delusion to ensnare and deceive a

large class in Christendom. The staggering has only begun, too; the great world-wide deception is only taking start. What will be the catastrophe at its climax! Dr. Heber Newton is a man of world-wide reputation as a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He is undoubtedly honest and truthful in his statements to the extent of his knowledge.

2H128

But should not a man who has consecrated his life to the ministry of the divine Word be better informed on a subject which is made so clear and plain in that Word? What excuses can he offer to the Lord for thus becoming a tool of the demons to help extend their influence?

True, the Lord could have overruled the matter, could have exposed the deceptions to Dr. Newton; but, in harmony with our text, it is our Lord's purpose not to hinder, but to help on with this deception. Mark the explicitness of the Apostle, "God will send them strong delusions (a demonstrating error) that they may believe a lie; that they all may be condemned that believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness—in untruth."

THE DELUSION IS SENT

The reason for the sending of the strong delusion mentioned in our text is plainly stated in the context, but before it can be appreciated it is necessary to have some grasp of the divine plan of the ages; it is necessary to see that the Lord's work throughout this Gospel age has not been, as many suppose, an attempt to convert the world, but, as the Scriptures declare, He has been merely electing or selecting out from the world a people for His name—to be the Bride of Christ. (Acts 15:14) We must see, too, that this elect people does not include all who become nominal members of Christian churches, but merely those who through full faith and consecration become followers of the Lord Jesus in very truth, and receive the spirit of adoption from the Father. These, through the trials and difficulties of this life, shall be proved overcomers of the world and its spirit, and accepted as joint-heirs with Christ, as His Bride, in His kingdom. This class, the Scriptures distinctly tell us, is but a little flock. Our Lord's words are, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The apostle declares also, "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble hath God chosen"—"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom?" 1 Cor. 1:26; James 2:5

After we once see that only the overcomers or kingdom class are being selected during this Gospel age, we are ready to see that God's great time for dealing with the majority of our race is in the future—after the second

coming of Christ—during His millennial kingdom—whose reign of righteousness will bless and give opportunity of eternal life to all the families of the earth.

END OF THE AGE NOT END OF WORLD

We are not of those who expect this world to be burned up. Quite the contrary, we expect its rejuvenation, its perfecting as the Garden of Eden, the paradise of God, the everlasting home of the majority of the human family—of all except the truly consecrated Church of this Gospel age and those who shall ultimately die the second death. We have no sympathy of thought, therefore, with those who are looking for the destruction of the earth; but we nevertheless believe, as the Scriptures teach, that the present age or aion will cease and a new age or aion begin. In error the translators have rendered the word aion “world” and given a misimpression.

More than this, we believe that the Scriptures clearly indicate that the present age is now ending and the new age, lapping with it, is beginning. It is at this particular juncture that all the New Testament writings, as well as our Lord’s great prophecy of Matthew 24, center, indicating a time of confusion, a trouble such as the world has never known before, and pointing out that these are judgments of the Lord designed to prepare the world for the next dispensation and the reign of the kingdom of righteousness. Furthermore, the Apostle distinctly points out that these judgments will begin at the House of God—the nominal church. Our Lord also points out the same thing, calling it a separation of wheat from tares in the harvest or close of this age. Matt. 13:20

It is because Christendom as a whole, though nominally a wheat field, is practically a tare field with a scattering of wheat intermingled that there is to be such a commotion in connection with the separation of the wheat and the tares. True, the Lord, who knoweth the heart, who knoweth them that are his, could easily separate them from the others, but he has chosen to make a separation publicly to demonstrate his own justice in the matter. Hence in this harvest time—at the proper time to separate the wheat from the tares—the Lord not only sends the sickle of truth to gather the wheat but he also sends the strong delusion to gather the tares.

“THE TRUTH IN THE LOVE OF IT”

The context tells us that the strong delusion will have its effect on those who “receive not the truth in the love of it”(v. 10). The Scriptures, which the Lord gave to His church for her guidance throughout the age, are now more than ever in the hands of all the people, with facilities for its study, and those who love the truth have every opportunity for ascertaining what it is. Here, however, comes a test of their real heart appreciation of

the truth: Do they prefer truth to error? Do they prefer the divine word to the traditions of men? All who do so have the opportunity of getting what they desire; those who do not receive the truth, we may infer, did not sincerely desire it, but preferred or were satisfied with error. This is the thought of the text,

2H129

namely, that many have become associated with Christendom not from love of the truth, but from fear, from policy or for worldly betterment or influence. While the Lord has no place in His plan for the tormenting of such they are not the esteemed ones whom He calls the “very elect,” whom He intends to give joint-heirship in the kingdom with their Lord, the Redeemer. Such as will be of the very elect must love the truth and prove all things, must be sincere every way.

Note the application of this love of the truth as we have just examined the matter. How few want the truth respecting the nature of man; how few investigate to see whether or not the Scriptures teach that when a man dies he is dead and has hope only in a resurrection of the dead. On the contrary, many tell us freely, “I do not want to believe that way; I like to believe that the dead are not dead.” Such have not the love of the truth, but the love of error, and if now the Lord permits the strong delusions of spiritism to sweep away all their faith and hopes from them it will be a just reward.

THAT THEY ALL MIGHT BE DAMNED

Thank God, this text in our common version is a poor translation! Thank God that all the great hosts of Christendom that will be deceived by the strong delusion now close upon us will not be delivered over to the demons for an eternity of torture. Their worst experiences with these evil spirits will be in the delusions and disappointments and troubles that will come in days not far distant now—’ ‘A time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation,” is the Lord’s picture of it.

All these, however, will be condemned—disapproved, and the fact of their disapproval will be shown in that they will pass through this great delusion and its consequent troubles and temporary anguish. We doubt not that the lessons learned in that trouble will be valuable to many to all eternity—that they will learn once and for all to place the highest estimate upon truth, learn that self-deception is self-injury directly or indirectly, learn to prize truth as from the divine standpoint.

When, by and by, they shall find what was the real difficulty, why they missed that great prize of this Gospel age and why they fell into this snare, they will surely be ready to acknowledge divine justice, as the Scriptures

indicate, saying, “Just and true are thy ways, Lord God Almighty.”

SPARING THE “VERY ELECT”

Our Lord in His prophecy respecting this time declares that the deceptions will be so great that they would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect. (Matt. 24:24) But it will not be possible, because this is the divine promise, that those who are the Lord’s in very truth, trusting in His redemptive work, and fully consecrated to His service, He esteems as His jewels, who are to be gathered at His second coming and at the establishment of His kingdom, that they may have part therein—gathered by the change of the first resurrection, changed from earthly to spiritual conditions, forever with the Lord, sharers of His glory.

A picture of this time of general falling is given us in the ninety-first psalm, but there also the stability of the very elect is carefully noted. We read, “A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee”—the Christ, the members of the Body, the Elect Church.

Let us, then, dear brethren and sisters, be of good courage, and while doing all in our power to stand, and doing all in our power to influence others favorably, let us have full assurance of faith in the Lord’s gracious promises, knowing, that He is able to make all things work together for good to those who love Him—knowing that the faithful in Christ Jesus, are the very elect, the jewels of the Lord, and that, as the Apostle Peter says, they shall never fall, but an entrance shall be administered unto them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, January 30, 1905

ETHICS OF WARFARE CLOSELY ANALYZED

DONORA, Pa., Jan. 29—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., gave two addresses here today. In the afternoon he spoke on “God’s Oath-Bound Covenant to Abraham and His Seed.” His evening discourse was on “The Right and Wrong Views of War.” His text was:

“Blessed be the Lord, my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight,” Psalms 144:1. We report the discourse in full, as follows:

To what extent war is either excusable or justifiable is a question which has long perplexed many of the ablest

2H130

minds. The thought that war is never justifiable under any circumstances finds few supporters; yet, as we should expect, the best and bravest of mankind deplore war and advocate peace on any reasonable and proper terms. How comes it, then, that we find the pages of history covered with war records, and find also among the warriors the names of many on the wisest and greatest of men and of nations?

We reply that the difficulty lies not so much in the fact that the fall has depraved and brutalized our race, but in the fact that it has so impaired human judgment that the course of wisdom and justice is more or less obscured to all, causing the wrong to appear right. One of the chief results of the fall has been the maintenance of **selfishness**, while other qualities of the kind, have **decreased or** shrunk. Thus selfishness, having come to be a prominent factor in the reasoning of the natural mind, wasps and twists the judgment of men and **nations** and leads to courses of action which otherwise would be disapproved.

As an illustration of this principle note how every man’s ways are apt to seem right in his own eyes, and, as the poet Burns suggests, he fails to see himself as others see him. He can reason more soundly in respect to the affairs of others than in regard to his own because of the twist, the bias, set up in his own mind by his own selfishness. We all recognize that the same thing is true of nations. Thus in the recent Boer war our British friends felt sure that they were wholly in the right; others, even their friends, thought them selfishly blinded to the rights of the Boers. Similarly today the Russians and Japanese are warring because of difference of opinion — both urged on largely by selfish motives — both deploring war while prosecuting it and suffering by it.

THE JAPANESE VIEW

As is well known, the Japanese, in justification of their instigation of the war, claim that Russia in grasping Chinese territory was menacing Japanese interests; that Japan, willing to live in peace, is more or less dependent upon her neighbors of the mainland for food supplies, and could not therefore endure the establishment there of powerful Russia, her recognized enemy. Whether or not this reasoning is sound depends upon the cast of mind which examines it. From the standpoint of worldly wisdom, Japan was wise in striking her mighty foe before he had become too thoroughly entrenched in China. In this view the tremendous sacrifice of human life and money by the Japanese is considered wisdom, and by such minds the course of Russia is generally condemned.

However, these very same reasoners, using the very same mental powers and reasoning along similar lines, if they were Russians, would have approved the course of the Czar's Government in gradually establishing itself in the Far East and gradually entrenching itself in the military and financial control of the Chinese Empire, thus appropriating to itself the vast resources and energy of a people numbering nearly one-fourth the population of the whole world. The reasoning of the Russians on this subject no doubt was that they were carrying civilization and business methods and strong government to a heathen people, and that they had a right thus to exploit the heathen to their own advantage. In justification of their course they doubtless thought of the similar procedure of Great Britain in India. Doubtless, also, pride told the Russians that their selfish desire to grasp the control of their Chinese neighbor was in part benevolence, which desired to give the Chinese good government.

Indeed, we find that the excuse of all the conquerors of the world has been that they were capable of giving the conquered better laws and regulations than they were able to provide for themselves. Thus the spirit of pride, which is an element of selfishness in the fallen nature, has combined and cooperated with general selfishness in the prosecution of nearly all the wars of conquest, and been the excuse of a very large proportion indeed of man's inhumanity to man.

GOD'S VIEW OF THE SITUATION

How does God view the matter? Why does not He interfere to establish and prosper the right and to overthrow the wrong? Why is it that the meek do not inherit the earth, but rather the rapacious, the combative, the grasping? Why is it that for now 6,000 years sin and selfishness have reigned among men, resulting in wars

and rumors of wars? Why is it that even during the nearly 19 centuries since the angels sang at our Lord's birth, "Peace on earth, good will toward men," there has been no peace? Why is it that the spirit of strife is increasing rather than decreasing? Why is it that, notwithstanding the introduction of peace conferences among the mighty nations of the world, beginning with that of Geneva on September 14, 1872, and its successor at The Hague, and the fact that another is proposed, still the world witnesses today its greatest armies, most impregnable fortresses and most powerful navies and most wonderful munitions? Why is it that the dove of peace seems more alarmed than ever, and that the whole world, while crying peace, peace, realizes that warfare is more than ever its spirit, not only among kingdoms and armies but between financiers and between capital and labor and in the home and family—war, contention, strife? What about the Prince of Peace, and when will he inaugurate his reign?

Many conjectural replies to these questions might be

2H131

obtained from "many men of many minds," and they would be discordant—no two exactly alike. We would best, therefore, appeal the questions to the Lord Himself, asking His explanation and then hearkening to the message of His Word. We can hear but one answer, and it is a satisfactory one, which meets all the requirements and conditions of the case.

THE ANSWER FROM GOD'S WORD

The Bible not only explains the fallen conditions of humanity as slaves of Sin and Death, but it tells us, too, that the Lord has, in a general sense, given over the earth to the control of the children of men, and that, while holding a general supervision of the affairs of nations to hinder them from interfering with his fixed plans for eventually blessing the world through the Kingdom of Christ, he permits them within these limits to take their course and to exercise their ingenuity in various methods of self-government, etc.

They are thus demonstrating two things: (1) Their lack of wisdom and justice and love. (2) The hopelessness of the world as respects ever reaching perfection under such conditions, and hence the necessity in the world's interest for the establishing of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, for which we have been taught to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Many do not yet realize the hopelessness of trusting in the arm of flesh, but are hoping that the increase in education will surely lift the whole world of mankind to that plane of intelligence where all will

concede the wisdom of righteousness, and the unwisdom of iniquity. Then, they say, we will have the millennium.

Not so, we reply. The millennium could never come, never be established on those lines: but, as the Scriptures teach, it will be introduced by force—"The Lord shall fight in that day." The wonderful education of the past century has lifted mankind intellectually, but has not increased the world's peace and joy. Rather, ours is pre-eminently the day of discontent, and the greater the education the more the discontent as a rule, the general exception being the comparatively few true Christians whose lives have been consecrated to the Lord, and who find satisfying peace and joy in the gracious promises of the divine word. The vast majority of mankind are still "in the wicked one," and it is still true, as the Lord declared, "There is no peace for the wicked," saith my God. (Isa. 57:21) "The wicked" are like "a troubled sea," their selfish ambitions keeping them in continual unrest.

Scriptural prophecy fully concurs with what we see about us in the unrest brought about by our higher civilization and more general education of the head. The unregenerated heart is sure to be able to make more trouble in proportion to its degree of education. The prime movers regional and national, are educated men; the leaders in every species of wrong doing, in almost every violation of the Golden Rule, are men of education. We do not say that they are at heart worse than if they had not had the education. Our claim merely is that their education has increased their power, and that the heart being unregenerate, their power is necessarily associated with selfishness, which in its diversified forms is at the bottom of the warfare and strife of which we have knowledge. The Scriptures indicate what is apparent on every hand, that very soon our highstrung civilization, instead of bringing the millennium of peace, will wreck itself in anarchy—the outcome of conflicting endeavors and strife of mastery; social, financial and political.

HOPE SET BEFORE US IN SCRIPTURES

On the basis of lessons learned in present conflicts between truth and error, right and wrong, love and selfishness, the millennial kingdom of our Lord will instruct the people, laying justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet—sweeping away the ignorance and superstition, the throttling selfishness, with the divine right hand of power, guided by the divine heart of love. For six thousand years the plowshare of selfishness and trouble has been doing its work in breaking the fallow ground of the natural heart and preparing it for the glorious spring time, the seed time of grace and truth, under our Lord's millennial reign. As the harvest of this present time is unto sin and sorrow and death, the harvest of the future will assuredly be unto righteousness and life and peace, and joy to all who will avail

themselves of it, and all others are to be destroyed in the Second Death. Thus the Lord declares that He shall cause wars to cease unto the ends of the earth—by first permitting mankind to prove its own helplessness and by then supplying the needed relief for its instruction and uplift.

THE CHRISTIAN'S VIEW OF WAR

We have been considering the views of the worldly-wise respecting the necessities of war, but now let us take the Christian's viewpoint as set forth by our Lord and the apostles to be the guide of all the soldiers of the cross. We cannot concede all the wisdom to the world's captains of industry and finance and sociology and armies. We must hearken to the Captain of our Salvation, the Lord Jesus. What does He counsel us? must be our inquiry. A difficulty which stumbles many is the fact that they do not recognize the difference between the Church and the world under our present civilized conditions.

Indeed, the Church, nominal includes the whole world, though the Church genuine, composed only of

2H132

the fully consecrated followers of the Lord is still, as the Scriptures declare, a "little flock," comprising not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many noble, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom. These are so few and so insignificant, numerically, politically, socially and financially, that their peculiar views respecting war effect little or nothing. They may safely pursue the counsel of their Master, assured that the world's course will not be particularly influenced by them except along general lines. Begotten again of the holy spirit they have too much of the spirit of love for their friends and neighbors, yea, for their enemies also, to take pleasure in injuring others either in life or limb. Rather they would bind up the broken-hearted, heal the sick and comfort the troubled. This was the Master's course, it was His spirit, and it must be the spirit of all who are His in proportion to their consecration to Him.

From the standpoint of the true Christian, therefore, war is reprehensible, particularly aggressive warfare. Love for the neighbor and for the enemy will surely lead to the application of the Golden Rule to both, and the Golden Rule will surely estop all aggressive warfare because it would eliminate the land hunger and thirst for power that induces such warfare. The Christian view of Russia's course would have been that she should not have coveted China; should not have attempted that extension of her territory and power. Such a course would have

averted the present war with Japan. On the other hand, the Christian in Japan's position should have followed the divine injunction to follow peace with all men and should have relied upon the results being overruled by the Lord for good. In other words, the Christian's standard for deciding as to Japan's course would have been in accord with our text for the present year—"The wisdom that cometh from above is first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits."

We appreciate the worldly wise view of matters, however, when they say: If all the people were of your mind our enemies would override us; we would lose our liberties and our lives. Yes, we answer: we do not suppose that the rules and regulations which the Lord laid down for his disciples would fit the world in the present time. He did not give his instructions to the world, but to the "little flock" seeking to walk in his footsteps. As already suggested, this little flock is so small that its course in such affairs will not in any degree affect the general course of the world's affairs.

A part of the Church's testing is along this very line— to walk with the Lord and comply with his arrangements and be filled with his spirit notwithstanding the contrary plans and arrangements and views and theories of the world, the flesh and the devil. Those who prove their faithfulness to the divine arrangement now are said in the Scriptures to be "overcomers." It is their faith in the promises of God's Word that enables them to live thus separate from the world and its ideas and schemes. Thus the Scriptures declare, "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith."

THE POLITICIANS OF THE FUTURE

These overcomers are the ones who, following their Lord's example and the hopes and promises of the Scriptures are separate from the world now, will be the politicians of the future—of the millennial age. We use the term politician in its true sense, as referring to those well versed in the principles of civil government and the conduct of State affairs, in the administration of public business, in the interest of the peace, prosperity and safety of the public.

From the scriptural standpoint the whole world is mentally as well as morally and physically deranged, and this accounts for many of the idiosyncrasies manifested everywhere among men. One has abnormal selfishness for money, another an equally abnormal hunger for influence or power, another is carried away to unreasonable lengths in pursuit of pleasure. All these extravagances indicate lack of soundness of mind, and thus viewed the whole world is mentally unsound, some affected with one hobby and some with another. The

Lord's Word presents this view and exhorts the little flock, the "soldiers of the cross," "Let your moderation be known unto all men," and declares that those who have the wisdom from above have a spirit of a sound mind, placing estimation upon the really valuable things rather than rainbow chasing for earthly name and fame, joys and wealth, whose beauty and pleasure vanish as they are neared.

We commend the heavenly riches and beauties and joys, and additionally the heavenly glory and power promised to the faithful "overcomers" in the life to come, to all who have ears to hear and hearts to appreciate them. Those who pass the present period of testing, developing characters in harmony with the divine, are presently to have of honor and glory and power and dominion such grand measures as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath in reservation for those who love Him"—love Him more than they love houses or lands, name or fame, self or others.

WARRING AND FIGHTING COMMENDED

What we have been saying is in full harmony with the spirit of our text, for although David lived before the time of the begetting of the Spirit, he was a prophet, and his language was guided of the Lord accordingly, so that his words are adapted to the spirit-begotten

2H133

followers of Jesus during this gospel age, as describing the Scriptural warfare and battles of the Lord's followers.

The spirit of warfare is not wholly bad; its evil consists in its misdirection. Combativeness lies at the foundation of all warfare, and, however much harm it has done in the world, without it mankind would be in a pitiable condition today. The grandest endeavors and enterprises would fail of execution were it not for the assistance of combativeness in helping us to overcome the difficulties in the way. Without combativeness the world would be without power to overcome the obstacles and perils in life's pathway, and would therefore be without character.

In view of this self-evident truth we are not surprised that the Scriptures represent our heavenly Father and Our Lord Jesus as mighty overcomers, conquerors, as victorious in conflicts, etc. Respecting Our Lord Jesus we are distinctly told that in due time He shall take His great power and reign, and that then the nations of the earth shall be dashed to shivers, as potters' vessels would be wrecked with an iron rod. We are assured that He will exercise power over the nations to subdue them to Himself—yea, to bring all nations under subjection.

We are assured again that “He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet —the last enemy to be destroyed is death.”

Comparing the human likeness with the divine original we find the quality of combativeness, the spirit of warfare and overcoming in both, but in the Almighty this is in full accord with the other elements of His character, namely, those of justice, love and wisdom, hence the power of the divine arm is never used injuriously, selfishly, and likewise the kingdom which He will ultimately establish in the hands of the overcomers of this present time will have in it the force, the conquering power of combativeness, but this will be exercised for the interest and welfare of all who desire to be in accord with the Lord and His righteous arrangements.

“FIGHT A GOOD FIGHT”

The Lord’s people are exhorted to fight a good fight and lay hold on eternal life, and this implies the sifting of the present time rather than the conquering warfare of the future. It implies, too, that such a fighting is necessary in order to the attainment of the life eternal. Whoever is so supine, so careless of the Lord and the interests of righteousness that he will not seek to overcome the world, that he will not fight a good fight, will be considered unworthy of the life eternal. Thus, again, we are told that all who will have a share in the First Resurrection will be “overcomers.”

What is it that we now fight with and overcome? We answer that we are, as new creatures, begotten of the holy spirit, out of accord with our former selves and with the whole course of the world as we see it all about us, and our good fight consists in our resistance of the world, the flesh and the Adversary, and our vanquishing of them from bearing rule in our hearts and lives and bringing forth evil fruit. More than this, it means such a battle with self as implies the putting down of every high imagination of an earthly kind, every ambition and fond desire, and the bringing of our hearts wholly and completely into subjection to the will of God.

It is a daily, yea, an hourly battle, and as one of old has stated the matter, “There is no discharge in this war.” As the apostle expresses it, the flesh and the spirit are contrary to each other. Our victory means the survival of the spirit, the new nature, and this means the overcoming of the human nature with its affections and desires, so that we allow them not to entrap us into consent to sin, allow them not to hinder us from endeavoring to do whatsoever our hands find to do in the service of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

The Lord has need of the combative ones, dear friends. They are the very ones He is seeking in the present

time—"overcomers." Let us not waste our time and energies in doing evil, in putting down and destroying or injuring our neighbors or friends, or our enemies; let us not engage in the world's warfares for wealth, for name or fame or land-grabbing; but, on the contrary, let us fight the good fight; and we will have plenty of opportunity to engage every atom of our combativeness thoroughly—in fighting against the spirit of the Adversary and the world as well as against our own weaknesses of heredity. Blessed be God who teacheth His people how to war against sin and weakness and every foe of righteousness, and to fight against all the allurements and ensnarements of the world and the Adversary!

* * * *

JESUS, my Lord, Thou art my life,
My rest in labor, strength in strife;
Thy love begets my love of Thee;
Thy fulness that which filleth me.

2H134

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, February 6, 1905

WEARERS OF CROWNS AND THEIR SEEKERS

As usual, the Bible House Chapel was crowded yesterday afternoon. Pastor Russell's discourse on "Crowns for All Heroes" was listened to with close attention. His text was, "When the Chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 5:4) He said:

The crown is an emblem of honor, dignity and authority, and when the word is used figuratively it carries much the same meaning, including the thought of reward. Created in the image and likeness of God, mentally and morally, Father Adam was the first king of the earth, and was given dominion over the earth and all things therein. Describing his glorious condition the Prophet David says, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels; thou crownest him with glory and honor, and hast set him over the works of thy hands; the beast of the field; the fowl of the air; the fish of the sea." Psalms 8:5

A CROWN OF GLORY LOST

Not realizing fully the grandeur of his position as the earthly representative of the Creator, "crowned with glory and honor," Father Adam was not sufficiently careful to maintain his high standing and relationship with the King of kings. He disobeyed the heavenly Over-Lord, came under the ban of His displeasure, and His

sentence was the forfeiture of his crown and kingdom of life.

The Apostle sets forth the matter explicitly, saying, “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world and death by sin, and thus death passed upon all men, for all are sinners.” It will be noticed that we entirely ignore as wholly unscriptural the theory, common to all the creeds of Christendom, to the effect that Father Adam and his race not only lost the dominion of earth, but were sentenced to an eternity of torture at the hands of demons. We reject this teaching of the Dark Ages as being thoroughly inconsistent with reason, contrary to Scripture and repugnant, both to the justice and love, the wisdom and power of the Creator. For the Scriptural proofs on this subject we refer you to a little pamphlet which we supply free, entitled, “What say the Scriptures about Hell.”

SEEKING OTHER CROWNS

The crown of divine favor and honor gone, mankind made the best of its fallen condition, and forthwith there began a strife amongst men as to which should be the greater, the more honorable—which should wear the crowns. The pages of history for six hundred years are filled with the records of the strife amongst men for the crowns of earth. Nations and families have been divided, millions have been slain and the greatest imaginable exertion put forth and enormous wealth squandered in the seeking of these crowns of earth. We review them: The crowns of the Pharaohs of Egypt were first in prominence, surrounded by a host of smaller ones. Later the prominent positions went to the Assyrians and Babylonians, the Israelites under David and Solomon sharing the glory for a time. Next the Medes and Persians were the chief crown wearers in the world. Still later, under Alexander the Great and his successors, the Grecians held the first place amongst these crown wearers. Then came the Caesars of Rome, and subsequently the Popes, and later still a division of the crowns amongst the great Powers of Europe.

MORE NOBLE THAN OTHERS

Amongst those who for the past six thousand years have been moved by the nobler sentiments and have sought the nobler crowns are the philosophers, teachers, poets, artists, physicians and musicians, these have sought victories and won crowns along nobler lines than did the kings and nobles, and, proportionately more enduring are their crowns of honor amongst men. We would like to include in this list religionists—the heathen priests and Christian ministers; but although we recognize pre-eminently grand characters amongst these, we cannot recognize them as a whole as deserving crowns of honor amongst men, because not only amongst the heathen but amongst Christians, Protestants as well as Catholics,

Greek and Roman, they have too often sought their crowns of honor by cultivating the superstitions of those whom they affected to enlighten. However, it must be admitted that the same charge of fraud and deception could be brought against many who have sought crowns along the lines of healing the sick, medicines, and other sciences and philosophies, falsely so called. The poor world has been deluded in paying homage and honor to many rascals, many deceivers, who by and by, when the light of the Millennial age shall be turned on, will be found covered with infamy.

Our own day has witnessed a new crown-seeking movement—crowns of wealth and the influence associated therewith. Ours is pre-eminently the day of millionaires

2H135

and multi-millionaires, and what gorgeous crowns they do wear! Few of their owners know just how to wear their crowns to the best advantage. Prominent and notable examples amongst these crowned heads are a few whose millions are being used philanthropically for the establishment of colleges, libraries, and social uplift efforts.

FOR WHICH SHOULD WE STRIVE?

To all thus seeking for a worthy crown, an enduring one, we commend the admonition of the Apostle in our text. He speaks of a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Is not that the kind on which you and I, dear brother and sister, have set our hearts?

Several things are in favor of the heavenly crown:

First—All who strive for it are sure to obtain it—not merely because of their striving, but because of the Lord's appreciation of their efforts, and because, therefore, He is gracious unto them through the Redeemer, and imputes to them all the righteousness and victories they desire and are striving for.

Second—This crown "fadeth not away." On the contrary it will grow more and more valuable, more and more to be esteemed as the ages of eternity shall roll. The world, which now sees not this crown and hears not the calling from on high, will by and by, under the ministrations of the Millennial Kingdom, be blessed by the obliteration of their present conquests and crowns and ambitions, and the placing before them of the grander, the nobler ones—the recovery of the crown of Adam lost in Eden and redeemed for the world by our Savior, and to be made known to mankind, to be brought unto them—brought within their reach during the Millennium. As the world will then be uplifted out of the sin and degradation and death conditions of the present to righteousness and life (the wilfully evil being cut off in the Second Death), the knowledge of the crowns for the Church, secured

during this Gospel age by the overcomers, will be made known to the whole world of mankind, and all shall ultimately recognize, not only the glorified Jesus, but also the glorified members of His Church then with Him in the work of blessing the world. How unfading a crown of glory is this which the Lord proposes to give to all those who espouse the cause of righteousness and to the extent of their ability walk in the footsteps of the Son!

Third—Those who would strive for this crown of glory must not expect it in this present life. The striving is to be done here, the crown of glory is to be received there. True, some glory has come to the Lord's faithful ones already, but not the crown of glory which the Apostle Peter here declares shall be given at the manifestation of the chief Shepherd, our Lord Jesus. When He was among men, because of His difference of standpoint and effort, He was of no reputation, even among the religious rulers. Today the whole world, heathen and Jew, nominal Christian and true, honor the name of Jesus, and in a certain sense crown Him with glory who once was crowned with thorns.

But many of those who now honor the Master do not do so from the standpoint which Jesus Himself enunciated to the Pharisees when He said, Ye garnish the sepulchers of your fathers and deplore their murderous spirit, yet are actuated by the same animosity today toward those of the same faith and spirit with the prophets. (Matt. 23:29-33) Similarly among those who sing of Jesus, "Crown Him Lord of all," there are many who hate and oppose those crown seekers who today are striving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Truly the Master said, "Marvel not if the world (including the nominal church) hate you; ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own, but ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The same spirit prevails respecting all the Lord's followers—those who are honored today were generally dishonored and spoken against in their own day.

It is well, then, that those who seek this heavenly crown should remember the Master's words, "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom!" If they do not consider the crown worth "much tribulation" it is because the eyes of their understanding are not properly opened to discern the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the glorious character and plan of God under which these crowns are proffered.

CROWNS FOR ALL THE CALLED

He knew and thus intimates that the world in general would only strive and sacrifice for the things that could be seen with the natural eye, the things of this present

time; He knew that the worldly wise would say, "A little in hand is worth much in prospect;" He knew that those who realized most keenly their own insufficiency and weakness in the great battle of life, and the hopelessness of their ever gaining any great prize in the earthly struggle, would be the ones who would most appreciate the proffer of the heavenly crown, and for such He specially intended it, as He declared, "Chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom."

What our text speaks of as a crown of glory, other Scriptures speak of as the crown of life. It is both, as the Apostle explains. The reward of the overcoming Church, who battle faithfully against sin within and without, who are fully consecrated to the Captain of

2H136

their Salvation in thought and word and act, is to be "glory, honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7)

That much the obedient of the world in the millennial age may expect, for the promise is that our Lord Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost—to restore mankind to life and to all the glorious qualities of mind and of body possessed before the fall and to deliver to the restored race the "purchased possession"— the dominion of earth.

THE COST OF THESE CROWNS

None can hope for the crown of glory who cannot exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Redeemer, and faith in His promises respecting these crowns, which will be distributed to the faithful at His second coming. Without faith it is impossible to please God. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. If the faith be a living one, a real one, it will impel to the activity, the knowledge, necessary to victory. Our strife is not against our fellow man, as in the case of those who seek the corruptible crowns of earth, political, financial, social. We strive against sin and the great Adversary, whose snares we recognize more clearly than do others.

Brethren, sisters, at whatever cost of self denial, social ostracism, disdain of the world, misunderstanding of friends, we may gain this great prize, the crown of glory, it will be cheap. Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, who shortly now shall be its finisher, and, as the Chief Shepherd, be manifested and give us the crowns of glory promised.

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, February 13, 1905

JOYFUL IS PETER'S MESSAGE

NEW YORK, Feb. 12—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., spoke twice at the Grand Opera House today. In the afternoon at 2:30 o'clock his topic was:

“To Hell and Back. Who Are There? Hope for the Recovery of Many.” His topic for this evening was, “Times of Refreshing Coming,” the text being the language of St. Peter: “Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.” Acts 3:19-20
Pastor Russell said:

It is sometimes claimed that those who study God's Word become pessimistic, looking forward to merely trials, difficulties, etc. But we claim, on the contrary, that those who understand God's Word aright are the most optimistic, the most hopeful, the most cheerful people in the world—that the gospel rightly understood is good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. True, the Scriptures do faithfully delineate sin and its downward influence and the certainty of just punishment as well as of rewards; but, more than this, they give us ground for expecting future blessings and a paradise restored, such as can be found in no other writings in the world, such as purely human philosophy could not reasonably even dream of.

Our text is an illustration of this: ‘Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of Jehovah.’ What refreshment comes to our hearts even with the very reading of these words! Although they point out to us the dry, the arid, the dying and dead condition of the world of mankind in the present time they tell us of refreshment, rejuvenation, etc. The thought behind the Greek word here rendered ‘refreshing’ is ‘recovery of breath’—as if one who was dying, gasping, were enabled to breathe freely again. Refreshing, therefore, as a translation, well represents the original thought. And as we look about us and see the condition in which the whole world is, nearly 20,000,000,000 already dead and 1,600,000,000 dying at the rate of 80 per minute, we get a glimpse of human affairs as it appears from the divine standpoint—a gasping, a dying world of humanity. How joyful is this message, then, which the Apostle Peter echoed, ‘Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of Jehovah.’ How much it means to our dying race! The Apostle Paul expresses the same thought, as looking down into the future he exclaims: ‘The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God’— waiting for Christ's millennial kingdom. Rom. 8:22

THEN SINS WILL BE BLOTTED OUT

Pentecost witnessed the covering of the sins of believers with the robe of Christ's righteousness imputed to them, but the coming times of refreshing are to do far more than this, for then the sins will be actually blotted out, to be no more forever—no trace of them will longer remain. It is indeed a blessed privilege for the Lord's people at the present time to realize the covering of their sins with the merit of their Redeemer—to realize

2H137

that the Father no longer regards them nor treats them as sinners, but as justified by faith. On the basis of this faith they have peace with God and the fellowship and communion and privileges of children.

Nevertheless, after all these privileges have been enjoyed, we are assured that the present is a trial time, and that our adoption into the Lord's family as members of the body of Christ, his Bride, is, as our Methodist friends would say, but a probationary membership. None will be accepted into full membership in the body of Christ and into the glory of His Kingdom and joint-heirship with Him until the probationary period shall have been passed successfully, and they shall hear the Master's voice in the first resurrection, saying, 'Well done, good and 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.'

FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

It was the Lord Jehovah who sentenced our race, who placed the curse of death upon us. We saw in this afternoon's discourse that this was not the curse of eternal torment at the hands of demons, but a sentence of death—'The soul that sinneth, it shall die,' being the Lord's declaration. We could not deny the justice of the divine decree that none of the sinful race is worthy of everlasting life, but we could have pleaded for mercy, we could have assured our Creator that we have learned a great lesson through the fall, and if we were granted such an opportunity as Father Adam enjoyed we would be thoroughly loyal to the great King of Kings and His laws of righteousness, and that thus obeying Him we might have hope for favor and everlasting life accordingly.

But the Heavenly Father did not wait for us to plead for His mercy. He laid hold upon one mighty to save—Jesus. He sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him, that the dying world might be released from the sentence by His paying the penalty for us, so that eventually all disposed toward righteousness might attain it.

The Scriptures tell us that 'in the fullness of time God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, that He might redeem,' etc. (Gal. 4:4). The fact that this was 4,000 years after sin entered, so far from confusing us, should show us the fixity of the divine purpose, and that according to the great clock of the universe every feature of the divine plan will be carried out. The times of refreshing, of which the Apostle Peter tells in our text, are just as sure of accomplishment in their season. The Apostle Peter could not know definitely when these times of refreshing would come. Our Lord said to them, 'It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in His own hands.' What comfort it gives to our hearts, what strengthening to our faith, to realize that all these times and seasons are in the hands of the Almighty! Viewed from this standpoint, the 2,000 years from the time Peter uttered these words seems none too long to wait for the refreshment promised. Comparing it with the time of waiting for the Redeemer's first advent, it is but one-half as long. And now, dear friends, we believe we see indications in the Lord's Word and in the affairs of the world around us of conclusive proofs that the times of refreshing are nigh at hand.

WHY THE LONG DELAY?

We answer that the delay is incidental to the work of the atonement. All of this was typified in the Jewish nation. Annually that nation had a day of atonement in which the people were without God's favor, as representing the world at the present time under condemnation. The people of Israel on the atonement day fasted and wore sackcloth, as symbolically evidencing the world's condition at the present time. As soon as the Day of Atonement sacrifices had been finished and the whole work of atonement completed the high priest lifted up his hands and blessed the people and they arose from the dust and were filled with joy and gladness, representative of the blessings which will come to the world of mankind as soon as this gospel age shall have accomplished its work and the millennial age have begun. In the latter there will be no more a death sentence upon the world, no longer a groaning and travailing creation under sin and death conditions. The times of refreshing shall be upon the world; the Lord Jesus will be present in His second advent in glory and power, although invisible to men; and His kingdom over all shall be the evidence of the divine favor returned, and the gradual uplift of the world out of sin and death conditions will be demonstrations that the curse or sentence of death has ceased, has passed away, that the reign of sin and death has terminated and that the reign of righteousness and life everlasting has begun.

THE ANTITYPICAL ATONEMENT DAY

This entire gospel age is a day of atonement in anti-type. At its beginning our Lord as the great High Priest offered the first sacrifice of the day of atonement—Himself—typified under the Jewish economy by the

bullock. The benefit of that first sacrifice of the atonement day was not applied generally to all Israel, but was limited to the under-priests and the Levites, the body and household of the high priest, Aaron. So in the antitype the first sacrifice of this day of atonement was

2H138

that of our Lord Jesus, finished at Calvary, and it He made applicable merely to the household of faith—to all believers, including the Royal Priesthood, the consecrated Church.

“WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION”

We have already quoted the Apostle’s words respecting the groaning creation—the world in general—’the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.’ We now see who these sons of God are:

that our Lord Jesus is the Captain, the Head, the Lord, the High-Priest over His Church, His Bride, His Royal Priesthood—the different figures representing the same class from different standpoints. We now see that all those are the sons of God who are now being selected or elected, and that by and by they shall be manifested as God’s kingdom class. For that manifestation and reign of righteousness, the Millennium, we shall hope and pray.

But notice again that the Apostle declares that these under-priests, these probationary members of the church, the body of Christ, also groan—notwithstanding the Pentecostal blessing, notwithstanding their begetting of the Holy Spirit, notwithstanding the light of divine favor upon them, notwithstanding the covering with the precious robe of Christ’s merit and their acceptance at the throne of heavenly grace. Of these the Apostle says, ‘We ourselves groan within ourselves.’ But mark that he does not say that we are waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, for if of the very elect we will be with our Lord, and all the faithful will thus be sons of God who will be manifested to the world.

“HE SHALL SEND JESUS CHRIST”

The Apostle’s argument leads up to the second coming of Our Lord Jesus as the grand climax of all our hopes—the time for the full realization of all the precious promises of God’s Word. That does not refer to the first advent of Our Lord is clear, for that was past when he thus spoke.

Comparatively few Christian people seem to realize how important a place the second coming of Christ occupies in the Bible. Could their attention be sufficiently aroused to insure an investigation on this subject it would mean a genuine awakening among all who reverence the

Scriptures. A theological error has led to the disregarding of the second coming of Christ. That popular error is that the church is to bring about the times of refreshing, is to establish the Millennial Kingdom, to convert the world, to cause the knowledge of God to fill the whole earth, etc., and that the Lord's second advent will not take place until after the church has accomplished this. Alas, then, the second coming of Christ would never take place, for the natural increase of population in the world far exceeds the conversions made to Christianity, even if these conversions were all genuine. All recent statistics prove this and show an alarming disproportion.

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, February 20, 1905

PASTOR RUSSELL SPEAKS ON RESTITUTION

Pastor C. T. Russell addressed a congregation of between 300 and 400 yesterday afternoon at Bible House Chapel, Arch Street, Allegheny. His text was:

“And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heavens must receive [retain] until the Times of Restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” Acts 3:20-21 The speaker said:

My topic is a continuation of that of last Lord's Day, delivered in New York City to my larger congregation “scattered abroad.” On that occasion we called attention to the “Times of Refreshing” pointed out by the Apostle as the hope for the Church and the world, and to be expected at the second coming of our Lord. We pointed out that this promised shining forth of divine favor upon the world means the turning away of the curse, the penalty for sin, which has been against the race for now 6,000 years, and that the antitypical day of atonement, a time for sackcloth and ashes and weeping and groaning and travailing in pain under the weight of sin and its death penalty, will soon be past, when the Sun of Righteousness shall shine upon the world to bless and to refresh.

The words of our text today follow those of last Lord's Day, as explanatory, as teaching us in what respect the divine refreshments will come to the world, how the divine blessing will be poured out. The second coming of our Lord is the key to the entire matter. As the Scriptures declare, the Father hath confirmed all judgment unto the Son, who redeemed the world.

Hence, our text declares that with the ending of the night of sin and death, the Heavenly Father's favor will

2H139

be manifested in the second advent of Christ, who cannot return until certain appointed times shall have arrived. The suggestion is in accord with our Master's words to the apostles when they inquired after his resurrection, "Wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom of Israel?" He answered and said unto them, "It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."

FOREORDAINED TIMES AND SEASONS

The Father has these times and seasons in His own power, fore-known, fore-arranged, or, if we please, fore-ordained. When the fore-ordained hour shall have arrived, the second coming of our Lord will take place and the great work He is to accomplish at His second advent will begin. That will be earth's new day—the Millennial day. How the Scriptures everywhere keep before us the thought that the present is a night time, in which sin and trouble prevail; that the new dispensation will be a glorious dawn of refreshment and awakening and reviving.

Well did the Prophet David speak of the present and intimate the future, saying, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The night which sin and death have beclouded, darkness and trouble, ignorance and superstition in the world, has already lasted six thousand years, but the dawn of the new day is at hand.

Thank God for the prophetic testimony. "Joy cometh in the morning"—not only joy to the living millions who will then be brought under the sway of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, but joy also to the twenty thousand millions who have already gone down into the darkness of the tomb, into the prisonhouse of death, to which, as we saw last Lord's Day, our Redeemer alone has the key—the power, the authority—that he may open and cause the prisoners to come forth. Isa. 49:9; Luke 4:18; Rev. 1:18

WHAT ARE RESTITUTION TIMES?

The Apostle refers to these times of restitution as though his hearers were all thoroughly familiar with them—as though they all understood that the divine promise of blessing through Christ implies times or years in which this blessing would be poured out upon the world. He seems also to take for granted that his hearers understood the meaning of the word restitution—that it signifies to restore, to put back again into a proper

condition. It is somewhat remarkable that the 'faith once delivered to the saints' has so far been lost sight of, and so far contaminated with the errors from the heathen, intermingling during the Dark Ages that remarkably few of the Lord's people today seem to have ever thought of times of restitution.

Indeed many ministers of the Gospel, hearing our text quoted, have at first presumed that it was some peculiar translation, having overlooked it entirely in their Scripture readings, and never having caught the thought of restitution, which the Apostle here in our text declares has been spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.

If any prophet failed to speak of the coming times of restitution, the Apostle Peter's declaration implies that such a prophet should not be regarded as a truthful or holy one. In other words, this message of coming restitution blessings to the world is so important, and has so large a place in the divine revelation, that no prophet could be the Lord's mouthpiece without referring to these times; and in harmony with this thought may we not inquire with reason, how can any of the Lord's people today consider that they are in full accord with the Heavenly Father and His inspired revelation while they are neglecting and are comparatively ignorant of this most important subject—the coming restitution which will be inaugurated at the second advent of our Lord Jesus?

In one of His parables our Lord speaks of a woman who hid leaven in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. The three measures of meal represent the family baking, the spiritual food provided by the Lord for the household of faith. If any wish to divide the measures we may properly see in the first, the great truth of justification, in the second, the truth respecting sanctification, in the third, the truth respecting glorification, or the final deliverance. A sufficiency of food for the family of God was provided through the teachings of Jesus and His Apostles and the ancient prophets — "sufficient that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished." But, alas! the parable shows the corrupting of this food by the intermingling of leaven, which in the Scripture is used as a symbol of corruption.

LEAVEN A SYMBOL OF CORRUPTION

As a woman in the Scriptures is referred to as a symbol of the true Church, and in that figure is represented as a pure virgin, so also a woman, a "harlot," is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of an impure church or system. It was the impure system of the Dark Ages which mingled the corrupt doctrines of pagan philosophy with the pure food which God had supplied for the household of faith.

And so successful was the mixture that, as the parable declared, the false doctrines are commingled with the truth on every subject to such an extent that the impure mixtures are everywhere called orthodox, while the little there is of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth is so unpopular that it is termed heterodox. But, however, the world and the nominal Church may misunderstand these matters, let

2H140

us see to it that we follow the Apostle's admonition and purge out all the old leaven, that we may be a clean lump, a pure loaf—that we may have the truth in its sincerity and purity, that we may be nourished thereby and not poisoned and made sick.

It is this corrupt bread that is turning the spiritual stomachs of the whole world at the present time. It is the leaven mixture that is causing the nausea that is becoming so prevalent throughout Christendom, and turning many away entirely from the Bible and from everything that purports to come from that storehouse of grace and truth. Even this foreseen and foretold by the Lord. Has He not pictured the present day and the various sectarian tables and the sour bread thereon and its nauseating effect upon those who sit at those tables? He has, indeed.

Note the statement of the matter as set forth by the prophet, and see that it fits most wonderfully to the conditions we see about us today. We see Christian people of all denominations at their own sectarian tables, ashamed of the "food" thereupon, not satisfied thereby, nauseated. The creeds of the Dark Ages are repulsive to them; they are turning from their tables.

Their turning away from their creeds is not because they are worse than were their forefathers, but because they have truer and clearer ideas respecting divine justice and divine love, divine wisdom and divine power, and the exercise of these toward the world of mankind. Let me quote the prophet's words on this subject, applicable today. He says:

"The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine they are out of the way through strong drink: they err in vision and stumble in judgment." The language here is figurative; the wine and strong drink referred to are those symbolically mentioned in Revelation; they represent doctrines. The picture in Revelation shows the woman—the same woman referred to in our Lord's parable as mingling the leaven with the food—having in her hand a cup full of abominable doctrines, with which she made drunk all the nations, with which she intoxicated with error to the extent of foolishness the people of Christendom. The Prophet proceeds with his picture, describing the various tables of Christendom today as represented in the various sectarian presentations of the truth, saying, "All tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean." Isa. 28:8

The world is not so well aware of these matters as are those who are closest to the tables. All sincere, earnest-hearted Christian men and women are perplexed and made sick as they seek spiritual food, nourishment, strengthening doctrines, at their denominational board,

where the very best is supposed to be set forth. It is for this reason that so many of the most honest, most sincere, most earnest, most intelligent are turning away and being ensnared by hurtful snares of the adversary.

Carrying out the same line of thought, the Prophet asks, “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine?” The answer is, “they that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.” In other words, as the Apostle declares, we must be more than “babes in Christ” in order to be overcomers of the world. We need more than “the milk of the Word.” We need the strong meat of Truth, but that meat must be pure, free from the adulterations and contaminations of the Dark Ages. We must get back to the strengthening food which the Lord has supplied through inspired channels, the apostles and the prophets.

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, February 27, 1905

MOSES, THE TYPICAL LEADER

NEW PHILADELPHIA, O., Feb. 26—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny preached at the Opera House here today at 1:30 p. m. on “God’s Oath-bound Covenant With the Seed of Abraham.” A report is transmitted of his evening discourse from the words of the Apostle Peter: “Moses truly said, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; to Him shall you hearken in all things whatsoever He shall declare unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hearken to that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” Acts 3:22-23 The speaker said:

Our text continues the topic which we gave attention in Allegheny last Lord’s Day and in New York City the previous Sunday, and which I understand reached quite a number of you through The Pittsburgh Dispatch.

2H141

TYPICAL PROPHET, RULER, MEDIATOR

In the words of today’s text the Apostle calls attention to the fact that all these coming blessings were intimated in the words of the prophet Moses, and that Moses himself typified the coming great Deliverer. We call to mind how great was the deliverance which God effected for the people of Israel at the hand of Moses— bringing them out of Egypt and through the Red sea, making them His covenant people.

Great and wonderful as all that was, it was me rely the shadow of the much greater and much better blessings

God intends to bestow. Moses was a type—a greater than Moses is the antitype; a typical servitude to a typical Pharaoh under hard conditions and a deliverance therefrom, was the type—a severer bondage under Satan and a grander deliverance for the world of mankind, is the antitype.

A grand man, the meekest man in all the earth, Moses was the typical leader at whose hand as mediator the Law Covenant was instituted, offering blessings and curses to the people according as they would obey or disobey it. This was the type; the antitype must be much larger, much greater than Moses; and the New Covenant which he as mediator will establish must be a much grander covenant, offering not temporal blessings, but eternal ones, and not temporal punishments, but everlasting ones. We pause here to remark that none of the punishments under the Mosaic law were torturous—that death was the extreme penalty.

But death inflicted for violation of Moses' law did not affect the opportunities for an everlasting life secured not only for the world, but also for Israel through the great sacrifice at Calvary; hence all those cut off from life for disobedience to Moses' law will nevertheless have a blessing, an opportunity for life eternal under the antitypical Moses. But the death sentences which will come upon the disobedient of mankind under the ministration of the antitypical Prophet, the Christ, will be a never-ending penalty—not a never-ending torture, but a never-ending death; not a never-ending dying, but a death condition from which there will be no awakening, no resuscitation, no resurrection—the annihilation of being as described by the Apostle Paul, saying, “They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.”

WHERE IS THE ANTITYPICAL PROPHET?

Where is the great Prophet like unto Moses? Where is his rule of righteousness? Where is the deliverance of the people from sin and Satan? Where is the predicted destruction of all who do not obey him?

Look where we will, either in heathen or civilized lands, we see no such condition as this prophecy implies; we see no such great prophet as Moses reigning and executing judgments in the earth—rewarding right doing, punishing wrong doing and destroying all who will not obey him. Was the Apostle Peter mistaken, then? Did he tell an untruth? Was Moses also mistaken in his original prophecy of the great Prophet? We answer, No. The great Prophet and his reign and the great deliverance of the people and the destruction of those who will not obey—all these things are in the future. They all belong to the millennial age.

All of the Apostle's presentations in Acts 3:19-23, considered by us in the last three discourses, are future. We are still waiting for them, but now have evidence that they are nigh at hand. As our Lord directed, therefore, we are lifting up our heads and rejoicing, realizing that our deliverance is nigh.

GREAT PROPHET HAS MANY MEMBERS

It may surprise some, but not all of you, I am sure, when I say that the great Prophet of our text is not our Lord Jesus, only, but includes also the elect Church of this Gospel age, of which the Apostle declares, "We are members in particular of the body of Christ." He again declares that our Lord Jesus is "The head of the Church, which is His body." Indeed this is a familiar metaphor, with which all Bible students are well acquainted. It gives us a picture not only of the intimate relationship of all the saints with the Lord, their Head, but also of their relationship one to the other as "fellow-members of the one body." It carries, too, the thought of the joint-heirship of the Church with her Lord in the great Millennial Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven."

From this standpoint and from no other we are able to see the reason why so long an interval has been permitted between the great redemptive sacrifice "for the sins of the whole world" and the outpouring of the divine blessing upon the whole world.

The interval of this Gospel age was just long enough, according to the divine wisdom and foreknowledge of the selection of the members of the body of Christ to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom which will bless the world. We must remember that this election is not an arbitrary one, such as might have been accomplished in an hour or a day, but rather it is an election in which each individual of the called is granted the fullest opportunity for making his calling and election sure by demonstrating his loyalty of heart to the Lord and to the principles of righteousness in his love for these and for the brethren.

It has allowed time for the fitting and polishing of all

2H142

the living stones which the Lord is preparing for the glorious Temple of the future, which will be filled with His glory in the first Resurrection "change." It has provided a sufficiency of time to correct, chasten, test, prove and make ready for the Kingdom all those whom the Lord designates as his 'jewels.'" Mal. 3:17

And is not such a fulfillment just what we might have expected, namely, that the antitype would be very much larger than the type? True, our Lord Jesus alone, the Prince of life, the King of glory, highly exalted by the Father, would have been a grand anti-type of Moses, without the association of any of His faithful ones with Him in the antitype. But it pleased the Father to have it otherwise—as the Apostle declared, God gave Him to be the “Head over all to the Church, which is His body.” Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18

Surely we who are now His consecrated followers, probationary members of His body, and who hope to be faithful to the end of our race course and to be received into His glory as the permanent members of His body, have every reason to rejoice that the Heavenly Father has so grandly planned not only for our redemption but for our additional call to glory, honor and immortality, joint-heirship with our Lord. Truly, eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man these wonderful things God hath in reservation for them that love Him—supremely.

“MAKING OF TWAIN ONE NEW MAN”

The Apostle Paul calls this matter a “great mystery”—that is to say, a great secret. (Eph. 3:3-6, 6-19; Rev. 10:7) It was not a great mystery or secret to the Jews that Messiah would have associates in His Kingdom, for it was the very hope of Israel that the Lord would select their nation and use them as associates with Messiah in the work of blessing all the families of the earth and establishing righteousness in the world. But it was a mystery, as the Apostle points out, that Gentiles were to be permitted to be “fellow-heirs of the same body.” All Jews except those who were of humble heart, Israelites indeed, were so prejudiced and self-conceited that they could not see in their own Scriptures the plain declaration of this fact which the Apostle and others of the early Church saw there.

Endeavoring to make the matter plain, the Apostle declares that the middle wall of partition between the Jews and other peoples was abolished, broken down, and their Law Covenant at an end, and hence the Lord was privileged to give other nations and peoples the same opportunities and privileges as the Jews. He refers to this on various occasions. In Romans 11 he pictures the whole Abrahamic seed as the olive tree springing out of the root, the Oath-Bound Covenant of Abraham. He tells us how all proper Israelites, Israelites indeed, were branches in that olive tree.

All unbelieving Israelites were broken off, to the intent that their places might be given to worthier Gentiles out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue who would

be engrafted in their stead. This was but one way of telling that Jews and Gentiles were to be fellow heirs of the same promise—the promise of being members and associates in the kingdom, the promise of being members of his body, the promise of being members of the great Prophet, the great Teacher, the great Ruler whom God would raise up for the blessing of the world.

In various Scriptures the Apostle refers to the Church growing “till all come unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:13) This great man of many members, whose Head is the Lord Jesus, is the great Prophet, the antitype of Moses, mentioned in our text. In Ephesians 2:15 the Apostle points out that the Jewish covenant was abolished that the Lord might “make in Himself of twain one new man.” The twain were the Jews and those outside, and all shall be ultimately one body, one new man, the Christ, the anointed of the Father, under the blessed Headship of their glorious Lord and Redeemer. It is of these ex-Jews and ex-Gentiles, who in Christ Jesus become New Creatures, that the Apostle speaks, saying, “Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a peculiar people, a holy nation.”

GREAT PREPARATIONS—GREAT WORK

When we reflect that the Heavenly Father not only foreknew the fall, foreknew the redemption, foreknew the coming times of refreshing and restitution and when we reflect, too, that He purposed in Himself the selection of this seed of Abraham—Christ and the Church, which is His body—to bless all the families of the earth; and when we see that this promise was given more than 3,500 years ago, that our Lord died and redeemed us more than 18 centuries ago and that during this interval, since the Lord has been selecting His Church, the immensity of this preparation for the blessing of the world adds assurance to the testimony of all holy prophets respecting the times of restitution, that then will be incomparably grand seasons of refreshing.

As we get a thought of the preparation for that time it gives added weight to the Lord’s declaration through the prophet Isaiah, that in this mountain or kingdom of His dear Son and His joint-heirs—the millennial kingdom—God will destroy the veil of ignorance, superstition and shame which is spread over all people and make unto all people a feast of fat things and wipe away tears from off all faces and put away the reproach of His people and swallow up death in victory.” Isa. 25:6-8

2H143

St. Paul Enterprise, March 1, 1905

THE ELIJAH MESSAGE, THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

Reading Pa., Mar. 1, 1905—Pastor C. T. Russell addressed two attentive audiences in the Auditorium today. His evening text was, “The voice of one that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” (Isa. 40:3) He said:

All four of the Gospels quote our text and apply it to John the Baptist. John the Baptist was the Elijah to all those who had the hearing ear and understanding heart to appreciate the message and to accept Jesus. And yet, as we pointed out, John the Baptist did not fulfill by any means all that was predicted respecting the antitypical Elijah and his ministries which would be introductory to the Christ of glory. Indeed we have John’s own word for it that he did not fulfill all the requirements and conditions appertaining to the Elijah, for when he was asked point blank the question: “Art thou Elias?” he answered, “I am not.” (John 1:21) In the power and the spirit of Elijah he did an introductory work to Jesus in the flesh, just as the greater Elijah, the Church in the flesh, has for nearly nineteen centuries been doing an introductory work as respects the great Christ of glory, Jesus the Head and King, the Church members of His body and associates in His Kingdom.

John the Baptist did literally enough dwell in the wilderness and preached there, thus typifying the experiences of the Church, which, during a large portion of this Gospel age, has been in the wilderness or hidden condition as respects the world and worldly history. Revelation tells us in symbolical language of how the Church fled into the wilderness condition for 1,260 symbolical days— 1,260 years—which period ended with the year 1799. Since then the true mouthpieces of the Lord, His true messengers, the loyal members of the Elijah class, have gone forth from the wilderness condition, and the voice of their message is again heard in the world, though they are still separate—in spirit at least—to Churchianity, Babylon, and the world, Egypt.

John the Baptist’s message to those who would hear him, “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,” has been similarly the message of all the truly consecrated of the Lord. The announcement is a two-fold one, first that the Kingdom is about to be established, and, secondly, that repentance and reformation are necessary to its proper reception and a share in the blessings which it will bring. Notice how much more accurately the description of our text fits to the antitypical Elijah than it did to John the Baptist, who did something of the

Elijah work to the Jewish nation as the body of Christ in the flesh has done to Christendom.

The voice does not declare that there is no wilderness, that there is no desolation, that everything is satisfactory and all right; it does not declare that God's Kingdom has come and that His will is being done on earth as it is done in heaven. Quite to the contrary, it declares that the Kingdom is to come, and that preceding it all who hear the message should join in preparing the highway or making right conditions for the reception of the Kingdom, that the world might receive God's Kingdom with joy and thankfulness and great blessing.

ELUAH'S MESSAGE NOT APPRECIATED

Similarly the message of the antitypical Elijah, the message of the true Church, the body of Christ in the flesh, has not been heeded by the world; has not been heeded by the nominal mass of Christendom. We may apply our Lord's words again here, and see that if Christendom had heard the message of the antitypical Elijah they would be ready now for the second advent of Jesus, ready to welcome His kingdom, glad to have it established in the world; they would have been praying from the heart what some of them have been praying from the lips, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, etc." But rejecting the antitypical Elijah, Christendom is unprepared for the kingdom. Indeed, it is perhaps more out of harmony with the conditions of the kingdom than it ever was before.

There never was a time when greed of gold seemed to have such power over all the civilized world as now; there never was a time when people in the most trusted positions rendered such poor account of themselves; never a time when so many proved unfaithful to their trusts. And all this greed for wealth and for power, the two being linked together today, means a very opposite spirit from that which must prevail under the kingdom conditions, when the Golden Rule will be enforced by the iron rod of power, when justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, when the humble shall be exalted and the proud shall be abased. In a word, the world is probably less prepared for the kingdom than at any other time of the world's history, so far as the governments and representatives of the people are concerned; so far as their preparation for the kingdom by any highway of righteousness and holiness,

2H144

the straightening of the crooked things and the smoothing of the rough conditions are concerned.

THE ALTERNATIVE IS THE DIVINE CURSE

The failure of the antitypical Elijah class to establish in the world a highway of holiness and righteousness through the message they promulgate means, as described in our last Sunday's discourse, that as the Jewish nation rejected Christ and passed into a great time of trouble, so Christendom, now rejecting his Kingdom on a spiritual plane at the time of its proper establishment under the whole heavens, will in turn be rejected as Israel was, and the time of trouble shall again come, which will resemble the trouble upon Israel except that it will be world-wide, a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation. This is the curse of the Lord referred to in our last Sunday's discourse in connection with the declaration that he the antitypical Elijah must turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, else the Lord would come and smite the earth with a curse.

A sufficient time has been allowed for the promulgation of this message of reformation and preparation for the Kingdom. Indeed, as we have heretofore noted the length of the Jewish age, proclaiming the Kingdom of Christ was 1845 years from the establishment of that nation until the office of the Kingdom by our Lord when he rode to Jerusalem on the ass. And similarly the Gospel age has been a proclamation of 1845 years, reaching from Pentecost to the announcement of the second coming, presence of Christ, and his Kingdom in process of establishment in 1878. As the Jewish nation was rejected at the end of that 1845 years of favor, and matters began to shape for the utter destruction of the nation, accomplished in thirty-seven years, so here we understand that Christendom has been tried in the balances and found wanting, and the decree of the Lord is that the time of trouble shall come which will thoroughly humble the hearts of mankind and bring them into a condition where they will be ready for the blessings he is to give, blessings to which they did not respond willingly and voluntarily throughout this Gospel age.

When the time of trouble shall have wrecked present institutions in anarchy, and when the world shall cry out to the Lord, as the prophet represents that it will do, earnestly desiring the reign of righteousness, then will be accomplished the things which the Church has been declaring should now be accomplished, if a sufficient number were willing to do so, namely: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Mankind has not responded to this appeal to cast up a highway of holiness and righteousness. On the contrary, the various advantages of earth have been exploited for individual aggrandizement, and selfishness has continued to be the law instead of righteousness and equity. But the Lord will delay no longer; He is about to set up His kingdom; He is about to establish the highway of holiness, and

so He tells us elsewhere, through the prophet, a highway shall be there and it shall be called a way of holiness, and the redeemed of the Lord shall go up thereon. In a word, that which mankind would not naturally respond to in the present time will be forcibly established in the future time, and meanwhile, because of unwillingness to respond, a time of trouble will come upon the whole earth, turning the sweets of selfishness and aggrandizement to the vinegar of disappointment, chagrin and loss.

EVERY VALLEY TO BE EXALTED

The Elijah voice was to do more than merely call upon us to prepare a highway of holiness and righteousness in the present time. It was to proclaim, as the text shows, that whether they would hear or whether they would forbear the Lord would carry out His great and wonderful plan. Thus we find it positively stated:

“Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low.” When the Lord undertakes this matter of the leveling of the conditions of society, bringing down the great ones and mighty ones, the princes of earth, financial, political and social, and lifting up the humble ones represented by the valleys, the masses of mankind, there will be no doubt at all that He will accomplish it to the full limit of His decree. There need be no doubt at all that eventually all the crooked things shall be straightened out and all the difficult and rough places, social, political and financial, shall be smoothed out.

Our Lord declared, pointing down to our day, the time immediately preceding the establishment of His Kingdom in power and glory, that every secret thing should be revealed, every hidden thing should be brought to light. (Matt. 10:26) We may assume, therefore, that it is in harmony with this divine arrangement and program that at the present time the great things, social, political and financial, are being brought to light, being brought to the surface almost miraculously. The result is to more and more shake the confidence of the people in their teachers, representatives and rulers. More and more they will be inclined to have confidence in no one, and conclude that it is a matter of every man for himself. The result will be, what the Scriptures so clearly foreshow, an anarchous period in which each will be striving with his hand against his neighbor for his own personal advantage.

2H145

JUDGMENT FIRST, NEXT THE GLORY

The prophecy proceeds to outline not only that the voice of the antitypical Elijah would be heard in the

wilderness, vainly crying that the way of the Lord should be prepared, but, secondly, that this work of leveling society, bringing down the great and lifting up the humble, will be accomplished—accomplished as we have seen by the great time of trouble which will come as a natural consequence of the rejection of the Lord's guidance, and yet come as a specially foreknown and prearranged chastisement of the Lord; and following this comes the statement that “then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.” (Isa. 40:5) The result of the time of trouble will be the opening of the eyes of understanding of all the world, so that all shall see the grandeur of the divine plan, the divine arrangement. All shall see God's plan to be glorious in the extreme. As the heavens are higher than the earth so will His ways be seen to be higher than man's ways. While the world will dread the dark day of trouble even now impending, yet after it shall have passed and after the glorious sun of righteousness shall have arisen with healing in his beams, after all the world shall behold the glory of the Lord thus manifested in the establishment of His righteousness and justice in the earth, the hearts of all will be made glad, and they will rejoice that God's wisdom and love, His mercy and justice, failed not in the establishment of the Kingdom, even though it required so great, so awful a time of trouble to bring it about, because of the unwillingness of mankind to respond to the divine invitation through the Elijah class.

GOD'S UTTERANCES SURE

As though anticipating the query of our minds as to how we can be sure that these results will be brought about, since we have seen more than eighteen centuries of Gospel proclamation and urging to repentance and preparation for the kingdom—how can we know that the great time of trouble will bring it about, and that all flesh shall recognize the grandeur of the divine kingdom and the blessings resulting? The answer of the Lord through the prophet to our query is in few words, “The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” (Vs. 5) Ah, yes! The difficulty now is that few are able to hear the word of the Lord, few are prepared to believe His testimonies respecting the future, and yet He declares, “My word that goeth out of My mouth shall not return unto Me void,” etc. How surely then the message which was given to the Elijah class and which the world has not heeded will be accomplished and fulfilled in a way which the world would not expect, but fulfilled nevertheless, although through the severity of a time of trouble upon mankind.

This is one of the great lessons which the world is to learn, namely, that the Heavenly Father knew the end of His plan from the beginning, and that He foretold the

affairs of the world, not by way of forcing results, but that mankind might learn of His wisdom and of His ability to discern the end from the beginning in every matter; and that learning also of His glorious character of justice and mercy and love all who desire His fellowship and seek it might be able to place absolute confidence in His arrangement for their welfare.

ALL FLESH IS GRASS

The succeeding verses, 6-8, correspond well with what we have already seen and intimated, that at or about the great time when the crooked things would be straightened and the rough places smoothed and the mountains and hills brought low and the valleys exalted, preparatory to revealing of God's glorious character to all mankind, there would be a special message sent to the Elijah class—"Cry. All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it." Surely in this parable the grass represents the people. The intimation is that the grass does not represent the saints, but the people who are not in relationship with the Lord, and this picture of the withering of the grass and the fading of the flower is but another way of telling us of the time of trouble which will wither all human hopes and blight all human prospects and turn the world upside down temporarily until the blessing of the Lord shall come again upon them through the kingdom—until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets shall bring them the refreshing of His favor, the forgiveness of their sins, their reconciliation to Him through their Redeemer.

SPEAK COMFORTABLY TO JERUSALEM

It is the Elijah class that is referred to in the first and second verses of the context, "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare (appointed time) is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

We cannot here go into details respecting the fulfillment of this prophecy, but will merely refresh the memories of those who have already read on this subject in the second and third volumes of Millennial Dawn.

The time indicated by this prophecy, when Israel would have received its double or second portion or experience at the hand of the Lord, we have already shown was 1878 A.D. In that year Israel's disfavor, rejected

of God, reached the exact period of length to that which had previously been their period of favor. It was then that the message was due to go forth to the Jew to the effect that the disfavor would begin to pass away and divine favor again return to the Jew—though it was pointed out with equal force that the favor of the Lord for a period of 37 years would be accompanied by great trouble, and that not until the close of that period and the glorification of the gospel Church could the divine favor come fully back to natural Israel, as we read in the words of the Apostle, “They shall obtain mercy through your mercy.” In other words, natural Israel shall come again into a place of harmony and favor in the end of this age, divine mercy being manifested through the glorified Christ, the Church.

What we are now pointing out is that this message of comfort to natural Israel, which was due to begin to be proclaimed in 1878, was part of the message of the antitypical Elijah—the Church, the body of Christ this side the veil. Israel’s sins are to be pardoned, blotted out, even as a little later on the sins of the whole world are to be blotted out, just as at the present time the household of faith have their sins forgiven on condition of their acceptance of Christ and their consecration to endeavor to walk in His footsteps. Other prophecies, as we have seen, also show this double in Israel’s history, that the one-half was a period of favor with chastisement, and the other half a period of total disfavor. The Israelites themselves are inclined to notice this matter and wonder at it. Only from the standpoint of the Lord’s word can we see that this comforting message is for them, and that ere long their blessing will begin, and that the blessing of the Jew and the forgiveness of the sins of those who pierced the Lord is but the precursor of the still more widespread blessings of the Lord upon all the families of the earth.

ZION TO BE EXALTED

Continuing the examination of our text, we note that verses 9-11 give a very beautiful word-picture of the establishment of the Lord’s Kingdom and the blessing it will be to all those who will respond to its favors. We read, “O, thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’” In such passages as these the symbolical use of the word mountain signifies kingdom, and hence these words in the prophecy signify the exaltation in the Kingdom of those who constitute the Elijah class, and who now tell the good tidings of coming blessings to a world which is not appreciative of the message. Only a few have the ears to hear and the hearts to appreciate the words of God, and those few the household of faith, who are permitted to become members

of the Elijah class now and of the glorious Zion hereafter, the Kingdom of glory.

Our message then is not only as to the glorification of the saints, but one also respecting the great honor and blessing and privilege that is coming to natural Israel, the prospective representative on earth of the heavenly Kingdom, which is to be invisible to men. It is the mission of the Elijah class to announce the Kingdom after this manner, to proclaim that the Kingdom is at hand, that the great Ruler of the World is about to take possession, that Messiah's Kingdom is the Kingdom of God, which shall ultimately prevail throughout the whole universe.

The message now to be delivered continues, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him (Christ is the arm of Jehovah, stretched down for our deliverance from sin and death, stretched forth in the time of trouble to dash in pieces as a potter's vessel all the hindering conditions and things now highly esteemed among men): Behold His reward is with Him and his work (of recompense) before Him" to reward both the well-doers and the evil-doers according to their condition of heart. These rewards at the beginning of the millennial age will mean great distress and trouble, because some will rightly deserve, on account of their selfishness and failure to appreciate and act upon the principles of righteousness, severe punishments or stripes, as the Scriptures express the matter.

The gracious assistance which the Lord will lend to all the families of the earth during the millennial age are beautifully pictured by verse 11. All who then desire, after they have learned of the grace of God, will be permitted to become the sheep of the Lord's pasture—"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom." This account parallels our Lord's parable of the sheep and goats, in which He pictured the whole world during the millennial age on trial before Him and the Church with Him in His throne. Then all mankind will be tested as to whether or not they will develop the sheep characteristics and be followers of righteousness and truth and peace, or whether they will prefer to develop the contrary goat characteristics. All who become the Lord's sheep shall eventually be blessed of Him with everlasting life, while all others will be punished with destruction, the second death, from which there will be no awakening, no redemption, no recovery.

Seeing, then, dear friends, the message that the Lord has given us as the Elijah class, let us do our share in proclaiming the propriety of righteousness, in pointing out the necessity of casting up a highway of holiness

2H147

and making straight the crooked things and establishing righteousness and justice in the earth and thus preparing for the Kingdom of God. By this time, however, we know that this part of the message is too late to effect anything—that matters will go from bad to worse until the fire of the Lord's anger shall wither the world as the heat of a furnace, and the grass and its flower will fade.

Nevertheless we can assure those who have the ears to hear that the Word of the Lord will stand forever, that He will establish His kingdom of righteousness in the whole earth, and that then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together, and that then the blessing of the great Shepherd will be extended to all who will then desire to be His sheep. And while giving this message faithfully as the Elijah class, let us be putting in practice in our lives the lessons which we testify to others with our lips, and thus we ourselves will be prepared for a share in the glories of the kingdom, for it is the Elijah class of this side the veil who is to constitute the Church in glory, the body of Christ, the Bride of Christ; on the other side the veil, through the power of the First Resurrection. He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure.

A nameless chill pervaded all the air,
On that gray morn, long centuries ago,
|As through the city's narrow streets there crept
Two women on their way to Calvary.
The fragrant odors of sweet spices told
Of their sad errand to the tomb of Him
They loved. And as they neared the garden where
Their blessed Lord was laid, a sudden fear
Took hold upon their eager, loving hearts —

(The sepulchre was hewn from solid rock,
A great stone had been rolled before the door,
And sealed with Pilate's royal signature) —
They felt their weakness, and in anguish cried,
“Oh, who shall roll for us the stone away?”
But faith grew bold, they urged their faltering steps —
When lo! they found an Angel from the Lord
Had rolled away the stone, and sat thereon!

Thus often, when with loving zeal we seek
To serve the Lord, a great fear chills our hearts,
The door of opportunity seems closed,
And in our weakness and distress we cry,
“Oh, who shall roll for us the stone away?”
But when with faith and courage we press on,
We find the Angel of the Lord hath gone
Before, and lo! the stone is rolled away!

2H148

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, March 6, 1905

A GREAT SPIRITUAL BLESSING UPON GOD'S PEOPLE

Pastor Russell was with the Allegheny congregation Sunday. At 3 p.m., to a crowded house, he discoursed from the text:

“Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Mal. 3:10

In order to have a profitable study of the Bible, in order to secure therefrom the “meat in due season,” is necessary amongst other things, that we should understand that the Jewish nation — elected or selected from all the nations of the world as God's peculiar people—were, up to the time of their rejection at our Lord's first advent, a typical people. The things said and done to that people represented higher and typical

lessons and promises to spiritual Israel, inaugurated at Pentecost. Until we learn this lesson and how to apply it we are deprived of much of the spiritual profit intended for us. The Lord points this out, telling us that those things which happened to them were for an example to us —our lessons being on a higher plane, spiritual. Again we are informed that their experiences were shadows of better things following. This principle properly applied to our text will furnish us spiritual food and refreshment under the Lord's blessing today.

At the time of the writing of this message to Malachi, the people of Israel were very much discouraged. They were not as prosperous as they thought they ought to be, considering the great blessings promised, to which they were heirs under the divine covenant with Abraham. They were not living in heathenish idolatry; indeed, after the Babylonian captivity the nation of Israel may be said to have been free from idolatry, which had previously brought upon them divine disfavor. Considering this absence of idolatry, coupled with outward loyalty to God, the Israelites were disposed to query why they were not more blessed in their various temporal interests, flocks, herds, granaries, etc. The Lord sends them through the prophet an answer on the subject, pointing out that, although acknowledging and worshiping the true God, they were not worshiping him with appropriate sincerity and devotion.

In the context they are invited to consider the fact that people in general, heathen people, in dealing with their gods do not steal from them, but rather present offerings to them over and above what might be considered their obligations. But in the case of Israel, the Lord points out that they were really robbing their God—the God from whom they received all their blessings and mercies. They acknowledged that it was from the Lord they expected blessings upon their families, flocks, herds and orchards. This being so, why should they not give to the Lord, according to their covenant with him, the required tithe or tenth of all the fruit of the field, of the flocks and herds, etc.? Why should they expect divine blessings while withholding the covenanted tithes? After pointing out that such withholding of the tithes was really robbery and that the Lord resented it, the message of our text assured them that if they would do their part in the agreement they would have abundance, more than they would be able to use.

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL'S DROUTH AND BARRENNESS

Let us apply this lesson to antitypical or spiritual Israel. First, let us see what constitutes spiritual Israel and then proceed to apply the lesson. In typical Israel our Lord designated some as "Israelites indeed," and to these he addressed himself spiritually saying, "Blessed are your ears for they hear and your eyes for they see." He thus

implied that the great mass of the nation, although nominally God's Israel, were not so in reality. As we look about us today we see the same thing to be true. We see a large multitude, the millions of America, Great Britain and Europe, posing as nominal spiritual Israel, yet in reality far from the Lord, far from being Israelites indeed—according to their own confessions. Indeed, while nominal Christendom represents less than one-fourth of the world in numbers, it really represents nine-tenths of the blasphemy and crime of the world. It is a sad picture and a disgraceful picture, yet a truthful one. We may be sure that the Lord's messages to spiritual Israel are not to this great mass, but to the little flock who are Israelites indeed, without guile, without deception, at heart sincerely devoted to the Lord. For such only is the blessing of our text, for the others have not the ears to hear, because they have not the hearts to appreciate the Lord's messages.

If, then, we find that the spiritual meat of our text belongs exclusively to those Christians who are Israelites indeed, without fraud or deception in the matter, let us examine the context further and note, if possible, whether or not this text has been generally applicable throughout the entire gospel age, or whether or not there is anything that would indicate some particular

2H149

time when it should be specially applicable, when it should be especially meat in due season.

THE MESSAGE ESPECIALLY APPLICABLE NOW

Examining the context, we find the second coming of our Lord brought prominently to our attention. "The Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his Temple (church): even the Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in.... But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire." Again, following our text the same thought is brought forward. Our Lord declares of the approved ones at his second advent, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels." Thus viewed our text is specially applicable to the present time. It appears to come as a special appeal from the Lord to spiritual Israel of our day. Many today are confessing their leanness and drouth, many are wondering why they have not the Lord's blessing more abundantly in their own hearts and homes.

In this we do not refer to nominal Christendom, which knows no yearnings—to those whose hearts are full of selfishness and meanness, fraud and deceit and guile, and all manner of uncleanness. We refer to those who

are sincerely the Lord's people, who have made a full covenant of consecration to him, and who are perplexed at the present condition of things, at the fact that the love of many is growing cold, that faith in the Lord and his providential care is losing ground, and that the majority of those who attend divine service freely acknowledge that they believe little, that they have but a form of godliness and know nothing of its special power that they use the Church as a social club, and would have no interest in it at all if it did not possess the club qualities.

TERMS OF THE DIVINE BLESSING

Would that we had a clarion voice to reach the ears of all the true Israelites who are thus mourning and sighing as they perceive more and more clearly the drouth and dearth and approaching famine—not for bread nor for water, but for the hearing of the words of the Lord. (Amos 8:11) To such the Lord sends this message—that upon his terms the desired blessing and refreshment of soul may be secured. Let such apply our text to his own soul—”Prove me herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will open to you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” But let us not make a mistake: this blessing is not promised to any except those who have the hearing ear: it is not promised to any except those who are hungering and thirsting and appreciating the drouth and desiring blessing.

It is not to be considered, therefore, as God's proposition as respects the three hundred millions of Christendom, but merely as applicable to that small portion of the three hundred millions who are genuine and sincere Israelites, people of God, who have turned from idols to serve the living God. Upon this class the Lord is ready to pour out those wonderful blessings. He is ready to make them a feast of fat things from his Word, to spread them a table of bounties such as they never have enjoyed before, and to bless and make glad their hearts with his loving kindness and tender mercies— with the lengths and breadths and heighth and depths of his love and bounty and provision. But what are the conditions upon which they may have this great outpouring of divine blessing, that would be to them spiritual riches instead of poverty, that would give them sight for blindness, hearing for deafness, and gold tried in the fire of experience and the white garments of divine favor? Addressing this class, the last stage of the Church, the Laodicean stage the Lord points out the difficulties and the needs and gives the proper counsel. Rev. 3:14-19

OUR ANTITYPICAL TITHING

In our context the Lord assured the Israelites who felt their dearth that it was the result of having robbed God by withholding the consecrated requirements—the tithe—the one-tenth of all their increase. What is the

meaning or lesson of this to spiritual Israelites without guile who are seeking for the divine blessing?

It signifies that the dearth is upon them and which is rapidly beginning a “famine” is their own folly—is because they have not fulfilled their terms and conditions as spiritual Israelites. We are not of those who consider the tithing system instituted among the Jews as a law upon the spiritual Israelites — that each should appropriate to the Lord’s work one-tenth of everything he possesses or earns. That was the type. The antitype is something far higher, far grander. In the type one-tenth was to be devoted to the Lord because it would have been impossible for the people to have devoted all to the Lord. In the antitype the Lord calls for our all, for a full sacrifice to him of everything that we possess—of all that we are or hope to be.

The Lord’s conditions upon which we may be his spiritual Israel and have his favor and enjoy an abundance of spiritual blessing from the opened windows of heaven, is expressed in the words, “My son, give me thine heart”—not one-tenth of your heart, but all of your heart. Our Lord sets this forth forcibly saying, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,

2H150

with all thy mind, with all thy strength.” Not one-tenth, not one-half, not three-quarters, not nine-tenths, but all or everything is the requirement.

True, many are giving the Lord one-tenth of their hearts and some more and some less. It is true, also, that in proportion as more or less of the heart is given to the Lord, in proportion as the divine will is sought and done—that is, to the extent of one-tenth or more or less—in that same proportion there is spiritual blessing and spiritual favor. None except those who make a full consecration of their hearts, of all, to the Lord are accepted by him to be his sons, and only such receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit as sons and adoption into the divine family. Only such are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord. But, do you say that those who have made a full consecration are few? I answer, Yes! and the Scriptures also teach that the Lord’s accepted followers who shall be joint-heirs with him in the kingdom are but a “little flock.” (Luke 12:32) I answer yes, again, from our context, that these who are the Lord’s jewels are exceptions amongst the many stones found in nature.

We are not now speaking of how many ultimately will be saved. In our discourses of the past three Sundays, with which many of you are keeping track in The Tribune, we have referred to the great blessings of restitution and the grand opportunities of salvation that are to

be brought to the world at our Lord's second advent, and we have referred also to how the Church of this gospel age, the "very elect," are to be the Lord's associates in that great work of blessing all the families of the earth. But now we are discussing merely the very elect class, merely the spiritual Israelites indeed. It is upon these that the Lord proposes to pour out his blessing at the present time, not upon the world in general— that will come in the future.

TO GET THE BLESSING BRING THE TITHES

From our remarks it will be gathered that only those who have made full consecration of themselves to the Lord constitute the real spiritual Israelites who are the heirs of all the promises. It is these alone that we address, because these alone are referred to in our text. The exhortation to bring the tithes to the Lord's storehouse, applied to the spiritual Israelite, signifies that while they all have made the full consecration of themselves to the Lord, many of them have been keeping back a part of the price, have been following to some extent the example of Ananias and Sapphira—outwardly professing one thing, really performing another —"robbing God."

Our text urges these that their failure to live up to their consecration is the cause of their leanness and drouth, and it they will do their part, if they will turn over a new leaf, if they will see that the Lord gets all that they have covenanted, he in turn will see that they get riches of grace and bounties and mercies more than they could ask or think—in so great abundance that they will not be able to contain the blessing. It will overflow upon others and be a great blessing to them as well.

HOW WE GIVE ALL TO THE LORD

If the Jew found it a task to give one-tenth of the fruit of his labor to the Lord, how will it be possible for spiritual Israelites, however well intentioned, to give all to the Lord under present conditions? Is not this impossible? We must eat, we must sleep, we must have raiment and shelter, and however plain and simple our provisions for these natural wants they will necessarily consume much of our time we have consecrated to the Lord. How, then, can we render to the Lord our all? Does the Lord ask or expect of us impossibilities? And if not, how can matters be explained?

The explanation is this: We give our all to the Lord in full consecration and he then makes us his stewards, authorizing us to use our time, our talents, our means, everything that we have or that may come into our possession to use of these, whatever may be necessary for the proper support of ourselves and those who are properly dependent upon us. Thus we give all to the

Lord and he gives them back again to us not only spiritual rewards and blessings from the open windows of heaven, but he gives us all things richly to enjoy. Indeed, many spiritual Israelites find that with their all submitted to the Lord, and with his blessing upon them in return, even plainer and far less expensive raiment can be enjoyed more richly than were the more elaborate provisions under other conditions.

Thus we see that the whole matter is in our hands under the Lord's arrangement. He has accepted our sacrifice, has adopted us into his family and has given us to use as stewards the things which we consecrated to Him. He does not force or compel their devotion to Him and His cause, but on the contrary he uses the opportunity to prove us, to test us, to ascertain to what extent we meant the consecration we made, to prove to what extent we are Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile. He tells us that our faithfulness in rendering to him and to his cause our little all—every moment, every dollar, every mite of influence that we possess— demonstrates the measure of our love for him.

He tells us that only those who love him supremely can be accepted to a position amongst the elect in the coming kingdom as joint-heirs with Christ; he tells us that we must love him more than we love houses or lands, parents or children or self or any other thing or

2H151

creature; he tells us that this will be demonstrated by our course in life. If we love him and are sincere in our covenant we will delight to bring into the storehouse everything under our control. We will even seek to economize time and influence and money from earthly things—seeking to deny ourselves that we may have the more to use in the Lord's service according to our best understanding of what will be acceptable to him as set forth in his Word.

I WILL POUR YOU OUT A BLESSING"

Dear friends, I exhort all within reach of my voice, all within the range of my influence, to accept the Lord's terms and accept them promptly. I exhort that the Lord's promise be proved—"Prove me herewith, saith the Lord." See if you do not get the blessing for which your heart has hungered. And to those who already have the blessing, who have already proved the Lord's word faithful, who are already seeking day by day to lay down their lives in the Lord's service, seeking that whatsoever they do, all may be done to the glory of God, seeking that every day shall demonstrate their love for the Lord — to those who have already received the blessing and are rejoicing in the rich outpouring that has come to

them, those are exhorted to continue faithful, steadfast, continue under the downpour of divine grace and truth, and trust that there is still more to follow, and see that every blessing received calls for notes of heartfelt praise, not merely notes from the lips, but also from their hearts, manifested through the actions of life.

Some may be perplexed and inquire in what way can we bring the trophies of our hearts and lives to the feet of the Lord? In what way can we spend our lives, our means, the cream of all we possess in the Lord's service? We answer that these offerings to the Lord may be associated with every little affair of life if all is done as unto the Lord, nevertheless these sacrifices may be divided into two principal classes. (1) Our sacrifice of our own earthly tastes and desires that are not sinful in the interest of our spiritual development. This may signify less and less time spent in amusement, including amusing literature; it may mean less and less time spent in worldly pursuit, the pursuit of money, honors of men, investigations of philosophy, etc., the time taken from these things being devoted to our own personal upbuilding in the knowledge of God's word, in communion and fellowship with him, and in building up our hearts in the truth, in faith, in love, in the various fruits and graces of the holy spirit.

(2) It may mean to live in the more humble home, to practice greater economy in various ways, that we may have not only spiritual riches to give to others, but that we may have the earthly means wherewith to forward our spiritual aims and ambitions and affairs. These savings of time from business and savings of money will be evidences to the Lord of our heart loyalty to him and our love for the principles for which he stands and our love and loyalty will be shown not only by our denials but also by the way we will use our savings of time and influence and money. To live economically, to practice self-denial either along literary lines or financial lines, and to thus gain time and money, mean responsibility in the use of the saved time and saved money. If the savings be accumulated merely with a view of getting rich, or if the time be saved merely to spend it in idleness, nothing is gained—perhaps, indeed, something has been lost.

The proper use of all that we can save for the Lord is its application either to our own spiritual development or to giving spiritual assistances to others of the household of faith, or, if this be not possible, the giving of assistance to those outside of the household of faith who give indications of having the hearing ear and understanding heart. Thus do the Lord's people lay up treasure in heaven at the expense of earthly treasures. As a result they may be less brilliant in conversation or less stylish in dress, or less esteemed amongst men from a financial standpoint, but they will be richer and richer in faith and in good works and in character likeness to their Master.

A GENERAL SHOWER—A DOWNPOUR

While the work is an individual one, while each Israelite indeed must attend to the matter of bringing his own offerings and tithes to the Lord, while we can do little toward helping one another merely through advice, there will, nevertheless, be a great influence going forth from one to another of the Lord's people, which may bring a great shower of refreshment and blessing to all who are of the true Israelite class.

“Actions speak louder than words,” is an old adage, but a true one, and hence all the preaching we may do, all the exhorting of others to bring their tithes, will not be nearly so forceful as our example. Example is contagious. Just look back at the Lord and the Apostles— at their forsaking of earthly prospects, counting them loss and dross that they might win Christ, and their faithfulness in laying down their lives in the service of the Truth, in service of the brethren: although they are 18 centuries distant their influence is most stimulating upon hearts and lives. Similarly every one of us, in proportion as he is devoted to the Lord and lives out that devotion day by day, is a living epistle known and read of all men, but especially known to and read by and influential with those who have made a similar consecration of heart and life to the service of the King of

2H152

kings and Lord of lords. Let us indeed more and more let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven.

True, only a few will see because only a few have the eyes of their understanding opened; but, nevertheless, these are the most important ones. Our influence upon the brethren is of much more importance than our influence upon the world. If we are now successful in building one another up in the most holy faith, if the Bride class now make themselves ready, very shortly— when the ‘jewels’ shall all have been gathered and shall shine forth in the brightness of the kingdom—they will have abundant opportunity then for blessing the world, which now has neither eyes nor ears for these things. Rev. 19:7; Matt. 13:43.

Let us who recognize the forgiveness of our sins in the redemptive work of Christ, and who have consecrated our all to him, be so faithful as to gain the blessing of our text. The result of the shining of such lights will be a blessing upon some at least and will glorify our Father in heaven.

The National Labor Tribune, March 12, 1905

TRUE FASTING AND FEASTING

Washington, D. C., March 12—Pastor C. T. Russell spoke twice here today in Odd Fellows' hall to large and attentive audiences. His afternoon topic was, "To Hell and Back. Hope for the recovery of many of them." Incidentally he claimed to show from the Scriptures the erroneousness of the views taught by Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, Seventh Day Adventists and Mormons. The address was listened to with profound attention for nearly two hours. We report in full the evening discourse on true fasting and feasting, from the text:

"Then came unto him the disciples of John saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bridechamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast."
Matt. 9:14-15

The so-called Lenten season, which began last Wednesday and will continue until Easter Sunday, will be widely observed throughout the civilized world by several large denominations of Christians. It is not for us to find fault with the conscientious religious observances of any, Christian or heathen. Every man's conscience should be his guide and each should seek to have his conscience enlightened by the instructions of the Divine Word to the extent of his ability. We are not here to advocate the observance of Lent nor yet to condemn it. We are free to concede that although the observance is a mere formality with some, and probably hypocrisy with others, to still others who enter into it with a true spirit of devotion to the Lord it probably yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to their souls, and at the same time with many has a beneficial effect physically, coming as it does at a changing of season, when an alternative of some kind is beneficial to nearly all.

The observance of Lent is of very ancient origin. Originally there was considerable discussion as to the number of weeks and the number of days in each week in which fasting would be properly observed. The 40 days' fasting by our Lord seems to have had considerable to do with the deciding of the question, a large number making exceptions of Sundays reduced the 40 days to 36, claimed to be especially appropriate as a tithe or tenth of a year. Undoubtedly good and loyal hearts had much to do with the establishment of the custom, but the general mistake has been made in this as in other things, namely, the attempt to apply to parishes, dioceses, States and hundreds of millions of people, principles and practices which only a mere handful of

them ever did or ever could rightly appreciate and observe. Nominal Christendom as a whole has merely a form of godliness, and by its daily words and acts denies the entire Christian institution, and really is injured by the Pharisaical fasting and praying which, being without the heart, are an abomination unto the Lord instead of a sweet savor. While this argument would be against the application of the Lenten season to nominal Churchianity, it in no sense impugns or even criticizes the appropriateness of its observance by the pure in heart.

FASTING IN GENERAL

But let us lift our eyes and take a broader view of this subject of fasting. All Bible students are familiar with the record that Elijah on one occasion fasted for 40

2H153

days, that Daniel the prophet fasted on several occasions—once, he tells us, for seven whole weeks he tasted no pleasant bread. Our Lord, also, we recall, fasted absolutely without a morsel for 40 days, and there are various minor fastings recorded both in the Old and New Testaments. Examining the occasions we find that these fasts were intended for one of two purposes. (a) Some were manifestations of repentance, contrition for sin and desire for renewal of fellowship in the Lord. Thus King David tells us, “I humbled my soul with fasting,” and “I chastened my soul with fasting.” (Psa. 35:13; 69:10)

(b) Fasts were performed with a view to bringing the heart into a closer communion with the Lord, from a desire to know and do his will, and without respect to any mourning for sins. For instance, our Lord’s fasting was for this purpose. As soon as he had made his consecration and had symbolized it by baptism and was about to begin his ministry under the plenary influence of the holy spirit, he went aside to fast, to pray, to consider the divine will respecting what the course of his ministry would be. And Daniel, having received a revelation from the Lord which he only partly understood, fasted and prayed to the intent that he might come near to the Lord and as a special favor be granted special insight into the signification of his vision.

Similarly, our Lord said to the apostles on one occasion when they had failed to relieve one who was possessed of a demon, “This kind goeth not out save by prayer and fasting.” He thus intimated an efficacy not only in prayer but also in fasting—intimated that by such fastings, self-denials, the heart would be brought nearer to God and a greater spiritual power would be enjoyed. In other words, the measure of the Lord’s Spirit enjoyed by his people is the measure of their power in his service in any

capacity, and whatever will empty the heart of selfishness and worldliness and pride and folly will permit a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord to be enjoyed and a larger measure of the power of the Lord to be manifested through that individual.

What a lesson there is in this for all Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile. As illustrating this last-mentioned use of fasting, we note that Paul, Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius and Manaen, the chosen elders of the Church at Antioch, observed fasting in connection with their ministry, and that after the Church at Antioch, in harmony with the guidance of the Spirit, commissioned Paul and Barnabas to be the Church's representatives in a missionary tour, they fasted and prayed on the subject before sending them forth as their representatives. Acts 13:2, 3

We notice again that Cornelius the Gentile was fasting as well as praying at the time that the Lord sent him the message that his prayers were heard and that he should send for the Apostle Peter, who would give him the instruction by which his prayers would be fulfilled—he should be saved from condemnation and accepted into the family of the Lord's people. (Acts 10:30) We notice again, in the report of the work of Paul and Barnabas on their missionary tour, that when they appointed elders in the various little churches they did so with prayer, after fasting.

THE TRUE IMPORT OF FASTING

Fasting, like baptism, may either be a mere form, injurious rather than beneficial, or it may be observed with spiritual profit. Just as a man might be sunk five fathoms deep into the ocean without being baptized, so he might voluntarily die of starvation without having fasted from the divine standpoint. No honest person, for instance could have the least sympathy for the man who affected an outward countenance of the Lenten restriction to one cup of coffee by providing himself on the occasion with a bowl which really held two cups. And this is but an illustration of how forms of godliness are observed while the heart is far from a fasting attitude in the Lord's sight. To the class called in the Scriptures, "New Creature" in Christ Jesus, the essence of fasting in any event must be measured in the Lord's sight by the condition of the heart.

We may safely conclude that all "abstaining from fleshly lusts" or desires is real fasting, the kind most approved in the Lord's sight. The apostle explains that these fleshly desires war against the soul, against the Spirit-begotten New Creature, which is seeking to walk in the footsteps of the Lord in the narrow way. Every denial of appetite for food and drink or the lusts or appetites of the mind for worldly pleasures, whether sinful or innocent, if practiced with the desire thereby to glorify God and to advance our new minds in a spiritual way, must surely have the Lord's approval and result favorably to the upbuilding of the New Creature and to the bringing of the old nature more and more into subjection to the new. This is the real fasting, the important fasting, the essential fasting, without which none can hope to enter the glorious Kingdom for which we hope, and for whose reign of righteousness over the world we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Outward forms and outward fastings and kneeling in prayer, water baptism, etc., as enjoined by the example of the apostles, undoubtedly are assistances as well as illustrations of the spiritual matters which they illustrate; but whoever sees and appreciates no further than the outward forms will never make his calling and election sure to the glorious things which the Lord has set before the elect Church of this gospel age. He may

2H154

indeed enjoy some of the blessings and divine favors that are for the world in general during the next age, but he will miss the high calling, the heavenly calling of this age. It is for this reason that the Lord continually referred to the true fastings, true sacrifices, and never

commanded and only incidentally commended the outward fasting.

THE FASTING WHICH OUR LORD COMMENDED

As illustrations of the kind of fastings our Lord declared necessary to those who would be his disciples, to those who would be joint-heirs with him in his kingdom to come, to those who would sit with him in his throne, to the “little flock” to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom, he said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself (fast in the true sense) and take up his cross, and follow me (follow my example in this).” “Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart”— learn of me complete self-denial, renunciation, complete consecration, complete giving up of the will that the Father’s will might be done in me. “I came not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me.” “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” “If a man love not less father and mother, houses and lands, yea, and his own self, less he can not be my disciple.”

Again self-denial, self-renouncing and fasting in the highest and fullest sense of the word is enjoined with fasting from fleshly desires both good and bad in the interests of the New Creature and for effective service in the ministry are the highest forms of fasting. Matt. 16:24; II:29; John 5:30

FASTING AND PRAYING IN SECRET

Our Lord frequently condemned the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in that they disfigured their countenances, giving them a drawn appearance, that they might seem to men to be suffering from severe fastings and might be esteemed very religious. He condemned their prayers in public places to be heard of men for similar reasons. This provoked our Lord’s unstinted denunciations. Woe unto you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye make long prayers and disfigure your faces that ye may appear unto men to fast and be religious— ye have your reward. You are not seeking the reward of God’s favor and closeness of communion with him; you are seeking the approval of men; you are getting the approval of the ignorant and easily deceived; you need expect nothing of a reward from the Lord for your fastings, for they are not done as unto him.

Warning his disciples to a contrary course, our Lord admonished that when they prayed they should do so of God even when offered in a public assembly of his people and so audibly that others might hear and join their hearts in the same petition. He enjoined also that their fasting should be similarly as unto the Lord and not unto men. His words were, “When ye

fast be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head; and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.” Matt. 6:16-18

“IN THOSE DAYS SHALL THEY FAST”

Our text clearly shows that Jesus did not enjoin fasting upon his disciples. The fact was remarked by the disciples of John the Baptist, from whose numbers some went to Jesus and became his disciples. Our Lord’s words have a rich significance when we remember that he was the Bridegroom, present with and the joy of those who thus recognized him as the Messiah. Their hearts would be so full of joy and thankfulness and praise to God that everything akin to mourning and sorrow would naturally be considerably dispelled. As our Lord remarked, how could they mourn or manifest any evidence of lack or dissatisfaction or cravings while he was with them, the source of every good, the center of every hope, the joy of every heart?

Why should they fast? Their sins had been forgiven them, they had been accepted of the Lord as his disciples, and had been taught to look up to the Almighty and call him “our Father in heaven.” Not a thing had they to wish for, because in Christ their Lord, present with them, was a full supply of wisdom on every subject of guidance for all their affairs and for instruction unto every good word and work. It was those who did not recognize the Lord’s presence who properly enough might fast and hunger and thirst for the bread and water of life, which they had not yet received, of which they had not yet become aware. Those Israelites indeed of more advanced development, who had found Jesus and had realized that he was the Messiah, had their prayers and fastings of the past all answered, all fulfilled in him.

Our Lord’s words were a prophecy of a coming time after his ministry in the flesh should be ended, after his resurrection and ascension to the Father had been accomplished. In those days, all through this gospel age, his followers would indeed find many occasions in which their hearts would crave divine guidance, in which they would seek divine wisdom, and in those days appropriately they might fast because of the Bridegroom’s absence and because, according to his

gracious promise and instruction, they were waiting for his return, and hoping and striving to be faithful to him that they might be approved at his coming, that he might then say unto them, “Well done, enter thou into the joy of the Lord.” Yes, all through the gospel age it has been appropriate that the Lord’s followers should indeed fast with the true fasting of self-denial, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, striving against the baits of the world, the flesh and the Adversary, which, tempting them, would seek to lure them away from the close fellowship with the Lord and the following in his footsteps of self-denial which he had enjoined.

FASTING MUST AGAIN LEAD UP TO FEASTING

Our Lord’s words intimating that the Bridegroom’s absence would be an occasion for fasting, imply also that with his return the fasting will cease and a great feast of joy be ushered in. If our Lord’s presence in the end of the Jewish age as the typical Bridegroom, presenting himself to the typical people invited to become his Bride, was a time for rejoicing, much more will his second coming as the King of Glory to receive “the very elect” unto himself, and to consummate the marriage of the Lamb, usher in experiences of feasting rather than of fasting.

For more than 18 centuries we have had the fulfillment of the Lord’s words, “In those days shall they fast.” Speedily following the death of the apostles the Dark Ages began to be ushered in; the doctrines planted by the Lord and the apostles began to be confused and corrupted by the traditions and philosophies of men. The food supply of the family, thus made more and more unnutritious, forced a fast which, as the Scriptures foretold, ultimately amounted almost to a “famine for the hearing of the Lord.” Amos 8:11

Correspondingly, too, our Lord declared that at his second advent he would send forth to his people the true family of God, an abundance of spiritual food and refreshment. His words were, “Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.” (Luke 12:37) Again he declared respecting the same time, and as referring to the same spiritual refreshments to his people, that he would send forth at the hands of his servants things new and old, meat in due season for the household of faith.—Matt. 13:52; 24:45

On previous occasions, as well as in the six volumes of the Studies of the Scriptures, I have endeavored to set before you and all of the Lord’s hungry family some of these spiritual viands, “things new and old,” from the storehouse of the

divine Word, showing also that the reason for the present abundance of grace and truth for the hungry ones is that we are again living in the “days of the Son of Man” (Matt. 24:37); showing, further, that present increased knowledge of the divine Word, like present increased knowledge upon all scientific and mechanical subjects, is not that mankind is wiser and greater and nobler and better, but that God’s due time has come for putting before us the treasures of grace—because we are on the very threshold of the new dispensation, the millennium—because the time of the Lord’s parousia is the time for the preparation both of his people and of the world for the wonderful changes just at hand. The change to his people will be the First Resurrection to glory, honor and immortality; the change for the world will be the great time of trouble which, as a great cloud, a dark night, will eventuate in a speedy bursting forth of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in its beams, the promised hope of the ages and of the world.

OUR LORD’S PAROUSIA

This being true, it is no surprise to us that those of the household of faith who are awake to their privileges and aware of the Lord’s parousia have a feast to their souls, a season of spiritual refreshment and joy such as they never knew before, such as was not possible previously. The Lord in his parable pictures the coming glory of the kingdom as a wedding feast, and his consecrated people of this gospel age as guests invited to that feast. But matters have so far progressed that those who are widely awake to the situation can figuratively realize the various preparations in progress for the sumptuous affair, can realize the preparations of the banqueting room and can already scent the sweet odors of the good things which God hath in reservation for them that love him. Yea, already it is fair to say that the feast is begun, that we have at least a sample of it all in the menu provided by the King. How all this causes our hearts to rejoice, even before the door is shut, even before the marriage of the Lamb had been consummated.

“A little while; now he has come;
The hour draws on apace—
The blessed hour, the glorious morn,
When we shall see his face.

How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning day!”

Courage, then, dear brethren! Be faithful to him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous

2H156

light. Let us continue the fasting of self-denial, self-restraint, in respect to everything that would be a hindrance to the growth of grace of ourselves and others. But since we are in the “days of the Son of Man,” of the Bridegroom let us seek more and more to appreciate and to digest the spiritual food he is now supplying through his faithful ones—let us feast indeed not only upon the milk of the Word but upon its strong meat . let us grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, that we may run with patience the race set before us, laying aside every weight and sin and looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, until he shall become its finisher.

The National Labor Tribune, March 19, 190.5

THE FIGURATIVE RESURRECTION FROM SIN AND DEATH

Pastor C. T. Russell addressed the Bible House congregation Sunday and was heard with great attention, as usual. His text was:

“Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.” Eph. 5:14

The discourse follows:

Our text naturally divides itself into four heads. (1) The sleepers. (2) The awakening. (3) Arising from the dead. (4) The light of favor then bestowed.

Nothing in this text has reference to the actual resurrection in the future, nor does it refer to actual sleepers and literal awakenings. The world in general is in a state of lethargy, asleep, and only the few have awakened. The prevalence of sin is, we believe, less the result of intentional wrongdoing than of a numbness of mind, an obtuseness, a lethargy on the subject which the inspired writer denominates sleep. This comatose condition is otherwise spoken of as blindness and deafness, and the

apostle assures us that the god of this world has blinded the eyes of them that believe not. They see not, neither do they understand, matters from their true standpoint; they need to be awakened.

We can readily see how easy a matter it would be for the Almighty to awaken the whole world in short order. Indeed we have the assurance of the Scriptures that such an awakening is to be one of the particular features connected with the new dispensation of the future—the millennial age. The Lord will no longer allow the world to lie in stupor and asleep respecting right and wrong, but will call their attention to the principles at stake by the judgments which he will establish in the earth—judgments of approval for and toward all well doers, judgments of disapproval and condemnation toward all evil doers.

HOW QUICKLY A CHANGE

Who can not see that if judgments and rewards followed swiftly upon the heels of wrong doing and right doing, the world would very soon get awake to the new conditions? The lethargy, indeed, results from the fact that the majority have little faith in the Lord and in the rewards and punishments which he has promised. Their attitude is that of the agnostic, though the majority profess some religious creed. They perceive that many who do righteously to the best of their ability suffer from poverty and sometimes from injustice; on the other hand they perceive that more evil doers prosper and, as the Psalmist declares, their eyes stand out with fatness and they have more than heart could wish. Under the circumstances, perplexed and bewildered, they gradually become indifferent or go to sleep in respect to such matters—their doubts and their fears about balance one another.

But since we can not hope for the establishment of divine judgments upon the good and the evil until the reign of Christ begins—until the time when he will take unto himself his great power and reign, until the time mentioned in his prayer when God's kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven—we must deal with present conditions and note what there is in the divine plan and arrangement at the present calculated to awaken these sleepers—"Awake thou that sleepest!" As a rule, but not as an invariable rule, some great trouble, some calamity or some fall into special sin, awakens the conscience, causing the individual to get awake and to come to some reasonable appreciation of his need for a Saviour and a great one. Awakenings, therefore, not infrequently follow some great calamity or some condition of dire poverty, when faith in self are strained to the snapping point. Then frequently comes the turning to the Lord as the only unchangeable and allpowerful friend, and an awakening to a sense of unworthiness results. Considerably of this

nature seems to be the recent awakening in the mining districts of Wales where large numbers have been awakened to the fact that they are sinners, to a realization that they have been living in a deplorable

2H157

considerable measure of prosperity now prevailing in the United States is not favorable to this kind of an awakening. Those who are well satisfied with the good things of this life, "full," are not easily awakened to an appreciation of the great facts of life and righteousness.

THE AWAKENING OF THE TRUTH

Another thing which may bring an awakening is a glimpse of the error and confusion frequently prevailing among Christians and represented in many of the creeds. As the darkness of the error is discerned, if a glimmer of the truth be present to show that the error is not of God but a result of failure to walk in the way of the Lord, this sometimes leads to an awakening — an awakening of the most desirable kind — an awakening to a realization of the goodness and justice, the wisdom and love of the Almighty, sure to be attractive and helpful to hearts of the right character. An awakening of this kind is quite possible at the present time, it would seem, for never before have men been thinking as much as now respecting the truth and falsities handed down to them from the dark ages.

The difficulty is that just as soon as some get awakened to a realization of the error, they are met with deceptive snares under the name of new light —false doctrines such as the apostle describes, saying that they present themselves as angels of light, inviting the awakened ones to doctrines more untrue than those they already had, but labeled a new light and presented in a more specious form. Spiritism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Mormonism, etc., are all along these lines, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. The thing that is better than the creeds of the Dark Ages is the Truth of God's Word, cleansed from the defilement of human tradition —not something new under the sun, but the old theology of Jesus, the apostles and the prophets.

Thousands are gradually getting awake in this latter sense of the word, and it behooves all that tasted that the Lord is gracious and who realize that the foundation of the divine plan rests not merely upon Jesus (whom all are inclined more or less to acknowledge), but upon the work which Jesus did, the ransom price which he paid in his own death, the redemption of Adam and his race which he effected, and the great blessing which is to follow as a result of that redemption in his "due time." I trust, dear friends, that all of this audience have gotten awake in this proper sense of the word, awake to the realization of their own insignificance and unworthiness,

awake to the realization that they are sinners, that they can not do as they would nor keep the law of God except as they shall have a covering of the sins that are past through the merit of the great sacrifice of Christ, and also as in every time of need all the journey through. Let us be glad that we have awakened; let us help to awaken others, and yet realize no disappointment if may whom we desire to awaken be so thoroughly immersed in pleasure or business or what not as to be beyond all our powers to arouse to a realization of their own condition and needs.

“ARISE FROM THE DEAD”

The world in general is reckoned “dead” from God’s standpoint for two reasons: (1) As the children of Adam and inheritors of his estate, both good and bad, they have inherited a death sentence under the Lord’s words, “Thou shalt surely die.” (2) Under this death sentence depravity, blindness and weakness have come over our race to such an extent that they are all dead, helpless and hopeless so far as the attainment of everlasting life by their own efforts is concerned. We can neither pay for our share in the original sin and free ourselves from that penalty, nor if freed from that penalty would we be able to maintain a righteous standing before the Lord, so ingrained has sin become in our natures.

There is just one way to arise from this dead condition, “dead in trespasses and sins” as well as under sentence to death. That is to accept the forgiveness and reconciliation which God provides for us in Christ. The provision is very simple: the Lord shows that we who were sinners in and through Adam have been bought with the precious blood —that Jesus has paid Adam’s penalty, and incidentally thus paid the penalty of his race, who were in him and partook of his fall, sentence, weaknesses and death. We can scarcely believe at first that the Lord proposes that if we accept of Christ by faith and determine to reform to the extent of our ability, he will count us as having passed from death unto life — he will reckon that old things have passed away and that all things have become new to us; he will reckon the trespasses and sins in which we were dead as covered, hidden from his sight through the imputed merit of the great Redeemer’s sacrifice. This is arising from the dead in the sense of our text.

It means more, however, than a mere resolution, for the justifying forgiveness continues to be ours so long as we maintain this attitude of heart, this desire to be free from the state of sin and death and to be alive toward God through Jesus. To maintain this standing implies that our hearts’ desire is for righteousness, and the new life in harmony with God will exercise itself and seek so far as possible to control the depraved appetites and desires which are ours as inheritors of Father Adam’s sin and

death. If any should turn away from this position he would be turning again from life back to death. The apostle describes some such, saying that they turn like a dog to his vomit, turn like a sow to wallow in the mire. (II Peter 2:22)

2H158

Those who continue the new life and strive against the weaknesses of the flesh to the extent of their ability are counted as perfect all the way along, as the Apostle declares, "The righteousness (the full requirement) of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." The Lord does not demand that we walk up to the letter of his law, for that is impossible so long as we have the new mind in these earthen vessels, in these mortal bodies. The new mind can express itself in thoughts and words and deeds only along the lines of the possibilities of the earthly body, but all the time the awakened one—who has arisen from the dead by accepting Christ—has all of his unintentional blemishes and imperfections covered by what the apostle designates "justification by faith."

Companions may think it strange that we run not with them to the same excesses as formerly. They may rail against us, call us hypocrites, etc., but those who passed from death unto life, who have arisen from the dead, realize a peace and a joy and a blessing which far outweighs the sneers of former companions, who know us not even as they knew him not. Our worldly friends, while conceding that the gospel of the Lord and the blessed hopes we have received have a transforming effect upon our lives, are sometimes disposed to cavil and to claim that we are not perfect yet. This we freely admit; not that we glory in it, but that in honesty we confess our faults, our blemishes, which we deplore, which we continually strive against, which so long as we are in these mortal bodies we shall not be able fully and permanently to overthrow.

But here we have the divine promise that the Lord's grace is sufficient for us, that he remembereth our frame, he knoweth we are dust, he expects of us nothing more than we are able to render. Yea, he is very generous, for we all sometimes have the consciousness of not doing all that we might have done on the side of righteousness and truth; but so long as the Lord reads in our hearts that we are not wilfully associating with wrong, that at heart we repudiate sin and seek to walk in his steps, so long will he be pleased to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness—giving us more and more the experiences in life necessary to our development, that our hearts may be fully in his likeness, and that by and by in the first resurrection we may be absolutely like him and absolutely free from sin because then we will be perfect—have perfect bodies promised us.

“CHRIST SHALL GIVE THEE LIGHT”

It is not to the sleeping one that Christ gives light before he is awakened. It is not to the dead one that Christ gives light after he has been awakened and before he has experienced the resurrection change of passing from death unto life, from sin unto holiness. It is after these two great steps of awakening and arising up out of death and condemnation have taken place that the Lord is prepared to give the light, and that the awakened and arisen one is in a condition to receive the light.

Here we see a matter which not only greatly perplexes the world but many Christians as well, who somehow fancy that all the light of God's Word and revelation is as much for the worldly and unregenerate as for the Lord's consecrated ones. Indeed some claim that the scriptures are mainly to the wicked, and that after one has become a Christian he has little need for the Scriptures. This is all a great mistake, all contrary to the divine promise on the subject. The Lord does not wish the world to understand the deep things of his plan; it is better for the unregenerate that they should be left thus in a measure of darkness, and hence the Scriptures declare, "Light is sown for the righteous and truth for the upright in heart;" again they declare, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise (the sincere) shall understand."

In accordance with this wrong thought many preachers seek to use the Lord's Word as a hammer to break the hearts of the ungodly, the unregenerate; and, on the contrary, when any have become the Lord's true people they seem to consider the study of the Scriptures as rather a waste of effort on their part because—they are saved? Not so, we answer; the Lord's Word is not a hammer. On the contrary, the suggestion of Scripture is that men's hearts are being broken with sorrows, trials, difficulties, and disappointments incidental to sin and our present imperfect condition as sinners, and we are specially informed that the gospel is intended to bind up the broken hearted.

True, the Scriptures, too, speak of the Word of God being quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, to separate between the thoughts and intents of the heart; but this is not applicable to the world, the sleeping, the unregenerate, but merely to believers. After they have become the Lord's people, then the Scriptures help them discern between the wishes and desires of the old nature, the flesh, and the will of the Lord, and often draw very fine distinctions, for, as the apostle

2H159

declares, the natural heart, the natural mind, would sometimes deceive us, being deceitful above all things

and desperately wicked. The new mind needs to contend against this deceptive old mind or will of the flesh, and the Word of God as the only power which makes such fine distinctions and really can separate a thought and divide its elements and shows us which features of it are of the flesh and which are of the spirit.

When the Apostle Paul was reasoning before Felix respecting right and wrong, truth and untruth and the certainty of the Lord calling all eventually to an account, we read that Felix trembled. He very nearly got awake, he shook a little in his sleep but evidently he did not get awake, did not become one of those to rise from the dead, did not get the great enlightenment promised to this class. Similarly King Agrippa said to Paul “Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian.” He was half awake, perhaps wholly awake, but he did not arise from the dead, he did not take the necessary step of fully consecrating his life and its every interest to the Lord and his cause. He did not, therefore, go on to get the higher and better light promised in our text. The Apostle Paul himself was asleep in respect to truth and righteousness, but being sincere at heart the Lord, even miraculously, shook him awake. At once we see the loyalty of the man in his prompt exclamation. “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” and in his obedience to the heavenly voice and in his faithfulness after days and years in laying down his life for his Lord and the brethren.

ST. PAUL AN ILLUSTRATION

The Apostle Paul is an illustration of those upon whom the Lord shines—of those whom he enlightens. His prompt transfer of his affections and desires and everything that he possessed to the Lord is most beautifully expressed in his own language. “I count not my life dear unto me so that I may finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify of the gospel of the grace of God.” “What things were gain to me I count loss for Christ, yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.” Acts 20:24; Phil. 3:7,8

In the Apostle Paul we see one of the grandest illustrations imaginable of the awakening of a true noble character, his passing from sin unto righteousness, from death unto life, and his subsequent enlightenment by the Lord. What a knowledge came to the Apostle after he had been awakened and after he had passed this figurative resurrection and became reckonedly a member of the Church, the Bride of Christ. Then all things were his, because he was Christ’s and Christ’s was God’s. And so it is with all who become the Lord’s true people in this true sense—all things are theirs richly to enjoy. They may enjoy the things of the present life even though they have not

much of this world's goods, as the apostle was frequently in straitened financial circumstances; and even though, like him, they suffer the loss of friends through their fidelity to principle, and even though, like him, they be counted fools for wasting time and talent which otherwise might be used in the acquirement of worldly fame or worldly riches— notwithstanding all these things they are rich toward God, and are able to appreciate the spiritual riches to such a degree that the things they part from are esteemed of no real value, as “loss and dross and dung,” as the apostle expresses the matter.

GROWTH IN GRACE AND GROWTH IN KNOWLEDGE

We are not to expect that those who are awakened and then pass from sin and death to righteousness and life conditions through faith in Jesus, and on whom he then shines the light of the riches of his grace and a knowledge of the divine plan—we are not to expect that these will receive all the light suddenly; but, as the Scriptures explain, having come into the place where the Lord is pleased to reveal himself and his plan to them, it is their privilege thereafter to grow in knowledge as they grow in grace. Each new step in grace brings additional privileges, and each new step in knowledge brings more fervent devotion and further growing in grace. Thus those whom the Lord is leading from darkness into his marvelous light progress day by day and step by step in the heavenly way.

The degree of this development is suggested by the apostle in Ephesians 1:18; 3:19, when he says, respecting some who had been awakened, who had passed from death unto life, and who were to some extent developed in the knowledge of the Lord—I pray God for you that the eyes of your understanding being opened, you may be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth all understanding. Let us, then, dear brethren and sisters, not only make sure that we have taken the first of these steps, that we have gotten awake to what really constitutes sin and to what is the real standard of righteousness as represented in the perfect law of God, but let us make sure additionally that we have taken the step mentioned in our text—out of darkness and sin and degradation and condemnation into the light, into the fellowship with God and into the endeavors of the new life. And let us additionally see that we are going on, and that by the Lord's grace “still more beauty may we see and still in creasing

2H160

light” in his great storehouse of truth, the Bible.

The apostle speaks of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of favor and knowledge, and yet it seems to me that all that the early Church enjoyed in these respects was less than the Lord is pleased now to make known to the same class who along similar lines are seeking to know the Lord and to walk in his way. As in the end of the Jewish age there came a time when further light was possible upon the prophecies of the Old Testament, bringing to light hidden things of previous days, so it is apparently in the ending time of this gospel age, in the dawning time of the millennial day. It is possible by the grace of God to have clearer views respecting the divine plan than were enjoyed either at the beginning of the age or throughout its length. Not that we have new revelations nor that we need them, but that God's promise has been that he will supply his people with meat in due season. We have the meat of the past and its rich nourishment and strength, and so now we have also the meat in due season, which is specially appropriate and necessary in the present time, that the Lord's people may grow, that they may understand and be on guard against the various wiles of the Adversary, which we are assured will be in great force in this harvest time.

WHY ALL ARE NOT WAKENED NOW

We have already seen that present conditions are not favorable to the awakening of the world, and that many who do get just a little awake prefer rather to fall asleep again, as did Felix and Agrippa. Why is this? Why does not God thoroughly arouse the whole world? Would it not be as easy for him to do it as not? We answer, Yes, and that when his due time shall come the whole world will be awakened. He indeed has assured us that when the judgments of the Lord are sent abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. We are glad to know that the time is coming when all these sleeping ones will be awakened; that the time is coming when all these dead in trespasses and sins, but redeemed by the precious blood, shall have full opportunity for release from their condemnation and of coming to an accurate knowledge of the truth, that they may be saved.

The reason why the Lord does not now deal with the whole world in this manner is that in his great plan he has purposed first of all to select from amongst mankind a "peculiar people," a "little flock," to whom he has promised joint heirship with the Lord in the next age, that they may become co-laborers with the glorified Jesus in the work of extending to every member of the human race the precious privileges secured to all through his death. When the awakening shall come matters will be much more favorable for the world than they are at present, though the reward then obtainable will be

much less valuable than the one now held out as a prize to the Church.

Then the Lord's arrangement will be that all who desire may by obedience to the Lord and the laws of the Kingdom secure eternal life, or by disobedience bring upon themselves the wages of sin, death—the Second Death—from which there will be no hope of recovery. The Lord's arrangement for this gospel age is also one of life and death—eternal life and a death that will never cease, a death from which none will ever be awakened, the Second Death. But the life that will be granted to the overcomers of this gospel age will be life on a spiritual plane, whereas the life offered to the world in the age to come will be an earthly life under good but earthly conditions. Moreover, in addition to the life now offered to the faithful, is the glory, honor and immortality which the Lord holds out as a triple crown for all of his faithful who by a manifestation of the Spirit of Jesus shall be counted worthy to be his joint heirs in the Kingdom.

We might even say that it is necessary that all the world should not be awakened in the present time. If all had been awakened and had known really what they were doing, who amongst the Jews, Pilate's soldiers, would have crucified the Lord of glory? The apostle explains, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Similarly, had all the world been awake throughout this gospel age, it is not supposable that the consecrated people of God would have had any opportunity for suffering with the Lord, for if the world had known them as the children of God and heirs of the coming kingdom, they surely would not have persecuted them even if they did not glorify them. Hence in the outworking of the divine plan it was proper to permit some of the world to remain in blindness and ignorance, asleep, dead, that they might work the works of the evil one and thus unwittingly accomplish the divine purpose of chiseling and polishing and preparing the members of the body of Christ for the coming glory.

PRESENT CONDITIONS NECESSARY

We may say also that the permission of this asleep and death condition in the present time is necessary or advantageous to the world under present conditions. For the masses of the world to get awake now would be a disadvantage to the majority of them. In their weakness, blindness, ignorance and perversity they need a strong hand of government, they need the instructions and corrections of righteousness which the Lord proposes to give them during the millennial age and which he does not propose to introduce during this gospel age.

This must not be considered, however, as any encouragement to sleep on. Rather “Blessed is he who hears the voice of the Son of Man,” who is awakened thereby in this present time. His present blessing in accepting the divine favor would be very great indeed and his future privileges and opportunities in the Kingdom in association with the Redeemer and little flock, his Church, would be superlatively precious. Whoever, therefore, gets awake in any degree should be on the alert to improve his opportunities. He should hearken to the Lord’s word, “He that hath an ear, let him hear” —let him obey, let him get the great blessings which are now possible to him. He who has not heard, who is fast asleep, let him rest. He can do nothing else and it is the best for him.

It is still, therefore, our privilege to cry with the apostle, “Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light,” notwithstanding the fact that we must not expect many wise, many great and many noble, or many rich, nor indeed many of any kind, to obey our call, even as few responded to the Master’s own invitation. The thought that all the sleepers will awaken, and all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears unstopped in the future is a comfort to us, not only in connection with our own dear ones who have not heard in the present time, but also in connection with the whole world of mankind.

Pastor Russell is advertised to speak at the opera house in Greensburg, Pa., next Sunday afternoon at 2:30 o’clock.

The National Labor Tribune, March 26, 1905

CHRISTIANS SHOULD JUDGE THEMSELVES

Greensburg, Pa., March 26—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., spoke at the St. Clair Opera house here this afternoon to a large audience, his subject being “To Hell and Back. Who are There? Hope for the Recovery of Many of Them.” The evening discourse, which we report in full, was from the text, “If we judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged of the Lord we are chastened; howbeit we are not condemned with the world.” 1 Cor. 11:31, 32

Our text is one amongst many that point out that the judgment of the Church is totally separate and distinct from that of the world. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the Lord’s people who have not discerned this fact are confused rather

than enlightened by it. They do not comprehend, for instance, the full import of the apostle's declaration that "God hath appointed a day (a one thousand-year day) in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath afore ordained." (Acts 17:31) Thinking of the judgment of the world as now in progress this Scripture would seem inconsistent, because it positively puts the judgment of the world in the next age, and indicates that in no sense had it begun in the apostle's days, but was still future, "appointed." Again the apostle's statement, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2), perplexes those who think of the world's judgment as now being in progress. They well know that the Church is not judging the world now. They must see, too, that the judgment or trial of the Church must be a thing of the past before the overcomers of the Church could be associated with the Lord in his great work of judging the world.

One great difficulty connected with the subject is the erroneous idea respecting the meaning of the word "judgment" in such connections. A misconception of the divine character and plan has interpreted the reference to a coming day of judgment of the world to signify a 24 hour day, and such a hasty acquittal or condemnation as would be possible in so brief a time for the living 1,600,000,000 and the dead 20,000,000,000. No wonder the proper thought of judgment is lost sight of from such a standpoint. No wonder that instead of thinking of the coming judgment of the world as signifying a schooling, a disciplining, a time of trial under righteous conditions, many have come to think of it as merely the time for the expression of a sentence. Indeed we see how even a sentence upon each individual of the human family would be impossible within a 24-hour day under any imaginable conditions, reasonable or unreasonable. It is here that we need to remember the words of the Apostle Peter: "Be not ignorant of this one thing, brethren, that a day with the Lord is a thousand years" (with man). (2 Peter 3:8) If this thought, that the world's day of judgment which God has appointed is a thousand years long, be kept in mind, the character of the judging then to be done will the more readily be discerned.

THE CHURCH NOW BEING JUDGED

This gospel age of nearly 19 centuries has been the
2H162

Church's period of judgment or trial. During this time those who have been called and who have accepted the call, and who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit and received as probationary members of the Church of Christ, have been on trial, have been subjected to testings and instructions in righteousness with a view to developing in them the Christian graces, the fruits of the

Spirit—in preparation for the glories and services to which they have been called by the grace of God. The Apostle tells us that these are subjected to “corrections in righteousness.” He tells us they will need and receive chastisements at the Lord’s hand, to the intent that they may develop proper characters and learn the proper lessons of obedience and be trained up in the way they should go for the inheritance to which they are called as sons of the Highest. The apostle intimates that there is no exception to this rule saying, “If ye be without chastenings, then are ye bastards and not sons.” Heb. 12:8

Here the apostle uses the word chastisements as signifying judgments, disciplines, corrections in righteousness. Indeed the word judgments is broader than the word chastisements, because the latter is applicable only to corrections for wrong doing, whereas judgments include the thoughts of either punishments for wrong doing or rewards for right doing. “The Lord shall judge his people,” his blessing shall be upon those who seek to walk in the narrow way, upon those who hear the Shepherd’s voice and follow him. His corrective chastisements or corrective judgments will be upon those who incline to wander from the narrow way, and are not destructive but corrective—intended to reclaim, to bring back, to teach, to establish in the ways of righteousness.

True, those who have entered the school of Christ and who are subject to these judgments of the Lord, these rewards and corrections, will be liable to the extreme penalty of the divine law should they wilfully, intentionally, perversely decline the divine leadings, and sin wilfully after they have received a knowledge of the Truth. For such the apostle tells us there is nothing to hope—“There is a sin unto death.” Such, resisting the rewards and chastisements of the Lord and hardening their hearts, who put the Lord to shame wilfully and intelligently, dishonoring and trampling upon that blood of the covenant with which they were once sanctified—there remaineth no more a sacrifice for their sins and hence nothing that we could hope for them. We must merely look forward in the case of such for the ultimate manifestation of God’s destructive indignation, to be manifested in the Second Death, which will be their portion. Heb. 10:26, 27

The point we wish to impress is the finality of the judgment in the case of the Church—namely, of one class being received into life eternal and the other class going into the second death at the close of the judgment. The judgment itself, consists of the innumerable encouragements and chastisements, rewards and punishments, corrective in their intention and results. How thankful we are that this is so! How reasonable it is that the Lord should thus judge his people! And if the judgment of his

people in the present time be done in this manner, it gives us a clear outline of what the righteous judgments of the Lord will be toward the world of mankind during the great thousand-year day of judgment, for which such great preparations have already been made in the appointment of Christ to be the great Judge and in the election of a little flock of his saints from the world to be his associate judges. We see, too, the great preparation that God is arranging whereby that millennial age of judgment shall afford the world every opportunity for a “righteous judgment.” How grand that will be! How like the Lord it will be to provide just such an experience for mankind in general.

In our discourse we noted the fact that the Scriptures uniformly speak of the world as blind and deaf and asleep, hence not on judgment now, not on trial now. We pointed out that only those who have heard the Lord’s voice have been awakened thereby, that only these see and hear and understand the wonderful privileges that are being offered by the Lord during this gospel age—the privilege of association with the Lord Jesus in the heavenly nature and kingdom and glory and the privilege of being schooled and judged in advance of the world, that they may be thus prepared for the work of ruling, instructing, correcting and judging the world when its day of judgment shall have come, when all the sleepers shall be awakened, when all the blind eyes shall be opened and when the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and when, consequently the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. Thus see, all who can get awake now, all who can open wide their eyes now, all who can hear now, and such who obey, who rise from the dead condition of the world and who receive the light and instruction of the Lord Jesus and who become children of God through faith and consecration and adoption — all these are specially favored. Blessed their eyes and blessed their ears! Blessed their hearts! Blessed their instructions, their trials and triumphs! To these all things are working together for good, because they love God and have been called according to his purpose to joint-heirship with their Lord and Master in the Kingdom.

NOT CONDEMNED WITH THE WORLD

Before coming to the depth of our lesson in its special application to the awakened ones, let us get the force of the sharp distinction which the apostle makes between

2H163

these and the world in the words, “Howbeit we shall not be condemned with the world.” The question arises, What is the condemnation of the world? When will it be condemned? We read that the world is already condemned, condemned to death; and when we were of

the world we were also under this condemnation of death, as the apostle declares, we have escaped the condemnation which is upon the worldly. As already seen we have been awakened—"Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead." We have arisen from the dead, arisen from the condemnation which is upon the world. We are justified to life through faith in the precious blood, and learn obedience to the voice of him that speaketh from heaven.

The world still lies, then, under the original Adamic condemnation ; the condemnation upon the world is death; its members have not passed from death unto life—they are yet in their sins; they have not accepted God's provision for their sins through faith in his precious blood. There is no other name given whereby they must be saved; they have not yet heard, not yet been awakened, not yet seen the grace of God. Those of us who have tasted of the Lord's grace and who have learned through his Word are glad to know that God's divine plan will not leave the world in blindness, deafness, slumber, ignorant of the only name given under heaven and amongst men for salvation, but will ultimately rescue them from that condition. We are glad and rejoice in the great things the Lord has promised shall be accomplished — "in the day of Jesus Christ" — in the millennial day — in the period of the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

But now we have seen that the world is still under this condemnation, and the apostle is telling us in our text that we who are of the Church, we who have gotten free from the Adamic condemnation and have reached the plane of justification, who have passed from death unto life and become the Lord's consecrated children and who are in the school of Christ and undergoing our judgments, disciplines, corrections, etc., may know that even though it be necessary that we should receive chastisements we are still separate and distinct from the world, and nothing that we could do would put us back again under the condemnation that is upon the world. We can not get back again under Adamic condemnation and sentence. So far as we are concerned this is settled and finished once for all.

With us the instructions of the Lord must either result in our instruction in righteousness, bring us nearer to him and develop in us the character likeness which he would approve, or else it must land us in the Second Death. The latter condition would be still worse than that of the world, because the world is yet to have a share and benefit and opportunity and blessing as the result of Christ's redemptive work; but if any of the Church shall fail to be influenced by the Lord's corrections and chastisements, it will mean for such the end of all hope, oblivion—because they will have enjoyed all of their share of the redemptive sacrifice. There will remain for them

no more sacrifice for sin; they have misused the blood-bought opportunities presented to them by the grace of God.

IF WE WOULD JUDGE OURSELVES

The apostle points out to the class he is addressing, the Church, the awakened ones who have passed from death unto life, who are no longer of the world or under the world's condemnation, an alternative. They are favored of the Lord in having their judgment or trial, experiences, encouragements, rebukes and chastisements toward righteousness in advance of the world; and now, if they will note the privilege, it is largely with themselves to determine how quickly they will learn the lesson of full obedience to the divine requirements. The apostle pointed out how we may become adept pupils, who will need the less of the Lord's chastisements and corrections. He points out how we can learn our lessons more quickly, and with the greater joy and with the realization of pleasing our heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus. This the apostle calls 'judging ourselves.'

The word here rendered judge is "diakrino," and signifies to search ourselves thoroughly, to prove ourselves, and carries with it the thought of correcting ourselves. When we bear in mind that the Lord's people during this gospel age are being judged not according to the flesh but according to the spirit, according to the intention, according to the desire of their hearts, we see that this matter of judging ourselves means not merely a judging of the flesh but a special judging or scrutinizing of the thoughts and intents, the motives and desires of our own hearts. Of course this will include the correction of our flesh in so far as is possible. The apostle assures us that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and so we may correspondingly conclude that the activities of life are largely governed by the attitude of our hearts.

Hence the importance of criticizing or judging our hearts, the necessity of purging from them everything rebellious and sinful, that we may be of the class mentioned by our Lord, saying: "Blessed are the pure in heart"—the pure in intention, the pure in effort, in desire—they shall see God. Not only shall they see God in the future, when they shall have experienced the resurrection change and be like the Lord Jesus and see him as he is and share his glory, but they shall see God in the present life with the eye of faith, after the manner suggested

2H164

by the words of the poet:

“Sun of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when thou art near.

O! may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes.''

OUR JUDGMENT OF OTHERS

The majority of people, saints as well as sinners, seem to find it very much easier to judge others than to judge themselves. They know how to critically examine the words and conducts of others; they think they know how much blame should attach to imperfections of thoughts and words and deeds of others, but generally there is a blindness toward the weaknesses and imperfections of self. Our Lord points this out in one of his discourses, suggesting that a man with a beam in his own eye is very apt to offer suggestions respecting the removal of a mote or speck from the eye of another, and using this as an illustration of the fault-finding disposition common in the world.

The divine instruction to the Lord's people is, not that we should be wholly blind to the weaknesses and failures of others so as to be imposed upon by them or to foster evil, but we are continually exhorted in the Scriptures to be generous-minded and disposed to take a charitable view of the weaknesses and frailties of others, and to hope that their misdeeds were not so much the result of evil intention as of temptation and weakness. Everywhere, throughout the New Testament especially, this attitude of mind is encouraged. Our Lord indeed assures us that unless we learn to look kindly and mercifully upon others we must expect no mercy ourselves at his hands; he assures us that this is the condition upon which we may be the children of our Father in heaven, who is kind to the unthankful. He declares that if we forgive not men their trespasses neither will our heavenly Father forgive our trespasses, and with what measure we mete out punishments or threats or condemnations upon others, we may know that we will be in a condition to deserve and receive, for a time at least, similar chastisements without mercy.

Recognizing this to be the divine teaching on this subject, and the teachings of our Lord and the apostles, what manner of persons ought we to be; how kind and merciful, how generous and sympathetic in dealing with the poor, blind, drowsy, deaf world, as well as in dealing with the brethren of the household of faith. Not that our mercy should blind us to what would be the best interests of others and our proper dealings with them, but that nothing should be done toward them in a spirit of strife and antagonism and vain glory, but that all of our conduct in respect to them should be actuated by love, kindness and desire for their welfare. We are to remember that although called of the Lord to be the judges of the world, we are not authorized to judge others now—we are not qualified to be judges yet. Not until we shall have our new resurrection

bodies, with their perfect powers and the perfect knowledge of that time, will we be competent for the judging of the world.

Until then we must view others leniently and give them credit for any good motives they claim to have especially if they are of the household of faith—though not to the extent that we would jeopardize our own interests or the interests of others in our acts by a confidence not warranted by our outward conduct. But however our judgments may tell us that some people must be held at arms length; our hearts should be committed to no bitter judgment against them, rather we should hope that they progress, in honesty of intention to the extent that they have light and knowledge, and should hope for them also that, under the favorable conditions which God will ultimately grant to all, they may develop characters which will be pleasing and acceptable to God and result in his bestowal upon them the gift of God, eternal life at the close of the millennial age.

HOW WE JUDGE OURSELVES

This is the pith of the lesson: it concerns everyone who has named the name of Christ, everyone who has awakened and arisen from the dead and made a consecration of their lives to the Lord, of one who is seeking to be enlightened of the Lord. The apostle assures us that we may advance more rapidly in the school of Christ by giving attention to the lessons set before us, by not waiting to have these lessons impressed upon us by divine corrections and chastisements, by not waiting for the pain of affliction, but instead by coming so fully into accord with the divine will that we will be watching our own characters, conduct, etc., scrutinizingly and correctively, seeking that the words of our mouths and meditations of our hearts and so far as possible, all the conduct of our life may be such as would have the divine approval. Nevertheless, with the best of intentions, as all Christians know it is not possible for us to walk in the narrow way without making mistakes; without errors of word and thought and deed. The apostle's suggestion is that we scrutinize our conduct and words and thoughts carefully, with a view to finding any that would be contrary to the mind of our Lord, any that he would be disposed to correct; and that we wait not for the divine correction but immediately proceed to correct ourselves along the lines of deficiency.

The first step in correction is unquestionably to go to the throne of grace in prayer. This implies faith in God's mercy; faith also that he has opened the door,

2H165

the way, by which we may avail ourselves of that mercy; faith in the value of the precious blood of Christ, which

not only effected for us a cancellation of our old sins or Adamic condemnation, but which also is effective for the cleansing of all the blemishes which our hearts through weakness of the flesh inherited from Adam. The apostle, speaking of such, declares that they have boldness (courage) to approach the throne of the heavenly grace that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. The request for mercy implies, first, the realization of weakness and of failure in our endeavors to walk in the ways which our hearts desire—the ways which we realize to be of the Lord's appointment.

It implies, secondly, that we have confidence in the redemptive work, and that we remember the inspired words, "He is just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) We find grace to help for every time of need; no matter what has been the difficulty, we will not only realize the divine forgiveness in connection therewith, but we will grow stronger by reason of asking this forgiveness and of exercising our wills to fortify them against a repetition of the weakness or fault which has sent us to the Lord to ask forgiveness.

SELF-IMPOSED DISCIPLINE

Another step in connection with this judging of ourselves is the imposition of restrictions and sometimes of penalties. This, however should not be considered in the nature of atonement for sin. Such a suggestion would be repugnant to the entire plan of God as set forth in the Scriptures. There is only one who can make atonement to God for sin—Jesus Christ, the righteous. We who are of the sinner race can neither atone for the sins of each other nor for our own, because the penalty of sin is death, and the payment of our own penalty would imply our annihilation. It was for this reason that God provided the great atonement once for all, and each must accept his share in this same sacrifice as a gift from God through Jesus Christ our Lord—"By grace you are saved." To attempt to make reparation to God for our transgressions would therefore improperly signify a belief that we are capable of offering for our own sins and that we disregarded the finished work of Christ. Our only course, then, is to go offer a supplication for the forgiveness in the name and merit of the Redeemer, our Lord Jesus.

The sense in which we may correct and judge and discipline ourselves is a different one. After having received divine forgiveness we can properly manifest our disapproval of sin and our penitence of heart and our thankfulness to the Lord by putting restrictions upon ourselves, upon the flesh, along the lines of the disobedience, with a view to strengthening character in those particulars, with a view to being more

guarded when next a temptation shall come to us along that line, with a view to impressing upon our flesh the lesson which the new mind desires it to learn. As an illustration a story is told of a wealthy man, who, when driving, passed a poor man whom he recognized as a proper object of charity. He concluded to give him a quarter, and then the thought came, why will not a nickel do as well? His better judgment realized that this was an assault of selfishness upon his new self. He resented the matter, and by way of penalizing himself he determined to give the poor man a dollar.

In every avenue of life we may see opportunities for judging ourselves, and the apostle's assurance is that these will be pleasing to the heavenly Father: that if he sees us thus intent upon the establishment of righteousness in all the interests of life, he will approve such a course and bless it, and in consequence it will not be necessary for him to send special chastisements or punishments for such errors. Not that we can hope that any man will or even could live so exactly as to merit the divine approval in all things at all times and never to need chastisings of the Father, but that as loyal children we should deplore it if we needed these chastenings frequently, or especially if we should need to have them repeated because of a repetition of the same error. We should deplore it because this would seem to show inattention on our part if pupils in the school of Christ, disloyalty on our part as sons of God. Nevertheless, we are glad of the apostle's assurance that if we should become overcharged or careless or indifferent; we would not be permitted to lose the Lord's spirit utterly without first receiving chastenings to reawaken us and draw our attention to our shortcomings and our need to lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, that we might run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, until he shall become its finisher.

Brethren, let us judge ourselves that we may not be judged of the Lord, for if we need chastisement he will not spare the rod, because he loves us and because he has separated us from the world to himself, and is disciplining us for the glorious things which he has in reservation for all them who love him, called, chosen, faithful.

2H166

The National Labor Tribune, April 2, 190.5

THE WORLD'S HEART-CRAVINGS

and what will satisfy them

Pastor C. T. Russell spoke at Bible House chapel, Allegheny, Sunday at 3 p.m., taking for his text a part of our Lord's last recorded general prayer, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." John 17:17

Although the Scriptures teach that our race six thousand years ago, in its representative, Father Adam, by disobedience fell from fellowship with God, and that the result has been degeneracy, mental, moral, and physical, they do not teach, as many of us were taught, man's total depravity. To fall from divine favor under the curse of death, to thus lose the perfection of the divine image, is one thing, and to lose every trace of the divine image and thus to be totally depraved is a very different matter. Everyone not prejudiced by a false theory will surely admit some good traits, occasionally admirable qualities, in nearly every race under the sun. These, we hold, are elements of the original character likeness of God possessed by Father Adam and not obliterated by the six thousand years of degrading experiences resulting from the fall and from alienation from God.

The apostle calls this to our attention when, speaking of certain heathen, he declared that they were "feeling after God, if haply they might find him." The implication is that even in the fallen and depraved condition of the heart there is a dissatisfaction, a lack of ease, a restless feeling, a longing desire to be something better than we are, to have the nobler elements of our being in close touch with our Creator and to render to him the obedience of righteousness which to some extent is instinctively recognized as his due. But, as the apostle intimates, there is a difficulty, a blindness; they can not see the Lord with the eyes of understanding, they can not hear distinctly his voice—hence their feeling after him.

Wherever such an inclination is found, wherever there is a hungering and thirsting after righteousness and feeling after God and desire for relationship to and fellowship with Him, there we may be sure is a heart of good soil which some day will produce good fruitage. All that such hearts lack is the plowing and harrowing, the sowing of the proper seed, the proper showers of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, to bring forth much fruit. And these blessings to the world in general are promised at the second coming of Christ, as the apostle declares, "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:19-21

MANY PARTIALLY ENLIGHTENED

The Lord through the prophet differentiates between darkness and gross darkness, and calls the condition of the heathen gross darkness and the condition of the remainder of the world darkness. He says, "Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen." How thankful we should be who live in civilized lands that we are freed from the gross darkness and gross superstition of heathendom, but none who are right minded are satisfied with present conditions. Though glad that we are free from the gross darkness we are still dissatisfied and desire the light. More light! And the Lord has more light for us in proportion to our readiness to receive it upon his conditions—through faith in his Son, faith in his plan centered in that Son's death and resurrection.

Looking over Christendom, so called, we find that a belief in a God is general and a belief in Jesus Christ as his Son is general. The life and works of Jesus have, by their manifestations of love and mercy, helped to clear from the darkened imaginations of mankind much of their latent fear and dread of the Almighty—have helped to manifest the true God in his true character to many—and yet how few have any proper knowledge of the true God. The majority of Christendom have before their mind's eye a God that is proud, arrogant, severe, unsympathetic, and dreadful because of his Almighty power. They know not and therefore can not worship in spirit and in truth the true God, the very essence of whose character is love. We do not say that the God of love is without other characteristics—wisdom, justice, power—but we do hold that according to the Scriptures all of these divine qualities are co-ordinate and co-operative, in full harmony with each other, so that while justice is the foundation of the divine throne, love is the crown of the divine character, and wisdom and power co-operate in carrying forward what love has designed and justice has approved.

Only a few in darkened heathendom and fewer in less darkened Christendom, are feeling after God with earnestness, with zeal, with a determination to do all they can to have fellowship with him, walking in his

2H167

ways. Their feeling after the Lord is rather of a stealthy kind, one element of their being drawing them closer to him while other elements draw them away from him, assuring them that to find the Lord would be to find curtailments of sinful pleasures and unrighteous ambitions. Hence there is in nearly every human heart this double sentiment, one toward the Lord and the other away from him. The latter usually predominates in its influence over the life—in such a degree, at least, as to

hinder the great mass from an earnest quest for fellowship divine.

KNOWING GOD MEANS LIFE ETERNAL

Our Lord in one of his prayers declared that to know the Lord signifies that one has passed from death unto life, is in relationship with the Father and has eternal life. (John 17:3) From this we may see that comparatively few even in Christian lands have really passed from death unto life, have really become children of God, who may now consider God as their heavenly Father and love and trust him accordingly. And this agrees with the Scriptural declaration that the whole number of the Lord's faithful in this present Gospel age is a "little flock"—composed of not many great, not many wise, not many mighty, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this earth, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom.

But how comes it that, with every element of their natures crying out for fellowship with God as the only thing that will satisfy their heart longings, the majority of mankind do not come to the Lord? We answer that the difficulty lies in the attractions of this world. Notwithstanding the misery, the suffering, the sorrow, and the fact that present things are recognized as transitory, fleeting, they have an attraction for the human heart that is stronger than the attraction which the Lord presents. This is so for two reasons:

(1) What the Lord presents is all faith, all of mentality, not of sight, not of physical experience. On the contrary, all the world presents is all actual, all tangible, and hence appeals more strongly.

(2) Sin has taken such a hold upon human nature, has so bent and warped and twisted every passion and desire, and is so entrenched, that the higher elements of human nature are powerless as respects the control of life. Indeed until the heart comes into relationship to the Lord and obtains from him new hopes, ambitions, etc., it sees nothing else of comfort and pleasure in life than the gratification of the earthly ambitions and pleasures, even though it recognizes that their gratification is usually associated with a violation of the divine law—sin. We can not wonder if under these conditions comparatively few become wholly the Lord's, presenting to him their wills, their all in all.

THE HOPE FOR THESE

While recognizing every good trait displayed by the world, heathendom as well as Christendom, while giving all credit of having traces of the original divine likeness still unobliterated, we can not concede that even the mass of Christendom have secured such a relationship to

Christ under the terms of the Gospel as would signify their salvation. Actually the masses of Christendom are not better prepared at heart than the masses of heathendom, they merely have a little more light, and have this because they were born under more favorable conditions. Their devotion to righteousness probably on the whole is little more than that of the masses of heathendom today who do not come up to the divine standards as set forth in the Gospel.

Although they have what might be termed a faith respecting Jesus and his faith, a faith that tentatively admits that probably Jesus lived and died, that probably he was a great teacher, that probably his teachings have been a blessing to the world, and that probably any future salvation is somehow or other associated with him. But that is not the faith nor the obedience which the Scriptures require—that is rather the degree of faith which the devils have, as the Bible again declares, “Devils also believe and tremble.”

The number is small of those who through faith and obedience have accepted the Lord, his mercies, his promises and his instructions. These alone have the son in the sense that our Lord declared, “He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life.” These alone are seeking to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit in their daily course of life. These alone have set their affections on things above and not on the things of the earth. These alone have the spirit of adoption, and consequently these alone can in sincerity and intelligently address the Almighty as their Father and realize themselves to be obedient children, not fashioning themselves according to their former lusts and desires of the flesh, but in accordance with the divine will as expressed in the divine Word.

If, then, the number receiving Christ is so small, and if the Spirit of the world and power of wrong and sin are so strong with the majority, what hope is there for their salvation ever? We answer that the hope lies in the great promise of God’s Word, that after the election of the Church class under present unfavorable conditions—which attract only those who can walk by faith and not by sight—a reign of righteousness will be introduced into the world by the Father through the Son and the elect Church glorified as spirit beings. These, called the Kingdom of God, will restrain the present powers of evil, scatter the darkness of Christendom and the gross darkness of heathendom, and cause the Sun

2H168

of Righteousness to shine over all the earth with healing and restitution in his beams. Social conditions will then be totally changed, and the organs of ambition and

avarice natural to mankind will be appealed to and operated only in connection with the proper objects and in a proper manner.

The true light will then shine and dispel the fear which now hinders so many from coming to the Lord. Every sin will then receive a prompt rebuke and chastisement, and every effort for righteousness will be blessed and rewarded. Under those favorable conditions may we not reasonably hope that all who have any craving after God and righteousness will be delivered both from the powers of darkness and of sin which now restrain, and be enabled to see the Lord with the eyes of their understanding, to hear and obey him with their hearts, and to thus come into fellowship with the Lord and to really know him who to know is life eternal? Is it any wonder that our Father instructed us to pray, “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven?” Is it any wonder that all the apostles and prophets looked down to the second coming of Christ as the grand day of earthly release from the thralldom of sin and death?

ADVANTAGES OF THE NARROW WAY

Few have sufficient trust of heart in the Lord to appreciate the teachings of his Word respecting the advantage of the narrow way which Jesus trod, and in which he has invited all that would be his disciples and associates with him in the Kingdom to follow him. And even those who have some ear to hear and whose eyes of understanding have to some degree been opened are hindered by the great Adversary, and scared off, as it were, from a proper investigation. Ignorance, fear, superstition, are the lashes of the whip by which he drives those whom he would into the slavery of sin and death. He thus also deters some who have really found the Lord and pledged themselves to be his disciples—he hinders these from making progress in the knowledge and love of God. He has succeeded in weaving into every creed of Christendom a sufficient amount of error to make it a bondage and restraint, hindering further growth in grace and knowledge. It, therefore, behooves all who see the situation—who recognize that there are brethren under restraint, who need to be brought to a clearer appreciation of divine things—to bestir themselves and thus to show their love for the Lord, their love for the Truth and their love for the brethren.

They fear to cut loose from the ways of sin, from its joys and pleasures, hopes and ambitions, and to enter the narrow way lest the latter should be devoid of pleasures and comforts and joys. They know that grace sufficient is promised to all that enter the narrow way, but their faith is not strong enough to grasp the promise and to follow it. Let us bestir ourselves to make known to others the joys of the Lord—the joys of the

narrow way. Let us realize this day by day as we make progress in the footsteps of Jesus; let us realize his presence with us, the joys of his forgiving love, the comfort and strength we have through him as our Counsellor and Guide. Let us have the realization that he who is for us is far stronger than all that be against us, that the promise for the present life is that all things shall be overruled for our good; and let us appropriate to ourselves the exceeding great and precious promises that pertain to the everlasting future of glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom and the privilege of association with him in the great uplift that is to come to the world in general.

As we learn to appreciate these things we make more rapid progress, growing in grace, growing in knowledge and growing in love toward the Lord and the brethren, toward the Truth, toward our friends and neighbors—yea, toward the world and even toward our enemies. Let us learn to tell the story of our blessing so wisely and so well that all of our friends and our neighbors who have proper eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to appreciate will receive a blessing through our daily ministries—that we may be indeed living epistles of the Gospel, known and read by all with whom we have contact.

TRUTH ALONE SANCTIFIES

Our belief in the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer is laid down in the Scriptures as the first step toward God, but not less explicitly do they teach that the second step is a full sanctification of the heart—a full setting apart of our wills to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. All who have attempted to walk in this way have found it a difficult one at first, and wise have been those who, finding the difficulties, have appealed to the Lord in prayer and who have hearkened to his Word, the Scriptures, for his answer. The majority have not done this, but have been inclined to lean rather to their own understanding, and, while not disloyal at heart to the Lord, they have been ruled rather by their own wisdom. Hence the majority of those who have entered the narrow way have made little progress, have remained very close to the entrance, and have required the Lord's hand of chastisement and discipline to move them along. The better way, the way set forth in the Scriptures, the way mentioned in our text, is the sanctification of the heart and the life produced by the Truth.

The general endeavor seems to have been to produce sanctification by fear, superstition, etc., but this is a failure. It may produce what men call sanctification,

2H169

but not what the Lord desires or will approve and reward with the Kingdom blessing. Sanctification does not mean

perfection in every thought, word and act of life—it does not mean the pharisaical and hypocritical pretensions to such perfection. It does mean perfection of intention—so far as possible the bringing of our thoughts and words and deeds into accord with that perfect intention; realizing the while that we are attempting the impossible because of the imperfection of the flesh, but that God's arrangement with the sanctified in Christ Jesus is that, because of the right intention and endeavor, all the results shall be reckoned as though they were fully up to the intentions. How gracious a provision this is! How well adapted to the various degrees of imperfection amongst the Lord's sanctified "little flock!"

In our text the Lord indicates the proper, yea, the only means of attaining the sanctification which is pleasing to him—"Sanctify them through thy Truth; thy Word is Truth." Whoever, therefore, has the desire of heart to approach the Lord step by step, and to attain a full sanctification or setting apart of himself to do the Lord's will in every particular, should give earnest heed to the Truth, should realize that he will reach his goal only by conforming to the Truth. There are various truths on various subjects, and while a love of the truth in general is commendable and implies an honesty of heart and purpose and is of great assistance in attaining the approved sanctification, nevertheless there is just one particular line of truth which has in it the sanctifying power.

Truth on the subject of mathematics or geology or astronomy will not sanctify. One of the best evidences on this line is the fact that there are many men, able scholars in these various sciences, who, instead of being led nearer to the Lord and into a fuller and fuller consecration to him, as we might expect, have as a matter of fact gone further and further from the Lord as they have progressed in these various sciences. When we think on the words of the Psalmist, "Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge, and there is no place where their voice is not heard," we might suppose that astronomers, studying the mighty works of God, delving into that great science or field of truth would be sanctified by their experiences; but we find on the contrary, nearly all of them evolutionists, and many of them out-and-out professed infidels. It is the heart which seeks first the Lord and his righteousness, fellowship and oneness with him, that is prepared to appreciate the divine handiwork in nature and to ascribe it to its proper source. Our Lord settled the matter as to what truth would sanctify, saying:

“THY WORD IS TRUTH”

Well did the prophet write, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The reverence of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the decisions of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.” Psa. 19:7-9

The mistake of some people is to suppose that to have a Bible in their possession is to have the Truth in their possession. A great mistake! The Bible is not the Truth; it is merely the expression of the Truth. Whoever would have the Truth must get it through the Word directly or indirectly, but the Truth is the spirit of the Word—its meaning, its intention, its real essence. In proportion as any Christian has attained to a knowledge of the Truth, in that same proportion he has attained the power which, rightly used, would produce sanctification in his heart and life. In proportion to his lack of the Truth must be his lack of the necessary power of God provided for his sanctification. If all Christians could realize this what a searching of the Scriptures there would be! What an endeavor to get at their real spiritual essence or meaning on the part of those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, who are seeking to be more and more at one with God!

This matter of the importance of sanctification and the necessity for the Truth as the sanctifying power is generally overlooked by Christian people, with the result that few are sanctified and few have much knowledge of the Word, even amongst those who are sincere Christians and esteemed to be advanced Christians. The majority know little if anything more than mere justification—the first step in the Christian way. This is one of the reasons why revival movements run a rapid course and leave little fruitage that could be found a year later. Indeed, in many instances those brought to a measure of repentance for sin and of acceptance of the Lord and then fall away into sin are in a worse condition, more difficult to be reached by the Truth than if they had not had their conversion experience. Our Lord referred to people of this kind at his first advent, when he said to some, “Ye compass sea and land to make a proselyte—a convert to Judaism—and when he is made he is two-fold more a child of destruction than he was before.” Matt. 23:15

LET US HAVE TRUE CONVERSIONS

Let us have all the conversions possible, hut let us have them along the right lines that will do people

2H170

good, permanent good, everlasting good. Let us not only start people in the way of righteousness but let us give them, as the Lord directed, first the milk of the Word, and afterwards its strong meat of doctrines and of righteousness, which will then develop them as children of God, fruit-bearers, followers of the Lamb. The usual course is that as soon as anyone has confessed his obedience to him, to say to such an one, "Now you are saved; you are all right; go out now and convert others." We believe, of course, that activity in Christian service is amongst the best methods of Christian development; but to thrust out a new born babe in Christ without instruction, without being fed upon the milk of the Word, without growing thereby to the use of the strong meat of its doctrines and appreciation of the divine plan, manifests a total misunderstanding of the object and purpose of this Gospel age. Such a mistake is a result of the error that for so long has choked everything good in Christian thought and endeavor, namely, the doctrine of eternal torment.

The appeal to the new convert is on a wrong basis, a false basis, which misrepresents the divine character in toto, and when he accepts of Christ he is instructed that now it is his duty to pull others out of eternal torment. Very soon, when the excitement passes away, reason asserts itself, and the man or woman, in spite of all the teachings he has received all his life, can not really believe in an eternity of torture, nor that he escaped such a penalty, nor that others are in danger of it; and in proportion as he is sincere, in the same proportion he will desist in his efforts to mislead others by preaching any such false statement of the Gospel. What, then, shall he do? On inquiring and finding nothing else to do he ceases all such activities and becomes starved, because there is no proper arrangement for his sustenance through the milk and meat of the Word. Very soon he is drawn into the activities of business or the home or pleasure or what not, and religion, while still respected, has no particular power in such a heart. The conversion never reached the sanctification stage, and was therefore a failure as respects the divine call of this Gospel age.

AID FOR BABES IN CHRIST

The assistance which should be rendered to the new converts who have accepted Christ as their Redeemer, and are trusting in him for forgiveness of sins and seeking to walk contrary to sin in the paths of righteousness, is to bring to them the word of God's grace, instructing them why and how they are no longer sinners but accepted in the Beloved One, in what sense their sins were laid on Jesus, and his robe of righteousness imputed to them as a covering for their weakness and imperfections, past, present, and to come. They should be shown clearly and distinctly how and in what sense Christ was

a ransom for sinners, how and in what sense he paid the penalty for our sins, and how God is willing to accept all who are trusting to him for forgiveness and who consecrate their lives fully to him.

By that time the willing and obedient would be ready to inquire, What shall we do that we may work the works of God? How can we serve our Lord and Savior? In what manner can we use the remainder of our lives in his service and to his praise? Then will come the opportunity of answering these questions in the words of the apostle, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service." Those thus instructed, who are of appreciating hearts, will answer in the words of the apostle, "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge ... that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves but unto him who has died for us." 2 Cor. 5:14

Those who during the gospel age have thus consecrated themselves wholly to the Lord, have been begotten of the Holy Spirit as "New Creatures."

Henceforth they are reckoned as embryo spirit beings, whose development must progress throughout the remainder of life under the care and discipline and assistances of the Lord, to be perfected in the first resurrection. Their consecration, then, it will be seen, is not the end of the matter either, but merely the taking of the second step, the raising to the proper level on which they may progress along the narrow way, enduring hardness as good soldiers, fighting the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life, growing in grace and knowledge and love and becoming more and more the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus and thus of the Father himself.

Every step of this journey in this narrow way toward the heavenly city, toward the perfection of the first resurrection, requires the meat in due season from the Word of Truth and grace—requires study of the Word and growing knowledge and appreciation of the divine plan. Nor is this schooling an unpleasant one, but quite the contrary; the rich unfolding of the divine plan and Word to those thus sanctified by the Truth and being taught of God is a rich and continual feast. They have joys of the heart and mind and of communion with the Lord which the world knoweth not.

Those of you, brethren, who have not yet taken these steps, be persuaded that they are a reasonable service, and entered into in a right spirit, are a joyful service, for as the Master himself said, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." However hard or difficult they seem to others the Lord's grace supplied with them enables those who are his to triumph in all these things.

2H171

You, brethren, who have taken these steps, who have received the Truth in sanctifying power, and who are rejoicing in the Lord's favors and blessings and instructions in righteousness—who know the favor of your Lord and rejoice more and more, and tell the good tidings to others to their comfort, edification and joy and to your own strengthening and upbuilding, while you continue to pass along the narrow way to the heavenly city, see that all your efforts with others, all your endeavors to assist them, shall be along these lines in harmony with the Master's Word—seek to produce in others what you yourself have enjoyed of the sanctification which is of the Truth and which affects and influences all the affairs of life, which gives us as full joy as is possible to be ours under present conditions, and the assurance that by and by the joy shall be full and everlasting.

The National Labor Tribune, April 9, 190.5

WHAT IT COSTS TO BE A CHRISTIAN

of the Genuine Sort

Newark, O., April 9—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny addressed a large audience here in the Y.M.C.A. Auditorium at 3 p. m. Sunday, his topic being, God's Oath-Bound Covenant to Abraham and His Seed and How It Will Be Fulfilled—the Christian's share in it, the share of the Jews and the share of the world. He had an extremely attentive audience. His evening discourse was for the specially interested. He prefaced it with the remark that next Sunday evening would be the exact anniversary of the night on which our Lord was betrayed, 1872 years ago—the night, therefore, in which Jesus instituted the annual Memorial Supper, the remembrancer of his death on our behalf, which the Lord requested all of his true followers to celebrate in his memory. The discourses published in The Tribune, he believed, reached a considerable number of earnest, thinking Christians, and through this channel he had been seeking to lead the minds of these nearer and nearer to the standpoint of true discipleship, in the hope that on this memorial occasion many might celebrate the Lord's death with a fuller appreciation of its meaning and of their relationship to the Redeemer. Because the capacity of the Bible House chapel, Allegheny, would be insufficient for the large attendance usual on Memorial Sunday, Carnegie music hall had been secured for both the afternoon and evening services on that date. The afternoon topic would be Christian Baptism and its Import. He had many inquiries along this line, and,

through The Tribune, hoped to answer many who would not be able to be present personally.

The topic this evening was, What it Costs to Be a True Christian, from the text, “Whosoever it be among you that renounceth not all that he hath, he can not be my disciple.” (Luke 14:33) The discourse follows:

The bane of true Christianity is that doctrine of devils respecting the eternal torment of all who are not Christ’s disciples—of all who, according to our text, renounce not all that they have to follow the Lord. This unholy, unscriptural teaching has not only cost pain, sorrow, perplexity and confusion to the Lord’s true people, but it has injured the world as well. It has been the spur and lash which the Adversary has used in connection with exciting revivals to the injury of many; more are in insane asylums on account of this false doctrine than is generally supposed. Others, of stronger minds, recover from the excitement only to fall into a calloused and hardened condition, where they are more difficult than ever to reach along the proper Scriptural lines, more difficult than ever to convert truly to the Lord and to his cause.

MORALITY NOT CHRISTIANITY

This lash of superstitious fear the Adversary used to build up the various sectarian systems to their present proportions. Now these systems are great and popular in the world. They stand chiefly for good morals, which the whole world recognized as proper and right, irrespective of religious profession. We are to distinguish between Christianity and morality. Many noble men and women, total unbelievers according to their own professions, have been moralists, some of them even priding themselves on this point.

Our Lord was not a revivalist according to the ordinary acceptance of that term. He never attempted to work his hearers into a spasmodic enthusiasm; he never carried the lash over them to drive them through fear to the Mercy Seat. On the contrary, he took a course which positively repelled those who were not in a right attitude of heart to receive his message, as we read, “He

2H172

spoke unto them in parables and dark sayings,” to the intent that only those who were of earnest heart would seek to know the true and deeper meaning of his words, and that these alone should be instructed thereby. He continually held out before those to whom he preached the extreme difficulties associated with discipleship. He told about the narrow way and the few who would find it, and that whosoever took not up his cross to follow after him could not be his disciples.

Our text is another illustration of this principle of fending off, hindering those who might think lightly of the responsibilities of discipleship. He would have them understand that to do the will of God under present conditions, during this present gospel age, would signify the forsaking of all else—the abandonment of earthly aims and hopes and ambitions, and the substituting for these of heavenly hopes and ambitions, which would transform their minds by renewing them, and would change them in character likeness from glory to glory, preparing them for a share in the first resurrection, a change to “glory, honor and immortality” of the “divine nature.” Rom. 2:7; 2 Peter 1:4

OUR LORD'S ILLUSTRATIONS

To make the matter particularly plain—that none might misunderstand him to be trying to inveigle any into a consecration that was not really wholly meant; to hinder any from professing discipleship who did not fully appreciate what it signified, our Lord gave two illustrations in the verses preceding our text. In verse 28 he points out that any man intending to build a tower would, if exercised by a sane mind, sit down and calculate its cost, whether or not he could afford to build it—whether or not it would pay. Undoubtedly the Lord's method of preaching the gospel was the correct one, and those who follow any other method or standard are in error, no matter how conscientiously they may believe that they do God's service. Let us note the difference: Revivalists in general attempt excitement, and sometimes evidently have the Adversary's assistance in producing hypnotic results, which attracts tares and not merely the wheat class, the regenerate.

Many evangelists without divine power and the gifts of miracles possessed by our Lord and the apostles, count far more converts in a season than our Lord and his twelve apostles, and the seventy also, gathered during the three and a half years of our Lord's ministry—the total number being stated as 500 brethren. But the Lord gathered no tares—only wheat; the message which he preached was not attractive to the tares; he took special pains to make it unattractive. He said, “No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him,” and he laid down the terms of discipleship so plainly that those who were not fully consecrated, not Israelites indeed, turned away and walked no more with him.

I seek to walk in the Master's footsteps, and to make known the same message, and expect that it will specially appeal only to the “very elect,” the “Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile.” But I am not seeking to build up a sect or party. I recognize the Church of Christ as one and not many. I recognize that the Lord gave no commission to me nor to anyone else to establish sects and parties and churches—that he established the one

Church of the Living God, whose names are written in heaven. It is not my effort, therefore, to build up a glorious earthly system, nor to draw the worldly by preaching such things as would be attractive to the world. It is my commission to preach Christ, to hold him up, to point out to the Israelites indeed of all denominations that their earthly associations will not avail them; that the only thing which constitutes membership in the Church of Christ is membership in the body of Christ, union with Christ, the Head; and that this union cannot be effected through human channels, but must be effected, if at all, by personal faith in the Redeemer and a personal consecration to him.

WHAT IT MEANS TO “FORSAKE ALL”

Our text speaks of forsaking all to be the Lord’s disciples. This does not mean merely to forsake all forms of sin. No one has a right to commit sin, whether he be Christ’s disciple or Plato’s disciple or anybody’s disciple. True forsaking of sin and moral living are connected with all decency of life and connected with discipleship to Christ, but the abandonment of sin is not even mentioned by our Lord when speaking to his disciples. It is taken for granted, as we shall seek to show.

To get the picture before our minds the Scriptures speak of Satan as being the prince of darkness and of the world as lying in darkness. Sin of every form is related to this period of darkness, this night time, and we are bid to hope for the glorious epoch to come, in which sin shall be utterly banished from the world; and instead of Satan being the prince of this world, as the Scriptures teach that he now is, Jesus shall be the King of Glory, the Light of the World, Immanuel. We are distinctly informed that in the divine plan the darkness is permitted for a season, and that the times and seasons are in God’s own power; and that when the time shall come for the grand transformation and the establishment of the reign of righteousness under the whole heavens, then God’s will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. We are taught to pray in harmony with these hopes set before us in the gospel.

More than this, the Scriptures distinctly teach that our Lord is now calling during this time of darkness

2H173

and night for those who are out of sympathy with sin and selfishness and fraud and licentiousness, who are out of accord with these works of darkness which now prevail in civilized as well as in uncivilized quarters. The Lord is calling upon these to take their stand for righteousness, for truth, for purity, for holiness, for

godliness, for the principles of love and righteousness. The Scriptures tell us that few have the ear to hear the Lord's message—few are so out of accord with sin and shame and ungodliness as to desire to escape from these and to come into full sympathy and accord with the Prince of Light at this present time. By and by, when all the evil conditions will be under restraint, no doubt there will be many who will prefer righteousness to sin but at the present time to hear the voice of righteousness and to obey it means the opposition of the flesh, the world and the Adversary, and few care to hear that voice and to inquire further as to the divine will.

FINDING THE ELECT

The Lord takes this method of finding the peculiar people, the very elect, mentioned throughout the Scriptures. He is seeking for those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, and now—in a time when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen—is the time best adapted for finding those who the Scriptures denominate the children of the light—that is, those who have a special love for righteousness, purity, truth, etc. These the Lord is calling, these he is drawing, these he is encouraging, these he is assisting, these he is leading from glory to glory because they love him, because they have enlisted under his banner even in this night time, preferring to stand with the Lord on the side of right and truth and holiness and purity at the cost of the sacrifice of earthly things, earthly pleasures, earthly aims and earthly hopes.

These the Scriptures denominate the Lord's 'jewels,' whom he will gather at his second coming. Again, they tell us that these shall constitute the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the very elect, who shall be with him and share his kingdom and his glory and be associated with him in the conferring of the divine blessings of the millennial age upon the world in general. These, with their Lord, shall constitute that Sun of Righteousness which shall arise with healing in its beams, to scatter all the night and darkness and sin and misery and trouble and to bring in life eternal to as many as will receive it under the favorable conditions of that time. Matt. 13:45

What a manifestation of divine wisdom we have in the fact that the Church is sought during this period of darkness, of sin, before the clouds roll away, before the great Adversary, Satan, is bound. Now we see from this standpoint two particular things not previously seen, and we see their relationship to each other: (1) we see why the Lord did not emphasize the forsaking of sin, and we see (2) why he did emphasize the forsaking of all and the taking up of the cross.

Our Lord was calling only for the class that would be so in accord with himself and his mission, so in accord with

the principles for which he stood, so in harmony with the light as children of the light, that they would be willing to forsake all—even life itself, as declared in the preceding verse. Manifestly, anyone who would renounce all to be associated with Christ in his work of opposing and putting down sin would not require to be exhorted to oppose sin in his own heart. Sin would have no place in such a heart, but, as the apostle declared, “Those things which once I loved, now I hate.” The heart that loves sin, that is full of pride and envy and malice, strife, backbiting, slander, covetousness, evil desires, is a heart that has not been transformed, has not been renewed, but is still in the gall of bitterness, still belongs to the prince of darkness. The heart that has renounced all the works of the flesh and the devil, all the things of darkness, is the heart of the true disciple of Christ.

Note that the apostle calls attention to this matter, saying, “How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?” Describing the condition of some of the children of darkness he says, “Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Cor. 6:9-10) This description does not merely cover the gross violations of righteousness; the words effeminate, covetous, revilers, extortioners, take in a vast multitude of proceedings more or less countenanced by the world, more or less the practice of all except the sanctified, the washed, but the latter can have no sympathy with these things because they are the children of the light. They love the light, the purity, the truth, the love which is of God, and they hate the darkness and sin and selfishness and meanness and violence which is of the Adversary.

“THIS TREASURE IN AN EARTHEN VESSEL”

A point here needs to be guarded along lines set forth in the Bible: We are not to judge others nor even to judge ourselves wholly by the possibilities of the flesh. We are to remember that having been begotten again by the new mind, by the Holy Spirit old things have passed away and all things have become new to our minds, to our hearts, to our wills, to our intentions. But

2H174

we are also to remember that the old body has not passed away and that it will not pass away until death. We are to remember that the new mind, the new heart, has no other channel or vehicle of thought or action than this mortal body once the servant of sin. We are to remember that now it is the servant of the new nature and thus the

servant of the Lord. But we are not to trust it too far. We are to keep continual guard over it, realizing its weakness and tendency toward sin through the fall.

We are to reckon it dead indeed unto sin, and alive toward God and toward the performance of good instead of evil works. But we are not to trust it for a moment; as the apostle declares, “We are to have no confidence in the flesh.” We are to criticize every suggestion of the flesh and to anticipate that the majority of them are selfish and tending toward sin. We are not to seek to gratify the flesh and thereby to pamper it, knowing that it would only grow the stronger and be more difficult for us as New Creatures to manage in the future. On the contrary, as the apostle declares, we are to wage warfare against every inclination of the flesh that is on critical examination found to be in opposition to the new mind to which we are committed as children of the light.

Nor are we left to this battle entirely of ourselves. It is the Lord who has declared, “My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in your weakness.” It is the Lord’s promise that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but with the temptation will provide a way of escape. It is for us as New Creatures to be on our guard against the wiles of the Adversary, the spirit of the world and the weaknesses of our own flesh, lest these in any degree captivate us or hinder us from waging a good warfare against sin in its every form and in favor of the Lord and truth and righteousness in general.

In one of the illustrations preceding our text, the Lord says that before consecrating ourselves to him to attempt to walk in the narrow way, before renouncing all to be his disciples, we should sit down and count the cost. One of his illustrations is that of a king with a small army going forth to battle against a king with a greater army. How necessary it would be to count the cost, if defeat could be avoided. So with us; it is well that we count the cost and see our own weakness and our own littleness and our own inability to cope with and to vanquish the world and the Adversary and our own imperfect flesh. Not until we do see this will we be properly ready to become the Lord’s followers, to have him on our side as opponents to the great Adversary and the various powers of darkness of this present time. If we once learn this lesson properly and make our alliance with the Lord, with the full realization of his words, “Without me ye can do nothing,” then our course will be the right one and success will be ours through our Lord in the end. We through him shall gain the victory, win the crown and the great prize that is promised to those who love him—the privilege of being associated in the great work of “restoring all things” during the millennium. Acts 3:19-21

THE IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

Make straight paths for your feet, the apostle admonishes. He has arranged your affairs so that you will not be stumbled in the narrow way. Put away the things that would remind you of the pleasures of sin, that would tend to preserve the pride and fond desires of the flesh. Become what your worldly friends would consider an extremist, to the extent that you will copy the Lord and the apostles and their instructions. Cultivate humility instead of pride, meekness instead of boastfulness, generosity instead of selfishness, loving-kindness instead of hypocrisy. Seek the companionship of the good, the pure, the consecrated and especially the companionship of the Lord himself. Speak to him frequently in prayer and seek for his answer in the inspired Scriptures. Be faithful in the little things of life. Realize that you can not, as a New Creature, measure yourself by the standards of the world, but have a higher standard according to which you will always be imperfect until your change shall come in the First Resurrection.

If while pursuing this course you fall into various trials and difficulties, take them patiently, realizing that this is another evidence of God's favor toward you, an evidence that he is pruning and testing you to make you ready for his further use either in the present or in the future life. Should you even be overtaken in a fault, much as you would regret the matter, be not discouraged, but take it to the Lord in prayer, and tell him how as a New Creature you are not in sympathy with sin or any weakness, that you will strive to learn a lesson from your experience which will make you stronger for the future, and accept the gracious assurance of his Word that the robe of Christ's righteousness covers your imperfections and blemishes. Thus you may bear a song away and find each day a happy one, because it brings you a little nearer to the grand ideal standard and a little nearer to the glorious time of your change.

2H175

The National Labor Tribune, April 23, 1905

“I AM HE THAT LIVETH, AND WAS DEAD”

Youngstown, O., April 23—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., addressed a large audience at the opera house Sunday afternoon, his topic being, “To Hell and Back. Who Are There? Is There Hope for the Return of Many of Them.” The closest attention was paid, and deep and lasting impressions were probably effected. We report

the morning discourse in full from the text, "I am he that liveth, and was dead." Rev. 1:18

Throughout the civilized world every Sunday is a remembrancer of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, but today, Easter Sunday, is the generally recognized memorial of that great event, second in importance only to the most momentous event of history—the death of Jesus. But while thousands of sermons will today speak of the resurrection of Jesus, and hundreds of thousands of hearers will think of the same with a measure of interest and joy, nevertheless false doctrines from the Dark Ages still greatly becloud this subject and hinder the day from being appreciated to its full.

Grecian philosophy, especially that formulated by Plato, has gained a firm foothold throughout Christendom, permeating and corrupting the original Christian faith, and causing the teachings of God's Word, the Bible, to appear to be in opposition to reason. These errors vitiate and nullify the doctrine of the resurrection which today especially celebrates. It teaches that the dead are not dead—that in appearing to die they really become more alive than ever. If this is true of others it would also be true of Jesus, that he did not die when he appeared to die, that he was alive during the three days in which the Scriptures ascribe him as having been dead. If he were not dead, but all the while alive, where would be the propriety in celebrating his resurrection from the dead? How could he be made alive if he were not dead?

The question is for our opponents to answer; the Scriptures aver that he was dead, that he rose from the dead on the third day. Our Lord himself predicted this in advance, saying that he would be killed, but that he would rise again on the third day, and in our text he tells us, "I am he that liveth, and was dead." It is for those who claim that he was alive, conscious, more alive than ever after he died, to prove their assertions, to give some evidence that would contradict reason and the Scripture. The facts of history are that our Lord was crucified, died, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day. (1 Cor. 15:3, 4) This is what all the Apostles preached, this is what the early Church believed, this is the truth. On this truth, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, hangs the whole argument respecting our justification from original sin, our justification through faith in his blood, through faith that he really died, that he really gave his life as our redemption price. The Scriptures declare that the life of Adam and his race was forfeited, and that Christ took the place of Adam and redeemed him, dying the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. If he did not die—really die—then we are not redeemed, for in that event the price, the penalty against us, has not been paid.

NOT A DEAD SAVIOUR

The Scriptures are properly very explicit on this subject of the necessity for the death of Christ for our deliverance from the death penalty. They show that there would have been no future life for any member of the human race had it not been that Christ became our Redeemer, purchasing our lives by his own life. More than this, they explicitly tell us that even after Jesus had died, had he not risen from the dead we would have been without hope of a future life. In that event all who have died should be reckoned as having perished absolutely, completely, just as a beast perishes in death. The hope of our race lies not in a continuation of life in death, lies not in the absurd supposition that the moment of death ushers us into an increase of life, and that the dead know more in a moment than the living know in a lifetime. On the contrary, it is in accord with the teaching of Scripture that “The dead know not anything,” “There is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in sheol (the tomb) whither all go,” and from thence none return except by the power of God in the resurrection of the dead.

Not only was it necessary that our Lord Jesus should be raised from the dead—not again to fleshly conditions, fleshly nature, but to the divine nature, that he as a quickened Spirit, a lifegiving Spirit, might legally and justly confer upon humanity the blessings secured judicially through the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf. In other words, it was necessary that he should die for our redemption and necessary also that he should arise from the dead, be clothed with glory, honor, immortality and divine power, to be the active agent of Jehovah God in establishing righteousness in the world and in bringing back from the power of sin and death all the families of the earth—assisting to perfection all

2H176

who will avail themselves of his favor and seek to do his will. From this standpoint the death of Jesus and his resurrection from the dead are of equal importance, neither one being efficacious in our salvation without the other. A dead Savior could deliver no one, could assist no one, because there is no wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the tomb.

No wonder, then, that the Scriptures are explicit in setting before the Lord’s people the evidences not only that he died for our sins, but that he rose again on the third day for our justification, for our forgiveness. Hence the numerous little details of Scripture narrative bearing upon every phase of this subject, that the Lord’s people might have full confidence not only that they were redeemed but that the Redeemer now liveth, yea, also, that he is to come again in power and great glory to

establish his Millennial Kingdom and through it to bless all the families of the earth.

Note the testimonies in the Gospels of how he was seen of Mary and the other women who went to the sepulchre, and of Peter, one of his disciples, then of above five hundred brethren, and how finally to Paul he manifested himself in a vision of light above the brightness of the noonday sun. All these evidences or demonstrations of our Lord's resurrection were considered necessary to the proper establishment of our faith in the fact. The Apostle calls our attention to another demonstration on the subject, saying that our Lord, having ascended on high, appeared in the presence of the Father, and having presented on our behalf the merit of his sacrifice, the holy Spirit of Pentecost was shed forth and is an assurance to all men not only that Christ died but that he liveth again in glory, in power, the guide and protector of his Church, now being polished as his jewels, now being prepared as his Bride for fellowship with him in his Kingdom, and for co-operation with him later on in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

RAISED A "QUICKENING SPIRIT"

The attempt to harmonize the Scriptures with the Greek philosophy brings confusion. In the endeavor to straddle the difficulties—to hold that Jesus was not dead and at the same time to apply the Scriptures which speak of his resurrection from the dead—another confusing error has been fallen into, namely, the claim that the resurrection applies merely to the body, not to the soul. We answer that the very contrary of this is true according to the Scriptures. The penalty upon man was not that his body should die, but "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Likewise when our Lord paid our penalty it was not sufficient merely that a body should die, but as the Scriptures again declare, "He poured out his soul unto death," "He made his soul an offering for sin." (Isa. 53:10, 12) To this agrees the declaration of the Prophet David quoted on the day of Pentecost by St. Peter, saying, in proof of Christ's resurrection, "His soul was not left in Hades." The Apostle declares that the prophet spoke these words respecting the resurrection of Jesus. Acts 2:27, 31

Each error tends to produce another; hence we find Christian people believing that our Lord in glory still has a body of flesh, a body of humiliation. We find them expecting to see their Lord with pierced hands and feet and scar-marked forehead. They do not grasp the clear statement of the Apostle Peter that "he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened (made alive) in the spirit," that now the "Lord is that Spirit," and that "though we have known Christ after the flesh, now, henceforth, know we him so no more." 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:17; 5:16

To think of our Lord as a human being with a body of flesh in heaven is to suppose him out of harmony and out of accord with the Father and all the holy angels; whereas, on the contrary, we are told by the Scriptures that he is the express image of the Father's person, and again that "God is a spirit dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see," because spirit beings are invisible to human sight except as they shall miraculously take on such forms as human sight can discern. Looking back to the time that our Redeemer was with the Father before the world was started, being in the likeness of the Father, "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14), we view with sympathy the great stoop, the great humiliation, which he endured for our sakes when he left the glory he had with the Father and humbled himself to become a man, that he might die on our behalf, because the sins of man could only be legally met by a man holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

But if this moves us to sympathy, what should be our consternation to think that in the resurrection the Father still obliged him to retain the human form, lower than that of the angels. How unreasonable as well as unscriptural a thought. On the contrary, the Scriptures explicitly declare of his resurrection, because of his obedience even unto death, even the death of the cross, "God hath highly exalted him (in his resurrection) and given him a name (a position of authority and power and glory) above every name." As the Apostle again declares, he is now "far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named"—next to the Father, a sharer of his dignity and honor, divine nature and glory and power that men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father also.

2H177

APPEARED IN VARIOUS FORMS

It was to the intent that the apostles and all who should believe through their word, might understand that Jesus had not only risen from the dead but that he was now a spirit being, with totally different powers than those he exercised during his earthly ministry, that our Lord after his resurrection appeared to the disciples in many different forms, and under circumstances which would prove to them that he was no longer under the limitations of human nature, but now was a spirit being and exercised all the powers that angels ever exercise. For instance, he appeared to Mary as the gardener in a body of flesh and with clothing, though the flesh was not the same which Mary had known before, nor the clothing that which the soldiers who crucified him still had in their possession.

Again he appeared to the two on the way to Emmaus in a still different body or form, that of a stranger; they saw no marks in his hands or his feet, they saw nothing in the face before them that reminded them of Jesus whom they had seen only two days before. It was the spirit Jesus who was with them and who appeared in that particular form best suited for his purpose of communicating with them, that he might call their attention to the prophecies, open the eyes of their understanding to appreciate the fact that it was necessary that Messiah should die and should subsequently rise from the dead, to enter into his glory and to accomplish all the wonderful work marked out for him in the divine plan, and that all of these things were written in the Law and in the prophets, in the types and in the testimonies.

It was that they might know that he was no longer in essence a fleshly being but a quickening spirit that he appeared in their midst while the doors were shut—that he materialized before them in a body precisely like that which they had seen crucified, and possibly in clothing exactly like that which he had previously worn. He demonstrated to them that they did not see a spirit; that they merely saw a body of flesh through which he communicated with them; and to assure them of this he ate some fish and honeycomb with them, and then, having served his purpose, the body dissolved, the clothing dissolved, as we read, “He vanished out of their sight.”

No human being could so have done. Our Lord himself never did so before his resurrection—he was the man Christ Jesus, subject to the limitations of human nature, so far at least as his own flesh was concerned. But what he did in these respects angels had previously done, as the Scriptures record. For instance, in the case of Abraham, the Lord and two angels appeared to him in human form and ate and talked with him. (Gen. 18) Our Lord at that time was not flesh, had not left the glory of the spirit nature, but merely appeared in flesh. This was centuries before “he was made flesh and dwelt among us.” And after his human existence had served its purpose and he had been raised from the dead a quickening spirit, no more to become a man, but possessed of the divine nature and all of its attributes, we may be sure that he had no less power to appear as a man than he had in the days of Abraham.

THE SON OF MAN IN GLORY

The Scriptures refer to our Lord glorified as the Son of man, this being one of his many titles. As a matter of fact he was not the son of Joseph, nor of any other man directly. Through his mother Mary he was the son of Adam, the one of his race who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and thus qualified to be the Savior of father Adam and his race. He was thus the foretold seed of Abraham who should crush the

serpent's head, who should eventually gain the victory over sin and all its consequences, for the race. All this he will eventually accomplish, because he is of human nature no longer, but in divine power and glory shall reign to bless those whom he redeemed with the sacrifice of his flesh, given for the life of the world. (John 6:51) To have taken back the flesh would have been to have taken back the ransom price, to have left us as a race unredeemed. Thank God that his soul was not left in Hades, and that in its resurrection it was clothed with a spiritual body.

HIS RESURRECTION— OUR RESURRECTION

Through our Lord's death, a resurrection for every member of the human family has been provided. Death was the penalty for sin; the payment of that penalty is to bring a release from the sentence of death, an opportunity for full return to all that was lost in Adam, an opportunity that is to be world-wide and which the Apostle declares shall be testified in due time to all. (1 Tim. 2:6) The world's opportunity for sharing in a resurrection will be during the Millennial age, but the Scriptures point out to us a special resurrection or chief resurrection opened to the Church, the little flock, the faithful of the Lord's disciples, the overcomers of the world, those who shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord in his Kingdom glory. This resurrection of the Church is scripturally called "his resurrection."

That is to say, the Church is to be raised to the same nature and glory to which her Lord was raised. The Apostle points this out, saying that he was glad to

2H178

count all earthly aims and ambitions, prospects, hopes, etc., as loss and as dross that he might win Christ—that he might make his calling and election sure as a member of the glorified Church or body of Christ. Proceeding to describe this he says "that I might know him and (experience) the power of his resurrection" (Phil. 3:10) To attain a share in that resurrection to glory, honor and immortality is the highest ambition that could be entertained by any of the Lord's followers, a distinction, an honor which will be attained only by the elect, the faithful. Those who do not attain to this special resurrection, his resurrection, may, nevertheless, have a part in the general resurrection and its privileges and blessings. But we are assured that this, while grand and glorious, will not at all compare with the heavenly blessings of the first resurrection — "Blessed and holy are they who have part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests

of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:6)

The Apostle Paul gives us a very masterful explanation of this resurrection subject (1 Cor. 15). He declares the decision of God for a general resurrection, that “as by man (Adam) came death, by a man (Jesus) also came the resurrection of the dead.” He proceeds to specially portray the resurrection of the Church —the first resurrection. He explains that the Church experiences a change of nature from human to spiritual, that as earthly beings we did bear the image of the earthly father, Adam, but that as new creatures in Christ we shall bear the image of the second Adam, the heavenly Lord; and that as the heavenly one is, so shall we be when, by our resurrection change, we shall be made heavenly—spiritual. He adds, by way of explaining the necessity for resurrection change, “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood can not inherit the Kingdom of God.” Verses 47-50.

His picture of the resurrection of the elect (vs. 41-44) shows us how radical will be the change from our present condition as his body of humiliation to our glorious condition as his body celestial — “it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body. As there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.”

As we thus get before our mind’s eye the glory which God hath in reservation for them that love him, the Church, the body of Christ, and that we shall not have a resurrection to flesh, but be changed by resurrection power, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, to be spirit beings, glorious, powerful, divine, it gives us a little conception of what was the real change which our Lord, our glorious Head, experienced in his resurrection from the dead.

These corrections of our theology, to thus come back in line with the inspired records, repair our minds for some comprehension of what we should expect at our Lord’s second advent. It shows us that we are not to expect him in the flesh; that he took the body of flesh at his first advent simply and solely for the suffering of death, and that when he had thus paid our penalty there was no reason why a humiliation to a lower nature should be forever continued. It shows us that he whom the Father hath highly exalted, and who was the express image of his Father’s person, will be invisible to men at his second advent, as he himself declared, “Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more —but ye (my disciples) shall see me.” Yes, says the exultant Apostle, “We shall see him as he is, for we shall be like him.” (1 John 3:2) We do not see him as he is now, for we are still in the

flesh, still human; but when our resurrection change shall come we shall be made like him — we shall be satisfied when we awake in the glorious likeness of our Redeemer.

Our Lord, who declares that he actually died and that he actually became alive again from the dead, assures us that he dies no more, that he is alive forevermore, and assures us also that he has the keys of death and of the tomb. Understanding and believing his Word, we are waiting for the Father's appointed time, when he shall take to himself his great power and reign, to restrain sin and evil and death, and enlighten and lift up and bless all the families of the earth.

* * * *

We may not see the pattern
That's woven by God's hand,
But when the work is finished—
Ah, then we'll understand.

2H179

The National Labor Tribune, April 30, 1905

SEPARATING THE SHEEP FROM THE GOATS

Altoona, Pa., April 30—Pastor Russell spoke here this evening at the opera house.. His discourse, which we report in full, was on the parable of the sheep and the goats. (Matt. 25:31-46) It was called forth in part by certain criticisms of Pastor Russell's discourse of some weeks ago at Greensburg, Pa., opera house on the subject, "To Hell and Back. Who Are There? Hope for the Return of Many of Them." The attack was by a Lutheran minister, through the public press, and claimed that Pastor Russell's teachings were contradicted by the parable here considered.

Christian people have held various views of the parable of the sheep and the goats, some claiming that the parable has been in process of fulfillment all down through the Gospel age and that it will be finished at the second coming of Christ. This view is shown to be erroneous by the first verse of the parable, which definitely locates the time of its fulfillment. It begins at the time of the second advent of Christ, as is clearly intimated by the words, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations," etc., etc. These

momentous events have not yet occurred, and consequently the parable still belongs to the future.

Another interpretation given to the parable by some is that at the second advent of Christ, on the very day of his arrival, all the 20,000,000,000 of the dead will come forth and, together with the living, will all range themselves before the Lord, and that during that 24-hour day he, as the great King, will separate the sheep class from the goat class, gathering all the sheep to the right hand and all the goats to the left hand.

This interpretation is not very satisfactory to anybody because, first, it implies that the Lord has made no determination yet as respects those who are his and those who are not. Fitting this interpretation to the usual but erroneous thought that all the dead are either in heaven with God and the holy angels or in some nether world with demons and flames, it involved the thought that they were dealt with before they had been judged, before their true characters had been determined. It further involves the thought, therefore, that some who had gone to heaven and been there for centuries should have been in the other place, and others who had possibly gone to the other place by mistake should have gone to heaven, and this parable shows the time and manner in which the Lord will finally determine as to whether or not any serious mistakes had occurred and endeavor to rectify them. Again this view is not altogether satisfactory in that it supposes God to be fallible, or else supposes a gathering of millions from heaven and hell to this earth again for no particular purpose, merely for a spectacular display which could alter nothing. This view as a whole is farcical, for it would be absurd to think of any kind of a judgment of the whole world or a separative gathering into two companies all over the earth in a 24-hour day. True, this is the prevailing view, but that proves nothing as respects its truthfulness or its reasonableness. It is to the discredit of theologians in general that any could entertain such a thought for a moment, or suppose that the Almighty and his glorified Son would participate in such a useless sham.

The correct view takes into consideration the various parts of the parable and applies them in harmony with other Scriptures and in harmony with consecrated reason.

THE WORLD'S JUDGMENT DAY

The parable applies at the end of this Gospel age, at the second advent of Christ, after the Judgment of the Church is past, after the Lord shall have selected from amongst mankind a people for his name, a "little flock," and the "great multitude" also. (Luke 12:32; Rev. 7:9) The Bride class will, according to promise, be with him in his throne and shall not come into judgment with the world. And the Apostle points out, the Church will be the judges in the throne, and will not, therefore, be represented by either the sheep or the goats gathered

before the throne for judgment. His words are, “Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2) The judgment of the Church is referred to in a preceding parable in the same chapter. In verse 14-30 we have the parable of the talents, in which our Lord represents his departure for a far country, heaven itself; and that during the period of his absence, during this Gospel age, his faithful servants should consider their privileges and opportunities as talents to be used in his service and that

2H180

he will first reckon with them on his return, at his second advent, rewarding each according to his faithfulness in the use of his opportunities, privileges, talents. To all the faithful he will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

The joy of the Lord, the throne of his glory, is brought to our attention in the succeeding verse. It will be the glory of the Millennial Kingdom, and the period for the judging of the world by Christ, the great King, and the Church his Bride with him in his throne. It will not be a 24-hour day, but a day of the kind mentioned by the Apostle Peter, saying, “Be not ignorant of this one thing, brethren, that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years.” It will be during that thousand years of the reign of Christ known as the Millennial day, whose dawning we hope, is very near at hand—during that day the Lord will gradually, thoroughly, effectively gather before him in judgment all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues. Those who have gone down into the tomb will come forth, that they may participate in the experiences of that great thousand-year judgment day.

BOUGHT BY THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

Those who have been accustomed to think of the judgment day as merely a time of terror, “doomsday,” will no doubt be surprised when we call to their attention that the Scriptures speak to the contrary of this, and assure us that the judgment day will be a mark of divine favor toward humanity. Theology has gotten miserably twisted on this subject, far away from the Bible presentation, and hence the prevalence of the wrong, unscriptural view of the day of judgment. Allow me to quote for you the words of the prophecy respecting this great judgment day, that you may see that the Lord, guiding the words of the Prophet David by inspiration, calls upon all mankind to rejoice that there is to be a judgment day. (1 Chron. 16:31-34) He says:

“Let the heavens be glad,
And let the earth rejoice;
And let men say among the nations

(Gentiles) Jehovah reigneth.
Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof;
Let the fields rejoice and all
that are therein.
Then shall the trees of the wood sing aloud
At the presence of Jehovah,
Because he cometh to judge the earth.
O give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is good;
For his mercy endureth forever.”

Our race had a trial once representatively. Father Adam was on trial, and when he failed his trial was over, he was condemned, and, since none of his posterity could be better or purer, and all were really parts of him, the condemnation rested against us all, as the Apostle declares, “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men because all are sinners.” (Rom. 5:12) Our race does not need to be twice tried or twice sentenced for the same crime. Since the sentence upon the race is a death sentence, Justice could not grant another trial, but has held that all are condemned, all are under sentence of death. The Scriptures teach that in view of man’s inability to recover from the penalty of original sin, there would have been no future life possible to any of us except as God in his mercy provided for that future life through the great sacrifice finished at Calvary. That sacrifice, the Scriptures tell us, was a full offset to the original sin. It was not only sufficient to meet the claims against the whole world, all of whom had been sentenced in the first Adam. Thus the Apostle declares, “As by man came death, by a man also (Christ) came the resurrection of the dead.” The signification of this is that God has appointed that through Christ all who will of the human family may come back into harmony with their Creator, and attain again the full perfection lost by Adam because of sin, including life eternal.

“SIN AND DEATH STILL REIGN”

But although Christ has died, sin and death are still reigning over the human family as before. The only exceptions are the few who believe in and accept and follow the teachings of the Redeemer. These, we are scripturally told, are a special class, “elect,” favored. But their blessings and favors are not of the earthly kind but are by faith spiritual, unseen to the world. Those who constitute this class, as we have seen, are on judgment now. They have in advance of the world an opportunity granted them of showing their love for the Lord, for the Truth and for righteousness, by their willing sacrifices in the service of these.

At the close of their trial, when all the Lord’s jewels shall have been gathered and polished, he will take them

up or gather them at his second coming. They shall constitute the Bride class, the “very elect,” heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord. These shall sit with him in the throne of his glory during the Millennial age, as the Apostle says, to ‘judge the world,’ as this parable of the sheep and goats illustrates. The Scriptures represent that the world is deaf to what is now going on, namely, to the selection and judgment and trial of the Church to this great

2H181

position of glory, honor and immortality with the Redeemer, and participation with him in the work of the Millennial age. ‘This world knoweth us not even as it knew him not.’”

THE GOD-APPOINTED DAY

The Apostle Paul not only points out that the members of the Church are to be judges of the world with Christ, but he also points out that in the divine plan a specific period or epoch, a “day with the Lord,” a thousand years with men, is set apart for the very purpose of judging the world. His words are, “God hath appointed (future) a day in the which he will (future) judge the world in righteousness (impartially and equitably) by that man whom he hath ordained” (the great new man of which Jesus is the Head and those constituting the Church are reckoned members.) The Apostle’s declaration is that God hath given assurance of the fulfillment of this promise by raising Jesus from the dead. He demonstrates God’s approval of Jesus and his intention to execute all the gracious provisions of his plan foretold through the prophets. In the divine plan the thousand-year day has been appointed for the judging of the world, Christ has been appointed to be the great chief of those who are trying the case, and the Church — approved in the trial which takes place during this Gospel age — is to be associated in the judging work.

On what score shall this judgment take place? For what will the world be on trial? Will mankind be tried for Adam’s sin? No, because Christ died for Adam’s sin. Will the world be tried for the sins of its own weakness and ignorance while yet it was blind and deaf? No, because the redemption price which Jesus paid not only covered Adam’s personal transgressions but also the transgressions of all his posterity which have resulted from the ignorance and weakness and frailty which followed the first transgression. The weaknesses and blemishes of heredity are, therefore, all paid for, and the world can not in justice be held responsible for these when it shall be brought to trial. In this respect it will be the same with them that it is with the Church: when we accept Christ and the favor of God through him, are we

judged for the weaknesses and imperfections which went before our justification, or are we merely judged for those blemishes which followed our justification? Certainly not more than the latter.

We are reckoned to be “new creatures;” old things have passed away, are reckoned to have passed away. The new mind, the new will, is reckoned as being free from the sin and condemnation which belonged to the old will, the old man. Even the blemishes of the flesh which are unwilling, to which our wills do not consent, are graciously covered with the merit of Christ’s righteousness imputed to us. Will it not be the same with the world when the day which God appointed shall arrive, when Christ shall sit upon his throne and when all nations shall be gathered before him in judgment? May we not see clearly that the King’s own death as the man Christ Jesus covered all the blemishes and weaknesses and imperfections of the past, for the world as well as for the Church, and that even their blemishes and imperfections of the future would not be permitted to weigh against them if they are sincerely desirous of becoming his sheep, of being led to him.

So then, the judgment of the world in the future age will be very similar to the judgment of the Church in this age, so far as the matters of judgment are concerned. As now the Lord’s people are judged according to their desires and intentions of heart, and the past is all under the blood, so it will be with the world and its judgment day; the past will all be under the blood, and the world will be on trial to see what it will do with Christ, with the love of God manifested toward it, with all the favors and mercies of the divine plan within its reach.

SEPARATING THE SHEEP FROM THE GOATS

The Lord speaks of his Church of this Gospel age as his sheep, his flock, and we rejoice in this term and in the care of the Shepherd; but this must not hinder us from seeing the meaning of the words, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, that they be one fold and one Shepherd.” The parable we are considering shows us when and how the Lord will seek for this second flock, how he will find them amongst the nations during the day of the world’s judgment, and gather them all to his right hand of favor. Others not his sheep will be gathered to his left hand of disfavor.

As to the ultimate results of that judgment of the world the Lord gives but little clue. We might naturally be inclined to suppose that, with all the blessed favors and privileges and opportunities and knowledge which the Millennial age will bring to the world, the whole human family would develop into sheep; but the parable seems to teach to the contrary, seems to teach that there will be some who, even after their eyes and ears shall have been

opened to see and to appreciate something of the Lord's plan, will still fail to develop that measure of loving obedience and accord with righteousness which would have his approval, which would mark them as sheep, which would entitle them under the divine arrangement at the close

2H182

of the Millennial age, to be ushered into the everlasting Kingdom of God.

The gathering to judgment will be a gradual one, not all at the same moment, not all on the same day, not all in the same year. All nations will be gathered, however—first the living nations; subsequently, gradually, more and more will be gathered from the tomb, until all the race shall be assembled excepting those who have been favored in advance during this Gospel age. All shall see the King in his beauty, shall discern that they are living under the reign of Immanuel, shall realize that the clouds and darkness of this present time of evil, of sin, of Satan, have rolled away and a new dispensation has been inaugurated, and that no longer will it be necessary to suffer for righteousness' sake but only for evil doing. The work of separating will be a gradual one, and will not be fully completed until the close of the Millennial age. Each member of Adam's race will have a full opportunity for not only receiving instruction in righteousness, but for making his personal decision as respects the same. In other words, each will have an opportunity for the development of character. Those who either refuse or neglect the opportunity for forming characters which God could approve as worthy of life eternal, will be amongst the goats, while all who will form characters in accord with the divine arrangement and plan will be amongst the sheep.

THE REWARDING OF THE SHEEP

The rewarding of the sheep and the punishing of the goats will come at the close of the Millennial age. True, great blessings will be upon all during the Millennial age, upon each in proportion to his obedience to the divine standards, but only at the close of the age will the full reward be granted. The reward to be granted to those sheep is not the same reward which will be granted in the end of this age to the sheep of this Gospel age flock. The promise to the faithful sheep of this Gospel age is expressed by the Lord himself in these words, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I have overcome and am set down with my Father in his throne;" "To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.

The promise to the sheep of the Millennial age is a kingdom promise, too, but does not pertain to the same Kingdom. They will inherit the kingdom which God prepared from the foundation of the world, from the time of Adam's creation. That kingdom was given to Adam originally; he was the first king of earth while in the image of his Creator. As it is written of him, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and didst crown him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Psa. 8:5, 6

By disobedience father Adam lost the rulership and power in his kingdom, and the entire kingdom of nature has suffered in consequence. The reign of Christ during the Millennium will be for the purpose of lifting up so many of mankind as shall then desire to come back into full harmony with the Lord, lifting them up out of the mire of sin and out of the miry clay and horrible pit of sin and death, lifting them up to all that Adam was before he sinned — to the image and likeness of their Creator. This the Apostle Peter designates restitution (Acts 3:20, 21), which he tells us will begin at our Lord's second advent.

But even the obedient of mankind will not be fit to be entrusted with the kingdom of the world until absolute perfection shall have been reached, and the perfection of the race will not be attained, as we have seen, until the end of the thousand-year day appointed for the purpose, and then the worthy will be granted the kingdom of earth, the dominion under the whole heavens. With this transfer of the earthly control to the perfect man of that time. Christ's Millennial Kingdom or mediatorial Kingdom will end. In delivering the Kingdom up to the perfect and worthy members of the race he will be delivering it up to the Father, in full harmony with the Father's original arrangement, interfered with by original sin. What the glories of this earth will be when man, the king of earth, shall be restored to the image of his Creator, and when the earth itself shall be filled with the glory of God, no tongue can tell, no mind can properly picture; we can only wonder and praise and adore the loving God, whose provision has been so bountiful for every creature, every member of the fallen race.

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE GOATS

A sharp distinction should be drawn between the heavenly promises and heavenly rewards which are for the Church, selected or elected during this Gospel age, and the earthly rewards, the earthly kingdom and earthly paradise blessings which are to be provided for the remainder of mankind willing to be in accord with the Lord under the favorable terms as they will then be presented to them. If the earthly blessings will be glorious the heavenly blessings will exceed in glory, for

“Eye hath not seen neither hath ear heard, nor hath it entered the heart of man, the things which God hath in reservation for those who love him,” “for the called according to his purpose.” —1 Cor. 2:9; Rom. 8:28

2H183

The goat class will not be punished for such crimes as are common today, murder, theft, arson, blasphemy. They will be punished because of a failure to develop properly the spirit of love, for love is the fulfilling of the law, and none can meet the divine approval except those whose sentiments will attain to the degree of loving Jehovah with all their hearts, minds, being and strength, and their neighbors as themselves. The sheep of the Millennial age, we may be sure will attain to this love, which God’s law marks as the proper measure of God-likeness; and the goats of the Millennial age, we may be equally sure, will be the ones who will not have this God-likeness.

The Lord represents the goats as being the associates or companions of Satan and the fallen angels. Satan lost his perfection and purity and harmony with God through disobedience inspired by ambition, and so this goat class is represented as having some of Satan’s characteristics — as being unfaithful to the Word and Spirit of the Lord. Hence they, as well as Satan and all in harmony with him, are denominated accursed, “condemned.”

THE EVERLASTING FIRE

Verse 46 explains, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment,” and in verse 41 the punishment is referred to figuratively as everlasting fire. This is the special point on which we are opposed by many of the Lord’s people, who, we think, misunderstand the teachings of his Word, because still more or less under the baneful influence of the smoke of the Dark Ages. It will be admitted that in our Lord’s parables figures are used: for instance, in one wheat and tares, in another sheep and goats. The tares are represented as being bundled and burned, likewise the goats are to be burned. But our dear friends forget that if the tare is a symbol and the wheat is a symbol so must the garner be a symbol and the fire a symbol. Likewise as the sheep is a symbol and the goat a symbol, the fire must be a symbol.

The next point is, What does fire symbolize? We answer that it always symbolizes destruction. No one even knew of a preservative fire. The thought of destruction is always associated with it. Thus in Revelation, for instance, we are given a symbolical picture of a lake of fire and brimstone, and immediately after we are given a key to the symbol in the words, “which is the Second Death.” Fire represents destruction, and brimstone represents one of the deadliest gases known. The Lord has thus, in the figures used in the

Scriptures, particularly guarded us against the thought of preservation of life in this punishment. Furthermore, there are other Scriptures that are not symbolical, which are not parabolic, which tell definitely what the punishment of the wicked is to be.

It is our duty in seeking the interpretation of the Scriptures to interpret symbols and parables by literal statements. Let us hear, then, from the Scriptures what is the punishment for sin. The Apostle Paul refers to sinners and the punishment that would be brought upon them saying, “They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power.” Here we have it plain enough; the punishment is not everlasting torture but everlasting punishment destruction, or reversing the statement everlasting destruction is everlasting punishment. Again we read, “All the wicked will he destroy;” again, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die,.” Everything in the Scriptures agrees with this thought, that the punishment that God has prepared for those who are finally incorrigible is the Second Death, utter destruction of the being, without hope of recovery, without hope of another redemption, without hope of another resurrection, without hope of any opportunity of any kind — “They shall be as though they had not been.”

“INTO EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT”

The Greek word here rendered everlasting is not as strong as our English word which represents it. However, on this point we raise no question; it is the same word that is used in referring to everlasting life which will be granted to the sheep. It may be well, however, to notice that life, being the Lord’s gift to the sheep, implies that no life will be given to the goats—it thus implies the kind of punishment which the Scriptures describe, namely, a death punishment, an extinction of life; and this will continue forever, as we have seen.

The Greek word here rendered “punishment” does not signify torture nor imply pain. The Greek word is “kolasin,” and literally signifies restraint. It is thus used in secular Greek writings, as, for instance, we read, “The charioteer restrains (kolasin) his fiery steeds.” It may mean more or less of restraint. In the case of the goat class the assurance is that it signifies complete restraint, the restraint of death, into which Satan and all who are in sympathy with him and his rebellion against the divine regulations will be restrained to the full — destroyed in the Second Death.

We submit to the candid hearers that this parable rightly interpreted is full of meaning to the Lord’s people, showing not only how the seed of Abraham, the elect

with Christ at the Head, will soon be the King of the Earth to reign during the Millennial age, to

2H184

bleed the world, to judge the world, to uplift the world, but how, also, all mankind will assuredly be brought under the restraint of that judgment day and its assistances, and how after the enjoyment of those blessings the tests will be finally unto life everlasting or death everlasting, according to the character developed by the children of Adam — according to whether they develop the sheep character of docility and obedience or the goat character of waywardness and self-assertion. The Lord's provision, as the Apostle points out, is —The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, but the wages of sin is death.

The National Labor Tribune, May 7, 1905

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Pastor C. T. Russell was with his home congregation Sunday. The services were held in Carnegie hall, Allegheny, Bible House chapel being too small for the occasion. The topic was the "Keys" given to St. Peter. It was announced that two weeks from last Sunday, namely, on the 21st inst., Pastor Russell would speak in the same place from the text, "Upon this rock will I build my Church." The text for Sunday afternoon was, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 16:19) The discourse follows:

Much of the language of Scripture as well as much of our everyday conversation is in figures of speech. Indeed, mental imagery is the basis of all language, and the more poetic the temperament the more clearly this will be comprehended and appreciated. The giving of keys to St. Peter symbolically represents to our minds the thought of some doors that up to that time had been closed, locked, and which Peter was to have the honor of opening. We aren't to think that Peter was given the keys of heaven, as though heaven up to that time had been a closed prison. He did not receive the keys of heaven. That is an erroneous thought which many have gathered from our Lord's words without the slightest authority. The statement reads explicitly enough, "the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

The expression, "the kingdom of heaven," was familiar to the Jews, because for many centuries they had been waiting for the fulfillment of God's promise that a kingdom of heaven should be established in the earth for blessing all the families of the earth, for the overthrow of evil and the lifting up of the standard of righteousness and truth. The Jews understood that this kingdom could not come, could not be established, except through the power of Messiah, and hence their hopes for their kingdom blended with their hopes for Messiah and their anticipation that they would be the favored people of earth under his regime.

Our Lord at his first advent in all of his teachings fostered this idea, assuring the disciples that as the Father had appointed the kingdom to him, he would share it with his faithful followers, and that the faithful of his disciples should sit with him in his throne in the regeneration" — in the times of restitution. (Acts 3:19-21) It was this Kingdom they were to hope for at his second advent and for it they were to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Thus seen the Kingdom in reality is still future, still waited for, still hoped for and prayed for; but it had an embryo beginning directly after the Lord had paid for the world the ransom price of his life at Calvary. When he rose from the dead his apostles were commissioned to proceed with the work of telling the good tidings that the world had been redeemed, and inviting those who believed to turn from sin, to become Christ's disciples, and to lay down their lives in his service, trusting for reward that they should constitute the Kingdom class, the Royal Priesthood, under and in conjunction with their Savior. All who would take these steps of faith and obedience and consecration were to be recognized by the Lord and by each other as the respective heirs of the Kingdom — the Kingdom class.

It was understood that all thus joining the Kingdom class were probationary members only, and that a full acceptance to Kingdom honors depended upon faithfulness. Hence the exhortation of the Scriptures to all of this favored class, called the elect, is that they shall persevere and make their calling and election sure by so running as to obtain the great prize, the great privilege, the great honor to which they have been called and accepted in Christ.

2H185

THE FIRST DOOR OPENED

From the foregoing it will be seen that the use of the keys in opening the doors of the Kingdom had nothing whatever to do with any sectarian system. It was not the Methodist kingdom, nor the Presbyterian nor the Roman Catholic nor the Lutheran nor the Baptist nor any other earthly system that Peter was commissioned to open. None of these systems mentioned were dreamed of in the days of the apostles. The keys were to be used in connection with the Lord's Kingdom — to open the embryo kingdom to all who were of the condition of heart above described, and who had the hearing ear. Although the Kingdom of heaven had been promised, had been hoped for by the Jews for centuries, there had been no opportunity for entering it because the door was closed, and that door could not be opened — that is to say, no Kingdom of heaven and no blessings of restitution through that Kingdom were possible —until first Christ Jesus our Lord and Head had paid the great penalty for the sins of the whole world.

From the time of our Lord's baptism and consecration unto death, the work of redemption having begun, the work of proclaiming the Kingdom was due, and hence the message of Jesus and his apostles was, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent and believe the good tidings. Our Lord described the situation saying, "The

law and the prophets were until John; since then the kingdom of heaven is preached and every man presseth into it," or, properly, every one should seek to enter it.

But although our Lord collected a goodly number of disciples during his ministry, about five hundred of whom were counted worthy to be witnesses of his resurrection, nevertheless none of these were actually received into the Kingdom relationship, into an adoption of the holy Spirit, until after our Lord had finished his sacrifice, had risen from the dead, had ascended up on high, had appeared in the presence of the Father on our behalf and had appropriated to believers a share in the merit of his sacrifice. Then the holy Spirit was shed forth upon those who had received Jesus, and was to them an evidence of their acceptance with the Father as prospective members of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, as prospective kings and priests under our Lord as the great King and High Priest of our profession. They would be tested, but the position granted them was sure to them if they maintained the earnest and loyal sentiment of heart with which they already had made consecration. The Lord's grace would be sufficient for them and keep them and develop them, working in them to will and to do his good pleasure, instructing them and fitting them for joint heirship in the Kingdom.

It was at this juncture, just when the Lord had endowed all those who had already made consecration during his ministry and had himself admitted them into this Kingdom relationship—at this juncture Peter was to use his key and to throw wide open the door into this Kingdom class. How successfully he used this key or authority to throw open the privileges of the Kingdom is clearly stated in the account of the preaching done immediately after the holy Spirit was poured out. The other apostles, of course, were associated in the work and assisted, but Peter was the leader and chief spokesman in that opening work of the Gospel dispensation, in the invitation then extended to all the Jews to purge themselves from their sins through faith in the Redeemer and to accept the conditions of the Kingdom, as we read—"Peter, standing up with the eleven lifted up his voice and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you and hearken to my words ... This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel... Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the holy Spirit," etc.

So powerfully was the key of the Kingdom used by the Lord in the hands of St. Peter that 3,000 believers were found and brought in through the door thus opened—six times as many as had accepted our Lord during the three and one-half years of his ministry. It was not that Peter

was thus powerful and a more eloquent preacher than he had ever been before, it was not that he was superior to his Master, but that the time had come for the throwing open of the door to the Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile, and the Lord's providence and holy Spirit directed and overruled so that this great work was accomplished—so that those previously the Lord's he granted to see their privilege of entering into the Kingdom class.

For three and one-half years after Pentecost the blessing of the Lord was upon the Jews according to his promise, up to the end of their symbolic week of favor. That week of years, seven years, began with Jesus' baptism, and in the midst of it, as the prophet had foretold, Messiah was cut off, not for himself but for the sins of the people. The remaining half of the week, three and one-half years, marked special, continued favor upon natural Israel for the gathering out of them of all the Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile. During this time, God's favor being still confined to Israel, the Gentiles had neither part nor lot in the matter. But at the end of that seventieth week, namely, three and a half years after Pentecost, God's favor was due to extend beyond Israel to all Gentiles who were in a proper condition of heart. There, as the Apostle Paul explains, the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the

2H186

Gentiles obtained opportunity to share in all the blessings of the Kingdom as fully and thoroughly as the Jews.

THE GENTILE DOOR OPENED

At this juncture, at the proper time for the opening of the door for the Gentiles into the Kingdom privileges, it was proper that the Lord's grace toward the Gentiles should be manifested and that he should use some instrumentality in this manifestation. Angelic beings could have been used, any of the apostles or any of the other loyal brethren could have been used of the Lord, but, in harmony with his promise that Peter should have the keys to the Kingdom, the Lord used him in the opening of the door of divine favor to the Gentiles.

We all remember the narrative—how Peter, like the other apostles and believers, understood that divine favors were exclusively for the Jews, and accordingly confined their efforts for those three and a half years to the Jews. At the same time there were amongst the Gentiles some equally as devoted, equally as sincere, equally as zealous for the Lord as amongst the Jews. One of these, Cornelius, revered God, prayed to him, frequently gave much alms, and in general lived a very model life, but being a Gentile he was outside the wall,

he was shut out from entering the door that was opened by Peter, which was only a Jewish door, a door of favor which belonged to that people by divine arrangement. Now, however, the seventy weeks of favor having expired, the Lord would begin to show his favor to the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name, to be one with those selected from amongst the Jews.

Accordingly God sent a message to Cornelius by an angel, assuring him that his alms were appreciated by the Lord and that his prayers were heard and that he should send for Peter to open the door before him that he might enter into the Kingdom class. He sent his servants, God in the meantime preparing Peter to respond, although the whole proceeding was contrary to the prejudices of himself and his nation, of centuries standing. The message was to send for Simon Peter who when he was come, should "tell him words" which should be to the saving of himself and his house. The telling of the words was the preaching of the Gospel, the explaining to Cornelius of how Jesus the Son of God had come into the world for our redemption, how he was made flesh, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, how he gave his human life as our ransom price, how his faithfulness and acceptableness to God were indicated by his resurrection, how he had ascended as the Mediator, how already through faith

in him many of the Jews had realized their sins forgiven, covered, and had been received into fellowship with God, to be prospective heirs in the Kingdom. As Peter explained the situation Cornelius accepted the thought and believed, and the time having come for the acceptance of such as he, St. Peter's words were blessed to his heart and the Lord poured out his spirit upon Cornelius, a Gentile by birth, as he had previously, at Pentecost, done upon those who were Jews by birth. Thus the second door was opened—the door to the Gentiles.

THE FIRST DOOR CLOSED

National favor to the Jew ended at the time of our Lord's crucifixion, as he said to them five days before when he rode on the ass, "Your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall see me no more till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." As a nation Israel has been without divine favor since, but the time is not far distant when at the second coming of our Lord many of that people shall say indeed, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah," and shall receive him, as the Apostle Paul distinctly points out in Romans 11:25-36. After the national rejection of Israel the special individual favor of God was with that people, as we have just seen, for three and a half years.

Subsequently, notwithstanding the breaking down of the middle wall of partition at the time the door was opened to the Gentiles, nevertheless Israel stood first in the Lord's great plan; as the Apostle Paul points out, it was necessary that the Gospel should first be preached to you (the Jews), but also to the Gentiles. The full end of favor to the Jew, in every sense of the word, was reached in A. D. 69, when their entire system and polity were overthrown, not to be restored in any sense or degree until after Spiritual Israel shall have attained the Kingdom. Then, as the Apostle points out, they (Israel after the flesh) shall obtain mercy through your favor — through the favor of the Gospel Church, which will then be glorified with the Lord as Spiritual Israel. At that point, therefore, A.D. 69, the Jewish door of favor closed, and since then they are privileged to enter the Kingdom of heaven class only upon the same terms and conditions as the Gentiles.

THE OTHERDOOR WILL SOON CLOSE

The doors to the Kingdom class were not designed to stand open forever. One of them, as we have seen, has already closed; the other will close as soon as the fore-ordained number of the elect shall have made their calling and election sure. The fact that one of these

2H187

doors has stood open for eighteen centuries should not deceive one into thinking that it will never close. Our Lord himself in one of his parables illustrates this matter, saying that when they that were ready went in to the marriage, the door was shut. The fulfilment of this will be that when the last member of the elect Church shall have been fully accepted, graduated, there will be no further opportunity for entering into the Kingdom class.

We are not saying that the door of mercy will be closed. God forbid! On the contrary, as the Scriptures declare, God's mercy endureth forever—to a completeness—until all whom he sees would profit by his mercy shall have had the fullest opportunity and until all others shall have been destroyed in the Second Death.

It will be a happy day for the world when the door into this Kingdom class shall close. For centuries the whole creation has been groaning and travailing in pain together, waiting—waiting for the consummation of this feature of the divine plan—waiting for the gathering of the Lord's jewels from every kindred, people, nation and tongue—waiting for the Royal Priesthood to be complete—waiting for the glories of the Kingdom of heaven then to shine forth, and its power then to be exercised, for the restraining of evil and for the uplifting of all who, under the light of that glorious day, shall

aspire to righteousness and harmony with God. The Apostle's words are, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." Rom. 8:22,19

The Apostle elsewhere says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God (but not glorified); and it doth not yet appear what we shall be (how glorious, how powerful); but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The Son of God, our great Redeemer, finished his work eighteen centuries ago, and in the interim has been working in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure, working in them through the experiences and trials and disciplines and oppositions of this present time to prepare them to be his associates and joint-heirs in the great work of blessing mankind. Let us, then, thank God that the company of the elect will soon be complete and that the door will be shut and that shortly thereafter the great blessing of all the families of the earth will ensue.

MAKING OUR ELECTION SURE

Meantime, dear friends, the thought that the company of the elect will soon be complete and that the door into that honored position will soon be closed, is a momentous one to us. It should not cause us alarm, but, as the Apostle expresses the matter, it should cause us fear. He says, "Let us fear, lest the promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." To have heard with the ears of our understanding respecting the wonderful Kingdom for which God has been preparing for six thousand years and which is to be his instrumentality for the blessing of all mankind, and to have seen our privilege of becoming members of that Kingdom class and to have entered into covenant relationship with the Lord with this in view and be counted in as prospective members of that Kingdom, and then to come short of it, to miss it—to fail to make our calling and election sure—would indeed be a sad disappointment to us, a loss compared with which all earthly losses would be as dross and, as the Apostle declares, unworthy to be compared with the glories which, if faithful, shall be revealed in us. Let the thought inspire us to greater personal zeal, to greater faithfulness in following in the footsteps of our Lord in all of life's affairs. Let the promises gird up the loins of our minds and make us strong and courageous to be, to do and to endure according to the Lord's good pleasure, assured that all things are working together for good to them that love him and are called according to his purpose.

THE DAY OF TROUBLE

True, the Scriptures speak of the closing of the period in which the door to the Kingdom class shall be shut as being one of fiery trials. But as we come to understand more fully the divine program we perceive that even

these trials and sorrows that are coming upon the world are intended of the Lord to work out eventually a blessing. That is to be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, a time of anarchy and confusion and general distress, symbolically pictured in the prophecies under the figures of fire, cyclones, floods and storms.

All this is but the plowshare of the Lord breaking up the fallow ground of the world of mankind in general, to prepare them for the messages of peace and blessing and the glorious opportunities which will immediately follow the trouble—when the Kingdom of God’s dear Son shall shine forth as the Sun of Righteousness to scatter the darkness and mists of ignorance and prejudice and sin, to enlighten and to bless and to refresh the world of mankind. Thus rightly viewed in the light of divine promise these troubles are Millennial harbingers, in which, while sympathizing with the world and its bitter experiences, we can nevertheless rejoice greatly, praying, “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” If, therefore, by God’s grace we have gained access into this Kingdom class, let us hold fast to all the blessings which we have

2H188

received, let us hear the word of our Master assuring us that if faithful he will not blot our names out of the book of life and will not apportion our crowns to others. Rev. 3:5-11

The National Labor Tribune, May 14, 1905

THE MAN OF SORROWS AND GRIEF

Tiffin, O., May 14, 1905—Pastor C. T. Russell spoke twice here today to large and attentive audiences. His evening discourse, which we report, was from the text, “He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Isa. 53:3

Goodness and sorrow do not naturally associate themselves in our minds. Neither does the statement, “He who sins shall suffer,” commend itself to us. We cannot suppose that our great Creator and the holy angels of the heavenly hosts are sad, sorrowful, grief-stricken: on the contrary, we naturally and properly associate with the heavenly purity the thought that there’s no night there, no clouds, no shadows, no pain, no sorrow, no crying, no dying; and yet, the same Scriptures which assure us that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, picture him to us as

having been a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Why is this? Why were our Lord's experiences so different from what we should have expected from one who was perfect?

The Scriptures clearly set forth that sin is the cause of all our sorrows, our troubles. Hearken to the Apostle: "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as the result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men for all are sinners." Rom. 5:12. Our sorrows, then, are parts of the penalty for sin, evidences of the death sentence working in us as transgressors of the divine law. True, this sentence came not directly upon us but upon our first parents; yet having inherited from them all that they could give us we find that inheritance an imperfect or cursed condition. "We are born in sin, shapen in iniquity." "There is none righteous; no, not one." Thus we readily account for our sorrows, our pains, our troubles—in that we are sinners. Our question, however, is, How and why was our Redeemer a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, since he was not a sinner, since he was not the inheritor of the weaknesses and imperfections common to the human family, but had his life directly from the Father, transferred from the heavenly condition?

WHAT AND WHY HE ENDURED

A little reflection proves to us that our Redeemer, who knew no sin, and whose previous association had been with the Father and the holy ones in heaven, transplanted from the heavenly to the earthly condition, from the heavenly surroundings to the sinful surroundings of fallen humanity, would realize the gloom and blight of sin and death far more than any of Adam's race, than any of those with whom he mingled. They had been born amidst the gloom of sin, the weakness and depravity resulting therefrom and the sorrow and dying connected therewith. Never having known other conditions they had become considerably inured to those surroundings, even as mankind are today. For, notwithstanding the Apostle's declaration that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together," there are many of our race who do not sufficiently realize their condition to groan for themselves. Blunted physically, morally and mentally, stunted and stupefied, they are unable to comprehend the depth of their miserably fallen condition, and to some extent their ignorance and stupor is blissful to them. On the contrary, we must see that it would have been impossible for our Lord Jesus to have been anything else than a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, considering how his heart was noble, pure, true and loving, and that he was suddenly immersed into so uncongenial surroundings.

Take an illustration from our own experience. Let one who had been reared under conditions socially and physically favorable, with refined sentiments and es-

thetic tastes, visit heathen lands and witness their degradation or visit the slums of his own land and come in contact with the degraded, depraved, “submerged,” and his feeling will be that of extreme revulsion, the sights and sounds and odors will nauseate him in every sense of the word, and, in proportion as his heart is tender and full of sympathy with others, he will feel sorrow and grief for the unfortunates — more than they feel for themselves. Accustomed to such surroundings

2H189

they have gradually become inured to them and have even learned to take a certain measure of pleasure in the sights and sounds which so grate upon and grieve the more refined. From this standpoint we may well see that it is no wonder that our Lord, although previously accustomed to fulness of joy, when transplanted to human conditions was pre-eminently the man of sorrows and more acquainted with grief than others.

OUR GRIEFS, OUR SORROWS

The context corroborates this thought, saying, “Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.” It was our condition which moved our dear Redeemer to sorrow and grief in sympathetic compassion; it was our helpless and pitiable condition as condemned sinners that induced his tears, for “Jesus wept.” Not a word throughout the Scriptures to the effect that Jesus laughed—the surroundings as viewed from his standpoint were too serious. A race was under sentence of death, and mentally, morally, and physically diseases were preying upon it and bringing it down to the tomb. The picture is enough to excite the sympathy of all—a race created in the image and likeness of God, in harmony with his beneficent arrangements for its peace and prosperity and everlasting life, had fallen to the wretched condition which surrounded the Savior; and although the Jewish nation had possessed much advantage every way in that God’s favor was manifested toward it through the Law, through the testimony of the prophets, etc., so that it was on a higher moral plane than the remainder of mankind, nevertheless even amongst those with whom the Master associated it must have seemed terrible to him that, instead of love and pity and sympathy and brotherly kindness and gentleness and patience and all the graces of the Spirit to which he was accustomed, he should find the very reverse spirit prominent amongst men—the spirit of selfishness, hatred, anger, malice, strife, idolatry of name and fame and wealth, an almost utter blindness to that love and loyalty to God which should fill their whole hearts and to the Golden Rule which should guide their conduct one toward another. No wonder our Redeemer was a man of

sorrows and acquainted with grief—sorrow for us, grief for our conditions.

“THE JUST FOR THE UNJUST”

But to have merely sorrowed for us and had grief for our deplorable condition would have advantaged us little: something more was necessary, and that our Lord did for us. There was a penalty against Adam, in which all of his posterity shared by inheritance. His was a death sentence (not an eternal torment sentence). It reads, “Ye shall surely die”—“Return to the dust from whence thou wast taken”—“The soul that sinneth, it shall die;” and because all souls had proceeded from Father Adam’s loins, every soul of man was under this sentence because imperfect, unable to commend himself to God. The thing necessary first was more than sorrow and grief and sympathy, and this necessary thing our Lord did for us as a race. He died as the Apostle declares, “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,” and again, “He died the Just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.” This was indeed sorrow and grief and sympathy taking on a most practical form, paying the ransom price for the sins of the whole world.

We have no sympathy with those who claim to be wiser than what is written, who claim that the death of Christ was not necessary as the propitiation, satisfaction for our sins. We have no sympathy with the suggestion that God did not require a sacrifice. Everything in Scripture as well as all the facts of history show that without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sins. The penalty for sin being death, the world’s condition was hopeless unless a Redeemer took the place of the first transgressor, through whom the entire race fell under the curse, the death sentence. Unless that death sentence were met by one holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners there never could be a resurrection of the dead, there never could be a recovery from the power of the tomb, the power of sheol, the power of hades. There never could be a Millennial age, “times of restitution,” so long as the original sentence stood against the race.

“BOUGHT WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD”

It is in line with this that the Scriptures everywhere hold out the thought that our race has been purchased by the Redeemer, that we are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ—bought from the sentence of Justice, the price of our Lord’s sacrifice being paid to justice and in harmony with the divine plan wherein was manifested both the love and justice of God. This is the essence of the Gospel—Jesus has died, and there is remission “through the merit of his sacrifice;” the sins and imperfections of our race can be passed over by divine justice, and those once condemned to death can have opportunity of attaining life everlasting through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

Whoever hears the message has the opportunity of accepting the Life-giver and becoming his follower. True, not many hear of these good tidings clearly and distinctly in the present time; but the assurance is that in due time all the blinded eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears unstopped—all shall know of God's mercy

2H190

and goodness and love and provision. It is in view of the ultimate results of this great redemptive work that the angels sang at our Redeemer's birth—"We bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. For unto you ... a Savior which is Christ the Lord."

THE DELIVERANCE IS DELAYED

The inquiry is a reasonable one, Why has not the curse of death been rolled away from humanity if it be true that Jesus paid the ransom price—that he redeemed us through the sacrifice of his life? We reply that God's ways are higher than man's ways, God's plans are higher than man's plans. God has purposed a higher and grander and more thorough-going salvation than man ever dreamed of. He proposes a salvation unto the uttermost for all who will come unto the Father through him, through Jesus.

The work of salvation is divided into two great sections, one of which is already operative, the other to begin where the present one ends. This first section of the divine plan of salvation relates to the Church, a little flock, and to a household of faith, both separate and distinct from the world in general, which is not now being particularly dealt with. The message of the justice of God, the fallen condition of man, and the remedy provided in Jesus, are promulgated now that those who have the hearing ear may be attracted and may receive a blessing. This blessing, which is of faith, can not reach all now, neither is it the divine plan that it should reach all in the present time. It is merely designed to take out of the nations a people for his name— "a little flock." (Acts 15:14, Luke 12:32)

A blessing comes promptly to those who now hear and see even a little if they will obey, and we properly enough speak of them as saved from the time that they accept the Lord and consecrate their hearts to him; but when we thus express ourselves that they are saved, we are speaking by faith in God's promise, speaking of "the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." We speak of being saved in the sense that sin has no longer dominion over us. We speak of being saved from death because we have faith toward God in a resurrection of the dead, but the actual salvation is to be brought to the Church and to the household of faith at the second coming of the Lord, for,

as the Apostle declares, “We are saved by hope”—not saved actually and will not be until our resurrection change shall complete, finish that of which we already have a foretaste in our hearts through faith.

WE SHARE HIS SORROWS AND GRIEFS

Those who in the present time experience salvation to the extent of receiving the holy Spirit, the holy mind of the Lord, are thereby lifted to new experiences and prompted to view matters from much of the same standpoint that Jesus viewed them. These disciples of Jesus are enabled to take his viewpoint in looking at sin and at the fallen condition of the world in general, at its meanness, its selfishness; and to these come measurably the same sentiments which filled our Master’s heart. They proportionately become more deeply sensible of the sorrows of the world and of grief for the world. Not that it is possible for them ever to have as deep an appreciation of these matters as did the Master, but that in proportion as they have his mind, his disposition, his spirit, they view matters from his standpoint. Thus he tells us to “Rejoice with those who do rejoice, and to weep with those who weep;” thus he tells the same class, “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted,” and again, “Verily I say unto you that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.” Matt. 5:4; John 16:20; Rom. 12:15

“JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING”

The prophet has declared, “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning,” the morning of the resurrection, the morning of God’s favor, the morning of the rolling away of the curse, the morning of the in-shining of the Sun of Righteousness to bless the world and to heal its sin-sickness, to dissipate its death conditions for all who will accept the divine favors then so freely bestowed. That, too, will be the time for the special joy and rejoicing of the Church, the household of faith. We will then enter into the joys of our Lord in the fullest sense, actual joys, everlasting joys, joys and rejoicing induced by the glorious conditions which will then obtain, and the glorious privileges of blessing the world of mankind shall then be ours. Meantime, however, there is a joy of faith and hope and trust which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

TWO STANDPOINTS—SORROW AND JOY

It would be a mistake for us to suppose that our dear Redeemer had no joys, and an equal mistake to suppose that his followers have no joys. We hold to the contrary that theirs are the real joys, such as the world can not appreciate. Of the Master we read, “Jesus rejoiced in spirit” From the standpoint of the flesh he was in very

unfavorable and uncongenial surroundings, but from the standpoint of his mind, his heart, he was in a very favorable condition. He delighted to do the Father's will; he had joy in realizing that the outworking of the divine plan would not only accomplish

2H191

the grand divine will, but accomplish the blessing of all the families of the earth, and incidentally his own glorification with the Father and a glory more than that which he had with him before the world was.

Our Master, addressing all of us who are his disciples, assures us that it is our privilege not only to enter into his sorrows and griefs but also sympathetically to enter into his joys, his rejoicing—by faith to realize the victory which he was granted and which he assures all who are his followers will share with him. Even while we are privileged to suffer for righteousness' sake, for obedience to the Lord, we may still rest upon the assurance, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy," "My joy shall remain in you, that your joy may be full." In harmony with this we find the Scriptures testifying that the followers of Jesus were always rejoicing, in everything giving thanks.

Even in trials and difficulties and persecutions, in prison and with bleeding backs from stripes received, the Apostles were enabled to sing praises to God and to thank him for the privilege of being associated with Christ in the sufferings of this present time, in an anticipatory sense, for the pleasure of being associated with him in the glories that shall follow. Such joy the world indeed can neither give nor take away. Such joys are not for those who have earthly joys to the full in the present time, but rather to those who because of faithfulness to the principles of righteousness, to the Word of the Lord's testimony, are to some extent dis-esteemed among men, ostracized, whom the world knoweth not because it knew not their Master, because it is still blinded to its own fallen condition and alienation from God and righteousness, because the eyes of its understanding have not yet been opened to see its true condition and needs and the divine provision for these.

DESPISED AND REJECTED

It may appear to some that Jesus is no longer despised and rejected of men, and that his followers are no longer despised and rejected. How is this? Have matters so changed? Have the Lord's words ceased to be true?—"Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you." Has the world ceased to despise and reject Jesus and his followers?

We reply that at the first advent the multitude said, "Never man spake like this man." They did not despise his message in every particular. We remember that great multitudes followed him because they saw the miracles that he did, and because they ate of the loaves and fishes which he had provided. So today there are some who follow the Lord as disciples, but few who are willing to take up their cross and follow him. There are multitudes who are ready to declare that the sermon on the mount represents the highest ideals ever presented to humanity, but very few of those who thus commend the ideals of the sermon on the mount would confess themselves to be followers of the Lamb, or confess that they lived or endeavored to the best of their ability to live in harmony with the holy precepts which they to some extent commend.

There are many who partake of the loaves and fishes of civilization and who realize that the name of Jesus is somehow connected with many of the blessings which are now common to civilized nations, who, nevertheless, are far from being footstep followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. The multitudes who followed Jesus crying "Hosanna!" and the multitudes which testified to the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, the multitudes who followed him because, as he said, of the loaves and fishes, were not in evidence when the High Priest and scribes and Pharisees, moved by jealousy, sought the Lord's life. So today, men who commend some of Jesus' teachings would not be inclined to disturb themselves if doctors of divinity and high priests and scribes and Pharisees should for claimed political reasons seek to suppress those who most loyally seek to walk in accord with the Master's teachings.

"WE WILL NOT HAVE THIS MAN"

The Jews were willing to concede that our Master's teachings were grand in many particulars, but they did not wish to be put under such restraints—they would not have him for their Master, their king, their lawgiver. "We will not have this man to reign over us," is the way the Lord describes their attitude, and herein the world differs from the true followers of Jesus, who so desire that Christ shall be their King, that his will shall be done in their hearts, that they may please him more and better day by day. They "delight to do his will." Not so the world and the merely nominal Christians who approve some of the Lord's beautiful sayings. They esteem him not as a ruler; they prefer to keep the reins of their own hearts in their own hands—yea, they prefer their plan to his even as respects the establishment of his Kingdom and the method by which the world shall be blessed. They have plans of their own, schemes of their own. Their prayer is, Our wills be done on earth; yours, O Lord in heaven.

The true disciples of Jesus accept his will, his plan, and pray: “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” Very soon the prayers of this class will be answered: very soon they, with Christ, as his glorified Church, shall be associated in his Kingdom, shall sit upon his throne, changed by resurrection power to the glory, honor and immortality of the divine

2H192

nature, and associated with Jesus in the ruling and blessing of all the families of the earth, purchased by his precious blood.

Then will come their time of special rejoicing, and, thank God, it will not mean a permanent time of sorrow and torment and torture upon the world. The Scriptures, however, do intimate to us that the world in the present time is so out of accord with the Lord that a great time of trouble will be necessary to introduce the Millennial Kingdom properly—that the plowshare of trouble shall go deeply through the souls of mankind, that the fallow ground may be broken up and be prepared for the good message of salvation as the Lord and his then glorified Church shall make it known to every creature. We may well thank God, then, that in his wisdom and love he will not spare the world from those experiences which will be profitable to it, and that he has promised that when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness.

Meantime let those of us that have tasted that the Lord is gracious, who have covenanted to be his footstep followers, see to it that we refuse not a participation in the sufferings of Christ, that we may be counted worthy of a share in the glories to follow. The sufferings last only until the closing of the Gospel age; the glories will follow immediately afterward, glories and blessings for the faithful and opportunities for blessing all mankind. Let us not only appreciate the sorrows of our Savior, but let us see to it that he is not despised and rejected by us as the King, the Ruler of our hearts— that, on the contrary, we call upon our souls and every power within us to praise and laud and magnify his name, and to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of the darkness into his marvelous light.

The National Labor Tribune, May 21, 1905

THE ROCK-BUILT CHURCH

Pastor C. T. Russell addressed a goodly audience Sunday afternoon at Carnegie Hall, Allegheny. His text and discourse follow:

“Upon this rock will I build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Matt. 16:18

What instruction can we draw from these words of our divine Master? Well would it have been for all of his followers down through this Gospel age had they given closer attention to the Master's inspired utterances and those of his heaven-directed apostles, and less attention to the speculations of men, however well intentioned, however wise in earthly lore.

As the "traditions of the elders" confused the Jews and made the Word of God of no effect, and thus hindered many from receiving our Lord at his first advent, so the traditions of the ancients—coming down to us through the creeds formulated during and following the dark ages—have tended to becloud the minds of many of the Spiritual Israelites, who today are much more in bondage to these traditions than they are aware of. Let us, dear brethren and sisters, as our eyes open wider to the facts, be the more on the alert to hold fast the precious Word and to reject any and everything for which we can not find authority in the inspired records. May the Lord bless to us our study of our text, that our minds may be clarified, our faith purified, our whole lives be more illuminated, and our way toward the heavenly City become more and more easy to follow!

ONLY ONE TRUE CHURCH

The first thought that strikes us in connection with this text is that there is only one Church built by our Lord—only one Church properly to be recognized as his—"My Church." Throughout Christendom we see many churches of many names, some of them founded recently and others in the remote past, some having one hope and some another, some having one baptism and some another, some having one faith and some another, some having one organization and some another. Time would fail us to trace the history of these various organizations of churches. We can only briefly rehearse the matter as follows:

(1) There was the Church which the Lord founded in the twelve apostles and about five hundred brethren who believed on him, accepted his Messiahship, and became his disciples during his ministry. For these he prayed the Father on the night on which he was betrayed, saying, "I pray not for the world, but for them thou hast given me, That they all may be one; as thou, Father, and I are one: that (eventually) the world may

2H193

believe that thou hast sent me. Neither pray I for these alone, but for those also who shall believe on my Word." This true Church was formally recognized of the Father at Pentecost, and progressed in its appointed work of seeking out and building up in the most holy faith those who had the ears to hear and the hearts to receive the message that Jesus was the Anointed One who had died

for our sins, and who would ultimately deliver all who would accept the favor.

FORETOLD MIXTURE—"BABYLON"

(2) As our Lord foretold in the parable of the wheat and tares, it was not long after the apostles fell asleep in death until the great adversary, Satan, brought in grievous errors in the name of Christ, and thus sowed tares amongst the "wheat." History shows that the tare-producing errors began to flourish in the Lord's Church and under his own banner early in the second century, and, as the Scriptures had foretold, the tare class had increased until the wheat was practically swamped. Meantime, gradually an organization sprang up which, while claiming to be of Christ, was really an organization of men along different lines from that which the Master laid down, and bound or organized, not with the cords of love—union with the Head—but with creeds, confessions, forms and ceremonies very different from the simplicity which the Lord and the apostles as his representatives had instituted. This organization established its headquarters at Rome, and gradually increased its power and influence, by fair means and foul, until it acquired such a prominence and predominance that those who adhered to the simplicity of the faith and practice laid down by the Lord and the apostles were gradually lost sight of, or, where noticed at all, were called heretics and were persecuted as such.

This condition of things prevailed for fourteen centuries. All this time there were, we believe, here and there solitary individuals, a "little flock," who held fast the faithful Word and who recognized no other organization than that which the Lord himself instituted, the organization in which each member is united to the Lord in faith, in love, in consecration, and thus united to each other. But these few were so insignificant in the eyes of the world, and in the sight of the great human system that overshadowed everything, that there may be said to be no history of them for all those centuries—indeed there is no history of this kind of Christians even yet.

(3) In the sixteenth century a religious reformation which had been working for some time broke forth. It had its sympathizers in every part of the civilized world, but for the time its chief leaders were Luther and his coadjutors in Germany, and Zwingli and his associates in Switzerland, and others of the same spirit in other parts, particularly in England and Scotland. The reformation thus begun was an attempt to go back to the simplicity of the early Church—the Church of Christ—the Church founded upon the rock, as declared in our text.

SECTARIAN REFORMATION PROGRESSIVE

The result of this reformation movement we see all about us in the five hundred or more different denominations of Christendom. The motive in the organization of each of these systems undoubtedly was to go back to the original lines of the primitive Church which our Lord founded. But, alas, for human weaknesses, prejudices, ignorance and superstition: in every case, it would appear, a fragment of truth was grasped and combined with old errors from the dark ages, and became the pretext for a new name and a new organization fashioned, not after the original pattern, but corresponding more nearly to the form, style, bondage, etc., of the Roman Catholic “mother.”

In dealing thus with the facts of the case, we are not railing against the good intentions of the organizers of these various sects and parties. On the contrary, we hold that they have been more or less deceived and duped by the great adversary and deceiver, Satan. We give them credit for a considerable degree of honesty, but believe that worldly men with worldly motives, “tares,” had much to do with all these organizations. We merely wish now to call attention to the fact that none of these man-made institutions can properly claim to be the Church which our Lord in our text called “my Church.” Indeed, so far as we are aware, few if any now make that claim — though there was a time when practically each one of them claimed to be the only true Church. Now they recognize that none of these organizations were founded by the Lord, and very few in any denomination dispute our statement that their membership in earthly sects and denominations brings them no favor with the Lord, since they are organizations which the Lord neither established nor authorized, and that the only hope of any is in vital, personal union with Christ and with all who are his, outside of and without regard to any of these human organizations, good or bad.

We see, then, that the Church which Christ organized has existed all through the centuries—has been composed of all of those individuals inside and outside of man-made churches, sects, parties, and only these have ever constituted the one and only Church of the

2H194

Lord Jesus Christ. So many as see this matter clearly and distinctly will be ready to follow the command of the Lord to separate themselves from all human institutions, which the Lord designates Babylon—“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins” (false doctrines and antagonism to those now seeking to lift up

the standard raised by our Lord and the apostles). Rev. 18:4

THE TRUE ROCK FOUNDATION

Upon what rock did our Lord suppose to build his Church? Our Roman Catholic friends quote this passage with fervor and heat and boast that the Apostle Peter was the rock, and that they made him the first Pope of their Church years and years after he was dead, and on the strength of their having done this they claim that they are the only Church on the true foundation—Peter.

We must dissent from this view as unreasonable as well as unscriptural. We have already shown that the organization, creeds, ceremonies, etc., of the Church of Rome are wholly different from those instituted by our Lord and his apostles as set forth in the New Testament. Compare the two. We note carefully our text and its context to ascertain under what circumstances our Lord used these words and what rock he meant. The context shows that the people were beginning to discuss our Lord's personality—who he was—and our Lord took occasion to inquire of the apostles what they heard on the subject. Then he asked them their opinion, "Whom say ye that I the Son of man am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ (Messiah), the Son of the living God." It was this great fact, that our Lord declared to be the truth, which would build his Church. And it is so today: Every true member of the Church built upon the true foundation is resting his faith not upon Peter, nor upon the human Church organization but upon this great truth that Jesus was the Son of God and the Messiah who had so long been promised, whose mission it was in God's due time to bless the whole world by destroying sin and the wages of sin, death, and by destroying also all who after full opportunity continue in wilful sin.

Our Romanist friends fell into their error in supposing that Peter was the rock because of his having been the one who voiced this great truth respecting Christ's Messiahship, and because our Lord there associated his name Peter (Greek Petros, which means a piece of rock) with this great rock truth which he had expressed. The word rock in our text, in the Greek, is Petra and signifies a mass of rock. Thus we see that our Lord declared Peter one of the rocks or living stones who, with others, would be built upon this great foundation truth which Peter had expressed by divine inspiration. That the Apostle Peter had this same thought respecting the matter is evident, for in his epistle he speaks of the true children of God as living stones for God's temple, built upon Christ as the great foundation. 1 Pet. 2:4-5

EXAMINING THE FOUNDATIONS

If we examine this rock-truth upon which the true Church was to be built, we find that a great many are building partly upon it and partly upon the sandy foundation of human theories. All who are truly consecrated to the Lord should seek to build their faith upon the full significance of this great foundation truth which our Lord commended as such. Unfortunately the word Christ has in a general way lost its real meaning. It is the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew word Messiah, but the Messiah thought is lost to many. In the Messiah thought we mean the thought which for centuries God had inculcated in the minds of the Jews respecting the great Deliverer of their race and the world of mankind.

The Messiah thought was the one the apostles had, which led them to recognize Jesus as not only the Redeemer of the world, but also the one who, in due time, after selecting his Church, after building it upon this foundation truth, would come a second time and establish in the world a reign of righteousness, with himself as the great spiritual, invisible King, all powerful in the subduing of sin and every evil, all powerful also in the blessing and uplifting of all who will turn from sin to God. This Messianic thought pervades all the writings of all the apostles, as, for instance, in Peter's declaration following the Pentecostal blessing— "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ (Messiah—at his second advent), whom the heavens must receive (retain) until the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:19-23

Whoever would get his faith properly built upon the foundation which the Lord declared to be the true one, should see to it that this declaration of our Lord's Messiahship has its proper prominent place in his faith, his hope, his aspirations, his joys in the Truth.

Another part of this rock-truth is that Jesus is the Son of the living God. Many there are in the pulpits of Christendom who gradually, insinuatingly, are introducing to their hearers the thought that Jesus was a mere man, that he was not "separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), that he had no prehuman existence, that he did not come down from above. Such teaching is off the foundation, and all who give heed thereto are

2H195

building upon the sand, and will surely suffer loss as a consequence. But while yielding to none in our reverence for the great ransom sacrifice which our Lord gave on behalf of the sins of the whole world, and in our admiration for the nobility of character which led him to

leave the heavenly courts to become a man that he might redeem us from the penalty of Adam's sin, and with highest appreciation of his subsequent resurrection to glory, honor and the divine nature, nevertheless we must fault those who falsely teach, contrary to the Scriptures, that Jesus was the heavenly Father as well as the Son of God—that the two were one in person, that he sent himself, that when he died it was the death of Jehovah, and that either

HIS DEATH WAS A SHAM

and deception merely, or else the universe for a time was without a God. Such absurd statements have come down from the dark ages and find no recognition whatever in the words of the Lord and the apostles. Some mistakenly suppose that they thus add honor to our divine Master by claiming that he was Jehovah, for the time disguised in the flesh. But instead of adding honor, these dear friends unintentionally dishonor the Master and discredit his Word. It was himself that said, "I delight to do the Father's will," not his own; it was himself that prayed to the Father, and that without deception or fraud; it was himself who prayed in his dying hour to the Father; it was himself who, after his resurrection, declared to Mary, "I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God." Those who contradict the Lord in these matters, and who assume to know more than he did on these subjects, are not properly on the rock foundation which he laid, and which distinctly recognizes him as the Son of the living God. Whoever may thus find himself drifting from the foundation should return thereto, otherwise he will surely suffer loss to the extent that he neglects the Master's word.

Neither did the apostles contradict the Lord and say that he was the Father, nor that he was equal with the Father. The highest declaration of homage expressed by them is in these words, "Him hath God highly exalted, and given a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth," "And that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." No uninspired man has the authority to add to the inspired utterances of God's Word, and none should have the temerity to do so. The Apostle Paul distinctly expresses himself on this subject, saying, "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:6) At a future time we may deal with this subject more exhaustively, but since this is a part of the rock foundation of our text, thus much attention is due to the matter here.

THE GATES OF HELL PREVAIL

Our Lord's words in our text, declaring that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his Church, are seemingly

understood by the majority of Christian people. All educated ministers understand it, but they seem indisposed to communicate their knowledge to the people—probably for fear that they should gain thus a clearer knowledge of the true meaning of the Greek word, hades, rendered hell in this passage and elsewhere. The ordinary mind, ensnared with the erroneous doctrine of eternal torment, which has come down blazing and smoking from the dark ages, draws a picture from these words of our text that is far, far from their true meaning. The erroneous view sees gates red-hot and flaming, seeking to enclose the Church with the world in a hell of flame and torture under the control of devils. To those who have this view, the Lord's words signify that he will exert his power to the intent that those who are truly his shall not be shut up to that awful doom which will be upon the remainder of the race. Nothing could be farther from the truth than this picture, which comes to the average mind because of ignorance, false teaching or no teaching upon this subject.

As soon as the light of Truth shines into our minds we learn the true meaning of the Greek word hades in the New Testament and of sheol in the Old Testament which it is used to translate. If time permitted, dear friends, we could give you most abundant evidence from scores of texts that these words, as used throughout the Scriptures, had no significance of torture or fire or anything of the kind. The equivalent hades merely signifies the tomb, the death state, and is translated nearly seventy times, grave, and frequently where the word hell is given in the text, some one disposed to help the reader has in the marginal column given the true significance, "grave."

According to the Scriptures all mankind go down into sheol, hades, the tomb, the death state. Our Lord himself was dead, was in hades, the tomb, for parts of three days, and arose from the dead, arose from hades. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians describes first the deliverance of the Church from the power of hades, from death, as the first resurrection, to glory, honor and immortality. (1 Cor. 15:42-46) Then proceeding he shows (v. 55) the ultimate deliverance of the remainder of mankind who will come into harmony with the Lord, and in connection

2H196

with this he quotes from the Prophet Hosea (13:14) a shout of victory over death that will then be due, saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave (hades) where is thy victory?" The Apostle adds, "Thanks unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He gained the victory in his own case by his obedience in the things which he suffered, and by laying down his life as a propitiation for the sins of the whole

world. When he ascended up on high, he applied the merits of his victory to his Church, which he counts as “members of his body;” and these in turn he has invited to participate with him in the victory over sin and death, by laying down their lives, by walking in his steps of self-sacrifice.

The Lord’s victory applied to the Church will result in the deliverance of every member of it from the power of hades, the grave. The gates of hades shall not prevail against the Church. It was sin that brought upon mankind the penalty of death —“The soul that sinneth, it shall die” — but through Christ, believers are justified from sin; and when the entire Church shall be complete in the end of this age, the Lord’s power will be exercised and every member of his Church shall come forth from the gates of death. For eighteen hundred years or more the gates of death, the power of the tomb, have prevailed against the Lord’s Church. Like the remainder of the world they have gone down into death; but when the due time shall have fully come, every member of his Church shall be delivered from hades, the grave, by a resurrection. It was to this that our Lord referred in his last message to his Church, saying, “I am he that was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and of hades —the grave.” The key is the symbol of power, authority, ability to open the grave.

Similarly our Lord’s resurrection was prophetically and symbolically represented as the bursting of the bars of the tomb —of sheol. All who are of the Lord’s true Church, by faith and consecration, whether in man-made churches or not, whether or not they have yet obeyed the Lord’s command, “Come out of her,” —all these may rejoice in the Lord’s assurance that the gates, the bars of the tomb, shall not prevail against them; that in his due time every true believer shall be fully liberated from the bondage not only of death but also of sin.

It is another part of our glorious hope set forth in the Scriptures, when we come to understand them aright, that the work of the next age will be to liberate all of the prisoners from this great prison-house of death—sheol, hades, the tomb; and that the Church will be associated with our Lord in that great work, the final victory over death, the victory that was begun in our Lord’s resurrection and that will reach still further development in the resurrection of the Church, which is his body, the resurrection of the just and which will reach a still further development in the raising up to life and fully freeing from every vestige of death and sin all those who, during the Millennial age, coming to a knowledge of the Lord, will come also into harmony with his reasonable and just requirements and receive at its end the blessing of eternal life. All others will be remanded

to death, the second death, from which there will be no redemption, no deliverance, no resurrection.

Dear friends, let us appreciate this great foundation of faith which the Lord has laid down for us, and let us build thereon obediently to the letter and spirit of his Word and regardless of human traditions, that we have the special blessing which he is pleased to give to those he will recognize as his faithful followers —to those who will hear and heed his voice and not the voice of strangers.

The National Labor Tribune, May 28, 1905

THE ANNIVERSARY OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION

Dayton, O., May 28, 1905—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., spoke twice here Sunday at the National Opera house to large and intelligent audiences. We report the evening discourse from the text:

“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11

Not long since we commemorated our Lord's death, and subsequently, at Easter, his resurrection: forty days later he ascended to heaven, and today being almost the anniversary of that event we choose for our subject the message of the angels to the disciples who had witnessed our Lord's ascension. They were bewildered with the events of the forty-five days preceding, the Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the ass in

2H197

fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah (9:9), his subsequent betrayal and crucifixion, in harmony with his previous declarations on the subject, that the Son of man must be lifted up before he could bless the world by drawing all men to himself. Their bewilderment was intensified by the peculiar incidents of that first Easter Sunday, the Lord's various appearances on that day to Mary and the other women of his company, to the two on the way to Emmaus, to whom he revealed the meaning of the Scriptures and their fulfillment, until their hearts burned within them in sympathy with the great divine plan of which the death and resurrection of Christ constituted the pivot or center.

In the evening of the same day he had appeared to the disciples in the upper room, the doors being shut, and after speaking a few words with them and eating a piece of broiled fish and of honeycomb to demonstrate that they were not beholding merely an apparition, he vanished from their sight as mysteriously as he had come into their presence. Then several days elapsed in which they saw nothing of him, had no communication with him. On the following Sunday he appeared again in a body similar to that in which he was crucified (doubting Thomas was present on this occasion and was fully convinced). Then two weeks more elapsed in which they saw nothing, heard nothing, knew nothing about the risen Lord. The disciples were discouraged. They had left all to follow Jesus and now he had been crucified! And although he had risen from the dead yet

he was no longer with them as previously, but merely appeared and disappeared as angels of bygone days had done. They finally concluded that the active duties of life called them and the three principal disciples, Peter, James and John, former partners in the fishing business, concluded to resume operations on the Sea of Galilee.

A PROFITABLE DELAY

The Lord's ascension was evidently delayed for the very purpose of allowing all the peculiar incidents to have their proper weight and effect and to prepare the disciples for the final instructions for the great work committed to them. The trio re-entered the fishing business, and the first night they toiled in vain and caught nothing. Their disappointments were growing upon them. They had left the fishing business to be made fishers of men, and that engagement seemed to have failed when Jesus died. They had no doubt of their success at their old occupation, but it, too, had apparently failed them. Had God forsaken them? Had everything gone wrong, and would they have no more success in life? Thus did the Lord permit difficulties to work out for their good and prepare them for his still further instructions.

In the morning they saw Jesus on the shore but they knew him not. In all of his various appearances to them after his resurrection he appeared otherwise than he had been before he was crucified, except on the two occasions in the upper room where he displayed his hands and feet. On these other occasions he was a traveler or a gardener or a stranger. The stranger called to the fishermen inquiring for fish, as though he would purchase their catch. They replied that they had caught none, whereupon he suggested the casting of their net on the other side of the boat. They felt that such a change would be unavailing, because the boat was small anyway and continually turning, and what was one side now would be the other side shortly, but, perplexed by their lack of success, they were ready to follow any suggestion from any quarter, and so cast the net on the other side. Finding it immediately full of great fish, and the net itself breaking, they realized that an astounding miracle had been wrought and that the one on the shore could be none other than the risen Lord.

They hastened to the shore, more anxious to meet him than to care for the fish they had caught, and though they saw no print of nails we read that none of them durst ask him who he was, knowing it was the Lord, feeling sure from the miracle that had been wrought, and realizing that this, another appearance in different form, was in line with his various appearances to them. Then he took occasion to ask Peter, the one who first proposed returning to the fishing business—Simon Peter, lovest thou these—boats, fishing tackle and fish—more than thou lovest me? The question repeated three times

became a burning question to Peter and the lesson was never forgotten. He realized that, having become a fisher of men under the Lord's direction, he was to continue in that service. Our Lord emphasized the matter saying, "Feed my sheep," "Feed my lambs," and again vanished from them. By appointment about five hundred of all his followers gathered to meet him, as the Apostle Paul tells us. All of these meetings had been very brief and altogether less than a dozen times—probably not two hours in all during those forty days.

OUR LORD'S ASCENSION

Finally, on the fortieth day, by appointment, he met the disciples on the Mount of Olives, and after being visible to them for a few moments ascended, disappearing gradually from their sight upward. No wonder the disciples were amazed and stood watching in the direction in which he had disappeared.

2H198

We can readily see that all of these experiences were necessary to their instruction — that they might know to a certainty (1) that the Lord was risen; (2) that he was no longer the Jesus of the flesh whom they had known as their Master and Teacher for three and a half years; (3) that he was now a spirit being, who could appear and disappear at will, who could appear in one form or another, in one garb or another, appear (the doors being shut as easily as if they were open) and vanish out of their sight without walking away. It was evidently necessary that they should have these pantomime lessons, and the last of these, his ascension, was no less important than the others, for they were not as yet begotten of the holy Spirit, as we read, "The holy Spirit was not given because Jesus was not yet glorified." John 7:39

The holy Spirit would come after his ascension, and under its guidance they might understand spiritual things, but now they must be taught respecting spiritual things in a natural manner, in pantomime. Had he not on leaving them appeared in a form of flesh and thus ascended and vanished simultaneously they would not have known that he had gone away; their not seeing him would have been no proof of his having gone. Having seen him disappear they got the pantomime lesson of his departure for heaven, and this was emphasized by the angels who appeared to them and in the words of our text declared that this same Jesus would so come in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven.

“THIS SAME JESUS”

A great deal of confusion obtains amongst Christian people respecting the second coming of Christ, and much of this confusion is due to a misunderstanding of this text, and that, too, by persons who have given the subject considerable study, but whose minds have run in a certain groove which obscured the truth. Which Jesus did the angels refer to when they said, “this same Jesus”? We answer that it was the resurrected Jesus. The name of Jesus attaches to our Lord, and we use the name for him when speaking of his heavenly existence before he became a man, the pre-human Jesus. Again we recognize it as especially his name after he became the Man Christ Jesus, and it is his name still since his resurrection and ascension to glory, and it will always be his name, for it signifies a Savior, a Deliverer.

It should be noticed, however, that the Apostle explains that Jesus was put to death in the flesh and quickened in the Spirit. That is to say, the Man Christ Jesus died for our sins, the human nature perished there as our redemption price, and God raised up Jesus from the dead, not again to human nature, not again as a man, but, as the Apostle declares, “a quickening spirit,” a life-giving spirit. It was this resurrected Jesus, the Life-giver, the Spirit that ascended, which was referred to by the angels. His appearances in various forms did not prove that he was still a man after the resurrection. Quite to the contrary: the angels who are spirit beings have appeared as men with bodies of flesh and with clothing especially created for the purpose—they materialized.

So Jesus the quickening Spirit after his resurrection materialized on various occasions, for the express purpose of demonstrating that he was no longer dead but risen from the dead, and the appearing in various bodies demonstrated also that he was changed, so that no flesh body was his, and that he was no longer a human being but a spirit being, who could appear in any form. While what we are saying might be associated with the claim of Spiritualists, be it understood distinctly that we have no affiliation or sympathy with Spiritism. We do indeed concede that materializations have taken place in the past and that they may to some extent take place now and in the future, but the materializations of those known as Spiritualists we hold to be under the power and influence of the fallen angels, all evil spirits, the spirits of demons who deceive the mediums and the public.

“SO COME IN LIKE MANNER”

Many dear Christian people—who perceive that the Scriptures everywhere speak of the second coming of Christ as the great hope of the Church and the world, point out that God’s Kingdom can not come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven until the second

coming of Christ as the King, the Messiah of the world—on reading these words, “so come in like manner,” draw a very wrong conclusion from them as they do from the words, “this same Jesus.” If we ask these dear friends how they are expecting the second coming of Christ they refer you to certain Scriptures which speak of the voice of the archangel, the trump of God, a shout, the heavens rolling together as a scroll, etc., etc., and tell us that this is what they expect. We ask them, Would that be in like manner as he went away? Did he go away with shouting and trumpets and heavens rolling together, etc., etc.?

The fact is that the Lord has permitted the subject of his second advent to be misunderstood that the world might not know what to expect—that none except the most zealous and earnest of the Lord’s people might be guided to an understanding of the subject through his Word by the holy Spirit. The time

2H199

is now come for a clearer appreciation of this matter. We now see that the voice of the archangel and the trump of God correspond to the seventh trumpet of Revelation, and will make no more noise upon the atmosphere than have the preceding six. We now see that the rolling together of the heavens is symbolical, representing the rolling together of the ecclesiastical systems of our day, the federation of Christendom which is everywhere being talked about and which is hoped for as a glorious achievement.

Symbolically the earth represents society, the sea represents heathendom and anarchy, the mountains represent the kingdoms of Christendom and the heavens represent the ecclesiastical powers. In the symbol all of these are represented as taking fire and being burned up, and as being superseded by a new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness will prevail and in which “there will be no more sea.” The burning of the heavens and the earth, of the ecclesiastical and social systems of the present time are elsewhere in the Scriptures called “The time of trouble such as there was not since there was a nation,” nor ever shall be.

PAROUSIA, EPIPHANIA, APOKALUPSIS

When we come to study the matter of the second coming of the Lord carefully we find it variously referred to: First the parousia of Christ in the end of this age is drawn to our attention. The word parousia signifies presence, but it does not signify outward show or demonstration of that presence. Thus our Lord was present during all of the forty days after the resurrection, but he was manifested or visible only a few times and

altogether only a few hours. The word Epiphania, used in respect to our Lord's second advent, signifies a shining forth brightly; still, however, not indicating in what manner the shining forth shall come.

Another word used in respect to our Lord's second advent is apokalupsis, which signifies revelation, making known, disclosure— as, for instance, the Lord may have been in the upper room with the disciples, present but invisible for some time, noting their words and conduct, and then manifesting himself, revealing himself by appearing in a body of flesh which they could see and handle and talk to. As we have seen, our Lord's revealings after his resurrection were in bodies of flesh, but revealing in that manner was necessary because the disciples were not yet begotten of the Spirit. There is nothing to indicate that our Lord's apokalupsis at his second advent will be in a body of flesh. On the contrary, the Scriptures speak distinctly of his being revealed (apokalupsis) in flaming fire.

“WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS”

The sum of the Scriptural teaching seems to be that in the end of this Gospel age, at the proper time, Jesus will come again — come to set up the glorious Kingdom so long promised and so earnestly waited for by all his faithful people. He comes as the Lord and Bridegroom of his Church, the “Bride,” and to be the “King over all the earth in that day.” For a time, although present, he will be invisible. His presence will not be known to the world, and will be known only to the saints his very elect, and to them not by any spiritual phenomena, but through the light which will at that time shine from the Word of God on this subject, revealing the time at which he would be due, the manner of his second advent, etc., etc.

While thus present (in the parousia) he will have an oversight to the completion of his Church and her glorification —her change from earthly conditions to spirit conditions. As each member of the Church shall pass from earthly conditions to spiritual conditions in this harvest time he will be able to see the Lord, not as he was as a man, but as he is, “this same Jesus” —the resurrected Jesus, the quickening spirit. The Apostle explains that such a change is necessary to the Lord's saints, saying, “Flesh and blood can not inherit the Kingdom,” therefore we must all be changed. When we shall be changed to spirit nature conditions we shall be able to see the Lord and to see all of the spirit beings, the angels and the heavenly Father. During the time of the Lord's parousia, in the harvest, the end of the Gospel age, there will be a bright shining and mental illumination granted to his people through his Word,

which will enable them to appreciate the fact of his presence and to feel fully assured on the subject. This is in accord with the Lord's promise to his followers that at his second coming, in his parousia, he would knock, he would give such indication of his presence as would be sufficient to arouse those who were in the proper attitude of heart to investigate the matter, to open the door of their ears by faith to receive him, and he declared that to such he would come in and sup with them, nourish them, feed them with special spiritual refreshment. He declares that for all of his people in this time he would gird himself as a servant and come forth and serve them. They should not only know of his presence by the testimony of the Scriptures, but they should have a special demonstration of it by the clearness and beauty of the plan as it would shine into their hearts under his ministrations. Luke 12:37; Rev. 2:20

Later on will come the public revelation or demonstration that the Lord has assumed the control of the world. Every eye shall see him, not in the sense

2H200

of seeing the flesh of the Jesus who walked the vales of Palestine, but in the sense of recognizing the power and authority and government and judgments of him who in the end of this age shall take to himself his great power and reign. The world is represented as seeing the Lord thus with the eyes of its mind in the judgments that are coming, and they are represented as calling for the rocks and mountains to cover them from his presence. Not that worldly men will gain such faith as to be able to pray for mountains to topple over and crush them, nor that they will go so far as to suppose that this will be the easiest way to extinguish life. No! No!

“AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH”

The symbolism signifies that in the time of trouble that is coming, men, without seeing the Lord in person, will realize the beginning of the reign of righteousness, and they will seek to be covered or shielded from those troubles by entering into the caves of the rocks — that is, by seeking protection and cover of social organizations, hoping thus to escape the “wrath of the Lamb.” They will seek the great mountains, the strong kingdoms, hoping that in these they will have better opportunities of escaping the anarchistic troubles which will be upon the whole world. But none of these will cover them, hide them, for the time of trouble that is coming is to be worldwide — there will be no escaping it. According to the Scriptural picture it will mean the dashing in pieces of all the kingdoms of earth as potters' vessels; it will mean the carrying of the mountains or kingdoms into the midst of the sea of anarchy; it will

mean that the heavens of ecclesiasticism rolling together, uniting for mutual protection or strength, will eventually be destroyed by the social conflagration of that great day of the Lord.

Referring to his parousia, his presence before the apokalupsis or revealing in flaming fire and trouble, our Lord explains to us that in the day of his presence matters will be going on much the same as in the past. The world's affairs will not be interrupted thereby, for it will be secret, unknown to the world, known only to the Church, to the Bride of Christ. At that time men will be eating and drinking, planting and building just as they did in the days of Noah, just as they knew not in those days how close they were to the great catastrophe, the end of their age. (Matt. 24:39) Let us notice carefully that the Lord here does not liken his presence to the flood nor to the days of the flood, but to the days that were before the flood — before Noah and his family entered into the ark — “So it shall be in the days (parousia, presence) of the Son of man.”

“HE THAT HATH AN EAR LET HIM HEAR”

We are now living in this very time mentioned by our Lord, the time of the parousia, the presence of the Son of man, who is making up his jewels, who is reckoning with his servants to whom he committed the pounds and the talents. Very shortly the work will be complete; the full number of the elect will have been tested, proven, and admitted to the joys of their Lord beyond the veil. Then will come the revelation of the Son of man and the evidences to the world that the Kingdom of righteousness has been established — the time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.

We do not call attention to this matter with a view to alarming the world. We know, on the contrary, that the world is deaf to the messages of the Lord's Word, and all the better it is for it to be deaf. We address those who have the “ear to hear,” whether they be few or many. Our message is for these and these alone. Others hearing will not hear, neither will they understand until the time of trouble shall be upon them.

In speaking to the world we prefer to emphasize, according to the promise of the Lord, the glorious favors and blessings which are to be world-wide and ocean-deep during the Millennial age — as soon as the troubles shall have consumed the present order of things and thus have prepared the way for Emanuel's Kingdom, the Kingdom of righteousness and peace, which for a thousand years is to bless and guide and control and uplift the poor groaning creation, to the intent that by the time of its close every member of our race will have been blessed with a full opportunity of attaining to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by the precious blood.

Time does not permit us to furnish evidences on this subject — to prove that we are now in the presence of the Son of man, in “the days of the Son of man.” (Luke 17:26) But those who have the hearing ear will, under the guidance of the holy Spirit, hunger and thirst for more evidences along these lines, and we have them in abundance and are pleased to dispense them as we have received them —freely. We will be pleased to have the addresses of those who would like to investigate these subjects further, that we may send them some free literature.

2H201

The Greensburg Weekly Press, June 5, 1905

THE ANNIVERSARY OF PENTECOST

Chattanooga, Tenn., June 4—The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society’s convention here opened Sunday by an address of welcome from the old veteran General A. P. Stewart. It continues for two days more. Pastor C. T. Russell, President of the Society, spoke twice today. We give his evening discourse as follows:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (the disciples) were all with one accord in one place... And they were all filled with the holy Spirit.” Acts 2:1,4

Today is approximately the anniversary of Pentecost. The word “Pentecost” signifies the fiftieth day. The fifty days began to count from the Jewish Passover Sabbath, the fifteenth day of Nisan: seven times seven weeks (7 x 7 equals 49) brought Pentecost, which the Jews celebrated year by year during their dispensation, but understood not the deep significance of the type.

I need scarcely remind you of the great transactions of that Pentecost day which followed our Lord’s death and resurrection and ascension. You will remember the account of which our text is a portion. You recall that before leaving his followers our Lord informed them that a new dispensation was opening and that although he had previously forbidden them to go to Gentiles or Samaritans, they should understand that henceforth their message must be unrestricted . . . to “him that hath an ear to hear” of any nation, but that their mission, their work, was to begin at Jerusalem. You recall further that our Lord admonished the disciples that they were not yet equipped for the work of the new dispensation, and instructed them, saying, “Tarry ye at Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.”(Luke 24:49) They probably knew not how long the tarrying would be, for

“The holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:39), and they could not understand spiritual things until they obtained this blessing. True, a measure of the holy Spirit had been on the apostles during our Lord’s ministry, so that they worked miracles, healing the sick, casting out devils, etc.; but the power under which they then operated was not from the Father direct, but was imparted to them by our Lord Jesus, whose representatives they were in the teaching and preaching and miracle working. However, the Lord had promised them a recognition by the Father in due time, and it was for this that they were to wait.

They were not waiting as sinners for power, for repentance, for they were already believers in the Lord Jesus, accepted of him, and, more than this, they were already consecrated to the doing of the Father’s will. But, although every proper step on their part had been taken, they had not yet been acknowledged of the Father—they had not yet received the spirit of adoption into his family. They had left the house of Moses, the house of servants, and had attached themselves to Jesus, the Son of God, that they might be members of the house of sons, this liberty or privilege having been accorded them (John 1:12); but now they waited for the matter to become bona fide, actual.

“DIVERSE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”

The descent of the holy Spirit upon them might have been as quiet a matter as was the descent of the holy Spirit upon our Lord Jesus at the time of his baptism—might have been no more marked a manifestation than there is on the Lord’s people today, when, becoming united to the Lord, they become partakers of his Spirit and are adopted into the Father’s family. However, it was not only in the interest of the early Church but in our interest also that our Lord marked this great and important transaction with wonderful outward manifestations—the cloven tongue and flames of fire resting upon the heads of the disciples and possibly upon others, the rushing mighty wind filling the place where they were and causing some kind of sensation, the after miracles of the tongues and other gifts of the Spirit. All these attestations to the momentous significations of Pentecost we may well rejoice in. They impress upon us the importance of the great events which on that day had their beginning.

What great events? We answer, in harmony with Peter’s words, that the events of that day signified (1) that the Lord who had ascended from them ten days before had reached the heavenly courts, had presented to the Father the evidence of his sacrifice, and had made a portion of the merit of the same applicable to his people—to the household of faith—to all who would believe in and

accept him as their Savior. These things were shown back in the Mosaic types: the High Priest, having slain the bullock, took its blood into the Most Holy and sprinkled it upon the Mercy Seat, to make atonement for his body (the under priests) and for his household (the house of Levi, which typifies the household of faith—all believers). As soon as the blood of the bullock was sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat, Justice pronounced absolution of sins for the particular class for whom the blood was applied, who, therefore, were in fellowship with God and in harmony with the blessings he had to dispense. Justice relinquished its claim

2H202

and divine Mercy accepted the consecrated ones as prospective members of the body of Christ—as sons of God. (2) The sending forth of the holy Spirit marked the adoption of these into the family of God, into joint-heirship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Peter, explaining this matter, says that it typified that Christ was exalted to the right hand of God—that he had been received into the heavenly courts with glory and distinction as an overcomer, as one who had performed the Father’s will, and to whom the high reward was given of sitting down with the Father in his throne—the throne of the universe. The sending of the holy Spirit upon his faithful followers was to be to them an attestation of all this and of their acceptance with the Father through him. (Rev. 3:21) Jesus, “being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy Spirit (the holy Spirit as promised), he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.” Acts 2:33

JOEL’S PROPHECY SHOULD BE REVERSED

Peter proceeds to point out that this pouring out of the Spirit was a partial fulfillment of a prophecy made long before by the Prophet Joel respecting the “last days.” We pause here to notice that this expression “last days” is generally misunderstood. It is generally forgotten by those who study the subject that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and that the entire period from the creation to full eradication of sin is a period of seven days—seven periods of one thousand years each, corresponding to the seven days of the week. Joel prophesied about 800 B. C., consequently before the middle of the great week of seven thousand years; and the expression, in the last days, would therefore properly refer to the thousand-year periods with which the great week should close. As a matter of fact, this Pentecostal

blessing occurred in the beginning of the fifth of these great thousand-year days. However, the Apostle Peter does not say that the Pentecostal blessing fulfilled all that was predicted by Joel, but merely that it was in his prediction—a part of it. And while it was a most important part, it by no means represented the larger part of Joel's prediction. The larger part is to be fulfilled shortly in the morning of the seventh of these great days—in the Millennial morning.

Turning to Joel's prophecy we see that it has two distinct parts—one part exclusively for the "servants and handmaidens" of the Lord and the other part for "all flesh." (Joel 2:28, 29) Pentecost marked the pouring out of the Spirit of the Lord upon the servants and handmaidens, and this blessing there poured out has been for all belonging to this class throughout this Gospel age. Pouring out of the Spirit of the Lord upon all flesh is due at the inauguration of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, when Satan shall be bound, and when the sons of God shall shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father, for the blessing and refreshment and restitution of all the families of the earth. Matt. 13:43; Rom. 8:17-19; Acts 3:21

The statement of this prophecy is an illustration of the manner in which the Lord throughout the Scriptures has stated his Truth, setting it forth in such a form that its force and meaning should not be understood until the due time should arrive and his people should be guided by the Spirit into the understanding of the same. The peculiarity of the statement is that the blessings of the Millennial age are mentioned first, and the blessings of this Gospel age, last, so that this reversal of the order of occurrence has put a haze upon the whole subject. Nevertheless, when we rightly consider it, the statement is properly enough applicable to all, including the Church. The operation of God's love and mercy through and in conjunction with the atonement sacrifice of Christ is to bring the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh, but this general outpouring will be after certain days, represented in this Gospel age, the fifth day and the sixth day—the fifth thousand and sixth thousand years of the great week, and hence it will be the seventh; but the blessing of the Lord's servants and handmaidens will not be after those days (the fifth and the sixth days) but "in those days." The entire matter is simple enough, plain as can be when once the eyes of our understanding open to a comprehension of the greater heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God, and much clearer than we had at first anticipated.

THE TWO DIVISIONS OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT WORK

The same blessing is represented similarly in the types of the day of atonement. That day was for the purpose of

making atonement for the sins of “all the people,” all Israel, who typified all mankind of all nations redeemed by the precious blood of Christ who will enter the covenant relationship with God at any time by reason of the blood of the atonement. After making this general statement respecting the work of the whole day of atonement, the type proceeds to particularize, and tells first of the sacrifice of the bullock, and, as we have just seen, shows that its blood was applied in a restricted sense—not for all Israel, not for all the people, who will eventually become God’s covenant people through the benefits of the atonement. The merits of the sacrifice of the bullock were typically applied to those constituting the under priesthood (the body of the high priest), whose antitype is the little flock, the Royal Priesthood, the tribe of Levi, the

2H203

priestly family, representing the antitypical “household of faith” developed before the Millennial age. The first part of the atonement, we see, was separate and distinct from the after outpouring of the Spirit, which is to be general—upon all flesh.

The second part of the atonement sacrifice—namely, the sacrifice of the Lord’s goat—was performed by the same priest and represented the participation of the Lord’s faithful footstep followers with him in this great work. It is his work, not ours; but he accepts us as members of his body, and permits us as such to share with him in his work of sacrifice. He permits us to suffer with him, to lay down our lives for the brethren, “to be dead with him,” and in all this we are counted as “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ;” so that really the entire period from the Lord’s baptism of the holy Spirit down to the end of this age is the day of atonement. The important feature of it all was that performed by our Redeemer himself, which he finished at Calvary. In consequence of that sacrifice, we, his consecrated followers, are “accepted in the Beloved,” and privileged to die with him as members of his body. It is to this end that the Pentecostal blessing of the holy Spirit has been poured out upon the servants and handmaidens of the Lord throughout this Gospel age—to enable them to walk in the footsteps of their Lord, to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and, because counted in as members of the body of Christ and suffering in this present time, to be glorified as soon as the number is complete and the sufferings and testings accomplished.

According to the type, on the completion of the Church—the last member of the elect having made his calling and election sure, having finished his course with joy, having had fellowship with Christ in his death—the

blood of the second sacrifice of the atonement will be offered to Justice. It is all Christ's offering, since we are nothing of ourselves, but have our entire standing before the Father as reckonedly members of the body of Christ—a Royal Priesthood under a Royal High Priest. As the Father accepted first of all the atonement sacrifice and blessed our Lord and sent the holy Spirit upon the Church, so, when the second sacrifice shall have been offered, we may be confident that the remaining portion of Joel's prophecy will have ample fulfilment—the holy Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh.

DOES NOT IMPLY UNIVERSALISM

As the holy Spirit was poured out upon the waiting believers by the Lord, so the Lord and those believers glorified with him in the Kingdom will pour out the Father's blessing of restitution, of knowledge of God and spiritual assistances, upon all mankind; and in full harmony with this is the statement of the Prophet respecting that glorious Millennial period, "The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. And they shall no more teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, because all shall know him from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord!" This does not mean universal salvation, but a universal opportunity for securing "the gift of God, everlasting life" on condition of obedience. As the alternative of wilful sin now incurred by the "servants and handmaids" is Second Death, so the same alternative confronts the world of mankind, "all flesh," when blest by the enlightenment of the holy Spirit during the Millennium.

The servants and handmaids of the Lord have needed the refreshment and guidance of the holy Spirit throughout this Gospel age, and without it none of us could surely hope to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Without it we should be unable to comprehend the spiritual things, and consequently unable to grasp the blessings that are freely given unto us of God in the present time, as well as unable to appreciate the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man—the things God hath in reservation for them that love him, which God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:9, 11) O, how much the Pentecostal blessing, the spirit of adoption, the seal of our sonship, means to us who are seeking to make our calling and election sure to those heavenly things to which the Lord has called us—the heavenly Kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality!

Let me guard you, however, against a serious error into which many saintly people seem disposed to fall. They seem to expect Pentecostal blessings individually and collectively yearly, or at least every few years, and some continually entreat the Lord in every prayer for a

repetition of that Pentecostal outpouring of divine favor—the holy Spirit. This is the result of a misconception. The Pentecostal outpouring of the holy Spirit was not merely for nor upon the early Church, but equally upon any and all of us who are their successors throughout this age. It needs no repetition. To illustrate: Consider our Lord Jesus, upon whom first of all the holy Spirit was shed forth by the Father at the time of his baptism at Jordan at the beginning of his ministry. He needed not to go yearly to Jordan to receive fresh baptisms; he needed not to receive them anywhere. The baptism which he received continued with him—the holy Spirit granted once was not withdrawn. Its withdrawal would have meant his death as a New Creature. The blessing which came to the Church

2H204

at Pentecost was part of that same blessing which came to our Lord Jesus, the Head.

The whole transaction was typically represented in the anointing of Aaron, the typical high priest. The anointing oil was all poured upon the Head, and Aaron's head typified our Lord Jesus, whom God hath given to be Head over the Church, which is his body. (Eph. 1:22, 23) God gave not the Spirit by measure unto him, is the record. It was poured out without limit, without stint; but it did not reach the body until Pentecost. The body could not be accepted or recognized of the Father until the atonement for our sins had been made with the precious blood; but the atonement having been applied and accepted, the holy Spirit was poured out. In the type this was represented by the holy anointing oil running down from the head to the body.

THE CHURCH ONE ANOINTED BODY— THE CHRIST

Mark how the Prophet David draws this to our attention, assuring us that the anointing oil ran down Aaron's beard and over all of his body even to the skirts of his garments. The Pentecostal blessing is abundant for all of the members of the body of Christ. When by faith and obedience, justification and sanctification, we come into membership in the body of Christ, we come under this which was represented in the type by the holy anointing oil—the antitype of which is the holy Spirit. If ever we are “cut off” as branches which do not bear fruitage, it would mean our total separation from the Lord and his Spirit, the anointing which we have received of him and which constitutes the earnest or foretaste of our inheritance. The inheritance will be attained in the life-resurrection promised to all the faithful.

Our petitions, therefore, properly contain no requests for fresh Pentecosts, even as in the petitions of our Lord and the disciples such requests are not to be found. Nevertheless it is entirely proper for us to pray with the apostles that the holy Spirit may abound more and more in us, and to be in accord with our Lord's sentiment when he said that the Father is more willing to give the holy Spirit to them that ask him than earthly parents are to give good gifts unto their children. This giving of the holy Spirit enjoined in the Scriptures and appreciated by us should not be confounded with the Pentecostal blessing, which was never repeated except on one occasion, namely, when the Lord marked the acceptance of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, and thus taught the lesson that henceforth there would be no distinction between Jew and Gentile as respects the favors of the divine promises.

What then do we mean if we ask to be more and more filled with the holy Spirit if we do not mean new Pentecostal endowments? The thought is that when we come into union with Christ through the consecration of our hearts and wills, when we are accepted as members of his body, all the blessings of God represented at Pentecost belong to us, not as individuals but as members of the anointed Church. As members of the anointed body, under divine favor and leadings, it is our privilege to grow in grace, in knowledge, and in all the fruits of the Spirit. At the beginning of our consecration, we surrendered our own sweet wills that we might take the Lord's will in every particular, that we might have the Lord's Spirit in respect to all of life's affairs; but it is one thing to will and another thing to receive. The surrendering of our wills, so as to desire to have the heavenly Father's will, spirit, disposition, mind, dwell in us, is the act of a moment, but it requires days and months and years to become fully transformed by the renewing of our minds. Rom. 12:2

Gradually the Lord's favor toward us, as members of the anointed body, permits us to see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths in his love and in his character, and as we see this the transforming influences in our own thoughts and conduct progress. As the Spirit of the Lord comes into our lives we come more and more to love things which at one time we did not love and appreciate and to hate things which at one time seemed to have little or nothing objectionable in them. Right and wrong have remained fixed as they were, but our views of them have changed as we have, under the guidance and blessing of the Lord, made progress from grace to grace and from knowledge to knowledge.

The National Labor Tribune, June 11, 1905

ORDAINED PREACHERS AND HEARERS

Allegheny, Pa., June 11—Pastor Russell had a good audience Sunday afternoon at Carnegie Hall, Allegheny. Close attention was paid to the discourse, which was from the prophecy of Isaiah, “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek.” Isa. 61:1

Our text applied primarily to our Lord Jesus and his anointing of the holy Spirit and his preaching, but, as we have heretofore seen, the Scriptures with one voice declare that as Jesus is the Head of the Church, which

2H205

is his body, so all the members of that body participate with him in the anointing of the holy Spirit and also in the ministry of the Truth. This might be abundantly established by Scriptural testimony, but we assume that the majority of our hearers are thoroughly acquainted with the Apostle’s explicit statements to the effect that we are members in particular of the body of Christ, and are filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in the present time, and are to be associated with our Lord in glory, according to his promise that to him that overcometh he will grant to sit with him in his throne, in harmony also with the declaration that if we suffer with him we shall also be glorified together.

It is, therefore, proper that we apply the words of this text not only to our Lord Jesus himself, but also to all whom his Word recognizes as members of his body, members of his Church—namely, to those believers in the redemptive work of Christ who have accepted the same personally, who have turned from sin to walk in the ways of righteousness, and who have consecrated their lives wholly and unreservedly to the service of the Lord.

THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A week ago we considered the Pentecostal blessing upon the Church, and discerned that it constituted an anointing of the Lord—a setting apart to divine service, an endowment with power from on high, spiritual power, a new mind, a clearer perception of spiritual things and ability to understand and appreciate and cooperate with the divine purposes. Our text tells us that this anointing with the holy Spirit constitutes an ordination to preach, and a moment’s reflection convinces us that none could be properly qualified to represent the Lord and his Truth unless he was thus qualified and anointed and able to discern the spiritual things, because who can express to

others that which he does not discern and appreciate himself? How could anyone declare the mysteries of God and of his plan unless first of all his own eyes of understanding had been opened and his own heart had been enlightened, permitting such an appreciation and making possible a truthful setting forth of the same to others?

True, in the early Church the anointing of the holy Spirit was accompanied by certain outward demonstrations which are not now granted to the anointed ones. These outward demonstrations or evidences of the anointing were called “gifts,” and consisted of power to heal disease by the word or the touch, the gift of prophesying or public speaking, power to speak in unknown tongues—in languages that had never been learned—power to interpret such tongues or languages, power to discern spirits, to read thoughts, as when Peter read the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira when they attempted to deceive, etc. These “gifts” we can readily see were valuable to the early Church for the establishment of their own faith, for the demonstration to others that they were really the people of the Lord, and for their own upbuilding in grace and knowledge at a time when the New Testament was not prepared and its aid in the study of the divine plan was not available.

But, as the Apostle intimated, these “gifts” having served their purpose would pass away, and would be succeeded by certain “fruits” of the Spirit. To the natural man the “gifts” might seem to be the more valuable, but to the advanced Christian the fruits of the Spirit will be seen to be more desirable and the better attestation of divine favor. Speaking of these fruits of the Spirit, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, faith, hope, love, the Apostle assures us that love is the principal one, and really includes all the other fruits of the Spirit. All other fruits and graces of the Spirit are merely elementary developments, part of that quality which in its completeness is called love, and which by our Lord is explained to mean, love to God with all our hearts, minds, being, strength, and love for our neighbor as for ourselves.

DISCERNING ANOINTED ONES

Our Lord assures us that as a good tree will be known by its good fruit and an evil tree by its evil fruit, so his followers will be known by their possession of the holy Spirit and the fruits and graces which they will manifest in their daily lives. This does not signify that those who are begotten of the holy Spirit or, as expressed in this text, anointed with the holy Spirit, will be perfect in the flesh. Quite to the contrary—it is not the flesh which is begotten again, it is the New Creature, the new mind, the new will. The anointing received as New Creatures manifests itself by its opposition to sin, its harmony with righteousness, its sympathy with everything that goes to

make up the divine standard of character and co-operation with the divine plan.

At first it is a mere likeness of the principles of righteousness, meekness, gentleness, patience, love, and a desire to develop in these graces of the Spirit; but subsequently, as this anointing abides and Christian character develops these traits become more and more manifest, not only to the person himself, but through his conduct to others. This growth in grace, in knowledge, in love; this is the development of the fruits of the Spirit. Just as the apple blossom precedes the little nubbin of fruit, and as this gradually enlarges and matures, so do these graces of the spirit gradually develop in the hearts of those who have been begotten again by the holy Spirit, by the Word of Truth.

2H206

“THE WORLD KNOWETH US NOT”

The world understands nothing about this begetting of the holy Spirit, this spirit of a new mind or will in accord with righteousness. It understands nothing about this anointing of the holy Spirit, under the influence of which old things pass away and new hopes and aims and objects in life take their places. But each one who has passed through these experiences understands them; each one begotten again is aware of the change in his mind, his will knows that he has consecrated his life to righteousness and to the Lord's service, and realizes that an anointing has come to him. Such are able to sympathize with one another, to discern the new mind one of another, and to sympathize with one another in the conflicts of this new will with the spirit of the world and with the flesh and its desires. Hence the Scriptures exhort the Spirit begotten ones to special love and sympathy one with another in a manner that others cannot, because the world knoweth us not even as it knew him not, and because our sympathy and fellowship must be with those who are similarly begotten to the new nature and inspired by the new hope.

The outward manifestations of these graces or fruits may be more or less rapid according to temperament, environment and zeal, but in every case the new mind, the new spirit, the new nature will be able to identify itself to others similarly spirit-begotten. And this anointing of the Spirit, wherever it is recognized, constitutes the bond of fellowship and brotherhood in Christ. It is not only the spirit of consecration, but also the spirit of the Truth, which signifies the enlightenment or illumination through the divine revelation of the Scriptures. It signifies, therefore, a growing knowledge not only respecting God's plan of salvation and our

relationship to it, but also a personal intimacy with the Lord.

ORDAINED AND UNORDAINED PREACHERS

According to our text none have ordination of God to act as his mouthpieces except they have received this anointing. Such may be known by the fruits of the Spirit, which all the Spirit-begotten ones will soon be able to detect, and which will more or less be manifest also to the world, although the world will not know how to make allowances for having the treasure of the new mind in an imperfect human vessel, although the world will not know how to sympathize with the weaknesses of the fallen flesh, and may often be apt to denounce and condemn those who are walking to the best of their ability not after the flesh but after the Spirit. We fear, however, that if this line were distinctly seen, sharply drawn, many who are now prominent ministers, reverends, doctors of divinity, would be seen to be barred from the Lord's service. Many of them have had ordination from men but have never had the ordination of God, and hence are unable to see spiritual things themselves and equally incompetent to present such things to others. They have not been anointed or ordained of the Lord to preach.

On the other hand many of the Lord's people misled by the human distinctions between clergy and laity and the privileges and limitations accorded to these by Churchianity, fail to recognize that they are ordained to preach, and that unless they are continually preaching they are failing to accomplish the divine will—failing to fulfill the ordination which was granted them of the Lord when they received the anointing of the holy Spirit. This does not mean, however, that all who are anointed of the holy Spirit are appointed of the Lord to preach in the same manner, for, as the Apostle would explain, we have gifts differing one from another, and, our opportunities in life are amongst these talents. For instance, some may have the talent for presenting the divine message of mercy and truth in a private manner, and may be very effective in their ministries, in their services; others may have the talents and opportunities for more public service. The sisters, for instance, are not Scripturally authorized to engage in the more public functions of preaching, but they, nevertheless, have glorious opportunities in a more private way of showing forth the praises of him who has called us from darkness into his marvelous light and who has anointed us to preach, to declare, to make known, the good tidings.

“LIVING EPISTLES KNOWN AND READ OF ALL”

As an illustration of forceful preaching of a female member of the anointed body, I want to tell you of a little incident which occurred on my last visit to the friends in New York City. Following the afternoon service an apparently very intelligent and accomplished lady sought a private interview for a few moments, in which she requested my prayers that she might be enabled to see and fully grasp the Divine Plan of the Ages, and to come to the point of a full consecration of her heart that she might enjoy the anointing of the holy Spirit.

She explained that for years she had been an agnostic, a total unbeliever in Christianity and the Bible, and that her friends and acquaintances were honorable people of the same class. I inquired how she had become interested so as to attend the meeting. She replied that she had a sister-in-law who had received the glorious message of the divine plan as set forth in MILLENNIAL DAWN, and that the Truth had made

2H207

such a wonderful change in her sister's character, disposition, etc., every way, that she was convinced that there was a power of God in connection with his Word that she had never dreamed of, a power which by its fruit attested that it was of God. She said, "I have never known an instance of such a wonderful transformation of character as that which occurred in my sister-in-law, and I came to the meeting today that I might begin to learn the ways of the Lord. After this sort and for this reason I am asking your prayers to this end."

Who could deny that the sister who had received that anointing and whose life had given that testimony had been preaching the good tidings in a most effective manner? Who could say that because as a sister she was not ordained to a public ministry that she was therefore debarred from the blessed privilege of showing forth the praises of him who hath called us from darkness to light? The Apostle tells us that this is true of all of us; that the world which will not read books and tracts and which cares not to attend preaching will read our living epistles, our daily lives, and in harmony with the Apostle, we exhort that all shall thus preach day by day the glorious message of our great salvation which is of God in Christ Jesus.

WHAT WE ARE TO PREACH

It should be noticed that we are to preach the good tidings, not bad tidings of great misery. We remember

the theme of the angels' song at the announcement of our Lord's birth, "We bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." So here the anointing which we receive of the Lord is that which leads us to declare the good tidings of this great salvation in all its lengths and breadths and heights and depths. Alas, that for centuries the good tidings of great joy has been overwhelmed by the loud voices of churchianity, which, during the Dark Ages, have misrepresented our heavenly Father's plan, misinterpreted and twisted his Word, giving the impression that he is the great adversary of our race, who even before we were created prepared for the great majority of us, a place for our torment, making all the preparations for fuel, and fireproof demons for our injury. Alas, that some of us who are his children, and who had received of the anointing of his spirit, should for a moment have imagined that such a message was the one referred to as the good tidings for the meek, the good tidings of great joy. How glad we are that in the dawning of the Millennial morning the shadows are beginning to flee away, and the glorious light of the goodness of God is beginning to be seen shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

TO WHOM SHALL WE PREACH?

Amongst the grievous mistakes of the Dark Ages and the legitimate outgrowth of its misconceptions of God's plan has been the thought that the Gospel is to be preached to the wicked, to railers, to blasphemers, to the hard-hearted, etc. Nothing is further from the teaching of God's Word nor from the example of our Lord Jesus and his apostles. Our text states the matter properly, saying, that our ordination, our anointing, was to preach the good tidings to the meek—to those who manifest a humble attitude of mind, a teachable spirit; to those who desire to know the truth, who manifest a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; to those who realize to some extent their own blindness and who desire to see the light. Our commission is to preach the good tidings to these.

Notice how our Lord and the apostles followed this course. Our Lord in sending forth his apostles in the end of the Jewish age limited their endeavors to the Jewish nation, which for centuries had been under divine instruction through the Law and the prophets. His words are, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles (heathen) and into the cities of the Samaritans (a semi-religious people) enter ye not; for I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." True, subsequently, after his death and resurrection, the apostles and all of the Lord's people were fully commissioned to carry the message of salvation also to the Gentiles, to the heathen—to preach the Gospel to every creature without restriction as to their relationship to the favored nation of Israel—to every person whom they might meet in whom they

should find the ear to hear, the spirit of meekness and desire to know the way of God and his salvation. This is the same commission to us still, and our course should be the same.

We should understand that the message of God's favor is to whoever has a desire to know it, and that such only are the meek, and this would mean that where we find special evidences of a lack of meekness that we should desist from efforts in those directions and should confine our labors to the most promising fields. Such was the course of the Apostles. Wherever they went they first sought out the most religious people to preach to them. Of course if the time should ever come when all those who are meek and show a desire to know the way of the Lord should have been fully instructed, and there should be no more opportunity to preach to them, we might go to the froward, the proud, the boastful, the disdainful, the self-righteous, the wicked, the hard hearted, but we have no reason to expect that our labors would have success with that class if we preach the true message. They require another kind of treatment, a kind of treatment which the Lord proposes to give them in the Millennial age which shall follow this present age and of which we shall have more to say again.

2H208

“The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek he will teach his ways.” (Psa. 25:9) The Lord in this present age is choosing out of the world a little flock, a peculiar people. He wishes to instruct them and develop them and fit them to be the Royal Priesthood of the coming associates as members of his body in the great Kingdom work then to be inaugurated for the blessing of the world in general, including the unmeek—to then bring to the knowledge of every creature, under the most favorable conditions and terms, the mercy of God, to the intent that they may then hear and be blessed. Even the meek will have plenty to do to learn the necessary lessons of faith and obedience in the school of Christ, walking in the narrow way.

Since the Scriptures, then, are so explicit as to the class whom the anointed should seek to reach with the Lord's message, how comes it that Churchianity in general has made so great a mistake as to consider that its special mission was to the opposite class, and that the meek need no instruction, need no guidance, need no conversion, etc. We answer that an erroneous doctrine of everlasting torment is responsible for the mistaken view, under the teaching that all the world was condemned through Adam to eternal torment, and that only those who are accepted of Christ would be saved from that awful fate. The tendency was to count the naturally meek and gentle as already saved and to give them little

attention, expending effort mainly upon the wicked, the vile, the perverse. A discernment of the Divine Plan of the Ages helps to set this matter straight again and to show us why, as above, the Church is now being selected from amongst the meek only, from amongst the teachable, and that the work of the Lord for the great mass of the world, the unmeek, the unfit even for the training of this Gospel age, is left for the next age, for the Millennial age.

In some respects it is a mercy and a blessing that the world is in large measure blind and deaf, and therefore in the same proportion irresponsible as respects the message now being delivered to the meek, who may have ears to hear and eyes to see. It is with these as it was with the scribes and Pharisees and doctors of divinity who conspired against our Lord and put him to death. Their guilt would have been terrible had they really known what they were doing, but committed in ignorance, their great sin will be forgiven, as our Lord declared, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men... and whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him." As the Apostle Peter intimates, speaking on this very subject, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." As the Lord through the prophet intimates, "I will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and of supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced and shall mourn"—in that day—in the Millennial day, when the new order of things will be introduced and when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, scattering all its darkness and blindness.

"PREACH THE WORD"

I am addressing the meek class, and particularly those of this class who have received the anointing of the holy Spirit, all of whom, therefore, are commissioned or privileged to preach, but have the responsibility also of doing this to the meek wherever they may find them. I am sure that I voice your sentiments and tell your experiences when I say that in proportion as you have been loyal to the anointing you have received, in proportion as you have self-sacrificingly endeavored to show forth the praises of the Lord and his wonderful plan of salvation, in that same proportion has been your own heart-development and growth in grace and in knowledge; and in proportion as you may have allowed fear and other considerations to hinder you from telling the good tidings, in that proportion you have failed to make progress and have experienced leanness of soul. Let us more and more appreciate this blessing of the Lord, our anointing, and let us by word of mouth, by pen, by printed page and by our living epistles day by day, tell all the meek the good tidings of the great salvation which is of God in Christ Jesus, a salvation which now affects the heart, the life, the hopes, every

interest of this present life, and which extends into the future, assuring us of a completion of salvation in the resurrection, and that if faithful we shall then enter into the joys of our Lord and be participants with him in the Millennial Kingdom to bless the world.

The National Labor Tribune, June 18, 1905

THE TRUE GOSPEL AND ITS EFFECTS

Pastor C. T. Russell preached in Carnegie Hall at 3 p. m. last Sunday. His topic was "The true Gospel and its effect," from the text, "He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isaiah 61:1) He said:

2H209

On last Lord's day we considered the forepart of this same verse of Scripture, and saw the particular class ordained of God to be the preachers of his Gospel, and the particular class, the meek, predestined hearers of it. Today we noticed some of the particular features of this Gospel. It is well known to all of you that the word Gospel signifies "good tidings," or a joyful message, and yet we all know that what is usually understood to be a Gospel sermon is one of bad tidings of great misery to nearly all people. This however is merely a false definition, a slander which has come down to us from the dark ages. The word gospel as used throughout the Scriptures has its one legitimate meaning, as illustrated, for instance, in the message which the angels delivered when announcing the birth of our Redeemer. They said, "Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people."

Similarly our text prophesied that Christ, and all the members of his body anointed to preach, would similarly preach good tidings of great joy for all people. Our text does not phrase the matter in these particular words, but this is its meaning. It declares that the good tidings, the message of joy, is liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those that are in bondage. There is one great prison-house, which, for the number of its prisoners and the security with which it holds them, has no competitor on earth—it is the prison-house of death. From its bondage none can free themselves. There is but one key to this prison: it was held by Justice for over four thousand years, while hundreds of millions of the race went into the prison. Nearly nineteen hundred years ago Justice disposed of the key to this great prison—turned it over to Jesus and the mercy and love which he represents. The key—that is, the power, the authority,

the ability to open the prison—is now fully and completely in the hands of him who redeemed us with his own precious blood—in the hands of him who bought all the prisoners, who paid the death penalty and who on this account is fully authorized by Justice to release the prisoners.

THE BEGINNING OF THE FULFILMENT

It will be remembered that our Lord Jesus made personal application of this prophecy to himself. Entering into the synagogue at Capernaum he was recognized as a man of letters and asked to read a selection from the book of Isaiah. He read our text and said, “This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.” (Luke 4:21) He was then and there declaring the opening of the prison doors and the release of the prisoners. He had no reference to the inferior prisons amongst men: John the Baptist was in Herods’ prison at that very time, and the Lord neither mentioned his deliverance nor attempted it. His work was on a grander scale: he was redeeming the whole world of mankind from the prison-house of death, in which Justice had shut them up under the divine sentence when Eden was forfeited by disobedience. In virtue of his thus paying the redemption price for the sins of the whole world he was privileged by the holy Spirit upon him to declare that the time would come when the prison-doors would be opened, when the prisoners would be set at liberty; and he did declare this, saying, “The hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth.” All in the prison-house shall be delivered not one shall be left. John 5:25, 28

This declaration of the wholesale prison delivery does not, however, as some might suppose, imply a universal salvation. It merely implies a salvation or deliverance from the tomb, from the Adamic sentence of death. Such a deliverance, associated with the new conditions of the thousand-year day of deliverance, the Millennial age, means that all the families of the earth—involved in father Adam’s sentence and imprisoned in death on that account—shall be set free therefrom, to the intent that they may have a full, gracious opportunity of knowing right from wrong, good from evil, of coming to a knowledge of the Lord and to an opportunity for eternal life through faith and obedience. Whoever then enjoying those glorious opportunities shall sin wilfully, deliberately, rejecting the favor of God, preferring sin, shall die the second death—shall go into the prison-house a second time and be then without hope of any deliverance, for Christ will die no more for any, neither will any be granted more than one full, complete opportunity for attaining everlasting life through faith and obedience to Christ.

A moderate estimate of the number of the children of Adam born in sin, shapen in iniquity and dying under the Adamic sentence, the curse, is 20,000,000,000. These

are in the great prison-house of death. None can redeem his brother nor give God a ransom for him, none can redeem himself, none can pay his own penalty and have anything left. (Psa. 49:7) The penalty upon the race was not imprisonment for a year nor for a century nor for six thousand years, but a death penalty of everlasting duration—"everlasting punishment." Not everlasting suffering, because not suffering but death is the penalty for sin—"The soul that sinneth it shall die." True, there is some suffering associated with dying but no suffering associated with the death state. Thus Adam suffered during the nine hundred and thirty years in which he was dying, but as soon as the dying had reached its culmination in death he suffered no more. As the Scriptures declare, "The dead know not anything"; and again, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, because there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the

2H210

grave (sheol) whither thou goest.” Ezek. 18:4; Eccl. 9:5, 10

A KNOWLEDGE OF THE PENALTY

To be rightly informed, then, respecting the penalty for sin is to be comforted to the extent of realizing that the aches and pains incidental to the dying cease there. There the hope comes in, the Gospel hope, the resurrection hope, the hope expressed by the prophet—”Thy dead men shall live;” and again, “I will ransom them from the grave (sheol, hades).” Isa. 26:19; Hosea 13:14

Surely this is good tidings of great joy, and shortly it shall be unto all, the Lord hath spoken it. To the extent that we can hear this message with the unstopped ears of our understanding, to the extent that we can see this to be the plan of God with the eyes of our understanding, to the same extent we may rejoice, we may be glad, we may feel relief, we may exercise the good hope that maketh not ashamed. We may know that thousands of millions of the heathen, who have never heard of the only name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved, are not to be lost eternally, but only kept in the prison-house, in bondage to sin and death, until the Lord’s due time shall come for the opening of the prison doors, when they-are to be called forth from the sleep of death. Similarly, millions who have lived and died in Christian lands, but who have been far from saints should not be considered as hopelessly condemned to the second death, for inasmuch as they have only partial light and partial knowledge of the Lord and his plan, so they have only had a partial responsibility.

True, the measure of their light is the measure of their responsibility, and to whom much is given of him will much be required, and where sin has been committed against light and knowledge, just stripes or punishments will be inflicted, but not hopeless, endless torture and agony, such as the creeds of the dark ages have declared. Those who have misused opportunities of the present life will come forth from the prison-house of death during the Millennial age impoverished and degraded in character, in proportion as they violated their consciences in opposing righteousness to the extent that they discerned it. But inasmuch as their light was not full, neither was their responsibility full and complete, and a full opportunity for coming to a knowledge of the Lord and to obedience to his commands is granted and assured to every son and daughter of Adam. No progress is made in this prison, no lessons are taught there, no stripes or punishments are given there. As a man goes

into the prison so he will come out of it so far as moral qualities are concerned.

When we discern that the world up to the time of Christ's first advent was not redeemed, and that consequently any reference to the resurrection of the dead and the incidental blessings were vague prophecies, we can see the meaning of our text, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me . . . to declare liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." It was quite proper indeed that any explicit statement of this great deliverance should not be made until the great deliverer himself had appeared and had begun the work of redemption. It is in full accord with this that the Apostle declares, "Christ hath brought life and immortality to light through the good tidings." (2 Tim. 1:10) It is equally in harmony with it that the Apostle declares again, that "this salvation began to be spoken by our Lord." (Heb. 2:3) It was the great theme of his discourse as it was also the theme of the apostles—they "preached Jesus and the resurrection." (Acts 17:18) Jesus without the resurrection power would have been no savior—the resurrection without Jesus and his redemptive work would have been impossible. Jesus and the resurrection, therefore, are indissolubly united, and should be so recognized by every follower of the Lord.

THE MESSAGE OF THE ORDAINED

We saw on last Lord's Day that the commission to preach, the anointing of the Spirit for the preaching, came first upon our Lord Jesus and subsequently upon all united to him through faith and consecration, styled in the Scriptures, "his body," "members in particular of the body of Christ," "the Royal Priesthood." (Col. 1:24; 1 Cor. 12:27; 1 Pet. 2:9) And as now we have seen that the very essence of our Lord's preaching was the resurrection of the dead, the deliverance of the captives from sin and from death in due time appointed by the Father, so this constitutes the true and proper Gospel message which all the followers of Christ should be preaching every day by word and by deed. This being true, it follows that a great deal of improper preaching is going on, a great deal that is not under the guidance of the holy Spirit; a great deal that the people were not anointed to preach is being declared. All the more those who discern the real anointing and who discern the real message should be instant in season and out of season in its promulgation.

Notice that the apostles were continually preaching of this deliverance of the prisoners from the prison-house. In every epistle, directly or indirectly, they refer to this either by directly mentioning the resurrection of the dead or by speaking of the second coming of Christ, and indirectly referring to the work which will then be accomplished by him and his glorified Church. For instance, notice the Apostle Paul's reference to these pris-

oners: he says, “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now.” Each generation in its turn has had its share of sorrow and pain

2H211

and suffering and dying, and the dead are prisoners of hope—not that they generally entertain any hope of their own, but those who have a knowledge of God and of his plan as scribes instructed in the matters of the Kingdom have a hope for them, seeing in God’s plan this declaration that all the prisoners shall be released, that all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth, that Jesus has the key, and shortly at the establishment of this Kingdom he will use it in resurrecting the groaning creation.

HEALING FOR BROKEN HEARTS

We have taken a hasty glance at the message itself, the Gospel proclamation, the good tidings of coming joy for all people. We have seen that this is the message that all anointed of the Lord should be declaring. We now inquire, What should be the results of this preaching? Our text tells us of one particular result, namely, to bind up the brokenhearted. Here again we see the difference between the preaching authorized by the anointing and the unauthorized preaching. The wrong preaching of bad tidings of great misery for nearly all people lacerates the hearts of the very best of humanity when already they are broken with sorrow and trouble. But the good tidings, the real Gospel authorized by our anointing, brings balm and peace to the wounded heart and binds it up, heals it, refreshes it, encourages it.

How unjust it would seem that our race, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and justly sent to the prison-house of death, should be still further tortured and pained with threats of an eternity of indescribable anguish! How unlike the Lord to either prepare such a place of eternal anguish or to send a message respecting it to be a torture to those of best heart, of most loving and tender sentiments! But how like the Lord that, having justly sentenced us to the prison-house of death, and having justly and with love redeemed us from it, he should also commission the Royal Priesthood through the anointing of the holy Spirit to tell these good tidings of the coming deliverance of the captives, to encourage their hearts, to refresh them, to bind up their broken hearts.

Ah, yes, we remember the word of the Lord through the prophet, saying, “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans.” The adversary has been for centuries traducing the divine character and the divine plan and persuading men that the Almighty Creator is the real demon, the real foe to all human happiness and peace in the present and in the life to

come. What a refreshing it brings to all to learn again through the words of the prophet, "Their fear toward me is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of men." Isa. 29:13

Nor should it be thought that there are no broken hearts, that all are hard hearted, stony-hearted, feelingless. Some of the most tender-hearted of humanity are those who have passed through veritable threshing machine experiences with sorrow and suffering, disappointment and pain; the plowshare of trouble has gone deeply into their hearts and broken up fallow ground, giving them sympathies and feelings which many others in the world know nothing about. One of these deeply sympathetic Christian women, a member of the Methodist Church, lost her husband in death, and was almost distracted with the thought that, because he had not been a member of any earthly Church, therefore he must have gone directly to eternal torment.

Ignorant of the true balm of Gilead, the true message of God's grace in Christ, ignorant of the assurances of the Scriptures that her husband was not in torment but in the great prison-house of death waiting for the awakening of the resurrection morning, she was almost distracted, almost went insane, unable to either eat or sleep. Her continual thought and expression was for her poor husband and his supposed suffering. How the message of the Lord concerning the prison-house and the prisoners and the redemption, and by and by the opening of the prison-doors and setting at liberty of the captives, brought refreshment and comfort to that poor heart. How peace came to her, how the broken heart was bound up by the message, how her entire life was changed, transformed, and how the peace of God which passeth all understanding came to rule in her life, and how she learned to trust and to love the God who before she had merely feared.

ANOTHER ILLUSTRATION OF THIS

Another dear Christian woman of tender heart, who has come to an understanding respecting the great prison-house and the ultimate release of all the prisoners by him who redeemed them by his precious blood, said to me not a great while ago, "I never had peace until I learned the truth respecting the prison-house of death and the deliverance of all the prisoners in God's due time. I had a saintly father, a minister in the Presbyterian Church, and, although I knew not a single blot against his character, I feared as I stood beside his casket, for I thought, Who can tell that there may not have been some secret sin which would render him unfit for divine approval in heaven and place him amongst those who were disapproved and a sharer in their fate, which at that time I believed to be eternal torment." Ah! how she

thanked God that she had heard the real Gospel, the real good tidings, and how it bound up her broken heart.

2H212

NOT OUR MISSION TO BREAK HEARTS

None of the class mentioned in our text as anointed with the Spirit are commissioned to break hearts. We are aware that many, realizing that the world is hardhearted, have misconceived the Lord's message, and have anointed and authorized themselves to preach a message to break hearts. The number of these is gradually decreasing. Once they occupied nearly every pulpit; their messages of eternal torment for all except the elect, the saints, the holy, were of a piece with the practices of the dark ages, when, in the name of God and the merciful Savior, all manner of tortures were inflicted, even to burning at the stake. Thank God the natural man is awakening to a better sense of propriety, and no longer thinks he is anointed to preach such a message. Thank God these heart-breaking discourses are becoming fewer and fewer.

We are well aware that some fear the result, and believe that in consequence the world will become more openly wicked. We reply that there is a danger in this direction, but one which can not be avoided, for the world will no longer receive the doctrines of the dark ages. The danger is that having been taught that eternal torment was the divine plan for humanity in general, the masses of mankind will not only drop the thought but drop the Bible and all faith in a revelation from God. The danger is thus in a general infidelity. The true remedy for the difficulty lies in the showing that the Bible does not teach the absurd and devilish doctrines of the dark ages; that it does teach a reasonable wage or penalty for sin, "the wages of sin is death;" that it does teach a redemption for Adam and the whole human family through the precious blood of Christ; that it does teach that, in consequence of this, the time is coming when all mankind shall be granted a full opportunity of coming into harmony with God, and that every wilful and intelligent disobedience to God injures future prospects.

There are plenty of agencies in the world for the breaking of hearts, but only the one balm of Gilead and only one class of people who can heal the brokenhearted with the message of divine love and grace, redemption and deliverance. The world is full of trouble. Every home, as a rule, has in it heart-breakers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of them that are good, unthankful, unholy, disobedient to parents. (2 Tim. 3:3) In addition to these heart-breakers are financial and social troubles. So, on the whole, nearly all who are right-minded and tender-hearted have full opportunity for becoming heart-broken and thus being prepared and caused to hunger

and thirst for God's good message of salvation through Christ and his Kingdom.

As for the breaking of the hearts of the wicked, that will come in due time. The great time of trouble that is just impending, according to the description given in God's Word, will break many hearts, and break up the fallow ground of the world's heart, preparing it for the good seed, the good tidings of great joy for all people through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. Let sin and suffering, disappointment and sorrow do their work in heart-breaking, while all who have been anointed as members of the body of Christ, the Royal Priesthood, are doing their part in binding up the broken-hearted by preaching to them the redemption and the ultimate deliverance of all the prisoners from the prison-house of death, the setting free of all the captives of sin in the Lord's due time in the Kingdom, in the Millennial age.

The National Labor Tribune, June 25, 1905

NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME--NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION

Philadelphia, Pa. June 25—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today in Horticultural Hall, to large and intelligent audiences. We report his evening discourse in full from the text, — “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings . . . to proclaim the year of our Lord.” Isaiah 61:1, 2

We continue our topic of the last two Sundays, with which some of you are acquainted through the public press. As we have seen, the prophecy is referring to the message which Jesus presented, and which all the anointed members of his body throughout this Gospel age are also to preach to the teachable, the good tidings, message of divine favor which will bind up, heal and refresh the broken-hearted because it speaks liberty' to the captives of sin and death and the opening of the prison-doors of the tomb to all who lost life in Adam, all of whom shall be awakened and have the opportunity of everlasting life through the Redeemer in due time. Much is condensed into a few words by the prophet, and our special subject of investigation today is respecting the proclamation of the acceptable year of the Lord. What does this mean? What year with the Lord is more acceptable than any other?

2H213

We reply that no particular year was meant, and the translation would better have been, to proclaim the ac-

ceptable time, period, epoch. This acceptable epoch began with our Lord Jesus, who was accepted of the Father and anointed with the holy Spirit; it continues with the Church, the body of Christ, from the day of Pentecost until the present time, and will last until the very close of the Gospel age, until the last member of the elect Church shall have been accepted of God. With the close of this age this particular form of acceptance will be at an end. For a time, at the beginning of the Gospel age, this acceptance was confined to the Jews—for the three and a half years following Pentecost. In that time the Gentiles were not acceptable to God, the door of favor toward them had not yet been opened. The Scriptures very clearly point us to the very moment when Peter used the second key of the Kingdom and opened the door of acceptance to the Gentiles, Cornelius being the first to enter. Speaking of that occurrence and the conditions following it, Peter declared, “I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

but that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him,” not Jews merely as previously. (Acts 10:34, 35) So it has been for now 1800 years, that all who love righteousness and desire to serve it and who accept Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, all who become his sincere followers in the narrow way of discipleship and self-sacrifice, all these are accepted of God—but none others. The world in general is not accepted, the wicked are not accepted, the tare class, merely nominal professors, are not accepted of God—only the ones specified.

ONLY SACRIFICERS ACCEPTED

Let us carefully hearken to the Word of the Lord respecting this acceptable time and what class of people he will accept and upon what terms they will be accepted. This is an important question for all those who desire to be accepted of him, who desire to attain to the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them who love him. Hear the Apostle, “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God (of which you have heard, namely, the provision of a ransom price for the whole world with the precious sacrifice of Christ), that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1) We see then that the Apostle uses this word acceptable to God in respect to the sacrifices which God’s people are invited to make of themselves. It was when our Lord Jesus, at thirty years of age, presented himself a living sacrifice to do the Father’s will, that he was accepted and anointed with the holy Spirit. It was his disciples, who had similarly consecrated their lives to be his followers and to lay down their lives in the service of the Truth, who were accepted of God at Pentecost and anointed with the holy Spirit; and it is the same class of self-sacrificing followers of the Lord who during this Gospel age have been acceptable to God as members of the body of

Christ and joint sacrificers with him. Their sacrifices are acceptable: that is to say, during this special period God is willing to accept such sacrifices.

This same thought is conveyed in the types, for our Lord Jesus is spoken of as being the great High Priest, and his self-sacrificing followers are called the under priesthood, the Royal Priesthood. The High Priest offered up himself an acceptable sacrifice to God, the under priests offering themselves up sacrifices to God, acceptable not because of morality or worthiness of their own but through the merit of him who loved them and bought them with his precious blood, and whose merit covers all their blemishes in the sight of the Father and constitutes their sacrifices acceptable to God.

This sacrificing did not begin prior to our Lord Jesus—there were no priests of this order before him. There was a typical priesthood established in Israel, but their sacrificings were merely foreshadowings, types of this “better sacrifice.” (Heb. 9:23) True, there were some who laid down their lives in the Lord’s service and who gloriously witnessed the fidelity to righteousness of some of whom the world was not worthy, enumerated by the Apostle in Hebrews 11. But these were not accepted of the Lord in the special sense in which Christ and his followers are accepted. The Apostle, speaking by inspiration, makes this distinction between the ancient worthies and their loyalty to God and self-sacrifice in his service and the privilege, blessing, opportunity and favor of sacrifice granted to the Gospel Church. Speaking of these ancient worthies he says, All these died in faith, not having received the things promised, God having provided some better thing for us; that they apart from us should not be perfected. (Heb. 11:39, 40) They will get their blessed reward, but it will not be as great as that of the Gospel Church, the Christ; nor will theirs take precedence, rather it will follow and be communicated to them through the glorified Christ, Head and body.

FAVOR UPON FAVOR IS OURS

In a word, then, we see that God’s plan as it eventually shall be worked out will mean the blessing and justification and uplift of all the families of the earth, but that God’s great plan for the overthrow of sin and death and for the deliverance of mankind from these adverse influences which have prevailed for six thousand years will be inaugurated at the second advent of our Lord. This acceptable time is in the interim between the great sacrifice accomplished at Calvary and the establishment of the Kingdom of God’s dear Son,

for which we pray “Thy Kingdom come.” It is during this interim that God extends a special favor or privilege to a certain class. The favor or privilege is that during this time he is willing to accept the limited number of sacrifices and willing to reckon the sacrificers as associated with his only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus, the great sacrificer. When we come to see the grand rewards that attach to this sacrifice, when we come to understand that the sacrificers are to become heirs of God and associates with Jesus Christ their Lord in the Kingdom, we see at once why an opportunity for sacrifice is spoken of as the acceptable time — the time at which God is willing to accept sacrifices and to give rewards to the sacrificers.

Whoever sees this clearly finds in it a most wonderful incentive to godly living—finds in it an explanation of why the Apostle was willing to count all his afflictions, all his sacrifices as nothing, to the intent that through this privilege of sacrifice he might have fellowship with Christ in the glorious things which the Father has promised and provided for Jesus, the great Sacrificer, and all who walk in his footsteps of self-sacrifice. From this standpoint the Apostles words do not seem extravagant when he says—“Yea, I do count all things as loss and dross that I may win Christ and be found in him” (a member of his body, the Royal Priesthood). (Phil. 3:8) It is in view of this glorious opportunity of sacrificing that the Apostle, as above quoted, urges all who have heard of the Lord’s favor to present their bodies living sacrifices, assuring them that they will be holy and acceptable to God, assuring them also that if they become dead with Christ they shall also reign with him, if sharers of his sufferings and death they shall be sharers also of his glory, honor, and immortality in the Kingdom.

NO SACRIFICING IN THE MILLENNIUM

The majority of people, failing to “rightly divide the Word of truth,” failing to see that there are various epochs and dispensations in the divine plan, fall into the mistake of supposing that all things must continue as they are. Such are apt to suppose that because there are opportunities for sacrificing now, there must be opportunities always, throughout the infinite future; but we answer, No. If sin and death were always to continue to reign, there would always be opportunity to suffer for righteousness’ sake; but the Scriptures assure us that in the close of this age and the inauguration of Christ’s Millennial reign, the whole matter will be changed; Satan will be bound, evil doers will be restrained, well doing will no longer cost the sacrifice of earthly interests. On the contrary, the righteous will then be rewarded for right doing and the evil doers shall be punished—“Justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet.” The

great King in that day will institute a thorough reform along these lines. (Isa. 28:17; Zech. 14:9)

So then in a natural way sacrificing for righteousness' sake will promptly and abruptly come to an end. Indeed the Scriptures clearly show us that the Lord is calling the Church in accordance with that institution of the reign of righteousness for the very purpose of affording them the opportunity to show their thorough loyalty to him by their willingness to endure earthly loss and disadvantage, pain and disappointment, for righteousness' sake.

The testing of character in this manner is very thorough, but it is only when we understand the divine plan, and see that those now being elected or selected are intended to be God's special agents and servants for the instruction and uplifting and blessing of the world, that we can understand why now they are tested in all points respecting their loyalty to righteousness and to Truth. The high reward which shall be granted to them—namely, a share in the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom class, the Royal Priesthood, is an offset to the greater trials and difficulties which beset their way in this age than will beset the world in general in the next age in the time of its trial for life everlasting. Only those who are guided of the Lord, anointed by his Spirit, instructed through his Word, can appreciate these great privileges which belong to this Gospel age, this acceptable time in which God is willing to accept the sacrifices and to count the sacrificers with Jesus in his glories.

Let us note a few Scriptures corroborating this thought that the acceptable time is the sacrificing time. We have already referred to Romans 12:1; notice now Ephesians 5:10. Here the Apostle exhorts us that instead of being partakers with the world in their sins we should walk as children of the light with our Lord and Master, proving, finding out more and more, day by day, as we seek to walk righteously and as we find its cost in self-sacrifice—"proving what is acceptable to God"—coming more and more to an appreciation of just what God does desire in us and just what it means to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Again we are exhorted to "serve God with reverence." (Heb. 12:28) Here our service is stated to be acceptable to God, our service of righteousness, our self-sacrifice, laying down our lives for the brethren. Again he speaks of our humble efforts as being a sacrifice to God of sweet odor. Phil. 4:18

Again he exhorts us to make progress in the Christian way of self-sacrifice that we may prove and demonstrate, know, the good and acceptable and perfect will of God—our sanctification, our complete self-sacrifice in his service. (Rom. 12:2) Again he assures us that God has made us acceptable in Christ—made our sacrifices,

which would of themselves be unworthy of his notice, to be acceptable through the merit of our Redeemer's sacrifice. (Eph. 1:6) The Apostle Peter in the same strain says, "We are acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Our Lord was acceptable as a sacrifice for sins, and we who during the Gospel age walk in his steps, sacrificing earthly interests for the privilege, are accepted. (1 Pet. 2:5) Explaining the matter, further, in verse 20, he says. "If when ye do well and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable to God (this is your sacrifice which God accepts). For even hereunto were ye called, for Christ also suffered for us leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps.

"NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME"

The Apostle Paul again calls attention to this acceptable time or epoch, the Gospel age, saying, "Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2) In this connection he quotes from Isaiah the prophet (49:8-10) "In an acceptable time have I heard thee and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant to the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; and to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves ... They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy upon them shall lead them, even by streams of water shall he guide them." It is remarkable that these inspired words should be so greatly misunderstood as they generally are. They are understood to mean that any who are uncalled of God during this Gospel age, who do not come into harmony with him in this acceptable time, will never have an opportunity to come to a knowledge of the Truth and to be saved.

These words are understood to signify that all hope of salvation ends with the present life, with "today." But whoever will read carefully the above quotation, noting the prophecy the Apostle is quoting, will see most clearly stated what we have endeavored to show foregoing—namely, that now is the time in which God will accept the sacrifices of the Royal Priesthood, the Christ; that this day of acceptance of these sacrifices will end; that the great privilege will then be passed forever; that the glorious opportunity of reward held out to the sacrificers will be given to none others. Now is the acceptable time, now is the time when God is willing to accept the little offerings that we can bring to him, the little services that we can render for righteousness. Those who love righteousness and are willing to render it service at the cost of self-interest in the present life, these shall secure the great salvation, the special salvation—these shall have part in the first resurrection of the blessed and holy who shall reign on the earth. Rev. 5:10

The Apostle in the same connection says, “We then, as co-workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace (favor) of God in vain..., but in all things approve ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,” etc. The grace of God which he exhorts they shall not receive in vain is this privilege of enduring these afflictions, and it is in support of this thought that the Apostle quotes from the prophecy, “In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I succored thee,” adding that now is the acceptable time, now is the time when God will accept such sacrifices, and not only so but that it is the beginning of the great salvation—it is a day of salvation as well as a day of sacrificing, for the sacrificers will be the first to obtain the fulness of the Lord’s salvation, both in the present joys and triumphs, and also in the first resurrection.

“AS A COVENANT FOR THE PEOPLE”

let us turn again and examine the statement in Isaiah from which the Apostle quotes. It is very evident that the first address is merely to the Christ, Head and body, “In an acceptable time have I heard thee and in a day of salvation have I helped thee.” This as we have shown is the Gospel age. Then follows the prophecy respecting the work of the Christ after the full development of all members—“I will preserve thee (notwithstanding the sacrificial death, the Lord’s guarantee is the preservation of every faithful member of the body of Christ), and I will give thee for a covenant of the people.” The word covenant here seems to have direct reference to the covenant made originally with Abraham and attested by the passing of the furnace of fire between the parts of the sacrifice, as recorded in Genesis 15:9-18.

It is in full accord with this that we find the Scriptures everywhere teaching that the Christ, Head and body, by divine arrangement constitute the seed of Abraham through which this covenant shall be fulfilled, and all the families of the earth shall be blessed. This seed of Abraham is first of all to be an acceptable sacrifice upon the Lord’s altar, as a result of which the sins of the world shall be entirely rolled away, the curse shall be no more, and instead of the reign of sin and death which has prevailed for six thousand years there shall then be ushered in the reign of righteousness into life everlasting as the Apostle explains. As the prophecy shows, it is the class accepted of God in this acceptable time, the class of living sacrifices, the Christ, who will become the Mediator of the New Covenant to the world, to establish the earth, to restore the lost heritages and to call the prisoners of sin out of the darkness

and to release the prisoners of the tomb. The whole earth was man's heritage and was lost through the disobedience of Father Adam, and the great work of Christ during the Millennial age will be not only to restore those who went down to the prison house of death, to set them free from the power of death and from the power of sin and to lift them up to original perfection, but also to restore to them the heritage lost.

This is the same thought set forth by the Apostle Peter's preaching under the inspiration of the Pentecostal blessing, when he told his hearers of the coming times of restitution of all things, at the second advent of Jesus and when he likened the entire Christ, Head and body, to the Prophet Moses, and declared that when this great antitype of Moses would rule in the earth all mankind must hear, must obey him, and that it shall come to pass that all who would not obey him shall be destroyed from amongst the people, while, on the contrary, all who shall obey the great Mediator shall be uplifted and established in the life everlasting.

Let us then, dear brethren and sisters, rejoice that it is our privilege to live in this acceptable year of the Lord; let us enjoy the privilege that is ours of presenting to the Lord our little sacrifices, realizing that they are holy and acceptable in his sight through the merit of our Redeemer, and that by thus being associated with him in this acceptable time in the sacrifices which the Father is pleased to accept, we shall also be accounted worthy to share with him in the glories of his future reign and Kingdom. O, what a privilege to be living under present conditions! Looking forward into the future and seeing the glories that shall soon be revealed, and the blessing of all the families of the earth, we realize that these sons of God now being selected in this acceptable time, when glorified, will be the joy of the whole earth, and that this is what the Apostle means when he says that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. (Rom. 8:19)

A clearer appreciation of these glorious testimonies of God's Word will cause us to rejoice in whatever privileges of suffering for righteousness' sake may come to us in the Lord's providence—to rejoice that we are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and in the interests of the cause of righteousness, and in laying down our lives for the brethren. Let us avail ourselves of the present opportunities, knowing that soon they will be at an end forever, and that then—although the sun of righteousness will shine forth to the blessing of all the families of the earth—there will be no further opportunity of entering into the glories to which God is now calling us to joint heirship with his Son and participation in the divine nature and its glory, honor and immortality.

The National Labor Tribune, July 2, 190.5

“THE DAY OF VENGEANCE” WHAT, WHEN AND WHERE IT WILL BE

Pastor Russell addressed a large audience in Bible Chapel, Allegheny at 3p. m. Sunday. He continued his discourses on the message of the ordained preacher set forth in Isaiah 61:1-3, and announced that on next Sunday he would be in attendance at a Bible student's Convention at Niagara Falls, N. Y., and would there continue the topic from the words, “To comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” Today's discourse follows:

In considering what the anointed members of the body of Christ are to proclaim in his name we reach today “the day of vengeance” feature. The anointed were to preach good tidings unto the meek for the binding up of the broken hearts, and were to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison-doors to them that are bound, and to make known the acceptable time of the Lord, in which he would be willing to receive sacrifices of the little flock, and withal they were to proclaim also “The Day of Vengeance of our God.” This part of the proclamation must not be overlooked, even though the preachers be thought in consequence to be pessimistic. There is a sweet element in the message and there is also a bitter element. Those faithful to their anointing, to their ordination, must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. However, it is necessary that we scrutinize carefully on this subject. A considerable amount of prejudice and misconception of the divine character and plan has come down to us from the Dark Ages, and we are liable to attach to the words of the Lord sentiments which they do not really express.

THE DAY OF VENGEANCE MISUNDERSTOOD

The average Christian, mistaught by the creeds and traditions handed down from the Dark Ages, thinks of the great majority of the human family as being in

2H217

Purgatory or in everlasting torture. Such are very apt to think of this message of the “day of vengeance” as referring to those tortures which they believe are already being endured by the vast majority of the human family who have died. When we point out to these that the day of vengeance is everywhere in the Scriptures indicated

as a future period or epoch they will feel a still greater fear and dread, saying to themselves, if the eternal torment which we are taught is already being experienced and is awful to the degree of being indescribable, what further atrocities can the Almighty Creator propose that he should speak of a future day of vengeance, as though all the tortures of the past had been merely incidentals unworthy of being regarded as punishment at all.

A failure to study the Bible, and to allow God through it to be his own interpreter and the declarer of his own plans, is responsible for all this misconception. Everything is plain, clear, simple, when we take the Scriptural standpoint of viewing matters, and remember that God's principal dealings thus far have been with the church—that so far as the world is concerned it has been having its own hopes and doubtings, successes and adversities, up to the point of death, and that death is a mere cessation of animation, a suspension of life, called in the Scriptures, sleep. We call to mind the statement of the Lord's Word that the dead know not anything, and consequently none are suffering the eternal torment in the Protestant hell, nor a temporary torment in the Catholic Purgatory. They are all asleep, waiting for the awakening, the calling forth in the morning of the Millennial age, the resurrection morning. (Eccl. 9:5; 1 Thess. 4:14) Let us not forget the words of the wise man, part of which are so frequently quoted, "Do with your might what your hands find to do, for there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in sheol (hell, the grave) whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9:10)

Before considering what kind of vengeance awaits mankind, we need to have very clearly before our minds the fact that the day of vengeance is future. As the Apostle Peter declares, "God knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (2 Pet. 2:9) They are not being punished while they are dead, while they are unconscious, while they know not anything. Any punishments that they do not receive in the present lifetime they will not receive until their awakening from the tomb, which will occur some time during the reign of Christ, some time during that thousand-year day of the Lord's judgment.

The Apostle Paul had this in mind when he wrote, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath, for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." (Rom. 12:19, 20) And again, writing in condemnation of those who forsake the way of the Lord, he said, "For we know him that said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people." (Heb. 10:30)

Again, referring to the same class and their affliction, the Apostle said, "You who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1:7-10) With one voice these various Scriptures assure us that the day of vengeance is future and thus they contradict the general thought of the majority of Christians, who suppose that the vengeance of the Lord is being continually meted out upon humanity from the moment of death onward. The last Scripture quoted shows plainly that the day of vengeance follows the second coming of the Lord Jesus, and will constitute the revelation of his righteous judgments in the earth.

We might refer to many passages of Scripture which speak of this day of vengeance and which indicate that it will follow the Lord's second advent. The first feature of his work at the second advent, as we have already shown, will be the gathering together of his very elect, their change in the first resurrection to his own likeness, and to share in his glory and joint-heirship in his Kingdom. Then will follow the manifestation of his Kingdom in its power and glory, and the vengeance will begin. A symbolical picture of the Lord and of the day of trouble, the day of vengeance, is given in Isaiah 63:1-6, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" Answer: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

"Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like he that treadeth the winefat?" Answer: "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me: yea, I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my fury, and their life blood is sprinkled upon my garments and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart and the year of my redeemed is come." We can see the harmony between the figurative description of the coming time of trouble and the other symbolical pictures of the same trouble furnished us in Revelation, where the vengeance of the Lord is represented as coming upon the nations, that they should be broken as potters' vessels with the iron rod of his power; and again the tribulation of his coming is represented by the seven vials of

2H218

wrath which are to be poured out.

OTHER DAYS OF VENGEANCE

Before recounting the particulars of the great "day of vengeance," let us note that there have been other days of vengeance in the past, which in the Scriptures are to

some extent referred to as bearing some likeness or resemblance to this coming day of vengeance. For instance, at the close of the first dispensation, in Noah's day, there came a reckoning time, a day of judgment, a day of vengeance, a day of divine visitation or punishment upon the world that then was, which perished in the flood. A more particular picture of the coming day of vengeance is furnished us in the time of trouble which came upon the Jewish nation, after their rejection of Messiah. After they had been favored with the Gospel at the mouth of the Apostles and other proclaimers of that time, there came upon that nation a destructive trouble which utterly overthrew that polity in A. D. 69. Describing this very trouble, the Scriptures declare, "These be the days of vengeance, that all things written may be fulfilled." (Luke 21:22) The Apostle, referring to the same wrath or vengeance upon the nation of Israel, says, "Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." (1 Thess. 2:16)

When we remember that natural Israel was a type or foreshadowing of Spiritual Israel, that the length of the Jewish age is the exact measure or pattern of the Gospel age, and that the Tabernacle sacrifices were the shadows of the better things following, which we enjoy, we learn to expect also that the time of trouble which ended their period of favor was a type or foreshadowing of the time of trouble coming in the end of this age upon nominal Christendom, in the end of the period of Gospel favor, and this latter, while it would be of the same kind that came upon natural Israel, will be more extended and will involve not only all the so-called Christian nations, but incidentally the whole world of mankind. No wonder it is graphically described by the prophet as a "time of trouble, such as was not since there was a nation," no wonder our Lord added the testimony to the words, "No, nor ever shall be again." (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21)

Time will not permit us on this occasion to call to your attention the many, many Scriptures which refer to this approaching trouble, and these references were more necessary a short time ago as many of you have them in print. But now, as we approach nearer and nearer to the culmination of this trouble, indications of the approach, that it is just impending, multiply daily and may be readily recognized by all those whose eyes of understanding have been opened through the study of the Word along these lines.

We can see readily the approaching conflict between capital and labor, between the people and the social structure, between the creeds and science falsely so-called and the Word of Truth. Everything indicates that it is beyond human power to avert this great calamity, which has been noted in the Scriptures for thousands of years. In symbolical language it is sometimes referred to as a "fire" that shall consume the whole

earth, but the context shows us that it is not literal fire, because it gives us the assurance that a result of this fire of God's jealousy will be the turning to the people of a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent. And, again, it is spoken of as a "whirlwind," which with suddenness will involve the entire social structure and overwhelm it. Again, it is spoken of as a great tidal wave, as a "flood" that shall carry the mountains, the kingdoms, into the midst of the sea, into the sea of anarchy. Our Lord's own description of the time is that unless that time were shortened none would be saved. (Zeph. 3:8, 9; Jer. 25:32; Psa. 46:2; Matt. 24:22)

THE DAY OF VENGEANCE LIMITED

Well may our hearts rejoice to note the Scriptural declaration that the day of vengeance is limited, that it will be cut short. We are assured that “a short work will the Lord make in the earth,” and that to this end, instead of allowing the time of trouble to run its course and to practically exterminate the race in the reign of anarchy, the Lord declares that in the midst of the trouble he will establish this kingdom on the ruins of present civilization, and that under the ministration of that Kingdom, order and peace and blessing will soon be established in the earth and on a sure foundation —on a foundation of righteousness and truth. The Apostle describes the world of mankind in general at the present time as a groaning creation, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God in their Kingdom power in the end of this age, in the dawning of the new dispensation. And if it is true that the world is now groaning and travailing in pain, how much more true it will be in that day of vengeance, in that day of wrath, in that great time of trouble which will affect every human being throughout the world. We may expect just what the Scriptures declare, that as a result of that trouble many nations will come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord’s house; he will teach us his ways and we will walk in his paths. For then the law shall go forth from Jerusalem, and the Word of the Lord from Mount Zion (the heavenly Kingdom — the glorified Christ).

WHY THE VENGEANCE?

It is a proper question, why should God take vengeance upon the world when he teaches us to the contrary,

2H219

saying, “Avenge not yourselves?” We reply that the entire Word of God, the entire plan of God, the entire kingdom or dominion of God, is based upon justice, as we read, “Justice and judgment are the foundation of thy throne.” But justice has not been administered in the world by the Almighty. He has confined his efforts to setting before his people the laws of righteousness. He has indeed held a loose rein over the kingdoms of the world, that they might not overreach the divine purposes and arrangements; but as for endeavors, God’s only dealings have been with Abraham and his seed—the natural seed, the few during the Jewish dispensation, and the spiritual seed, the Church, during this Gospel dispensation. The judgments of the Lord have been with these not only collectively, but also individually, ordering their affairs, blessing them in certain respects in

proportion to their faithfulness to him, punishing them in some particulars in proportion to their unfaithfulness; but the mass of the world has been judging itself.

Throughout this Gospel age the Lord has sent his light and truth hither and thither throughout what is called Christendom. Here and there the message of the Lord has attracted the Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile, and everywhere it went the divine Word has caused a measure of enlightenment even among its enemies and his pseudo friends. With the end of the Jewish age came the time for the gathering of all the Israelites indeed then ready for the next step in God's plan, namely, into the Gospel garner, into the ministration of the Spirit. And similarly with the end of this Gospel age comes the great gathering of the little flock, the saints of Spiritual Israel, who shall be changed in the first resurrection to the spirit nature, glory, honor, immortality, and likeness with their Lord.

As in the end of the Jewish age, those who had enjoyed the blessings, privileges and opportunities, and had done despite to those favors of God were dealt with and chastened, so in the end of this Gospel age the civilized world, so-called Christendom in general, after the gathering of the elect to glory, will be dealt with sharply; according to their unfaithfulness to the light and privileges which were accorded them they shall have many or few stripes in that great time of trouble. And who will say that these stripes or punishments will not be deserved?

Look back at the closing of the Jewish age, and note how much there was of formal Judaism, of professions of holiness, called Pharisaism. Note how the bitterest enemies of God's son and of the plan of salvation centered in him were found amongst those who made the greatest professions. See how it was the scribes and Pharisees and doctors of divinity of that time who misled the populace into crying for the crucifixion of Jesus. Was it any wonder that vengeance came upon those men—that having so much light and opportunity and advantage every way they should be held responsible for their course of evil? It was not surprising that vengeance came upon them in their day of vengeance, and their trouble is reckoned as having been the greatest in the world up to the present time, the greatest that ever shall be except the greatest of all, which is to come in the end of this age upon Babylon the Great, so-called Christendom or Churchianity.

It is very difficult for some to see conditions which prevail close to us, illustrated in the present turmoil in Russia; and yet the Scriptures declare that our day is the exact parallel of the period of our Lord's first advent, and that the spirit of Churchianity in our day is the parallel to that of Judaism in our Lord's day. Is it strange, then, that those of our time with much advan-

tage every way should be held to be worthy of some stripes and punishments? And if these punishments are to be dispensed throughout all Christendom, is it strange that it should result in a time of trouble such as was not seen since there was a nation? Nay, verily, it is only what we might expect aside from the sure testimony of the Lord's Word, which seems to mark the climax of the present trouble as between October, 1914, and October, 1915.

“JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING”

The Scriptures speak of the six thousand years of the reign of sin and death as a night time, and assure the Lord's people that the Day Star of hope which they have seen through faith in Christ, is the harbinger, the forerunner, of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams. They assure us that the Sun of Righteousness was the Lord Jesus and the Church, which is his body, or, under another figure, the Bride. They assure us that the influence of that Rising Sun of Righteousness will be the healing of the peoples, the healing of the earth's woes and troubles, the establishment of the reign of righteousness, the putting down of sin and all forms of iniquity and injustice, and the lifting up of the poor and distressed, and the bringing about of a general revolution of society, in which character, worth, will be the only tests and standards of divine favor and approval and blessing and progress and uplift.

We may look forward, then, to the day of vengeance with this happy thought in our hearts, that as the Lord in the present time has favored us, his people, by permitting the plowshare of trouble to break up the fallow ground of our hearts and make them ready for his glorious message, so he speaks of this coming time of trouble as the ploughing of the world, the time for the

2H220

breaking of the stony hearts, the time for the general preparation of the world of mankind to be brought to a knowledge of the truth—to a knowledge of God's righteousness and justice as well as to a knowledge of his mercy and love, to the intent that all the world then may be on judgment, on trial, to test their loyalty to the principles of righteousness. The result, we are assured, will be that all who shall then come to an appreciation of God's character and plan and the laws of his empire, and into harmony with the same, shall be lifted up and blessed, while all those who refuse thus to do will be cut off from amongst the people as the enemies of God and of righteousness.

“VENGEANCE” A POOR TRANSLATION

We come now to notice the fact that the translators have not given us a good rendition of the original in the word vengeance. Since the Apostle has quoted the prophet's testimony in the New Testament, we have the advantage of both the Greek and the Hebrew word and therefrom we see clearly that instead of rendering this passage the “day of vengeance, the translators would better have rendered it the “day of recompense” or the “day of vindication.” To this all scholars will agree.

With this thought before our minds we perceive that the trouble that is coming is to be on the one hand a vindication of the principles of righteousness as in opposition to the principles of error. On many subjects the world is ready to claim that error is more potent than truth, wiser than truth, but in this day of vindication all such sophistries will be overthrown. It will be clearly demonstrated that the way of righteousness is the way of wisdom, and that any other way is the way of folly. It will mean the levelling of things that are high, proud, domineering, and a day of lifting up of the poor and the humble—a day of rewarding the well doer in proportion to his zeal and self-sacrificing spirit, and the evil doer according to his knowledge of better things and the selfishness to which he yielded. It will be such a time as our Lord described when he said “Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for you shall weep. Woe unto you when men shall speak well of you! for so did your fathers of the false prophets:” but “Blessed are ye poor! for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that weep now! for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and separate you from their company, and reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for your reward is great in heaven.” (Luke 6:20-26) In that time of recompense many who are least esteemed in the world now will be found to be great, and many who are now great will be found to be least.

HOW LONG THIS DAY OF RECOMPENSE

As we have already intimated, the judgments or recompenses of that day of vindication will be proportionate to the light and privilege enjoyed. To whom little has been given, of him will little be required, but to whom much has been entrusted, of them will be proportionate requirements. Many who are great and rich in talents and privileges and influence, and who are using all these things selfishly and inconsiderately, forgetting the claims upon them of the household of faith and of their brethren of mankind, such undoubtedly will be esteemed worthy of severer stripes than will be administered to others who knew not the Master's will, who were born under less favorable conditions in hea-

then lands. Justice will be evenhandedly meted out yet not without mercy, for the Lord assures us that through faith in him and joyful obedience to his instruction we may escape, because all the members of the Church will be glorified before the day of vengeance upon the world. Before the revelation of the Lord in flaming fire comes his parousia, his manifestation to his saints through the eyes of their understanding under the guidance of the holy Spirit and the teaching of the Word. Blessed are our eyes for they see and our ears for they hear. Blessed are we whom the Son of man at his second presence comes forth to serve with the precious things of his Word, things new and old, according to promise. (Matt. 13:52)

We are not interested in the day of retribution in the sense of expecting to be under retributive judgments ourselves, but are hoping by the Lord's grace to be amongst the overcomers, whose judgment will be complete in this present age and who will be accounted worthy of a share in the Kingdom, and who, the Apostle says, shall judge the world and be associated with Christ as his mighty angels, messengers of power, in the exercising of the judgments written—"This honor hath all his saints." (Psa. 149:9) Nevertheless it is profitable to us that the Lord hath anointed us to declare the day of retribution as well as to declare the good tidings. If the whole world could be made aware of the real retribution that is coming it undoubtedly would influence many. The thought that the future will be the same for all, whether they sin much or little, has tended to make many careless of the amount of their wrong doing. On the contrary we see that every word and act of life has its bearing, even so far as the world is concerned, in proportion to their knowledge, and that those possessing much light will have the severer retribution if they neglect it or walk contrary to

2H221

what they discern to be the Lord's standard of righteousness.

The National Labor Tribune, July 9, 1905

ANNOINTED TO PREACH GOOD TIDINGS

Niagara Falls, N.Y. July 9. The Bible Students' Convention is in session here at the Natural Food Auditorium. About a thousand are in attendance from various parts of the United States and Canada. It opened yesterday and will close on Tuesday. Amongst the addresses of to-day we report that of Pastor Russell. of Allegheny, Pa., from the text:

“The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek;... to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” Isa. 61:1-3

The Gospel of Christ addresses itself especially to those who labor and are heavy laden and seeking rest: it passes by those who are full and satisfied and merry: it appeals to those who mourn. They can appreciate God's message as others cannot. But why should this be so? Why should we not expect rather the reverse of this? Surely we cannot believe that heaven is a place of mourning, that the heavenly Father is sad, that the holy angels are weary and heavy laden and seeking rest. Why, then, is it that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus appeals to the mourners? If in the heavenly courts all are rich in health and joy and prosperity and if they all are rejoicing in the divine character and divine plan, why is it that the earthly class, rich and favored and rejoicing, should not be attracted by the Gospel of Christ?

NO SORROW IN HEAVEN—NO SIN

We answer that the conditions are totally different. In heaven there is no sin, no sickness, no pain, no sorrow, no death, no weeping—nothing to cause mourning. On earth all these conditions prevail—if not in each individual, certainly in each family. While, there, it is proper that those who are sinless and free from the penalties of sin should rejoice in the Lord and be joyful, it is equally proper that those who are in sin and under its penalties should mourn, should realize their true condition, should feel weary with sin and the burdens mental, moral and physical, which it has brought upon us as a race, should feel heavy laden with life's trials and difficulties and should mourn and long for deliverance from these unfavorable conditions. And it is so with all who are in the right attitude of mind. Only where selfishness has crowded it out is there no feeling of sympathy, sorrow and mourning amongst the favored few in the world on behalf of the less favored multitude.

But it would not be fair to suppose that all the rich and well-to-do who seem to be filled with joy and pleasure are really so. Truth to tell, nearly every human being has his heart-aches, and not a few— while enjoying the fat of the land and much advantage over the majority in every way have a longing desire to help their fellows; but feeling the impossibility of accomplishing anything in the uplift of all, realizing that they must draw the line somewhere they have their special objects of sympathy and assistance. Much surely is done for the benefit of the less favored of the human family in the provision of public instruction, public libraries, public hospitals, etc.—not to mention the many private benevolences. In any event it is not for us to attempt to judge the hearts of one another, to determine which are they that mourn. We are safe to assume that many mourn—the majority. Our text assures us that all the anointed body of the Christ are ordained to proclaim the Lord’s message of comfort to all that mourn, to all who realize that the present condition of things is an unsatisfactory one, quite beyond the power of any human being to fully rectify—a condition which God’s Kingdom alone can correct.

WIPING AWAY ALL TEARS

“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy like the wideness of the sea,” as the poet has expressed it, and this is in marked contrast with the narrowness of human creeds and theories. According to the latter, God’s provision for the majority of the human family is that they shall mourn and be weary and heavy laden, be a groaning creation throughout this present life and at its close be ushered into conditions awful to contemplate — an eternity of woe; mourning and sorrow, pain and anguish, will be their lot to all eternity. This was the

2H222

false Gospel which was concocted during the Dark Ages by those who verily thought they did God service in burning one another at the stake. How different is the true message of God referred to in our text, the message which he anointed the Christ, Head and body, to proclaim, the message of “good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people,” (Luke 2:10), a message of comfort to all who mourn.

True, many of those who now mourn are unable to appreciate God’s message: blinded and deafened by the Adversary, they know not neither do they understand the mercy and gracious provision of the divine plan of salvation which centered in the cross of Christ. Confused with the various religious creeds of the world, they cannot discern the voice of the true Shepherd, and hence the vast majority are without the comfort, are, doubtless, in despair. While, therefore, it is the privilege of the

Spirit-annointed members of Christ to tell the good tidings which shall ultimately be unto all people, they are to understand that only such as have the ear to hear will be able to comprehend and appreciate their message until the new dispensation shall be ushered in, when the clouds of error and (darkness, confusion and falsehood, shall melt away 1) before the glorious rising Sun of Righteousness, whose healing beams are to bless the whole world during the Millennium.

The comfort of the Scriptures respecting the blessings which are coming upon the world must, therefore, be understood for the household of faith only in this Gospel age, as the Master said, "Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear." (Matt. 13:16) Those of sympathetic nature, in proportion as they receive the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of the anointing and grow in likeness to the Lord, would mourn more than ever for their dear ones in sin, still in darkness, were it not for this comfort of the Scriptures which the Lord provided for their sakes. As they come to understand the divine message, it means an ultimate blessing to each member of the human family— it means that as all of Adam's race were involved in his penalty without their consent, likewise all of them are provided for in the great redemption accomplished by the second Adam, likewise without their knowledge, before the majority of them were born. Thus the Lord prophetically declares that weeping endures for the night but joy cometh in the morning. (Psa. 30:5)

THIS IS NOT UNIVERSALISM

The whole creation is involved in the weeping and mourning and suffering and sorrowing incidental to the curse, the penalty of death; and the whole creation, redeemed by the precious blood, shall in the morning come forth to joyful opportunities for attaining life everlasting through obedience to the glorious Kingdom of God's dear Son, who bought them with his precious blood. To this the Scriptures agree. Pointing down to the Millennial age they declare that God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes not merely from the faces of the saints of this Gospel age. (Rev. 7:17) Almost the same message was given thousands of years ago through the prophet Isaiah (25:8) saying, "The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." These divine testimonies are in full accord with the others which declare that ultimately every knee must bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God. (Phil. 2:10,11) These are all testimonies of general application to the whole world of mankind, all based upon the fact that God has undertaken to provide a full atonement for sins of the whole world, which means restoration to every member of the race.

This, however, is not universalism. There is a wide difference between wiping away the curse, the penalty of Adam's fall, and the giving of every human being during

the Millennial age an opportunity of rejoicing in the Lord's favor, in the knowledge of forgiveness of sins that were past, an opportunity for demonstrating their love for righteousness and their opposition to iniquity, and thereby proving their fitness under the divine terms for the possession of life everlasting, which God has provided for all such and such alone. All who after having been brought to a full and complete opportunity, with a clear knowledge of what they are doing, shall wilfully reject or oppose or neglect the opportunities then afforded them, will be properly deemed opponents of God and his righteousness and fit subjects for the second death, as it is written, "It shall come to pass that the soul that will not obey that Prophet, shall be destroyed from amongst the people." (Acts 3:23)

MOURNERS IN ZION

It should be carefully noticed that the Lord distinguishes between mourners in general, the "groaning creation," and "mourners in Zion," —the mourners amongst those who are truly his through faith and consecration. This distinction is everywhere made throughout the Scriptures. Take, for instance, Romans 8:19-23, already referred to—the whole creation groaneth and travaileth, says the Apostle, waiting for the revealing of the sons of God—waiting for the Kingdom to be established. Then he tells us that we ourselves groan within ourselves, "mourn," but are waiting for a different thing. We, the Church, while groaning within ourselves more privately, less perceptible in an outward manner, are waiting for our

2H223

adoption, our deliverance as the body of the Anointed One, our share in the first resurrection. We constitute the sons of God whose manifestation the groaning creation awaits, although they know not of the fact.

Those who mourn in Zion have the hearing ears and the eyes of their understanding opened, and hence the message of the Gospel means to them what it cannot mean to mourners in general. The Lord through the prophet explains the joys and blessings which the mourners in Zion would have for their comfort, for their consolation, that they might not sorrow as others who have no hope, because believing that Jesus died and rose again they believe that all the human family, whose death sentence has been turned into a sleep through the redemptive work of Jesus, will God bring from the dead by him, in due time. (1 Thess. 4:14) Seeing the coming blessings to be brought to the world, in which all their dear ones shall participate, they need not sorrow as others who have no hope. Nevertheless, as the Apostle says, these groan within themselves because the

blessings are still future, and the trials and difficulties, weaknesses and frailties and pains are still present.

Although the hope which they enjoy maketh not ashamed, but cheers and comforts their hearts and lightens their burdens, nevertheless they have burdens and sorrows. Our Lord speaks from the same standpoint, saying, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" — "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28) The Lord's yoke is easy and his burden light as compared with the yoke of sin and the burden of death. But while it is the teaching of Scripture that the burdens of God's people are thus lightened as their hearts are cheered through faith in the divine character and promises, they, nevertheless, are admitted to have some burdens, though lighter ones, as the Apostle again declares — "We who are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." (2 Cor. 5:2) But oh how different is the burden of those who are in Christ and the burden that is upon the world! and how this burden decreases as we become acquainted with our heavenly Father and with our Lord the Redeemer, and with the gracious plan of which he is the center.

"A GARLAND FOR ASHES"

A garland, a wreath, symbolically pictures hope and joy, as ashes symbolically picture the reverse. As children of wrath even as others, as sharers in the penalty of sin and death with its concomitants of trouble and pain and sorrow, we once, as the Apostle declares, were "without God and having no hope in the world," we knew not of the gracious redemption, knew not its lengths and breadths and how surely it covered us and all the race of Adam knew not in any clear, (definite manner at least, of the great divine plan for the resurrection of the dead, both the justified and the unjustified.

Earthly hopes indeed we had, earthly ambitions, earthly desires, earthly prospects, but as time passed on we found that these withered, failed, turned to ashes. We said to our souls, "Here is not rest." Every fresh earthly hope seemed to last but a time and was gone, leaving in our hearts an aching void; but now, as the poet has expressed it, those who find the Lord find rest and peace and a hope that maketh not ashamed, so they can sing, 'Jesus has satisfied, Jesus is mine.'" In their acceptance of Jesus with their whole hearts they obtain a satisfying portion, they lose old fears as well as old ambitions; they find new hopes, new joys, represented symbolically as a "garland." (R.V.) Not one joy, but many joys, not one blessing, but many blessings, come to those who are the Lord's—to them old things have passed away and all things become new Even death itself loses its sting when they realize to a certainty that Christ has bought every prisoner in the tomb, and that ultimately death shall be swallowed up in victory and there shall be no more

death, no more crying, no more sighing, no more (lying, because the former things will have passed away.

“THE OIL OF JOY FOR MOURNING”

How poetic the promise of the oil of joy instead of mourning. In ancient times the mourning and rejoicing were expressed more in an outward form than is customary to-day. The mourning and sorrowful would frequently go about clothed in sackcloth and with ashes upon the head, as indicative of their woe; and on the contrary, when the occasion for the mourning passed, it was the custom to display the spirit of rejoicing by washing and then specially anointing with a perfume. Such a perfume oil of special preparation was used in the anointing of the kings of Israel and of their priests by the Lord's direction, and is very properly understood to signify the anointing of the holy Spirit. So in this symbolical statement of our text, the oil of joy, the oil of gladness, represents the anointing of the Lord's members with the holy Spirit, the spirit of joy and gladness and refreshment and comfort, as instead of the spirit of sadness.

The poet has well expressed this matter, saying, “Why should the children of the King, go mourning all their days?” Throughout this Gospel age those who accept Jesus as their Redeemer and who seek to walk in his steps and who make full consecration to him and to

2H224

his service are accepted of the heavenly Father as his children and anointed with his holy Spirit, the spirit of gladness, the spirit of joy to all who receive it, and in proportion as they receive it, it drives away much of the spirit of mourning and brings instead much of the spirit of joy. As the Apostle declares, speaking of this class, “Rejoice, and again I say Rejoice.” (Phil 4:4) He tells us, too, that we are not only to rejoice in the comforts, privileges and blessings that are ours, but we are to rejoice in tribulations also, knowing that all the experiences of the present life are working together for the development, the preparation of this class to be the kings and priests of the Lord, his associates and joint-heirs in his Kingdom that is soon to be established.

“THE GARMENT OF PRAISE”

Continuing to speak to us poetically, the Lord declares of this same class that his appointment for them is the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness. If any of the Lord's people after becoming participants of the holy Spirit are dejected, morose, unhappy, let them know assuredly from this text that they are not enjoying that which the Lord appointed for them. His own declaration is that he has appointed the

garment of praise to supplant the spirit of heaviness. True, in our present imperfect conditions many things occur to make us heavy-hearted from time to time and some temperaments are more subject to this ailment than others: but each should seek to cast off the care, each should seek to take his burdens to the foot of the cross and leave them there, each should remember that the Lord careth for him, and has promised that all things shall work together for good to the called ones according to his purpose. Many never get rid of the spirit of heaviness because they fail to put on the garment of praise — they fail to be sufficiently thankful, sufficiently appreciative of the good things received of the Lord. This is not only true of Christian people in general but it is sometimes true of those who have been specially favored of the Lord in the knowledge of Present Truth and the refreshment which it brings.

A Brother who rather dejectedly said to us one day, “There are some points that I still do not see clearly.” We asked, “Are they many?” He replied, “Oh, yes; eight or ten.” We replied, “Dear brother, give thanks; remember that your points of difficulty and doubt and fear and misunderstanding used to be eight or ten hundred.” We fear that this is the case with others. We remind all that it is important that we should not only confess our sins to have them forgiven, but that we should notice and acknowledge and give thanks for the blessings if we would have them continued and multiplied to us. He who recounts over and over the mercies and blessings of the Lord will find their numbers to increase and their value to enhance day by day until before long, if he continue, his tears will give place to praise and thanksgiving, and so far from asking the Lord continually for fresh blessings his petitions will be in the nature of thank-offerings, and he will be saying to the Lord, “I ask no more, give what is best.”

The National Labor Tribune, July 16, 1905

THE SPIRIT WILLING, THE FLESH WEAK

Pastor Russell preached at Bible House Chapel, Allegheny, Sunday at 3 p. m. from the text: “Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Matt. 26:41) The discourse follows:

Our text is in the nature of a prescription of two parts or ingredients, both essential. The desired results cannot be obtained through either one of these ingredients alone: watching and praying are both necessary to escape temptation. But first it is proper that we inquire who are addressed. Who

are to watch? Who are to pray? Who are to escape the temptation? Who? We reply that this prescription is not given by the Great Physician to the world in general. True, our dear Redeemer called sinners everywhere and at all times to repentance, but he has no dealings with them until they respond to that call, he has no instruction for them except they first repent of their sins, make restitution so far as possible, will to walk in the ways of righteousness, and then, accepting by faith his merit, they come under the conditions where he is willing to be their teacher, their instructor in righteousness.

It were well if the entire world could realize our Lord's attitude toward them—that while not unsympathetic toward them in respect to their weaknesses and blemishes of the fall, he nevertheless, has closed off all methods of reconciliation, all avenues of approach to himself and his favor except one, namely, the one of repentance and faith. He refuses to hear others, he refuses any responsibility or care over their interests and affairs. It is only to those who have become thoroughly his through repentance, justification by faith and consecration of self, that he makes the gracious promise that all things shall work together for their good—they

2H225

are the called ones according to his purpose. The masses of mankind not only in heathen lands but also in civilized lands, who reject the Lord's call to them as sinners to repent, to reform, to accept his mercy, are outside of his favors so far as the present age is concerned; they have neither part nor lot in the blessings he is now willing to dispense, which are only for his servants and his handmaidens. To the contrary, hear his words, "Unto the wicked, God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth. Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee." Psalm 50:16, 17

REGENERATE AND UNREGENERATE PRAYERS

Manifestly there is not only justice but wisdom in this divine arrangement. For the Lord to undertake to hear the prayers and to care for the unconsecrated would be to discount and to make void his own arrangement, which assures us that there is no other name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved—whereby members of Adam's race, all sinners, may be reconciled to God and enjoy in any measure, here or hereafter, divine favors, mercies, etc. It is equally true, however, that there are certain blessings which the Lord dispenses upon the just and the unjust, the bad and good, without regard to their prayers; the rain and the sunshine are common blessings, all that can be made out of the present life and present unfavorable conditions the world

is welcome to. The curse rests everywhere and upon everything, so that nothing in this present time is or could be perfectly satisfactory. Everything is blemished, marred, imperfect; as the wise man expressed it, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity”—nothing is satisfactory. Eccl. 1:2

And not only has the Lord made gracious provisions for the unjust as well as the justified during this Gospel age, for the evil as well as for the good, but he has made general provision for all in his great plan, in that he has provided “a ransom for all,” the great atonement for the sins of the world and has assured us that in due time every member of the race shall enjoy a full privilege and opportunity of benefiting by that redemption, and, if they will, to come fully back to all that was lost in Eden, fully back to what is meant in the words, “In the image and likeness of God created he him.”

We see, then, that God’s refusal in the present time to hear the prayers of the world in general is not through any evil sentiment or grudge that he bears against them, not through any narrowness or animosity, but because in his great and glorious plan of salvation there are two parts: The first of these, belonging to the present time, the Gospel age, is for the special class who can and will and do exercise faith in him and seek to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit; and second, a place for the world in general in the next age, in the Millennial age, in which age, however degraded, however lacking in faith, however prone to sin, shall have the fullest of assistances for their uplift and restoration to all that was lost, and more—greater knowledge. And, to those obedient under test, eternal perfection. On the other hand how appropriate it is that the Lord should mark us, the particular class whom he is now calling, the peculiar class which now responds to his call, the particular class which now has the ear to hear and the heart to obey—the desire to obey the divine directions. How appropriate that the Lord should grant us access to the throne of heavenly grace, which he denies to others. Indeed how necessary is such communion, such privileges of prayer, to those who are striving against great odds and opposition in this present time to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.

“LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY”

True, there is in the unregenerate at times a desire to pray to God—usually in times of distress or fear. This is a natural trait, the result of certain mental qualities in combination: first, veneration, and second, fear. But it is not the divine purpose to encourage such a combination, but rather a combination of veneration, faith and conscience. Original traits of character which belong to our race, as represented in Eden when it was in the image and likeness of God, have not been entirely obliterated, even during the six thousand years of our fallen condition. But it is the regenerated being who

approaches the throne of grace with faith and love and a conscious desire to know and to do the divine will, and to be guided and assisted therein according to the heavenly wisdom. For the natural man to approach the Lord in prayer, with the selfish motives and instincts of the old will, would mean that his prayers would be of a wrong kind, from the selfish standpoint.

The Apostle intimates that even children of God, who have been accepted in Christ and are reckoned as new creatures with new aims and hopes, may become so overcharged with the cares of this life and so imbued with the spirit of the world that they might approach the throne of grace, which indeed is open to them, but approach it in such a manner and with such requests as would not be pleasing to the Lord and that would be refused. The Apostle says, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss," for things to be used or consumed to your own desires. (Jas. 4:3) All the natural man's petitions would be along this line and would be rejected, and the Lord's people require continually to be on watch, on the lookout to guard against the spirit of the world, which would entrap them in selfishness and

2H226

worldly ambition and prayers for these things.

Our Lord clearly marks out the kind of petition which his people will offer. The kind of petition which he will be pleased to entertain and answer at some time. Describing this proper prayer he says, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) Ah yes! If the Lord's words abide in us it will imply our love for them, and diligent study to know the words of the Lord and the will of the Lord expressed in these words; and if we abide in him it will mean that we abide loyal to his will, and are desirous of having his will done in us and not our own will.

This will signify in turn that not only will the Lord's disciples abiding in him be searching to know his will through his word, but that they will be striving to apply that will and Word according to his guidance and direction—according to his will and not according to their own wills, according to the spirit of the Truth and not according to the spirit of the world, according to the spirit of love and not according to the spirit of selfishness.

Thus those who are truly the Lord's will petition him in their prayers, "Not my will but thine be done" in everything, in matters temporal, in matters spiritual. Faith in their hearts and the spirit of humility will convince them that they are not wise enough to judge of the various experiences, trials, testings that should come to them in this present life as fitting, polishing preparations

for the life to come and a share in the Kingdom. Gradually, as they grow in grace, as the Lord's Word dwells in them more and more richly, and as they abide in him more and more continually and fully, their prayers will become the more simple, and as our Lord suggests, will not be vain repetitions as with others. They will know that the Father knoweth in advance what things they have need of, what things will be best for them, and their petitions in substance will be that the Lord God for Christ's sake would do for them according to divine wisdom respecting their highest interests and welfare.

PRAYERS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

Some, then, may perhaps ask, Did not the publican pray and was he not heard? We answer, Yes; but he prayed as a sinner and merely asked for forgiveness which implied his desire to escape from sin, his resolution to do so, and his desire for the Lord's assistance in this matter. Moreover, the publican belonged to the nation that God had accepted through faith, belonged to his adopted nation, Israel after the flesh, and to this publican, therefore, pertained the promises and blessings which up to that time had been extended by the Almighty to that one nation alone—"You only have I known (recognized) of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) For the publican to return to God was represented in the return of the prodigal son in the parable; the relationship was already there and he had merely disregarded it for a time. In the case of the remainder of the world, the Gentile nations of which Christendom is a part, the matter is entirely different:

we were strangers, aliens, foreigners, without God and having no hope in the world, but now we have heard that the middle wall of partition has been broken down and that it is our privilege to come to the Lord through Christ. The manifestation of divine favor in God's willingness to receive us, if we renounce our sins and accept the divine provision in Jesus, will surely be glad to do so, and they as the Apostle intimates, may come boldly, courageously "to the throne of heavenly grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need." Heb. 4:16

All children of God then, are exhorted of their need to come frequently to the throne of grace to express in their petitions their faith and confidence in the divine promises, thus assuring their own hearts and receiving the blessings of the Lord, but they are assured also that neglect so to do will mean the starving and withering of their new nature. As a company of the Lord's brethren, as his Ecclesia or body, they need to pray for one another, for the interests of the Lord's work, for wisdom and grace and the guidance of the holy Spirit, that their association in the work of the Lord may be profitable to each other and let a bright light shine before the world.

Those of the Lord's people who are heads of families are to remember that in their family circles they are the Lord's representatives or priests, and that daily they are privileged to offer incense at the family altar, and to realize its acceptance and to have the sweet odor of the same not only ascend before the Lord in the merit of Jesus, but thus to bear witness also before the members of their families that they are the natural heads of their families; the Lord in turn is their Head, whose wisdom and supervision is sought in all the affairs of life, temporal, as well as spiritual. Not merely does the blessing come upon the parent in thus using his privileges and opportunities, but a reflex blessing extends to the members of the household if the divine rulership is acknowledged and bowed to. In such homes there is apt to be less and less the spirit of anarchy than in other families where divine headship and rule are not thus recognized.

But aside from the privileges of prayer in the Church and in the family circle, superior to either of these, is the great privilege of individual, private prayer granted by the Lord to every one who has renounced

2H227

sin, has accepted justification and has made consecration of himself to him, and is seeking to walk in his steps. The poet has well expressed the meaning of prayer by the words, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." If opportunity favors it is preferable to utter the prayer semi-audibly at least, preferable, too, to take the attitude of prayer upon one's knees, but nothing in divine Word limits God's people to any form or expression. Where it is not appropriate to bow the knee to lift the eyes or clasp the hands, to utter the words, the heart can be lifted to the Lord in silent prayer which none but he can hear. And thus we can enter into our closets in an instant and have communication with the heavenly Lord by wireless telegraphy, and having the blessing of wisdom and guidance in life's affairs and of succor in the moment of sending, when most needed. How precious a privilege! How few there are who really appreciate it! and yet we believe that all who are the Lord's consecrated people must have considerable appreciation of this, and could not long continue in the narrow way unless they avail themselves of the privilege.

WHAT AND WHY WE WATCH

Let us now look at the other ingredient in this prescription which the Lord gave for our benefit and which so many of us have proven to be beyond price. If we pray why should we watch? For what should we watch? On another occasion our Lord intimated that the reason,

the necessity for watching as well as praying, lies in the fact that we have an adversary, an invisible foe, who seeks to seduce us, turn us aside from our vows of consecration to the Lord and his way of righteousness. Our Lord says that this adversary is the devil, and we understand that the devil is not only a personal being but that he has many minions or associates, the fallen angels who kept not their first estate when on trial before the flood. (Jude 1:6) Not only so, but Satan has millions of representatives and agents in the world—millions who are his agents without really being aware of the fact. According to our Lord's testimony on one occasion, we may understand that the whole world of mankind is divided into two hostile camps, the one a little flock under the guidance and control of Jesus their invisible Lord and Head, whose will they seek to do, the other the remainder of the world, who unwittingly are in the service of Satan because they are in the service of sin, and because, as the Apostle expressed it, "His servants you are to whom you render service." Romans 6:16

From this standpoint, with this view before our minds, how many agents our great adversary has who unconsciously are working for him, working for sin, working against the Lord, and hence are the opponents of the few who have tasted of the grace of God, who have accepted the divine conditions and who have consecrated themselves to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. No wonder we are urged to watch as well as to pray, to watch against these various seductive influences of the adversary through the world and its spirit operating through social, financial and Churchianity channels to draw us away from that full consecration to the Lord and to the Truth to which we have already pledged our lives. From every standpoint of opposition there will be more or less seductive allurements on the part of the flesh seeking gratification. Our safety is in watching and praying, not that we can hope that by watching and praying we can escape temptations but that holding fast to the Lord and being covered with the mantle of his love and mercy these temptations will all be overruled for our good, developing us in heart and character in the likeness of our Lord. Well has the poet expressed this sentiment, saying:

"O! watch, and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore."

"Ne'er think the vic'try won,
Nor once at ease sit down;
Thine arduous work will not be done,
Till thou hast gained thy crown."

True, the Lord could answer our prayers by defending us from every adverse influence, by shielding us from every temptation, by making us immune to all manner of temptations. But for him to do this would be to change his own plans, and hence he will not do it. And when we

come to understand what the divine plans are, and how the watching and resistance of sin are necessary to our proper development as the Lord's people, we will no longer be expected to be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, while others fought to win the prize, and sailed through bloody seas."

Our Lord's object in the special call of the Church during this Gospel age is the development of a class of people into the character-likeness of his dear Son, our Redeemer. That means a condition of heart that will be in opposition to sin, that will have its special delight in opposing sin, that would die rather than yield to sin. We must remember, however, that we have this treasure of a new mind in an earthen vessel, our mortal bodies (2 Cor. 4:7); we must remember that to will is present with us but that the performance is another matter. To will right is of absolute necessity from the very beginning of our Christian course. He who wills adverse to righteousness and truth and goodness and

the Lord, is not begotten of the holy Spirit. Every one that is begotten again wills to do right, wills to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. But with all our willingness we have difficulty in performing, because of the adverse conditions of our own flesh and because also of the adverse conditions of the world about us. So, then, the present life, with its praying and watching, is the Lord's time; in it he tests us respecting our faith and our obedience to him and his principles.

If we realize the temptations about us and have faith we will sorely appeal to the Lord for his promised assistance. We will surely not neglect the throne of grace. If we do neglect it, it is a sign that we are lacking in faith, that we are in that respect not fit for the Kingdom, because all who are inheritors of the Kingdom must have faith—"Without faith it is impossible to please God." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:4

THE NEW NATURE'S PICKETS

Our obedience while it can not be perfect because we are still in the flesh, and because we have only the imperfect mortal bodies through which to act, nevertheless our efforts toward obedience must fully demonstrate the positiveness of our will for righteousness, must fully demonstrate that if we had perfect bodies there would be no question whatever respecting the perfection of our every word, thought and deed. We then, realizing our weaknesses and imperfections, realizing that the whole world and its spirit are adverse to the Lord and his spirit and his message, will lead the Lord's faithful people not only to appeal to him but also to watch against the snares of the adversary. They watch themselves not only by taking heed to the admonitions of the Lord's Word for the resistance of these temptations, but also they watch their own weaknesses, failures, shortcomings, that they may protect themselves along the lines of their weaknesses—that, as the Apostle says, they may make straight paths for their feet, lest that which is weak, lame, be turned out of the way. They may be overtaken in a fault because attacked from some new quarter: they may discover a weakness in their own natural make-up of which they had not previously been aware; but with these to discover their weakness would mean not only an appeal to the Lord for assistance at that point, but also energetic endeavors for defense against the inroads, the seductions, the snares of the adversary.

The point known to be a weak one should be doubly picketed by the new mind, lest it should be overtaken unawares and should again meet defeat. To this class of true disciples, watching and praying, a temporary defeat at some point does

not spell disaster, but rather renewed energy and a stronger character because of the setting up of defenses at the point found to be weak. Thus, throughout life, those who watch and pray are gradually making stronger their characters along every line of defense, and in thus building up character they are demonstrating to the Lord the transformation of their hearts, their minds, the sincerity of their vows, and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness set before them in his Word and in the glorious example of their Redeemer and leader.

THE LORD'S JEWELS

These eventually will constitute the Lord's jewels. At the beginning of their course their hearts were honest and loyal for righteousness, but character had not been developed. The trials, the difficulties, the contacts with the world, the flesh and the adversary, developed character by leading them to exercise faith, which manifests itself in prayer, and the loyalty to righteousness, which manifests itself in watching against the various temptations and besetments to which they are exposed.

The latter part of our text is in full accord with the foregoing: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." This is not true of the world, but only of those who have accepted the Lord and turned their backs on sin. Their spirits, minds, are anxious to serve the Lord to do his will, to walk in his ways. But as for the world—their spirit is to please themselves, to walk in their own ways, to serve their own ambitions, to walk after the flesh. Only when we start to walk contrary to the desires of the flesh, only when the new mind seeks to use the mortal body, tainted with sin, born to sin as the sparks to fly upward, only then do we realize how weak the flesh is, how impossible it would be for us in any measure or degree to carry out the good resolutions which we make when we accept Christ, enlist under his banner and undertake to be his followers through evil report and good report to the end of life, laying down our lives in his service. It is because of this weakness of the flesh and because of the loyalty of the spirit or mind that the Lord declares that we need to both watch and pray lest we get into temptation. Temptations we surely will have, because we have chosen the course which is contrary to the spirit of the world and contrary to the natural traits of our fallen flesh.

We must surely expect this from our glorious Master, who will thus fit and prepare us for participation in the first resurrection, "his resurrection." (Rom. 6:5; Phil. 3:10) By that glorious change all these who constitute the very elect will be made absolutely perfect, for they will there receive their perfect or spirit bodies, which will be in full harmony with the changed characters already attained by the Lord's

2H229

grace through obedience to the Word and the watching and praying which he directs. For that glorious attainment we are to strive, and the method is to be through the watching and praying—the watching of the Word, the watching of our hearts, the watching against temptations, the prayer of faith and the exercise of faith in him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

The National Labor Tribune, July 23, 1905

“THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD”

Cincinnati, 0 July 23. Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here to-day. We report one of the discourses in full as follows:

A full, clear, comprehension of our text shows it to be one of the most remarkable utterances of Holy Writ. It tells us of eternal life, with which none of us have had the slightest experience—an incomprehensible matter, we might say. All of our experiences have been more or less in connection with death and its concomitants of pain and sorrow. The very thought of eternal life, a life which will never cease year after year, century after century, millions upon millions of years, being but as its beginning—the very suggestion inspires in us both hope and fear. How grand it would be to continue our existence eternally under favorable conditions, in happiness and joy, in perfection, in harmony with God, in harmony with everything that is pure and good and right and true, with all evil, all sin, abolished. No other proposition could interest us as much. No other suggestion would be worthy of as much consideration. If by any means we might attain to such a glorious eternity, such unspeakable happiness without end, we should certainly avail ourselves of it. We should esteem that the experiences of this present time, whether more or less severe — even if they were the most uncomfortable in the world would be desirable if thereby we could secure that eternal bliss implied in the thought of eternal life under perfect conditions.

On the other hand come the suggestions of fear. How terrible it would be, what an awful curse it would be, if we were doomed to spend an eternity of existence under unfavorable conditions, even as unfavorable as our present environments. We realize instinctively that it is the hope of a future life under more favorable conditions which buoys us up at the present time and makes each trial blessed. If all hope were eliminated, the present life

to the majority of humanity would be barely worth having for its period of three score years and ten and certainly would be undesirable to any one for more than a century.

‘THE CREATOR’S GIFT

While we ponder this question, whether we should fear the eternity proposed or whether we should rejoice in it, we note the fact that the declaration is that the eternal life is the gift of God. We query, What kind of gifts would the Almighty bestow, good or bad? And while weighing the Master’s words, “Which father of you, if his son ask for bread, would give him a stone? if he ask for a fish, would give him a serpent?” (Matt. 7:9,10) The Master’s lesson impresses us. He would have us understand that the heavenly Father is more generous, more kind, than earthly parents. He will not deceive us and answer our petitions by giving us that which would be injurious to us. If he gives us a gift at all we may be sure it will be a blessing. The very arrangement of our text implies that the eternal life which God would give would be a blessing, because it is put in antithesis, in opposition to a wage of sin. It reads, “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.” Here then, we have it: death is the opposite of life. We are already under the sentence of death, because all are sinners. We hearken to the Apostle’s words, “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin and so death passed upon all men, for all are sinners.” Rom. 5:12

Here is the explanation: We are suffering, we are in pain, in sorrow, in trouble because we are dying. We are dying because that is the curse or penalty of God against us. It is his penalty against us because we are imperfect, because life under present conditions would be neither to our advantage or to God’s glory; therefore his decree that sinners shall not live. What a comfort there is in the thought that there shall be a termination of evil that, as the Apostle has declared, “All the wicked will God destroy;” and again, they shall “be destroyed with an everlasting destruction.” Psalm 145:20; 2 Thess. 1:9

GIFTS AND PENALTIES BOTH ETERNAL

No one in the universe has any knowledge of the

2H230

divine purpose except as he receives it from the great Creator, who is working all things according to the counsel of his own will. It becomes us as his creatures to hearken for any message he may send us. Attention, faith and obedience to the divine Word are specially appropriate, indeed absolutely necessary to all those who would continue in relationship with the Lord as his children, sons of God. Let us, then, hearken further to the message from on high which informs us respecting the eternal destinies of the world which the Lord will ultimately divide into two great classes, however many other such divisions there may be in the interim. Now, because of more or less knowledge and because of more or less weakness through heredity, mankind occupies various degrees of harmony with God and various degrees of alienation from him; but ultimately, when the Lord's great plan shall be revealed and all shall know him, from the least to the greatest, and all shall be fully released from the weaknesses and blemishes of heredity — then, according to the Word of the Lord, the matter will resolve itself into two great divisions, the sheep and the goats.

Not that the sheep will all be of one plane or nature, but that all ultimately will be in full accord with the Almighty, the great Shepherd, and with the Lord Jesus, the Chief Shepherd of the flock, as we read, God will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth—that is, under the headship of Christ. (Eph. 1:10) All who will not eventually come under this headship will have arrayed themselves under the other headship, under the lead of Satan, as enemies of God and of righteousness the wicked of whom it is declared, All the wicked will God destroy," with an "everlasting destruction," utterly "destroy them from amongst the people." The penalty of utter destruction against these will be eternal; they will never have a resurrection, never will be permitted to have everlasting life. They are not God's friends, they are his opponents. Why should he provide for them? Why should he maintain their existence, which would profit neither himself nor any in harmony with him?

It is a great mistake, therefore, to suppose that the divine arrangement has so proposed—the entire testimony of Scripture is to the contrary. When rightly understood, the symbols of Scripture are all in agreement with the thought that death, not life in torment, is the penalty of sin. The symbolical pictures thus represent destruction as, for instance, "the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death." This highly symbolical figure used in the highly

symbolical book of Revelation, explains itself. Fire is always destructive; with brimstone added there is nothing more sure to cause death to every living thing, large or small, and the explanation is attached to it, “the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” It symbolizes destruction of life, of everything, in a most positive, most absolute sense. It is repugnant in every sense and degree to every thought of eternal existence. On the contrary, God’s proffer to those who are in harmony with him is that they may live—everlasting life is their reward; none shall get it except as they are obedient to him who “speaketh from heaven.” Heb. 12:25

We remember our Lord’s words on this subject —“lie that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God (the curse, the sentence of death) abideth on him”—will continue to abide on him because of his refusal to accept and obey the message of mercy, speaking peace, forgiveness, restitution and eternal life through Jesus.

Let it be remembered that our Lord did not limit the time or place or manner whereby sinners might come into relationship with himself and with the Father through him. His words are applicable not only to all those who heard him, but applicable also to those who had lived and died throughout the preceding four thousand years, and equally applicable to all who have lived from his day until the present time. Yea, they are applicable to every creature great and small, “Lie that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life.” It is in accord with this that we see that the majority of mankind at the present time have not life because they have not the Son; they have not come into heart-union with him that he could own them as his disciples, his friends. The great mass of mankind, not only in heathendom but also in Christendom, have not the Son — the great mass of mankind know him not and consequently the masses have not eternal life. His words at the time he uttered them were applicable, as he intimated, only to the little flock; and to a similar class they have applied ever since.

“HOW SHALL THEY BELIEVE ON HIM OF WHOM THEY HAVE NOT HEARD”

The twenty thousand millions of our race who have gone down into the prison-house of death without having come to a knowledge of the only name given whereby we must be saved, have not the Son and have not the eternal life. And since, as the prophet declares, “In death there is no remembrance of thee,” and again, “The dead know not anything,” “there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave whither thou goest” —therefore it follows that none of these millions who

have thus far failed to hear of the only name can have received any blessing since their

2H231

death. Either God must have a provision for them in the future, whereby they may learn about the only name and have opportunity for yielding obedient response, or they are hopelessly dead. What is the fact? What do the Scriptures teach? We answer that they assure us that all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth both the just and the unjust. They assure us that at that time, when they shall be called forth, the Lord's Kingdom will have been established. They inform us respecting the object and equitable character of his reign of righteousness. They tell us further that the very object of that reign is that all the families of the earth may be blessed through the seed of Abraham. They assure us that in that day the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep, and that none shall need say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know him from the least unto the greatest. (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34) These assurances coming from the Creator show us most distinctly that while none can have the life except they have relationship with the Son, yet the great time for the majority of the race to secure a relationship to him will be in the future age, the resurrection time, with its glorious opportunity of knowledge and assistance from the Kingdom, when Satan shall be bound and all evil shall be under restraint.

We are not to be understood as encouraging any one to wait for the Millennial age and its opportunities. Quite to the contrary; we urge all that the sooner they make an alliance with the Son of God, the world's Redeemer, the better it will be for themselves, for their own joy and peace and blessing both now and everlastingly. We merely point out the consistency of the Scriptures, which, while declaring God's love for the world and his provision for the future, also tell us that in the present time only a little flock see, hear and obey, and walk in the narrow way and gain that relationship to the Son which insures the life everlasting. These not only have the peace and joy and hope and blessing now, but in the future are to have the high honor and distinction of being the special associates of the Redeemer, the Bride class, who, clothed with the divine nature, glory, honor and immortality, shall cooperate with their Lord in the blessing of all the world of mankind—in giving the whole world an opportunity to become related to the Son through the opening of the eyes of their understanding, and making the crooked paths straight, and by delivering them from their own undesired weaknesses, to the intent that under most favorable conditions many more than now may obtain that relationship to the Son, the Life-Giver, and thus obtain the eternal life which is the gift of God, and so escape death, the second death, which is the curse, the

sentence of God against all who refuse obedience to the Son and to the laws of his Kingdom.

God's gift of eternal life is an indirect one: his direct gift was his Son, our Lord, who died as man's Redeemer. The gift itself is great, and everything connected with it is on the same stupendous scale—riches of grace and of loving kindness in Christ Jesus.

A PRINCELY GIFT

Any king or prince is expected to give gifts in proportion to his greatness, his wealth, his power. Other people may give trifling gifts of little value, but for a king to give a trifling gift would be a discredit. And so when we think of the stupendous gift of eternal life under favorable and blessed conditions, and then think who it is that proffers the gift, we are constrained to say that the Almighty God has rendered us the most wonderful gift imaginable, and that it is in full comportment with his own greatness and majesty. The liberal deviseth liberal things, says the prophet (Isa. 32:8), and so a good God, a liberal God, a gracious Creator, has devised for his creatures this most wonderful gift. If it were the offer of any one of less dignity and power we might properly feel a doubt respecting the fulfillment of the promise. But when we remember that the one who proffers this gift is none less than the great Creator who formed the mighty worlds, who in harmony with his own plan created man in the world in his own image and likeness, and who, foreknowing his sin, foreknew and prepared also the great redemption price before the foundation of the world—when we think of such a giver we are less astounded at the gift, while we wonder and adore.

It was told of a prince of olden times that he desired to give to his betrothed a very precious jewel, but determined that she should realize the value of his gift gradually. The jewel was fitted into an elegant casket, this in turn was fitted into a silver case, and this into a brass case, and it in turn into an iron one. The fittings were so arranged as to be almost indiscernible. When the lady received the present, undid the wrappings and found the iron case, she was considerably disappointed—she had expected more. Presently the secret spring of the case opened and she discovered the brass case, but still she was disappointed. Later it opened and disclosed the silver case, much more beautiful and desirable; and when that opened, too, and disclosed the jewel casket she was astounded at its beauty; but when that opened and disclosed the jewel itself she was overwhelmed.

So with God's gift of eternal life—it is the precious jewel, and it is hidden in the casket, which is Christ. Not until first we have found Christ can we find the

jewel. He that has the casket has the jewel, he that has Christ has the gift of God. But before we can find Christ in the true sense we must find God's Word, and outside of it the Lord has permitted various matters to cover and hide the jewel. For instance, Churchianity is one of these outside cases, and the one who would find the casket and get the jewel must be sufficiently interested to search for the hidden treasure. "He that seeketh, findeth." Only a few, however, of the present time have a knowledge of what to seek for and where to seek for it. To the great mass the beauties of the casket and the jewel will not be revealed until this present time of darkness and Satan and sin shall have passed away and given place to the new dispensation, in which everything that is covered shall be revealed.

"THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"

The giver of a gift has the right to determine how it is to be proffered, and our Creator has determined that his gift of eternal life shall be proffered to mankind in one manner only — "through Jesus Christ our Lord." He who will not have it through Christ shall not have it at all, but it is a part of the divine program that all shall come eventually to know that there is such a gift provided, and to know also of the channel through which it may be obtained. It might at first be considered that this was merely an arbitrary arrangement on God's part. We answer that even if that contention could be substantiated it would in no wise detract from the propriety of the course. The Lord has every right to bestow his gifts to please him. We, the recipients, have every cause for gratitude that we should be offered eternal life at all, but we have every reason also to believe that the terms of the offer are reasonable, just, loving, merciful, and that back of the Almighty's restrictions lies a good reason for every requirement.

When we remember that the word Christ in the Hebrew is Messiah, and signifies "God's Anointed King," it associates the giving of this life everlasting to the world through the Kingdom which is to be established at our Lord's second advent. The little flock, who gain relationship to Christ in advance of the Kingdom's establishment, are those who by faith willingly accept him as their King before he establishes his authority with power and great glory. The thought of the Millennium carries with it all the blessed arrangements of that time, and the divine plan by which the glorified Messiah shall cause every creature, including those who have died, to come to a knowledge of the divine will, to discern between righteousness and unrighteousness, between truth and error.

This will be their testing or judgment. All who will learn obedience to that kingdom shall be uplifted mentally,

morally and physically to perfection; while all who are disobedient, who wilfully oppose the divine arrangement, will be esteemed workers of iniquity and will be destroyed as such from amongst the people. Thus the heavenly Father has arranged to give his gift only to the willing and obedient of the fallen race, and this gift will be bestowed through him who redeemed the world, and who ultimately shall grant to each member of Adam's family a full, fair opportunity for knowing the way of the Lord, and of coming into full harmony therewith, and of attaining thereby all that was lost by the first Adam, with increase of blessing through increase of knowledge.

Blessed are our eyes for they see now. Blessed are we who at the present time discern the beauty and value of the gift, and have already accepted Christ as our Redeemer and the Captain of our Salvation. We already reckon ourselves as having passed from death unto life; we already reckon that we have the eternal life because of our faith in the precious promises. And this which we have now through faith will be fully realized by us when we awake in his likeness in the first resurrection, as it is written, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in his likeness." Psalm 17:15 "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

The National Labor Tribune, August 13, 1905

SALVATION

***FROM WHAT ARE WE SAVED?
TO WHAT ARE WE SAVED?***

Connellsville, Pa., August 13--Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., addressed a good audience here today in the Colonial theater. His theme was salvation, from the text, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." (Heb. 2:3) The discourse follows:

The keynote of the Gospel message to mankind is Salvation. It implies that mankind is in an undesirable condition, or about to come into such a condition, and that a rescue is desirable. It is proper that we should know, that the Scriptures should tell us distinctly, what

2H233

we are to be saved from and what we are to be saved to. Nor are we disappointed when we approach God's Word in a proper, reverent and teachable attitude of mind and heart. Nevertheless this question is rarely ever asked—the Scriptures are very rarely appealed to for their answer. An answer is generally inferred and understood without the query and without the Scriptural reply.

We are told by all the “orthodox” creeds of Christendom that the world was lost 6,000 years ago, that because of father Adam’s disobedience God sentenced the entire race of mankind to an eternity of torture, that many are already enduring this; that, after millions had gone down to that awful condition during four thousand years, Christ appeared as the representative of God to offer salvation. This offer of salvation as claimed is, that those fortunate enough to hear about Christ and able to exercise faith in him, and who as a result of this faith become saints, will be saved from the eternal torture, and instead will be carried up to heaven, there to enjoy bliss eternal. That, briefly stated, is the general view in Christendom respecting salvation.

SUCH SALVATION NOT SATISFACTORY

That theory, slightly modified in unimportant features, satisfied the minds of many during the period we call the dark ages, but it no longer satisfies anybody; everybody agrees that such a view of the divine plan, purpose, arrangement, would be very discreditable to a wise, just, loving God. All are agreed that no good man or woman would make such a plan, and the better the man or the woman the farther such a plan would be from his or her design. As a consequence of this view of matters, as a consequence of the greater enlightenment of our minds, many today are rejecting the Bible in toto as a book suited to the dark ages only and totally unworthy of credence in the light of our day. Others, while still holding to the Bible, are perplexed and perturbed in mind, ill at ease—their confidence in the old book is shaken.

We want this afternoon, dear friends, to call your attention to the fact that the view of salvation we have just portrayed is not only contrary to reason and justice and love, but equally contrary to the teachings of God’s Word. We want that every person in this large assembly today shall leave this house not only with a higher respect for his Creator, but also with a higher esteem for the Bible as the divine revelation of God, his character and his plan. We shall endeavor to have all catch a glimpse at least of the divine wisdom, justice, love and power, which, working all things according to the counsel of divine will, has formed a plan of salvation which is as superior to the theories of the dark ages as the heavens are higher than the earth. Indeed the Scriptures, after calling attention to man’s misapprehension of the divine character, declare, “As the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans.” Isa. 55:9

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?

The Scriptures tell us distinctly that “the wages of sin is death,” “the soul that sinneth it shall die.” They explain to us that by one man’s disobedience sin entered into the

world and death by sin, and thus death passed upon all men for all are sinners. (Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23; 5:12, 19) From this standpoint everything is clear and simple and plain. God's dealings with mankind have been just, and his provision for our salvation is a loving and generous one. Death is the extreme of the penalty: the journey from the cradle to the tomb is all a dying process. Indeed the Scriptures inform us that as a race we are all born in sin, shapen in iniquity, in sin did our mothers conceive us. (Psa. 51:5) Only the one man and woman, therefore, had life in its full perfection. All of their children born under the sentence of death have been a dying race. Let us look about us and see the evidences of the truthfulness of this Scriptural proposition, let us note the mental decay or dying, the physical decay or dying, the moral decay or dying, as it has spread throughout all the earth, so that as the Scriptures again declare, "There is none righteous, no not one; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:10, 23

MAN MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

The image of God possessed by our first parents has been lost. The mental image, the moral image and the perfection of the human frame are gone through the operation of sin working through disease unto death. We shall see that this is a reasonable and just penalty: our first parents while in the image of God, knowing right from wrong, sinned wilfully, the Scriptures explain to us, and therefore got the penalty that rests upon all their offspring through heredity. All are thus going down to the tomb, the death state, called in the Hebrew language of the Old Testament sheol and in the Greek language of the New Testament, hades. Sheol, hades, the grave, therefore, is the great prison house of death to which the entire human family has been consigned on account of sin. Be it noted that these words sheol and hades are mistranslated in our common version of the Bible, being rendered hell when there is no such thought as torment connected with them. As an illustration Jacob, mourning for his son, whom he supposed to be dead, said, "I will go down to sheol mourning for Joseph"—meaning he would continue

2H234

to mourn for Joseph until death. Note again Job's expression on the subject when, under the hand of affliction, he prayed the Lord, "O, that thou wouldst hide me in sheol until thy wrath be past. Thou shalt call and I will answer thee, thou wilt have respect to the work of thy hands." Job 14:13, 15

What did he mean? He meant that, if God were willing, he would rather die. He had had happy experiences in life, but now, under the severe hand of affliction, having

lost all of his children, having lost all his property, having lost his health, being accursed by his wife, he prayed the Lord that, if it were his will, he might go into sheol, go into the tomb, there to await the resurrection—the time when the Lord would call and when Job could respond, even as Lazarus responded to the voice of Jesus when he said, “Lazarus come forth.” Job was a prophet, and had some advanced information respecting the divine plan, that there would be a resurrection of the dead. He addressed God as the Redeemer, Savior, and expressed his confidence that God would have respect to the work of his hands, to the human family, himself included. Job’s faith was securely grounded, and we are glad of the assurances of the New Testament that his prophetic hopes will be fully realized—that not only Job but all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth.

SALVATION FROM WHAT?

If, now, we keep in mind the inspired declaration of what the calamity is that is upon our race, we will be prepared for the Scriptural explanation of the remedy which God has provided, but in whatever proportion we lose sight of the Scriptural declaration respecting the trouble, in the same proportion our minds will be confused when we attempt to think of salvation. This is the trouble with the great majority of Christian people:

they are holding fast the traditions of the ancients received from the dark ages, theories concocted at the time when the professed children of God racked one another, beheaded one another, burned one another at the stake, because of differences of opinion, thus manifesting that they were considerably under the power of the great Adversary Satan. Let us thank God for whatever of clearer light and better knowledge of faith and proper conduct we enjoy. Let us remember that the increasing light has come from the Word of God, and, as the Lord through the prophet has exhorted, let us seek again for the old paths, for the teachings of the Word of God, in contradistinction to the words of man. Let us not be satisfied either to go ten or twelve centuries back—let us go clear back to the words of the Son of God and his inspired apostles—let us anchor our faith to these, nor be moved from them by the threats or cajolery of men.

So surely as it is true that the wages of sin is death, it must also be true that salvation would be a rescue from sin and from death. There can be no rescue from death without a rescue from sin, and there can be no rescue from sin without a rescue from death. Under the divine arrangement they stand as cause and effect; hence, it was that our dear Redeemer said, “He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life.” (1 John 5:12) To have the Son, to abide in the Son, means not to abide wilfully and willingly in sin, to have the Lord’s

deliverance from sin and his deliverance unto life—everlasting life. Thus it is that throughout the Scriptures the whole theme of salvation is “Jesus and the resurrection,” (Acts 17:18)—Jesus, the Redeemer, who gave his life a ransom for father Adam, and thus indirectly paid the ransom price for the sins of the whole world—Jesus, as the power of God, legally authorized through his redemptive sacrifice to release mankind from the power of sin and death.

The foundation for this salvation of mankind is deeply and broadly laid. The Scriptures assure us that it was because of one man’s disobedience that the sentence of death now rests upon the whole world. That one man was father Adam, and the Scriptures also tell us that it was “the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (1 Tim. 2:5, 6) This provision has been made not only for father Adam’s forgiveness but also for the forgiveness of the sins of the whole world. But the Lord proposes to give his blessing of forgiveness and salvation only upon certain conditions. The conditions for the present age are faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior, and obedience to him. Those who can not hear can not exercise faith, and not exercising the faith now can not exercise the obedience, nor can they in any sense of the word have this salvation now. What their future prospects for salvation may be we will consider later. We are now considering our Lord’s offer of this present time. It is confined exclusively to believers, and its terms are discipleship, and our Lord says distinctly, “If any man will be my disciple he must take up his cross and follow me.” Matt. 16:24

The remainder of the world, then, is still unsaved, and this, dear friends, we all recognize to mean that the vast majority here in this city are unsaved. Worse than that, it means that the vast majority of church members are unsaved. We are laying the matter before you as given in the Scriptures. Be not deceived; think not that you are saved when you are not saved; let us not deceive ourselves.

“RISEN WITH CHRIST”

From the time that we accepted Christ and consecrated

2H235

our all to him and began to walk in his steps, we are Scripturally reckoned as having passed from death unto life, as having mentally experienced a resurrection. To such, “Old things have passed away, all things have become new.” Addressing such the Apostle says, “If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.” (Col. 3:1) These, by seeking to follow the

example and precepts of their Lord, are seeking what he promised them, glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature, association with himself in the Kingdom to come—in the Millennial Kingdom for which we pray, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.”

This does not mean that the Lord’s faithful ones experience their resurrection in full at the present time. Quite to the contrary. The Scriptures explain that in this transition of mind we experience but a foretaste of our blessing, our resurrection—as but one of hope and faith and newness of spirit in the Lord. We are still instructed to wait for, to hope for, to expect, a participation in the actual resurrection, in which present earthly imperfections shall all be lost, and we shall receive perfect spirit bodies in every way adapted to our new minds and new conditions as joint-heirs with our Lord. This resurrection of the Church, the Scriptures explain, will come at the close of this Gospel age, at the dawning of the Millennial age, and by that “change” all the members of the body of Christ, the Church, will be glorified, and thus be ushered into the condition and honors and experiences of the Kingdom which will qualify them to bless all the families of the earth. This the Scriptures term the first or chief resurrection, because its rewards will be so far superior to the resurrection which will be granted to the remainder of the world. Of this first resurrection the Apostle says, “Blessed and holy are they that have part in the first (chief) resurrection; on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years. (Rev. 20:6) It is this resurrection, that the Apostle describes in 1 Cor. 15:42, 44:

It is sown in corruption; raised in incorruption; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body.

THE WORLD’S SHARE IN THE GREAT SALVATION

We have already shown by the Scriptures that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man, that he was a propitiation for our sins (the Church’s sins), and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. We have also shown that only faithful believers get the benefit and blessing of this salvation during this Gospel age, and that these alone have part in the first resurrection. We now call attention to the fact that God’s plan is wider and deeper than we had once supposed. The Scriptures already quoted, as well as many others we can cite, prove conclusively that God’s plan for salvation extends beyond the salvation of the present time, which is effective only to the Church. All have been redeemed, all are to have an opportunity for salvation.

The opportunity offered in this Gospel age is a special opportunity, and the reward as we have seen is to be wonderfully, sublimely grand above all that we could ask or think. The salvation and the reward intended for the world in general will be grand, beyond anything that we are able to present or to comprehend, but far less grand than the salvation provided for the special class, the little flock, saved now during this Gospel age and of which the Scriptures speak as the first fruits unto God of his creatures. The first fruits are about to be gathered in this harvest of the Gospel age, and then the plowshare of trouble will be run deeply throughout the world. The hearts of all mankind will be broken, humbled to the dust, to the intent that the great seed-sowing of truth and grace may take place during the Millennial age, the result of which will be another harvest in the end of the age, in which all the worthy ones will get everlasting life on the human plane instead of the spiritual plane, and those found unworthy of eternal life will be destroyed from amongst the people, utterly destroyed in the second death. Well has the poet expressed, probably much better than he knew, the riches of God's grace and provision for salvation for our race, saying:

“Salvation! O the joyful sound!
What tidings for our race!
Deliv'rance for the world is found,
Through God's abounding grace.

LENGTHS AND BREADTHS, HEIGHTS AND DEPTHS

The Apostle having in mind this glorious plan of God, which we have sought to present, breaks out at various times in his writings in ecstasies of joy. On one occasion his words were, “That ye might be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth all understanding.” (Eph. 3:18) To appreciate God's plan we must see that only a comparatively few are being dealt with at the present time, that the great work of salvation belongs to a future time; that the Lord in the present time is preparing fruits of the salvation, a first fruits of God's mercy; that it is to constitute a Royal Priesthood, to be associated with the great Redeemer when he shall by and by stand forth in authority and power as the great Prophet, Priest and King of the whole world, as the

2H236

Lord's representative to establish justice and righteousness, order and truth in the world.

No longer will matters be left as they are now—the great mass of the world in gross darkness, and even the

enlightened parts of the earth much blinded by the god of this world through his various snares and sophistries, among them, money, honor of men, etc. No longer will the truth-seeker be confronted with hundreds of contradictory creeds, whose advocates will not claim that they are true, though they will endeavor to shackle him with them and to stop his search for the truth. No longer will he be left to bewilderment and uncertainty, exposed to the snares of higher criticism, theosophy, Christian science, orthodoxy.

On the contrary, the Sun of Righteousness shall then arise and all the darkness will be scattered, the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as a mighty flood, as the waters cover the great deep. No longer will it be necessary to explain and teach, for all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. This is the assurance of the Scriptures, however unlikely it may appear from the present standpoint of unbelief. Let those who can exercise faith in the Lord and in his Word, trust fully to its presentations and be of good courage, assured that all the blessed promises of the Lord will very soon have fulfilment, that the Kingdom for which the Lord taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," will shortly be established, and that all the blessings of that Kingdom will more than offset the darkness of the past six thousand years, and its gracious privilege and opportunity for life everlasting to the world will be appreciated by the many all the more because of the experiences of the present life of sin and its bitter wages of death.

SAVED TO WHAT?

We answer that God's Word reveals four separate and distinct salvations to those who will give careful study to it, that they may learn "to rightly divide the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) Of course the vast majority, not being thoroughly consecrated believers, will not do this, and hence will remain in darkness; but all who are truly consecrated to the Lord should be glad to give heed to his Word and to come to a clearer understanding of it, that they may appreciate more and more the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love divine and of the plan that is higher than man's. We will briefly review these four salvations, not with a thought that our statement of the matter will be convincing, but rather that we might through this brief statement attract to a thorough study of the subject those who are hungering and thirsting for the truth, those for whom the Lord intends his message during this Gospel age, from the time of the Lord's crucifixion to its end, to accomplish the salvation of two classes called the "little flock" and the class described in the Scriptures as the Great Company. Both of these classes are true believers in the ransom and the efficacy of his sacrifice and have entered into covenant relationship with the Lord, consecrating their all to him; but the little flock consists of those who have joyfully, gladly, willingly gone

forward in the line of duty, privilege, sacrifice, and throughout life have delighted to lay down their lives for the brethren and for the Truth. Lay down their lives, I say—not instantly, not in one moment or hour or day or year, but daily, hourly, throughout life, they seek to spend and be spent in the Lord's service, in the service of his cause, in the service of the Truth, in the service of his brethren, the Church. These the Scriptures denominate "living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God," "followers of the Lamb," a "little flock." (Rom. 12:1; Rev. 14:4; Luke 12:32)

The "great company" is not great as compared with the population of the world, but as compared with the little flock. They come off conquerors by the Lord's assistance in that they demonstrate that they would die rather than deny the Lord or turn wilfully into the ways of sin, but they are not of the class denominated "more than conquerors," not of the little flock. They will not, therefore, share with the little flock in the throne, in the glories and honor of the Kingdom, although they will receive spirit nature in their resurrection, not the human or fleshly nature.

Another class of the saved ones is described by the Apostle in Hebrews 11:39, 40—the worthy ones of ancient times, who lived and died before the great redemption price was paid and before the Gospel call went forth. The Scriptures clearly show that this little flock of ancient worthies will have a very honorable position in the future, under the Millennial reign, but they will not be spirit beings, because not begotten of the Spirit. Their experiences and victories were before Pentecost. The Scriptures assign to them a very honorable place as representatives of Christ and the Church amongst men. The Lord and the Church, the Kingdom class, will be invisible to men, and their communications will be made through the ancient worthies, who will be perfected as Adam was perfect. With added knowledge, they will be examples to the remainder of mankind as well as representatives of the Lord's Word, authority and power amongst men.

Glory they will have, honor they will have, perfection will be their portion in the resurrection. The remainder of the world under their tuition may gradually attain to their perfection, Adamic perfection, earthly perfection, and come to inherit the whole earth. And thus, saved from sin and death, they

2H237

will enjoy the salvation God has provided for them—salvation even unto the ends of the earth—and those who will not accept that salvation the Scriptures distinctly teach us will be remanded to death, to destruction, as we read, "It shall come to pass that the soul that

will not hear (obey) that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people.” Acts 3:23

“NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION”

Our text intimates that there is no escape for those who neglect so great salvation. The Apostle is speaking of himself and others when using these words, “How shall we escape.” He does not say, “How could the world escape,” nor would such words have been appropriate. It is the “we” class, the Church class, the believers only, who have the light and the knowledge at the present time, and upon them properly rests now the responsibility of choosing life or death. If after testing God’s goodness, if after coming to a knowledge of God’s plan, we sin wilfully and repudiate the Lord’s offer of salvation, it demonstrates that we are not worthy to enjoy its everlasting provisions. And thus the Scriptures speak of some who now draw back unto perdition, some who will die the second death during this Gospel age, a possibility of committing the sin unto death of which the Apostle says, “I do not say that you shall pray for it.” But only believers are at the present time in any danger of committing this sin. Others have not the knowledge, have not the light that they could despise it.

By and by, however, when all the blind eyes shall be opened, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, it will then be true of the remainder of the world that they will be offered the great salvation which God has prepared for them in their times and seasons, and then it will be proper to apply to them the words of our text, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation” as will then be within their reach.

We hope, dear friends, that something in this discourse has helped you to discern clearly what God proposes to save men from and what he proposes to save them to. It is a reasonable salvation, a grand, a glorious one. You will thank God in proportion as you are able to grasp and appreciate this message from his Word. I hope to hear from the interested ones, and will be glad to send you literature freely. Make no mistake about the matter: if you understand and appreciate the great salvation now offered, this is your chance, and but one chance or trial for eternal life is offered to any in the Scriptures. Let us who have seen and heard of the great salvation seek to make our calling and election sure to a place in the little flock of overcomers.

The National Labor Tribune, August 27, 1905

DIVINE PREDESTINATION IN RESPECT TO MANKIND

Pastor C. T. Russell addressed the Bible House congregation in Carnegie Hall, Allegheny, at 3 p.m. Sunday. He endeavored to make plain from the Scriptures the subject of divine predestination, which has vexed and perplexed theologians for centuries. His text was, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." (Rom. 8:29) His discourse follows:

The public press informs us that our Lutheran brethren throughout the U. S. are being greatly stirred over the subject of divine foreordination or predestination. They have recently held a synodical conference in Indiana, at which the subject has been warmly debated pro and con, the Ohio synod by its representatives denouncing the doctrine and desiring its expurgation from the Lutheran Confession of Faith, the other synods supporting and endeavoring to uphold the Confession. The dispute is an old one, and nearly every denomination of Christendom has been more or less exercised respecting it. Of recent years, however, doctrines have been relegated to the rear by nearly all except the Lutherans, simply because with the advancing light of our day theologians realize that the creeds formulated in and shortly after the Dark Ages would best be hidden as much as possible from the public scrutiny, as they would not stand the light of present-day investigation and intelligent reasoning.

This discourse was republished in the old Theology Quarterly, No. 70, 1905

Now republished in Harvest Gleanings, Vol. 1, pages 3 75-79, Part 2; under same title.

* * * *

God shall wipe thy tears away,
Turn thy darkness into day.

2H238

The National Labor Tribune, September 3, 1905

AN ARMY OF THE LORD

Denver, Cob., Sept. 3—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached here today to a large audience from the text, 'Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.' (1 Tim. 6:12) He said:

We are not of those who hold that wars are wholly avoidable under our present conditions. On the contrary, we can see that in many instances wars have been immensely profitable to the advancement of civilization. The veterans who are meeting in this city today in

conclave were, so far as human judgment can discern, engaged in such a conflict as in the condition of things was unavoidable and has resulted in great advancement, improvements, etc., to the brothers who fought on both sides of the question at issue. Apparently they were conscientious people, who viewed the questions at issue from opposite standpoints, doubtless because of variant views of truth and righteousness and loyalty to principles. So we believe it has been with many of the wars the world has prosecuted. At all events we may safely assume that the men in the ranks were generally swayed by the arguments presented to their minds and fought conscientiously by them.

We, dear friends, who accept the revelations of Scripture respecting the future, can rejoice that the time is near at hand when Satan, the great adversary, shall be overthrown, and when Christ shall reign under the whole heavens, establishing lasting peace upon the basis of absolute equity and justice, and by restraining and controlling the selfish propensities which now lead to wars. We are assured that in that blessed time “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more;” and we are assured again that the Lord “will make wars to cease unto the end of the earth.” (Isa. 2:4; Psa. 46:9) We are assured further that although Messiah’s Kingdom will be introduced by the most terrible time of trouble the world has ever known, a time of anarchy, confusion, which symbolically in the Scriptures is compared to fire and whirlwind and floods, yet eventually, after these troubles shall have taught the world its lesson and brought it into proper subjection to righteousness, Immanuel himself shall be known as the Prince of Peace, in whose Kingdom nothing shall hurt or stumble any. Isa. 11:9

STRIFE MUST STILL CONTINUE

We have not yet reached that glorious time when all shall know the truth and when righteousness shall be thoroughly established—when it will cost much to be unrighteous, unjust, and bring reward to live righteously. We are still under the domination of the prince of this world, who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience. (Eph. 2:2) The children of disobedience are still far more numerous than the children of obedience everywhere, not only in heathen lands but also in the most civilized. Only the comparatively few are even striving to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. All who are walking after the flesh are walking after the course of selfishness; all who are walking after the spirit are walking under the law and banner of love, under the leadership of Christ.

As our Lord expressed it, the darkness hateth the light and opposes it, and as a consequence strife is unavoidable to some extent. As for the world, selfishness

being its rule, everything is strife. Each nation is selfishly seeking either to maintain an already selfishly acquired hold upon peoples and provinces or to acquire control of such. The general motive is selfishness and desire to exploit those less advanced in the scale of civilization and enlightenment—to create wealth at the expense of the less competent. The same principle applies everywhere throughout Christendom, strife for power, strife for honor, strife for wealth, strife for territory. Undoubtedly the exercise of these selfish propensities will lead to further wars, and that perhaps in the very near future, notwithstanding the fact that mankind is sick of war and butchery, and that the majority would fain establish permanent peace by arbitration. Nothing of the kind will be found practical so long as the hearts of the majority are under the control of selfishness.

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

When our Redeemer was arraigned before Pilate he was asked whether or not he was a king, and replied, “My Kingdom is not from hence, else would my servants fight.” Our Lord’s Kingdom was not established then and has not been established since, and hence his servants or followers are not in any sense qualified to fight for its maintenance. When it shall be established it will be a spiritual empire, against which flesh and blood will have no prevailing power. He will reign, must reign, until he has put all enemies under his feet, the last enemy to be destroyed being death. 1 Cor. 15:26

Because the time for the establishment of the Kingdom has not yet come our Lord did not resist the authority under which he lived. He recognized that under divine arrangement the control of the world had been

2H239

handed over to Gentile governments. This is pictured in the prophecy of Daniel, where the great universal empires of earth, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman, are illustrated in one vision by great terrible beasts, and in another vision by the image whose head of gold represented Babylon, whose breast and arms of silver represented Medo-Persia, whose belly and thighs of brass represented Greece, and whose feet and toes corresponded to the ten horns of the beast of civilized Rome, representing the division of Rome in a pseudo-Christian amalgamation known today as Christendom. Our Lord well knew that the divine plan had given the control of the world to these Gentile empires, and that his time to exalt his Kingdom and to exalt his authority had not yet come. He knew indeed that before the Kingdom would have authority to bless the world he must purchase the world, redeem us with his precious blood. To this he consecrated his life at baptism, to this he gave the attention of his entire three and a half years

of ministry, and in harmony with this consecration he would not defend himself before Pilate but resigned his life, saying, 'Thou canst have no power at all except it were given thee from above.' Our Lord's fight then was not with carnal weapons or against any of the powers that be, and which were ordained of God, but with his human nature, to bring it fully into subjection to his consecration, to pour out his soul unto death. This was his battle, and right loyally he won, saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart." Psalm 40:8

His victory meant his attainment of the right of empire, and the authority to control all the race of Adam purchased with his sacrifice. Thousands of millions of these had already gone into the great prison house of death, and to this he secured the "key," the right, the authority to open, and in the resurrection morning to bid all the prisoners come forth to glorious opportunities of life and by obedience to attain everlasting life. Not only so, but in accord with the divine purpose he called for disciples, for followers, for a little flock who would follow in his steps of sacrifice and delight to lay down their lives in doing the Father's will and in preparation for a share with him in the coming Kingdom, the Millennial Kingdom, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven," when in due time it shall be established.

"THE CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION"

These, who follow Jesus even unto death, thereby with him to attain a share in his glory, the Scriptures refer to as "soldiers of the cross," and mention Jesus as their Captain, the Captain of our Salvation, in whose footsteps we are to follow. But our limitations are the same as those of our Captain, as the Apostle points out to us saying, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2 Cor. 10:4) We have various weapons of defense given us by our Captain, a helmet of salvation, a breastplate of righteousness, a shield of faith, etc., but we only have one weapon for offensive warfare, namely, the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. With this all of our fightings are to be done. We are not to use other swords, the words of men, of creeds of the, dark ages or decisions of councils, nor are we to have our own imaginations and fancies in the matter, but simply the Word of God, which is able to make us wise unto salvation, able to defend us from the adversary and all of his various attacks, able to make us mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds of error, in the casting down of our own vain imaginations as well as those of others, permitting us to place the standard of divine truth prominently before the world.

We must lift up the divine standard and proclaim that while many of the Lord's people have been in wars and

fightings according to the flesh and with carnal weapons, and with good intentions, they were never so engaged by divine authority during this Gospel dispensation. During the Jewish age the Lord indeed had an earthly kingdom, a typical kingdom, and fightings done on its behalf were typical of the good fight with the sword of the Spirit which is to be done by the spiritual Israelites during this Gospel age.

The number of genuine soldiers of the cross who have enlisted under the banner of Jesus to serve faithfully even unto death in the cause of righteousness, at the loss of earthly name and fame and advantage and comfort, and for the sake of divine approval and the prospect of sharing the everlasting Kingdom of Messiah—the number of this class is very small indeed. It will matter nothing whatever to the world in general whether they fight with the carnal weapons or not. With this specially consecrated class, exempt from fighting with the carnal weapons, there will still be millions of nominal Christians and well-intentioned worldly people not under this divine restriction respecting weapons of warfare, who may and who will fight along the lines of good principles and for a good government, and for various causes and questions which they shall consider to be right and just and worthy of their blood. To such we say in the language of Shakespeare, “Thrice armed is he who has his quarrel just.” It is possible for a man to be a good citizen, a good soldier, and to fight along the lines of the best worldly principles, and to be doing the best he knows how to do, and we can rejoice with such if their lives are

2H240

laid down in what seems to them conscientiously a worthy cause. We may feel sure for such that their loyalty to principle will find them all the better prepared when the resurrection morning shall bring them back to the activities of earth under the more favorable conditions of the reign of Immanuel and his Bride, the little flock.

“RESIST NOT EVIL”

Not to the world in general, then, not to the masses of mankind, does the Lord address his injunction that evil is not to be resisted. All of our Lord’s commands are to those who are his followers in the special sense we have intimated—those who have taken up their cross to follow him in consecration even unto death. It is the failure to notice this distinction between the consecrated and the merely nominal believers and the world which has led to so much confusion amongst believers and others respecting the peculiarity of our Lord’s teachings. What mattered it to the Roman or to the Jewish nation that our Lord resisted not? What mattered **it** to them that

he enjoined upon all who would be his disciples that they should follow his example? Their number was so small that it made little practical difference in the affairs of Judaism or in the affairs of the world, and the same has been true of the Lord's elect class throughout the Gospel age. Their swords and guns and blood have not been necessary in any of the wars or any of the victories of the world. In the world, they are not of it; their battlings, their fightings, are of a totally different kind.

While the command to these was that they were not to resist evil, it signified, as elsewhere expressed, that they were not to resist evil with evil, not to resist the world and its forces by earthly forces. Nevertheless they were to contend, to fight, to resist evil unto death—"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood," is the Apostle's suggestion. (Heb. 12:4) The implication is that we are to resist evil even unto blood. Of course we are not to resist the good but to resist the evil—to resist the evil with good, to resist unrighteousness with righteousness, to resist error with truth, to resist impurity with purity. This is the good fight, this is the great fight. The great majority are on one side of the question, the Lord and his little flock are on the other side.

“BLINDED BY THE GOD OF THIS WORLD”

It is safe to say that there are a great many people in the world who are more or less supporting sin and unrighteousness and injustice and error who are not willing to be on that side of the battle, but who if they realized the true situation would be ready to contend earnestly for the right. The question is why can not all see what is right, what is truth, what is righteousness, what is purity? The answer of the Scriptures is that the Adversary, Satan, the god of this world, who now has so much influence and power, puts darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus deceives many who would love to be on the right side, and thereby utilizes them on his own side of the question. Every day we find Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and people of all denominations, who assure us that they have long been feeling after the Lord, seeking after the light of truth, and that, so far as they know their own hearts, they would long ago have enlisted heartily on the side of righteousness had they been able to see clearly, but that for a time their eyes were holden—the untrue appeared to be the true, it had an earthly honor and sheen and glory that deceived them; the truth appeared to be the false, it was so small, so insignificant, so unpretentious, so despised of the world.

The Lord suffers matters to be in this condition now throughout this Gospel age, to the intent that he may make selection from the world of those who specially love the light and truth, who love it more than they love houses or lands, father or mother, husband or wife or children or others dear according to the flesh, yea, more

than they love their own lives. Such have the eyes of their understanding opened, and immediately a test begins which demonstrates surely to the Lord, at least, the measure of their sincerity, their honesty of heart, their desire for the truth. If they are faithful and really joy in laying down their lives in defense of righteousness, truth and in obedience to the Lords they are of the kind whom the Lord is seeking as members of his elect class joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

GIDEON'S BAND AND ITS VICTORY

As already intimated some of the battles under the Jewish regime were typical of the conquests of Spiritual Israelites during this Gospel age. Gideon and his little band seemed to have been specially used of the Lord as a type or illustration of Christ and his little flock. In the type it was this battle in which the Lord gave the victory to Gideon and his little handful of followers over their enemies, delivering the people of Israel. The correspondence or antitype would be the victory which Christ and his little flock will soon have over Satan and all the forces of evil at present operating in the world for the enslavement of those who would desire to be the Lord's people were it not for the blindness which is upon them and for the deceptions which he practices over them and for the weaknesses of the flesh which ensnared them. The battle time will be at the close of this Gospel age, the great time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, otherwise in

2H241

the Scriptures called "the battle of the great day of God Almighty." Rev. 16:14

At the close of that great battle of the day of the Lord, with the Millennial kingdom fully established in the earth, Satan bound, and all the influences of sin restrained, and all the agencies of righteousness set free, it will mean the blessing of all the families of the earth and an opportunity to test, to prove, to demonstrate who are on the Lord's side, on the side of righteousness, on the side of truth, and who are on the opposite side of error and sin. All on the Lord's side will be accounted his sheep, as represented in the parable of the sheep and the goats, and these shall all be gathered to his right hand of favor and ultimately be granted the full liberty of the sons of God—liberty from death and imperfection and all the weaknesses that have come down to humanity from the fall of our first parents, accentuated by the six thousand years of still further degradation.

Our special interest in Gideon and his band lies in the fact that it was a selected army, a peculiar people. We remember how Gideon first invited all who wanted to

serve the Lord to come to his standard, and a considerable gathering was assembled. So there are many in the world, who, when they first hear of Christ and his call for followers, are ready to respond, not seeing clearly all the conditions, not realizing what it means to be one of the soldiers of the cross. In harmony with the Lord's direction Gideon set before the assembled ones the terms and conditions, and urged any to go home again, to leave the ranks, if they were not anxious to go into the fight. So Christ, our Gideon, the Captain of our Salvation, says to all who volunteer to be his disciples, "Sit down and count the cost; consider whether or not you sufficiently appreciate the blessings that are to follow and the privilege of being my disciple and inheriting my Kingdom. Before you make definite enlistment count the cost, count the self-denial, reckon that it means to love less father and mother, wife and children, houses and lands, yea, and your own life also, and to be ready to sacrifice all of these should occasion require in faithfulness to your covenant."

As with Gideon's band, the majority went back home and declined that which they at first had sought. So with those who hear of Christ and who first contemplate being his disciples, the majority fall back, do not make the full consecration, conclude that it will be enough for them to rejoice in the blessings that Christ will ultimately bring, and that as for fighting for it and being with him in the struggle and ultimately being with him in the Kingdom glory, they do not estimate this as worthy of the sacrifice of all earthly things.

The Lord intimated to Gideon that there were still too many in the little handful of his associates, there must be another weeding out; and the test made was that he should bring them to the water, and those who took the water in one manner were accepted and those who took it in another manner were rejected, and thus under divine guidance the company was reduced to the small number which the Lord designed. So it is with the antitypical Gideon's band. Amongst those still courageous so far as fighting is concerned another test is applied, namely, loyalty to the truth, for the water, and the drinking of it, and the manner of drinking it, seem to typify the truth and how it was received. Those who lifted the water by hand to the mouth were three hundred, and they were thus marked as the Lord's selection, water here symbolizing truth as it generally does throughout the Scriptures, and the hand—representing power, energy, cooperation—would signify the putting forth of power, the exercise of energy in connection with the partaking of the truth. And so it is not merely those of Gideon's band who have courage and who have access to the water and who partake of it to some extent, but those who handle the truth, who put forth their power or energy in connection with the use of the truth, who are exercised in connection with it. These are the ones who will have a special

blessing of the Lord, and constitute the special class who will have the privilege of fighting the good fight.

BREAKING THE PITCHERS

The Apostle intimates that the armor of the Christian is peculiar in the sight of the world. So also this was typified in the armament given in Gideon's band; each had a pitcher, and in the pitcher each had a light, and in his hand each had a trumpet. In this manner they approached the enemy. First they blew a blast upon the trumpets, which represent the Word of God, the message of the Lord; then they used the ram's horn trumpets in breaking the pitchers, and thus allowing the light to shine out as from lanterns.

So the message, the blast of the trumpet, the bugle call to the world in the name of the Lord, not only have their effect upon the world, but the same bugle has its effect upon ourselves—all who belong to Gideon's band will be rightly exercised by the same message. With this trumpet we will break our vessels and let our light shine out. The Apostle intimates that the light is the spirit of the truth, the new mind, the new will in us, and that the earthen vessels represent our mortal bodies. And so it is that the channel through which we proclaim the message of the Lord against all opponents of righteousness is the same instrument by which our own mortal bodies are broken for the Lord's service, and in proportion as the vessel is broken in the same proportion

2H242

the light of grace and truth will shine out to others.

This calling of Gideon's band, this sending back of some, this testing of the remainder with the water symbolizing the truth, and how it will be received and applied, this blowing upon the trumpets, this breaking of the pitchers, this letting shine out of the light, has been going on for now over eighteen centuries, and very shortly the results will be seen, the conquest will be ours through the power of the Lord, and the time of trouble will indeed scatter all the forces of evil. Gideon's band, the Lord's little flock, will be with him in glory to bless and to uplift all the families of the earth.

A BLESSED WARFARE

Dear friends, let us who have enlisted in this warfare fight the good fight, break our vessels, let our light shine out, blow the trumpets, cultivate in ourselves all the fruits and graces of the Lord's Spirit and put down in ourselves the foes of grace and truth, and, as the Apostle suggests, bring into captivity to the will of God even the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, that we may be wholly his, that we may be accepted in the Beloved and accounted worthy of being of the little flock, the Gideon band, to whom the victory shall so soon be granted

over all the forces of evil, and whose victory shall mean not only their own blessing and glorification but also the blessing of the whole groaning creation and their deliverance from the power of sin and weakness and death.

The National Labor Tribune, September 17, 1905

“THERE ISA SIN UNTO DEATH”

Los Angeles, Cal., September 17—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., addressed large audiences here today on two occasions. We report one of his discourses on the “sin unto death” from the text, “If any man see his brother sin a sin not unto death, he shall ask and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: not concerning this I say that he should make request.” 1 John 5:16

Perhaps some of my audience may say, How strange a topic for an address to Christian people! If Brother Russell were addressing a congregation of convicts in a prison that might be a suitable text, but it is not appropriate to us. On the contrary, dear friends, the Apostle addressed these words to the Church, as I am now addressing them to the Church. Indeed, as I expect to show, the sin unto death is one that the world at the present time could not commit, is one which only the truly consecrated of the Lord’s people could commit at the present time. If this be conceded it must also be acknowledged that to the Church and not to the criminals of earth is the Apostle’s admonition applicable.

This discourse was republished in Pastor Russell’s Sermons, pages 766- 78, under the same title.

The National Labor Tribune, September 24, 1905

SOME SINS FORGIVABLE AND SOME UNFORGIVABLE

Houston, Tex., September 24—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., homeward bound from the Pacific coast, preached on Saturday at San Antonio, and twice here today. He had attentive audiences. We report his discourse on Forgivable and Unforgivable Sins. His text was, “Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto them; but a blasphemy against the holy Spirit shall not be forgiven.” (Matt. 12:31, 32) The discourse follows:

The Scriptures inform us of the transgression of the divine command and justly carries with it a penalty. And since all

men are by nature fallen and unable to measure up to the perfect demands of the divine law, it follows as the Scriptures declare, that all are sinners—“There is none righteous, no not one.” The question of sin and its penalty, therefore, is one which should be of deep interest to every human being, especially to those members of the sinner race who are striving against sin, wishing and hoping by the Lord’s grace to attain perfection.

Since sin is the infraction or violation of the divine law, inquire what is its penalty? The Scriptures reply, “The wages of sin is death,” and explain to us that

2H243

the death we witness, which preys upon the entire human family, carrying mankind to the tomb, is this penalty for original sin, the concomitants of sorrow, pain, distress and trouble being merely fundamentals to the penalty. The Bible asserts this, saying, “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin, the penalty of death passed upon all men, for all are sinners.” Rom. 5:12

[We cannot reproduce the first part of this paragraph due to poor copy. What follows is the last section.] Hence the Almighty purposed the redemption of Adam and his race with a view to give.., race, such a second opportunity.

In harmony with this plan the fact of the redemption has been proclaimed throughout the world, to the intent that those who have ears to hear the message and faith to believe it may act upon it and turn from sin and devote their lives to the Lord and his cause of righteousness. Yea, more, the Scriptures clearly inform us that the class who are now being selected, the Church of this Gospel age, is but a first-fruits unto God of his creatures (Jas. 1:18), that it is his purpose in an age to follow to extend the scepter of mercy to every member of Adam’s race—to those who have not the ears to hear now and who therefore are not eligible in the present gathering of the Lord’s first-fruits class.

ADAM’S SIN WAS NOT FORGIVEN

The foregoing facts must be borne in mind in order to rightly understand our subject—forgivable and unforgivable sins. Adam’s sin was an unforgivable one, because it was the sin of a perfect being created in the image and likeness of God. It was a wilful and deliberate sin, a sin against the Spirit—that is, not an unintentional one, not one through weakness, but a deliberate one. That that sin was an unforgivable one was evidenced by the fact that for six thousand years, ever since its commission, sin and death have reigned over the race. (1) The children of Adam, sharing in his imperfections,

shared also in his sentence. (2) The inheritance of an unforgivable sin is attested to by the fact that it was necessary for Christ Jesus by the grace of God to go into death for every man, to redeem Adam, the sinner and all of his race of sinners.

Note, however, since Jesus had died for our sins, and since he arose and ascended on high and appeared in the presence of God on our behalf and presented his sacrifice as the atonement for the sins of all believers, it can readily be seen that these believers stand in different relationship to God from that which Adam occupied. Their sins being forgiven they are still by reason of their share in the fall, imperfect in mind and in body. Since God now takes cognizance of them he must in justice make an allowance for the blemishes and imperfections which they inherit and which are unwillingly theirs. If they were perfect, as Adam was perfect, any transgression of the law by them would be as unforgivable as was Father Adam's transgression. Now, as a part of his plan, God informs us that in the cases of all who accept Christ as their Redeemer and turn their hearts from sin to righteousness and seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus—to all these he will grant forgiveness of their blemishes—their imperfections, which are merely the result of heredity.

Such blemishes as would have been counted sin to them, had they been perfect men at the bar of divine justice, are thus passed over and not counted sins to them because they have trusted in him and because they are seeking to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. This treatment of believers is called divine grace. It extends only to believers. Under another figure these believers are represented as being covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness; their sins having been imputed to Jesus, his righteousness is as a garment imputed to them, covering their blemishes and permitting them to stand before the Lord as though they were perfect, "holy, acceptable to God." Rom. 12:1

We will have something to say about the sins of unbelievers and God's dealings with them, but now we continue our examination of the operation of divine grace toward believers. The Apostle John when speaking of this class declared that none can be of it who deny that they are actually imperfect. He says, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" but if we "confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." (1 John 1:8,9) God can be just in forgiving our sins because Jesus has appeared for us. Our Redeemer has become our advocate, and has applied the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf; hence the justice of God in forgiving those who confess their sins and who accept the forgiveness which his grace has provided.

The same Apostle John in another connection says, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and thus he intimates that those who are truly the Lord's people do not sin.

Here evidently he is viewing us from the standpoint of the covering which is ours in Christ. He means that those who sin wilfully, deliberately, are of the devil, and are not guided by the holy Spirit of God. If, therefore, any who have become truly the Lord's followers through full consecration shall sin wilfully after they have received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for their sins, they can have no more share in the great atonement work of

2H244

Christ. They have had their share and have misused the justification which they received through that forgiveness. For such is the second death. Theirs is the sin mentioned by our Lord in our text as blasphemy against the spirit—that is, evil speaking, evil acting, contrary to the spirit of truth, the spirit of righteousness, the Spirit of the Lord as they had learned and understood the same. That sin was never forgiven, as the Apostle declares, "There is a sin unto death" and there is a sin not unto death.

"STRIPES" FOR MIXED SINS

Our Lord, the great teacher and Theologian, did not teach that all sins have the same penalty. He not only showed that there is a sin unto death but he also spoke of sins which would be punishable with "stripes"—chastisements. Furthermore, he intimated that there would be various degrees of such sin, some punishable with few stripes and some with many. What sins are these? Which sins are they?

We have already considered two kinds of sins, and the kind now under consideration might be designated a third or a mixture or a combination of the other two. To keep the matter before our minds let us rehearse: (1) Sins that are purely the results of ignorance or inherited weaknesses the Lord proposes to overlook or forgive altogether for believers when they are confessed, acknowledged and repudiated. (2) The full, complete, deliberate renouncement of righteousness and participation in sin, a wilful delving into sin after having been forgiven, after having been accepted into the Lord's family, after having participated fully in the merits of the salvation provided—for this full, complete sin against the spirit of truth, righteousness, holiness, the penalty is the second death—utter destruction. (3) A mixture of the foregoing two kinds of sin—a blending of wilfulness with inherited weakness, a combination of perversity and heredity with a will that is not sufficiently strong in the Lord, not sufficiently determined for righteousness, not sufficiently on the alert to resist the attacks of the world, the flesh and the devil. This last-described species of sin is the more general one and must have our particular

attention, that we may know how it is viewed of the Lord and what are the proper steps to take in counteracting it and what the results will be if we do not take these steps.

In our text the Lord divides the same subject into two parts only, "All manner of sins may be forgiven unto men except the sin against the Spirit, which can not be forgiven."

Applying the text to this third view of sin, which is the one with which we all have our greatest difficulty, we find that where any measure of willful-ness is associated with sin, it takes it to that degree out of the list of forgivable sins and places it in the list of unforgivable, because to whatever degree we sin against the light and knowledge we are sinning against the spirit of the truth. On the other hand, so long as it is not a willful, deliberate renouncement of righteousness and of the Lord's redemptive work it is not counted as a sin unto death. It therefore occupies the intermediate place which our Lord elsewhere mentions—it is a real sin, it implies a defect in the heart, in the will, in the intention. If the will were perfect the Lord would not count any defect a sin at all, and to whatever extent the will is imperfect it must be rectified, remedied, otherwise assuredly we need not expect a place in the Kingdom. We must get to the place where we will be free from all intentional sins, imperfections, where our hearts will be opposed to sin in every sense and degree, where we will be walking not after the flesh but after the spirit, as close to the spirit of God's law as is possible for us—though it will not be possible for any of us to walk up to the spirit, because we are imperfect through the fall, but our endeavors to walk after the spirit are counted to us for righteousness, as the Apostle declares. Rom. 4:5

“IF WE WOULD JUDGE OURSELVES”

Our Lord and the apostles exhort not the world but believers to examine themselves, to examine their faith whether or not it is founded upon the Rock-foundation, the redemptive work of Christ, or upon something else, sandy foundation which will not stand. They exhort us also that in all our Christian course we shall “walk circumspectly,” looking all about us, examining every step in life's pathway, seeking that our Christian walk shall be in all things pleasing to the Lord, measuring ourselves and our conduct by the Golden Rule, comparing ourselves repeatedly with the divine standards set for us in Jesus, the standard of perfect love for God and for our fellow man. To whatever extent inspection finds that we are short in these matters, we must see to it that it is not the will that comes short, that every shortcoming is purely, solely, the result of weakness of the flesh, inability to do better. So doing we shall continue to have the forgiveness of the Lord, and enjoy continually the light of his countenance and fellowship of spirit with him.

On the other hand, if we find that to any extent we have done less than we are able to do to maintain a righteous standard of life—less than we are able to do in preserving our fellowship and relationship to the Lord and his people, less than we are able to do in holding up the standard of righteousness before the world—our hearts should condemn us and show us that we are not living up to our proper standard and privilege. If we find that our wills were not sufficiently on the alert to know and to do the will of the Lord, if we find that to

2H245

any degree we have courted sin or to any degree assented to our own temptations or yielded in any degree to our own weaknesses, then our course is plain—we have sinned. We should go at once to the Lord in prayer, acknowledging the defect, asking forgiveness for the sins and sincerely promising thereafter to put forth greater endeavors to walk after the spirit and not after the flesh—to serve the Lord with all our hearts.

But we can not expect to have such sins entirely forgiven, entirely blotted out. The Lord will very graciously forgive the transgression to the extent that he who can read the heart can see extenuating circumstances, weaknesses, strong temptations, etc. We may rely upon the divine justice as also upon divine mercy that, on the one hand the Lord will not judge us too severely, but on the other hand, that He will judge a righteous judgment. We are to bear in mind that the Lord's object in dealing with us, in giving the strictest of punishment, is not that he takes pleasure in our suffering, but, as the Scriptures explain the matter, would chasten us as sons that he might teach us the lessons necessary, which will be helpful to us, and which will enable us eventually to be proper and acceptable members of his family in glory, amongst whom there can not be a solitary member who will love or have any sympathy with sin. And as the Apostle says, "Brethren, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." If we are doing the best we know how to do day by day, year by year, we may rest in the Lord's unchanging grace toward us in Christ, however weak, however imperfect our results.

To whatever extent we can grasp this thought, we will be helped, not only in our appreciation of the Father's judgments and disciplines and chastenings as they also come to us, but be helped also as the Apostle exhorts, in judging ourselves and correcting ourselves, in disciplining ourselves. This is the real life work of the Christian after he enters the family of God by adoption as a son through Jesus Christ. We are not ignoring the privileges and opportunities granted to the Lord's people in connection with serving the truth by preaching, circulating tracts and otherwise; but we assert that these

services for the Lord and for the brethren and for the truth could easily be accomplished without us and we are permitted to engage in these that thereby we may evidence our love for him and for his cause of righteousness.

But these outward works for others are not the most important. Our special work is for ourselves, that our own hearts may be developed more and more in the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Our hearts must be more and more after his own pattern, holy, harmless, undefiled. Let us remember that we can not hope for absolute perfection in the flesh, but must require of ourselves perfection in the spirit in the heart, in the intention, of the will. This is the Lord's demand, and he will accept nothing less. We would not expect that this judging of motives and character-development... can be developed sufficiently.

[The first section of this sentence is not readable in the original copy] of sin with self-will, with the various depravities and oppositions of the flesh, as well as the oppositions of the general course of this world. We must learn from our imperfections and failures, must judge ourselves by fortifying with resolutions and prayer our arrangements of the affairs of this life, so that the weak points of our characters may be strengthened, and that we as new creatures may be in the spirits of our minds rounded out and approximate more and more the perfect pattern.

PERFECT LOVE, THE STANDARD

God is love, and his love was manifested in the character and work of his Son, and to us he had declared that "love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:10) We, therefore, are to judge ourselves continually to see to what extent words and thoughts and deeds are in harmony with love. Day by day we are to seek to bring all into as close harmony with the requirements of love as is possible to and yet with each step of progress that we make toward the ideal we find that the ideal advances proportionately, so that the Christian at the end of his journey may have no higher an appreciation of himself according to the flesh than he had at the beginning of his course, though he may have made and should have made considerable progress in overcoming the weaknesses of the flesh and in attaining the character-likeness of his Lord.

If, therefore, using the golden rule of love to measure all of his affairs, we can see at the end of each day that we have done our best to regulate life according to this rule, our hearts need not condemn us, and we can know that our imperfect work shall be acceptable through Christ. But if we have found that we have done less than we could, we have come short of the standard; and not more

than was absolutely necessary; we should judge ourselves, condemn ourselves, have pain, shame and regret, which would be manifest to the Lord not only in our petitions at the time, but also in our subsequent better endeavors.

The Apostle intimates that the Lord would accept such a judging of ourselves as being the stripes due to such a sin—to such a failure to live up to the standards which he has set and which we as the followers of Christ have accepted. Such would probably have no further

2H246

stripes from the Lord because of their self—correction, because of their grief for sin, and because the Lord would esteem that this was a sufficient punishment for their measure of willfulness or lack of zeal associated with their infraction of the divine standards.

But if we would not judge ourselves, the Apostle says we would be judged of the Lord—receive stripes, punishments—not by and by, but now in this present life. The Apostle tells us that the Lord would give these corrections in righteousness to the intent that we might not be condemned with the world—because he wishes to judge and develop us as his Church now instead of leaving us and our judgment over to the future—to the time and conditions of the world's judgment, which belongs to the age to come. The Lord's chastisements may come to us through sickness, through financial losses, through sorrow and pain or from any of a variety of sources, but these to the Lord's children are always the chastisements of a Father to the Son, because they are his, because they take the step of renouncing sin and accepting Christ as their Deliverer as the Captain of their Salvation. This acceptance of Christ differentiates all believers from the world, and assures them of their judgment, their trials, their disciplines, their stripes, in the present life and not in the future age.

Those who have committed their way unto the Lord and thus entered the school of Christ have much advantage every way over others. Such should rejoice, and the more and better they understand the divine plan the more they will rejoice that the Father in his gracious plan does not give them over to their weakness nor permit them to lapse totally into sin, but holds them by his own right hand and chastens them that they may not be condemned with the world. Nevertheless, more glorious, more happy, is the course of those who faithfully walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and who need not the chastenings of the Lord, but who judge themselves and continually have the Father's smile with not a cloud between.

The National Labor Tribune, October 1, 1905

THE SIN OF THE WORLD

Pastor Russell met with his home congregation Sunday, occupying Carnegie Hall, their own chapel being no longer of sufficient capacity.

The speaker said:

I continue my examination of the general subject of sin, supposing that many of my audience keep in touch with the discourses through the public press. Having already examined the sins of the Church and found them to be of three different kinds, namely—sins of ignorance, which are forgivable through faith and prayer; sins of full wilfulness, which are punishable with the full penalty of the divine law, the second death; and sins which are a combination of ignorance and weakness, heredity, and a measure of wilfulness, and which are punishable with stripes, chastisements, sorrows, either self-inflicted by the penitent one or administered by the Lord in mercy that the believer of the present time might not have his portion with the world, having been called and accepted to a new nature—a spirit nature.

Today, if you please, we will examine the sins of the world, to note the divine attitude toward them and what punishment has been arranged for them.

I choose for my text the words, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) These were the words of John the Baptist, specially commissioned of the Lord to be the forerunner and announcer of the great Redeemer. They suggest to us properly that there was a sin of the world at that time, a general sin which involved the whole race. In keeping with this thought is the Apostle’s statement respecting the Church, Ye were “children of wrath even as others,” and “have escaped the condemnation that is on the world.” The general condemnation of the world because of general sin of the world dates away back to the time of Adam, who when in the image of God, perfect and unfallen, sinned wilfully and deliberately, and brought upon himself the curse, the condemnation, the sentence, the wrath of God, involving the whole world of his posterity with himself in his transgression and in its penalty, death—“the wages of sin is death.” Rom. 5:12; 6:23

A THEOLOGICAL BLUNDER

It is a theological blunder, and properly out of harmony with the Scriptures, that the teaching has gone forth that the penalty for Adam’s sin is to be meted out to his posterity beyond the grave. The facts are obviously to the contrary. The penalty of the original sin, in which the whole world shares, began to be felt by father Adam at once, since he was driven from the garden of Eden to earn his bread in the sweat of his face in battling with the thorns and thistles and unfavorable conditions associated

with the curse upon the earth. All of the aches and pains and sighs and tears of father Adam and mother Eve and all of their posterity, as

2H247

they have been fulfilling a penal servitude in going down into the great prison-house of death, have been associated with the wage or penalty of sin—these have constituted the dying process, the result of which is absolute nonentity, extinction.

It is from this death penalty, extinction, that God has redeemed the whole world through Jesus Christ. The dying processes do not fill the penalty; death, extinction itself, and that to all eternity, was the penalty. Original sin needed no more penalty than this. We could not justly consider that any more of a penalty would have been possible or reasonable, and certainly no more is specified by the divine Word. Whoever will consider the amount of physical, mental and moral pain, sorrow, disappointment, experienced in one day throughout the world, and then remember that this has been the order of things for now six thousand years, will agree that God placed a heavy penalty against sin when he declared, “Dying, thou shalt die.” Gen. 2:17

To assume that after mankind has passed through the trials and difficulties and disappointments and sorrows of the present life, there must still await him an eternity of torture because of father Adam’s disobedience in the eating of the forbidden fruit, is to suppose what is totally unreasonable and what would imply the mental aberration, the insanity, of the thinker. Alas, that for a time we were all somewhat hoodooed by the great Adversary through the false theologies of the (lark ages into such a misconception. We can not charge it to insanity either, for the fact of the matter is that reason and common sense have been generally ignored when considering religious subjects.

WHOEVER SINS SUFFERS

This well-worn proverb is manifestly true. Observation and experience teach us that while we are born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and are continually surrounded by imperfect conditions and downward tendencies, nevertheless it is possible for us to strive against these and to measurably maintain ourselves without further degradation, and perhaps even to advance a step or so in the right direction, though without any hope that we would ever be able to recover ourselves and to reach perfection. On the other hand, it is equally evident that to yield to the weaknesses and imperfections wherein we are born, while it is easy to go on the downward road, the broad road, nevertheless it is the road to destruction—the road by which we might hasten in ourselves the dying processes already in operation. Moreover, while the

whole creation, as the Apostle says, is groaning and travailing in pain together because of sin, because of the curse, because we are a dying race, it is possible for each one by indiscretion and running headlong into sin, to increase his groaning, to increase his sins, to increase his troubles and disappointments and vexations.

Thus seen every sin increases the trouble upon the individual and tends to hasten him to the tomb, while on the contrary every endeavor for righteousness, every restraining of the downward tendency, is advantageous. Thus we see that in the divine arrangement rewards and punishments measurably adjust themselves as respects the unbelievers. We will see later on how present resistance of sin will prove of future advantage, and present yielding to sin prove a future disadvantage, without any reference to the original sentence against Adam and his race now being executed.

CANCELLATION OF THE WORLD'S SIN

The Scriptures everywhere keep before our attention the fact that, so far as believers of this present age are concerned, their past sins are all canceled, and their only responsibility before God is the present attitude of their own hearts. We have seen that God can be just and at the same time justify these believers in Jesus and cancel their past sins because of the great atonement sacrifice of Christ, and share in the merit which is imputed to each believer. How glad we are! How we rejoice in the testimony! "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." (Psa. 32:1, 2) But what shall we say respecting the world — they who are not believers? We cannot say for them that God has canceled their sins, that he has imputed to them the merit of Christ's sacrifice, for there is no Scriptural warrant for the usual theory that those who have not believed on the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved, are to be held responsible for their share in Adam's weaknesses, for all their ignorance and blindness and the measure of wilfulness in sin which they have manifested, and that they are all to be punished for these after death — to be awakened from the sleep of death by resurrection power in order that they shall be punished for all the weaknesses, imperfections, etc., which they have inherited and to some extent perhaps increased.

Evidently such a procedure would be inequitable, since as we have already seen, they are suffering now in this present life weaknesses, pains, tears and sorrows, and since, as we have also seen, their share in death completes their share in the penalty for sin, complying with the sentence in every particular. The thought of a future awakening for the purpose of punishment for past sins is entirely incongruous with the Scriptural declaration and ends reasonable conception of divine justice. It would be like the trial and conviction and imprisonment and execution of a murderer, and then,

if the government had the power, his resuscitation that he might be tortured or hanged again and again, repeatedly. Such conceptions are totally out of harmony with the divine character and Word—we must repudiate them.

As the hope of the Church now is in God's mercy for the forgiveness of sins, so the hope of the world is in divine mercy and forgiveness of sins. Ah, but, says one, it would never do to not be just! We answer that it would be as just to forgive the world its sins as to forgive the Church's sins. We admit that having sentenced the world to death, the death penalty must stand, that justice could not rescind it. But we have just seen the whole Scriptures corroborate the thought that God has provided a ransom, that Christ has paid the penalty "for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." These sins of the world may include murder, but as far as justice is concerned, there can be no more objection to the forgiving of the sins of the whole world than to the forgiving of the sins of the whole Church.

THE PREMIUM UPON FAITH

But some one suggests that the sins of the world may include murder, arson, adultery and various heinous crimes, and God could not forgive these. We answer on the contrary that those very crimes have been committed by many who became believers in Christ and were freely forgiven them. If justice was not violated in forgiving these sins to the Church of this Gospel age, why should we consider that it would be violated by forgiving similar sins for the world in the coming age?

The Apostle enumerates these various sins in speaking of the forgiven Church—"Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God." The Apostle, after reciting almost every crime of the decalogue and every degradation imaginable, adds: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. **6:9**, 10, 11) If the mercy and grace of God have been such toward us, who during this Gospel age have been favored with the opening of our eyes and the opening of the ears of our understanding, why should we object if his mercy and grace abound in a similar measure to the remainder of the race when in due time they shall be brought to a knowledge of the truth, of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world?

Ah, but, says one, you forget that God has a premium upon faith in this age, and declares forgiveness to those who exercise the faith. Evidently in God's estimation faith is

righteousness! No, my dear brother, faith is not righteousness. Faith could never satisfy the demands of justice—the blood of Christ and it alone has paid the penalty. Faith is merely the trolley arm which connects us with divine power and favor during this present time. He who has faith and is brought into contact with the Lord Jesus may have the great blessing which those may have now. But how comes it that one can exercise faith which to another is impossible? We answer that some have a less favorable environment for the attainment of the knowledge necessary as a basis for faith, while others are deficient in that quality of mind necessary to the exercise of faith. The believers of this Gospel age are therefore a called and elected class, because the Lord is choosing them and granting them special favors in advance of the blessings he intends to confer later upon the world. We who believe have been favored of God in various ways, through the various assistances, giving us the knowledge and favorable conditions for cultivating faith and trust and obedience and love. Spiritual Israel has manifestly much advantage every way over the world in general.

But because we have had much advantage and have been favored of the Lord, shall we either deny his grace toward the remainder or begrudge them the blessing which he has promised shall be theirs in due time? No, verily! In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, in that proportion we will desire that all the good things God will be able to justly do for the world shall be accomplished in their interest. We will rejoice, therefore, and be glad in the new heavens and new earth which he will create— in the new conditions which divine providence will surely inaugurate, the result of which will be the binding of Satan, the restraining of all evil influences and the blessing of all the families of the earth.

THE DIVINE PURPOSE

God's purpose, as we more and more see it shining out through his Word, is that after having blessed in a peculiar, special manner those who have faith in him and who will exercise it and under his guidance develop the spirit of love, he will then deal with the world in general who have not yet heard of his name, whose eyes and ears of understanding have not yet been opened in the true sense of the word to appreciate the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God. Now is the age of faith, and all the rewards of the Lord are to those who exercise faith and to none others; but following this age will be one of sight, in which the Lord will reveal to the world in general his glorious character, opening the eyes and ears of their understanding and causing the knowledge of the Lord

to fill the whole earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep. It is in harmony with this that the Scriptures everywhere present the thought that we who walk by faith and not by sight are walking in a dark place, merely enlightened by the lamp, the Word of God. Weeping endures during this night because sin and death are still reigning, but the morning has been proclaimed in the Lord's word, a glorious morning, a Millennial morning, in which the Sun of Righteousness, the Lord of glory, shall shine forth, shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see the glory of God, that all might know him from the least unto the greatest.

But someone still objects perhaps—What has the world done that it should deserve so great a blessing at the Lord's hands? I reply, What did the Church do to merit divine grace and favor and forgiveness of sins? Neither those who now believe through the exercise of faith, nor those who will by and by believe through the exercise of sight, have anything whereof to boast before the Lord. Neither we nor they could put forth any claim to justice why our sins should be canceled and we should be reinstated in divine favor and mercy. The basis of hope, both for ourselves and for the world, rests upon the great sacrifice accomplished at Calvary. There is none other name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved, and he who is the Savior of the Church by the grace of God "tasted death for every man," and is the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

We will consider this feature of our subject in next Sunday's discourse. We now merely note the fact that the elect Church of this Gospel age, the Royal Priesthood, under the great High Priest, is being selected for the very purpose of ministering to the world during the coming age. The sacrifice of the Church as the body of Christ is counted in with the sacrifice of the Head, and as sealing with him the great NEW COVENANT which is to be established between God and the world— "after those days"—after this Gospel age. The Lord's proposition to the world is that he will freely and graciously remit all the sins of the past for all who then in the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness shall accept the divine favor of forgiveness and seek to walk in the paths of righteousness. This covenant will apply not only to natural Israel, which will be the first of the nations under the blessing, but will apply ultimately, as originally explained to Abraham, to all the families of the earth—"Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 10:17

FUTURE PUNISHMENT FOR THE WORLD

In studying the Scriptural teaching respecting God's dealings with the sins of the Church, we found that all unforgivable sins received stripes in the present life, and that the only

punishment for sins that extended into the future was that of the second death, utter extinction, which would be visited only upon those who sin wilfully, deliberately, intentionally, against light and knowledge and opportunity. It will be different with the world. They suffer, as we have seen, the natural consequences of sin in the present life and in going down into death. The condemnation for sin, the curse, will be lifted from the world at the opening of the Millennial age—lifted from all—the curse will be no more. God will at that time accept the sacrifice of Christ as full satisfaction for the whole world and blot out the sins of the whole world, as we shall see in next Sunday's discourse.

But although the condemnation for sin will wholly pass away from the world at that time, before their awakening from the sleep of death, they will awaken in practically the same condition in which they went into death, since there is no moral change in the tomb, whither all go. (Eccl. 9:10) The world, then, will come forth bearing the various marks of degradation and sin with which they died. And it will be the work of the Millennial age to remove these scars, these marks of sin and degradation. And we may understand that the relationship to each individual which he will be obliged to contend with in the future, will be proportionate to the measure of his knowledge and conscience in the present life, whose voices he disregarded. Some may have sinned grievously; committing bloody murder as well as slanderous murder and assassinations of reputation; but because of their degeneracy through the fall, their ignorance, etc; theirs may be much more amenable sins of ignorance and weakness; having little or no uplifting influences at that time as some others who, having much more knowledge and hence much more responsibility, committed crimes which perhaps in the eyes of many would be considered less heinous.

The conscience seems to be the touchstone according to which the world's judgment will be reckoned. All sins of ignorance and weakness having been canceled, punishment for those will surely not be required. The stripes which the world will receive during the Millennial age, the difficulties which will surround their pathway as they will then be required to climb from degradation to perfection, will be proportionate to their wilfulness in wrong doing in the present time—in proportion to the measure in which they have destroyed their basis of character in themselves. Thus the stripes or difficulties of the world in the future age may be along the line of a very different estimation than that which would be likely to be made by any of us at the present time. It is largely for this reason that we are instructed to avoid judging, attempting to determine the exact degree of responsibility in those about us in

the world as well as in the Church—”Judge nothing before the time.” 1 Cor. 4:5

We are to note, however, that the judgments which the Lord will exercise toward the world in that future time ignore, as cancelled, all the responsibilities for wrong doing in the past, although the weaknesses resulting from this wrong doing will still be in the flesh and need to be striven against and by the Lord’s assistance overcome. Hence we see that, so far as the world is concerned, those who are seeking to live moral and upright lives and to maintain a good conscience and to deal justly, even though they are now both blind and ignorant respecting the Lord, will by and by profit by all their present endeavors to live righteously, and that they will have characters already somewhat advanced along the lines of justice and righteousness, which then will find opportunity for rapid growth under favorable conditions of the Kingdom. On the other hand, any sin in proportion to its wilfulness, degrading the conscience and weakening the character, will be a blight upon the life of that individual during the Millennial age, and seriously inconvenience him in his attempt to go upward on the highway of holiness. Let us more and more, dear brethren and sisters, appreciate the fact that “The Lamb of God taketh away the sin of the world,” that “he is a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

The National Labor Tribune, October 8, 1905

“YOM KIPPUR,” SIN- COVERING, SIN-REMISSION

Harrisburg, Pa., Oct. 8—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., addressed good audiences twice here today. We report his discourse on “Atonement by the Precious Blood” as follows:

Tomorrow Jews throughout the world will celebrate “Yom Kippur,” the sin-covering, in accordance with the law of Moses, so far as circumstances will permit. In other words, tomorrow will be what in the Old Testament Scriptures is termed “The Day of Atonement,” God everywhere throughout the Scriptures keeps before the minds of his people the thought that all are by nature sinners, that all were born in sin since the fall of our first parents, and that there can be no return to divine favor and blessing except as this fact is recognized and the suppliant returns, seeking again the Creator’s favor through the merit of the sacrifice offered by a Mediator. The time of a real mediator’s appearance and for the real atonement sacrifice to be made being still future, God organized the Jewish people as his typical people, established them typical ordinances at the hand of a typical mediator—Moses.

Amongst the most important of these types which the Jews performed “year by year continually” was the great Day of Atonement, which by divine institution was located at the beginning of every ecclesiastical year, on the tenth day of the seventh month. Its sacrifices and the benefits which typically flowed from them were applicable for the year just beginning, and typically constituted Israel a clean nation for that entire year, and thus guaranteed to them God’s favor and blessing for that year. At the end of each year they were to realize themselves again in sin, cut off from God, and were to mourn and wear sackcloth and fast and pray, and wait until the hour when the high priest would have accomplished the sacrificing and the making of atonement for them in the Most Holy, and would come out and give the divine blessing, good not only for the moment but for the entire year.

THE ANTITYPICAL ATONEMENT

The Apostle had reference to this Atonement Day sacrificing when he declared that this yearly repetition of it implied that it was only typical and not the real covering for sin, because if original sin had once been really blotted out it would remain forever effaced and there would be no need of repeating the sacrifice every year. The Apostle declares that the repetition of the sacrifices of bulls and goats year by year continually, implied, proved, that those sacrifices could never make real atonement for sin, but were only foreshadowings of the better sacrifice through which sins would ultimately be really, completely, everlastingly blotted out, and that when that real atonement sacrifice should be made there would no longer be need for the typical ones. He points out, too, that Christ, having made one sacrifice for sin forever, everlasting in its merit and efficacy—has been exalted to the right hand of the Father, needing no longer to offer sacrifice, and we no longer needing any other sacrifices than the one which he made for us.

This general teaching is recognized by the creeds of all the various denominations of Christians throughout the world. In at least a general sense all agree that the sacrifice of Christ at Calvary is the basis of reconciliation with the Father, our Lord Jesus being the antitype of Moses, and being the real and not the typical

2H251

Mediator. Only Catholics and high church Episcopalians repudiate this thought, and claim that further sacrifices for sins are essential. These claim that while the sacrifice at Calvary was efficacious as respects past sins it is not efficacious as respects subsequent sins, but that a sacrifice of the mass, which affects to be a repetition of this sacrifice at Calvary, is proper and necessary to the cancellation of sins committed after the believer has been accepted into the Church of Christ. We dispute this,

and in common with all Protestants denounce it as being the very rankest of error, styled in the Scriptures an abomination in the sight of the Lord—a “desolating abomination,” a blighting of spiritual life and growth, a hindrance to all true growing in grace, God having ordained that all should look to the one sacrifice for sins by him who “gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.” 1 Tim. 2:6

THE WORLD REPUDIATES ATONEMENT

The world, comparatively satisfied and relying upon the false theory of Evolution, denies that the first man was created in the image and likeness of God, denies the fall into sin and degradation and death, denies that there was any barrier between God and man that needed to be removed by an atoning sacrifice, denies that Christ made atonement or that any was necessary, and refuses any covering for its sins, asserting that it has little sin anyway, and that it is willing to suffer whatever its penalty would be. These, blinded to the real facts of the case, are not to be considered wholly responsible for their position, and doubtless in divine providence will share the blessings of the Millennial age, when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth.

Then they and all men shall realize the truth on this subject, that “by one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world, and death” and all our troubles as a result of sin, and that all are so involved, no hope of escape from the penalty of death, extinction, except through the mercy of God, and this mercy was extended to us as a race through the Son of God, “who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” With the facts demonstrated to them beyond peradventure, no doubt many, now agnostics, will become sincere followers of that which is good and accept the divine arrangements heartily, and ultimately attain to the eternal life which God proposes shall be his gift to all who love righteousness and hate iniquity.

We now only address those who have the hearing ear on this subject, as it is beyond our power to give any one such an ear. He who hath an ear let him hear the message of God’s Word, that while our whole race was unworthy of everlasting life, because of sin and degradation, God has provided a great sin-atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. And it is only a question of time until the whole race shall come to know of the matter and have an opportunity to avail themselves of its wonderful, gracious provisions. The knowledge is now merely for those who can exercise faith, and who in response to that faith will seek to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, in accord with the divine character and Word.

THE JEWS HAVE NO YOM KIPPUR

We have great respect for the Jewish people and their desire to have as much blessing as possible in connection with Yom Kippur. We admire the persistency they have manifested and their devotion to the one God. Nevertheless we must point out that they are utterly deceived in supposing that their celebration of Yom Kippur contains any virtue or blessing. Let me prove this: Every Jew who understands the law realizes the force of our text, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." Where have they the shedding of blood, as was commanded under the law to be the prime essential of the Day of Atonement? All real Jews know this, then why not have the sacrifices as Moses instituted them? We answer, because they have no priest and because they have no altar or propitiatory on the holy ground commanded. It is easy to see why they can not have either tabernacle or temple at Jerusalem, as they once had. It is because the city and land are not under their control, but under the control of the Turks. But if they possessed the city and had full control, and had rebuilt a Tabernacle or Temple as originally directed, they still could not have observed this Atonement Day, they still could have no Yom Kippur. Why? Because they have no priest.

But, you say, They could easily ordain a priest. I answer, No! The priests of the Jews were not ordained of man. Under the law none except a son of Aaron, who could prove his lineage, could serve as the high priest and offer these atonement-day sacrifices; but it is all uncertain, and it would be contrary to the law for any one to attempt to serve before the Lord as high priest without better credentials. Secondly, the poor Jews celebrating Yom Kippur year by year are merely deluding themselves when they think they are making any atonement for sin, or in any sense of the word are accomplishing what was set forth in these Atonement Day ordinances.

Why is it thus? We reply that matters are in this condition by divine intention. The Lord miraculously kept together that nation and preserved their records, so that they were not without the priests and the typical

2H252

sacrifices throughout the entire period of their favor with God, which continued up to and included the time when he sent to them his Son, to be not only their sacrifice, and through whom as the Mediator the antitypical blessings of the Lord might have been theirs. As the Lord himself testified to them, "He who rejecteth me rejecteth also the Father who sent me," and thus it was that with the rejection of Christ they came under the

sentence, “Your house is left unto you desolate.” “Ye shall see me no more until that day when ye shall say, ‘Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah.’ “ (Matt. 23:28, 39) “That day” is the great Millennial day, when all the world is to be blessed, when “the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.” (Isa. 40:5) In that day the Jew, cut off from divine favor at the opening of the Gospel age, will again come into favor and be the first of the nations to receive the divine blessing. Then the Jew and all nations shall see that the typical priesthood did not pass away until the antitypical sacrifice and the antitypical Day of Atonement had begun.

SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

The literal Atonement Day was one of ordinary length, but the antitypical Atonement Day, beginning at the time of our Lord’s baptism and consecration, has lasted from then until now, and not yet quite finished. At its conclusion there will be ushered into the world the glorious blessings of the Millennial age, the rolling away of the curse, the shining forth of divine favor. This was typified in the fact that at the close of the Atonement Day when its sacrifices had all been offered, when the blood of both sacrifices had been sprinkled in the Most Holy, then the high priest put on his glorious garments, came forth to the altar, lifted up his hands and blessed all the people, lying on their faces in sackcloth and ashes. Then the people in the type arose, shouting and rejoicing in God’s favor. And so it will be in the antitype: with the conclusion of this Gospel age, or day of Atonement, the great High Priest will have claimed all the dignity and power and offices represented in the gorgeous robes of the Jewish high priest, and he will step forth, be manifested in power and great glory, to bless all the people, many of whom are literally in the dust, in the tomb, and all of them groaning and travailing in pain together waiting for their glorious consummation, when all the sons of God represented in the High Priest, Head and members, will shine forth as the sun for the blessing and assistance of mankind. Matt. 13:43

The Apostle, after telling us that the law was a shadow of good things to come and that the substance or reality is in Christ (Jesus the Head, the Church his body), proceeds to tell us in the words of our text that under the law “without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins,” God thus teaching that the only remedy for man’s fallen condition, the only thing that would cancel his penalty before justice, would be a sacrifice, and one much better than any of the sacrifices which the Jews had offered or ever could offer—a blameless sacrifice, a perfect sacrifice, a holy sacrifice, a harmless sacrifice, an undefiled sacrifice, the sacrifice of one perfect,

complete, sinless, and in every way fully equal to and the equivalent for the original sinner, father Adam.

The Apostle points out further that all the things done in the temple and tabernacle represented higher and grander things, mistranslated heavenly things. He says the pattern or types of the higher things were cleansed with the blood of bulls and goats, but the actualities on a higher plane were to be cleansed through better sacrifices than these. Heb. 9:23

THE “BETTER SACRIFICES”

I need not remind my hearers that the better sacrifices are those offered by the Christ. It is proper, however, that I do remind you that in God's gracious plan he has arranged not only that Jesus, our Redeemer and Lord, should be the Head over the Church, which is his body, but that the entire company, Head and body, should be called the “Anointed,” the “Christ.” Our Lord Jesus offered his sacrifices first, and subsequently called for volunteers amongst those who would be his followers, that each and all of his followers should be sacrificers, priests, he being the Head or chief of our order of priests—the first and chief Sacrificer and the first and chief Priest. While we remember that the Apostle addressed the consecrated, saying, “Ye are a royal priesthood,” we are to remember equally well that we are permitted to be priests and to offer our sacrifices to the Lord, not because of merit or worthiness in ourselves, but because of our participation first in the merit of our Lord's sacrifice. As he said, “Without me ye can do nothing,” so indeed we see that we could offer no sacrifice that could be acceptable to the Father except through him, except as based upon his sacrifice for our sins which he first offered. So, then, when we read again in the Apostle Peter's words that we are to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, we are not to forget to lay the proper stress upon the words, “through Jesus Christ,” and are to recognize that all the merit of all the sacrifices offered throughout this Gospel age comes directly or indirectly from the merit that was in the first great sacrifice for sins presented by our glorious Lord, and Redeemer, and finished at Calvary—”By one sacrifice he perfected forever all those who come to the Father through him.” We are of those who have come to the Father through him, and by his

2H253

sacrifice we are reckoned as perfect, justified. Heb.10:14

It is in full harmony with this that we note the Apostle Paul's exhortation to those who had already believed in Jesus as their Redeemer, who had already been justified through faith in his blood. He exhorts such saying, “I

beseech you therefore, brethren, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service.” He was exhorting the justified class to take the second step and become members of the antitypical priesthood, the Royal Priesthood, mentioned by Peter—the sacrificers. He assures us that the sacrifices of such would be holy in God’s sight, not sinful, not blemished, because the righteousness of Christ was first imputed to them, acceptable to God because thus justified or covered by the merit of our Redeemer’s sacrifice. Rom. 12:1

ALL TAUGHT IN THE TYPE

We find these various lessons of the New Testament clearly foreshadowed in the types of the Atonement Day and its work as presented in Leviticus 16. There two sin offerings are commanded: First, a fat young bullock was offered, which represented our Lord Jesus. Its abundant fat was placed upon the altar, ascending as a witness and memorial of devotion—the fat representing the love, the zeal, the consecration of the Master. This was burned in the Court of the Tabernacle, which represented the justified state or condition or class, and implied that all who were in the Court would be able to discern the Lord’s loving zeal and devotion to the Father’s will. The horns, hoofs, etc., were burned without the camp, representing the Lord’s death as viewed from the standpoint of unbelievers—odious, undesirable, repugnant, of no value. The High Priest who slew the bullock represented our Lord, who at the time of his baptism consecrated himself, entering at that moment upon the office of Priest and at once consecrating his earthly human life to death.

The Holy place into which the high priest took the blood with his two hands full of incense represented the state, the condition of newness of life through the Spirit in which our Lord entered at the moment when he was begotten of the holy Spirit at consecration. The three and half years of his earthly ministry was represented by the priest in the Holy enjoying the light of the golden candlestick and the bread of presence and offering, and crumbling his two handfuls of sweet incense upon the fire at the top of the golden altar. This represented our Lord’s sacrificing as viewed from the heavenly Father’s standpoint — all of his words and deeds and purposes were pleasing and acceptable to the Father, sweet incense. After the priest had finished offering the incense he took with him the blood of the bullock, representing his own sacrificed life, and passed under the second veil, representing his death, and rose on the other side of that veil in the Most Holy, representing his resurrection to the completeness and perfection of the spiritual nature. He then approached the Mercy Seat, sprinkled the blood upon it and before it, representing his appearance in the

presence of God on our behalf to make the atonement for our sins.

A careful reading of the type shows exact conformity to the teachings of the New Testament on this subject, namely, that application of the merit of Christ's sacrifice was made wholly on behalf of believers, so that these may have peace with God, reconciliation through the blood; while unbelievers, the world in general, are still out of harmony, still under condemnation, not atoned for, not reckoned in the type, the sacrifice being applicable to the priest himself, head and body, the white robes covering the body of the priest typifying the Church, the members of his body, covered with Christ's robes of righteousness. It was also applicable to the whole tribe of Levi the type or representative of the whole household of faith. How closely the type agrees with the antitype. Not only the Royal Priesthood have their sins covered by the sacrifice of Christ, but also all true believers, including those who have not yet made a full consecration of themselves—leaving them an opportunity yet to do so.

THE SACRIFICE FOR THE SINS OF ALL THE PEOPLE

After having finished this sacrifice after having applied its merit to his body and the household of Levi, his house, the priest began another sacrifice. Two goats were selected, one of which was sacrificed as the Lord's goat, the other treated as the scapegoat. This represented two classes amongst the Lord's people, both consecrated. A part of the consecrated voluntarily, gladly, walk in the footsteps of the Master, sharing his sacrifice, seeking to copy him in all things, the other class holds back, permitting the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to more or less choke their usefulness, and are not counted worthy to be of the Lord's goat class, but instead, if they still maintain a trust in the Lord, they will be brought through trials and difficulties and chastisements, a time of trouble which will develop them as the Lord's people, but because of unwillingness to endure joyfully, sharing the sacrifices of Christ, they are not counted worthy to be of the special little flock represented by the Lord's goat.

Notice that the testimony is that the Lord's goat was treated exactly as the bullock was treated, which signifies that all of the Lord's followers represented in that goat will have experiences which will closely correspond to his—that after their consecration they will

2H254

find opportunities for laying down their lives in the Lord's service, and rejoice so to do. The description says that they did with the goat even as they did with the bullock. They put its fat upon the altar, but 0, how little fat a goat has! So we realize that with our zeal put upon

the altar it is so little that we wish it were a thousand times greater.

But all the while we are reminded that our sacrifice is acceptable to the Lord not from its own worth or merit, but because of the preceding sacrifice; the sacrifice and merit of the bullock. When we read that the horns, hoofs, etc., of the goat were burned without the camp, like as were those of the bullock, we are reminded of the Apostle's words to this very class of consecrated Royal Priests, seeking to offer up themselves in the Lord's service, acceptable through Jesus Christ. He says, "Let us go to him without the camp, bearing his reproach with him." (Heb. 13:13) Ah, yes! The reproaches of the world that were against the Lord were also against the apostles and all his faithful followers since. From the world's standpoint our Lord made a serious misuse of his time and talents in sacrificing as he did, and the Apostle says of himself and others of his time, "We are fools for Christ's sake." (1 Cor. 4:10) And this is true of all the proper sacrificers since; they must go to the Lord without the camp, they must bear his reproaches— "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." Rom. 15:3

Note further that all that was done in respect to the bullock was done in respect to the goat. The Church, representing this goat class, has been passing through its experiences for now more than eighteen hundred years. The Day of Atonement is well nigh ended. A little while and all the sacrifices will be ended, Satan will be bound, the curse will be rolled away, and the blessing from the Lord will be poured out upon the world. This is shown in the type, for the priest, after having done with the goat as he did with the bullock, presented its blood also upon the Mercy Seat. But the blood of the goat was not presented for the same purpose as was the blood of the bullock. The blood of the bullock was efficacious in full measure for all to which it was applied and needed no supplement. The blood of the goat was applied specifically on behalf of the people—all outside of the tribe of Levi, which represents the household of faith. Then it was that the high priest went forth, clad in the garments of glory and beauty, representing all the wonderful powers and prerogatives of Jehovah conferred upon him, head and body, and stood up to bless the people for whom the atonement had all been made.

"YOUR BODIES LIVING SACRIFICES"

Dear friends, while we as the Apostle exhorts should seek to lay down our lives for the brethren and to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the Church (Col. 1:24), while we are to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, we are to continually remember that none of the real merit adheres in our sacrifices; that what we are doing is merely as members of our High Priest's body.

We have been merely by grace accepted to that glorious position and privilege and honor. So, while the Lord thus clearly indicates how fully he accepts the Church to be his body, to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, he also makes clear to us that this is a privilege granted to us, and that our sacrificing is wholly unnecessary so far as the divine plan is concerned; that the merit of our Lord as it was applied to us was quite sufficient to have covered the whole world, indeed that it did cover the whole world, because it was imputed to us only for the purpose of permitting us to be his associates, that we also might be his joint-heirs and participants in his glory, honor and immortality.

Such honors, such privileges, are too wonderful for us. We can only thankfully accept the privileges, and show our appreciation by our devotion to the cause of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. We can tell the whole world the blessed tidings that Jesus has died, that he tasted death for every man; that while his death is at present merely applicable to the Church, ultimately in God's great plan, through the Church, his merit shall be applicable to every creature, every member of Adam's race. Thus the great Day of Atonement for the sins of the whole world will shortly be finished, and the great Day of eternal happiness and blessing be ushered in—"times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-23) Well did our Lord say to us, "Be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I created," (Psa. 65:18)—the new heavens and the new earth, the new dispensation, which will be ushered in as soon as the sacrificing of the body of Christ has been finished by the great Priest and presented before the Father. Yom Kippur of the Jews will thus have been fulfilled in a grander and more wonderful scale than they have ever dreamed of.

* * * *

Gird thy heavenly armor on,
Wear it ever, night and day;
Ambush'd lies the Evil One:
"Watch and pray."

The National Labor Tribune, October 22, 1905

JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS

Providence, R. I., October 22—Pastor C. T. Russell, of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today in Infantry Hall to large audiences. We report his evening discourse as follows:

Continuing our examination of the eternal evidences of the reliability of the Bible, we consider this evening the center of the divine message, “Jesus Christ the Righteous.” No other name in the world’s history fills such a place as the name of Jesus. His character and his message have met the demands of the human heart, and satisfied its longings as nothing else ever did or could do. And this notwithstanding the fact that the world and but a comparatively small proportion of the Church have ever caught more than a passing glimpse of the divine plan which centers in this “son of God.”

The Bible may be said to be a revelation of Jesus, who in turn is a revelation of the Father. Its opening pages tell us of the fall of the first human son of God, Adam, point to the death penalty upon him, and indicate the need of a Savior and Redeemer; and, more than this, inferentially promise such a one as the seed of the woman who ultimately shall bruise the serpent’s head—crush, subdue all evil. Its intermediate pages are prophecies and types respecting Jesus and the work he would accomplish as a Redeemer, and later as a Deliverer of the race. And further on it records his birth, his ministries, his death, resurrection, glorification, and the messages he gave to all who would become his followers, including his promise to come again, and receive them unto himself. The closing pages of the Bible picture in symbolical language the completion of the present age, the inauguration of the Millennial age, the work that it will accomplish in the blessing and uplifting of the human family and the ultimate purging of the earth from all sin, imperfection, evil, when every voice in heaven and earth shall be heard praising the Lord.

We submit to intelligent minds the proposition that no other book, no other record, no other combination of writings and sermons by scores of preachers and teachers, covering a period of thousands of years, present any such harmony as the foregoing. And this harmony centering the divine plan upon Jesus, the Messiah, is the more wonderful in proportion as the minutiae of the Scriptural statements respecting him are clearly discerned. But in order to appreciate these Scriptural statements, in order to see the beauty and harmony of the Word of God, we must divest ourselves of the teachings of the

Dark Ages, which becloud the beauties of the divine Word and tend to make its statements of no effect—yea, worse than that, tend to make the divine record appear unreasonable, contradictory, nonsensical. Let us, then, divest our minds of the traditions of the ancients so carefully handed down to us in the various creeds, Catholic and Protestant, and let us look to the Word of the Lord for the instruction and guidance necessary to see its beauty and harmony.

“ALL THINGS WERE MADE BY HIM”

The teachings of higher criticism are very misleading on this subject. They would have us consider that all miracles are impossible; that our Lord was not born of a virgin, and by the direct power of God; that he was born as other men; that he happened to be a rather superior type of man; that he never had a prehuman existence. The Scriptures teach to the contrary of this most explicitly, that Jesus was the “son of God;” that “he who was rich for our sakes became poor,” taking a human form for a particular, specific purpose— “for the suffering of death,” that he might be our Redeemer. John 17:5; 2 Cor. 8:9; Heb. 2:9

The inspired writers go further and declare, “All things are made by him, and without him was not one thing made that was made.” The context tells us that he was in the beginning with the Father, and was the Word or mouthpiece and personal representative of the Father in all the works of the creation of all the remainder of the works of God. Our common translation of John 1:1-13 only partly discloses the beauty and force of the Greek original, which should be rendered thus, “In the beginning was the logos (the divine mouthpiece, the representative), and the logos was with the God and the logos was a god, the same was in the beginning with the God. All things were made by him, and without him was not one thing made that was made.”

“TO US THERE IS BUT ONE GOD”

We should note in passing the consistency of the Scriptures in respect to the supremacy of Jehovah God. From first to last with one voice the Scriptures declare that there is but one supreme God. The New Testament is in thorough agreement with this—for instance, the Apostle Paul’s words, “To us there is one God, the Father., and one Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 8:6

How comes it then that the record is that Jesus, our Master, in his prehuman condition was the logos, a god with the God? Is this testimony out of accord with the remainder of Scriptural testimony? We answer, No! The name Jehovah was never permitted to any but

in the Hebrew is Elohim, and sometimes abbreviated El, signifies a mighty one, and might be applied to any mighty one in authority and power, Jehovah himself being superior to all Elohim.

An examination of the Scriptural uses of the word Elohim substantiates the foregoing. We find, for instance, that it has not only been applied to the Father and to the special representative and prime minister, the logos, the Son of God manifest in the flesh, but we find also that the word is used in respect to angels when they directly represented the Lord as his special messengers, they who are his mighty ones. We also find that this title Elohim was used in respect to the first elders of Israel when God recognized them as his representatives in judging their brethren. For instance, see Exodus 21:6, "Bring him unto the judges" (elohim), 22:8, "Brought unto the judges" (elohim), 9, "Come before the judges" (elohim), "and whom the judges" (elohim), 28, "Thou shalt not revile the gods" (elohim), margin judges.

Similarly we read God's declaration to Moses. "I have made thee a God (elohim) to Pharaoh." (Ex. 7:1) From these illustrations and others which we might give it will be seen that the word Elohim signifies instead of God a representative of God. Sometimes, when the true God is mentioned in connection with other gods or representatives, or counterfeits, he is called the Almighty God, or by his name, Jehovah God, but at other titles where the sense is evident or no particular emphasis is necessary the very same word is used in referring to Jehovah and to those who are his representatives. For instance, in Psalm 82:1 we read, "God (Elohim) standeth in the congregation of the mighty (El), he judgeth among the gods (elohim)." In verse six of the same Psalm the Almighty (Elohim) prophetically addresses the Gospel Church, who throughout the Scriptures are called the sons of God. We read, "I have said, 'Ye are gods (elohim), all of you sons of the Highest.'

"NOW ARE WE THE SONS OF GOD"

It will be remembered that the Jews were angry with our Lord Jesus, not because he called himself Jehovah or intimated any usurpation of the Father's place, honors or prerogatives, but simply because he called himself the Son of God and referred to Jehovah God as his Father. On one occasion when they were about to stone him Jesus inquired why, and the answer was that in calling himself the Son of God he was affecting to be superior to them and to others of mankind, and affecting a relationship with the great Jehovah, which they termed blasphemy, because they said it was affecting an equality with Jehovah. But knowing that the Scriptures fully sanctioned such a title as the Son of God, Jesus referred them to the passage in the Sixth Psalm already quoted, "I have said, Ye are gods" (elohim).

Our Lord's logical suggestion is that if God himself through the prophet David gave the name, the title of gods, thus to human beings, to the followers of Christ, to the Church of this Gospel age, why should it be considered blasphemous that the special Son of God, whom the Father had specially set apart and sent into the world as his representative should be called the Son of God. His persecutors were unable to answer him, nor can any logical objection be found to our Redeemer's words. He was indeed pre-eminently the representative of Jehovah and pre-eminently he was his Son.

The Jews never claimed the title Sons of God for themselves, nor would it have been proper for them to have done so. Not until the great sacrifice for sins was offered by the Redeemer could the Father so justify any members of the fallen race as to receive them back into the close, the dear relationship represented by the word Son, but since the redemptive work of Jesus, spiritual Israelites are termed sons of God, as the Apostle declares, "Now are we the sons of God, though it doth not yet appear what we shall be (how great our glory and exaltation in the resurrection change), but we know that when he shall appear (our Lord and Master, the only begotten Son) we shall be like him and see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) The Scriptures clearly show that the followers of Christ were accepted of the Father as sons when begotten of the Spirit at Pentecost and since. John 1:12, 13

"THE SON OF THE HIGHEST"

The divine announcement of our Lord Jesus before his birth was "Thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." In explanation of his miraculous birth we read, "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee (Mary): therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:31-35

Here we have the title of the Son of God officially applied to the man Christ Jesus before his birth and this title he continually approved, saying "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "I came not into the world to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me." "The Father worketh hitherto and (now) I work." John 20:21; John 4:34; 5:17

"THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD"

Let us look back and note the Scriptural declaration

2H257

to the effect that the Logos, who subsequently became the man Christ Jesus, was the beginning of the creation

of God. These are our Lord's own words, and are in full accord with the Apostle Paul's statement that our Lord is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature (more literally the first-born of all creation), for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible., all things were created by him and for him; and he was before all things and by him all things consist. And he is the Head of the Church, which is his body; he is the Beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father (the invisible God) that in him should all fullness dwell." Col. 1:15-19

These records agree with what we have already seen respecting the Logos in John 1:1-3, that his career dates from the beginning. The Father, Jehovah, we are distinctly informed had no beginning, was before the beginning; and that our Lord Jesus should himself be the beginning, the first-born, indicates to us how high a position he held in the divine arrangement, long before the creation of the world, as the Father's logos, minister, representative — all things were made by him. How high a station, how high a rank this gives to the one whom we love to reverence and obey!

“HONOR THE SON AS THEY HONOR THE FATHER”

Our Lord himself pointed out to us that it is the heavenly Father's will that we should honor the Son as we honor the Father also—that we should recognize him as the Father's representative, through whom he is working all things according to the counsel of his own will. The Apostle explains to us that although our Lord occupied the chief position next to the Father before he came into the world to be our Redeemer, yet he now occupies a still higher position. He tells us that he was obedient to the Father and humbled himself even unto death, even the death of the cross. He assures us saying, “Wherefore (on this account) God hath also highly exalted him and hath given him a name above every name”—above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named. Note our Lord's words, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do. . . the Father loveth the Son and showeth him all things that himself The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He that hath not the Son hath not the Father which hath sent him.” John 5:19-23

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY NOT IN SCRIPTURE

We have seen that the Jews persecuted Jesus because he claimed to be the Son of God, and this persecution resulted in his death. A warm controversy arose on this subject following the death of the apostles when Grecian mythology clashed with and then amalgamated with Christianity. Grecian mythology had lords many and gods many, but the Jews had but one God, and the early Church likewise recognized but one Father supreme, but likewise recognized our Lord Jesus as the subordinate son of God.

It was when the opposition endeavored to prove that Jesus was a mere man, a member of the fallen race, that he had no pre-existence, etc., that others in the Church, aroused to the combative point, claimed for Jesus more than he ever claimed for himself, more than any of the inspired apostles ever claimed for him—more than is either reasonable or logical. They claimed that he was his own Father and his own Son; that there was not one God according to the Scriptures, but really three Gods, whom they claimed to be equal in power and glory—contrary to the Scriptural authority on the subject. When asked how there could be three Gods and yet only one, in order to conceal the weakness of their position they claimed that the subject was one of the holy mysteries which it would be sinful to inquire into. Yea, they even claimed more—that to question or make inquiry on the subject, to express a doubt as to how three persons could be one person and yet three persons, was to become an unbeliever, thus to become subject to eternal torment, which was claimed to be the penalty for all unbelievers—all not in the Church. The period in which these theories had their rise and reached their prominence is properly enough designated the Dark Ages, in which little reasoning apparently was done along any line, and in which the masses of believers were restrained, under threats, from thinking for themselves.

The doctrine of the Trinity, which finds no place whatever in the Scriptures, and which is likewise contrary to reason, was concocted during that period of darkness in which its advocates concluded that they would supplement the after death-torture by other tortures before death, and according to the records of history thousands and thousands were tortured, drawn limb from limb, beheaded, burned at the stake and otherwise maltreated in the name of God and the holy Trinity, because they stuck to the Scriptural declaration on this subject, and repudiated the unreasonable theories of uninspired and unholy men. They clung to our Lord's

words, "The Father is greater than I." (John 14:28) They clung to the Apostle's words, "Though

2H258

there be gods many and lords many, to us there is one God, the Father, OF whom are all things and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ BY whom are all things and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:6) They remembered the Apostles words, "Ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all." Eph. 4:4

"THREE THAT BEAR RECORD IN HEAVEN"

Although the reformers did valiant service in dispelling much of the gross darkness and in lifting the true light of God's Word, they evidently overlooked the fallacy called the Trinity. But we have in the Bible the standard authority by which the reformers were guided, and it is our duty as well as our privilege to hear what the Lord God hath spoken upon this subject and to conform our faith thereto. The Scriptures do indeed teach, as we have seen, that there is an Almighty One, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 15:6) They do teach also that the only Begotten Son of God, highly exalted by the Father, is to be revered even as we reverence the Father; also that the Scriptures do teach that there is a holy Spirit of God, which, proceeding from the Father and from the Son, is also to be the Spirit of the sanctified Church.

But, some one inquires in astonishment, Is not the doctrine of the Trinity particularly set forth in the Bible? We answer, No. Everything as we have shown is to the contrary; the word Trinity, Trinitarian, etc., is not to be found even in our common version of the Bible, which was made by those who held this unscriptural position, and who would have been glad to thus translate any Hebrew or Greek word if they had found any Greek word capable of such translation.

The few of our day who would stand up in defence of the unreasonable proposition that we have three gods equal in power and glory, and yet that the three in some incomprehensible manner are one in person, who would like to use the one text of Scripture which has defended this absurdity for centuries, but which all scholars now agree was no part of the original writings, but was added about the seventh century, at the time when this doctrine of the Trinity, by persecution, had forced itself into the place of full control.

The passage referred to is omitted in the revised edition of the Bible, although all the members of the committee were professedly Trinitarians in their views. They were too

conscientious to give further publicity to that which was recognized as fraudulent interpolation intended to deceive and to support the Trinitarian view. The words not in the original, added in the seventh century—not found in any Scriptures of earlier date than the seventh century—you should note in your Testament by striking them out, namely, beginning with the words, “In heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth.” If those fraudulent words be stricken out the passage reads as it did originally, with beautiful simplicity and clearness, “There are three that bear record, the Spirit, the water and the blood, and these three agree in one (testimony.)”

The absurdity of the passage as it stands in the Common Version can be seen at a glance. The interpolation would make the passage say that the Father, the Word and the holy Ghost all three are one, and that they are bearing record in heaven that Jesus is the Son of God. How unreasonable to suppose that such a witnessing in heaven should be necessary. Do not the angels know that Jesus is the Son of God? Why then the statement that the Father, the Son and the holy Ghost are witnessing in heaven that Jesus is the Son of God? Every interpolation, and we are glad that they are few, marks itself as an absurdity, and can not be harmonized with the inspired portions of the Word. There is a further evidence to us that the Scriptures as given by God are of divine inspiration, and that nothing should be added to them nor taken from them. Evidently, however, it is the duty of every child of God to erase from his Bible any portion, such as this one, that may be found to be an addition, not the words of the inspired apostles.

“MY FATHER AND I ARE ONE”

This passage would not suggest to any reasonable mind that the Father and Son are one in person were it not that this false doctrine has beclouded judgment on the subject. There are more ways of being one than merely personally one. Our Lord’s words elsewhere explain his meaning here. Praying to the Father for his followers he said, after praying for his apostles, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who believe on me through their word, that they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they maybe one in us.” (John 17:20, 21) Here is the sense of oneness between the Father and the Son, oneness of Spirit, oneness of purpose—not oneness of person.

THE BIBLE CONSISTENT

By allowing the Bible to be its own interpreter we see more and more of its beauty, consistency and harmony. The Jews would not find one tenth the objection they do to Jesus as the Messiah were it not for the spurious, illogical, unscriptural claim that is made that he is the

Father, that he is his own Father as well as his own Son, that he is a third part in an indescribable three Gods in one. Moreover, the various doctrines of the Scriptures which seem unreasonable to thinking

2H259

minds are largely so because of this fallacy. Getting rid of it we begin to see God's Word and plan, of which Jesus is the center, in its true and glorious colors. Our sentiment is that we should let God be true though it should prove every creed false. God's Word has already suffered grievously through the misrepresentations of the creeds, and it is because of these illogical and unscriptural presentations that the Bible today is being discarded by reasonable people. "To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this Word it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20

Our next discourse will consider Christ, as Son of God and Son of man.

The National Labor Tribune, November 5, 1905

SIN, PAIN, TROUBLE, DEATH

Pastor C. T. Russell of the Bible House congregation, Allegheny, preached Sunday afternoon in Carnegie Hall his fourth discourse in proof of the inspiration of the Bible. His text was, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin; and thus death passed upon all men, because all men are sinners." (Rom. 5:12) The discourse follows:

THE PROBLEM OF THE AGES

The world may be said to be united in the belief that there is a God, a Creator of the universe and all therein, but believers as well as atheists are perplexed with the problem of evil. For ages the best minds in every religious cult the world over have asked the question, Why should a good and benevolent God stand sponsor for so imperfect and unsatisfactory conditions as prevail in the world, physically, socially and morally? With power to create why did not God produce a perfect world with perfect inhabitants, more on a par with what the heavenly condition, the angelic condition, is understood to be? The heathen nations of the world have uniformly answered the question by assuming that their gods are passionate, ferocious—not good, not loving. Heathen mythologies abound with tales of conflict between gods, vindictiveness, spitefulness, malice, envy, strife. The Bible alone teaches a God of love, and assures us that

the characteristics ascribed by the heathen to the deities are works of the flesh and of the devil. 1 Cor. 10:20

Enlightened minds assent to the proposition of the Bible, and concede that one so great as to be the Creator of all things ought certainly to be the embodiment of righteousness and love. Yet here the people of Christian lands meet with difficulty in their attempt to understand or explain how a righteous and loving God could be the author of the present order of things. Is he responsible for all the warp and twist and crookedness, mental, moral and physical, with which humanity is blemished? Has he in the past and does he in the present time appoint and uphold the various iniquitous systems which have or do afflict and injure mankind— bad governments, priestcraft, superstition, whisky, opium, beer and a thousand other sources of physical, mental and moral delusion and degradation? Does he send tidal waves, earthquakes, cyclones and tornadoes, the extremes of cold and heat, of rain and of drouth which vex and distress the race and lead on to death? The same question might be applied to the pests of the present time. The thorns and thistles, bugs and worms, which hinder the earth from yielding her increase in response to labor's sweat of face.

THE BIBLE SUPPLIES THE ONLY KEY

Look where we will, philosophize as we may, there is no reasonable solution to this question except one, and that one is given us in the Bible and nowhere else. If we shall demonstrate the truth of this proposition it will be another confirmation of the Bible as the Word of God from internal testimony. It and it alone assures us that God is love, and that these various matters of our experience which tend to injure us day by day are not in conflict with the divine character, but are, on the contrary, attestations of his justice which will co-operate with divine wisdom, power and love ultimately.

The difficulty with Christian people, the source of their perplexity on this subject—God's permission of evil—is that they have not given sufficient attention, sufficient study, to the Word of God; they have not made it sufficiently the "man of their counsel." The spirit of doubt has prevailed even amongst those who reject the infidelity of "higher critics;" the Bible is not studied as it should be. It should be regarded as God's special revelation, explanatory of all the affairs of life, with instruction on every topic for those who look to him for wisdom and guidance. Whoever will accept the "Helping Hands," the "Bible Keys" which the Lord is now extending to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness—Truth—will find a satisfaction beyond anything they had supposed possible. They will find literally true that which the poet supposed was an exaggerated statement, that the Scriptures will "satisfy their longings as nothing else can do."

SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

The Bible solves the problem, and fully explains why God permitted sin and all of the calamities which have injured or cursed our race for now six thousand years. Its opening chapters tell us of how man, as well as the Eden Garden in which his trial took place, was perfect. It assures us that man was originally created in the divine image (not physical but mental and moral). It explains to us the fall by disobedience, and that all our blemishes as a race, mental, moral and physical, producing sickness, sorrow, pain and dying, are the results not of improper creation on the part of our beneficent God, but are the results of disobedience to his divine regulations. It teaches us that by the law of heredity the blemishes of the children were inherited from their parents; that God was the direct Creator of the first pair only; that he endowed them with procreative powers which, had they remained faithful, would have resulted in the begetting of perfect children, and that the depravity which we find in the world today, some more and some less gross, is the result of accumulated weaknesses and blemishes handed down and increased from parent to child. It tells us that all this is the wage, the penalty of sin, the curse that rests upon the world of mankind.

The Bible also explains respecting the unfavorable conditions of the earth: that only the Garden of Eden was provided in a perfect state for a perfect pair, that the remainder of the earth was in an unfit or accursed condition, and was allowed to remain so for man's sake—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake." (Gen. 3:17) It was because God foresaw Adam's curse of disobedience, and that he would come under the death sentence, that God created our first parents before the earth as a whole was prepared, though as a whole it was good and in harmony with the divine program. In order to have a proper conception of this question we must remember that—

MAN IS A CONVICT.

Because men are under sentence of death as imperfect, unfit for everlasting life, therefore God permits present conditions of nature which tend to hasten the execution of the death sentence—"Dying thou shalt die." As a result we all see about us what the Apostle emphasizes saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together (dying) waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:22) The Apostle's intimation is that a better time, a better day is coming, in which the sons of God will be manifested in power and great glory, abolishing present evils of every kind and substituting for them every good and perfect gift of the Creator. The question naturally arises, then, Why the long delay in substituting the blessings and joys and favors of the Lord for the sorrows and troubles of the present groaning time?

THE BIBLE ANSWERS THIS ALSO

It explains to us that as our present fallen condition is the result of our having been created free moral agents, with a liberty to obey or disobey the divine commands, God purposes such lessons for the race as will give them by experience a thorough knowledge of the evils which follow disobedience to him. The Apostle indicates that the Lord is now teaching the whole world a lesson respecting “the exceeding sinfulness of sin,” and the bitterness of every pleasure that is in conflict with the divine arrangement. And how true to the facts of history is this! Looking back over the past six thousand years along the aisles of history, we see indeed that the world has been learning its hard but important lesson. The fall from the divine likeness of righteousness and love into the condition of sinful selfishness has surely well demonstrated to the majority of the race that the fruit of selfishness is always bitter and always undesirable, always an apple of Sodom. The world has not yet been taught the lessons of righteousness and love and their rewards of peace, joy, everlasting life. It has only had thus far the lesson of sin and its wages of sorrow and trouble and death. Of this we will have something to say later. Now let us notice in the Bible’s presentation that God has been dealing with our race along just these lines.

DIVINE JUSTICE FIRST—THEN LOVE

For six thousand years the Lord has allowed mankind to propagate the species until now the whole number under reasonable estimates would make a comfortable filling or population of the earth—though if more room were needed divine power is not limited, for the capacity could be doubled by the raising of new contingents from the depths of the oceans and by the reclaiming the deserts and arctic wastes. Born in sin, shapen in iniquity, the 20,000,000,000 of humanity have had brief experience with the sin, pleasures and trials of life under the reign of sin and death, and the divine purpose as set forth in the Scriptures is that sooner or later every member of the race shall have a full opportunity of tasting life under favorable conditions, under the reign of righteousness and life, during the Millennial Kingdom of God’s dear Son and his glorified Church, his Bride, now being selected from amongst men. Nor should it seem unreasonable to us that the divine plan of mercy should be co-extensive with the divine permission of the reign of sin and death—that the knowledge of righteousness should reach every member of Adam’s race at some time, as each tastes in some measure the wage of sin—death.

The Scriptures divide the world into two classes, believers in God, and the world, the unbelievers in God. The latter have been practically left to themselves for the past six thousand years under certain broad, general limitations, to learn as best they might the lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The former, the believers, have been blessed with the Bible revelation of the divine plan, which, disclosing to them the future, with its hopes and joys and blessings, proves even now a foretaste, a comfort in every sorrow and trial and difficulty, enabling those who walk by faith to rejoice even in tribulation, and to realize that those of this Gospel age—who, having the ears, have heard the call and have separated themselves from the world in consecration to the Lord and his service—these are promised joint-heirship with their all-glorious Redeemer in the Kingdom which he is about to establish. The Bible shows them the operation of divine justice in the death sentence upon the race, and subsequently the manifestation of divine love in providing a great sacrifice for sins in the person of the only begotten Son of God. It assures them of the acceptance of all who now by faith accept that sacrifice and conform their lives to the counsel of the Redeemer.

It informs them also that ultimately the blessings of that ransom sacrifice, finished at Calvary, will be made applicable to the world of mankind. Not that all mankind will develop eyes of understanding and ears of faith, but that in due time under the divine plan the faith now necessary will no longer be required, but sight and knowledge shall largely replace it. Instead of the night and darkness of ignorance and superstition now prevailing, shall be the sunlight of divine truth and knowledge flooding the earth; instead of sin and (death) abounding, Satan shall be bound, all evil shall be restrained and the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God shall be clearly made known to every member of the race.

This is the Bible testimony from the opening pages of Genesis to the closing statements of Revelation. The one pictures to us Paradise lost, the other Paradise regained, while all the intermediate testimonies of the Word, in types and symbols and plain statements, agree in showing forth what sin is, what its penalty of death means, how the death of our Redeemer was necessary to redeem us from the death sentence, how the Millennial age is to be the time for the release of both man and his earthly home from the curse, and how in the interim between the death of the Redeemer and the establishment of his Kingdom, this Gospel age has been devoted to the gathering out the little flock, his Bride and joint-heirs in that Kingdom. The beauty, the harmony and the uniqueness of this testimony of the Bible certainly stamp it as being distinctly separate from other sacred books, the one and only one which gives an explanation of why a good God permits evil, and how, why and by what means he will ultimately overthrow it

and cause that its permission shall work the greater blessing to those rightly exercised by the lessons of tribulation inflicted by Him.

DEATH AND ITS OFFSET, RESURRECTION

While heathen peoples declare that death is not death, that those who appear to die really become more alive than ever before, the Bible is the only religious book which teaches that “the wages of sin is death”—”Everlasting destruction.” (Rom. 6:23; 2 Thess. 1:9) Which of these views is the more reasonable, which is in best conformity with the facts as we know them? Would any man of sound mind stand beside a corpse and, without outside suggestion, reach the conclusion that the dead was not dead but more alive than ever? We think not. We think, on the contrary, that his natural conclusion would be in accord with the Bible statement—”The wages of sin is death,” “The soul that sinneth it shall die,” “Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.” Ezek. 18:4; Gen. 3:19

There is, however, in every human being a longing for life, and a consequent hope that there might be some life beyond death. Heathendom and Spiritism tell us that they can prove the life beyond by various manifestations, messages, signs, etc., coming from the dead to the living through priests and mediums, fetiches, etc. The Bible answers their proposition with the declaration that the “dead. know not anything,” that “There is neither wisdom, knowledge, nor device in the tomb whither all go,” that the only hope of a future life is in a resurrection of the dead, and that our Lord Jesus redeemed the race by the sacrifice of his own life, that in due time he might justly, righteously deliver the dead by a resurrection. The Scriptures point us down to the second coming of Christ as the time for the resurrection, and assure us that the Church, the little flock of this Gospel age, will constitute the first resurrection, and in it be made like their Lord, spirit beings, glorious, invisible to men and be clothed with power and great honor, as the glorified sons of God under the Captaincy and High priesthood of the glorified Redeemer.

The Bible teaches that when the first resurrection shall have been completed and the Kingdom of God shall have been established, this work of rescuing the world will begin. It indicates that this rescue shall consist in uplifting out of sin and death-conditions all those then abiding in the earth—so many of them as will come into harmony with the laws of the Kingdom administered by the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus. It assures us later on the prison-house of death

shall be opened and all the members of Adam's family shall come forth, not all at once but each in his own time, place, rank. It tells us that after awaking from the dead, after coming forth, these shall have had a resurrection by judgments; that during the Millennial day or age, which is the judgment day or age, under the judgments of the Lord which will then be abroad in the earth, rewarding good endeavor and punishing every evil intention, these will have the fullest opportunity for resurrection, rising up step by step in the image and likeness of the Creator. It assures us that not even then will God be pleased to grant eternal life to any except upon manifestation of their willing, hearty obedience to and concurrence with the divine law; and that all otherwise minded, all who will not obey the great prophet, Priest and King, shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people—in the second death. Acts 3:23

HEATHEN WORSHIP DEVILS

The Bible and no other book informs us that the heathen are deluded and are really “worshipping devils,” (1 Cor. 10:20) and that all mankind need to be on guard against “seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.” (1 Tim. 4:1) It tells us that from the very beginning it has been Satan's deceptive lie that has taught the world, “Ye shall not surely die.” (Gen. 3:4) It tells us that all the fallen angels seeking to perpetuate this original declaration of the great Deceiver have through all ages and in the midst of all peoples sought to personate the dead by giving information to the living which supposedly the dead alone would possess. All through the Old Testament as well as the New those who have respect for the Word of God are warned against these “seducing spirits” and their doctrines of devils—that man when he dies is not dead but more alive than ever. This doctrine is undoubtedly the foundation for the bulk of priestcraft and superstition which has afflicted the whole world of mankind.

In conclusion, then, we answer that on the subject of the permission of evil, pain, suffering, death, as related to mental, moral and physical matters the Bible gives the only reasonable, the only consistent, the only logical solution, and the remedy which it declares of redemption and restitution by the resurrection is the only logical and reasonable hope, and that these internal evidences peculiar to the Bible demonstrate its divine authenticity and give to all believers a basis for faith, well expressed by the poet in the words— “How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,

Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word.”

The National Labor Tribune, November 12, 1905

MAN'S ELECTIONS AND GOD'S ELECTIONS

Ft. Wayne, Ind., November 12—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., spoke twice here today to good audiences. We report the evening discourse on human and divine elections from the texts, “Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world.” “And the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.” John 17:16; 2 Pet. 1:10

As we look out over the civilized world we perceive humanity everywhere stretching forth its hand in self-help. And all right-minded people rejoice to see that gradually the world is coming to prefer that the self-helping hand shall bear a ballot rather than a revolver or dagger. When we perceive that in every land the privilege of self-control through law-makers of their own choosing has been wrested by the people from the grasp of monarchy at the cost of blood, as recently in Russia, our esteem for the ballot is greatly enhanced. And surely in no better manner could the world rule itself under present circumstances and conditions. With the ballot in their hands, if the government is a bad one and its standards and ideals poor it is the fault of the majority and calls for education.

SYMPATHY FOR RASCALS

But if any man hopes that government of the people, by the people, through the ballot, will bring the Millennium, he will be mistaken, as history shows. Time after time, year after year, we have party reforms and faction reforms, often evidently greatly to the advantage of the public; but it is one continual round of putting the rascals out, only to find that in a comparatively short time the reformers get the name of rascals also.

What sympathy can we have for the rascals? This: that they are members of the fallen race who, brought into a position of power and influence and opportunity, are not of sufficiently firm character to withstand the temptations which bear in upon them from every quarter—old temptations and new ones. Without sympathizing in any way with the wrongs committed—nay, while very indignant thereat—we must not allow bitterness against the rascals to invade our minds, but must remember that politicians rarely if ever pretend to be saints of God, or acknowledge any higher standard than self-interest.

2H263

ALL CHRISTIANS SHOULD VOTE

The masses of Christendom should evidently as far as possible vote for the soundest principles and the most

conscientious men, so far as their time and opportunity for investigation will permit them to judge of these so far as they are able to study and to sift the conflicting views of the politicians and the aspersions and commendations of the public press. And alas for the poor voter! in all this he usually has a very difficult time, in proportion as he would endeavor to be conscientious. Nevertheless, with the majority of nominal Christians, this may as well as any other be a paramount issue. Indeed he would better spend his time studying the political situation, and striving for the maintenance of a reasonable standard in politics, than give that time to money-grabbing or golf or whist or other time-killing and soul-starving entertainments. We have high respect for the well intentioned and honest endeavors at the polls. We wish them every success in electing the best man and in supporting the best principles of government.

But we have only spoken of the majority of Christians. There is another class named by the same name, but recognized throughout the Scriptures as a “little flock”—as Christians of a special type or quality. These are not as a class superior either mentally, physically nor morally, than the Christian majority referred to. The difference between the masses of nominal Christians and these we are now describing consists in the fact that the latter take the name Christian more seriously to mean followers of Christ, and not merely to mean respectable and moral people. This is the class referred to by our Lord, when he said, “Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world.” These are the ones to whom the Master referred, saying, “If any man will be my disciple let him take his cross and follow me.” Luke 9:23

While, therefore, the name Christian belongs to all who recognize Christ and his teachings in any sense of the word—the household of faith—yet this term Christian evidently belongs especially to the minority, who, as disciples or learners, are consecrated wholly to the doing of the will of the Master—following in his steps through evil report as well as through good report. These also have a vote, have rights, have liberties, have privileges of expressing their choice. And they, too, vote, and so firmly is their mind set on this matter that they vote the same ticket right along,

THEY VOTE FOR JESUS.

They declare their preference unqualifiedly for him—that his will may be done in them and in the whole world. It is not in their power to elect Jesus to be the King or Ruler of the world, because this class constitutes a very small minority in any community. The majority are not prepared to take such a positive step, they prefer to straddle questions; they would like to have good men in office and like to know that righteous

laws are enacted and enforced, but still they are not prepared to go the full length and to pray and to vote, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." It is not for us to even criticize them, but to suppose that they are acting conscientiously and up to their highest standards of judgment.

We merely, therefore, wish them God-speed, and that they may find as good as can be found along the lines of their quest. You will see that I am placing myself with the minority, who vote for Jesus, and who claim to have as much right and power to vote as have our fellow-citizens who, equally well intentioned, split their votes in nearly every direction according to their information or misinformation and their good or bad judgment.

In following our course we are merely obeying our Leader, even though under present conditions our party is even less likely to score a success than is the Prohibition party. We are not expecting success under present arrangements—we are not expecting the world to vote "Thy Kingdom come," because our Master has informed us that his Kingdom is not of this world but of the "world to come"—the age to come. He tells us that he is getting ready the office-holders of the future, who shall be associated with himself in the great work of ruling and blessing the world and guiding the affairs of the earth in the interest of a general uplift, mental, moral, physical, financial and religious. He calls this class, whom he is thus selecting and testing, fitting and polishing, a "Royal Priesthood," that is, a Kingdom or government composed of priests, who will combine with the ruling feature the religious and uplifting quality.

The work of this Gospel age according to the Scriptures is a two-fold one: To let the world do its best at self-help and self-rule that it may learn the lesson which it is seemingly so slow to learn, namely, that under present fallen conditions no human government can be perfect, so that eventually all peoples and nations, learning of the imperfections of their own methods and rules, will gladly look to the Lord and pray, "Thy Kingdom come." And when the Kingdom of Messiah shall be established we are assured of the Lord through the Prophet that it will be the "Desire of all nations." Haggai 2:7

GOD'S ELECTIONS

As men do electing, choosing, so the Scriptures tell us God is carrying on at the present time the work of election. This doctrine of election, manifested throughout

2H264

the Scriptures and theoretically upheld by Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and others, has in recent years fallen greatly into disrepute because of its association with the unscriptural doctrine that God has

provided a great place of eternal torment for all the non-elect. But when our minds are rid of that bugbear of the Dark Ages, when we come to a better understanding of the Word of God, we find that the election which God has in progress is beautiful, grand in every particular.

We find that from among the sin-cursed race, redeemed however by the blood of Christ, God is selecting the “little flock” who willingly renounce the world, its prospects, its schemes, its plans, its ambitions, its hopes, its pleasures, and accept instead the heavenly hopes and promises set before us in the Scriptures.

The Scriptures abound in references to this class, who are styled the “Lord’s jewels,” the “very elect,” the “over-comers,” and by various other titles and names which imply the thoroughness of their devotion to the Lord and their submission to his will and their endeavors to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit—not up to the requirements of the spirit of God’s Law, which would be impossible for them as members of the fallen race under present conditions, but after it in the sense of doing the divine will to the best of their ability. These are the ones who now vote in their hearts for Jesus as their King and who take up their cross to follow him. This the Lord declares to be his election. Of these the Lord said, “I know my sheep and am known of mine.” (John 10:14) So from the standpoint of election the Lord chooses such characters and such characters choose the Lord, and in choosing him and in seeking to walk in his footsteps and follow the directions of his Word they are, as our text points out, “making their calling and election sure.”

LEGITIMATE ELECTION EXPENSES

In worldly elections there are legitimate expenses, as, for instance, the advertising of meetings, rent of halls, traveling expenses, etc., for speakers. Additionally every candidate for office is expected to lay down part of his life—that is, to spend time and influence, strength and vigor, to secure his own election or that of his friend. Much is considered wise and reasonable along these lines, that from our standpoint would be considered the very reverse. The amount of energy and money spent to secure election as a ward councilman or alderman or mayor is astounding, and the expenditure rises in proportion to the office, so that it requires strenuous efforts to become a member of the State legislature, planning, scheming, wire pulling, day and night for weeks and months and years, and the liberal expenditure of time and strength and vitality—all these are the cost if the office reaches to congressman, senator, president. It is the work of a lifetime gradually, step by step, to rise to the honorable position of president of these United States for a period of four years. The man who would not be willing to spend years of time and effort and a considerable amount of money in a legitimate way to help

forward his aspirations to this high office would be considered mentally deficient. To all this we would agree with certain limitations. But now, on the other hand, we wish to contrast with this the expenses of a campaign in God's election.

Those whom God nominates or "calls," those who the Apostle in our text exhorts to make their calling and election sure, are expected to appreciate the honor, the blessing, the high exaltation which is proffered them, and expected to show this appreciation in their endeavors to secure the election. Is this unreasonable? Quite to the contrary, all would admit that it is perfectly reasonable; the person who would not appreciate the divine call or divine election so as to be willing to allow it to cost him something would not be fit for the duties and honors for which the Lord calls or nominates him.

When we contrast the high office of president of the United States for four years with the still higher office of joint-heirship with Christ in the heavenly Kingdom, which is to rule and bless the whole world during the Millennium, and the subsequent high position as joint-heirs with Christ and co-workers together with him in the subsequent features of the divine plan for all eternity, we say to ourselves, If a presidency is worth a lifetime of effort and planning and the expenditure of immense sums of money, what would this heavenly election be worth? What would be a reasonable expense or cost for the candidate to expect to bear?

If every schoolboy is thrilled with the thought of the possibility of attaining to the Presidency of the United States, if for every one who reaches the position there are hundreds of thousands who have striven and have failed to reach it, what would be the reasonable service of the one who has been nominated to the still higher position, and who has the divine assurance that he will win it if he will but make the proper expenditure of time, influence and vitality? What would be the reasonable expenditure for the attainment of such an election? We answer that if a life might reasonably be spent and all other ambitions be cast aside in the attainment of a four years' presidency of this Republic, who will dispute that the sacrifices of a thousand lives and the grounding of ten thousand hopes and ambitions in other directions, would be but a small cost in the attainment of the glory, honor and immortality, joint-heirship and divine nature which God has promised to the "very elect."

2H265

DIFFERENT VIEW POINTS

While all this seems so reasonable to some, it seems foolish to others. And thus, the apostles state the matter in the Scriptures, that the wisdom of God is foolishness

with men and the wisdom of men is foolishness with God. (1 Cor. 1:18; 3:19) In proportion as we take our standpoint with men or with God we will take our view of these matters. From God's standpoint, and therefore from the point of view of all who see it from the divine standpoint, the poor world is spending time and money for a very unsatisfactory portion. Because of a selfishness that is in the world, and the strife for office, whoever is a candidate must expect to be more or less smirched by his opponent, and then, however well intentioned he may be, he will find himself so handicapped by custom usages, wire-pullers and superiors in office that he is sure to feel disappointment and that the cost has been higher than the value of the honor. This is certainly true in the great majority of cases, even in the estimation of the world. From the standpoint of God's estimation the whole struggle for political preferment to the neglect and disregard of the still higher calling and election is as foolish as to grasp for bubbles and neglect diamonds.

Reversely, the great mass of Christian people, even the "household of faith," regard the minority of their brethren who become disciples of Christ and in consecration undertake to bear his cross—and to walk in his steps that they may be his joint-heirs in his Kingdom—these are regarded by the majority as foolish, as the Apostle declared, "We are counted fools all the day long." (1 Cor. 4:10) The world says it is foolish to have so much faith in a future life, and in the promises of the Bible respecting the same, that you will consent to be considered peculiar by the world and to be ostracized by it. It argues that those who would pass by opportunities for earthly elections, offices, etc., hoping for the heavenly election, must be daft, must be mentally unbalanced.

The apostles who were amongst these "fools" who laid down their lives for a principle, who ran a race for the prize of the high calling in Christ invisible to the natural eye, for a crown unseen, for a Kingdom not established but merely promised—these tell us that they were really acting wisely and that we also would do well to follow their example. They tell us that all who thus renounce the present for the future have the "spirit of a sound mind," thus implying that all others are either blinded to these glorious things by the god of this world, who hath blinded the eyes of those who believe not, or else that they are of unsound mind. (2 Tim. 1:7; 2 Cor. 4:4) Bunyan in "Pilgrim's Progress" pictures the masses of Christendom as laboring on the shores of life's ocean with a muck rake, gathering the corks and seaweed, etc., in heaps about them, calling these wealth and fame and social position. From the standpoint of Bunyan and his pilgrim, Christian, these were foolish indeed. And this evidently is the Lord's standpoint of view of these matters, and should be the

viewpoint of all who have the Truth and proportionately as they receive the spirit of the Truth.

“FORGETTING THE THINGS BEHIND”

One thing to be remembered is that in whichever party we have been voting and for whichever honors we have been striving in the past, it is still possible to change. Those who have been running for the heavenly prize and Kingdom can face about and find earthly prizes and ambitions and many helps in the pursuit of these. The world, the flesh and the adversary will all cooperate, and they may gain some transitory bauble or bubbles; but these may be assured that in even striving to gain it they will be almost certain to lose their grasp of the heavenly things and to make shipwreck of the higher things. Would such be a wise course? Would it pay in any sense of the word? Assuredly not. What says the Master? “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own being”—become a castaway as respects the eternal promises within his grasp through Christ.

On the other hand, however unwisely we have handled the muck rake in the past, however foolishly we have sought peace and joy through satisfaction in the things of this present time and to the neglect of the heavenly calling, there is still time, thank God, for us to lay aside every weight and to run with patience in the race whose end is the divine favor and everlasting life upon the spirit plane. The Apostle intimates this, urging that we forget the things which are behind and press onward to the things that are before, the better things, the things of God—seeking a place in the divine favor, seeking to make sure of our calling and election to the Kingdom conditions. Phil. 3:13

Nevertheless we sorrow not as others who have no hope in respect to our dear friends who are blind to all spiritual things, dead to all spiritual impulses. We are glad to know that if we are unable to help them now, because “the god of this world hath blinded their eyes,” the time is coming when Satan shall be bound and the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and we as his ministers of truth shall be privileged to enlighten and uplift the whole world of mankind.

2H266

The National Labor Tribune, November 19, 1903

“THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.”

Pastor C. T. Russell addressed a large audience at Carnegie Hall, Allegheny, Sunday. His discourse was the fifth of a series on the authenticity of the Bible, from the text, “And thou, O tower of the flock.., unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion”—the Kingdom. Micah 4:8

Amongst the many internal evidences proving the inspiration of the Bible, by the harmony of its teachings through various pens during thousands of years, is its persistent testimony respecting the Kingdom of God. The record of Genesis is that Adam was created in the image and likeness of God and given the dominion of earth. David prophetically repeats the story of man’s original endowment with the dominion of the earth and all the lower creatures, saying, “Thou hast made him but a little less than angels and hast crowned him with honor and glory; thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands.” (Psa. 8:5,6) The superiority of man over the lower creation is intimated in the narrative of how all the creatures passed before Adam and received their names—evidently being fully under his control, not merely by brute force, but by that subtle mental force which is so nearly obliterated in our day through the fall, but which to some extent is manifested still.

Only occasionally do we hear of or see a great horse tamer able to control the most ferocious horse by some telepathic power unknown to the majority of the race. Occasionally also we see some who have extraordinary power in the training of wild animals, serpents, etc. This greater power of some more than others is manifested daily in all the little events of life, the controlling influence as respects men, horses, dogs, etc. In general, however, this first dominion of earth is gone. One of the losses sustained is that man, the original king of earth, has lost his imperial power and must defend himself now with superior weapons. We have no intimation of ferocity of the beasts against the human family for nearly two thousand years after the fall. Then the strife against the wild beasts, under the leadership of Nimrod the mighty hunter, was the beginning of strife amongst men, which gradually led up to the mighty wars which the world has since witnessed, the culmination of which we believe will be very shortly witnessed in the great time of trouble and anarchy with which the present dispensation will close, and which will prepare for ushering in of the world to come, the Millennial

Kingdom, the reign of Christ, the blessing of the reign of peace.

“THE PURCHASED POSSESSION”

The Scriptural narrative, after pointing out man’s loss of life and loss of the dominion of earth, consistently points out also the necessity for a general redemption—first of all, man’s redemption from the power of the tomb, from death; and secondly the redemption of his inheritance, the dominion of earth, “all that was lost.” Our Redeemer at his first advent, we are told, came to seek and to save that which was lost—man and his domain. We have already seen how the man Christ Jesus became the ransom for the man Adam, giving a life for a life and this purchase of Adam’s race bought with it all the rights and privileges and honors and dignities, which were his through the fall. Thus the Apostle sums up the work of our Lord Jesus, declaring to us that what God’s people already enjoy of the holy Spirit of promise is the “earnest (payment) of our inheritance until the deliverance of the purchased possession.” (Eph. 1:14) Everything that was purchased by the great Logos, the Son of God— who by taking our nature became our kinsman—all this is to be in God’s due time, we are informed, restored to mankind. Thus the Bible account opens with the narrative of our loss of Paradise and of life and of the dominion of earth, and concludes in Revelation with the symbolical pictures of Paradise restored to all the worthy of the race through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.

Our text calls this feature to our attention, referring to Christ as the “tower of the flock,” the strong one in whom the Lord’s people trust. It assures us that the dominion shall come to him—the first dominion, the Adamic dominion, the lost dominion, shall come to him because by the grace of God he has redeemed Adam and all that was lost. “He came to seek and to save that which was lost,” and has already paid the ransom price, and during the Millennial age that which was truth incurred by his sacrifice will be fully recovered and delivered to the worthy ones of the race. Matt. 18:11

THE THEME OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

When our eyes open to the matter we see readily that the central theme of the Old Testament prophecies is the restoration of this original kingdom lost by Adam’s disobedience. This is the substance of the great Oath Bound Covenant made to Abraham. “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” This

promise was understood by Abraham and his posterity to mean dominion, law, authority over the world, such authority being recognized as necessary if the world would be uplifted from present degradation and brought back into harmony with the Creator. We are not, however, to suppose that Abraham or others of the ancients understood the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the great salvation which God proposes, for these were not then made known to the children of men, but were still a part of the hidden mystery since made known through the Gospel.

Nevertheless the entire story of Abraham's posterity was in line with this promise made to him—a waiting for and hoping for the Kingdom, the first dominion; a waiting therefore for the great King or Messiah who, by the grace of God, would exercise the necessary authority and establish Israel as his co-laborers and associates in the work of ruling and blessing the world.

Not only were these promises before the minds of the people, but in various ways the Lord gave them illustrative promises respecting the Kingdom hopes. First of all, he gave them the judges—being invisible, being their King, and they were thus his representatives for the training and instruction of the people.

But rebelling against these, desiring to have a king in their midst who therefore would have greater authority, the Lord established through Samuel the kingdom of David and his successors, each one of whom the Israelites understood to be a representative of Jehovah, who was still really their King. Thus we find it written that David sat upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord, and again that Solomon sat upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord, in the room or stead of his father David. It was God's Kingdom that was recognized—not his kingdom yet in power over the nations, but merely so far his Kingdom or rule in the one nation, Israel.

At the same time the Lord through His prophets sent messages to the people of Israel, frequently condemning the course taken by the kingdoms who represented the divine will, promising that Messiah would restore the law-givers as at first and the judges as at the beginning, and that in him a blessing would extend to the world in general, that he should be a light unto the heathen then also as well as unto Israel. By and by the Lord took away from the earth the typical kingdom of the house of David. He allowed that nation to come under subjection to the four universal empires which, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, still continue in a divided form to bear rule over all the earth. These are called Gentile kingdoms, or kingdoms of this world, and the Scriptures assure us that in due time all the kingdoms of the world shall pass to and come under the control of the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

At the time of the discontinuance of the typical line of David's descendants—the time of the annulling of the typical Kingdom—we note the remarkable utterance of the Lord through the prophet. Addressing Israel in connection with the overthrow of the last king, he says of Zedekiah, "O thou profane and wicked prince, whose time is come that iniquity should have an end: Remove the diadem and take off the crown: this shall not be the same... I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he come whose right it is; and I will give it to him." (Ezek. 21:25) Here we have again clearly set forth the Messianic Kingdom as the great antitype, the real Kingdom of God. Various other prophecies delineate the great blessings that flow from that Kingdom. No wonder, then, that the people of Israel, who had waited for centuries for the fulfillment of this promise, were in expectation of a Messiah and hoping for a Kingdom. Thus at the time that our Lord was born we read that "all men were in expectation of Messiah," and it was in accord with this that our Lord sent forth the message, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand, Repent and

BELIEVE THE GOOD TIDINGS."

It seems remarkable that in our day this subject of the Kingdom of God should be so completely overlooked by the Lord's people in general, when, every time we refer to the words of our Lord, we should be struck with his frequent references to the Kingdom, the Kingdom, the Kingdom. Not only were the disciples sent forth to announce the Kingdom, and himself as the King, but a large proportion of our Lord's parables related to the Kingdom, and illustrated various features connected with it and its establishment. These were in the nature of prophecies and were stated in parabolic form, because they were not due to be understood in clearness by the people in general, but were only intended for the consecrated disciples. As our Lord once said in answering a query, "To you it is given to know of the mystery of the Kingdom of God but unto outsiders these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear and not understand." Mark 4:11

The Kingdom that was preached to the Jews was the privilege of being associated with Messiah as subordinate kings, princes, priests, in the great work that the Kingdom was to accomplish in the blessing of the whole world. We all know the result of that preaching, that not many received it, only a few; and that the Lord in so many words cast aside that nation which had previously been his peculiar people saying, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say

unto you Ye shall see me no more until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Matt. 23:38, 39

“A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION”

But although the nation of Israel was rejected from being associates with Messiah in the Kingdom work so long promised, the divine plan was not by any means changed or altered. The Lord accepted those Jews who were Israelites indeed to become the nucleus of his Kingdom, and sent forth through them as his ambassadors a message to all the world who should have ears to hear and hearts to obey, making a general invitation to joint-heirship in the Kingdom to all who would desire to become his disciples, assuring us in the meantime that in all there would be but a little flock to whom it would be the Father’s good pleasure to give the Kingdom. Luke 12:32

This message of the Kingdom the apostles took up: The apostle Peter points out that, in addition to the remnant of Israel found worthy of the Kingdom privileges and blessings, God was about to visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name—to be adopted into the divine family, to become heirs with God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ in the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled. (Acts 15:14) The Apostle Paul still more perspicuously points out and indicates that Israel’s rejection of Messiah was not a matter unforeseen by God. He quotes from the prophets, especially Isaiah, to show that the Lord has foretold that Israel would reject Messiah, and that the chief part of the divine promises and favor would pass from the nation of Israel, and that the elect class would be found in every kindred, people and tongue to constitute members in this heavenly Kingdom class. On the subject he says, “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded.” (Rom. 11:7) He tells us that this blindness which came there upon natural Israel is not to be perpetual but temporary—that as soon as the elect or Kingdom class shall have been completed from all nations, peoples, kindreds, and tongues, then Israel again shall come into divine favor with the rest of the world, and be participators in the great blessing promised through the seed of Abraham to all the families of the earth.

SUFFERING AND REIGNING

Our Lord’s words can only be understood from this Kingdom standpoint. He declares that none can be his disciples unless they take up their cross to follow him, counting the cost and despising the shame, and forsaking houses, lands, parents and children and all things, even life itself, if this might stand in the way of their covenant to follow his example, to walk in his steps. What he meant was that those who would constitute the

Kingdom class, those who would sit with him in his throne, must thus be associated with him in the good fight of faith and love and self-sacrifice in overcoming the obstacles of this present evil world, and thus the Apostle declares, “If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him,” and again he declares that it is our privilege to be “heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together with him.” Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12

The common thought that our Lord meant that only the disciples who would take up their cross and follow him would be saved from eternal torment, or from destruction of the second death, is entirely erroneous, inconsistent with facts and the Scriptures, as well as inconsistent with reason. It is only when we see that the peculiar work of this Gospel age is the selection of the Kingdom class, that we can see the necessity for the special fiery trials that shall try all those who will be counted worthy of a share in that Kingdom.

The Apostle Peter evidently understood the matter, for on one occasion he said to the Lord, referring to himself and the others of the apostleship, “Lo, we have left all and followed thee; what, therefore, shall we have?” The Master answered that in the regeneration time to come, in the world’s time of regeneration, the Millennial times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, those twelve apostles should sit upon twelve thrones, judging or ruling amongst the twelve tribes of Israel, who at that time, we are assured, will again be in the prominence under divine favor and at the head of the nations. Elsewhere the Lord assures us that not only the apostles but all who love him more than they love houses and lands, parents or children, self or any other creature, shall thus be marked as overcomers, as his faithful ones, and his promise is, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.” Rev. 3:21

“THY KINGDOM COME”

Not only did our Lord indicate that his followers would constitute the little flock to whom it would be the Father’s good pleasure to give the Kingdom specified through the Abrahamic promise, but additionally he taught us that this would be a part of the central theme of our hearts at all times—the Kingdom. It should be so prominent in all of our anticipations of the future that whenever we pray to the Father it should constitute the very center and essence of our expressions of faith and hope and trust, saying, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” Alas! How many of the Lord’s people during

the past eighteen centuries have uttered this prayer thoughtlessly, carelessly, not giving due weight to the words, and therefore not praying properly from the heart; and the difficulty seems to be that they have lost sight of this fundamental teaching of the Word of God respecting the Kingdom of God's dear Son. Col. 1:13

“UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVENS”

Some, in their confusion of thought on this subject, imagine that it is a kingdom to which we are to go; but our Lord and all the testimonies of the Word indicate that it is a Kingdom which is to come, and whose appointed times and seasons for establishment are in the Father's hand, and that it is to be established at the second coming of the Son of God in power and great glory. With this thought the various prophecies agree, pointing to a particular time when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep, when the knowledge of the Lord would be so universal that there would be no need for one to say to another, Know thou the Lord, because all would know him. Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34

Daniel the Prophet pictures the time of the setting up of this kingdom. In one of his prophecies he shows the time of the first advent of Messiah, and how he was cut off in death, but not on his own account, but for our sins. But he proceeds to tell us how, when present Gentile governments shall have run their course, when Gentile times shall have expired— and his prophetic periods covering this point we believe end in 1914 A.D.—then it tells us, in harmony with our text, that the first (dominion shall come to the great Tower of the flock, to Christ. In harmony with the statement made to Zedekiah, the time will then have come when the overturning, overturning, overturning of Israel without a king, without a law-giver, should be accomplished, and the dominion shall be given to him whose right it is, to him who redeemed father Adam and all of his race, and who redeemed also or purchased all of Adam's rights, privileges, dignities and authority, the dominion of earth.

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM NEAR

We will leave for another occasion the Bible's portrayal of the glorious conditions which will prevail amongst men during the Millennial age, under the operation of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, in which the elect Church of this Gospel age, as his Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir, will be associated with him in the blessing of all the families of the earth. Suffice it now to say that to those who have given the subject careful thought and investigation, the evidences seem clear that the prophesied seven times, or 2,520 years of Gentile dominion of the world, is nearly at its close. If this period of “Gentile

Times” began with Nebuchadnezzar at the time of the overthrow of God’s typical kingdom, when the prophet declared that it was overturned until he should come whose right it is, and if that event occurred in the year 606 B.C., it follows that the whole period of Gentile dominion will expire in October, 1914 A.D., according to the accepted chronology of the world.

How in this matter also the Scriptures forestatement is borne out by history! The four universal empires delineated by the prophet have had their day, and we are now living in what the prophet designates the days of the feet, the toes of Daniel’s image, and soon, according to the prophet, the whole image of earthly government is to be wrecked. Other Scriptures show us that the wreck is coming through the uprising of the people in anarchy, “Every man’s hand against his neighbor.” (Zech. 8:10) Looking out we see the spirit of selfishness and strife on the increase, and it seems everyway probable that the ensuing nine years will bring so-called Christendom to social, political and financial destruction.

The prophet pictures this as a stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, and smiting the image on the feet. (Dan. 2:45) He explains that this stone is the Kingdom of God—the little flock of which Christ is the Head, and which is to be glorified when the last member shall have been selected and polished and glorified. Although the stone Kingdom itself will be spiritual, invisible to men, it will be the real power which will bring about the crisis in human affairs. If this were all of the story it might well be left untold, but this is but the prelude.

The grand climax of that trouble, according to the prophet and all the apostles, will be the humbling of the world to such a degree that they will be ready for God’s kingdom, which will ultimately begin its rule. This Daniel shows by picturing the little stone as growing until it fills the whole earth. So during the Millennial age the Lord’s Kingdom, originally only the elect few, will greatly increase in numbers as mankind comes to appreciate the blessings of righteousness and give their hearts to the Lord in consecration. For that glorious epoch and its glorious work let us continue to pray, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven,” and let us more and more realize that this Kingdom promise is another of the evidences, of the proofs, of the homogeneousness of the Word of God.

The National Labor Tribune, December 10, 1905

THE PRESENT TIME AND THE TIME TO COME

Elmora, Pa., December 10—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached here this afternoon and evening. His discourse in the afternoon, reputed to be an antidote for infidelity, was entitled, “To Hell and Back, Who Are There? Hope for the Return of Many of Them.” We report the evening discourse from the text, “He shall receive an hundredfold now in this present time, and in the world to come eternal life.” Mark 10:30

The context tells us that Jesus had been explaining the difficulties and hindrances attending the Kingdom of heaven class and that these difficulties especially bar the way of the rich and influential and learned, in harmony with the Apostle’s words, Not many wise, not many great, not many learned hath God chosen, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:26; Jas. 2:5) The Apostles were astonished at this, for in their day as in ours the wealthy and learned were regarded as the special representatives of religion. The thought that not many of these would gain an entrance to the Kingdom class caused the unlearned and fishermen, who had become the Lord’s followers, to query respecting what opportunities they would have if the rich, the learned, the influential, the outwardly religious would have so poor a show.

Our text is part of our Lord’s reply. Peter’s remark was, “We have left all and followed thee,” which implied how such sacrificing would be dealt with. Our Lord replied, “Verily I say unto you there is no man, who has left houses or brethren, sisters or father or mother or children or lands for my sake and the Gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundredfold in this time, and in the world to come, eternal life.”

“AN HUNDREDFOLD IN THIS TIME”

The Bible records here seem at first to present the teaching of numerous Sunday School superintendents and teachers who effect that a consecration to God brings worldly influence and wealth an hundredfold. It is usual in our day to point to the affluent business men and bankers, who are generally members in some of the nominal churches, as corroborations of this thought— bright and shining examples of how the Lord blesses those who become church members. But such ideals are often shattered in this our day, as bank irregularities, defalcations or losses or exposures or insurance investigations disclose the fact that much of the wealth of the world is secured in a manner which the whole world recognizes as disreputable, dishonest, and certainly far from the standard of

the Golden Rule which our Master laid down. And when we hear the Lord's word assuring us that not many wise, not many learned, not many rich, not many influential will enter the Kingdom at all, and that the few of them who do enter will come through great tribulation and difficulties, we see that our Lord's words in respect to the hundredfold blessings of this present time can not refer to earthly wealth.

LEAVING ALL TO FOLLOW CHRIST

This thought is confirmed by the Apostle's statement that those regarding whom he inquired had left all to become the followers of Jesus in doing the Father's will, and our Lord's word also confirms the same thought. It is not those who have accumulated houses and lands, but those who have left them for the Lord's sake and for the Gospel's sake—for the privilege of giving a faithful witness to the Truth—it is this class that is to have an hundredfold more in this present time.

But how can we leave these earthly things and earthly privileges and comforts and yet have an hundredfold more of them? Well, in order to understand this matter thoroughly we must experience it: (1) We must leave or forsake earthly things, surrendering them to the Lord, making a full consecration of all before we come into the position where he will give us the hundredfold in return. Not many are ready or willing to make such a consecration of their earthly all, and not many, therefore, are in line to receive the hundredfold blessing. The few who do take up their cross and forsake earthly advantage and seek chiefly the Kingdom of God, these alone can understand fully respecting the hundredfold of the Lord's blessing.

Our Lord did not mean that we would have an hundredfold houses for every one forsaken, but he did mean that we would have an hundredfold more of blessing, comfort, joy, in our sacrificing of these earthly interests than if we had held fast to them. The hundredfold blessing consists largely in the hopes which are begotten in our hearts through the divine promises, which the Apostle terms exceeding great and precious promises by which we may obtain the divine nature. (2 Pet. 1:4) These hopes and promises are so glorious that all earthly things fade into insignificance in comparison with them, so that each one of this class may be able to say with the Apostle of old, respecting the sacrificed things of an earthly character, I count all things but loss.. .that I may win Christ and be found in him. (Phil. 3:8,9) I count these

2H271

things not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. (Rom. 8:18) I forget the things that are behind and am pressing on to the things before

— for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:13-14) These heavenly glories which belong to the future are made so real, so precious to the truly consecrated, that they more than fill the losses and sacrifices of this present time an hundredfold.

THE NOMINAL AND THE REAL CHURCH

In all denominations of Christians there are properly some sincere ones of the consecrated class described in our text: some whose hearts are not set upon earthly homes or friendships or attachments of any kind, but set upon the heavenly things, the things above; some who are not living for the things of the present time, but for the life and glories which the Lord has promised us in the future. The mass of Christians of all denominations constitute the nominal Church, and here and there amongst the many in all denominations are found the few, the “little flock,” whose condition is described in our text—who have forsaken all earthly interests and hopes and advantages and have voluntarily and gladly cast in their lot with him who was rich and for our sakes became poor; him who was despitefully used and persecuted for righteousness’ sake; him who laid down his life for the Truth and the brethren in accordance with the divine will; him who went about doing good. (2 Cor. 8:9; John 15:20) All such, whoever and wherever they may be, are the Lord’s jewels, his little flock, his Bride class, the members of his “body.” While a larger number may constitute the general household of faith, these are God’s very elect who, when their trials shall have been passed successfully, shall constitute the Church of glory, and will during the Millennial age be God’s agents, through whom blessing shall flow to all the families of the earth.

It is to this class, this little class of followers in the footsteps of Jesus, that the Lord assures an hundredfold more in this present time. And they get it. Not only do they get an hundredfold more in this present time, more joy and blessing in fellowship with the Lord and the brethren, but in the Lord’s providences they literally have brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers and homes more than an hundredfold, for wherever these may meet one another they are recognized by each other as being of the same spirit; the same mind of Christ dwells in them richly, and, abounding, manifests itself, so that, as the Apostle said of some in his day, they need not letters of introduction to one another, but can very quickly discern the spirit each is of. And in proportion as they grow in the spirit of the Master will they grow in fellowship of spirit toward all who are truly his, all the pilgrims in the narrow way toward the heavenly Kingdom; and they will not only delight in sharing with each other such temporal good things as each may have need of. The spirit of Christ in these will lead them

to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, but especially unto the household of faith. Gal. 6:10

“IN THE WORLD TO COME”

In the world to come these are to receive eternal life. True, there is a sense in which the Scriptures speak of the Lord’s followers as already possessing eternal life, but this is merely by faith. In the same sense that we now see the crown of glory which is laid up for the Lord’s followers, we may now appreciate the life eternal which will then be granted. Thus the Lord speaks of us as having passed from death unto life. The new life has begun in us although it has not yet been perfected, nor will it be until the “world to come.

“The world to come: how peculiarly that phrase would strike the majority of minds if they would but examine it. We all have been taught and have been accustomed to think of going at death to some other world—a world of torture, of devils, of fire, etc., or a world of bliss and heavenly fellowship. By reason of having studied the creeds handed down from the Dark Ages, and having neglected the study of the Word of God, a few have noticed that the hopes set before God’s people all through the Scriptures is that there is to be a world to come—that we can not go to it but must wait until it comes to us. The resurrection belonging to that world to come, the reward of God’s people, belongs down there, and also at the same time the rewards of the wicked for their evil deeds of this present time, for every willful transgression against light and knowledge.

“The world to come” signifies that epoch, age or dispensation that is to come. We can not hasten its coming, for, as our Lord explains, its times and seasons the Father hath put in his own power. We nevertheless find something in the Scriptures that relates to these times and seasons, and gives us sometimes obscure and sometimes specific presentations respecting that glorious time and the wonderful events then to be accomplished. The epoch preceding the flood is scripturally termed the “age that was.” The dispensation or condition of things prevailing since the flood up to the present time, and about to end in a great time of trouble at the second coming of Christ, is scripturally called the “world that now is,, the age or dispensation at present. Again the Apostle calls this “the present evil world,” because evil, ignorance and superstition now predominate, now hold control of the world’s affairs. Similarly Satan is called the prince or chief of this age. Unrestrained by the Lord, Satan now

works in the hearts of the children of disobedience. And since they constitute the vast majority of the race, Satan is the de facto “prince of this world,” and has nothing in Christ, nothing in common with the hope of the Church—his body, but is an opponent, an adversary, whose rule must come to an end before the long-promised Kingdom of God take its place.

FIERY TROUBLE TO END THIS AGE

The entire Bible points to the end of this age as being the time for the transfer of the dominion of earth from the control of Satan and ignorance and sin to the control of Christ and his glorified Church and a reign of righteousness. The trouble will be the natural result of the antagonism between the prince of darkness and the prince of light, between error and truth, between sin and righteousness.

As soon as the work of the present age shall have been finished, as soon as the class mentioned in our text shall have been elected or chosen out of the world, as soon as those who have the hearing of faith and the eye of faith have forsaken all to follow the Master, and be tested along the points of self-denial, then this present age will close and these elect ones will receive the reward mentioned in our text—“in the world to come eternal life.” More than this, the faithful overcomers are promised elsewhere a share with the Lord in his throne in his Kingdom, as he said, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.” Rev. 3:21

HOW THE NON-ELECT ARE LOST

When we say that all the non-elect are lost, we do not mean what others would generally mean by the statement. We are standing close by the Bible, not only in our phraseology but in the meaning which we attach to it. The whole world was lost through Adam and his disobedience; the whole world thus came under condemnation of death, the curse; and although Christ has redeemed the world and has paid his life a ransom for all, yet only the Church class has yet been found. The remainder of mankind are like lost sheep, gone astray from their Creator through sin and degradation. We who have heard the voice of God speaking peace by Jesus Christ have been found of him, have returned to him, to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, have already been blessed an hundredfold in this present time and are to be his special treasure, his jewels in the end of this age, in the beginning of the world or age to come, when our Lord shall come to make up his jewels. Mal. 3:17

The rest of the world, then, are still lost, because they have not yet been found, because their eyes are blinded by the god of this world and the false doctrines, superstitions in ignorance

which as a dense cloud has hindered them from seeing the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Their ears are dull of hearing for the same reasons they know not neither do they understand.

But is the world to remain forever lost? Are only the little flock who are now able to exercise the hearing of faith and the sight of faith—are these alone to be the saved? Of such alone will be the elect, the Scriptures distinctly tell us, but they also assure us that these elect ones, when glorified with the great Shepherd, will be associated with him in the work of blessing all the sheep that none are lost—bringing all mankind to a knowledge of the Lord and to a knowledge of the glorious provision that they may attain eternal life by obedience to the arrangements of the Millennial Kingdom.

When in that glorious “world to come” or new dispensation the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth and all mankind will see the facts — that God loved the world while yet sinners and provided a redemption through the blood of his Son, and that whosoever will may return to the Father’s fold through him —then we believe that many will be gathered into the Lord’s fold who can not be gathered now, because of the restrictions placed about the same, the narrowness of the way and the requirement of the ears and eye of faith. Whoever, then, will not improve those glorious opportunities to become members of the Lord’s sheepfold will be counted as goats, as followers of the Adversary, as opposed to God and to righteousness, and as such we have the assurance that they will be utterly destroyed from amongst the people, so that eventually every voice in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard giving thanks to him who sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Rev. 5:13

“OTHER SHEEP I HAVE”

Our Lord referred to these other sheep of the Millennial age on various occasions. For instance, he particularly describes the work of the Millennial age in separating those sheep from the goats during that thousand-year period, and that at the close of that testing all the sheep will be at his right hand of favor and all the goats at his left hand of disfavor, and how they will then be with Satan utterly destroyed, experiencing the everlasting punishment of an utter destruction, from which there will be no awakening, no resurrection, no recovery.

Again our Lord spoke of this same class saying, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, that they may be one fold and one Shepherd.” (John 10:16) He was speaking to his flock of sheep, spiritual Israel, whom he was gathering out

from amongst nominal Israel and subsequently from amongst the Gentiles. We are now the Lord's sheep; he is our Shepherd or caretaker. Under his protecting care we have the blessing represented in the twenty-third Psalm. We are glad, too, to note that the other sheep, now lost, the world in general, blind and deaf, will be found of the Lord shortly, and that so many of them as will have their eyes opened and their ears unstopped, and may become truly one with the Lord and with all those who are in harmony with him in every plane of existence. Eph. 1:10

“IN THAT DAY”

Everywhere throughout the Bible we have reference to “a day”—pointing us to a coming epoch vastly different from the present time—pointing us to the world to come and its Millennial Kingdom glory, and the wonderful blessings that are then to be poured upon the world of mankind. It will be in “that day” that the seed of Abraham shall bless all the families of the earth. Our Lord Jesus is the Head, the Chief of this seed of Abraham; and the faithful ones mentioned in our text, the elect of this Gospel age as his Bride and Joint-Heirs in the Kingdom, members also of this seed of Abraham, as the Apostle declares, “If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29) The promise is that in this seed, which is now in process of development, and which in the world to come, the age to come, shall get eternal life—in this seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. And this in turn means, not only a blessing for those who will then be living at that time, but also a blessing for those who have gone to the great prison-house of death in the calling of them forth from that prison, from the grave, from the sleep of death, that they may come to a knowledge of the Truth, that they may have a share in the great mercies and blessings vouchsafed to the whole world of mankind by the heavenly Father, through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

The National Labor Tribune, December 17, 1905

THE ELIJAH MESSAGE--THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

Reading, Pa., December 17. Pastor C. T. Russell addressed two attentive audiences in the Auditorium today. His evening text was, “The voice of one that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” Isa. 40:3

All four of the Gospels quote our text and apply it to John the Baptist. John the Baptist was the Elijah to all those who had the hearing ear and understanding heart to appreciate the message and to accept Jesus. And yet, as

we pointed out, John the Baptist did not fulfill by any means all that was predicted respecting the antitypical Elijah and his ministries which would be introductory to the Christ of glory. Indeed we have John's own word for it that he did not fulfill all the requirements and conditions appertaining to the Elijah class. When he was asked point blank the question, "Art thou Elias?" he answered, "I am not." (John 1:21) In the power and the spirit of Elijah he did an introductory work to Jesus in the flesh, just as the greater Elijah, the Church in the flesh, has for nearly nineteen centuries been doing an introductory work as respects the great Christ of glory, Jesus the Head and King, the Church members of his body and associates in his Kingdom.

John the Baptist did literally enough dwell in the wilderness and preached there, thus typifying the experiences of the Church, which during a large portion of this Gospel age, has been in the wilderness or hidden condition as respects the world and worldly history. Revelation tells us in symbolical language of how the Church fled into the wilderness condition for 1260 symbolical days— 1260 years—which period ended with the year 1799. Since then the true mouthpiece of the Lord, his true messengers, the loyal members of the Elijah class, have gone forth from the wilderness condition, and the voice of their message is again heard in the world though they are still separate—in spirit at least—to Churchianity, Babylon, and the world, Egypt.

John the Baptists' message to those who would hear him, "Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand," has been similarly the message of all the truly consecrated of the Lord. The announcement is a two-fold one, first that the Kingdom is about to be established, and secondly, that repentance and reformation are necessary to its proper reception and a share in the blessings which it will bring. Notice how much more accurately the description of our text fits to the antitypical Elijah than it did to John the Baptist, who did something of the Elijah work to the Jewish nation as the body of Christ in the flesh has done to Christendom.

2H274

The voice does not declare that there is no wilderness, that there is no desolation, that everything is satisfactory and all right; it does not declare that God's Kingdom has come and that his will is being done on earth as it is done in heaven. Quite to the contrary, it declares that the Kingdom is to come, and that preceding it all who hear the message should join in preparing the highway or making right conditions for the reception of the Kingdom, that the world might receive God's Kingdom with joy and thankfulness and great blessing.

When John the Baptist, as representing this Elijah in a small way, made this proclamation to the Jewish nation,

his message was received only by the few. The great majority had neither ears to hear nor hearts to understand and appreciate the things which he called to their attention. Self-satisfaction filled the hearts which should have been seeking reconciliation to the Father through the Redeemer. Those who did receive John were those who were ready subsequently to receive Jesus. The rejection of John by fleshly Israel meant the rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, and meant also his rejection of them and the consequent great time of trouble which came upon that nation.

ELIJAH'S MESSAGE NOT APPRECIATED

Similarly the message of the anti-typical Elijah, the message of the true Church, the body of Christ in the flesh, has not been heeded by the world, has not been heeded by the nominal mass of Christendom. We may apply our Lord's words again here, and see that if Christendom had heard the message of the antitypical Elijah they would be ready now for the second advent of Jesus, ready to welcome his Kingdom, glad to have it established, in the world; they would have been praying from the heart what some of them have been praying from the lips, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done," etc. But rejecting the antitypical Elijah, Christendom is unprepared for the Kingdom. Indeed it is perhaps more out of harmony with the conditions of the Kingdom than it ever was before.

There never was a time when greed of gold seemed to have such power over all the civilized world as now; there never was a time when people in the most trusted positions rendered such poor accounts of themselves; never a time when so many proved unfaithful to their trusts. And all this greed for wealth and for power, the two being linked together today, means a very opposite spirit from that which must prevail under the Kingdom conditions when the Golden Rule will be enforced by the iron rod of power, when justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, when the humble shall be exalted and the proud shall be abased. In a word the world is probably less prepared for the Kingdom than at any other time of the world's history so far as the governments and representatives of the people are concerned, so far as their preparation for the Kingdom by any highway of righteousness and holiness, the straightening of the crooked things and the smoothing of the rough conditions, are concerned.

THE ALTERNATIVE IS THE DIVINE CURSE

The failure of the antitypical Elijah class to establish in the world a highway of holiness and righteousness through the message they promulgate means, as described in our last Sunday's discourse, that as the Jewish nation rejected Christ and passed into a great time of trouble, so Christendom, now rejecting his Kingdom on

a spiritual plane at the time of its proper establishment under the whole heavens, will in turn be rejected as Israel was, and the time of trouble shall again come, which will resemble the trouble upon Israel except that it will be world-wide, a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation. This is the curse of the Lord referred to in our last Sunday's discourse in connection with the declaration that the antitypical Elijah must turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, else the Lord would come and smite the earth with a curse.

A sufficient time has been allowed for the promulgation of this message of reformation and preparation of the Kingdom. Indeed, as we have heretofore noted the length of the Jewish age, proclaiming the Kingdom of Christ was 1848 years from the establishment of that nation until the offer of the Kingdom by our Lord when he rode to Jerusalem on the ass. And similarly the Gospel age has been a proclamation of 1848 years, reaching from Pentecost to the announcement of the second coming, presence of Christ, and his Kingdom in process of establishment in 1878. As the Jewish nation was rejected at the end of that 1848 years of favor, and matters began to shape for the utter destruction of the nation, accomplished in thirty-seven years, so here we understand that Christendom has been tried in the balances and found wanting, and the decree of the Lord is that the time of trouble shall come which will thoroughly humble the hearts of mankind and bring them into a condition where they will be ready for the blessings he is to give, blessings to which they did not respond willingly and voluntarily throughout this Gospel age.

When the time of trouble shall have wrecked the present institutions in anarchy, and when the world shall cry out to the Lord as the prophet represents that it will do, earnestly desiring the reign of righteousness, then will be accomplished the things which the Church has been declaring should now be accomplished if a sufficient number were willing to do so, namely, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert

2H275

a highway for our God." Mankind has not responded to this appeal to cast up a highway of holiness and righteousness. On the contrary, the various advantages of earth have been exploited for individual aggrandizement, and selfishness has continued to be the law instead of righteousness and equity. But the Lord will delay no longer; he is about to set up his Kingdom; he is about to establish the highway of holiness, and he so tells us elsewhere through the prophet, A highway shall be there and it shall be called a way of holiness, and the redeemed of the Lord shall go up thereon. In a word, that which mankind would not naturally respond to in the

present time will be forcibly established in the future time, and meanwhile, because of unwillingness to respond, a time of trouble will come upon the whole earth, turning the sweets of selfishness and aggrandizement to the vinegar of disappointment, chagrin and loss.

EVERY VALLEY TO BE EXALTED

The Elijah voice was to do more than merely call upon men to prepare a highway of holiness and righteousness in the present time. It was to proclaim, as the text shows, that whether they would hear or whether they would forbear the Lord would carry out his great and wonderful plan. Thus we find it positively stated:

“Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low.” When the Lord undertakes this matter of the leveling of the conditions of society, bringing down the great ones and mighty ones, the princes of earth, financial, political and social, and lifting up the humble ones represented by the valleys, the masses of mankind, there will be no doubt at all that he will accomplish it to the full limit of his decree. There need be no doubt at all that eventually all the crooked things shall be straightened out and all the difficult and rough places, social, political and financial, shall be smoothed out.

Our Lord declared, pointing down to our day, to the time immediately preceding the establishment of his Kingdom in power and glory, that every secret thing should be revealed, every hidden thing should be brought to light. (Matt. 10:26) We may assume, therefore, that it is in harmony with this divine arrangement and program that at the present time the great things, social, political and financial, are being brought to light, being brought to the surface almost miraculously. The result is to more and more shake the confidence of the people in their teachers, representatives and rulers. More and more they will be inclined to have confidence in no one, and conclude that it is a matter of every man for himself. The result will be what the Scriptures so clearly foreshow, an anarchous period in which each will be striving with his hand against his neighbor for his own personal advantage.

JUDGMENT FIRST, THEN THE GLORY

The prophecy proceeds to outline not only that the voice of the antitypical Elijah would be heard in the wilderness, vainly crying that the way of the Lord should be prepared, but, secondly, that this work of leveling society, bringing down the great and lifting up the humble, will be accomplished—accomplished as we have seen by the great time of trouble which will come as a natural consequence of the rejection of the Lord’s guidance, and yet come as a specially foreknown and prearranged chastisement of the Lord; and following this

comes the statement that “then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.” (Isa. 40:5) The result of the time of trouble will be the opening of the eyes of understanding of all the world so that all shall see the grandeur of the divine plan, the divine arrangement. All shall see God’s plan to be glorious in the extreme. As the heavens are higher than the earth so will his ways be seen to be higher than man’s ways. While the world will dread the dark day of trouble even now impending, yet after it shall have passed and after the glorious Sun of Righteousness shall have arisen with healing in his beams, after all the world shall behold the glory of the Lord thus manifested in the establishment of his righteousness and justice in the earth, the hearts of all will be made glad, and they will rejoice that God’s wisdom and love, his mercy and justice, failed not in the establishment of the Kingdom, even though it required so great, so awful a time of trouble to bring it about, because of the unwillingness of mankind to respond to the divine invitation through the Elijah class.

GOD’S UTTERANCES SURE

As though anticipating the query of our minds as to how we can be sure that these results will be brought about, since we have seen more than eighteen centuries of Gospel proclamation and urging to repentance and preparation for the Kingdom — how can we know what the great time of trouble will bring about, and that all flesh shall recognize, the grandeur of the divine Kingdom and the blessings resulting? The answer of the Lord through the prophet to our query is in few words. “The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” (v. 5) Ah, yes! The difficulty now is that few are able to hear the word of the Lord; few are prepared to believe his testimonies respecting the future; and yet he declares: “My word that goeth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void,” etc. How surely then the message which was given to the Elijah class and which the world has not heeded will be accomplished, fulfilled, and led in a way which the world would not expect; but fulfilled

2H276

nevertheless, although through the severity of a time of trouble upon mankind.

This is one of the great lessons which the world is to learn, namely, that the heavenly Father knew the end of his plan from the beginning; and that he foretold the affairs of the world, not by way of forcing results; but that mankind might learn of his wisdom and of his ability to discern the end from the beginning in every matter; and that learning also of his glorious character of justice and mercy and love all who desire his fellowship

and seek it might be able to place absolute confidence in his every arrangement for their welfare.

“ALL FLESH IS GRASS”

The succeeding verses, 6-8, correspond well with what we have already seen and intimated, that at or about the great time when the crooked things would be straightened and the rough places smoothed and the mountains and hills brought low and the valleys exalted, preparatory to the revealing of God’s glorious character to all mankind, there would be a special message sent to the Elijah class—”Cry, All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it.” Surely in this parable the grass represents the people. The intimation is that the grass does not represent the saints, but the people who are not in relationship with the Lord, and this picture of the withering of the grass and the fading of the flower is but another way of telling us of the time of trouble which will wither all human hopes and blight all human prospects and turn the world upside down temporarily until the blessing of the Lord shall come again upon them through the Kingdom—until the times of restitution of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets shall bring them the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the blessings of his favor, the forgiveness of their sins, their reconciliation to him through their Redeemer.

“SPEAK COMFORTABLY TO JERUSALEM”

It is the Elijah class that is referred to in the first and second verses of the context, “comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare (appointed time) is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”

We cannot here go into details respecting the fulfillment of this prophecy but will merely refresh the memories of those who have already read on this subject in the second and third volumes of Millennial Dawn.

The time indicated by this prophecy, when Israel would have received its double or second portion or experience at the hand of the Lord, we have already shown was 1878 A. D. In that year Israel’s disfavor instituted of God, reached the exact period of length to that which had previously been their period of favor. It was then that the message was due to go forth to the Jew to the effect that the disfavor would begin to pass away and divine favor again to return to the Jew— though it was pointed out with equal force that the favor of the Lord for a period of thirty-seven years would be accompanied by a

great trouble, and that not until the close of that period and the glorification of the Gospel Church could the divine favor come fully back to natural Israel, as we read in the words of the Apostle, "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy." In other words, natural Israel shall come again into a place of harmony and favor in the end of this age, divine mercy being manifested through the glorified Christ, the Church.

What we are now pointing out is that this message of comfort to natural Israel, which was due to begin to be proclaimed in 1878, was part of the message of the antitypical Elijah—the Church, the body of Christ this side the veil. Israel's sins are to be pardoned, blotted out, even as a little later on the sins of the whole world are to be blotted out, just as at the present time the household of faith have their sins forgiven on condition of their acceptance of Christ and their consecration to endeavor to walk in his footsteps. Other prophecies, as we have seen, also show this double in Israel's history, that the one half was a period of favor, with chastisement and the other half a period of total disfavor. The Israelites themselves are inclined to notice this matter and wonder at it. Only from the standpoint of the Lord's Word can we see that this comforting message is for them, and that ere long their blessing will begin and that the blessing of the Jew and the forgiveness of the sins of those who pierced the Lord is but the precursor of the still more widespread blessings of the Lord upon all the families of the earth.

ZION TO BE EXALTED

Continuing the examination of our text, we note that verses 9-1 give a beautiful word-picture of the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom and the blessing of it will be to all those who will respond to its favors. We read, "O, thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" In such passages as these the symbolical use of the word mountain signifies kingdom, and hence these words in the prophecy signify the exaltation in the Kingdom of those who constitute the class, and who now tell the

2H277

good tidings of coming blessings to a world which is not appreciative of the message: Only a few have the ears to hear and the hearts to appreciate the word of God, and those few are the household of faith, who are permitted to become members of the Elijah class now and of the glorious Zion hereafter, the Kingdom of glory.

Our message is then not only as to the glorification of the saints, but one also respecting the great honor and blessing and privilege that is coming to natural Israel,

the prospective representative on earth of the heavenly kingdom, which is invisible to men. It is the mission of the Elijah class to announce the Kingdom after this manner, to proclaim that the Kingdom is at hand, that the great Ruler of the World is about to take possession, that Messiah's Kingdom is the Kingdom of God, which shall ultimately prevail throughout the whole universe.

The message now to be delivered continues, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him (Christ is the arm of Jehovah, stretched down for our deliverance from sin and death, stretched forth in the time of trouble to dash in pieces as a potter's vessel all the hindering conditions and things now highly esteemed amongst men): Behold his reward is with him and his work (of recompense) before him"—to reward both the well-doers and the evil-doers according to their condition of heart. These rewards at the beginning of the Millennial age will mean great distress and trouble, because some will rightly deserve, on account of their selfishness and failure to appreciate and act upon the principles of righteousness, severe punishment or stripes, as the Scriptures express the matter. (Psalm 89:30-32)

The gracious assistances which the Lord will lend to all the families of the earth during the Millennial age are beautifully pictured by verse 11. All who then desire, after they have learned of the grace of God, will be permitted to become the sheep of the Lord's pasture—"He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom." This account parallels our Lord's parable of the sheep and goats, in which he pictures the whole world during the Millennial age on trial before him and the Church with him in his throne. Then all mankind will be tested as to whether or not they will develop the sheep characteristics and be followers of righteousness and truth and peace, or whether they will prefer to develop the contrary goat characteristics. All who become the Lord's sheep shall eventually be blessed of him with everlasting life, while all others will be punished with destruction, the Second Death, from which there will be no awakening, no redemption, no recovery.

Seeing, then, dear friends, the message that the Lord has given us as the Elijah class, let us do our share in proclaiming the propriety of righteousness, in pointing out the necessity of casting up a highway of holiness and making straight the crooked things and thus preparing for the Kingdom of God. By this time, however, we know that this part of the message is too late to effect anything—that matters will go from bad to worse until the fire of the Lord's anger shall wither the world as the heat of a furnace, and the grass and its flowers will fade.

Nevertheless we can assure those who have the ears to hear that the Word of the Lord will stand forever, that he will establish his Kingdom of righteousness in the whole earth and that then the glory of the Lord shall be

revealed and all flesh shall see it together and that then the blessing of the great Shepherd will be extended to all who will then desire to be his sheep. And while giving this message faithfully as the Elijah class, let us be putting in practice in our lives the lessons which we testify to others with our lips, and thus we ourselves will be prepared for a share in the glories of the Kingdom, for it is the Elijah class on this side the veil who is to constitute the Church in glory, the body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, on the other side the veil, through the power of the First Resurrection. He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.

2H277

The National Labor Tribune, December 25, 1905

THE SONG OF THE ANGELS PROPHETIC

Pittsburgh, Pa., Dec. 25. Pastor C. T. Russell preached at Carnegie Hall Sunday afternoon on the prophetic song of angels, from the text, "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord... Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:10-14. He said:

It matters not that tomorrow is not the real anniversary of the Savior's birth, but probably the anniversary of the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, the anniversary of the virgin Mary's conception, our Lord being

2H278

born nine months later on the calendar, or about Oct. 1. One so great, whose birth, death and resurrection from the dead mean so much to the human family, may be remembered and celebrated any day, every day, by all those who appreciate what He has done for our race. Since, then, the majority of Christian people have become habituated to the celebration of Dec. 25 as our Lord's birthday we need make no protest, but join with all in celebrating that day with rejoicing of heart, giving gifts and remembrances one to another, thus copying divine favor, which gave to mankind the Son of God as a gift of mercy and love for our redemption.

For 4000 years and more the promise of God, clothed in more or less of obscurity, had been given to mankind, intimating that ultimately the great curse of sin and death which had come upon the world through Father Adam's disobedience in Eden would be rolled away, and instead of a curse, a blight, would come a blessing of the Lord with life-giving refreshment. In various types, figures and shadowy promises this lesson had come down through the ages to the time of our Lord's birth, especially among the Jews, who were the divinely favored and covenanted people. And since the Jews were of a commercial spirit many of them were to be found in all parts of the civilized world; and thus among every people the faith in the one God and the hope of Israel through a Messiah was more or less made known, so that at the time of our Lord's birth we read, "All men were in expectation" of a soon coming Messiah. Doubtless this expectation was built upon the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy, which we now see clearly marked the year of

our Lord's majority, when He was 30 years of age, and made His consecration to His work and received the begetting of the holy Spirit, His anointing as the great antitypical High Priest and as the great antitypical King over Israel and the world.

FROM BETHLEHEM TO NAZARETH

In olden times there were honorable and mean cities. Nazareth was generally recognized as one of the latter, while Bethlehem was distinctly one of the former—the city of David, Israel's beloved King. The Scriptures explain to us that Mary, our Lord's mother, and Joseph, her husband, were both of the lineage of David, and that in a seemingly accidental manner the prophecy was fulfilled which foretold that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.—Micah 5:2.

The Roman Empire at that time bore rule over the whole world, the Jews being subject to it, but waiting expectantly, restlessly, for the coming Messiah, who would deliver them from being subject people and make of them the ruling caste in His kingdom, the dominion of the world. Rome's great Emperor, Caesar Augustus, was in power at this time, and had sent forth his decree for a polling or census of the whole world for purposes of taxation, etc. Luke informs us that it was in response to this royal decree that Joseph and Mary went up to their native city to be enrolled, and that thus it was that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and on account of the great concourse of people at the same time and for the same purpose, accommodations being scarce, the stable of the inn or khan was used by some as a lodging. Joseph and Mary, being of the latecomers, were forced to occupy these humble quarters, and thus it was that the King of Glory, whose kingdom is by and by to rule the world, was in the time of His flesh born in a stable and cradled in a manger.

THE ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS

Noble shepherds those must have been to whom the Almighty sent the angelic message respecting the birth of Jesus the Messiah which has come down through the ages and has reached our ears—the message which thrills us the more in proportion as we are able to grasp its meaning. First a single angel appeared to the shepherds and allayed their fears, saying: "Fear not; behold, I bring you good tidings." It would appear that fear is one of the dominating impulses of the human mind, especially in conjunction with any revelations from the Lord. Men realize—even the best of the race—that they are imperfect and that the Almighty and His laws are perfect. Instinctively the world seems to realize that a curse or condemnation of the Almighty rests upon it, and instinctively it fears a further curse and further condemnation, realizing the continual and increasing sinfulness. The same is true today with all except the

comparatively few who are well informed respecting the divine character and plan. Thus the subject of religion is generally obnoxious to the world in general—a subject which they prefer to avoid because of a feeling of guilt and a dread of further knowledge of condemnation.

It is for the true children of God today as it was for the angels at that time to assure the world that God is better than all their fears—that God so loved the world as to redeem them from the just sentence of death, the curse that came upon all as inheritors of Adam's imperfections and sentence.

“Good tidings” is another translation of our word gospel. How beautiful the thought that the gospel is really and truly good tidings! Alas! for the misrepresentations of God's plan under which so many of His true people misrepresent His character and His Word and apply the term gospel to their various messages from the Dark Ages, teaching purgatory and eternal

2H279

torment as the portion of the race. Let us get away from this false thought and get the truth that the gospel is good tidings. The angel elaborated, saying that his message was “good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people.” Ah thank God, His plan is wider and deeper and higher and grander than anything we had ever conceived. The gospel message is not merely to be good tidings to the comparatively few that now have ears to hear and eyes to see its beauties, but in God's due time it is to be good tidings of great joy to all people.

As every member of Adam's race shared in his fall and in the curse of death which came upon him as a result, so every member of the race was included in the great redemptive sacrifice which our Lord Jesus offered and which was finished at Calvary. God's plan in Christ, as it is being worked out and shall ultimately be accomplished, will mean great joy for all people, and the tidings of this were given at the very moment of our Lord's birth, because He was the one through whom all the glorious things of the divine purpose and plan shall ultimately be accomplished.

THE CAUSE, THE LOGIC, OF THE MESSAGE

The message took cognizance of the fact that it was to reasonable people, who would want to know why the unchangeable God, who had once pronounced a curse, should at any time so amend and alter matters as to supplant the curse with a blessing. The messenger states the philosophy of the divine plan, "Unto you is born this day a Savior, which is Christ (Messiah) the Lord." There we have the key to the entire Gospel statement of how God could be just and yet now be the justifier of sinners who accept Jesus. The word Savior here signifies life-giver, and how beautiful is the thought that as death is the wage of sin, the curse upon the race, this Messiah who was born is to be the one who will rescue the race from the sentence by giving them life again. The explanation of how He would give life was not given, nor was it necessary at the time; but now, in the light of developments, and with the explanations furnished through the Spirit in the New Testament we see how that our Lord's voluntary sacrifice of His life, dying the just for the unjust, settled the claims of divine justice against Adam and thus incidentally against all who shared his sentence.

Truly the more we see of the divine plan for our salvation, which began to take shape in the birth of Jesus, the more we feel like shouting with the angelic choir)raises to the God of heaven, thankfulness for His mercy to the children of men. It mattered not that the babe born in Bethlehem was the Savior only in prospect; that He could not even be anointed to do His work until He reached manhood's estate 30 years later;

it mattered not that even then it would be necessary for Him to lay down His life gradually through three and a half years of His earthly ministry, to be finished at Calvary; it mattered not either that the resurrection was still three days after that, and His ascension 40 days later, and that the blessing in general would be deferred for nearly nineteen centuries thereafter. As the angels could sing and rejoice at the first budding of the divine plan of salvation, so also can all who have faith in the ultimate outcome, rejoice with joy unspeakable and give praise to God in the highest and to His Son our Lord.

SAVED BY HOPE

Although nearly nineteen centuries have rolled away since that angelic message was delivered, it has not yet been fulfilled except in a limited measure by faith to those who have the eye of faith and the ears of faith, in all a "little flock." But the tidings of great misery for nearly all people has been spread abroad in the name of

Christ, much to the discredit of the divine plan and to the dishonor of the divine character. Instead of carrying joy the message has very generally carried grief and sorrow, especially to the kind-hearted and more generously disposed. Indeed, we may say that no message of the Lord Jesus, either the true or the false, has ever reached all people. Even today, after nineteen centuries of propaganda, only a comparatively small portion of the human family have ever heard of the only name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved—"nor is there salvation in any other." Acts 4:12

What then shall we say of the salvation which is come to those who have truly accepted Christ as their Savior and who are today rejoicing in him as such, and who by faith are seeing the salvation of God begun in their own hearts and yet to be fully accomplished under the whole heavens? This the Apostle calls the "salvation by hope." His words are: "We are saved by hope." (Rom. 8:24) We are not saved actually; we are still surrounded by sin, pain, sighing, crying and dying; the curse is not yet rolled away. All the best of the Lord's people have received this salvation by hope, by faith. Yet this anticipation of the future salvation, of the resurrection from the dead, of a participation in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature promised to the faithful is so strong, so clear, that those who possess it are enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even in the midst of trials and difficulties and weaknesses and unfavorable conditions incidental to the curse which still rests upon the race.

A PROPHECY OF GOOD THINGS

Yes, the angelic message was a prophecy of good

2H280

things to be accomplished for the Church and the world during the Millennial age. The Church is to have the first blessing. The first resurrection is to be composed only of the blessed and holy who shall live and reign with Christ during the millennium, the thousand years in which Satan shall be bound, and when the good influences of truth and righteousness shall enlighten the whole earth. The declaration of the Scriptures is that the deliverance of the Church will come early in the morning of that Millennial day, as the prophet declares, "God will help her early in the morning." Psalm 46:5

But much as we rejoice in the glorious hopes of the Gospel set before us who now see, who now believe, who now rejoice with joy unspeakable, we are glad that the divine mercy and love are of such lengths and breadths and heights and depths as to encompass the whole world of mankind and to provide a blessing for

every member of Adam's race through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.

It will be during the Millennial age that this prophecy of the angel will have its fulfilment, and the great Savior who has already redeemed us by his sacrifice will stand forth as the King, the glorified Messiah and establish His dominion of righteousness in the world for the blessing and uplifting of every member of the race. In harmony with the words of the Apostle, those will be times of refreshing, "times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:19-21) If the Lord has based the hope of the world upon some works of merit or righteousness of the world's doing then, indeed, we might have feared—indeed, the more we know of the world the less hope we would have. But, on the contrary, the Lord has based the entire proposition for the future blessing, not upon our worthiness but upon the worthiness and sacrifice of His Son. To you is born a Life-Giver, which is Messiah, the Lord.

How it adds to our enjoyment of the coming blessings to know that the trials and difficulties of this present time are for the Gospel flock that is now being gathered in advance from amongst men—the "elect," the Church. We see how the present trials and difficulties are the chiselings and polishings necessary to our development in the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit in the character-likeness of God's dear Son, our Lord, our Hope, our Bridegroom. How joyful the thought that soon the elect number called from the world to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, will be completed and enter into her glory. How precious the thought that they shall be privileged with the Lord and Master to extend the divine favor of blessing and uplift to the world. What higher honor, or privilege, or blessing could possibly come to any?

THE ANGELS' SONG

It was after the giving of the message of good tidings of great joy by the heavenly one that a host of angels appeared to the shepherds, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men. This, too, is a prophecy. It has not yet been accomplished, but will be fulfilled in every particular in God's due time, which we believe is now nigh, even at the door. Not yet does God receive glory in the highest, not yet is there peace among men. Quite to the contrary. God's name is blasphemed, not only by those who vulgarly and in ribald jest take the divine name in vain, and not merely by the heathen who worship devils and think they are gods, but even by Christian people God's name is blasphemed every day. For be it known that blasphemy is any dishonorable misrepresentation of the character of another. God be merciful to us, but at some time or other doubtless everyone of us here present blasphemed the

holy name in this manner—by misrepresenting the divine character and divine plan, by picturing the God of love and mercy and justice and truth as the originator, the planner, the perpetuator of the eternal torment of the great mass of his creatures, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, born to sin as the sparks to fly upward.

But the Lord had mercy upon us because we did it ignorantly. And we also should have compassion upon others who still ignorantly misrepresent our God, and our energies should be continually bent to their assistance, that the eyes of their understanding might open more widely to perceive the lengths and breadths and heights and depths and know the love of God which passeth understanding.

Noting that peace on earth and good will to men have not followed the Savior's birth thus far, and in discerning that this is a prophecy of what is to be accomplished during the millennium, many have been inclined to change the translation of this verse so as to have it read, "On earth peace among men, in whom he is well pleased." But even by thus changing it, the statement would not be true, for even the Lord's people have no peace on earth. Whatever peace they have is in their hearts, and based upon their faith in the Lord and in the glorious things which He has promised. Our Lord himself and the apostles testified to this, assuring us that whosoever in this present time would live godly should suffer persecution, that a man's foes would be they of his own household, etc. (2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 10:36) Let us not confuse ourselves nor abridge the testimony of the Word, but with the eye of faith look forward to the day of Christ, in which all these glorious

2H281

things shall have their fulfillment, in which peace shall indeed fill the whole earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, bringing divine favor and rolling away the curse from the entire groaning creation, as pointed out by the Apostle. Rom. 8:22

Not even with the inauguration of the millennium will this prophecy be fulfilled; not until its close, when the human family shall have been lifted by the Kingdom regulations out of sin, sickness, pain, sorrow and death, up, to all that was lost in Adam—not until then will there indeed be glory to God in the highest, not until then shall there be peace among men. Nor are we to understand that the entire race will be appreciative of the divine love and favor even after they have fully seen the righteousness of God in Christ manifested. On the contrary, the Scriptures seem to clearly teach that there will be a class who will then prove unfit for life eternal, unappreciative of the divine favor, and it is with pleasure that we learn that all such shall be utterly destroyed from among the people in the Second Death. Thus eventually, by the close

of the millennium, Satan and all wilful wrongdoers having been destroyed, the time Will come as declared in the Scriptures when all voices in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard praising God. To Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever, Hosanna! Glory to God in the highest; peace and good will to men will be the final shout of a redeemed race when the great plan of salvation shall have been fully outworked according to the divine plan set forth in the Scriptures.

2H282

1906

The Pittsburgh Dispatch, January 8, 1906

“RESURRECTION OF LIFE... OR DAMNATION.”

Carnegie Hall, Allegheny, was crowded Sunday afternoon to hear Pastor Russell's discourse on the Resurrection of Life, and the Resurrection of Damnation. He took for his text the words of Jesus, "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28,29

The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, so prominent in the Bible, is one of its unique features, one of its internal evidences that it is not of human origin. Had the Bible been written fraudulently to deceive the people to establish a religion, it undoubtedly would have seized upon theories already entrenched in the human mind the world over, and would have avoided doctrines antagonistic thereto. On the other hand, since the world by its wisdom knows not God and discerns not his plan, it is entirely reasonable that we find this doctrine of the resurrection of the dead to be a part of the divine r((or(1 an(1 out of harmony with all human wisdom.

RESURRECTION A STRANGE DOCTRINE

We might well inquire, as the Apostle Paul inquired of his hearers, Why should it be thought a thing incredible to you that God should raise the dead? (Acts 26:8) Strange to say, however, it seems easier for the great mass of Christendom to believe the doctrine of heathendom on the subject of a future life than to believe the doctrine of the Bible. Heathendom teaches that life is inherent in man, that he can not die, that when he seems to cease to live he begins a new form of existence in some unknown and unexplainable manner, that he becomes more alive than ever when he seems to die. Strange

to say, the masses of Christendom accept this untenable, unreasonable proposition of heathendom in the face of the Scriptural declarations to the contrary. To the majority it seems easier to believe that humanity never dies, even though it appears to do so, than to believe the divine record, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die,” “The wages of sin is death.” “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” — by a resurrection from the dead. Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23

If upon investigation we find that the Scriptures teach that death is a reality and not a sham, and that the entire hope of a future life is based upon the divine power and promise of a recovery by resurrection, we shall thereby be proving that the Bible is the one and only religious standard which takes this position, and its very opposition to the prevalent opinions of the whole world should constitute to us an evidence that its records, covering thousands of years, are not of human origin but divine, and accepting this fact we should give earnest heed to its teachings upon every other subject.

Our Lord, in discussing the resurrection of the dead, declared that Moses’ experiences proved a resurrection, when at the burning bush he heard the voice of God declare, “I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” The argument of Jesus is logical, that when God thus spoke of those who had been dead for centuries it implied

2H282

their resurrection at some future time, because, as our Lord expressed it, God would not declare himself to be the God of those who are out of existence. Let us remember that the argument here used by our Lord was in proof of a resurrection of the dead, and not a proof of a continuance of the life of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He was discussing the resurrection with the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection and a future life. Matt. 22:23-32

THE STILL EARLIER FAITH

Still earlier than Moses, Abraham and Job believed in the resurrection of the dead: the latter in his prayer to the Lord declares not only that he knew that his Redeemer lived and should stand upon the earth at the latter day, but declared also his faith in a recovery from the tomb, saying, “Thou shalt call and I will answer thee; thou wilt have respect unto the work of thy hands.” Job 14:15

Of Abraham we also read that he had such faith in the Oath-Bound Covenant that he hesitated not to offer his son Isaac in response to the Lord’s testing command, accounting that God was able to raise him from the dead. Abraham had not the heathen thought that if his son were slain he would go to heaven and be the better off;

he realized the truth that the dead are dead, but he thoroughly believed in God's power, trusting for the resurrection of his son if, in obedience to the divine command, he died. We may suppose that this hope was built upon the Oath-Bound Covenant, because in that promise the Lord had said to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This implied an awakening of all the families of the earth, for many of them had already fallen asleep in death before Abraham received this Oath-Bound Covenant of divine favor for all peoples.

CARE FOR THE DEAD

We see the same lesson of faith in a resurrection illustrated amongst the Israelites in their care for the dead. The grave itself is a symbol of hope of a resurrection, else why preserve or memorialize those who have died, if we had no hope for our dead; or if we believed they have no life out of the fleshly body, and no hope of better and brighter continuance of life, then heathen's destroying that body by burning would be the reasonable one, if we so believed. But, wherever the teachings of the Bible have gone; wherever the resurrection hope has penetrated, there the grave and cemetery are to be found, rather than the funeral pyre and incinerating furnace. Not that there is hope that the same atoms of matter that once composed the body shall be reassembled in a new body; but that the new body which will be given the dead in the resurrection by the power of God, is memorialized by the old body, so long as it in any measure continues in our thoughts and tender affections long after it has gone to dust.

“AWAKE IN THY LIKENESS”

The Psalmist David exclaims, respecting the resurrection hopes, “I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.” (Psa. 17:15) But while the doctrine of the resurrection was tenaciously held by the Jews as their only hope of future life, it was necessarily a faith without a clear and definite foundation until our Lord’s first advent and his sacrifice of himself as the redemption price for the sins of the whole world. Previously those who believed in a resurrection might well have asked, Why believe in a resurrection? If God wanted to keep mankind alive would he not have done so? If he has sentenced them to death as unworthy of life because of sin, what occurs during the time of their death which would lead to any change in the divine program that they might be restored to life?

However, after Christ’s death, and after the explanation given by the apostles, that he died for our sins the just for the unjust, that we might be restored to divine favor, then an answer to their query was furnished. Admitting the fact that death is the wages of sin, the other fact is produced that Christ tasted death for every man, that he paid the penalty for Adam, and thus incidentally for the whole race, and that all thus might be judicially relieved from the sentence of death, as the Apostle Paul declares that “God might be just and yet be the justifier of those who believe Jesus.” Rom. 3:26

“JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION”

The keynote of the New Testament is Jesus and the resurrection — the sacrifice of Jesus as the redemption price for our sins, and the resurrection from the dead, the release from the penalty of sin, as the natural, logical result. Thus Paul, when before the judgment seat of Felix, enlisted the interest of a large proportion of the mob around him when he declared, “For the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am called in question.” (Acts 24:21) The primary question was whether or not Jesus had risen from the dead. The Scriptural declaration is plain that God raised Him from the dead on the third day; that His soul, being, was not left in sheol, hades, the death state, the tomb condition, but raised up by divine power, so that our Lord was indeed the “first that should rise from the dead.” (Acts 26:23) Others, indeed, had been awakened from the sleep of death, but none previous

to our Lord was raised up out of death completely to the full perfection of life. This is the real thought in the word anastasis, translated resurrection in the New Testament.

Many of the Jews in Paul's day had become Sadducees, or what we today would term materialists, total unbelievers in a future life by a resurrection or otherwise; others, but a small part, the Essenes, had accepted the heathen doctrines that death is not real, but merely a deception; but when the Apostle declared himself on trial because of his faith in the resurrection of the dead he instantly drew to his support the mass of the Jews, the Pharisees, and those who sympathized with their views, the scriptural view. And thus all through his preaching Paul, as well as the other Apostles, made prominent the resurrection hope of the church. Note, for instance, the clear expressions of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians on this subject. There the Apostle distinctly avers that if there be no resurrection of the dead all Christian hope is vain, all teaching is vain, and the apostles and other teachers of Jesus and the resurrection were false teachers. "If there be no resurrection of the dead your faith is vain; ye are in your sins." 1 Cor. 15:14

RESURRECTION OF JUST AND UNJUST

One of the arguments of the Apostles on this subject he states in these words: "I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:25) We are thus assured that the divine provision, in its lengths and breadths and heights and depths, embraces not only those who during the present time, have heard of the grace of God and the redemption provided in Christ, but also for others, for all the remainder of the race, all the unjustified, all whose eyes have been holden by the ignorance and superstition and degradation incident to the fall and to the blinding influence of the adversary. Resurrection opportunities have been provided for all — and, more than this, it is in view of the divine favor yet to be extended to the unjust that there is to be a millennial age at all for their trial, for their testing, for their development, for their raising up, if they will, to full harmony with their Creator. The just, justified through faith, acceptable to God, need not the millennial age, need not the day of judgment promised in the scriptures. This we shall see more particularly in the examination of our text.

THE GOOD AND THE EVIL

What the Apostle calls the just and the unjust, our Lord in our text calls the good and the evil. That neither the Lord nor the

Apostle meant to intimate that any of mankind are good, perfect in the absolute sense, is most evident from the trend of the Scriptures, which assure us in various forms that the whole race is fallen, that “there is none righteous, no not one.” (Rom. 3:10) The good then of our Lord’s statement, the just of the Apostle’s statement, are those who are justified in God’s sight through faith, justified from sin, their sins covered, not imputed to them, because of their having accepted the divine arrangement and because they are seeking to walk in the Lord’s way. The Apostle explains the situation elsewhere, saying, “The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.” (Rom. 8:4) These cannot walk up to the spirit of God’s law, because of their inherited blemishes under the fall; but since these are covered by God’s grace in Christ, such as are walking to the best of their ability after the spirit of God’s law are reckoned as though walking up to the spirit of that law. In their minds they are up to the standard, and their flesh approximates perfection as closely as may be from day to day.

But if only these receive the life resurrection how few they are! How few you know and how few I know who are thoroughly regenerated, and who would even claim to be walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Only these few, therefore, need hope for a part in the life resurrection. All the remainder will have their part in what our text refers to as the resurrection of damnation. But, thank God, we find that a mistranslation in our common version has seriously beclouded the true import of our Master’s words.

We might say something in defense of those here listed as doing evil. Many of them are heathen who know not God, whose eyes of understanding have never opened to a knowledge of the grace of God in Christ, and the hope there is before them of eternal life through the precious blood. Many of this class even in civilized lands could have something said on their behalf, as, for instance, that, although they have heard something respecting God and the Redeemer, what they have heard has not been good tidings of great joy to all people, but in the main the very reverse — bad tidings of great misery for all people. They have thus been deceived by the confusion which abounds in all the creeds of Christendom on this subject, as the Lord declares through the prophet, “Their fear toward me is not of me but is taught by the precepts of men.” Isa. 29:13

Moreover, the entire race is mentally, morally and physically impaired through the fall, and God alone knows how to make proper allowances for these conditions as they bear upon the various members of our race. It is for this reason that He warns us that we shall not attempt a final judgment of one another.

“Judge nothing before the time.” (1 Cor. 4:5) When God’s time shall come another judgment will be effected, no room for doubt will be left; every member of our race shall come to a clear knowledge of the truth that he may be saved, or, rejecting it, he may be destroyed from among the people in the second death. Acts 3:23

THE “RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION”

How our translators fell into the mistake of giving this (dreadful mistranslation of the word krisis is difficult to understand. Three times they have translated the word krisis in the context properly by the English word judgment, and this is what it should have been in our text. Those of you who have the revised version will find that it is rendered judgment in it. John 5:29

The Greek word here rendered damnation is krisis, and whether Greek scholars or not, you all know the meaning of the word krisis. Our English language absorbs words and phrases from all languages, and thus it has absorbed krisis from the Greek. We frequently use it, especially in connection with fevers. The physician when asked about the patient will sometimes say, on the fourteenth day or twenty-first day we will expect the fever to reach its krisis, and the decision for better or worse will be prompt. This is the legitimate meaning of the word krisis, wherever it occurs, and it is the meaning of it in our text. The krisis or judgment of the unjust will be reached at the time of their coming forth from the dead—in that day—in the Millennial day.

An explanation here is necessary, because the majority of people seem not to discern between awakening or coming forth and a resurrection. Notice carefully that the implication of our text is that they who have done evil shall come forth unto or in order that they may have a resurrection by judgments. The coming forth is not the resurrection, but merely the awakening, such as Lazarus and others of that time had. They were not resurrected in the Scriptural sense of the term; they were not brought to the full perfection of life; they were not lifted completely out of death. Indeed the Scriptures in so many words assure us that Jesus was the “first that should rise from the dead.” (Acts 26:23), that he “was the firstborn from the dead. Col. 1:18

Those referred to as having done evil — that is, as not having come up to the divine standard of worthiness for the life resurrection — will include many fine, noble men and women who, like Confucius, for instance, had never even heard of the only name given whereby we must be saved, and it will include also the depraved characters who have never yet received their share of the glorious opportunity secured through the great atonement sacrifice for sin. The intimation is not that these will all come forth at the same time, but rather

that the awakening of the world during the Millennial age will be a gradual one, in the reverse order to which they went down to sleep in death. In other words, that Adam and his contemporaries will probably be among the last of the race to be awakened. Nor can we suppose that any of them will be awakened until the knowledge of the Lord shall have been well established among the living of the nations.

RESURRECTION BY JUDGEMENTS

But we are specially interested in the resurrection which will be their privilege, their opportunity, after they shall have been brought forth from the tomb by the voice and call, the authority and power of our Lord. We notice the contrast between the resurrection promised to these and the promise to those who have passed divine approval. These are to have a resurrection by judgment. What does this mean? Notice first the meaning of the word resurrection in the Greek anastasis. It signifies to raise up again. It implies that a thing was once up and got down, and is to be brought up again to the place where it originally was, if not higher. Applying this to the human family, we see that Adam was created perfect in the image of God; that by disobedience he came under divine condemnation and fell from that high position into sin, degradation, death, mental, moral and physical decrepitude and blemish — into absolute extinction, for such was the penalty, and from such extinction he was saved by the great atonement sacrifice of Christ, and because of this redemption he is not only to be awakened from the tomb under the favorable conditions of the Millennial age, with Satan and all evil under restraint, and the knowledge of the Lord filling and enlightening the whole earth, but he is to have the opportunity of coming back again to all that was originally lost.

If we take the place of Adam himself we have no difficulty in seeing that he lost the image and likeness of God, mentally, morally and every way, under the sentence, “Dying thou shalt die,” and that for him to be raised up again to what he was before would mean a wonderful blessing of restitution, restoration. Thank God! We shall be glad to see Father Adam come back again to all that he lost. But more than this, although his children were born in sin and shapen in iniquity, as the Scriptures declare — although they never were on the mountain heights of perfection of life as he was — nevertheless they were counted in with him in his sentence, and are counted in with him also in the redemption accomplished by Jesus. Hence the uplift

2H285

that is coming will not only bring Father Adam back to all that he lost, but will bring all the willing and obedient of his children as well back to the original perfection, to

all that was lost. Those who will refuse to come back under favorable conditions, and the clear knowledge of that millennial day, will die the death not again on Adam's account, however, not the Adamic death, but on their own accounts; and this death for their own sins is scripturally called the second death "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power." Rev. 20:14; 2 Thess. 1:9

THE JUDGMENTS OF THAT DAY

Our text tells us that this resurrection will be by judgments, and we want to understand what this means. The apostle comes to our assistance, declaring, respecting the millennial age, "God hath appointed (a thousand years) a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained. (Acts 17:31) He tells us further that when Christ shall judge the world in righteousness the Church will be associate judges. His words are, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2) We see, then, that the judgment of the world is separate from the judgment of the saints. That the judgment of the saints takes place during this gospel age is evident, and it will be after they have been judged and found worthy of the life resurrection, after the little flock shall be with the Lord as His bride and joint-heir in His throne and in the kingdom, that the judgment of the world will proceed.

That judgment will not be accounting for present sins and weaknesses and failures. Present wrongdoing, in proportion as it is committed against light and knowledge, makes its mark upon the characters of men at the time committed, and the characters thus broken down or depraved will be the more ignoble; and when the future awakening time shall come and the opportunity for restitution, then each notch of degradation will be that much more to be overcome in their attempt to work righteousness and to be obedient to the laws of the kingdom, the conditions of eternal life. Thus, indeed, every transgression of the present time will receive a full, just recompense of reward.

But this judgment which is recorded in the characters of men is not the judgment referred to in the Scriptures as belonging to the millennial age. The whole world will start in the millennial age on a footing of forgiveness under the terms of the New Covenant, just as believers by faith have such a justified start in their trial now during this gospel age. As our sins and iniquities are passed over by the Lord, so will also the sins and iniquities of the world be passed over not held against them for future tribulation. But as our past wrongdoings still trouble us through the aggravated disorder and degradation of our mortal bodies, so with the world in their flesh, awakened in practically the same condition in which it went into death,

they will have the harvest of the present life according to their degree of unrighteousness.

When the Scriptures speak of the millennial age as a (lax or age or epoch of judgment of the world they are contrasting that time with the present time, thus: Now the Lord does not judge among men. Earthly prosperity is not proof of divine favor, and earthly adversity is not a proof of divine disfavor. On the contrary, as the Scriptures point out, it is “he that will live godly that shall suffer persecution” in this present time, while as for the wicked, “their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart could wish.” (2 Tim. 3:12; Psalm 73:7) The divine judgments are not now in the earth, but they will be everywhere manifest during the millennial age. We have already mentioned that the little flock, the over-corners, the Church, when glorified, will be judges of the world. Our Lord thus presents the matter in two of his parables - some shall have dominion over two cities and some over five. Let us suppose the millennial kingdom established and its rule to begin this very night: let us suppose that the city of Tampa has been placed under the supervision or judgment of Martin Luther or John Wesley; let us remember that of the glorified saints and their judgment it is written, “They shall not judge by the hearing of the ear nor by the sight of the eye, but they shall judge righteous judgment.” Isaiah 2:3-4

WESLEY AS A JUDGE

In his transformed condition as a spirit being Wesley, for instance, would be able to know all the affairs of this city, good and bad; able to read the hearts of all. Suppose he saw in one the purpose, the intention of robbery, and allowed him to go to the length of making every preparation, and then just before the committal of an overt act suppose he smote his hand with paralysis. Suppose another crook about the same time attempted a confidence game and was smitten with blindness, and similarly with others. Suppose that, obtaining cures for these ailments, these same persons subsequently attempted other mischief, and again received a just recompense of reward for their wrong course. What think you would be the effect?

I answer that the Word of God tells us what the results would be, saying: “When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the

2H286

world will learn righteousness.” (Isaiah 26:9) In a very short time the world would learn to rightly apply a proverb that is sometimes of doubtful application now, namely, “Honesty is the best policy.” From the moment that God’s kingdom begins to exercise justice and

power, from the moment the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the world would have no further use for policemen and jails and prisons; the saints would be the judges, and all matters would come to them through prayer and through earthly representatives, respecting whom the Scriptures would be found very explicit had we time to examine them.

The world would thus speedily have an opportunity of coming to a knowledge and appreciation of righteousness, as now every member of our race has some opportunity for learning the disadvantages of unrighteousness, of sin working in themselves and in their fellows, working unhappiness, sin, sorrow and death. The future would teach all not only what righteousness is but what the joys of righteousness are, and each one accepting the situation and coming into harmony with God would begin at once to have a reward for every good endeavor, and thus to rise up, up, up in a social uplift, mentally, morally and physically, until by the close of the millennial age not only the living, but all in their graves having been awakened and come forth, would thus have experienced the resurrection, the raising up which the Lord declared he would accomplish for them at that time. Only those who intelligently and wilfully reject the divine arrangement will then be utterly destroyed from among the people in the Second Death.

SOME TO SHAME AND CONTEMPT

The Lord speaking through the prophet (Dan. 12:2) declares respecting this coming forth from the tomb that some shall come forth to shame and everlasting contempt. The word everlasting here is an inaccurate translation, the Hebrew word signifies to an end instead of without an end. The thought would be more accurately rendered in English if “ever” were omitted. The awakening of those who have not made good use of opportunities will certainly mean shame to them, and in proportion as they in the present life have gone downward instead of upward they will deserve and have the contempt of all the right-minded. We can imagine, for instance, Nero, the murderer of his own mother, the murderer of many of the Lord’s faithful disciples, coming forth, his history known to the world, his own meanness of disposition recognized by himself—he would surely be an object of shame and contempt.

Nevertheless, the great atonement sacrifice in redeeming the race included Nero, and he must have a share, an opportunity, for profiting thereby. Whatever measure of light and knowledge he lacked previously he will surely get in the world to come, in the millennial age, when he shall have been awakened under the favorable conditions then prevailing. And his shame and contempt, thank God, may gradually be lifted, until he will be free from

them, provided he shall be responsive to the blessed conditions of the time. He will have a hard road to travel because of his miserable use of opportunities in the past; but his shame and contempt will culminate either in his full acceptance of the divine blessing of restitution to perfection or in his utter destruction in the Second Death, and this illustrates the blessed righteous judgments which God has arranged for the day of Christ.

The National Labor Tribune, January 14, 1906

GOD'S THREE GREAT COVENANTS WITH MEN

GOD'S THREE GREAT COVENANTS

Johnstown, Pa., January 14. Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., addressed his friends of the public twice today here. His afternoon discourse was on the cure for infidelity—To Hell and Back. We report his evening discourse on God's Three Great Covenants with Men. His text was Galatians 3:29.

None get the scope of the divine plan as presented in the Bible who do not realize that Christians constitute Spiritual Israel, who, following the first advent, succeeded natural Israel as the heirs of the chief promise of God—the chief blessing—the chief covenant. This is clearly set forth in our text, 'If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.'

We are not in this claiming that Christians, Spiritual Israelites, inherit all of the divine mercies and blessings. On the contrary, we hope to show from this discourse that while they inherit the chief blessing, Natural Israel has a share in divine mercy yet to be revealed; and not only so, but also all the nations—all the families of the earth. These blessings have come down to us from the one to whom the promises were made, father Abraham, who was not only the friend of God, and to whom

2H287

God first revealed something of the riches of his grace toward man, but he was additionally a type of God in a great system of allegories brought to our attention in the Scriptures—particularly in Galatians 4, just following our text.

In this great allegory Abraham represented the heavenly Father; his wives, Sarah, Hagar and Keturah represented God's three great covenants; and the children of these three wives represented the three covenants. The Apostle clearly points this out. Writing of Sarah and Hagar he says, "Which thing is an allegory, for these two women

are two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai bearing children (fleshly Israel) unto bondage, which is Hagar,” the other, Sarah, a free woman, whose son Isaac became Abraham’s chief heir. The Apostle continues, “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was are the children of promise,” Christ being counted in as the “Head of the Church, which is his body”—the antitypical Isaac. Keturah, whom Abraham married after the death of Sarah, represents the New Covenant, which will not go into effect until the death of the Sarah covenant, which bears Spiritual Israel, and which will die or become extinct when it shall have served its purpose in the development of Spiritual Israel. Gal. 4:22-28

ABRAHAM A TYPE OF GOD

The foregoing allegory shows indirectly that Abraham represents God after the manner of a type. Not exactly a type, however, because an antitype follows a type, whereas God was already in existence and was merely representing himself and his future work through Abraham—showing how eventually in his plan of salvation he would develop from the human family various sons of God under various covenants. This is stated by the Apostle, saying, “It is of faith that it might be of grace; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed (all the children); not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the Father of us all, foreshadowing (allegorizing) him whom he believed even God.” Rom. 4:16, 17

All Christian people recognize the general fact that God made a covenant with Abraham and his seed. This we sometimes designate the Oath-Bound Covenant, because it had no Mediator—it needed none, because it was unconditional. But it was attested or guaranteed by the divine oath. All Christian people also recognize the fact that God instituted a Law Covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai, and that Moses was made the mediator of that Covenant, which was between God and the nation of Israel, and was sealed with the blood of the sin offerings, the mediator sprinkling the people with the blood as representing that they were bound by the Covenant, and sprinkling the book of the Law with the same blood as indicating that God was likewise bound by the provisions of that Covenant.

All Christians know additionally that the Lord has declared, “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; not according to the Covenant which I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt ... For this is the Covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts, and will

be to them a God and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Heb. 8:8-12

Thus we see the three great covenants clearly set forth in Scriptural terms, aside from the allegories already referred to. Let us now take those up in their order and learn their import.

THE SARAH COVENANT

What the Apostle designates as the Sarah Covenant allegorized in the personal experiences of Abraham's first wife, is everywhere represented throughout the Scriptures as by far the most important of these three, because it included all the blessings of the other two. It was Sarah's son that was to be the heir of all things and through whom a portion was to be granted to the others of Abraham's children. It will be remembered that Sarah was barren for a long time, and that Isaac was born in her old age, and this typified the long interim between God's declaration of this original Covenant and the time when its first fulfillment began to appear in the manifestation of Jesus at the first advent. Then, as the Apostle points out, the prophecy began to be fulfilled—"Sing thou barren one that didst not bear, for more are the children of the desolate than of her which hath a husband."

This Covenant is not yet dead. It not only bears Jesus, the Head of the Isaac class, but the Church, the members of his body, for "Ye, brethren, as Isaac was are the children of the promise"—the Abrahamic Oath-Bound Covenant. For more than eighteen centuries this Covenant has been bearing its children, yet they are all one seed, one generation, one kind—the "New Creation" of God through Christ Jesus. The Sarah Covenant will not expire until it shall have brought forth the complete Isaac class, who will be the heirs of promise as the special seed of Abraham. This is

2H288

in accord with the promise, namely, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Whatever blessings are to come to the remainder of mankind, must all come through the members of this New Creation, the Church, whose Head is Christ. It must be completed before it can accomplish its work of blessing all nations. Various Scriptures seem to indicate that very soon this entire Isaac class of Abraham's seed under the Oath-Bound Covenant, already begotten of the Spirit, will be born in the first resurrection, changed in a moment, in the

twinkling of an eye, to be like their glorified Head, associated with him in the great work of his Millennial Kingdom.

THE LAW COVENANT

The Apostle points out that the Law Covenant was added to the Abrahamic Covenant because of sin (as a restraint upon the people and as an educatory process) until the promised seed had come. (Gal. 3:19) This was the Hagar Covenant of the Allegory—the Sinai Covenant, whose introduction with fearful sights at that Mountain fitly represented the terrors of the Law, its announcement of penalties against its every infraction. The Apostle in the Allegory pictures that as a bondage Covenant, and the Jews, represented by Ishmael, as also in bondage. The Apostle points out in his letter to the Romans that the Jews thought this Covenant was a great blessing, a great advantage to them; but while they supposed that it would give life everlasting, they found on the contrary that because they could not keep its absolutely just requirements, it therefore did not give them life, but sentenced them afresh to death as sinners, as violators of the divine law. Thus the Apostle declares that the Law made nothing perfect, that by the deeds of the Law could no flesh be justified in God's sight, that the Law merely gave them a knowledge of sin, and did not point them to a way of escape from the sin. He declares that by giving the Jews the Law, God shut them up, as it were, to make them feel their need of deliverance through grace, which he ultimately intended to extend to them through Christ.

The period of Ishmael's life prior to the birth of Isaac represents the period of Israel's history for over 1600 years from Sinai to Christ. Henceforth, as the Apostle points out, there was a conflict between the natural and the spiritual seeds, between the seed of Hagar and the seed of Sarah, between those who were merely under the Law and those who by the exercise of faith rose higher than the Law Covenant, and were accepted of the Lord under the original, the Abrahamic Covenant, which still existed.

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL CAST OUT

As Hagar and her son were cast out with very limited provision for sustenance, so the Law Covenant and natural Israel—because of the rejection of Christ and the persecution of the Church, the body of Christ— were cast out, deprived of almost every element of divine favor. As Hagar and her son almost perished for lack of food and drink, so natural Israel in its castoff condition almost perished for lack of spiritual nourishment and refreshment. As in dire extremity Hagar finally cried unto the Lord and a spring of water was shown her that

saved the life of her son, and as then she came back and was subject to Sarah, it teaches us that in the direst extremity of natural Israel's cast-off condition the Lord will graciously point to the true water of life and bring natural Israel back into relationship with himself, subject to and appreciating the higher Covenant than theirs, the Sarah Covenant, the Oath-Bound Covenant, under which they also will get a blessing.

In this we are not left to conjecture, and the allegory is well backed up by the statements of the Scriptures. God's Word freely declares that in due time he who scattered Israel shall gather him, and that the gathering shall be from the ends of the earth back to divine favor and to a repossession of their old land.

The entire matter is most explicitly set forth in Romans 11:25-32. There the Apostle explicitly tells us not only that Israel was blinded and cast off from God's favor, but that favor also is in reservation for them in God's due time. He indicates that the due time for favor to natural Israel will not come until the Gospel Church, the Isaac seed of Abraham, shall first have been developed and glorified in the first resurrection; then through this Isaac seed a blessing is to come first to natural Israel, and subsequently to all other peoples. He says, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer (the glorified Christ, Head and body, being in process of development throughout this Gospel age), and he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (the natural seed of Abraham, Ishmael of the allegory). The Apostle quotes further saying, "For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins." Thus the Lord declares that Israel's sins shall be put away, cancelled, and the doing of this covenant will be the fulfillment of his covenant with them, the taking away of their blindness and ungodliness.

"MERCY THROUGH YOUR MERCY"

The Apostle explains the matter further, saying, "As concerning the Gospel they (natural Israel) are enemies for your sakes (for spiritual Israel's sakes—to permit of your development as the seed of Abraham by the original or Sarah Covenant). But as touching the election they are beloved for the father's sakes, because the gifts

2H289

and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these also now believed, that through your mercy (the mercy of Christ, the antitypical Isaac, the special or spiritual seed of Abraham) they also may obtain mercy.

THE NEW COVENANT

Following the allegory suggested by the Apostle, Abraham's wife, Keturah, whom he married after the death of Sarah, and by whom he had numerous children, would correspond to the third great Covenant—the New Covenant. (Gen. 25:1) But while the New Covenant is thus represented in the allegory it is more particularly represented as fulfilled in Isaac, the seed of promise. The Oath-Bound promise reads, "In thy seed (Isaac in the allegory) shall all the families of the earth be blessed." It is the antitypical Isaac., the Christ, Head and body, which is to bless all the families of the earth under the New Covenant.

The New Covenant of divine mercy and favor toward whosoever will is represented as having Christ for its Mediator and as being sealed by the blood of Christ, the death of Christ. (1 Pet. 1:19) In various particulars it is contrasted with the Law Covenant, which it supplants—as, for instance, the Apostle contrasts and compares the two, speaking of Moses as the mediator of the Law Covenant and Christ as the Mediator of the New Covenant; the blood of bulls and goats as the offset of the sins of the people under the Law Covenant, the blood of Christ, the better sacrifice, as making atonement for the sins of the people under the New Covenant. The law of God was the basis of the Law Covenant, and the same law of God—still more freely enunciated as the law of love and the Golden Rule—are set forth as the law connected with the New Covenant. We are shown clearly that the difference between the two covenants is in the different sacrifices and different mediators.

Moses, a member of the fallen race, could and did act as a mediator, but could not assist the people out of their imperfections, and hence the covenant which he mediated failed to bring life to those under it. But the New Covenant in this respect will be different, because the Mediator of the New Covenant, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, meets all the requirements of the Covenant with his own blood, his own death, his own sacrifice, and on the basis of the better sacrifice he is able to offer mercy to the people, which Moses could not offer.

In a word, then, the law of God was the foundation of the Law Covenant, and the same law—no less strict but still more clearly set forth—will be the law of the New Covenant. The offer of life under the Law Covenant was conditioned upon obedience to the Law. Similarly the offer of life under the New Covenant will be conditioned on obedience to the divine law. Thus far the similarities, now the differences: The Law Covenant made nothing perfect, because its mediator, unable to meet the requirements of the Law himself, was unable to help the people to do so. The New Covenant Mediator not only kept the Law himself and thus had the right to life everlasting, but giving that life as a ransom for mankind he is prepared to grant to every member of the race all the assistance necessary to obedience to the Law and the attainment of life everlasting.

THE NEW COVENANT STILL FUTURE

We have seen what the New Covenant will do when in due time it shall go into effect, but it has not yet gone into effect; before it can be effective it must be sealed. True, our Lord declared, “This is my blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins,”

“The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?” But by divine arrangement the Church, the body of the antitypical Isaac is to share with the Head in the work of sealing the New Covenant as well as in the work of being Mediator between God and man. Hence our Lord said to his followers respecting the cup, the blood of the New Covenant, “Drink ye all of it”—participate with me in this work of sealing the New Covenant. And so it has been as the Apostle declared—the faithful saints, the footstep followers of the Lord, have throughout this Gospel age each been “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” Col. 1:24

Not that the sacrifices of the Lord’s consecrated people are at all necessary so far as divine justice is concerned—not that they have merit either for those who make them or for others; but that the Lord has ordained that receiving the merit of Christ by faith themselves, they should make consecration of all that they have and thus be accepted as members of the glorified Christ, so that it is, as the Scriptures represent, the sufferings of Christ that are still being accomplished in the world. From this standpoint the work of propitiation has begun, the Head has suffered even unto death and been glorified, and the various members of the Church, the body of Christ, as New Creatures, who are sacrificing earthly interests in harmony with his example are under the influence and guidance of his Word and his Spirit.

Presently the great High Priest will have finished his sufferings, finished offering up himself as represented in the Church, his members, and then by that blood of the New Covenant in which his followers are privileged to participate, the New Covenant itself will be

2H290

reckoned as sealed —made sure, made obligatory, guaranteed.

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

The Church, called now to be members of the body of Christ and joint sacrificers with him, were by nature children of wrath even as others. How, then, can they be justified before the remainder of the world—before the New Covenant is fully ratified and put into effect? We answer that they are justified by faith, and the

righteousness of the Law is counted unto them as fulfilled when they walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, however imperfect that walk, however short they come of the perfect standard, so long as it is the endeavor of righteousness from their hearts. Their faith in the Lord, demonstrated by their consecration to his service, even unto death, is surely a full demonstration both of their faith and of their obedience, and the Lord so accepts them; and these, as we have seen come in as members of the body of Christ under the original Abrahamic Covenant, needing no new Covenant to intervene. As the Law Covenant was added because of transgressions and to school fleshly Israel, so the New Covenant will be added to the Abrahamic Covenant for the benefit of the world, that thus the promised seed of Abraham might bless all the families of the earth.

THE NEW COVENANT IN OPERATION

We have already seen that the New Covenant could not go into operation until all of the Church, the body of Christ, have shared in his sacrifice and filled up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ, thus completing the work of the great antitypical day of Atonement, the Gospel age; and looking all about us we see that the curse is still resting upon the world, that God has not yet been merciful to mankind as he proposes to be under the New Covenant arrangement. The whole creation still groaneth and travaileth in pain together, waiting—waiting for the consummation of the atonement work, waiting for the completion of the sufferings of Christ, waiting for the full sealing of the New Covenant when it shall go into effect. Even natural Israel has not yet received its blessing, though it is to have the first favor under the New Covenant—”They shall obtain mercy through your mercy.

Mark some of the things that will obtain under the New Covenant: “I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be my people.... I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sins no more.” (Jer. 31:33, 34) No one can claim that any such terms or conditions have yet obtained. The great mass of mankind are still in darkness, in ignorance of God, in ignorance of his plan, in ignorance of the Mediator, in ignorance of the blessings that are coming through the rolling away of the curse.

But all these provisions of the New Covenant are part and parcel of the glorious blessings which the Lord has declared will be accomplished during the Millennial reign of Christ. Then he will have mercy upon them; Satan shall be bound and deceive them no more, and the glorious Mediator as the representative of the Father shall cause the knowledge of his grace to fill the whole earth, and times of refreshing shall come from the

presence of the Lord, and times of restitution which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets.” Rev. 20:2; Isa. 11:9; Acts 3:19-21

In other words, the work of the whole Millennial age will be that of writing again in the hearts of mankind the divine law, which has been largely obliterated by the prevalence of sin and death for the last six thousand years. In proportion as the world under the Lord’s instruction and discipline and corrections in righteousness and rewards for every good effort shall rise, inch by inch out of its degradation and death conditions, it will be coming back to restitution to all that was lost in Adam, to full human perfection, the image and likeness of God. Thus in restoring man mentally and physically to the perfect likeness of God will be fulfilled this promise of the New Covenant, of the rewriting of the law in the heart—O, so much better than the writing of it on the tables of stone for Israel.

We who are of Spiritual Israel have many of these blessed experiences now, because we by faith, in a sense, enjoy all the blessings the world will enjoy during the Millennial age, the difference being that our mortal bodies are not going on to perfection, but, on the contrary, we belong to the Isaac class, and are being offered on the altar even as in figure Abraham spared not his son Isaac from sacrifice—he in whom centered the promise. Thus the Father withheld not our Lord Jesus, but permitted him to pay the great atonement price, and is now also permitting us to suffer with him that we also may reign with him, to be dead with him that we may also live with him and be participants in his glory, honor and immortality as the great King of glory, the great Prophet, Priest and King, whose millennial work as the Mediator between God and the world will deliver from sin and death all mankind except those who wilfully, intelligently refuse, neglect, the privileges thus set before them.

How grand are these three great Covenants! But chiefest of them all, dear friends, is that in which you and I as Spiritual Israelites are privileged to have a part. The Lord grants us the wisdom and grace more and more to appreciate the great privilege that is now ours, for “If ye be Christ’s, then ye are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the (great Oath-Bound) promise.” Galatians 3:29

2H291

The National Labor Tribune, January 21, 1906

“THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB”

Pastor Russell spoke Sunday in Carnegie Hall, Allegheny, to a large and intelligent audience. His text and discourse follow:

“I have espoused you as a chaste virgin unto one husband, which is Christ.” 2 Cor. 11:2

One difficulty with many Bible students is that they fail to recognize the design, the order, which pervades the divine plan of salvation. The thought of eternal torment has seemed to so dominate their minds as to hinder them from properly understanding the Scriptures when they do read them. That awful doctrine from the dark ages continues to have a baneful effect, even where enlightenment aside from the Word of God has discredited it.

The basis of our faith lies in recognition that the human race are sinners and under divine sentence, and that in due time Christ died for the ungodly, that he might be the Mediator between God and man, the reconciler. This foundation is generally recognized, but the next step in the divine plan seems to be discerned by but few: that the plan of salvation, instead of proceeding at once to the reconciling of the world, delayed that work and instead took up another, namely, the calling out from the world of a peculiar “people,” a “little flock,” to constitute the Church, figuratively called the “Bride, the Lamb’s wife.” These throughout the Scriptures are spoken of as the “elect,” and a very general mistake has been to suppose that when the gathering of the elect shall be completed at the close of this Gospel age the plan of salvation will be finished.

On the contrary, however, the Scriptures distinctly teach that with the completion of the election a work of “free grace” to the whole world of mankind will begin—the work of blessing all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. And this seed of Abraham as we have already pointed out from the Scriptures, is composed of Jesus and the Church, his Bride, or joint-heir. “If ye be Christ’s (his Bride and joint-heir) then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the (Oath-Bound) promise.” Gal. 3:29

ONE OF MANY FIGURES

Various figures are used in the Bible to represent this elect Church. In this figure Jesus is the Bridegroom and the Church his Bride; in another he is the elder Brother and the Church his younger brethren; in another he is the High Priest and the Church the under “Royal Priesthood;” in another he is the

Captain and the Church the good soldiers of the cross; in another he is the chief cornerstone in God's great Temple and the Church are the small "living stones" associated with him as members of that Temple; in another he is the true Shepherd and the true ones are the sheep of his flock; and so the shepherd declares, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them I must also bring."

Today we want to consider the Church from the standpoint of this one figure—as a woman, as the Bride of Christ. Let no one think from the figure that the Lord's intention is that his followers shall lose their personal identity and become merged in one person. On the contrary, the Church when spoken of as the Bride is viewed from the same standpoint as when we speak of Congress or Parliament. In these the various members are individuals, but under organization they act as a whole under the presiding officer. Applying the figure further we might speak of the presiding officer as the head of the body of Congress, composed of many members. So Christ is said to be the Head of the many members of the elect Church, his body, and it is a similar figure which represents the Head as the Bridegroom, separate from the body.

THE ESPOUSED VIRGIN

In studying this subject we must keep in mind two things: First, that it is the Church of the future, after the resurrection, that is designated the Bride, the married wife. We must remember that the marriage of the Lamb—that is to say, the union between the glorified Lord and the glorified Church—is to take place after this Gospel age shall be ended, after it shall have accomplished its work of calling, testing, proving, selecting and glorifying all the members of that Bride class.

In the present time the Lord's people are spoken of as the betrothed or espoused, never as the married wife or joint-heir. The Apostle points out that the present time is our probationary period, to demonstrate which of us, after having consecrated our lives to him and with him to the service of the Truth, will carry out that covenant faithfully: which of us, now counted probationary members, will by faithfulness become actual members, thus making our calling and election sure, and be received through the first resurrection into the joys of our Lord and into participation in his Millennial reign of the future. The Apostle indicates all this when he says that "we are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 8:17) In accord with this note the Apostle's statement in our text, and its context: "I have espoused you as a chaste virgin unto

one husband, even Christ.”

There is no suggestion in the Scriptures anywhere that there will be more than one Bride—nowhere is our Lord represented as a polygamist. Hence very evidently many are mistaken when speaking of many churches of Christ, many Brides of Christ, many espoused virgins. As there is but one Bridegroom so there is to be but one espoused virgin of the present time and one Bride or married wife of the future. The Apostle discerned this same spirit of sectarianism in his day and reproved it saying, While one says I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; and another, I am of Cephas, are ye not carnal, fleshly, misunderstanding the divine arrangement as worldly people might be expected to do? The same terms are applicable today, while ye say, I am of Calvin, Wesley, Luther, Peter, etc. Are ye not carnal? Is it not an evidence of a lack of spiritual perception of the great fact that there is but one Bridegroom? and that in calling ourselves by any other name we would be to that extent renouncing our betrothal? According to the figure we would be guilty of adultery.

FEDERATION OF CHURCHES

Christian people in general are awakening to this thought and moving toward federation: but even in this they show that they are carnal, that they do not understand what constitutes the real Church of Christ—that it is composed of such only as are fully consecrated to the Lord, espoused to him, “not their own”—that the Bride is not composed of a federation of churches, but is composed of those individuals who by the spirit are joined to the Lord in one spirit, “The Lord knoweth them that are his.” (2 Tim. 2:19) These are one, however the nominal systems may divide and separate the Lord’s people the one from the other by credal fences. These, possessing the Lord’s spirit, love and fellowship as fellow members all who are truly his, utterly regardless of the hindering fences erected by the Adversary for their separation. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit, and all such should be one with the Father, one with the Son and one with each other.

The time was when these various sects called Churches opposed one another, burned one another at the stake, called each other antichrist. Now in saner mood they are fraternizing, but still are greatly blinded and do not discern that they are all antichrist—all opposed to the divine order and arrangement. What matters it that the Lutheran body recognizes Luther as its head? Are they not as really antichrist as the papal Roman Catholic body with the popes at their head, or the Greek Catholic body with the czars at their head, or with the Church of England with the king of England at their head, or the Presbyterians with Calvin and synods and presbyteries as their heads and lawgivers and guides.

Combinations or federations of these unwarranted, unscriptural organizations will not make of them the true body of Christ—the true Church. The combination of several wrong doings under one head will not make all or any of them right. The proper course would be to abandon all factions and sectarian separations and begin again as one company of the Lord's followers, guided by his word as given to us through the apostles and prophets in the Scriptures. The fundamentals at first stated, faith in Christ as our Redeemer and full consecration to him, should be the only standards for fullest fellowship. All Christendom would soon be thoroughly united but for one thing, namely, that only a small portion of so-called Christendom is truly consecrated to God, truly realize that they are sinners and that the sacrifice of Christ is their ransom price, and who, accepting this, have made full consecration of their every power and talent to him and his service. These alone would be the Church which God recognizes.

A mass of tares have overgrown the Master's wheat field. These run the organizations with a form of godliness but without the power thereof, and the Lord for centuries has been permitting it to be so, and is allowing his truly consecrated ones to be developed under these different conditions. Now we have reached the harvest time foretold in the parable (Matt. 13:18-43); the wheat are being called out of all sectarian bundles for the burning day, not for a future torment, but for a time of trouble coming upon the whole earth preparatory to the establishment of God's Kingdom—the glorified Church, Christ and his Bride. In the parable the Bride, represented by the wheat at the close of the harvest, will all be safely gathered into the barn, and our Lord's declaration is, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."

Thank God that the mission of Christ and the Church in glory is not to condemn and blight the remainder of the human family. On the contrary, it is to be a blessing to all, in symbol the glorious Sun of Righteousness which shall scatter the darkness of earth, binding the prince of darkness, Satan, and setting at liberty from the bonds of ignorance, superstition and credulity the whole world of mankind which for so long has been under his power. 2 Cor. 4:4

THE BRIDE IN ALLEGORY

Heretofore we have seen that the Apostle pointed out that Abraham and his wives and his children were used of the Lord in such a manner as to make of them allegories or pictures of various features of his plan for the future. Let us notice how the union between Christ

and the Church which we are now discussing was allegorically represented in the same connection. The fact that Isaac was used not only to represent Jesus but all the members of the Church, his body (“Ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise”—Gal. 4:28), does not at all interfere with our seeing Isaac as a representative of our Lord, and his wife, Rebecca, as the representative of the Church. On the contrary, it is in full accord with the fact that the Lord’s faithful followers are sometimes spoken of as members of his body and sometimes as his Bride.

Isaac did not select his own bride; his father Abraham made the selection through his servant Eliezer. Similarly our Lord Jesus does not select his Bride, but specifically tells us, “No man cometh unto me except my Father which sent me draw him.” (John 6:44) Again, Abraham directed his servant that the wife must not be taken from strangers but from his own relationship. Note how this illustrates the fact that sinners are not called to be the Bride of Christ, but called to repentance and reformation. The call or invitation to be the Bride of Christ has been made only to justified believers. All who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and have fled from sin are counted as related to God and no longer strangers, aliens and foreigners through wicked works, but being justified by faith, they have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also they have access into this grace wherein we stand, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God—access into the grace or privilege of becoming members of the Bride class, of joint-heirs in the Kingdom. Rom. 5:1,2

ELIEZER’S MISSION

Abraham’s servant, sent to select Isaac’s bride, allegorized the holy Spirit. Thus throughout the Gospel age since Pentecost, it is the province of the holy Spirit of God to invite, to draw through the Word of testimony, those who may become the Lord’s Bride and joint-heirs. The entire journey of the espoused Rebecca was made under the care and guidance of Eliezer, as the entire journey of the Gospel age has been made by the Lord’s truly consecrated ones under the supervision and guidance of the holy Spirit. The camels which bore the presents to Rebecca, and which bore her on her journey to Isaac, represent the Word and providences of God which bring his faithful ones safely to the end of the journey, to the end of this age. The journey ended at the well Lahairoi, Isaac going that far out into the desert to meet her.

When Rebecca discerned Isaac she alighted from her camel and put on a vail. Gen. 24:64, 65

This feature of the allegory is still for future fulfillment: hence we must draw our inferences from it with the greater caution. The meaning of the name of the place where the meeting took place seems suggestive; it means, "The well of a living one, my seer." It was a fountain of living waters which seemed to speak of life from the dead, especially as this well was in the desert place. It suggests the thought of a resurrection, the glorious change which the Apostle assures us will be the experience of the Church at the end of this age—each individual member shall be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15:52) Putting on of the vail would seem to mean the passing of the Church beyond the veil—beyond the flesh into the spirit condition of the first resurrection—and the alighting from the camel would seem to mean that the Church would no longer be sustained by the Scriptures and earthly providences so necessary now, but would at once pass fully under the care of the heavenly Bridegroom.

THE GOLD AND THE JEWELS

Glancing back along the allegory we find other details equally in harmony with the experiences of the true Church and the teachings of the Word. The servant by directions went to the family of Abraham's brother, Nahor, but he attempted not to bring the entire family; he made selection. So of the many who are believers in God, a selection is now made of a special class for a special purpose, a peculiar service in connection with the great divine plan which ultimately shall bless all the families of the earth. The maiden who was afterwards espoused was found at the well, drawing water, which well illustrates the fact that those who are called of the Lord to a fulness of consecration and obedience and joint-heirship with the Lord Jesus are those who went frequently to the well, to the Word of God, to draw of the water of truth for cleansing and for refreshment and for distribution to others.

The servant, acting under divine guidance, made a test by which he recognized the maiden as a suitable one to be invited to be wife of Isaac. The test was her willingness to serve the water to others, to which she not only responded by tendering Eliezer the water but drew also for his camels. Similarly those suitable to be called, to be invited to joint-heirship with Jesus, must be of humble mind, ready to serve, especially pleased to serve others with such water, the truth, which is under their control. The test having proven satisfactory the servant at once opened his treasures, and presented to the maiden gifts of earrings and bracelets. (Gen. 24:22) How well this represents the fact that those found of the holy Spirit acceptable, suitable to be invited to consecration, are at once rewarded for any services they have rendered as a pleasure. They receive at once the hearing ear and a

blessing upon their hands in their labors in the Lord's service.

When the servant had been received into Nahor's

2H294

house he explained his mission, that he was Abraham's servant, sent to find a suitable wife for his Master's son, of whom he declared "Unto him hath he given all that he hath." Thus it is that the holy Spirit reveals that Jesus, is the antitypical Isaac, the heir of all things, and informs us of the fact that God is calling out a people, a little flock, to bear his name as his bride and to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

The messenger and the message were appreciated and the invitation received: Rebecca was recognized as accepted of the Lord to be Isaac's wife and to go to him as soon as this was recognized by her kinsfolk. Abraham's servant produced more jewels of silver and gold, and raiment, some of them for Rebecca and some of them for her kindred. In the fulfilment of this allegory we see the household of faith and their appreciation of the fact of the call, and how correspondingly they received also gifts and blessings of the holy Spirit, though not in the same measure or degree or value as those presented to the specially consecrated ones. The whole mission of this Gospel age is to take out the elect Church, but incidentally a blessing falls upon all who are in any measure or degree associated with this "little flock."

The blessing coming to "the very elect" extends to all about them. In a measure they are the "salt of the earth," and have a preservative effect upon all with whom they are associated. Of these Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world... Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5:14-16) All men who are directly or indirectly in contact with these lights of the world, these members of the body of Christ, have blessings in proportion to their preparation for them. It can not be shown in allegory, but the fact is clearly presented in the Scriptures, that the invitation to become the Bride of Christ is a general one to every member of the household of faith. But though many are called few are chosen, because only the few will have the characteristics demanded by the Lord's call and selection. The others may merely rejoice with this class, but refraining from a full consecration of themselves, they can not be of them.

"FORSAKE THY FATHER'S HOUSE"

The period of rejoicing over the favor of God which had come to them, by which Rebecca was to be especially blessed, soon gave place to a measure of trial, of testing. At first she

probably had no thought of what this espousal would signify, would cost her to leave her father's house and her own kindred for a far-off land she had never seen. Her mother and her brother both joined in importuning that the departure should be delayed for a time, but Abraham's servant was prompt and the question was left with Rebecca herself. So great was her heart's affection for the one to whom unseen she had plighted herself that she was anxious to go to be with him, and the journey began promptly. Thus is illustrated the test which comes to every consecrated one. Those dear to them by earthly ties lovingly seek to hinder them from self-sacrifice, or at least to delay the matter, and it becomes a question of loving father or mother, brothers or sisters, houses or lands, and one's own ease and comfort, or love for the heavenly Bridegroom. All who are of the Rebecca class will say with the Apostle respecting the heavenly Bridegroom, "Whom not having seen ye love: in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." 1 Pet. 1:8

THE VIRGIN NOT A HARLOT

Carrying out this same thought the New Testament uniformly represents the espoused Church as a chaste virgin, who will recognize no other Lord than Jesus, and call herself by no other name than his. The same Scriptures call our attention to false systems which would develop and would call themselves by the names of other heads or Lords, ignoring to some extent the heavenly Bridegroom. These, because nominally betrothed to Christ, but really associated with the world, are figuratively said to be harlots. The Scriptures clearly bring to our attention a great system from which other Church systems proceed, and these are recognized throughout Christendom as being the Roman Catholic system and the Protestant churches, her daughters, who left the mother's house to set up on their own account. From the divine standpoint the whole proceeding is harlotry, confusion, the mixing of world systems with that which should be true, pure, loyal to the Lord alone. In harmony with this these systems are spoken of as Babylon—the "mother of harlots" and her daughters.

Nothing in this, however, implies harlotry on the part of the individuals composing these systems. It is the system and not the individuals that is pictured. This is clearly shown in the fact that in the picture of the end of this age the Lord calls his faithful ones out of Babylon, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4) So deceptive has been the great system of Churchianity that the Lord's true friends have been in it without realizing the wrong, nor was it due time to bring the matter to their attention until the harvest time of separation would come, when the wheat would be separated from the tares, when all of the Lord's people—"My people"—would be called out by the voice of the Truth—by the exposing of

Babylon's error. For any one to remain after the eyes of his understanding

2H295

have opened would be to bring himself intelligently and wilfully into fellowship with the wrong, and our Lord declares would make him partaker of the sins of the systems and sharers in the wrath or plagues about to come upon Churchianity as a whole in a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation. Dan. 12:1

“THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB”

As the consecration of the Lord's people and their begetting of the holy Spirit constitute the betrothal to Christ, so the glorification of the first resurrection will constitute their marriage to him, when they shall be like him and see him as he is and share his glory as his Bride. This is pictured also in Revelation, where we are told that the marriage of the Lamb will come when his wife hath made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7) The making ready has required the entire period of the Gospel age; the robe of Christ's righteousness imputed to each individual member of the Church has required to be painstakingly embroidered, according to the pattern set before us, with the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. In this preparation work each member assists the others, edifying one another and building up one another in the most holy faith. The same thought is pictured by our Lord in one of his parables, in which he represents the closing of this Gospel age and its gathering of the wise virgins before the marriage supper of the Lamb takes place, and the door of opportunity to a membership in that elect class forever closes.

Thank God, the door that will then be shut will not be the door of hope either to the foolish virgins of Christendom nor to the heathen world. (Matt. 25:10) On the contrary, it will be merely the closing of the narrow way of this Gospel age, the end of the wonderful opportunity of becoming members of the Bride class. Just beyond the dark night of trouble that will then be upon the world, the dawn of the new Millennial day will usher in the blessings of the Lord and open up the “highway of holiness.” Then the Spirit and the bride will say “come” to whosoever will of all the families of the earth, that they may freely partake of the life eternal provided for all through the sacrifice of Christ.

The National Labor Tribune, February 4, 1906

“LIKE UNTO MOSES”

Pastor C. T. Russell preached to his home congregation in Bible House Chapel, Allegheny, Sunday, to an overflowing house.

His text was, “Moses truly said unto the Fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you among your brethren, like unto me. To him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hearken to that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people.” (Acts 3:22, 23) The discourse follows:

Our text is the testimony of the Apostle Peter, and must therefore be accepted by all believers in the Bible. Nevertheless, many of us for a long time had difficulty in our effort to harmonize this statement with the facts in the case. We said, “Where do we find the correspondence between Moses, the great Lawgiver of Israel, and the Lord Jesus as his antitype?” We read in the Law of Moses respecting the sacrifices and sin offerings which he instituted, and in this could find foreshadowings of the “better sacrifices” of Christ; but wherein Christ fulfilled the Apostle’s statement has indeed been a difficult matter.

We said to ourselves, “In what sense can it be true that whosoever does not hear and heed Christ is ‘utterly destroyed from amongst the people?’ “The heathen have never heard, in any sense of the word—Are they utterly destroyed? The great majority of people in civilized lands have never heard in the sense here intimated, in the sense of heeding the commands of Christ. Are they utterly destroyed? True, it would be far better that they should be utterly destroyed than that they should be eternally tormented, as many have imagined, but as the Scriptures do not teach. Nevertheless, would it not seem too bad that the great mass of humanity even, in our day should thus be condemned to utter destruction because they have not heard and not heeded the voice of Christ?”

“THE HIDDEN MYSTERY”

The Apostle repeatedly tells us about the mystery hid from past ages and dispensations but now due to be understood by the saints—not by the world. (Eph. 3:3-9) This mystery or secret, not generally comprehended, the Apostle explains is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27) In other words, he would have us understand that God’s plan for the salvation of the world is much greater, much larger, than any of us would have suspected—that it includes first of all the selection of the Church of this Gospel age as members of the body of the great Christ under Jesus their Head. (Eph. 1:22-33) This whole company, the Head and the

2H296

members, will therefore constitute the Christ of prophecy—“like unto Moses.” So, then only, those who recognize this “mystery,” this secret, are prepared to rightly understand our text and many other matters and

statements of the Scriptures. Our text is not yet fulfilled, but awaits its fulfilment until the entire Christ (Head and body—Christ and the Church) shall have been “raised up.” Our Lord, the Redeemer and Head, has already been exalted, and his Church for 1800 years has been in process of selection, formation and testing. In the harvest of this Gospel age the union between the Head and the members is promised, for our Lord declared, “I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.” (John 14:3) He told us thus to expect to enter into his glory and become heirs of God and joint-heirs with himself in his Kingdom, which he will establish at his second advent. From this standpoint, therefore, this entire Gospel age has been devoted to the raising up of this great antitypical Prophet, foreshadowed or typified by Moses and composed of many members.

With the completion of the work of this age the work of the next age will begin—a totally different work. The work of this age is a selective one, or, as some dear Christian people term it, an elective work. God is gathering the “members of the body of Christ” that he may use them in his great work of blessing and instructing mankind, and in thus raising up out of sin and death conditions all who will hearken to the instructions then to be given through the great antitypical Moses—the Christ in glory. In the type, Moses led Israel and instructed them 40 years before they were prepared to enter Canaan; in the antitype, the greater than Moses—the Christ, Head and body—will lead and instruct all the willing and obedient for a thousand years, at the close of which all the worthy ones will be ushered into the antitypical Canaan of eternity, while on the contrary all who fail to respond to the teachings and assistances that will be given to mankind by the antitypical Moses will be utterly destroyed in the Second Death.

THE LAW COVENANT AND THE NEW COVENANT

God’s purpose toward the world—to grant to Adam and all of his posterity a blessing of recovery from the “curse” or sentence of death which came upon all through Adam’s disobedience—is clearly set forth in the Abrahamic covenant, the oath-bound covenant, which declares, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Nevertheless, in thus providing a blessing for all, the Lord wisely put restrictions, requirements, upon all who would have that blessing to the fullest degree—to the perfect degree of eternal life. First, the Law covenant was made with the nation of Israel that it might foreshadow the plan, the arrangement of God for the world’s blessing, and at the same time might, by showing man’s deficiencies, point out to mankind the need for the better arrangements which God designed to bring forward in due

time under the new covenant, whose Mediator would be the Christ.

The Law given to Israel was just and true, and Moses, the Mediator of that covenant, was loyal and faithful both to the Lord and to Israel. Wherein then was the difficulty that the Law Covenant brought nothing to perfection? We reply that the difficulty lay in the fact that mankind are by nature fallen and have the seeds of imperfection, sin and death in their constitutions, and hence, with the very best of intentions, as the Apostle declares, “we can not do the things that we would”—when we would do good evil is present with us. (Rom. 7:21) Thus the Jewish nation for centuries tried to keep the Law and were unable to do so, and hence, as the Apostle declares, “By the deeds of the Law can no flesh be justified in God’s sight,” Rom. 3:20

The Lord’s Word teaches us that the New Covenant is to be more successful than was the Law Covenant—it is to save all the willing and obedient of every nation, people, kindred and tongue. How will it do this? Will the new law connected with the New Covenant and administered under the Millennial Kingdom of Christ be less searching, less exacting than the Mosaic Law? And if the people of Israel could not rise to the requirements of Moses’ Law, because of their inherited weaknesses, will there be a modified law for the future? We answer, No! A perfect God could not give an imperfect law—he could not set up a wrong standard of righteousness. What hope, then, could there be that the world’s opportunity under the New Covenant will result more favorably than did Israel’s opportunity under the Law Covenant?

We answer that the difference will consist in the fact that the New Covenant has a more competent Mediator. In this we are not calling in question the willingness of Moses to have done for the people of Israel all that Christ will do for the world of mankind: but with all his willingness he was incompetent, because he, like the rest of the people, was a sinner—a member of the sinner race. Christ on the contrary is a competent Mediator. Adam’s disobedience brought condemnation and death against the entire race: the obedience of Jesus, even unto death, paid, settled, canceled that original condemnation according to the divine requirements, “a life for a life,” the last Adam for the first Adam. And as the condemnation of Adam proceeded to all of his posterity, so the redemption of Adam proceeds to all of his posterity.

2H297

In other words, our Lord Jesus bought the world of mankind with his own precious blood; his own untainted, uncondemned life he gave for the world’s ransom. By reason of this

redemptive work our Lord has the full, just right to restore, to lift up, out of sin and death conditions, through knowledge and disciplinary experiences, the whole world of mankind, so many as will obey. By thus lifting mankind up again out of sin and death, in recovering the willing and obedient from all that was theirs through original sin, our Lord will prepare them for the tests of the perfect divine law which will come upon every one of them in the close of the Millennial age. But it will be a different matter for a perfect man to meet the requirements of the divine law than for an imperfect man to meet these requirements.

True, father Adam was a perfect man yet failed, but his failure was due largely to an imperfect degree of knowledge. Those who will reach the close of the Millennial age will have a clear knowledge of both good and evil. The world has gained its knowledge of evil during the six thousand years of the prevalence of sin, and whoever will shall, during the Millennial age, have full opportunity of coming to clear knowledge of that which is good and appreciate the difference between good and evil and the rewards of these, so that the testing in the end of the Millennial age will fully justify the seven thousand years of instruction which God's providence has arranged for Adam and his race. It is not for us, to know what will be the proportionate number of those who shall ultimately attain eternal life and of those who through disobedience to that great Prophet shall be "utterly destroyed from amongst the people" in the Second Death. We think it is not unreasonable, however, to assume that fully a half of our race or over will gain life eternal under the gracious terms of the New Covenant.

SEALING THE NEW TESTAMENT

Some may inquire, Why the long delay since Jesus died as the Redeemer of the world? Why did he not at once begin the work of the New Covenant, restoring the world of mankind. We answer that there are two principal reasons:

(1) The Lord evidently wished that the world should be filled, populated. This was the original commission given to father Adam before he sinned, "Multiply and fill the earth." Under the conditions of sin and death the race production has gone on rapidly, so that by now we may suppose that the whole number ever born into the world would very nearly make a full population for it if it were turned as a whole into a Garden of Eden or, as promised, into a paradise of God. True, the Lord could raise up in the midst of the ocean other continents still larger than we now have, and possibly he may do so; but as it is, a reasonable estimate of the numbers born into the world for the past six thousand years would make a tolerably well-populated earth. This would be one reason why the Lord would delay the establishment of the Kingdom, because with

its establishment the birthrate will certainly decrease and eventually entirely cease. For we are assured that those who will attain perfection will “neither marry nor be given in marriage,” but like the angels of heaven will be without sex distinctions, as Adam was before Eve was created to be the mother of the race. Matt. 22:30

(2) Another important reason for the delay in the establishment of the New Covenant blessings is the necessity for the sealing of this New Covenant. It must be sealed before it can go into effect. The Apostle calls it a testament—that is, a will—saying, “Where a testament is there must also of necessity be the death of the testator”—the death of the one who makes the will, “for a testament, a will, is of force only after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator is living.” (Heb. 9:16, 17) So this New Covenant, New Testament, could not go into effect except as the testator, Christ, died. But, you say, Christ died nearly nineteen centuries ago. Yes, we answer, Jesus died—and it is his death that is efficacious for the cancellation of the sins of the world; but in the present time he is not applying the efficacy of his sacrifice to the world, but merely to those special believers who flee from sin and by faith lay hold upon him and come under his robe of righteousness. And he is now giving such the opportunity of becoming members of his body, and as such of joining with him in his sacrifice—joining with him in the sealing of the New Covenant.

“PARTAKE YE ALL OF IT”

This is what he meant when he instituted the Memorial Supper in the night in which he was betrayed. He took the cup, saying, “This is my blood of the New Covenant (New Testament—will), shed for many for the remission of sins; Partake ye all of it.” Not the many who will be blessed by the New Covenant are invited to become partakers of the blood, but the few, the little flock, who now by faith are called out of the world, elected as the body of Christ—these are invited to participate with their Lord and Head in the blood by which the New Covenant is sealed. As our Lord said to his followers in the narrow way, “Drink ye all of it,” so the Apostle, putting the same matter in other words says, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1)

Again St. Paul says, speaking of the memorial cup

representing the blood of Christ, “The cup which we drink is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” (1 Cor. 10:16) By this he calls attention to the fact that our pledge as followers of Christ, to lay down our lives in his service and for the brethren as living sacrifices, is our communion or common participation with Jesus in his sacrifice. Not that the merit belongs to us, but under the cover of his merit we are accepted as his members, so that our sacrifices are counted in as part of his sacrifice.

From this standpoint of the “mystery” we can see that the entire Gospel age of over eighteen centuries has been the time of the sufferings of Christ, first the Head and subsequently all the members of the body of Christ, filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1:24) We can see that the experiences of the Lord’s consecrated ones have been their communion, their fellowship, in the blood of Christ, in the sacrifice of Christ, and that all of these together are sacrifices counted in with the Master’s, and constitute the sealing of this great covenant, this great testament, through which the world is to be blessed during the thousand-year reign of the Christ, the antitype of Moses.

INAUGURATING THE NEW COVENANT

The typical or Law Covenant was inaugurated at Mount Sinai by the typical mediator, Moses. Its foundation was laid in the sacrifice of typical animals, bulls and goats, the mediator sprinkling the blood of these first upon the book of the Law and secondly upon the people. The sprinkling of the tables of the Law represented the satisfaction of Justice, that the Mediator and his sacrifice were acceptable so far as God was concerned. The sprinkling of the people with the same blood represented their agreement to be obedient to God and to accept the mediator.

The antitype of these things belongs to the Gospel age. As shown in the types, the first sacrifice of the sin offering was that of the bullock, which was not for all the people but simply for the “household of faith,” including the Church, which is the “body of Christ.” This sacrifice of the goat class has been in process since Pentecost, and will conclude with the finished sacrifice of the Lord’s consecrated people of this age. The presentation of the merit of these sacrifices before the Father by our great High Priest, Jesus, and the Father’s acceptance of them, corresponds to the sprinkling of the Law, the meeting of the demands of the Law as respects the race. Then forthwith the work of sprinkling all the people will begin. This in the antitype will mean the spread of the knowledge of the truth amongst the people, and the application to each individual who will accept it of the merit of Christ’s sacrifice, so that as a result all mankind may come back, if they will, into full

fellowship and harmony with God. However, the Scriptures clearly indicate to us that not all will respond, that some will refuse divine mercy and favor even after they have had full knowledge and full opportunity, and that for these the Lord provides the second death—"They shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people."

MOUNT SINAI AND MOUNT ZION

This pictures before our minds the installation of these two covenants, pointing the one out as a type and the other as an antitype. (See Heb. 12:18-29) He here points out to us that as the Law Covenant, the type, was instituted at Mount Sinai, its thunder and lightening and terrible sights and sounds were all typical or allegorical of the yet more striking, more wonderful events which will attend the inauguration of the New Covenant; and as this inauguration of the New Covenant is, we believe, nigh, even at the door, and to be expected within the next ten years, it may be profitable for us to consider carefully just what the Lord may teach us under the guidance of the Apostle's words. The Israelites had for some time been approaching Mount Sinai, and, being a large company, would not all reach there at the same time. Likewise the Church has been approaching Mount Zion, the Kingdom of Zion, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come"—the Kingdom of God's dear Son. For 1800 years the faithful in Christ Jesus have been continuing on toward Mount Zion, which is to be the general rendezvous, the meeting place for all, "the General Assembly of the Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven." There they not only will meet God, the Judge of all, but ultimately also meet all the perfect ones, with Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant. At that time, then, the sprinkling of the blood of the New Covenant will be in order. To come under that sprinkling will not mean vengeance, as the blood of Abel called for vengeance; to come under the blood of Christ will mean mercy, because his blood was shed as our redemption price.

Pointing back to the type the Apostle says that the Lord's voice, then at Sinai shook the earth. Pointing next to the installation of the New Covenant now near at hand, he declares that God has promised that at this time he will not only shake the earth but also heaven. We can readily see that the terms "heaven" and "earth" in this case are used in a figurative or symbolical sense. True, the physical earth may be shaken considerably, as it certainly was literally shaken at Mount Sinai; but we can not think of heaven, God's dwelling place, as being shaken in any sense. Evidently the symbolical heavens and earth are here meant—

namely, the heavens, ecclesiastical powers—the earth, social organization or civilization. Both are to be shaken here, and the Apostle’s language clearly shows that the shaking is not to be a trifling matter: the Lord will so thoroughly shake the ecclesiastical powers and the social systems of earth that everything that can be shaken, every⁴thing that is not fixedly established upon principles of righteousness and truth, will be thoroughly shaken loose, overthrown, destroyed. With the amount of error and falsity there is in the world, in religion, in politics, in business, in society, everywhere, we can readily see that this will mean a terrible shaking of present institutions—”A time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” Dan. 12:1

That we may get the force of the matter the Apostle pictures allegorically the tempests and darkness and frightful sounds which occurred at Mount Sinai. As there the least contact with the mountain brought death, so here everything in conflict with the Kingdom, Mount Zion, will suffer. As in the type blackness and darkness and tempests and sound of a trumpet caused terror, so here in the antitype there will be fearful sights, terrible scenes in the end of this age, in the beginning of the sounding of the great trump of God, the last trump, the “Seventh Trumpet” of Revelation. Here the voice of the archangel will be recognized as issuing commands and bringing into order the institutions of the new dispensation, not in words literally, but in forceful demonstration which will speak louder than words. The result will be, as the Apostle points out (vs. 27-29), that everything shakable, everything imperfect, everything untrue, everything out of accord with perfect justice connected with the institutions of men, either theological, political, financial or social, will be utterly shaken loose and destroyed, and only those things that can not be shaken will remain. The Apostle’s intimation is that the things which can not be shaken are the truths pertaining to the Kingdom of God’s dear Son, which can not be moved.

THE KINGDOM THEN BESTOWED

The Apostle, addressing those who hope for a share with Christ in his Kingdom and honor and glory, and who hope for a share in the work of that Kingdom in the blessing of all the families of the earth, urges us, all believers, saying, “Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which can not be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably.” Let us realize that now is the time for service, the time for sacrificing, the time we have pledged ourselves to walk in the narrow way, to faithfully lay down our lives, thus participating with him, our Lord and Head, in his cup, that we may also be

accounted worthy to participate with him in his glories soon to follow.

The Apostle concludes his statement with a further reference to God, with whom the mediation is made. He declares, "For our God is a consuming fire." The picture he thus thrusts before our minds carries us back to the illustration at Mount Sinai, where the Lord manifested himself to the people as a consuming fire at the top of the mountain. The lesson thus enforced is that God's opposition burns against all iniquity, all unrighteousness, all sin; he can not look upon it with allowance; his sentence against sin is destruction. We are all sinners and all justly under this sentence of destruction, the fire of God's anger, righteous indignation; but he is merciful also, and provided a way of escape—Jesus, the Way, the Truth, the Life. The Church of this Gospel age is now being invited to associate with him, but if any man love darkness rather than light, if when he comes to discern righteousness and sin in their true character, true colors, he is not disposed to accept the side of righteousness, he is putting himself wilfully and intentionally in opposition thereto, which means opposition to God.

Such are to know that however much mercy, long suffering and patience the Lord has for those who are even stumblingly seeking to walk in the ways of righteousness and in the footsteps of Jesus, and however broad the provision he has made that ultimately every creature shall have the knowledge and opportunity of coming into accord, with himself through Christ under the New Covenant, nevertheless still the "wages of sin is death," and all who love the unrighteousness must expect to perish before the consuming fire of divine justice.

This applies to the Church in the present time as well as to the world in the coming age. We who now taste of the good things of God's favor in advance of the world, in connection with our high calling and privilege of joint-suffering and joint-heirship with Christ, must remember that the Almighty is not to be trifled with, that if we wilfully reject his mercies and favors he would be toward us as a consuming fire. Likewise the world in the coming age must learn that if they sin wilfully, if they refuse to go on and attain perfection, if they reject the mercy of God through the Lord Jesus, they must expect no further mercy, no mercy outside of him and the divine order and arrangement of which he is the recognized Head—they shall die the death, they shall be "utterly destroyed from amongst the people," as is declared in our text.

But we are not of those who draw back, but of those who go on. Let us be faithful a little while, and we shall reach

the end of the narrow way and be ushered into the Kingdom with the words, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” enter into the joys of the Lord’s Kingdom, the blessed work of ministering to and guiding

2H300

and uplifting the world—whosoever wills. How precious is this present opportunity of casting in our lot with him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood, that we may be counted “members of his body,” participants in his sufferings and also in the glory to follow.

The National Labor Tribune, February 11, 1906

“FEAR HATH TORMENT”

Wheeling, W. Va., February 11.—Our Court Opera House, with a seating capacity of 1,500, was crowded this afternoon with an intelligent audience to hear Pastor Russell’s anti-infidel discourse, “To Hell and Back.” We report his forenoon topic from the text, “Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men.” (Isa. 29:13) The speaker said—

There is a proper as well as an improper fear toward God. The one is reasonable, the other illogical; the one is helpful, the other injurious; the one is the beginning of wisdom, the other the beginning of folly, irrational anguish.

The Scriptural fear is presented to us in the words, “The fear (reverence) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” To this statement every rational mind will assent. “The fool hath said in his heart there is no God,” but all properly balanced intellects recognize that there is an intelligent Creator, that human life conditions proceed from him and suggest to us that reverence is due Him and his perfect laws, established for our well-being and form a proper regulation of the universe. The person who has not learned this has not even started to become wise, much less started to become a Christian. The Apostle indicates that even after we have become Christians, even after we have come into the relationship to God through faith in the Redeemer and obedience to his laws which permits us to call the Almighty our Father—even then we should reasonably and properly have a revered kind of fear. The Apostle says, “Let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest any of us should seem to come short of it.” (Heb. 4:1) This, however, is not an anguishing, distracting fear, but a rational one, helpful to the Lord’s people in preserving that sobriety and balance of mind everywhere inculcated in the Word.

IRRATIONAL, UNSCRIPTURAL FEARS

The fears above considered are helpful, but another class of fears referred to in our text are injurious —fears that are taught by the precepts of men. We will note what these are; many suffer from them from the earliest childhood and know well the meaning of the Scriptural statement, “Fear hath torment.” (1 John 4:18) How many little ones are affrighted by being told “If you do that the bad man will get you” — describing the devil — with the inference left upon the plastic mind of flames and torture. We rejoice that in our own land, and increasingly everywhere as intelligence gains foothold, the smoke of the dark ages rolls gradually away, and this frightening of children is on the decrease.

The torments of hell and purgatory are still directly or indirectly brought before the child mind, but not with such degree, not with such vividness as formerly, though even yet in some parts of the world the lisping little ones are taught to fear God as a monster. While being instructed they are given illustrations of hell and purgatory, in which children kneel and pray in vain on red-hot floors for relief from anguish because they have been disobedient to their earthly instructors. With advancing years the teachings of men continue to clinch these false doctrines, these unscriptural views of God and his provision for our needs, until with maturity the average mind is terror stricken respecting death and all beyond it. No wonder that so many faces are careworn and sad and marked with fear! No wonder that the very thought of God brings to such mistaught minds fearful forebodings and every other feeling except that of love and confidence. No wonder the Bible is regarded with superstition and error, and never thought of as the book of God’s messages of love and good will toward men.

THE APOSTLE SAYS: “DOCTRINES OF DEVILS”

These misconceptions of God and his plan are not based upon the Bible statements, but came from heathendom. True, there are texts of Scripture which, with the twist and bias already in our minds from infancy, can readily be acclaimed to encourage these unreasonable fears. For instance, the loving statement that “the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost,” is often quoted as a proof of eternal torment. How erroneous! How unreasonable! What was lost? When was it lost? How would Christ save it? These rational questions are rarely considered or given reasonable answer. The Bible answer is that by father Adam’s disobedience sin entered the world and has corrupted his race and brought all under the sentence

of death —“Dying thou shalt die.” (Rom. 5:19; Gen. 2:17) Life was lost. Eden was lost, divine fellowship and favor were lost, and God’s gift, eternal life, was lost.

Sad was the loss, but there is no suggestion in the Scriptures that eternal torment was gained or inflicted in addition to those losses. Our Lord Jesus has redeemed the lost Adam and his race, his lost dominion also, and everything that was lost by original sin. The purchase price was paid when the Lord by the grace of God tasted death for every man. As a result the Redeemer has the right to restore from death, from sin, from weakness, from imperfection, from all that was lost, Adam and every member of his race. the Scriptures show us how, eventually, the offer of eternal life, the opportunity of gaining it, will be extended led by the Redeemer to every member of the race and that all may have it who will get back into harmony with God and his principles of righteousness. How unreasonable, how criminally wrong to misrepresent this blessed promise, and to endeavor to make it a support to the doctrine of eternal torment, which blasphemes God’s holy name, character and Word.

The Apostle was quite right in referring to the diabolical views of the heathen as “doctrines of demons.” All heathen religions teach torment after death for the great bulk of the human family. Where did they get that idea? From our Bible? No! they know it not. From our God? No! he is as yet not revealed to them. They got their wrong views from the demons, the wicked spirits whose chief delight seems to be to terrorize the human family and to misrepresent the Almighty. Instead of heathendom getting its demonology from Christianity, the reverse is true — Christendom received its demonology from the heathen, not from the Bible.

While it is true that some of mankind have been obsessed by these demons and that others have been used as mediums for communicating false doctrines, while it is true also that these demons sometimes attempt to pass themselves off as angels of light and their doctrines as the truth of God and his Word, yet their influence, power, is restricted; as the Scriptures declare, they are reserved under chains of darkness. (Jude 6) The majority of the race, under divine providence, have not come directly under the demoniacal influence, though they have come under the influence of the errors, the doctrines of demons presented to them as the traditions of men, precepts of men. (Col. 2:8) It is still true, as our Lord said to the religious teachers of that time, “Ye do make void the law of God through your traditions.” (Matt. 15:6) God’s people need to become awake to the fact that the traditions of men are unreliable, and from these come the errors which hinder them from properly understanding the Scriptures and properly appreciating the Word of God, his character and his plan for man’s salvation.

“LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR”

As all Christians know, the best antidote for these fears taught by the precepts of men is love for God and an intimate acquaintance with him. In proportion as God's true character is apprehended the fear engendered by error is neutralized, even though the error may to some extent continue a rankling thorn in the mind. For instance, all Christian people who have learned to love God's Word and to trust in its promises and to know the Father and the Son can testify that their love was engendered not by the creeds of the Dark Ages but by the Word of God itself, and gradually their fears were overcome as they learned to know the Lord better and to trust him more. And still they had a difficult experience. How difficult it is to believe two such opposite suggestions as that “God loved us while we were yet sinners,” and at the same time believe the traditions of men that even before he created us he made a great place called hell, large enough to receive the entire race of Adam, and equipped it with all kinds of instruments of torture and fuel to all eternity, and manned it with fire-proof devils who would take fiendish glee in our torture. The two thoughts are wholly incompatible, and those who ever learn to love God do so in spite of the erroneous traditions of men received from the Dark Ages.

No wonder, then, that with such obstacles in its pathway Christian development in love for God is so small! No wonder that the majority never pass the stage of fear never learn to know the true God of love. In proportion as error is cast out, the fear is cast out; in the same proportion the love of God may enter into our hearts and fill them, and thus make us more and more God-like. Perfect love casteth out fear, but no one can have this perfect love until first he has the perfect message — the true Gospel “good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people” through the “redemption which is in Christ Jesus.” Luke 2:10; Rom. 3:24

“FAITH, HOPE, LOVE”

The Scriptures inculcate faith, hope, love. Along these lines they lead believers out of the darkness, pain, sorrow, confusion of this present time, upward in mind and character to that which is perfect. This appeal to faith, hope and love is distinctly the Bible plan—the very opposite of the fear taught by the precepts of men. The Bible teaches us to hope for a better condition, not to fear a worse; it tells us that we are already sinners, already under a just sentence of

death, and that our sorrows and tears, aches and groans, are all parts of the death penalty now on us; it bids us look up to the Lord for succor; it points us to Jesus as the one who redeemed us from the death sentence and who can therefore justly and legitimately offer us life eternal — release from sin and death and the concomitants of these. Hope engendered in our hearts brings relief, and a measure of joy replaces the fear as we begin to learn that God is for us and not against us; that he not only would not torture us in the future, but he is not even pleased in the present to see us in the groaning condition, dying; that he therefore has provided Jesus as the Life-Giver and the good Physician, to heal us of our sins and imperfections and to restore us to harmony with himself.

After being attracted by this prospect — the “hope set before us in the Gospel” —if we exercise faith it becomes the stepping-stone to further knowledge, further joy, further fellowship with God through our Lord Jesus. In the present time our only salvation is of faith — none are now actually delivered out of the unfavorable conditions; we are still in a world of sin and groaning and dying; only by faith do we rise above these our environments and our own condition and accept the Lord’s assurances that if we love righteousness and hate iniquity and seek to walk forever in the footsteps of Jesus we shall ultimately have a completeness of divine favor in life eternal, in the resurrection. This faith and this hope lead, as the Apostle says, to a transformation of life— “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he (Christ) is pure.” (1 John 3:3) It is from this standpoint that saints are transformed by the renewing of their minds, as they come to see more and more clearly the love of God which passeth all understanding; and as they come to have this as a ruling, controlling, directing influence of their lives they become more and more God-like, more and more loving, gentle, compassionate, merciful.

WHY “SAVED BY HOPE” ONLY?

But some may ask, If God purposes the deliverance of mankind from sin and death, why is it that he gives us only the promises and not the actualities and why is it that even this deliverance by hope extends to so few if the Lord’s blessings are intended for Adam and all his race and if Jesus has redeemed them all?

These proper questions are fully answered in the Word of God. It explains that the great work of restitution — social, mental, physical and moral uplift out of sin and death — will be accomplished in the coming age during the Millennium, when the Redeemer shall take unto himself his great power and reign, for the very purpose of bestowing upon mankind in general the blessings and

opportunities secured by his own redemptive work. It suggests also that the work of this present Gospel age is a preparatory one to select from amongst mankind a "Little Flock" of especially zealous, especially loyal, especially earnest, especially faithful persons to be associated with Jesus in his Kingdom and in his great work of blessing and uplifting mankind.

It explains why this work of selecting the little flock, the Bride of Christ, is done in so secretive a manner as to be discerned only by those who have the eye of faith:

that it is because chief amongst the characteristics of those who would be specially pleasing to God must be faith. If restitution, mental, moral and physical, were to be granted to those who now accept the Lord they would soon be walking by sight and not by faith. On the contrary, the testing, the trial of their faith is the very thing that is most precious in the Lord's sight. And hence in the present time all the arrangements for the call of the church are along this line. They must exercise faith, and according to their faith it shall be unto them, and without faith they can not please God, and without faith they can not see the things unseen as yet, which God hath in reservation for them that love him. (1 Cor. 2:9) Without faith they can not have any of the blessings provided for this present time and this special class. Thus the Lord is seeking a peculiar people zealous of good works to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife, associated with him in the blessing and restitution of all that was lost in Adam — to as many as will accept the divine favor on the divine terms.

Let us, dear brethren and sisters, get rid of the tormenting fears handed down to us from the Dark Ages; let us get back into the sunlight of Truth —not by discarding the Bible but by learning its true import, its true teaching; by more and more cleansing our minds of the traditions of men and the improper shadows which those false teachings have cast upon the inspired Word, that we may more and more rejoice in the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth all understanding.

* * * *

Hear, above all, hear thy Lord,
Him thou lovest to obey;
Hide within thy heart His words:
"Watch and pray.

2H303

The National Labor Tribune, February 18, 1906

THE RICH MAN IN HELL

Allegheny, Pa., Feb. 12 Pastor Russell addressed a large gathering at 3 p.m. Sunday in Carnegie Hall from the text, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.” Isa. 1:18 The discourse follows:

On last Sunday the Word of the Lord assured us that the fear of many toward him was taught by the precepts of men and not founded upon His Word. In our text of today he invites us to reason with him. How strange it is that so many people possessed of good reasoning faculties neglect their use in matters pertaining to their highest interests their religious interests. They will reason on politics, finances, etc., but not on the special matter which the Lord particularly invited us to reason upon and respecting which he has laid down for us a sound basis, in the revelations of his Word. The cause of this unreason is not far to seek. It lies in the fact that for centuries religious teachers have given the inference, if they have not positively so stated, that to reason upon any religious topic is to doubt the interpretations put upon it by the teachers of the “dark ages,” and that to doubt is to be damned.

Some have gone to the length of forbidding the use of the Word of God by the common people. Others, while granting their right of access to it, have endeavored to hinder investigation to compel their adherents to swallow unchewed the declarations of the creeds to which their parents had subscribed. A gentleman, a Presbyterian, related to me not a great while ago how his minister has used this very simile. My friend had remarked that he found it very difficult to indorse some of the teachings of the Westminster Confession of Faith. His pastor replied: “Ah, that is not the way: when you take the Confession of Faith you must do so in the same manner that you take a Brandreth pill—you must swallow it whole; if you stop to chew it you can not swallow it.” This must be the general principle upon which all Christian teachers are proceeding—let us keep the people from thinking, from reasoning. Two ministers of these parts, conversing about the influence of my presentations of the Bible teachings, the following dialogue ensued.

(1) “Many of my people are reading, and some of them considerably learned on this subject.”

(2) “My advice is that you tell them to stop thinking and go to work.”

Ah, how evident it is that the creeds of the “dark ages will not stand investigation. If God’s consecrated people would but hear his voice in our text, and begin to use their reason in the study of his Word, rejecting the fallacies of the “dark ages,”

how soon a blessing of enlightenment would come to them. Shepherds, false to their commission from the Great Shepherd, are more anxious to keep their sheep within sectarian pens than to lead them to the green pastures and still waters provided for their spiritual nourishment.

There is a reasoning based upon human ignorance miscalled knowledge, or science, which ignores the divine Word, and with which none of the Lord's true followers can have sympathy. But, alas, this seems to be the only kind of reasoning ever presented from the majority of pulpits reasoning along the line of "higher criticism" and evolution theories, denying the inspiration of the divine Word, and setting up the teachings of Darwin, Huxley and Ingersoll as instead of the inspired message of God through Jesus, the apostles, and prophets. Let us who are faithful to the Word say with one of old, "My soul, come not thou into their counsels." Gen. 49:6

REASON ON PARABLE INTERPRETATION

Let us with full loyalty to the Word reason together with each other and with the Lord respecting one of the Master's parables, which seems to be the great Gibraltar of those who hold that the doctrine of eternal torment is a Bible teaching the parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus. While we might be afraid to trust our reason away from the Word of God we need not be afraid of error so long as we are loyal to that Word and endeavor to exercise sanctified common sense, we need have no fear of results. Some, however, approach the Word of God with such a conviction of his merciless character, that as soon as they begin to find a reasonable interpretation they begin to fear that they must be in error. How absurd such a position! Ought we not to expect that the God whose very name is Love, who tells us that our fears toward him are taught by the precepts of men, would have so reasonable, so just, so loving a plan for his creatures, that the investigation of it would rejoice our hearts and draw out our confidence more and more toward him whom we are told to love with all our hearts, minds, beings and strength.

A PARABLE OR A NARRATIVE

Some insist that the account given of the Rich Man and Lazarus is not a parable—that it is a statement of an actual occurrence. Let us investigate the matter—"Come, let us reason together, saith the Lord." If it is a narrative, a statement of actual facts, then every feature must accord with this view. If it is a parable, then every feature is parabolic.

It can not be a narrative of facts, for the following reasons: (1) The RICH MAN is not said to have been wicked—merely rich, well clothed, well fed. LAZARUS is not said to have been good, holy, saintly—merely sick and poor and hungry. If taken as a statement of literal facts this would involve an absurdity, and imply that all the well fed and well clothed were enroute for a future time of trouble; while all the poor and sick, contrariwise, would be en-route for future bliss, both irrespective of character. Such conclusions are not in harmony with reason, and must be rejected.

Furthermore, if it be a fact that the poor man went to Abraham's bosom literally, we may be sure that Abraham's arms were filled long ago, and that there would be little hope for even one more in his bosom. From this standpoint we would be obliged to suppose that all mankind, crowded out of Abraham's bosom, would be deprived of any opportunity for eternal bliss, however merited by their poverty and sickness in the present life. "Come, let us reason together," would introduce us to many other difficulties which would effectually preclude our acceptance of this as a narrative fact, and compel us to accept it as a parabolic statement.

WHAT IS A PARABLE

A parable is a word-picture in which nothing means exactly what the statement says. For instance, in one of his parables our Lord spoke of wheat and tares but did not mean wheat and tares. He explains that the wheat meant children of the Kingdom, and that tares meant children of the wicked one. In another parable he uses sheep and goats as illustrations, without meaning sheep and goats. So in this parable the Rich Man does not mean rich men, but something else. The Poor Man does not mean poor man, but something else. The sores and dogs also have other meanings than appear on the surface. Some of our Lord's parables he interpreted, and some he left as problems for us to work out under guidance of the holy Spirit. These in the Scriptures are called "his dark sayings," as it is written, "he shall open his mouth in parables and dark sayings." The question is, Have we a sufficiency of light from the general teachings of the Lord's Word and the facts of history which will enable us to understand this dark saying? Have we the guidance of the holy Spirit that we may interpret this parable? "Come, let us reason together!"

HARMONY WILL PROVE CORRECTNESS

Nothing can be accepted as a proper interpretation of this parable that does not go into and explain harmoniously all the various features of the statement. On the other hand any interpretation which will reasonably, consistently harmonize

every statement should be accepted as the proper interpretation, on the principle that the key which fits a lock and opens the door must be the proper key. We propose to use the proper key and unlock this parable in its every detail, and it is our opinion that no different key, either literal or symbolic, can be produced by anybody that will interpret this parable in a reasonable manner to an intelligent mind.

THE RICH MAN WAS THE JEW

The Rich Man of the parable represented the Jewish nation in our Lord's time. His clothing of purple and fine linen represented the honors and blessings and privileges accorded to that people over every other nation. The fine linen represented the typical justification granted them as a people under the Mosaic covenant, through the typical sacrifices for sins, which typified or foreshadowed the better sacrifices of Christ during the antitypical day of atonement. The purple raiment represented royalty

not only was purple the royal color in our Lord's day, but we still speak of royal purple. The Jewish nation had the purple in the sense that to it belonged the honor of being the typical Kingdom of God, and the promises respecting the future dominion of God as the Kingdom of God. The abundance of food upon the Rich Man's table represented the abundance of divine promises and blessings and instructions given to the Jewish nation. It was this table of divine favors that the Apostle referred to saying, "What advantage hath the Jew? Much every way, chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God." (Romans 3:1-2) This was the table respecting which the prophet and the apostle spake saying of Israel "Let their table become a trap and a snare unto them." (Rom. 11:9) In other words, the very bounties and blessings of God's revelations or oracles tended to make them not humble, but proud, and ultimately assisted in their stumbling and their rejection of the Savior.

LAZARUS THE POOR IN SPIRIT

"The scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' seat" as the religious leaders and representatives in Israel. They specially represented the Rich Man. They would not so much as eat with publicans and sinners. They ranked these as on a par with the Gentiles, whom they classed as dogs. Those who accepted our Lord's teachings were of this lowly class. Matthew, one of his disciples, was a publican, others were common fishermen; none of them were recognized by the religious aristocracy of the times. They were looked down upon, declared not to be heirs with the holy Pharisees and learned

Scribes and Doctors of the Law. The latter even determined that Jesus himself was not only a friend of publicans and sinners but an injurious person, who must not be allowed to live. From their standpoint the Lord and his followers were all outside the gates, excluded from the special privileges and blessings of God. They were the Lazarus class.

This Lazarus class included also those Gentiles of humble heart who accepted Jesus. As an illustration of how these fed on the crumbs which fell from the Rich Man's table let us remember our Lord's words to the Syrophenician woman, a Gentile who came to him entreating for the healing of her daughter. Our Lord, to illustrate the relative position of the Jews and Gentiles from God's standpoint, said unto her, "It is not meet (not proper) to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs" —which means, It would not be proper for me to devote my time and energies to the blessing of yourself and daughter, who are Gentiles, because the Jewish nation is by covenant with God in the favored place, so that to them belong first of all any special blessings and favors that God has to give. You Gentiles, called "dogs," are not to expect to get the favors I was sent to give to Israel." We remember his words to the disciples also, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, for I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

The message and blessings and opportunities could not go to the Gentiles until first they had been offered to the Rich Man and had been rejected. But mark that as Lazarus got some of the "crumbs," according to the parable, so did the Syrophenician woman. She exclaimed, "Yea, Lord, I know that we Gentiles are outside of the special divine favor which has been accorded to the Jew, and that it would not be reasonable for me to ask that the bread should be taken from the children to be given to us dogs; but, Lord, do not even dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table? and may I not therefore claim this crumb of favor and healing for my daughter?" Jesus answered and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith" — and he gave her the crumb of faith from the children's table —from the Rich Man's table.

HOW THE RICH MAN DIED

Did the Jewish nation continue thus in the favor of God, clothed with typical justification and royalty? Or, on the other hand, did that nation die to those special blessings and mercies of God which they previously, for over sixteen centuries, so richly enjoyed? Ask the Jew himself. He will not deny that shortly after the time that Jesus wept over Jerusalem and said "Your house is left unto you desolate," their nation did die. Not only have they since been without prophet and priest and vision but they have been without national life. As a nation

they have been buried. As a nation they are dead, and, like all in Hades, unconscious—as a nation. National sufferings they have none, because national existence they have none.

Yet they are still a people, though dissolved in death as a nation. As a people they have been in torments through the past eighteen centuries ever since the destruction of their city and polity, A. D. 69. At that time, as the Apostle foretold, “wrath is come upon this people to the uttermost. (1 Thess. 2:16) Oh, we are glad for the poor Jew that, after getting that wrath to the uttermost, there remains no further wrath for them beyond the tomb. They have had a sad enough experience as a people for the past eighteen centuries, in fulfilment of their prayer, “His blood be upon us and upon our children.” Thank God there is no prospect of a future torment for them. On the contrary, the Word of God contains various promises which assure us that the Jewish people will ultimately be delivered. Their sins, even to the crucifying of the Prince of Life, will be forgiven them, as the Scriptures declare “I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” As the Apostle declares, “they shall obtain mercy through your (the Church’s) mercy,” “for the gifts and calling of God are not to be repented of.” (Rom. 11:28-32) They are still beloved for the fathers’ sakes, and will be the first of mankind to be reconciled to God and to receive his blessings and favors in the Millennial age. After the perfection of the Church of this gospel age, and her glorification with her Lord, forgiveness and favor will come to Israel and to all the families of the earth.

LAZARUS CARRIED BY THE ANGELS

Let us look now to Lazarus let us note the class of publicans and sinners disesteemed by the proud pharisaical class, and who smote upon their bosoms saying, “God be merciful, we are sinners.” What were the experiences of these while the Rich Man was dying? We answer, that when the Rich Man was rejected from further divine favor and was dying, the angels, the messengers of God, the apostles, under the blessing and guidance of the holy Spirit, began to call all of the Lazarus class to the place of favor to Abraham’s bosom. “Father Abraham,” was the style, the title, by which the Jews looked fondly back to the patriarch as the father of the faithful; but when they

ceased to be faithful to God they ceased to have a right to consider themselves children of Abraham.

On the contrary, the publicans and sinners, the common people who heard the Lord gladly, were ready for the message which the apostles carried to them at and after Pentecost. Five thousand were converted in one day, and others were gathered. Whither? To Abraham's bosom—they became the "children of Abraham through faith," through Christ, through the adoption of the holy Spirit. (Gal. 3:7, 29) All through this Gospel age the Lord, through the ministries of his truth, has been calling this class to Abraham's bosom. It is of this class that the Apostle declares, "ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. 2:12,13) Again he declares, "Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise." (Gal. 4:28) Isaac was Abraham's special son of promise, received instead of Ishmael, who represented Israel according to the flesh—the Rich Man who died to heirship in the spiritual part of the Abrahamic promise, when fleshly Israel was rejected as a nation because of their national rejection of the true head of the body.

"We brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise," "if we be Christ's then are we Abraham's seed," or children, and this is what the parable represents. Abraham of the type, God in the antitype, has accepted us in Christ as his children, and if children then heirs, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, our Lord and head.

CRAVING A DROP OF WATER

Come back now to the Rich Man and glance at the sorrowful experiences that have come to the Jewish people in the centuries behind us. They have been persecuted by nearly every nation under heaven, and notwithstanding the civilized day in which we live they are subjects of persecution still, in harmony with the picture of this parable. Yea, at various times they have applied to God for relief and have applied to Christendom also, but without avail. Only recently the President of this United States was invoked by the Hebrew people to intercede for their relief in Russia, yet still the persecution continues, they get no drop of water,"—no relief. And from our understanding of the scriptural predictions of the future they will have still more persecution and perhaps still greater moments before their deliverance — "it is the time of Jacob's trouble." Jer. 30:7

By way of showing that the experiences outlined would apply not merely to the Jews of Palestine but to the Jews throughout the world, a feature is introduced into the parable by which the Rich Man is represented as asking special favors upon his five brethren: but the request being refused, implies that no extra favors would be granted the Jews outside of Palestine, that all Jews would be treated alike. They only had Moses and the prophets, and if they would not hearken to these they must have the same experiences as the Jews of Palestine.

The proportions of the number five when applied to the Jews of scattered tribes is manifest. The nation of Israel dwelling in Palestine specially represented two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, and in the same proportion the ten tribes scattered amongst all nations would be represented by five brethren.

COME, LET US REASON TOGETHER

What shall we say to these things? Here we have before our minds an interpretation of one of the Lord's parables that is fully in accord with all the facts and fully in accord with the delineations of the parable. Shall we accept this reasonable solution of it or shall we unreasonably interpret it to match with the heathenish ideas of the dark ages, confusing our own minds, dishonoring our God and destroying our faith in him and in his Word? Let us resolve that for our part we will begin to use reason in religious matters, in seeking to understand the divine Word in harmony with the only character of Justice and Love and Wisdom and Power which we could reasonably attribute to our Creator. So doing we will find ourselves advancing in grace as well as in knowledge, for it is an indisputable fact that we are all more or less copying in life our ideals our God. Those who copy a bad God, who have a low idea of God, are proportionately low, groveling, spiteful, themselves. Those whose eyes of understanding are opened to see the ideal God of the Bible develop most rapidly in his characteristics. "Be like unto your father which is in heaven," be ye copies of God's dear son.

* * * *

CHRISTIAN, seek not yet repose,
Hear thy gracious Savior say,
"Thou art in the midst of foes:
Watch and pray."

2H307

The National Labor Tribune, February 25, 1906

UNDYING WORMS, UNQUENCHABLE FIRE

Canton, Ohio, February 25--Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today. The afternoon topic was his discourse, A sure cure for infidelity, entitled "To Hell and Back." We report his evening discourse from the text, "Cast into hell fire, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Mark 9:47, 48

The declaration that our Lord opened his mouth in parables and dark sayings is well illustrated in our text: the more so if we include the context, in which our Lord recommended that it would be better for a man to lop off his hand or pluck out his eye and enter into eternal life maimed than to preserve these and go into hell fire-Gehenna. The people of our Lord's time were used to figures of speech. They frequently were perplexed by those which our Lord used, as, for instance, when he declared that he was the bread that came down from heaven and unless a man eat his flesh and drink his blood he could have no life in him. (John 6:41, 53) No wonder the poor hearers exclaimed, "This is a hard saying: who can hear it?" Our Lord spake in this dark manner, he tells us, with the very intention that the majority might not understand—that "hearing they might hear and not understand." But he likewise explained to his disciples, saying, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven; but to those who are without (outsiders) these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings." Luke 8:10

The true followers of Jesus, "taught of God," have learned the meaning of these dark sayings, yet the masses of Christendom comprehend them not. Nor can we hope to make these plain to the masses, for whom they were not intended. They should, however, be easily comprehended by the Lord's consecrated people, and even the world may be taught what they do not mean. Our hope this evening in discussing the obscure statements of this text lies along these lines. We hope that some of the Lord's truly consecrated will fully grasp the meaning of the text, and we hope to have others see, at least, that the language does not imply the perpetuation of sinners in torment to all eternity.

GEHENNA DIFFERENT FROM HADES

On other occasions we have considered the scriptural teaching respecting the sheol of the Old Testament and the hades of the New Testament, and found these words to refer to the death state, the tomb condition, in which the dead know not anything, but from which all have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and from which all mankind are to be delivered by an awakening in the resurrection morning by him who declares, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth." John 5:28, 29)

But the word hell in our text is an incorrect translation of a different Greek word, namely, Gehenna. Let us inquire the meaning of the Greek word Gehenna, and then proceed to an application of the words in our text.

Gehenna in the Greek language is a translation of the words, “valley of Hinnom” in the Hebrew language. This valley lies outside of Jerusalem, and at one time it was a deep, narrow gorge, but during the centuries it has gradually filled up, until now it bears no resemblance to its former appearance, but although a valley it is now a fertile field. We read of this valley as a prominent landmark away back at the time when the children of Israel first entered Canaan—it is so mentioned in the book of Joshua. (18:16) It is referred to repeatedly in the Old Testament by three different names: (1) The valley of Hinnom; (2) The valley of Slaughter; (3) Tophet. It was in this valley that the wicked king Ahaz established Baal worship and set up an image to Moloch. The image was hollow and constituted a furnace in which fuel was burned until the image was fiery hot. Through the prophet Jeremiah the Lord twice reproved the Israelites for this savagery, in one of these places describing the valley and giving it three different names. See Jer. 19:2, 6.

When the good king Josiah instituted reforms in Israel and abolished idolatry, he put a ban or curse upon this valley (2 Kings 23:10), so that it might never again be used for any kind of worship, good or bad. Thenceforth the valley became a synonym for all that was vile. In it was cast the rubbish and offal of the city of Jerusalem; in its depths were kept burning fires fed with brimstone, for the double purpose of destroying the combustible elements and also of preserving the health of the city, because the fumes of brimstone were then and are still recognized as a superior disinfectant, purifying the atmosphere by killing the germs of disease and decay. Later on, as a special terror to evil doers, the carcasses of the vilest criminals were thrown into this valley, treated with every disrespect as merest offal, with a view to deterring crime.

“WHERE THEIR WORM DIETH NOT”

Naturally some of the offal cast into this valley did not reach the bottom of it, but, caught upon the ledges,

2H308

or otherwise not reaching the bottom, was not so closely in contact with the fire as to be consumed. Indeed the fires, as already explained, were not so much to consume the carcasses as to purify the air, destroying the injurious qualities of gases arising from the decomposition. Hence

the worms, maggots, generated upon these carcasses, utterly consuming them.

The expression, “Where their worm dieth not,” should not be understood as describing worms possessing immortality, but merely as intimating that if conditions were favorable there would be nothing to destroy the worms and hinder them from accomplishing the work of complete destruction. Likewise the fire which “is not quenched” does not mean that the fire could not have been quenched but that there was no desire to quench it, no right or permission to quench it—it continued to burn, was intended to burn, was serving a good purpose in burning. The people of our Lord’s day were well acquainted with the facts. It is the people of today who, after fifteen centuries of delusion on the subject of eternal torment, are most seriously handicapped by their lack of knowledge of what the Lord really said and the proper application of the words.

APPLYING OUR LORD’S WORDS

Let us now apply our Lord’s words. What did he mean by saying that it would be better to cut off a right hand or blot out an eye than to be cast into Gehenna? We answer that his words have a two-fold application:

(1) There would be a certain lesson which all Israelites could take from them; (2) There was another lesson which only the comparatively few of his hearers could appreciate. All understood that the Lord did not mean a literal cutting off of the hand or blotting out of an eye: all understood that he meant that sins should be lopped off and discarded even though precious as an eye or a hand—even though considered amongst the most important features of life, the greatest pleasures. To the masses this would mean that they should avoid criminal conduct which might, if persisted in, lead from bad to worse, until they might be considered so vile as to be cast after death into this Valley of Hinnom, Gehenna, Tophet, that their bodies might thus be consumed and by implication that they should be considered unworthy of any future life: for to the Jews burial implied the hope of a resurrection, but the utter destruction of Gehenna implied hopelessness as respects a future life.

To those to whom it was given to understand the mystery of the Kingdom, the Lord’s words had a still higher signification, and meant that they, having become his disciples, having made a consecration to be his followers, had staked their all upon the results. If faithful in the narrow way even unto death they would be granted eternal life and that on the highest possible plane, the “divine nature,” by a share in the glorious change of the first resurrection. But these thus on trial for glory, honor and immortality must beware, because they have undertaken a serious matter, and to even look back longingly

at the things of the present time, to even in their hearts rue the sacrifice they had made, would mean that they would be unworthy of a place in the Kingdom. Luke 9:62

These specially consecrated followers should recognize that they not only agreed to abandon sin to the extent of their ability, but had agreed also to walk in the narrow way of sacrifice—yielding up their rights and privileges as respects the present time that they might gain the higher glories and blessings of the spiritual nature. These were to consider that however delightful, however enjoyable might be their earthly pleasures and comforts, these if they stood in the way of their sacrifice, if they offended (that is stumbled) them in the race for the great prize set before them so that they would ultimately fail of gaining eternal life, would result in their going into the Second Death—utter destruction. This Second Death they would understand to be the antithesis, the opposite, of the Second Life, just as literal Gehenna was the extreme antithesis of the earthly life. In no sense of the word could any of our Lord's hearers get the impression that Gehenna fire represented torture, for no torture was ever permitted; it was only after the animal or criminal was dead that the carcass was thrown into this valley.

The divine law strictly forbade the Jew from torturing any creature or taking pleasure therein in any measure. It was the heathen teaching of the roasting of children in this very valley that our Lord condemned, and it is the same heathen teaching that has come down through the ages and permeated Christian thought, greatly to the disadvantage of all who to any extent entertain it, greatly to the dishonor also of our heavenly Father, whose arrangements are all both just and loving and opposed to cruelty. The understanding of all of our Lord's hearers respecting Gehenna must have been that his figurative references to it were along the lines of total destruction—a hopeless destruction—ignominious destruction from which there could be no recovery. How well, then, the valley of Hinnom, Gehenna, represents the Second Death.

“THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE”

In the symbolical book of Revelation our Lord presents to us a picture of the New Jerusalem—the glorified Kingdom—and outside of it he pictures Gehenna, “the lake of fire and brimstone,” more properly the

2H309

“abyss of fire and brimstone.” Let us get the picture before our minds, remembering that this symbolical book is written in picture language, in symbols. As the New Jerusalem symbolically represents the glorified Church, whose twelve foundation stones bear the names of the

twelve apostles, so the valley outside that city is equally symbolical. In the city, we are told, the glory, honor and dignity of all nations may ultimately come, through obedience to the laws of the Millennial Kingdom; but those who work iniquity and violence shall not be permitted to enter the city and the eternal life and harmony with God which it represents, but these on the contrary, in the picture, are represented as being cast into the abyss of fire and brimstone, and the explanation is given in so many words, “which is the second death.”
Rev. 20:14

And what could more particularly represent the second death than this very picture? Gehenna fire itself is a symbol of destruction, never a figure of preservation. Burning brimstone is another figure of destruction—everything that has life is subject to the power of burning brimstone. It means sure death to life of every form. Even today, if we were making symbols, we could think of nothing that would more thoroughly, more completely represent utter destruction of life and being than the figure which the Lord has here used, “The lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

GEHENNA IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the Old Testament this Gehenna thought—this thought of the second death and utter destruction, from which no recovery would be possible, from which there would be no resurrection—is distinctly pictured in Isaiah’s prophecy (66:24), describing the future conditions when the Gospel Church completed will have passed into glory beyond the veil on the Spirit plane, describing the blessed conditions of mankind under the Millennial Kingdom, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and none shall need to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord. (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34) The prophecy goes on to describe the rebellious and to show their utter destruction. It assures us that the willing and obedient who will then worship the Lord “in the beauty of holiness” shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of men who have transgressed against him: “for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”

It will be noticed that this description corresponds exactly with the New Testament delineations of the second death, the Gehenna destruction. There is no intimation whatever of the torture of these transgressors against the Lord. Men may take pleasure in the torture of their victims and their enemies, but the true God never—Molech might require sacrifices of burning, but Jehovah never. The picture speaks of seeing the carcasses of those who transgressed, not of seeing the transgressors alive, in flames, shrieking in torture and pain, pitched about on pitchforks by gleeful, fire-proof devils. How reasonable, how sensible is the Scriptural teaching on this

subject, as on every subject. All of our confusion and trouble has come from neglect of the Word of God and adherence to the traditions of men, who, however well intentioned, were grossly blinded by the “god of this world” with the same sophistries and fallacies with which he has blinded and enslaved the entire world in superstition. 2 Cor. 4:4

THE SECOND DEATH PENALTY

The very term second death implies a first death. This first death entered the world through father Adam and his disobedience, and has been in force swallowing up the human family for the past six thousand years. All mankind are under this original death sentence, as the Apostle declares—By one man’s disobedience sin entered the world and death as the result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because all are sinners. Rom. 5:12

None can come under the sentence of the second death pictured by Gehenna until he has first gotten out from under the sentence of the first death, Adamic death. Adamic death would have been eternal in its results had it not been for the divine mercy which provided a ransom for it. By that ransom our Lord Jesus secured the right to release Adam and all his posterity from the Adamic death, the first death; hence it will not be an eternal death against any man. But the release from it comes only to those who have a knowledge of Jesus and who by faith accept him as their Savior. Upon all others condemnation remains. Hence the majority of the world to-day are still under Adamic condemnation of death: only the Church—who have heard of God’s provision for our recovery, and who have accepted his terms, and have laid hold upon the Life-Giver—these alone are reckoned as having passed from Adamic death unto life, and these alone, therefore, are liable to the Second Death.

Mark how the Apostle lays emphasis upon this point. Describing the Church, the household of faith, believers, partakers of the holy Spirit, etc., he declares, “If we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.”(Heb. 10:26, 27) This fiery indignation which would devour us as adversaries of God if we turn from the way of holiness, like to a sow wallowing again in the mire, is another way of describing the second death, the abyss of

2H310

fire and brimstone—which is the second death.

No wonder the Apostle says to the Church—not to the world—“Let us fear lest a promise having been left us of

entering into his rest any of us should seem to come short of it”—for our God is not a literal fire, but in the same figurative sense he has provided an abyss of fire and brimstone for all who wilfully, intelligently repudiate his government. In this sense and to this class he is a consuming fire. (Heb. 4:1, 12:29) His love and mercy having done everything reasonable and proper on their behalf, nothing will turn aside from such wilful evil doers the just, righteous destruction which the Lord has declared against this class. “The wages of sin is death,” is a brief statement of the divine law.

SECOND DEATH FOR ALL THE WICKED

Although the world in general is still under the Adamic penalty of death, so that merely consecrated believers are subject to the second death now, nevertheless the Lord’s Word distinctly points out that every member of Adam’s race redeemed by the precious blood of Christ will ultimately have a full opportunity of gaining eternal life under the blessed ministries of Christ and the Church during the Millennial reign. When in “God’s due time” the masses of mankind will be released from the condemnation of Adamic death and brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth they will be on trial for everlasting life or everlasting death—the second death—utter destruction. (1 Tim. 2:4-6) It is not for us to determine whether the numbers of those who will ultimately be saved shall preponderate over that of the lost in the second death, but it is for us to rejoice that as “the dead know not anything” in the first death, so similarly in the second death they will now nothing, experience no suffering, no pain. Their loss will consist in their deprivation of the eternal life and the joys and blessings which will come to those who by obedience to the divine requirements will return from sin and death conditions by restitution processes up to all that glorious perfection of mind and body lost by Adam—including the glories and dignities and privileges which were his.

Let us more and more rejoice in the God of our salvation—the God of justice, wisdom, love and power fully coordinated, who is working out things according to the counsel of his own will, and who ultimately will fulfill his oath-bound covenant to bless all the families of the earth with a knowledge of himself and with an opportunity for eternal life through the antitypical seed of Abraham, Christ and his elect Bride. Gal. 3:16,29

The National Labor Tribune, March 4, 1906

SUFFERING THE VENGEANCE OF ETERNAL FIRE

Pastor C. T. Russell addressed a large audience at Bible House Chapel, Allegheny, at 3 p. m. Sunday from the text, "Set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude 7) The speaker said:

The general ignorance and the misunderstanding of the people respecting the divine character and plan which during the "dark ages" spread over so-called Christendom have given to the words of our text a lurid horror which has tended to intensify and burn into their hearts and minds the atrocious doctrines of devils, pitchforks and eternal torment which has so dishonored God's name and so perplexed and troubled his faithful people for centuries. This misapprehension of the Scriptures, still prevailing under the increasing light of this twentieth century is leading thousands of people away from the Word of God into infidelity. They say to themselves, "We can not believe such doctrines; and if the Bible is the foundation for these horrible nightmares of the past, we can no longer tolerate it except as a relic of superstition.

But, dear friends, the more we get to understand the real teachings of the Bible and to appreciate the real character of God the more we will love and honor both, and, correspondingly, the more we will detest the nightmares and superstitions of that dark period in which our deluded ancestors attempted to confirm their misconceptions of God by burning one another at the stake for differences of opinion. Let us hold fast to the precious Word, not superstitiously, as loving and kissing the covers of the book, but with true, intelligent reverence, as appreciating its message of wisdom, justice, love and power from our heavenly Father to us his children, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, after truth, after knowledge, of his character and plan.

THE MEANING OF THE TEXT

When we shall have analyzed this text it will, we believe, forever have lost its luridness, its terrors, and henceforth in all of our minds will be a reasonable, just statement of the doings of our reasonable, just, loving God. We notice the connection: Jude is discussing evil doers, especially those who, having been favored of the Lord with a knowledge of his grace and truth, have turned therefrom willfully, intentionally, into the ways of sin. The Apostle is calling to our minds the fact that such a course is sure to have a punishment, and cites

illustrations from the past to show the general trend of divine government. He instances the deliverance of the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage, yet that this favor of the Lord did not excuse them from punishment and destruction when subsequently they were rebellious. Another illustration is that of the angels, who were at first in divine favor, but who by disobedience were sentenced to chains of darkness until the great day of judgment. As a third illustration of the principle that God punishes evil doers, the Apostle refers to the Sodomites, who, because they gave themselves over to fornication, etc., are set forth for an example—"suffering the vengeance (punishment) of eternal fire."

ETERNAL FIRE ON SODOM

Let us not too hastily read into this passage what it does not contain: It does not say that the Sodomites suffered the vengeance of eternal torment as the majority seem to understand it. It is speaking of the city of Sodom, the city of Gomorrah, and the other cities about them, and their inhabitants—that they suffered punishment for their wrong course. The fire by which they were punished is described in Genesis 19:24, 25, just Lot and his family alone being spared—delivered from that fire and its destructive work. The fire which burned those cities and destroyed those people is in our English translation called "eternal fire," but it would be a mistake to suppose that this means a fire that would last to all eternity. The fire is not burning now. It burned until it had utterly destroyed those people and their cities, and the Greek word here rendered eternal has this signification: it is aionian fire, or literally a fire that burned to a completion of its work of destruction. There is not a suggestion about its being a fire that will burn in the future, but, to the contrary, it effected its work, and our Lord testifies saying, "It rained down fire from heaven and destroyed them all." Luke 17:29

Let us give our Lord's words their proper weight: he says the people of Sodom and Gomorrah and surroundings were destroyed, not preserved by that fire. He does not intimate that they are in the fire now, but quite to the contrary. When discussing those people he intimates quite distinctly that they know nothing at the present time, but that in the coming forth of the resurrection time they will have a judgment or trial for eternal life. More than this, comparing them with some who heard his preaching in Capernaum and surrounding cities, he declares, "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for you." Matt. 10:15

"More tolerable!" The intimation is that in the great day of judgment, the Millennial age, when the world in general shall

be on trial for life everlasting or the second death, the people of Capernaum who heard the Lord will be on trial with others. But inasmuch as they had had superior advantages to others, and had neglected those advantages, they would be correspondingly less benefited by the blessings and mercies of God which, during the Millennial reign of Christ, will extend to every member of Adam's race. And this we understand to be a general principle of divine dealings:

where much of light and knowledge and opportunity and privilege are granted, much will be required; where sin abounds in opposition to the light of truth there is correspondingly large responsibility, and the stripes or punishment will be proportionate. But there is no suggestion in any part of the narrative either that the people of Capernaum or the people of Sodom and Gomorrah went to their rewards good or bad at death, nor that in the awakening of the resurrection time they would suffer eternal torture.

Our Lord proceeds to explain that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah had less advantage than the people of Capernaum and Palestine, and he declares that if they had heard his preaching and seen his miracles "they would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes." (Matt. 11:21) Is there, then, injustice with God that the people of Capernaum should have so many privileges and mercies more than the people of Sodom, and yet that the latter should be sent to eternal torment? Who would so claim in view of our Lord's statement that if they had enjoyed the same amount of favor they would have repented with deep contrition in sackcloth and ashes?

THE FUTURE OF THE SODOMITES

Dear friends, we have already shown that the eternal fire upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah was a literal fire, and has no relationship to any future torment of any kind: now let us see what the Scriptures do say respecting the future of the Sodomites. Those of you not familiar with your Bibles, and whose minds have long been clouded with misconceptions, will no doubt be astounded by the evidences which we will produce from the Scriptures showing that the Sodomites are to come back from the destruction which came upon them through the aionian fire which destroyed their cities as well as their lives. Nevertheless, all of you who have good hearts and reasonable minds will rejoice to find that the heavenly Father has made provision through the death of his Son for all the world of mankind, even including the wicked Sodomites.

We are offering no suggestion that God will save them in their sins, but on the contrary that he will save them from their sins. Our Lord's words assure us that the Sodomites were at heart and in his sight not worse than

the people of Capernaum, who had greater light and therefore greater responsibility. Doubtless the

2H312

Lord would say the same of our city or of any other civilized city today that the Sodomites were no worse at heart, that their outer wickedness and licentiousness was largely the result of their ignorance. Surely all who have the love of God in their hearts and who intelligently pray, "Thy will be done," will be glad to know that the divine will is to bring a blessing to the people of Sodom. Now let us examine the proofs.

First, we have our Lord's statement, already referred to, assuring us that in the day of judgment (the Millennial day of a thousand years, in which the world will be judged or tried for everlasting life or the Second Death) the condition of the Sodomites will be more favorable than that of some others who thought themselves very religious. Secondly, we have the Lord's statement that the fire which rained from heaven destroyed them all, and this precludes any suggestion that a part of them might have remained alive and that the Lord might have had reference to the remnant not destroyed and their posterity. Unquestionably he referred to the ones who were destroyed, as the language clearly states.

"TIMES OF RESTITUTION"

The Apostle Peter tells us of the "times of restitution" which will begin at the second coming of our Lord: he calls the same the "times of refreshing." (Acts 3:21) He tells us that this coming refreshing or restitution was spoken of by the Lord through the mouth of all the holy prophets of the past. Let us look at one of these prophecies of the coming restitution which specifically mentions the Israelites, God's favored people; the Samaritans, their neighbors in Palestine: and the Sodomites, who once occupied a portion of Palestine. Turn with me to the prophecy of Ezekiel, chapter 16. Read throughout the entire chapter a serious arraignment of the people of Israel and their failure to be loyal to the Lord, to whom they had been betrothed by the Mosaic Covenant. From the forty-eighth verse to the end of the chapter we have the Lord's prophecy respecting the future of Israel, Samaria, and Sodom, and the restitution blessings that are to come to all three at or about the same time.

As our Lord guarded against any misunderstanding as to which Sodomites were meant by saying that he referred to those upon whom God rained down fire and consumed them, so in speaking through his mouthpiece, the prophet Ezekiel, he identifies the Sodomites whom he intends to restore in due time, saying, "Behold, this

was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom: pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters; nor did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.” Vs. 49, 50

In verses 51, 52, the Lord points out Samaria’s unrighteousness, but declares that Israel’s course under her special favors and privileges and advantages in every way was more abominable in his sight than that of either of the others, and that they were both in comparison justified rather than condemned by the course of Israel. Then, pointing down to the future, in harmony with the declaration of the Scriptures everywhere that the Lord after punishing Israel will bring them back from their captivity and bless them under the spiritual seed of Abraham, the account in vs. 53-56 specifically tells us about this returning from captivity, the captivity of death into which the Israelites by the million have gone as well as the Samaritans and Sodomites—”When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them.”

What is the object of thus stating the matter of the conjoined awakening of these three peoples? The answer is, “That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be ashamed because of all that thou hast done in that thou art a comfort unto them.” In other words, when the great Millennial day of judgment and trial shall have been fully opened, and its blessings shall be poured out upon the world, God will use Israel in her shame and exposure in the light of that day to comfort the Sodomites and Samaritans in their degree of shame and exposure in that day.

“SHAME AND LASTING CONTEMPT”

Through the Prophet Daniel the Lord speaks of these returning from the captivity of death, and tells first of the faithful of the Church, who will come forth from the tomb to shine as the stars forever and ever; and then he refers to the others, such as the Sodomites and Samaritans and Israelites, who shall come forth to shame and lasting contempt.” (Dan. 12:2) It will be in this shame and contempt condition that Israel will be a comfort to her sister nations. But it is not God’s design that the shame and contempt should work an eternal blight to those poor creatures or to others, but that it should be associated with the period of reformation—that being ashamed of their past course of sin and degradation they might turn from the things of sin and shame and be transformed under the influence of the

Kingdom of God's dear Son, which, as the Sun of righteousness, shall fill the whole earth with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, putting to shame, to flight, the works of darkness and sin. It will indeed be a comfort to the Sodomites, when they realize their own degradation, to see that some others who had enjoyed so many more favors than they were equally put to

2H313

shame. The shame will be more tolerable for Sodomites and Gomorrah than for the people of Capernaum.

But there will be no need of their remaining in this contemptible condition and under shame. All the influences of the Kingdom will be favorable to their rising out of sin and death conditions and coming up, up, up on the highway of holiness, which will then, we are assured by the Prophet, be established, that all who love righteousness and desire harmony with God amongst the world of mankind will go up thereon without ostentation and with every needed assistance so that by the end of the Millennial age they will have reached the end of that grand highway of holiness and perfection, everlasting life. Only the wilful and disobedient, and those who love sin and hate righteousness, will be excluded from this highway and its termination in perfection, and they, we are assured, will not be eternally tormented, but "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. II Thess. 1:9

"RETURN TO YOUR FORMER ESTATE"

No one can doubt that the period referred to by our Lord as the day of judgment, in which it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for Capernaum, meant the period of time following his second advent and the establishment of his Kingdom. No one can doubt either that the time mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel is the very same—when the captivity of the Sodomites and Israelites shall be at an end—when all the captives shall be released from the prison-house of death. No one can question either that the Apostle Peter, in speaking of the times of restitution, had reference to this same period following the Lord's second advent. Now, then, connect these three together and notice what the prophet declares respecting the liberation of these captives and to what purpose they are liberated from the prison-house of death. I quote:

"When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate." The prophet is here undoubtedly referring to the "times of restitution" mentioned by the Apostle Peter. He says, "return to your former estate." What is here meant? We answer that man's original estate, according to the Bible record, was the image and likeness of God. It was from this

glorious estate that Adam fell—and all of us as his race, his children, in his loins, fell from the same into a condition of sin, degradation and death. So then, when we read that the prison-doors shall be opened, and that the captives shall be set free from the prison-house of death and from the bondage of corruption, and then read that they shall return to their former estate, it means restitution back, back, back to the original likeness of God lost through sin.

“A RANSOM FOR ALL”

And this is exactly what is implied respecting the Lord’s sacrificial death, when we are told that “he gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (1 Tim. 2:6) He ransomed father Adam, the original sinner, and incidentally ransomed also every member of his race, as well as all of his possessions, titles, privileges and rights as the original King of earth. The very object of this purchase was the restitution of man and his estate to their primeval dignity, honor and glory. And this is the promise of the Bible—times of restitution— and Paradise restored, which in the future will not merely be a garden in Eden but the entire earth. Why should we be astonished to find that God is carrying out a great and glorious plan which his Word everywhere outlines? The fact that it has been delayed is explained by the other fact that the Lord desired to give our whole world a lesson on the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and desired at the same time to take out of the world a “little flock” of peculiar faith and love and zeal, to be associated with his Son in the great work of blessing the world with restitution.

Come back now to Ezekiel’s statement of the matter. I want you to notice carefully the Lord’s statement in the context, for you will be told by ministers that they know better—that they know the Lord has no such good and generous heart and plan—that they know that this statement must be “ironical.” Alas! poor depraved humanity finds it difficult to believe in the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding! But, regardless of what any one may say, you and I want the Word of the Lord on this subject, and on every subject:

“Let God be true though it make every man a liar.” (Rom. 3:4) Now read the remainder of the chapter from verse 56 to the end, and note that the Lord is speaking very sympathetically and comfortingly. He does indeed reprove Israel, especially for having broken his Covenant and despised the oath which sealed it, but he tells them that he proposes to keep his Oath-Bound Covenant, anyway.

That Covenant declares: “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” The Apostle tells us

that Israel failed to obtain the chief blessing under this Covenant which it had hoped for—it failed to become the spiritual seed. He tells us that Christ and the Church, his body, his members, attained to this favored position, and that through Christ and the Church therefore, as the antitypical seed of Abraham, all the families of the earth are to be blessed. He tells us

2H314

that Israel will be among the first to be blessed. At your convenience please read carefully the Apostle's exact words on this subject as recorded in Romans 11:25-32

Now come back and read again the Lord's statement in Ezekiel 16:60, 63. "Nevertheless (notwithstanding your evil course and your unworthiness) I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting Covenant. Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed (when the whole world is ashamed under the light of the Millennial Sun of Righteousness), when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger. And I will give them unto thee for daughters but not by thy Covenant (not under the New Covenant then to be established in the earth); and I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AS AN EXAMPLE

Coming back now to our text we find that we have a new light upon it, and we can see in what sense of the word it was set forth as an example—not of future torment, but in respect to divine indignation against sin in general. God declares that he is thoroughly opposed to sin in its every form, that it shall ultimately be destroyed utterly, and that all that will not come into harmony with the great Prophet, Priest and King, Jesus, the Head of the Church, and the Church, his body members, shall be ultimately destroyed from amongst the people as were the Sodomites—with a complete, everlasting destruction.

True, our Lord's dealings in the past and in the present are specially with his consecrated people—Israel after the flesh and Israel after the Spirit. Nevertheless, this does not imply that the Lord has not an overruling hand in all the affairs of the world. While permitting sin to reasonably take its course and to bring its own lessons and experiences to the world of mankind, that all may learn something of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, nevertheless the Lord clearly intimates that

in any place where sin shall have run its course and be standing in the way of the divine purposes, it will be headed off. So it was with the Sodomites. Pride and prosperous ease had led them to despise the poor and needy, had made them haughty, and favored amongst them licentiousness. The Lord blotted them out with the fire from heaven, as he saw good. For them to have remained would have been to permit a plague spot in the very land in which he intended later on to plant his typical people, Israel after the flesh.

The example furnished us in this incident illustrates, not eternal torment, but the “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power” which will surely be visited ultimately upon all evil doers. We are thankful, however, for the blessed assurance that before either the Sodomites or any of the world who have been redeemed by the precious blood could be condemned to that Second Death they must all be brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth. This is the divine declaration, “God our Savior, who would have all men to be saved and to come to an accurate knowledge of the truth. Because there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” 1 Tim. 2:3-5

This view of our Heavenly Father’s character, as indicated and exemplified in his dealings with our race in the past, and in the declarations of his Word in respect to his future dealings, is cheering and encouraging and helpful to all those who are truly the sons of God, begotten of his Spirit.

The Sodomites did indeed suffer loss in that they were cut off from life a little sooner than they would otherwise have been. They have been redeemed by the one sacrifice for all; but when granted their opportunity in due time, in the “times of restitution,” if then they be negligent and will not hearken to the voice of the great King of glory, they will suffer the vengeance of cutting off again, and that without remedy, for from the Second Death there is no redemption, no recovery. “Let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest (into life eternal on the highest plane, the ‘divine nature’) any of us should seem to come short of it.” (Heb.4: 1) The principle that now operates in the judgment of the Church in this age is the same that will operate by and by in conjunction with the whole world— except that our trial is by faith in advance of actual knowledge and demonstration, and the life proffered to us is that on the spiritual, heavenly plane instead of the earthly restitution, which will be proffered to the world.

Pastor Russell’s “Studies in the Scriptures” are published and sold at absolute cost by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, Bible House,

Allegheny, Pa. These are frequently called "Bible Keys,"
so wonderfully do the Scriptures open before the reader.
Nearly 2,000,000 copies are now in circulation.

* * * *

I yield my sinful heart to Thee,
And in Thy love Thou fillest me.

The National Labor Tribune, March 11, 1906

HOPE FOR THE RECOVERY OF MANY IN THE RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION

Pastor C. T. Russell preached Sunday evening at Carnegie Music Hall, Pittsburg, on "The Resurrection of Life and the Resurrection of Damnation." (John 5:28, 29) The large auditorium was crowded, extra chairs being placed upon the platform and many standing, while some were turned away. The speaker said:

Our text has been one of the bugbears of ignorance and superstition, chaining us to an irrational and blasphemous view of our Creator's character and plan. Thanks be unto God that in the dawn of the Millennial morning, which is bringing us blessings of a material kind on every hand, the eyes of our understanding are gradually opening to the discernment of the grandeur of the Divine purpose respecting our race and realization of the same precious truths which enthused the apostles and the early Church, but which were so sadly buried under ignorance and superstition during the "dark ages."

How many absurd theories were built upon this text! The most unreasonable of them all is one which claims that a part of man goes into eternal torment when he dies, and that God is so ferociously revengeful that he is not satisfied with this, but by and by will resurrect a body for the suffering spirit, that he may thereby add to the awfulness of its torture. This text is supposed to be the basis for that thought. Before seeking the real meaning of the text we call attention to the contemptible, mean view of the Creator's character and plan which all eternal-torment theories foster. The God who declares himself to be the embodiment of justice is pictured thus before our minds as the very embodiment of injustice; the God who declares his name to be love, as the very embodiment of anger, malice, hatred or revenge.

The merest glance at our text shows it a poor translation. It declares a resurrection of life and a resurrection of damnation. Has life been dead that it needs a resurrection? Is damnation a thing which died and also needs a resurrection? What sense is there in this translation anyway? It is non-sensical! There is not the slightest ground for the word damnation in this text:

the Greek word krisis is the word here improperly rendered damnation, in utter violation of the Greek and out of all

harmony with the various renderings of the same word elsewhere. This word *krisis* occurs four other times in the same chapter with our text and is properly translated judgment. For instance, in the very next verse our Lord uses the same word, saying, “My judgment (*krisis*) is just”—not, My damnation is just. Why the translators rendered it damnation is utterly inexplicable, except upon the hypothesis that they thought they knew the mind of the Lord on the subject and that they could explain it better than he did. Such a course is always a mistake.

The translators had the fog of the “dark ages” in their minds. Their thought was that the judgment of every man is past when he dies, and that hence our Lord must have made a mistake when referring to any as coming forth to a resurrection of judgment. They were evidently trying to help the Lord to state matters according to their understanding of his plan. Our only safety is in holding fast to the Word of the Lord. The translators in this case remind us of James and John, the beloved apostles, who in the beginning of their ministry were offended at the people of Samaria, and asked permission of our Lord to call down fire from heaven to destroy those men and their city. But what were Jesus’ words—“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.” (Luke 9:56) So the translators erred because they had not a sufficiency of the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, to enable them to discern the meaning of the words. Hence they turned upside down what we shall show was a gracious promise, and made of the statement a most diabolical threat.

THIS TEXT IN THE REVISED VERSION

In the revised version of the New Testament you will find a better translation, in that it renders *krisis* judgment instead of damnation. It also, however, labors with a false thought in speaking of a resurrection of life and a resurrection of judgment. The proper translation of the verse would be, “They that have done good unto a life resurrection and they that have done evil unto a judgment resurrection.” Let no one get the impression from our vigorous opposition to the doctrine of eternal torment that we believe the Scriptures to teach that there is no punishment for sin. Quite to the contrary, our teaching is in accord with the Bible, that the Lord will render a just recompense of reward to every soul of man that doeth evil—that they who sin against much light shall receive many stripes, while those doing evil and sinning against little light will receive correspondingly fewer stripes or lesser punishment.

It is a mistake to suppose that the horrible doctrines

2H316

which have been taught us have drawn men to righteousness. It is truth and not error that sanctifies and draws us to God. As an illustration: In Atlanta, Ga., a man whom I had never before seen approached me and said, "I want to tell you, Pastor Russell, that I am a new man, that I have given my heart to God, that I hate the sins I once indulged in. Your presentations of the Scriptures affected this change. I was a very, very wicked man, a liquor dealer; I indulged in every kind of sin. On the basis of my ignorance of the true teaching of God's Word I supposed that my eternal future was sealed, that God would never recognize me, that I would spend an eternity of torture. I determined that I would merit all that I might get, and went from bad to worse, until your teachings showed me the real wages of sin, the real stripes, the real punishments which every wrong doer would receive according to the Scriptures. Now by God's grace I shall endeavor to spend the remainder of my life seeking to build up character, and trusting to his grace to assist me. With a better knowledge of my Creator's character I can praise him for the blessings and mercies and forgiveness which he has promised me."

There are twelve readers of ZION'S WATCH TOWER in the Columbus, O., penitentiary, earnestly striving to cultivate the spirit of Christ, because they have learned the way of the Lord more perfectly. They are doing mission work amongst the other prisoners. When they entered that prison as criminals they held the usual view that eternal torment was the wages of sin, yet it did not deter them from sin. The love of God and the justice of God as seen in a proper view of his Word will change the heart and transform the life where error fails to do so. Harken upon the streets as you pass how men damn one another to eternal torture, and reflect that faith in that wrong doctrine has probably driven them to their present attitude of mind and blasphemy.

Notice that almost every murderer executed professes to have been reared under the dogma of eternal torture and to be a full believer in it, yet the misbelief did not hinder him from being a murderer. On the other hand, note the transforming influence of the Truth upon the hearts, the characters, the lives of those who receive it into good and honest hearts. Let us remember, however, that according to the Scriptures a certain attitude of heart is necessary before the Truth can be received and appropriated—that, as the Scriptures declare, "None of the wicked shall understand." (Dan. 12:10) It is not, therefore, our expectation, dear friends, that wicked people will be interested in our presentations—we seek

the wheat, "Light is sown for the righteous and truth for the upright in heart." Psalm 97:11

THE GOOD UNTO LIFE RESURRECTION

Our text divides the world of mankind into two classes, the good and the evil. Similarly the apostle writes of a "resurrection of the just and of the unjust." (Acts 24:15) That neither the Lord nor the Apostles meant to intimate that any of mankind are good, perfect in the absolute sense, is most evident from the trend of the Scriptures, which assure us in various forms that the whole race is fallen, that "there is none righteous, no not one." (Rom. 3:10) The "good" of our Lord's statement, the "just" of the Apostle's statement, are those who are justified in God's sight through faith, justified from sin, their sins covered, imputed to them, because of their accepting the divine arrangement and because they are seeking to walk in the Lord's way. The Apostle explains the situation elsewhere, saying, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4) These can not walk up to the spirit of God's law, because of their inherited blemishes under the fall, but since these are covered by God's grace in Christ, such as are walking to the best of their ability after the spirit of God's law are reckoned as though walking up to the spirit of that law. In their minds they are up to the standard, and their flesh approximates perfection as nearly as may be from day to day.

But if only these received the life resurrection how few they are! How few you know and how few I know who are thoroughly regenerated, and who would even claim to be walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Only these few, therefore, need hope for a part in the life resurrection. All the remainder will have their part in what our text refers to as the resurrection of damnation. But, thank God, we find that a mistranslation in our common version has seriously be-clouded the true import of our Master's words.

We might say something in defence of those here listed as doing evil. Many of them are heathen who know not God, whose eyes of understanding have never opened to a knowledge of the grace of God in Christ, and the hope there is before them of eternal life through the precious blood. Many of this class even in civilized lands could have something said in their behalf, as, for instance, that, although they have heard something respecting God and the Redeemer, what they have heard has not been good tidings of great joy to all people, but in the main the very reverse—bad tidings of great misery for all people. They have thus been deceived by the confusion which abounds in all the creeds of Christendom on this subject, as the Lord declares through the Prophet, "Their fear toward me is not of me but is taught by the precepts of men." Isa. 29:13

2H317

Moreover the entire race is mentally, morally and physically impaired through the fall, and God alone knows how to make proper allowances for these conditions as they bear upon the various members of our race. It is for this reason that he warns us that we shall not attempt a final judgment of one another, "Judge nothing before the time." (1 Cor. 4:5) When God's time shall come another judgment will be effected, no room for doubt will be left; every member of our race shall come to a clear knowledge of the Truth, that he may be saved, or, rejecting it, he may be destroyed from amongst the people in the Second Death. Acts 3:23

The National Labor Tribune, March 18, 1906

WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH IN THE OUTER DARKNESS

Wheeling, W. Va., March 18—Pastor C. T. Russell addressed large audiences here today. His 3:00 p.m. discourse on the celebrated Cure for Infidelity—"Hope for Many in the Resurrection of Damnation," previously reported. His evening discourse, which we report below, was from the text, "Bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called but few are chosen." Matt. 22:13, 14

The expression, "weeping and gnashing of teeth," occurs altogether seven times in the New Testament. To the average mind, filled from childhood with thoughts of devils and pitchforks, flames and torture, the expression includes all of these at a glance, and is taken as an endorsement of the doctrine of the eternal torment of all who do not become saints. And yet we are all familiar with weeping and wailing, as the poet has expressed it.

"Now the world is full of suffering,
Sounds of woe fall on our ears."

It is the "gnashing of teeth" that seems to be the unusual feature. What in this expression, looked at with deliberation, indicates eternal torture? True it is not a common expression in our day, but we can readily see that it signifies chagrin, disappointment. We have the same phrase used elsewhere in the Scriptures, not as representing a future torment either, but by men in the present life. For instance, when Stephen, the first Christian martyr, preached to his opponents, we read—"When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." The expression, "gnashed on him with their teeth," is evi-

dently no more of a figurative expression than the associated one, “they were cut to the heart.” The meaning is evident: they were angered, vexed, chagrined, and manifested their feelings outwardly. Evidently we should not attach any other than this correct meaning to the words of our text, and any other analogous statement.

On this occasion we will examine carefully, with the context, three of the occurrences of the words “weeping and gnashing of teeth.” We begin with our text, which is a part of the parable of the King’s marriage feast. This parable represents the work of this gospel age—the period between the first advent of our Lord and his second advent. The privilege of being participants in the Kingdom is figuratively represented by participation in a feast. The heavenly Father had planned this feast, and during the Jewish age had, through the law and the prophets, informed Israel, his friends, of his intention to have such a feast—that he would in due time establish his kingdom, and that they should have the first invitations. When the due time was come, at the first advent of Christ, the message went forth to the Jewish nation, “Come to the feast, for all things are now ready.”

This parable shows how the people of Israel made light of the matter, and refused and neglected to avail themselves of the opportunities first offered to them. Some made excuses of being too busy with other affairs, while others beat the King’s servants shamefully and killed them—a prophetic statement of how the Lord and his apostles would be mistreated and killed by the Jews who said, “His blood be upon us and upon our children.”

As this parable shows, the great King, the Almighty, took them at their word, and destroyed them as a nation and burned their city. The King, the Almighty, then said to his servants, “The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden are not worthy—as a whole, a nation.” The worthy ones of that nation were not rejected—as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” (John 1:12) The King then sent the servants into the highways to bid any and everybody come to the marriage feast. This represents the breadth of the gospel invitation, which recognizes neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, male nor female, but includes all who will accept the call with a true heart when they hear it. The parable, however, does not teach that all

heard the invitation to the feast, and the facts of history demonstrate that the servants of the great King have not succeeded in reaching the ears of any but a comparatively small proportion of humanity. We rejoice to know from the Scriptures that the Lord has another feast of fat things for all nations, which he is about to spread for them during the Millennial Age. We rejoice in the assurance that in connection with their feast the knowledge shall be world wide and ocean deep. On the other hand, the Kingdom feast now proclaimed is intended only to gather a little flock, who, by the grace of God through faith in Jesus as their Redeemer, and their obedience to his instructions, are privileged to become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord in that Kingdom—participants in that great feast.

INSPECTING THE GUESTS

The number of guests was limited—it was the same number originally intended when the offer was made to the Jews alone, 144,000. The remnant of the Jewish nation found worthy to be guests, augmented by the calling done during this gospel age, and restricted by the narrowness of the way, will accomplish this work of finding the predestinated guests at this feast. The predestinated number will surely constitute the “body of Christ,” the elect Church. The particular point of the parable claiming our attention at this time occurred at its close, after the full complement of guests had been found—hence in the end of this gospel age, in the “harvest” time of this age. It was when the supper was about to be served that the King came in to inspect the guests, to determine that they were of such as he could approve.

The King here we understand to represent our Lord Jesus at his second advent, making inspection of those about to become his bride and joint-heirs in the Kingdom. This thought of inspection at the end of this gospel age is everywhere made prominent in our Lord’s teachings; for instance, in the parable of the net after it was full it was drawn to shore, and the suitable fish were gathered out, separated. In the parable of the wheat and tares, in the harvest time the wheat was separated from the tares and gathered into the barn. In the harvest time, in the parable of the virgins, the wise were separated from the foolish and entered into the marriage. In the parable of the pounds and talents the king returned before taking his Kingdom, reckoned with his servants, chastised unfaithful ones and rewarded the faithful variously with dominion over two cities, five cities, etc.

REMOVED HIS WEDDING GARMENT

In olden times at such a feast given by a king it was the custom for the host to provide a wedding-robe for each guest. Thus all appear alike—on one plane, whether rich or poor. So the Lord has provided for all who accept his invitation to the great feast a robe of Christ's righteousness, which covers all of our natural blemishes and imperfections which we repudiate and are seeking to avoid. This robe is the free gift of our bridegroom, our host. The wearing of it signifies our acknowledgment of our unworthiness of his favor, and our acceptance of the blessings we enjoy as of his grace.

In the parable a guest was found without a wedding garment, contrary to the rules of such a feast. The King in kindly manner inquired where the fault lay that he was without the garment—was it the fault of the servants, who had neglected to give him the garment or had admitted him without? Assuredly not! Or was it the fault of the guest in having received the garment and by it gained entrance, and then had removed and discarded that garment, preferring his own, thus slighting his gracious and hospitable King? Evidently it was the latter, because the guest was speechless—he could make no defense, he was guilty.

The fulfillment of this feature of the parable is not difficult to find in this day, in which so many of those who once trusted in the merit of the precious blood of Christ as their robe of righteousness, covering of their imperfections, are discarding it. How frequently we all take note of the fact that professed ministers of Christ and teachers of his flock, as well as agnostics, declare that while they accept Jesus as a teacher they totally reject the covering of his robe of merit—the imputation of his righteousness as the offset of their inherited imperfections. Alas that the one represented in the parable finds so many illustrations in fact in our day. Alas, too, that those who deny that the Lord bought them (2 Pet. 2:1) include so many of the noble and well educated. Another testimony, however, is that not many wise, or great or learned, according to the course of this world, will be found ultimately in the Lord's little flock, who shall be heirs of the kingdom. Luke 12:32

CAST INTO OUTER DARKNESS

In the parable the guest who did not appreciate the robe provided was rejected from permission to share in the feast. The fulfillment of this part of the parable here signifies that those who reject the value of Christ's sacrifice, "a ransom (a corresponding price) for all" (1 Tim. 2:6) will be rejected of the Lord, and can not occupy any place in the Kingdom, whatever other blessings they may or may not get at the hands of the great King to whose grace they do despite.

Again, in the parable, the expression "outer darkness" is in harmony with the declaration that the feast is a supper, and also conveys the thought that the

2H319

room in which the guests were assembled awaiting the supper was brilliantly lighted, making the outer darkness the greater contrast. The application of this to the present time would be that now in the end of this age much light is shining from the divine Word, our lamp, upon all who have knowledge of the Kingdom, who have accepted of its invitation, who recognize the parousia (presence) of the King, and are awaiting the inauguration of the Kingdom. Amongst these guests we must look for the one without the wedding garment. We need not look for him amongst those who are in the outer darkness and have not seen the inner light of the feast.

The casting into outer darkness evidently signifies that those who reject our Lord as their savior, their redeemer, their ransomer can not remain in the light— they must go into the outer darkness respecting these subjects, into the condition common to the whole world of mankind. The statement bind him hand and foot implies that such may desire to resist and have a preference for the light but that none will be permitted to enjoy it except those appreciating the robe of Christ's righteousness and wearing it.

WEeping AND GNASHING OF TEETH

As we have already seen, nothing in these simple words necessarily implies eternal torment, or any other kind of suffering or disappointment than such as is frequently experienced amongst men in the present life. But various Scriptures show us that, following the inauguration of the Kingdom of God's dear son, when all the elect shall have experienced the change of the first resurrection and entered into glory, there will forthwith follow in the world "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." Dan. 12:1

We have seen on previous occasions that this trouble is referred to as a shaking of the earth, the social structure, in its financial, social, political relationships, and that it is also a time of the shaking of the heavens, the shaking of religious institutions. It will be in that time that the guest without a wedding garment will have his weeping and gnashing of teeth, his disappointment, his chagrin, when he perceives the fall of human organizations called churches, and that many things highly esteemed amongst man were an abomination in the sight of the Lord. What could be simpler than this interpretation of this parable? Can any one give a different interpretation and show that weeping and gnashing of teeth in outer darkness refers to

eternal torment? They can not, we challenge them to do so.

Our Lord's use of these words, "weeping and gnashing of teeth," in Matt. 8:12, is evidently the same as that recorded in Luke 13:28; hence we consider these two statements as though they were one. Luke's account is the more elaborate; hence we follow it. Our Lord, teaching the Jews, said, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate (the narrow door), for many I say unto you will strive to enter in and shall not be able, when once the master of the house has risen up and hath shut the door." This may be understood to refer to the closing of the door of Israel's favor eighteen centuries ago. Undoubtedly, as the Jewish nation began to find the troublous times coming upon them which ultimately destroyed their national polity, many of them began to seek afresh for the Kingdom taught by Jesus; but it was too late for them to return to divine favor as a nation and to receive the chief blessings of the Kingdom privileges. As the Apostle declares "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election obtained it and the rest were blinded." Rom. 11:7

"YOU YOURSELVES CAST OUT"

On the other hand, we may understand these Scriptures as applying to a class in the end of this age, at the second coming of Christ, similar in many respects to the class which he dealt with at his first advent, not ready for the Kingdom as those were not ready. Both views are true to the facts and to the Scriptures, though the latter fits to some further details. It illustrates that not all who say "Lord, Lord," will enter into the Kingdom—constitute the Kingdom class. Nay, verily: the Lord is choosing a "little flock" of very zealous ones for joint-heirship with his Son. Again, another says, "Have we not in thy name cast out devils and done many wonderful works?" The implication would be that at our Lord's second advent, when inspecting those who professed to be his followers, some would be found to be very prominent, very confident, very boastful, whom he would not be willing to acknowledge as his bride. Perhaps some of them will be found very busily engaged in building up Babylon in some of its wards or denominations, but neglecting the divine Word and their own character building. They evidently think well of themselves, and remind us of the Lord's declaration that many things highly esteemed amongst men are abominations in the sight of God. We believe that sectarianism is one of these abominations by which many are deceiving themselves.

When the last member of the Gospel Church, the elect little flock, shall have been secured, taught, tested, approved and received to glory, the door will be shut. Not the door of mercy, thank God! but nevertheless a door—the door of opportunity of entering into and becoming members of the Kingdom class, the elect

Church. This door is distinctly referred to in the parable of the ten virgins. When the wise virgins had all entered into the marriage feast, "the door was shut," and no appeal for entrance could be entertained. For

2H320

none but the wise virgins could comprise the bride class, though the foolish virgins, made wise by getting the oil they previously lacked, will surely have a good portion of blessing on a lower plane than the bride, as shown by the Scriptures.

This is the same thought represented in the passage under consideration. These foolish virgins are the ones "who will seek to enter in and shall not be able when once the master of the house has risen to shut the door." How evidently this is a class in the end of this gospel age who will share in the great wave of trouble which will engulf the whole world directly after the Church shall have been glorified. Many will then begin to understand what they are not able to appreciate now because of pride and self-will: they will understand that the Kingdom class has been made up, that they are thrust out of the honors and dignities represented in the gracious call of this gospel age. Thank God, although they shall have weeping and gnashing of teeth, great disappointment and chagrin respecting their loss, and although that loss will be an irretrievable one, and although that door they failed to enter will not open again, yet in the divine plan all the families of the earth are to be blessed by the glorified Christ, and a wave of blessing will sweep over the earth, ocean deep, following the wave of trouble whose anguish caused the gnashing of teeth.

How evidently there is no foundation in any of these Scriptures considered upon which to build a theory of eternal torment. The theory was conceived in darkness and malevolence of spirit by those who were far from possessing the spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of truth, and it has descended to us as the "tradition of the ancients" from the "dark ages." As our minds are released from the incubus of this hoary error, and as we find that the Scriptures do not support it, all the true hearted of the Lord's virgins, of the proper guests at the feast, will rejoice, and will love and praise and serve their Redeemer and Lord with increased joy, and more and more realize in their hearts "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

The Lord willing, we will next Sunday continue this subject, examining other texts containing these words, "weeping and gnashing of teeth." Our text will be Matt. 25:30—"Cast ye the unprofitable servants into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." It will be reported in the National Labor Tribune.

The National Labor Tribune, April 15, 1906

“HE IS NOT HERE-- HE IS RISEN”

“If Christ be not risen our preaching is vain, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” 1 Cor. 15:14-18

Akron, O., April 15.—Pastor C. T. Russell, of Allegheny, Pa., preached here to-day twice. His afternoon topic was his anti-infidel discourse on “To Hell and Back,” especially adapted to the Easter occasion. We report his Sunday morning discourse from two texts. “He is not here, he is risen.” (Luke 24:6 with 1 Cor. 15:14-18) The speaker said:

The resurrection of Christ, indeed the entire subject of the resurrection of the dead, receives far less attention from believers than it deserves. It has measurably lost its importance to Christendom in general because of the almost universal reception of the heathen theory that death is not death, but merely a transition from a lower condition of life to a higher one, as from a vestibule into a house proper, from a temporary experience into a permanent one. But the Scriptures set forth the resurrection in a very different light from this. They declare that death is a reality, that the dead know not anything, that it affects not merely the body but the soul — “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” (Ezek. 18:4) In the case of our Lord it is distinctly stated that his soul died and that his soul rose from the dead. We quote the Prophet: “He poured out his soul unto death,” “he made his soul an offering for sin.” (Isa., 53:10, 12) Again, “His soul was not left in hell” — sheol, hades, the state of death, the tomb — “He rose from the dead on the third day.” Acts 2:31

RESURRECTION IS ALL IMPORTANT

From this standpoint the resurrection of the Lord, of which to-day is the generally celebrated anniversary, was and is the most important event in the world’s history, for upon that event hangs every element of Christian faith. The Apostle admits this in so many words in our text, saying that if Christ be not risen we are yet in our sins, the dead have perished, Christian preaching is bearing false witness. The Apostle evidently gave full weight to the doctrine of the resurrection. He staked his all upon it, and taught all believers so to regard it. His words imply a good many things quite opposed to the ordinary thought of to-day: for instance, with the thought that a resurrection is quite unnecessary, that death is merely

2H321

a change from a lower plane of life to a higher one. What sense would there be in the Apostle’s words that all preaching is vain if Christ did not rise from the dead?

With the ordinary thought in mind what could he mean by saying that the dead in Christ were perished? How could they be perished if they had passed into heavenly glory? What effect would the non-resurrection of Jesus have from that standpoint? How would all the faith and hope of Christians be negated, nullified, if Christ did not rise from the dead? Surely the Apostle's words could have no reasonable, sensible meaning when viewed in the light of the common error that death is a mere transition to a higher state of life.

But when we view death from the Scriptural standpoint, what meaning, what force there is in the Apostle's words. The whole world of mankind is dead or dying because of the original sin, death being the penalty or wage of that transaction, shared by all of Adam's posterity as well as by himself. Under this penalty nearly 20,000,000,000 of humanity have been born and, with varying periods of experience, have sunk down into death, and those that we now call alive are really ninety-nine parts dead, and dying at the rate of 90,000 a day. There is no hope for a future life for any of all this vast multitude except by a resurrection, and there could be no resurrection unless first the ransom price for their sins, the Adamic sin, were paid. Our Redeemer was manifested in the flesh that he might destroy death and him that hath the power of death—that is, the devil. (Heb. 2:14) Evidently this death had not been destroyed nor the power of the Adversary checked up to the time that our Redeemer came, over 4,000 years after the creation. Nearly 2,000 years have since elapsed, and we see that death is not yet destroyed. On the contrary, it still holds the human family in the great prison-house of death, of the tomb, sheol, hades, and Satan, who has the power of death, is still unbound.

We sometimes declare that the death of Jesus was the very hub, the center, of the divine plan upon which depends and around which revolves every other feature of divine grace. We still hold to this thought, but draw attention to the fact that in many respects our Lord's resurrection was no less important. His death indeed was necessary as our redemption price—a propitiation for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) But even though the world's sins were all cancelled, that would be insufficient: more would be necessary. He who bought the world with his precious blood must live again in order to wholly restore, revive, uplift from sin-and-death conditions. A Savior who would die in the midst of redeeming could not profit the race. The first part of the Redeemer's work was to satisfy the demands of Justice against the race, so that God could be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; but the second part of his work is equally important to us, namely, the application to mankind of the benefits secured by his sacrifice.

“I WILL COME AGAIN”

As we have already noticed, the dead world knows nothing of the blessing that God has in store for it. Only a comparatively small number of the race have yet even heard of the grace of God in Christ, that the redemption price has been paid, and that in due time the great Redeemer will come again to complete the work — to awaken, revive, restore and bring up to full perfection, if they will, all the families of the earth, all for whom the precious sacrifice was made.

We inquire, Why the long delay? Already over eighteen centuries has the world waited since the Saviour was born, was touched with the feeling of our infirmities and tasted death for every man. Why has he not long ago come to bestow the blessing secured by his sacrifice, to revive the sleeping ones, to give beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness? Why does he still permit the world to groan and travail in pain and sorrow and death? Has the plan of God miscarried? Has it been changed or ‘altered or amended? What reason can we assign for this long delay?

The Scriptures alone answer this question, and tell us that before beginning the work of blessing and reviving the world, before beginning the work of the Millennial Kingdom — the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began — the Lord is taking out in advance a peculiar people, a little flock, the elect. They tell us that the election of these will ultimately accrue to the blessing of the non-elect, the world in general, all the families of the earth. (Acts 15:14; Gal. 3:8, 9) They tell us that the elect are the specially chosen, called in the Scriptures the seed of Abraham, of whom Jesus is the Head and all of his faithful followers members of his body. To this seed pertains the promise made to Abraham — “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” So, then, the delay between the time of our Lord’s redeeming the world, raising them out of sin-and-death conditions, up, up, up to the full perfection that was lost in Adam through disobedience, is on account of this work of selecting the seed of Abraham; and the Lord through the Apostle declares to the faithful believers and followers of Jesus, “If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise — the promise to bless all the families of the earth through this seed. Gal. 3:29

2H322

“BUT NOW IS CHRIST RISEN”

From this standpoint, dear friends, the Scriptural standpoint, how important a matter was the resurrection

of Jesus. Without it all these hopes would be in vain; there could be no selection of a Church under a dead head; there could be no gathering together unto him; there could be no second advent in glory; there could be no Millennial reign for the blessing of all the world. Without the resurrection of Jesus, the seed of Abraham through whom the blessing was to come would have been non-existent, and the oath-bound promise of God would have been a complete failure. Can we wonder then that the Scriptures everywhere lay such stress upon this great fact of history? that they elaborate the accounts of how he was seen first by the women mentioned in our text, and subsequently by the others of the apostleship and by five hundred brethren of the household of faith, and finally by the Apostle Paul also, by a miracle? As one of the apostles declared, he showed himself to his apostles after his resurrection by many infallible proofs — proofs that were indisputable.

The entire narrative of our Lord's ministry, death and resurrection is substantiated thoroughly by other events of history. Those who recorded the incidents declared themselves ignorant and unlearned men. They evidently were not striving for self-exaltation but were merely speaking forth words of truth and soberness — telling an unvarnished tale which evidently they thoroughly believed themselves. Their espousal of the Lord's cause did not bring them honor of men or wealth or social position, but the contrary of all these, mockings, scourgings, severe trials of many kinds — Yea, writes one, on account of him I have suffered the loss of all things; yea, do count them as loss and dross that I may win a place in the anointed body. (Phil. 3:7-9) They had everything to lose, nothing to gain by choosing the standard of the Nazarene. And although it be admitted that they were unlearned in worldly wisdom, it can not be claimed that they were stupid men. Their writings are clear, terse, logical and pointed, and give evidence that they were not merely credulous nor merely stupid. Indeed they must have been far above the average as respects natural intelligence, however unpolished so far as earthly schooling was concerned.

IN VARIOUS FORMS

In every way the particularity of their detailed statements commended themselves. They record the Master's own words that they were foolish, slow of heart to believe what he had previously told them respecting his resurrection. They told how they were perplexed at the remarkable experiences of that first Easter Sunday: instead of remembering that the Master had said that he would rise from the dead on the third day they forgot all this. The women went with spices to embalm the body as soon as the Sabbath was past. The disciples, when the women explained to them that an angel messenger had

announced the Lord's resurrection, instead of believing were incredulous. Forgetting entirely the Master's words, they evidently had no expectation of a resurrection: the conviction was forced upon them by the experiences they underwent.

The risen Lord walked with two of them to a nearby village, veiled from their recognition by garb, manners and speech, which hindered them from recognizing him, even though they marveled while their hearts burned by the way as he recounted to them the necessity for his death, and how this had all been foretold by the prophets, and that also it was necessary and in harmony with the prophets that he should rise on the third day. Then revealing himself to them he instantly vanished from their sight. He gave them an evidence of his resurrection and at the same time an evidence of his "change." Later he appeared in the upper room where the disciples were gathered discussing the events of the day and of the three days previous, and querying each other respecting whether or not the rage of the priests and Pharisees might extend also to themselves, and with the doors closed and fastened for fear of the Jews. Suddenly in their midst stood Jesus saying, "Peace be unto you," calming their fears and assuring them of his resurrection, proving to them that they were not seeing a phantom, that it was no imagination of their minds; that he had appeared in a physical, tangible form similar to his previous appearances, and although he had come in without the opening of the doors, "the door being shut," nevertheless he had a body of flesh and bones. He demonstrated this by eating some fish and some honeycomb, and when their fears were somewhat allayed he expounded to them the divine plan further, and then vanished as instantly as he had come, the doors still being shut.

WITH THEM FORTY DAYS

The Scriptures assure us that the Lord remained with his followers for forty days: they were visible to him but for the most part he was invisible to them. They saw him not except as he occasionally "manifested himself." These appearances, so far as the record goes, would appear to have been about eight times, all told—possibly less than this number, as the different evangelists may have recorded the same events in slightly different language. Apparently all of one-half of these appearances were on the day of our

2H323

Lord's resurrection. Throughout the entire week following they waited, hoping to see him again, hoping for some further manifestation, but were disappointed; but on the next first day of the week, when they had come together, Thomas being with them, Jesus again

appeared as before in the upper room, the doors being shut, and proffered to Thomas the very proofs which he demanded — to put his fingers in the print of the nails and to thrust his hand into the wounded side. The flesh, the wounds, were all there, even though the doors were shut.

It is not possible for us to comprehend the power which can create and dissolve human bodies, but we have abundant evidence along this line. Did not the angels of old appear and then vanish? Did not our Lord and two angels appear to Abraham ere they went down to Sodom? And thus it was with our Lord. As the Apostle declared, he was put to death in flesh, he was quickened in the spirit — “sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body; sown in weakness, raised in power.” (1 Cor. 15:44) The resurrected Jesus, actually a spirit being, invisible to men, appeared in various forms to his followers for the purpose of convincing them, first, that he was no longer dead but alive, and secondly, that he was no longer flesh but spirit, able to take on any form he might desire; even as the “angel of the Lord” had appeared in previous dispensations, as man or as the burning bush, as occasion made suitable.

Only eight days of the forty had passed, another week of waiting and hoping to see the Master, another first day of the week, with almost sure conviction that the Lord would appear to them again on this first day of the week as on the two previous occasions. But with the third Sunday they saw him not; they were more disappointed than ever. What could it mean that he who before was with them daily was so changed that he had almost deserted them? They knew not what to do — they would wait a little longer; peradventure he might reveal himself again, perhaps on the next Sunday, and perhaps on that occasion he would tell them what should be their future course. But, no! another week passed and no manifestation, a fourth Sunday and nothing seen!

Matters were getting desperate. The disciples were Galileans, away from home. Their work as missionaries of the Kingdom of God was at an end, because the King himself had died; and even though they believed he had risen from the dead they knew not how to apply this great act nor what to expect nor what to do or say, Simon Peter said to the others, “I go a fishing” — I will return to the fishing business; choose you for yourselves what you will do; there is no propriety in our staying here without aim or object. James and John, members of the old firm, responded that their sentiments were the same, that they also would re-enter the fishing business. What the others proposed to do we are not informed. Another week passed. The three had gone into the fishing business; probably some of the others had joined them though quite possibly they had gone to their various homes, with a view to re-entering

upon the duties of life as before their call to be the special messengers and apostles of Jesus.

“THEIR SHEPHERD CARED”

All those days and weeks the Master was present frequently with them unseen. He heard their conversations, knew their plans, and purposely allowed them to go to the very extreme of disappointment and perplexity. Thus he would impress upon them more thoroughly, more lastingly than in any other way, the lesson he wished them to learn. The leaders amongst the apostles had gone into the fishing business, as we have seen and Jesus waited for the opportune moment of giving the signal of his presence —important especially to those through whom it would be forcefully communicated to the others. He was with them as they sailed all night and caught nothing, and as they talked together respecting their ill success and wondered whether matters had so changed that even the fish did not come to their nets, and why God had permitted them to pass through such peculiar experiences, such great disappointments in respect to Messiah, and their hopes of sitting with him in his throne in his Kingdom and be associated with him in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Then Jesus again assumed a human form and human clothing, that of a stranger, and standing upon the shore he called to them inquiring if they had any fish, as though he would purchase. They replied that they had caught nothing. The stranger then suggested that they cast their nets on the other side of the boat, and in their perplexity they followed his suggestion, apparently without even so much as thinking that the boat while at anchor had been turning this side and that all through the night. But no sooner was the net down than it was full of large fishes, whose weight was too great for the net. Peter at once jumped to the conclusion that the stranger must be the Lord, manifesting himself now in a different form: once a gardener, another time a wayfarer, another time in a body such as they had previously known, now again a stranger on the shore — it must be Jesus, it could be no other, who else had the power? Was not this the very miracle he performed for them when he called them first to be his disciples? Convinced that it was the Lord, not by wounds or features or voice or clothing, but by a miracle, Peter could not wait until the boat

2H324

would come to shore but swam to land to be as soon as possible near his Lord. The others speedily came, and yet they did not ask him — they knew it was the Lord, in the same way that in the vision of Moses and Elijah they had known them; and so we read, “None of them durst

ask him, knowing that it was the Lord.” None of them thought of asking him, the proof was so positive, so conclusive.

SUFFICIENT FOR EVERY NEED

They now had the lesson which the Master intended them to learn, namely, that while without his blessing they might have no fish at all, with his blessing they could have a large catch; but more than this, they found when they reached him on the shore that not only had he fish but he had a fire also, and that the fish had been cooked, and so they became his guests. THE LESSON to them was that he was their sufficiency as respected all the temporalities of life, and more — that he could provide for them such things as they had need of and would do so. After this lesson had silently been learned by all, the Lord addressed Peter, and indirectly the others, reminding them of how they had become his disciples and had forsaken the fishing business that he might make them fishers of men.

The Lord would show them that in no sense had that commission expired, that they were still his ambassadors and mouthpieces to do a great work in his name, that the work instead of being ended by his death was really only beginning. His language to Peter then was all the more convincing as to who he was — “Simon, son of Jonas, Lovest thou me more than these?—more than these boats and nets and fishes?” Simon answered, “Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.” Jesus answered, “Feed my sheep.” Again Jesus put the same question, again Peter answered similarly, and our Lord said, “Feed my lambs.” A third time the Lord asked the same question, and Peter, filled with grief, probably remembered that three times he had denied his Master. In this gentle way did the Lord reprove the one who in weakness and under strong temptation had denied him with oaths and curses.

What a lesson of our Master’s greatness and forbearance, what a lesson to us in respect to our dealings with others overtaken in a fault! It is not strange that Peter was grieved as he remembered this, and almost broken hearted he cried, “Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.” This lesson taught, the Master again vanished from them, but left information respecting a definite time and place where he would meet them again, to which point all the believers could be gathered. Respecting this last appointed meeting the Apostle Paul writes that he was seen of above 500 brethren at that time. A few days later his chosen eleven, probably by appointment, met him on the Mount of Olives, and after a very few words with them he was parted from them and ascended into the heavens, a cloud receiving him from their sight. This was the closing of the important work of instructing those whom he had already commissioned to be his representatives in respect to his resurrection and his change.

Why did he appear to ascend to heaven in a body of flesh? We answer that when he was present with them without a body of flesh they saw him not at all, and if he had failed any further to manifest himself they would have been confused, would not have known of his ascension to heaven. Hence his appearing in a body of flesh on this occasion, and ascending into heaven in such a body until the cloud had enveloped him, was a lesson to his followers, the best lesson possible for him to give them under the conditions. He could not tell them of spiritual things because they were not yet begotten of the Spirit, and could not be until after he should have ascended up on high and had appeared for them in the presence of God, making atonement for their sins, that God might be just and yet the justifier of them that believe, and might give them the spirit of adoption.

That which our Lord could not have done through words, explanation, he did accomplish by the outward appearing and the lessons associated with the disappearance. To this was added the words of the angels who then appeared to them, saying, “Ye sons of Galilee, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11) Not with a great trumpet blast, not with a great commotion, not visible to the whole world, but as he went away—quietly, secretly, unknown to the world, his going known only to his faithful followers. And so at his second coming it will be — only his faithful followers will be aware of his presence, for so far as the world is concerned he will come as a thief, quietly, stealthily, unknown to them.

“NOT FAITHLESS BUT BELIEVING”

Thomas, who doubted our Lord’s resurrection, represented a class of the Lord’s followers down through the age who are so constituted mentally as to require more proofs than do some of his followers; but the Lord in compassion furnished Thomas with the necessary proofs because of his sincerity, and those very proofs have been a help to the Lord’s followers throughout the age. His words to him apply to all, “Be not faithless but believing.” It is necessary that we believe in our Lord’s resurrection promise, as we have

2H325

already seen in the types that everything rests upon that great fact.

To some of you who read my discourses every week I remark that I shall be following up this subject of the resurrection of Jesus, and its relationship to the divine plan, in the next Sunday’s published discourse; but meantime I wish to remind

you that what we have just seen respecting the sincerity of the apostles, the simplicity of the narrative and the reasonableness of the entire matter as the logical outworkings of the divine plan — all these matters are corroborated and supplemented by the law and the prophets, which not only foretold our Lord's first advent, its object, its sacrifice, but also pointed out his resurrection as the first-fruits of them that slept; and, further, that he in due time will assume the control of the world as Messiah, and during his Millennial reign will bless all the people with the glorious opportunities of return to divine favor and God-likeness as a result of his great redemptive work. We who now have eyes to see, ears to hear this wonderful grace of God, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness?" In view of the gracious promises that we may be associated with our Redeemer in his Kingdom, how gladly should we take the trials and difficulties, the testings, all the experiences which the Lord sees fit to permit to come to us.

“IN DUE TIME”

In *His* due time, O blessed Jesus, Thou shalt see
The travail of Thy soul, and shalt
Be satisfied eternally;
Thine agony on Calvary; — the price that Thou didst give,
Shall cause the dead again to live!

April 22, 1906

*Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
April 10, 1918*

“RISEN WITH CHRIST”

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 22, 1906—Pastor C. T. Russell preached twice here today. One discourse was his cure for infidelity—“To Hell and Back. Who are There. Hope for the Recovery of many of them by a Judgment Resurrection.” We report the evening discourse from the text, “If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Col. 3:3

In our published discourse of last Sunday (for I know many of you follow these discourses in the public prints) we considered the general fact of our Lord’s resurrection—that it was well attested, not only by the testimony of the apostles and the harmony between their testimony but by the typical and prophetic teachings. Today we look at the matter from another standpoint, and note that the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus, and the hope of believers in a risen Savior who would come again in due time for their deliverance, became a fundamental in the Christian faith. It entered into all the philosophy of the plan of salvation. For instance, in our text the Apostle points out that the true followers of Christ reckonedly die to earthly aims, hopes and ambitions, sinful pleasures, etc., and reckonedly arise from a dead condition to newness of life as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, “risen with him to walk in newness of life.” To these “old things have passed away, all things have become new.” All of their interests, hopes and aims are indissolubly linked with the resurrection of Jesus and his exaltation to the heavenly kingdom, spiritual condition, and their hope, their aim, their endeavor is to live in the world as not of the world, as dead to the world and its interests and affairs, and alive toward God and the spiritual interests and heavenly promises through Jesus Christ.

Not that the Apostles taught that this reckoned death and reckoned resurrection are sufficient. On the contrary their teaching was that this reckoned state must be maintained until the actual state is reached. For instance, the follower of Christ who makes a full consecration of

his life unto death not only reckoned himself dead unto the world and to sin and reckoned himself alive toward God as though risen from the dead, but he must maintain this condition until actual death shall finish and complete the reckoned state; and

2H326

his hope is that the resurrection of the new mind in the present life is but the precursor, the preparation, for the actual resurrection of the dead at the second coming of the Redeemer. Hence it was that the Apostles were continually exhorting the Church to stand steadfast, waiting for the grace, the favor, that shall be brought unto you at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—at his second coming. (1 Pet. 1:13) Again, he says that we should hope unto the end, unto the completion, until that which is perfect shall have come, until the actual glory, honor and immortality shall have taken the place of the reckoned conditions, “changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.”

PICTURED IN BAPTISM

Under the guidance of the holy Spirit the apostle introduced the Church to a new view of baptism, different from that which had been promulgated amongst the Jews by John the Baptist. The latter signified merely the washing away of the filth of the flesh, and symbolized thereby a return so far as possible to righteous living, in harmony with Moses; but the new and different thought in baptism, introduced after Pentecost and especially applicable to all Gentiles who accept Christ, was that it was a symbol of the death and burial of their human will into the will of Christ, that in the water, symbolically, they were immersed into death—dead to the world, dead to sin, dead to self, dead to earthly ambition, and from the water they were raised up to walk in newness of life, not after the flesh but after the spirit, seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Thus the Apostle declares that believers are buried with him (Christ) in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him through faith in the operation of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins, in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened (made alive, resurrected) together with him, having forgiven you all your trespasses. Col. 2:12, 13

The Apostle again in his letter to the Romans (6:3-5) similarly defines the meaning of baptism, explaining that believers are immersed, buried into Christ; that in a sense each one so buried loses his own individuality and self-control and becomes merged into the body of Christ as a member thereof; that the method by which he is thus inducted into the body of Christ, with its privileges and

favours, is through his voluntary baptism into death, his consecration of his heart, his will, his all to the Lord, to be dead so far as earthly interests and affairs are concerned.

The Apostle proceeds to explain that the object of this reckoned dying and reckoned burial into Christ is that we may be reckoned as members of his body and reckonedly live a new life thenceforth as though we had risen from the dead, glorifying our Father in heaven. He assures us that those who are faithful to the significations of this baptism into death will be in the Lord's likeness actually by and by in the resurrection, the First Resurrection, of which it is written, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection:

on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall he kings and priests unto God and shall reign with him a thousand years." Rev. 20:6

"CHANGED FROM GLORY TO GLORY"

In however different forms the Apostle presents the hopes of the Church as respects the transformation from sin-and-death conditions, to holiness and life conditions, he always maintains the same general thought, namely, that we became reckonedly dead to the earthly interests, service, hopes and aims, and simultaneously became more and more alive toward God and the holy things, until this changing process—begun in the present life and maintained until death—shall be finished in the actual resurrection of the Church described by the Apostle (1 Cor. 15:42-44)—"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." This changing process the apostles tell us is accomplished by the spirit of the Lord.

The moment of full consecration to death—the moment of baptism into his death—is for such the moment of begetting to newness of life; the moment of quickening and anointing with the holy Spirit is the moment of resurrection from the former dead condition to walk in newness of life. Then in proportion as the holy Spirit dwells in the Lord's people and abounds in them in that same proportion will the change progress from glory to glory in the image of their Lord. This is not a fleshly image—the flesh is reckoned dead: it is a heart likeness or image that is begotten and that is developed at the expense of the will of the flesh, but, mortifying it, he walks after the Spirit. He follows the example and spirit of the Lord's Word diligently, that he may attain unto the glorious perfection to which he has been invited, and which will be granted to the faithful early in the Millennial morning, in the actual resurrection.

“ALIVE TOWARD GOD”

The world is reckoned as dead because of sin and its sentence of death, but the Christian is reckoned as alive toward God through Jesus Christ—through faith in his finished sacrifice—that faith being tested by their acceptance of the divine invitation to become living sacrifices with Christ and reckonedly New Creatures in him. We have already pointed out that this is not a renewing of the flesh but of the spirit, the mind, the will, and that henceforth the world knoweth us not, as it knew him not.

The world, judging according to the flesh, may see some who are not the Lord’s people that have inherited proportionately less of evil effects of the fall, and, contrasting these with some of the more fallen ones who have accepted Christ, they may fancy that some of the world are superior to some who are of the Church. But the Lord looketh not on the outward appearance merely, but chiefly at the heart—the will, the intention. Those who have consecrated their all to the Lord and who are doing their best in warring a good warfare against the weaknesses of their flesh have the divine approval, while those who have not thus made a consecration to the Lord and become dead to sin have not the divine approval, even though they have inherited less depraved bodies. Herein behold the grandeur of the divine arrangement, whereby the weakest and most depraved is put upon equal footing of opportunity for the attainment of the Kingdom with those who are more favored according to the flesh. As the Apostle explains, where sin abounds there grace so much more abounds—the Lord’s provision for each through Jesus is according to the necessity of each, and his acceptance of us in him is according to our sincerity and wholeheartedness.

“QUICKEN YOUR MORTAL BODIES”

As we have already seen, our mortal bodies are to die—indeed they are reckoned dead at the moment of consecration, and continue to be so reckoned until they actually die. And there is no hope of the resurrection of the mortal bodies of the Church. On the contrary, as already pointed out, the Lord’s faithful followers have the promise of a “better resurrection”—a resurrection to spirit conditions, far superior to any earthly conditions. As the Apostle declares, there is an animal body and there is a spiritual body. We have an animal or fleshly body at the present time which is reckoned dead; and if faithful in keeping it dead, “keeping our bodies under,” we will receive our glorious spiritual, immortal bodies in our resurrection change, when our Master at his coming shall say, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things [faithful to the covenant of self-

sacrifice] I will make thee ruler over many things.” Matt. 25:2

However, the Apostle points out to us that we are not to be satisfied with merely reckoning our bodies dead to sin and our hearts and minds alive toward God, but he points out to us that in proportion as we receive of the holy Spirit—in proportion as it enters into our hearts and lives with transforming power—we will be enabled not only to will aright but more and more do aright. We will not only cease to walk after the flesh and in our minds or intentions walk up to the spirit, but the new mind will have such power, such influence over the mortal body, as to be able to use it more and more in the service of the Lord, in the service of righteousness. Mark the Apostle’s words along these lines. He declares: “If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus dwell in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Rom. 8:11

The Apostle is not here talking about the actual resurrection, which we have seen will not be an awakening of the mortal body but a creating of a new body, the spiritual body promised to the faithful. The Apostle’s thought is that our mortal bodies, consecrated to death, may be so energized, so controlled, by the holy Spirit, the holy mind, the holy disposition of the Lord in us, that in the present life we may be more and more servants of God and of righteousness, bringing forth fruitage of godliness to the praise of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

It will be observed that we have confined our review of this resurrection to the Church—that we have said nothing about the world’s resurrection, which belongs to the next age, and is called in the Scriptures the judgment resurrection. (John 5:29) It will contain in its time wonderful possibilities for the human family. But now in this present time the Lord’s special message is to the few, the little flock, the peculiar people, who, coming to a knowledge of the Truth and his grace, and seeing the situation—the mental, moral and physical depravity and death which sin has wrought, and seeing the redemption which God proposes through Jesus, gladly accept the opportunity of casting in their lot with him in the warfare against sin and all unrighteousness, willingly laying down their lives in the service of truth and righteousness and the Lord’s cause as against the cause of sin and Satan and death.

The resurrection of this class to the glories and perfections of the heavenly state are reckonedly begun in this present time, because it is necessary for the divine approval that we should not only make good resolutions and consecration, but that those resolutions, etc., should be tried and tested by what the Apostle terms “fiery trials”—that thus the character likeness of the Savior,

Jesus, may be developed in us by those trials and difficulties, and through his assistance, by his Word and Spirit, that we shall attain to his character likeness, and thus in the Father's sight be counted worthy of a share in his nature and glory and Kingdom by and by. The Apostle declares, "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." (1 John 3:1)

2H328

ATHEISM ON THE INCREASE

The world in general is growing more and more atheistic and pantheistic. Increasing numbers of the intelligent as well as of the ignorant are reaching the position of doubt respecting a personal Creator, and accepting an evolution theory to the effect that Nature is God, and has brought forth man and everything that we see by evolutionary processes, wholly aside from any individual, intelligent director or Creator. I notice in the public prints a statement bearing upon this question. A series of questions respecting God, his personality or impersonality, were propounded to a class in Columbia College, N. Y. The class numbered forty-five, and of these only sixteen professed faith in a divine, personal Creator, the remaining twenty-nine averring themselves atheists. With the Scriptural declaration that only the fool says in his heart there is no God, how can we think of the present time as wiser or an improvement upon the past?

Those of the world who do recognize a personal God take various views of the situation. The standard usually recognized by the world is that of justice—that there will be no mercy shown, that every man will receive of rewards or punishments according to his just deserts, good or bad. Rejecting the thought of an eternity of torture, the view generally entertained is that more nearly corresponding with the purgatory of Romanists. But these same people do not recognize the divine standard of justice, namely, perfection; hence they fail to see the doctrine of the Scriptures, that without redemption by the death of Jesus, without his paying the penalty of original sin for mankind, there would be no hope of a future life. Their false basis of reasoning is that they will be punished in the future for those transgressions of the divine standard which were committed willfully and for none others.

Nor is the thought so different from what the Scriptures teach, namely, that our Lord's atonement sacrifice constitutes the full offset before Justice of all the sins of the whole world, to the extent that the same have been through ignorance or superstition or through inherited weaknesses or moral blemishes, and that for all wilful transgressions, all sowing to the flesh, there will be a

reaping of corresponding disadvantage in the glorious Millennial age, when the great uplifting work shall be rescued from sin-and-death conditions up, up, up to the full perfection of earthly life represented in Father Adam's perfection in the image and likeness of God—the disobedient, unwilling to make progress under the favorable opportunities of that time, being cut off in the Second Death—destroyed.

ONLY VOLUNTEERS ON TRIAL

Although Christian people very generally recognize the fact that God's mercy at the present time is extended to those of the called ones who respond voluntarily, yet the majority do not seem to grasp the force of this truth. Whoever will look about him at the present time must see that the Gospel is preached, but that no penalty is now enforced against those who reject the message—merely a blessing is extended to those who accept, and that blessing even is so veiled, so obscure, that the majority of the world do not appreciate it. They perceive, as the Scriptures declare, that “many are the afflictions of the righteous,” that the Lord's people are tested by fiery trials, and that the unconsecrated seemingly have fewer trials and difficulties.

This the world does not comprehend. It seems rather to imply that the Lord thinks less of the believers than of the unbelievers, less of the consecrated than of the unconsecrated. Only those who are taught in the school of Christ can appreciate, through other teachings of the Scriptures, that these trials which are upon the Lord's people are manifestations of the divine favor—indications that the tried ones are under inspection and being chastened, polished, fitted and prepared for a place in the divine arrangement for the future, because they have made their consecration to the Lord, because they have heard of the divine grace and responded thereto. Therefore these afflictions which they by faith esteem to be right, shall, they are assured, work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. But this they can understand— not by looking at the things that are seen, the temporal things—but by looking with the eye of faith at the things that are not seen, eternal things, the heavenly Kingdom. 2 Cor. 4:18

“Even hereunto were ye called,” says the Apostle—called, he again explains, with the heavenly calling, a high calling, to be heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be they suffer with him that they may also be glorified together. It is this filling up of the afflictions of Christ, the participation with him in his sufferings, in sacrifices of earthly interests, that constitute these peculiar, separate and distinct from the world in general—no matter how morally and benevolently disposed the matter may be.

The mistake of Christian people in general has been in supposing that only this called out class is to be saved, in supposing that only these who now are dead with Christ and alive with him to walk in newness of life—that only these will have part or lot in the great divine plan of human salvation, and that all the remainder will be eternally lost—go into eternal torment say the majority, go into the Second Death say the minority. But the divine plan stands out glorious beyond all human conception in that it sets forth that the elect

2H329

of this Gospel age are merely counted in with Jesus as members of the great Redeemer under one figure, and that they with him, in the glory of the Millennial Kingdom, will carry out the original purpose of God—the blessing of all the families of the earth—the uplifting of Adam and all of his posterity from the tomb and from all the degradation of sin-and-death conditions, if they will.

How glorious is the plan of God beyond all of our hopes and all our fears, and how glorious is the privilege now accorded to us who have heard the message of God's grace speaking peace through Jesus, and who after accepting the message of peace have received the invitation to be baptized into his death, to suffer with him that later on we may reign with him in his Kingdom, to be dead with him that, later on, we may live with him in the glorious immortality of the divine nature on the spirit plane, to be dead to the world and self and earthly ambitions and sin, and to walk now in newness of life, as resurrected New Creatures in Christ, and to be inheritors with him in a share of his resurrection, the First Resurrection, the Chief Resurrection, the resurrection of the blessed and holy to glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature. Brethren, so many of us as can see this glorious plan have a blessing and privilege which is hidden, evidently of divine intention, from the eyes of many others. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure"—walking in newness of life. 1 John 3:3

The National Labor Tribune, April 29, 1906

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION A GUARANTEE OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Brockwayville, Pa., April 29—Pastor C. T. Russell spoke twice here today in the Grand Opera House. His afternoon discourse was his "Cure for Infidelity—To Hell and Back." His evening discourse was the day of judgment and blessing for the world guaranteed or made possible by the death of Christ. The latter was from the text, "He hath appointed a day in which He will judge

the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given an assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead.” (Acts 17:3 1) Pastor Russell said:

The statement of our text, that the resurrection of Jesus is God’s assurance to us that the world will have a general judgment, must sound peculiar to the majority of Christian people and others who have so long been taught that the day of judgment is synonymous with the day of doom. For several Sundays past some of you have been keeping in touch with our discourses on the resurrection, as presented in the public press. In these we showed the fact of the resurrection as attested by the apostles, and as foretold and foreshadowed in the Law and the Prophets; and we have shown, too, that the Church participates with Jesus as members of His body in the sufferings of this present time, and that they shall also participate with Him in the glories of the coming age. Today’s subject relates to that coming age which our text calls “the day of judgment.” Elsewhere in the Scriptures it is called the day of Christ, His day, etc. (Phil. 1:6; Jer. 23:6) This is not to be understood as a 24-hour day, but as a day on a larger scale, which the Apostle Peter calls a “day with the Lord,” saying, “Brethren be not ignorant of this one thing, that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years.” 2 Pet. 3:8

Even from childhood’s day we have probably all realized that there was something incongruous in the ordinary conception of the day of judgment which has been handed down through traditions and creeds from the “dark ages”—a 24-hour day, in which we are told Jesus would sit upon the circle of the earth while the earth revolved, and that during that time He would judge the world of mankind respecting their words and thoughts and doings of the present life. When we noticed the time necessary for a single case in an ordinary court of law we wondered that it would be possible for our glorious Redeemer to judge all of the twenty thousand millions of our race in so brief a space of time. The more we look at it the more ridiculous the entire statement grows, until common sense declares that it is totally unreasonable; and then, turning to the Bible, to which we should have looked at first, we find that no such thing is there declared, but on the contrary a thousand-year day for the world’s judgment.

“KRINO” SIGNIFIES TO DISCERN

The word judge in our text does not mean to render judgment, as in a case already tried and determined; the Greek word is “krino,” and signifies to discern, to reach a decision. True, there will be a decision reached in the end of that Millennial age, and that decision will go into execution, too; but the thought of the word “krino” is that of trial rather than of verdict. The ordinary thought among Christian people respecting this

2H330

text is that all the trial takes place in the present life; that none of the trial goes beyond the present life into the Millennial; that a decision is reached as soon as one dies, and that the future could in no sense change or alter that decision. This is wholly a mistake, as every Greek scholar must admit upon examination of this word “krino.”

Before going into a Scriptural examination of the question let us turn this over reverently in our minds, agreeably to our Lord’s invitation, “Come and let us reason together.” (Isa. 1:18) The world already has passed a trial and received a condemnation. The trial took place in Eden: Adam, our father, was the representative of himself and his race in the trial. He failed, and was sentenced to death, and the whole world, his posterity, are still resting under the incubus of his sentence, “Dying thou shalt die”—you are unworthy of the eternal life which was proffered you at the beginning—your disobedience has proven you unworthy. As we look about us we see that none of the race has improved and reached perfection—rather, on the contrary, the course of the race in general has been downward, and the Scriptural assurance is: “There is none righteous, no not one.”

If then the whole world is already condemned to death—if all were born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and thus from birth have been under the sentence of death, what kind of a judgment further would they need? What more condemnation could they receive from the Lord than that already against them? Surely we are not to suppose that God doubts the wisdom of His own decision, which the Scriptures express so forcefully, and that He will try matters again to see whether or not any mistake was made in His original decision. We cannot so suppose. The Supreme Court of the Universe is infallible; its decision is beyond repeal; its sentence is: “The wages of sin is death.” (Rom. 6:23) For 6,000 years this penalty has been inflicted. There could be no hope of a change upon the part of the great Judge. We see, then, that any thought of a repetition of the original trial and sentence is inconsistent, and hence our text must refer to a new trial.

GRANT OF A NEW TRIAL

But on what grounds could the great Supreme Judge of the Universe grant a new trial to Adam and his family? We reply that, since he could not rescind His own just sentence, the only consideration upon which a new trial could be granted would be that the penalty of the original trial should first be met and cancelled. And this is exactly what did take place: “By one man’s disobedience sin entered the world, and death as a result of sin— and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned”—have inherited the sin, are sinners. (Rom. 5:12) But now Christ has died for the ungodly—has redeemed Adam,

and, incidentally, all of his posterity involved in his transgression. Hence the Scriptures assure us that God can be just and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

Here notice that our text refers right back to our Lord's great transaction, His great redemptive work and how that, after He had died for our sins, God raised Him from the dead. The apostle declares that in so doing, God gave us an assurance of His intention to grant another trial to the race of Adam and that this Jesus who died for Adam and his race is, by divine appointment, the Judge and Mediator through whom all the condemned ones, if they will, may return to the full perfection of harmony with their Creator, and the eternal life which He is pleased to give to all those who are obedient to His laws.

THE NECESSITY OF ANOTHER JUDGMENT

The first judgment was that of one man, the effects of which extended to all of his posterity—all lost, all were condemned, all went into death. The divine standard can never alter— a sinner can never have eternal life, either in heaven or elsewhere; eternal life is a gift of God, and He will give it to none except those who please Him. The divine proposition is, to give to Adam and every member of his race an individual opportunity for returning to harmony with God, and thus to a recovery to all that was lost through the original fall—with added blessings in the case of the Church. This is the Gospel, the good news—that there is a hope of eternal life through Christ. Over 4,100 years had elapsed before our Redeemer was born, yet in all that time none of Adam's race had escaped from death, and only a few had any knowledge of the divine intention to provide a Savior and Redeemer and ultimately to roll away the curse and bring in blessings through Him.

Those few were of the Abrahamic line, the Israelite line. But even to them no promise of eternal life was given, though it was indirectly hinted at, and they were told to hope for it through the Messiah promised. Thus the Scriptures declare that our Lord brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel—it was not brought to light before. (2 Tim. 1:10) At His birth the angels declared that they were heralds of the Gospel, which would have its fulfilment through the new-born babe, saying, "We bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10, 11

THE JUDGMENT OF THE CHURCH

The Apostle declares that these good tidings for our race are the tidings of salvation—not salvation from the

2H331

torture of demons nor from the eternal torment, but salvation from sin and its death penalty. This salvation implied two things: (1) The sinner must be reformed in heart and begotten again to a newness of life; (2) The sinner must be raised up out of present death conditions—brought back to the full perfection of life as it was enjoyed before the sentence or curse came upon all mankind. This is salvation in the broadest meaning of the term, and the Apostle declares, which salvation began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that there was no offer of salvation, no basis upon which it could be offered, until Christ, as our Redeemer, our Savior, brought life and immortality to light. Still, nothing that He said and nothing that the apostles said warrant us in believing that this salvation will be attained by any except the willing and obedient. The offer of salvation, indeed, we are assured, is to extend to Adam and every member of his race, but it will be for each one of them to accept or reject its terms. The good tidings of joy shall be unto all people, but it will mean eternal salvation only to those who obey Him — those who obey the great Redeemer, who is also the Teacher, the King and the judge.

In harmony with this thought the preaching of the Gospel began with Jesus, and has progressed amongst His followers since. We perceive, however strange though it be, that the truth has never been popular, that not many believed on the Redeemer Himself, that not many believed on the apostles, that the great growth amongst the followers of Christ came when an admixture of error was added to the gospel truths. And so we find today that, in proportion as the error is combined with the truth, the larger are the numbers and the lower is the Scriptural standard so far as faith and heart-obedience is concerned. We find now, as in our Redeemer's day, that not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many noble have the Lord's favor, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom.

JUDGMENT OF THE FAVORED

It is not difficult to prove from the facts as well as from the Scriptures that there is a favor of the Lord at work in the world at the present time—that, as during the Jewish age, the seed of Abraham according to the flesh were specially favored of the Lord, and, as the apostle declared, a “Jew had much advantage every way, chiefly in that to them were committed the oracles of God” (Rom. 3:2); so during this Gospel age, while the middle wall of partition has been broken down between Jew and Gentile, there is still a selection according to favor, as the apostle points out — only a certain class of the world is being dealt with. The great mass of mankind are not favored with the

necessary information and opportunity to come into harmony with the Lord at the present time. I know that some, ignorant of the Scriptures and short-sighted in their view of the conditions of the world, may dispute this, but it will stand examination from both standpoints.

Notice how frequently our Lord declares that only some have the ear to hear. This means that only those are called. And He assures us that even amongst the called only a comparatively few will be chosen. The prophet holds forth the same thought, assuring us of a future time coming, when the wilderness shall blossom as a rose, namely, the Millennial age, when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. (Isa. 35:5) He thus implies that at the present time many eyes are closed and many ears are stopped, so that the majority of mankind now see not and hear not, appreciate not, the things which God has revealed at the present time to a special class only— “the called according to His purpose.” 2 Tim. 1:9

The apostle also refers to the matter in the same way, only more explicitly, telling us “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2 Cor. 4:4) This implies that originally the whole world was blinded, but that by God’s grace His message through Jesus and the apostles comes as an eye-salve to some, but not to all. The vast majority, blinded by the adversary, by false doctrines, selfishness, weakness, depravity, superstition, etc., are utterly blind and ignorant respecting the real character of God and of His Son, and the plan of salvation being worked out on their behalf, and the apostle declares “The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not.” (1 John 3:1) We are not therefore to say that God has blinded the world, but rather, as the apostle does, that it is the great adversary that has brought this blindness of heart upon mankind, which hinders their knowing, loving and appreciating God’s love and offer of salvation.

We question, Why should God provide a great feast of fat things through the sacrifice of His Son, and yet not make provision that all of the poor human family of Adam should hear of it? The very thought seems incongruous. He who loved the whole world so much to give His only begotten Son as their redemption price surely should love them all to such an extent that He would give them all the proper knowledge of that Son—the knowledge necessary to their appreciation of Him, and of His work, and of their privilege of return to harmony with their Creator and to everlasting life. We search the Scriptures to ascertain the secret of this peculiarity, and are there informed that the Lord is now selecting a

peculiar people, a cream class as it were, from the world of mankind. The Scriptures inform us that these are

2H332

the called, and that their eyes of understanding open gradually, and thus the apostle prays even for the Church “that the eyes of your understanding being opened, ye may be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God.” (Eph. 3:18) Only a special class are now granted this eye-salve by the great Physician, and the explanation is satisfactory when we learn that the Lord is choosing from amongst the world a little flock to be joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom, a class figuratively called the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife, figuratively called the members of His body, figuratively called the Royal Priesthood, under their Redeemer as the Chief Priest and King.

JUDGMENT OF THE HOUSE OF GOD

What happens to those whose eyes of understanding open? What blessing comes to them? We answer, A blessing of knowledge and of trial. In proportion to their knowledge they have a responsibility toward God. They are on trial for life or death everlasting. In proportion as they respond to the love and grace of God by obedience to His will and by growth of character likeness to Jesus, in that same proportion do they make their calling and election sure to a place in the Bride company, a place with the King of Glory in His throne, when they shall, as overcomers, have been granted glory, honor and immortality. But notice that only those whose eyes and ears see and hear are on trial—being judged. The remainder of mankind, whom the god of this world hath blinded, are not on trial, are not being judged now.

Let us prove this. First, the whole world is under the original Adamic sentence, and cannot be released from that sentence except by faith in the Son of God as the Redeemer—a faith based upon a reasonable degree of knowledge. Only by the exercise of this faith and obedience do any pass from under the condemnation that came upon all through Adam into the justification which comes to believers through Christ; second, the whole world is still under the Adamic condemnation; as the apostle declares, only believers have escaped it. Should no opportunity be given to the world to come to enlightenment on the subject they could never escape that condemnation—could never be rid of the original sentence of death—could never, therefore, go on trial again.

“GOD’S ARM IS NOT SHORT”

Some tell us that God is doing all in His power for the world, to bring mankind to a knowledge of the truth, of His grace and the opportunities of eternal life through His Son. We believe no such thing—it is contrary to both reason and Scripture. The Lord through His Word not only informs us that Satan is operating in the world in opposition to the light of truth, and blinding the masses, but we are also assured that God has full power over Satan, and that when His due time shall come Satan will be bound, restrained, that he shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished—that for the entire thousand years of the Millennial age the world will be free—from all such blinding influences. The Scriptures also assure us that though now darkness covers the earth, society, and gross darkness the people, yet in God’s due time the light of Truth shall mount up high in the heavens as the Sun of Righteousness, to scatter the darkness and clouds of sin and superstition, and that thus from two standpoints a blessing will come by restraining the powers of darkness and by setting free the powers of light, and we are assured that it is at that time, not the present time, that the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. Isa. 60:2; Mal. 4:2; Isa. 11:9

Those who think of the Lord as having done all that is in His power to cause the knowledge of His grace and truth to fill the earth have a miserably small conception of the power of Jehovah’s arm. It is not shortened, as He tells us in due time all His purposes shall be accomplished. (Jer. 51:29) The difficulty with mankind is in our shortsightedness—we feel that more should be done at the present time. We need to be calm, and to sink into the Lord’s will; and instead of attempting to tell the Lord how we think the plan of salvation should be carried out, and instead of attempting to carry out our own plans irrespective of the divine arrangement, we should as obedient children hearken to the voice of our Father through His Son and through the apostles and prophets, assuring us that in His due time the message of salvation will be good tidings of great joy unto all people—assuring us that now He is doing a preparatory work, finding His jewels, those who will constitute the Bride class; and that as soon as this Royal priesthood shall have been developed, as soon as the elect number shall be completed, then He will work through these to the fulfillment of His great and glorious plan, which is not merely for the salvation of the Church, but for the salvation of the world—that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely.

THE WORLD’S JUDGMENT

Who do not see then that the judgment or trial of the world in general cannot begin until the eyes of their understanding are opened, and that God will not set into

operation the general plan for the opening of all the blind eyes and the unstopping of all the deaf ears until first He shall have chosen the elect, the little flock,

2H333

the Bride, who with their Lord shall constitute the Sun of Righteousness, which will then shine forth for the blessing of the world when Satan shall first have been bound.

Now look again at our text: It does not refer particularly to the judgment of the Church, which takes place in advance, and which was already in progress when the Apostle uttered these words. It evidently did not refer to the judgment of the Church as a part of the judgment of the world. On the contrary, He assures us that if we are faithful we shall not come into judgment with the world in the end of this age, but will be counted as the first-born of the Lord's people, a kind of first-fruits of His creatures, "the Church of the First-born." (1 Cor. 11:32; Jas. 1: 18) Judgment begins at the house of God. (1 Pet. 4:17) We must all be tested during the present time, and only the overcomers of the consecrated will eventually attain to the glories, honors and privileges promised. But judgment does not end with the house of God—it will extend to the whole world. If we are glad that by God's grace we are not left under the original sentence of death, but were redeemed and are now being tested, granted a trial to prove whether we love righteousness or sin, in proportion as our eyes open to behold the real distinctions between them—so if we rejoice in our privileges of present trial why should we not also rejoice that God has a great trial day still in the future for the whole world of mankind, and that in due time all of their blind eyes shall be opened and all their deaf ears be unstopped, that they thus under favorable conditions may come to a knowledge of the Truth and to a trial for life or death everlasting. We do rejoice in it more as we see the beauty of this, the divine plan.

Noting our text carefully again, we see that it refers to the entire matter of the world's judgment as future from the Apostle's day; it is still future from our day, though very near at hand. We believe that the great Sun of Righteousness will soon be disclosed, and the shadows of the dark night of sin and superstition and ignorance shall begin to flee away. We can no longer wonder that the Lord, through the prophets, spoke so joyfully of this coming judgment of the world as a great blessing, saying: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth; He shall judge the

world with righteousness and the people with His truth.”
Psa. 96:10-13

Whoever gets the right conception of this word judge, “krino,” sees clearly that it means that the Lord will give a trial even to the poor and the humble, no matter how degraded, no matter how fallen through sin and superstition and ignorance. The divine plan is so wide and so deep and so broad that every member of Adam’s race will have full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the truth that he may be saved. He cannot be saved in ignorance, he cannot be saved without the eyes of his understanding being opened, and God’s arrangement is that they all shall see; that they all shall know Him from the least to the greatest, and that then under the blessing of that knowledge will be their trial. If after they know the Lord and know of His righteousness and its reward, and of the penalty of sin—if then they choose disobedience willfully, persistently, intelligently, they will die the Second Death, “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power”—in which there will be no hope, from which there will be no resurrection. 2 Thess. 1:9

“SAINTS SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD”

It is in full agreement with this line of thought and in disagreement with every other thought on this subject that the apostle declares, writing to the Church of this age: “Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2) Here he distinctly differentiates between the Church and the world. The saints, he tells us, are being judged now—every son whom the Lord receiveth is being chastened, corrected, proven, that only the faithful may be granted a share in the life resurrection to glory and honor and immortality. But the world, he distinctly tells us, is not on judgment now— not on trial—but will be on trial in the future; and when the world shall be on trial the saints will be the judges. Having already passed trial themselves and been adjudged worthy of eternal life as the Bride of Christ, the saints will be the judges under Him as the great Judge—the judges of the world during its trial time, during the millennial kingdom reign.

The Scriptures distinctly teach that the world’s present course will have an influence upon them in their judgment day. They assure us that if any man give even a cup of cold water to one of the elect because they belong to the Lord, he will by no means lose his reward; and that whosoever shall harm one of the least of the Lord’s people will correspondingly have a punishment. In other words, every act of life conscientiously done brings a blessing of strengthening of character and uplifting, while every act contrary to conscience, contrary to one’s appreciation of righteousness, as surely brings a penalty by degrading the conscience. In other words, if we represent character by the length of a ladder we see that the whole world is near the foot of it, and

that the whole world during the Millennial age, while exercising faith in Christ, must climb to the top of that ladder by obedience to the laws of the kingdom; that to whatever extent a man in the present time violates

2H334

his conscience and degrades it, such conduct will carry him that many rungs the lower on the ladder and give him that many more to climb in the future. Thus in the man's own character the acts of his life are faithfully recorded, and will have to do with his future eternal welfare: "That which a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7) True, the arrangements of the Lord for the time are that the weaknesses and blemishes inherited by mankind through the fall shall be graciously forgiven, and that man shall be helped over such difficulties; but the difficulties which were willfully his and not in any measure attributed to his share in the fall, he must pay for under the stripes and punishments which our Lord mentions, saying: "He that knew the Master's will and did it not shall be punished with many stripes." (Luke 12:47) Be it noticed that, knowing the Master's will, knowing the right, has to do with the responsibility of the world.

We should then rid our minds of the thought that the day of judgment is merely a time for sentencing for wrong doing and the blindnesses of the present life of the world, and should see clearly that, on the contrary, whatever there is in the present life that is of ignorance, of blindness, of superstition, that has come to all through the fall and through the power of the adversary, all this is to be forgiven men, is to be blotted out, if they accept the Lord and His gracious arrangements, just as these ignorances and blemishes are in the present time forgiven the Church, and we who believe are counted as free from all condemnation through our Redeemer's merit and sacrifice. So the world, when it shall come to a knowledge of the Lord and an acceptance of His arrangement, will be cleared of responsibility for original sin and all the blemishes coming from it, and will be helped by the Lord and the glorified Church out of all these blemishes, according to the promise of His word, that this shall be a time of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:21

In conclusion, notice the context: The apostle is speaking of the ignorance of the heathen worshiping images, and declares that prior to the advent of Christ God winked at all those things on the part of the heathen, sent them no messages, no Gospel, no offer of eternal life; but now since Christ has bought the world and since in God's plan the sins of the world are to be blotted out, the world is to be given a fresh trial for eternal life; therefore, now it may be preached everywhere that Christ has redeemed the world, and that eternal life is to be had through faith in His blood and through

acceptance of His teachings. Those who can hear now, those who are called now, have the special favor of the invitation to joint-heirship with Christ and to be judges of the world, but eventually all of the world shall have that blessed opportunity of a judgment, a trial for life. God has given an assurance of this, says the apostle, in that he raised Christ from the dead. The lesson is that the resurrection of Christ guarantees an opportunity for eternal life to the whole world in that trial day, the Millennial age, and as seen in our last Sunday's discourse the Church is now on trial in advance, that she, if found faithful, may be associated with her Lord in that millennial glory.

Let us, dear brethren and sisters, who have been favored with this wonderful call, this advance privilege of blessing with Christ, strive the more earnestly to make our calling and election sure. He who has thus favored us in advance of the world, to give us the knowledge of His grace in the present time before the world's day of judgment, is for us and able and willing to make all things work together for our good, for our development in the character likeness of His Son, that we may be His bride and joint-heirs.

The National Labor Tribune, May 6, 1906

RESURRECTED BY FAITH

Pastor C. T. Russell preached at Carnegie Hall, Allegheny, Sunday, taking as his text the words —“God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Eph. 2:4-7

Continuing our series of investigations in respect to the resurrection of Jesus, let us note to-day that while the resurrection of the Church and the resurrection of the world are both dependent upon the resurrection of Jesus, there is, nevertheless, a wide difference between these two resurrections, their methods and their results. In both cases the word resurrection signifies a raising or lifting up out of sin-and-death conditions of the present time. The instantaneous resurrection of the Church will be to perfection of life, and the gradual resurrection of the world during the Millennial age, the “judgment resurrection,” will similarly result in perfection of life. Yet they will not

2H 335

be the same; the world's resurrection will signify the raising of the willing and obedient to perfection of life, human beings, while the Church's resurrection will

mean a raising of the willing and obedient to perfection of life, as spirit beings.

In the case of the world, the new dispensation —the reign of Messiah's Kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth —will bring release from the Adamic death and opportunity for regeneration, for the beginning of a new life through faith in the glorified Lord and through obedience to his instructions, providences and guidance, rewards for well -doing and stripes for misdeeds. Only in proportion to the obedience, however, will be the rise from sin-and-death conditions to the perfect heights of restitution — to the full perfection of human nature and all the rights and privileges lost through Adam and redeemed through Jesus, our sacrifice.

The whole world is spoken of as coming forth unto, or to have, that judgment resurrection — a raising up under the Kingdom system of rewards and punishments. The Scriptures show us that not all of the world will avail themselves of that privilege, and distinctly tell us that those who refuse to make progress under the new conditions will be tolerated no longer than a hundred years. The sinner of that time, a hundred years old —will be cut off—forever cut off in the Second Death. (Isa. 65:20) But, as the Lord through the Prophet explains, even then he will be dying in childhood, for it will be the privilege of all mankind, by giving obedience to the Kingdom, to live to the full end of that Millennial reign if they will be obedient to its reasonable requirements. Do we ask why they will not then be permitted to live forever obedient to the Kingdom laws? We answer that the Scriptures represent the Millennial Kingdom to be merely a provisional one, a temporary matter intended to deal with mankind under present imperfect conditions engendered by the fall.

It is not the Lord's purpose to have that Kingdom remain indefinitely in control of the world, rewarding well doing and punishing misdeeds. The divine requirement is higher than this. The Lord would inculcate such development of heart and mind as would bring the willing and obedient up to that perfect standard where they would need no further chastisements —where their weaknesses would be entirely effaced by the restitution processes of that Kingdom, and where evil doing in the least degree would be willful, intentional, against light and knowledge and ability, and would merit and have the same divine discipline that came upon father Adam for his disobedience when he was perfect — and the same penalty, death; for the divine law will always be that the wages of sin is death. We have seen that the Second Death, which will come upon the wilful evildoers of the Millennial age, will be one without hope, and in that respect different from the Adamic death, under the curse of which all except our first parents were born without their

volition and from which they were redeemed without their volition.

At the close of the Millennial age we are clearly shown in the Scriptures that Christ and the Church (his Bride and consort in the Kingdom), the members of his body, will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that he may be all in all—that the world then renovated, perfected, restored, might thence forth be under direct responsibility to the Father, needing no Mediatorial Kingdom because they will have gained the full perfection in which sin will be utterly renounced. It will be at that time that a searching test will be made, under divine guidance, with a view to proving the entire race perfect. The intimation is that strong delusion will be permitted to test the heart loyalty of each one, and to manifest those who would at heart have any degree of sympathy with pride or self-will or insubordination to the divine arrangement. This last will be a heart-searching matter, and all found disloyal at heart will be counted as enemies of the divine government and will be destroyed, with Satan and all who are his messengers, servants or sympathizers, in the Second Death — an utter destruction. Then there will be a clean universe, and the crucial test which all will have passed is the guarantee the Lord gives that there will be no more dying, no more crying, no more sighing, no more sin.

A PROGRESSIVE RESURRECTION

From the foregoing it will be seen that the word resurrection in the Greek, *anastasis*, signifies to raise up again — to lift out of some improper place or condition to a proper place or condition. Our race fell in father Adam from perfection of life into death; the dying, the falling into death, was gradual. Adam was 930 years in dying. Similarly man's resurrection will be gradual, requiring the entire Millennial age, called in the Scriptures "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21) Those living in the world (nine-tenths dead) will not need to go into the tomb, for from the Scriptural standpoint they are already dead — under sentence of death. Their raising up or restitution will begin speedily after the Kingdom shall have been established. "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth." (John 5:28,29) Their coming forth will merely be their awakening, not their resurrection. Their resurrection, their *anastasis* or raising up, will be a gradual one, and this will be to their advantage in

2H336

that it will permit the development of character inch by inch, step by step, with lessons and schoolings in

righteousness and all the graces of the Spirit of God, until by the close of the Millennial age all the willing and obedient will have been fully raised up.

The case of the Church is different, and yet there is a similarity'. To see the resemblance we must take the Scriptural standpoint, and recognize that now the Lord is dealing only with those who are begotten of the Spirit — that these alone properly constitute the Church, and that these (figuratively) are said to have begun their resurrection now. The New Testament abundantly substantiates this thought: our Lord refers to believers as already possessing eternal life — “He that hath the Son hath life.” The apostles speak repeatedly of our being risen with Christ and seeking those things which are above. Our text is a clear testimony along this line: it points back to the time when we were dead in sins — to the time when we turned away from sin and abandoned it, and accepting Jesus as our Redeemer took our places figuratively at his side as soldiers of the cross, to fight a good fight against sin.

Our text proceeds to show how we passed from death unto life, that it was through being quickened — a word not in general use to-day, but signifying made alive. The Apostle, however, points out that we are not made alive individually, but with Christ—as members of his body — not actually but reckonedly, by faith. Mark his explanation: he tells us that “we are saved by hope,” and again that our life is hid with Christ in God, and that when he who is our life shall appear we shall appear with him in glory.” (Rom. 8:24; Col. 3:3; 1 John 3:2) We have not the life in ourselves, nor in any sense separate and apart from our glorious Lord and Head: we have no standing with the Father except as members of his body, or, under the other figure, members of his Bride.

“RAISED US UP WITH HIM”

Proceeding along this same line of thought — showing that the Lord’s consecrated followers are now enjoying an incipient resurrection and that it is progressing — the Apostle tells us that as new-born babes we should desire the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby. (1 Pet. 2:2) Here the figure is of the resurrection life already begun as a babe in Christ. He exhorts us to grow in grace and in knowledge and in love and all the fruits and graces of the Spirit until we attain to the “full stature of manhood in Christ.” In another place, referring to this matter, he tells us that we are being gradually transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we may prove (1) the good and (2) the acceptable and (3) the perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:2) He tells us again that as New Creatures in Christ, walking in newness of life, we are to look into the perfect law of liberty as it is held before us in the divine Word, and that we are to be changed from glory to glory as in the

image of the Lord — to become daily, hourly, as New Creatures more like our Pattern, our risen Head.

ENTERING INTO THE HOLIES

This is the same thought that we find in our text (v. 6), “and hath raised us up with him and made us sit with him in the heavenly places.” What is the Apostle’s thought here? Into what heavenlies do these, the Lord’s followers reckonedly risen from the dead, enter? We answer that the Apostle is directing our attention to the great lessons taught in Israel’s Tabernacle of the wilderness, and later in their Temple — both built under divine instruction to represent great spiritual lessons. The lesson now pointed out to us is that as the High Priest that typified Jesus killed his sacrifice in the court, representing his full consecration to the Lord, and thus passed under the vail into the first of the Holies, so we, accepted as his members, as members of the Royal Priesthood —having cast in our lot with him and “become dead with him” —are reckoned as also risen with him, and as having entered into the Holy of the Tabernacle, as being priests of God in the antitypical Tabernacle.

It will be remembered that there were two holy places, separated by the second curtain or vail, the rear one being called the Most Holy, and which represented, the Apostle tells us, heaven itself. We have not entered into the Most Holy, but into the first of these Holies or Heavenlies, the one in which was the golden lamp stand with its seven branches, representing the Church in its oneness and perfection as the divine light bearer. In it also was the table of shewbread, of which only the priests might eat, and the golden altar of incense, at which only the priests could offer the incense acceptable to God. The Apostle pictures the consecrated ones, quickened, risen with Christ, as being together in his company in this Holy — as having fellowship with the Lord in the glorious privileges and blessings and spiritual enjoyments represented by the furnishings of the Holy to which he has referred. We are not abiding there, but as the Apostle said, “seated there.” We are to go no more out —we are to remain under these blessed favorable conditions throughout the remainder of life.

SAINTS ARE DUAL BEINGS

This special class, the consecrated, the quickened, the begotten, the anointed, the risen with Christ seated in the Holy, are separate and distinct from all the remainder of mankind. They were children of

wrath, even as others, but they are such no longer. They have been begotten again by the holy Spirit—they are “New Creatures” in Christ Jesus. (2 Cor. 5:17) These have a dual existence. From God’s standpoint they are New Creatures, risen with Christ, and rising more and more day by day as their minds become more conformed to the divine likeness, as they become more and more copies of God’s dear Son. (Rom. 8:29) These recognize each other according to the Spirit, as God recognizes them, and, as the Apostle declares, they know each other no longer according to the flesh.

The world knows, them not, even as it knew him not. (1 John 3:1) The world sees nothing of the New Creatures, comprehends nothing of the change by which they are risen with Christ. The world indeed may see, should see, more or less of a change in their outward conduct, in their words, companionship, etc., but the world knows not how to account for this; to it they are still men as others—not risen, not New Creatures, not begotten again of the holy Spirit. The world knows them as men and women as formerly, sees them still in the affairs of life, endeavoring to provide things honest and decent in the sight of all men. It may indeed think that they carry matters to an extreme, that they are too conscientious, or that they give too much time and attention to spiritual and religious matters and may think it strange that they run not with it to the same excess as formerly, and do speak evil of them, as the Apostle declares. (Matt. 5:11) The world in this case includes not merely the murderers and thieves, not merely Jews and infidels, but indeed a large proportion of Christendom, who though nominally members of the churches, are not really members of the true Church whose names are written in heaven—not begotten again they can not understand spiritual matters. As the Apostle declares, “The natural man (not begotten of the Spirit) receives not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor. 2:14

In various respects there is a correspondence, then, between the raising up of the world as it will proceed during the Millennial age. Both must have a beginning in knowledge of Christ and in faith and obedience; both must move onward and upward in character development, in the likeness of God, of whose character likeness our Lord Jesus is the perfect example furnished us. But there are differences between these two resurrections: The world’s resurrection will affect the mind and body together proportionately. As they make progress in mental attainments they will also be making progress in physical development. As they reach perfection of mind they will also reach perfection of body—restitution. But not so with the Church in this age. The Church’s resurrection is merely of the mind, of the will, of the heart, not physical—the

outward man perisheth, but the inward man is renewed day by day and progresses. (2 Cor. 4:16)

The new creatures in Christ now risen, now quickened, being raised up in his likeness, going on from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, from glory to glory, we are assured are under a very special divine supervision and protection. “Their angels do always behold (have access to) the face of my Father,” “nothing shall by any means injure them (as New Creatures—in their highest interests).” (Matt. 18:10) All things shall work together for good to them because they love God and have been called according to his purpose. No accident in the ordinary sense could befall these: we mean that nothing could befall them outside of divine knowledge, power, supervision. Whatever befalls them is of divine foreknowledge and permission — not a hair of their heads could perish without their Father’s notice. All the steps of a righteous man (justified, sanctified in Christ) are ordered of the Lord, and he will direct his paths. Psalm 37:23; Prov. 3:6

We may be sure then that under divine providence sufficiency of time will be granted to each of these to make his calling and election sure — to pass through the change of character likeness from glory to glory, to develop in his heart the fruits and graces of the Spirit, of which love is the principal and all-comprehensive one. This development may be more gradual with some, more speedy with others — those who love the Lord much will be the most zealous, the most energetic, the more quickly transformed, the most active in his service; and, as star differeth from star in glory, so it is with these, as the Apostle explains, and so it will be with them in the consummation of their resurrection, when, in the end of the age, those who fell asleep in Christ will come forth clothed upon with the spiritual body, perfect in its every particular. So it will also be with those who will be alive and remain unto the second presence of the Redeemer — until the second advent of our Lord as King.

These living members of his body shall not hinder or go before or take precedence of the members already developed and asleep in Christ waiting for this time, as the Apostle explains— “The dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” (1 Thess. 4:16,17) The catching away or meeting shall not be at the same moment, but gradually. As each member shall attain to the character likeness of the Lord and shall have served

2H338

the purposes of the Lord’s cause here, he will, so far as human discernment goes, die even as other men: but according to the testimony of the Lord’s Word his death will be very different from that of others in that the

moment of his dying will be the moment of his change to spirit conditions. Thus each “will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” and thus caught away from earthly conditions to be with the Lord in the heavenly conditions, spiritual conditions, “in the air” conditions.

THE REASON FOR ALL THIS

While every man should act in harmony with some reason or purpose, we find that many in the fallen condition do not do so; but when dealing with divine things we may be sure that there is a reason, a purpose, back of every divine arrangement and proposition. And so in the present case we may confidently look for a particular reason why God is now raising up as a special class a little flock to be members of the body of Christ, otherwise his Bride and joint-heirs. If we ask why this special honor to the few, what object is to be served, our text answers, saying, “that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 2:7) God is not now showing the exceeding riches of his grace toward the Church. The world, looking on, sees little but sacrificing, self-denial, abstemiousness, fighting a good fight, warring a good warfare, enduring hardness as good soldiers.

The time for showing the divine favor to the elect has not yet come. When it does come we may be sure, as the Scriptures everywhere tell us, that the Church will shine forth all glorious with their Lord. The Apostle speaks of the light afflictions of the present time as unworthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. He exhorts us also to faithfulness, that we may attain the promised glory, honor and immortality. To some who were neglecting the present opportunities for self-sacrifice he wrote that they were living as kings without waiting for the time to come to have association with the other members of the body, and then he adds, “I would to God that ye did reign that we also might reign with you.” 1 Cor. 4:8

When the reign of Christ begins all the members of the body, every member of the Bride, all of the elect, will share the glory, share the reigning. In one of our Lord’s parables he pictures the Church in the present time as wheat living in the midst of tares, and then tells us that the harvest will come and the separation take place, and that then the wheat gathered to the garner will shine forth as the sun. What a wonderful picture of the glory that will be revealed in us —revealed to the whole world. Speaking of this coming glory one Apostle says, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear (our Head, our Lord, our Bridegroom), we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” — “When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” 1 John 3:2; Col. 3:4

This glory that is to be revealed in the Church in the future the Apostle calls exceeding riches of God's grace. We have just seen that he has great grace and wonderful provision for the restitution of the world —something better than we ever could have hoped for, much better than the majority of Christian people have ever dreamed of. Yet this grace, provided for the world in its salvation by restitution to the full perfection of all that was lost in Adam, will not compare with the exceeding riches of his grace and loving kindness toward us—the Church, the body, the Bride. The Apostle Peter tells us something along this same line, saying that “God hath given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature.” (2 Pet. 1:4) O, yes, that crowns it all! The divine nature is far above angelic nature, and the perfection of human nature is still a little lower than the angels. Who could have dreamed of such wonderful glory reserved by the Father for the Christ, head and body, Bridegroom and Bride.

“IN THE AGES TO COME”

The Millennial age is the next age to come, but we have just seen that in the divine order it will have an end after a thousand years of prosperous work, in which our Lord and his glorified Church, his body, will put down all sin, all insubordination, lifting up all the willing and obedient and destroying all wilful sinners. Then will come a new age beyond, with still different glories and honors and blessings, not yet made known to us in any measure and concerning which therefore we need not speculate. But we have the assurance in our text that not only during the Millennial age will God bestow great honor and blessing upon the Church of which Jesus is the Head, but also in succeeding ages the exceeding riches of God's grace will still be manifest toward God's peculiar people, his little flock, these Jewels which he is now gathering out. Mal. 3:17

No wonder the Apostle exhorts us saying, “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.” (1 John 3:3) No wonder he exhorted that we cast aside every weight and every besetting sin, and run with patience the race set before us. (Heb. 12:1) No wonder he declares that since Jesus is the Head of

2H339

the Church and the Church is his body, therefore the resurrection of Jesus to the plane of glory, honor and immortality is the same resurrection in which all the members of the body of Christ are to share. No wonder he declared that he counted all things but loss and dross that he might win Christ and be found in him—that he might know him and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable unto his death—sacrificial death, the condition of terms upon which we may share in his resurrection. Let us also, dear hearers, resolve that by the grace of God this greatest of all gifts shall not slip from us—that we will hold fast to that which we have already attained, and onward press our way.

HE CARETH FOR YOU

I PETER 5:7.

WHAT can it mean? Is it aught to Him,
That the nights are long, and the days are dim?
Can He be touched by the griefs I bear,
Which sadden the heart and whiten the hair?
Around His throne are eternal calms,
And strong, glad music of happy psalms,
And bliss unruffled by any strife.
How can He care for my poor life?

And yet I want Him to care for me,
'While I live in this world where the sorrows be;
When the lights die down on the path I take;
When strength is feeble, and friends forsake;
When love and music, that once did bless,
Have left me to silence and loneliness;
And life-song changes to sobbing prayers—
Then my heart cries out for a God who cares.

When shadows hang o'er me the whole day long,
And my spirit is bowed with shame and wrong;
When I am not good, and the deeper shade
Of conscious sin makes my heart afraid;
And the busy world has too much to do
To stay in its course to help me through,
And I long for a Savior—can it be
That the God of the universe cares for me?

Oh, wonderful story of deathless love!
Each child is dear to that Heart above;
He fights for me when I cannot fight;
He comforts me in the gloom of night;
He lifts the burden, for He is strong;
He stills the sigh and awakens the song;
The sorrow that bore me down He bears,
And loves and pardons, because He cares.

Let all who are sad take heart again:
We are not alone in our hours of pain;
Our Father stoops from His throne above,
To soothe and quiet us with His love.
He leaves us not when the storm is high,
And we have safety, for He is nigh.
Can that be trouble, which He doth share?
Oh, rest in peace, for the Lord doth care.

The National Labor Tribune, May 13, 1906

“ALL IN ADAM”— ”ALL IN CHRIST”

Philadelphia, Pa., May 13—Pastor C. T. Russell spoke to large audiences twice here today. His afternoon topic was his anti-infidel discourse on “To Hell and Back”—the Bible defended against tradition. The evening discourse was on the resurrection, from the text, “For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his presence.” 1 Cor. 15:22, 23

This evening we continue the examination of the Scriptural teaching respecting the hope of the resurrection of the dead, built upon the great fact that Christ died for our sins. Numbers of this audience, we know, are following these discourses weekly through the public prints, and those who listened this afternoon to our discourse, “To Hell and Back,” will, we trust, also find our subject helpful. We saw this afternoon that the penalty upon our race through Adam’s disobedience was not an eternity of torment, but everlasting death, “everlasting destruction.” (2 Thess. 1:9) We saw how God inflicted death as a penalty on account of sin, as it is written, “Thou turnest man to destruction.” (Psa. 90:3)

2H340

We saw also how divine mercy had arranged for man’s recovery, and so that his experiences with sin and death might work out for him an increase of knowledge, valuable to him through all eternity. We saw that to this end Jesus died for our sins—paid the penalty for Adam and his race, that he and all of his posterity might be saved and get free from that death penalty, in resurrection from the dead.

We saw too that God has a plan for the general awakening of the world, for the release of all in the prison-house of death, and that there is an appointed time for this great event, and that meantime “the dead know not anything” (Eccl. 9:5), that their awakening moment will seem to them the very next instant to the one in which they fell asleep in death. We saw that while the death penalty was really a sentence to extinction of being (“The soul that sinneth it shall die”), yet on account of the divine pre-arrangement of redemption through Christ this has not been reckoned as extinction, obliteration of the being, but merely as a sleep from which in the Millennial morning the whole groaning creation shall awaken to the blessings of the Millennial privileges and opportunities under the reign of the Prince of Light, the Lord of lords and King of kings, to whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. (Phil 2:10, 11) We saw also this afternoon that during this Gospel age God has been selecting from the world of mankind a “little flock,” to be the “Bride,” “the Lamb’s wife”—joint-heirs with Christ in his Kingdom of glory and in the work of blessing, judging and uplifting the world.

THE SECOND ADAM

This evening from our text we wish to show what the Scriptures reveal respecting the divine order in the resurrection of the dead. It will be noticed that the Apostle specifically declares that all of Adam’s race died in him. We know this to be a fact; not a member of the race of Adam has escaped the inheritance of the death penalty. The alternative statement of the text is that “even so in Christ will all be made alive.” We call attention here to the fact that this text does not teach the thought of universal salvation: not all who died in Adam will be made alive—will gain perfect or everlasting life.

The Scriptures set forth that Father Adam essayed to be the head, the life-giver to the race, but that he failed to accomplish his purpose by reason of transgression and the divine sentence of death. He did beget children endowed with a spark of life and able to transmit the same to others, but it was only a very weak spark, which flickered but for a few years in each generation, until at the present time the average of human life is thirty-five years. What Adam failed to accomplish God proposes still to accomplish—through Christ. God proposes a regeneration for the world. All mankind were generated once in what we term natural birth, but, as we have seen, this brought no life in its perfection, but merely a spark of life soon to die out. What as a race we need is what the Scriptures declare our Lord Jesus came to give, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly”—perfect life, everlasting life, “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (John 10:10; Rom.

6:23) Christ, therefore, is set forth in the Scriptures as being the Life-Giver provided of God for the race of Adam. He is called the second Adam, in that he takes the place of the first Adam—undertakes to be the Father and Life-Giver to Adam and every member of his race upon condition of their obedience to him. What a grand proposition this is! What a hope for life everlasting it holds out to the race of Adam! Truly our God is a God of mercy, compassion and love. He has done great things for us, whereof we are glad; he has provided a Savior and a great one—able to save to the uttermost all who come unto the Father through him. Heb. 7:25

ORDER IN THE RESURRECTION

Our text not only tells us that all who come unto Christ will be made alive, will reach full perfection of life, everlasting life—”He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life”—but it also tells us that these in Christ who will receive everlasting life will not all get it at once, neither will they all be of one order or class, but “every man in his own order.” This is in exact accord with what we have just seen, namely, that God during this Gospel age has proclaimed a special calling for a special class of the human family. The Apostle speaks of it as “our high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” and again he calls it “our heavenly calling.” (Phil. 3:14; Heb. 3:1) The Scriptures everywhere speak of this class of present selection as a little flock, especially favored above the remainder of mankind, in that to them is specially granted the hearing ear and the understanding heart. We are particularly told that God at the present time does not desire the entire world to hear and understand respecting his plan, and that therefore he has covered the matter in the Scripture revelation in symbolical, figurative, parabolic language, so that the majority hearing may hear and not understand, seeing may see and not perceive—not be converted and not be healed. This is the Lord’s own statement of the matter. (Mark 4:11, 12) He declares that he is choosing a special class, and that in this manner of withholding some of the truth he is singling out those of the particular class he is now selecting for the Royal Priesthood.

2H341

The Apostle again tells us that the “Elect” of this present age are members of the larger Christ, of which the “Head” is our Lord and Redeemer Jesus, and all the faithful of this age are “members in particular of the body of Christ.” (1 Cor. 12:27) He emphasizes this statement in the same chapter, declaring that in every congregation of the Lord’s followers this body picture is preserved, so that the head is represented in their midst by certain members, and that as a whole they are as hands and feet, eyes, ears, etc., for the building up of the body of Christ, which is the Church, until we all come to

the full stature of a man in Christ. He tells us that to make this new man, this New Nation, of which the Redeemer is the glorious Head and Lord, God took from the Jewish nation at the time of the first advent all who were Israelites indeed, and is now gathering people of the same general character from every nation, people, kindred and tongue. He tells us that the Lord made of these twain one body, that there should be no schism in the body, no separation, no division, naught but perfect unity amongst those who are in harmony with the Father under the Headship of his Son and under the guidance of his Word and Spirit.

CHRIST THE FIRST-FRUITS

The reference in our text to Christ the First-fruits applies to this whole body of Christ, the Church, whereas some have understood it to refer merely to our Lord Jesus. The Apostle, however, cautions us that this is the “mystery hid from the ages and generations” of the past, but now made known unto the saints, that we should become heirs of the same body — that the Messiah of prophecy would include the body of followers who now accept the Lord’s favor and call, under present conditions of self-sacrifice and devotion even unto death.

This idea of First-fruits is everywhere maintained throughout the Scriptures, as, for instance, in the statement, “Of his own will begat he us by the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.” (Jas. 1:18) In everything our Lord is chief and has pre-eminence, for, as the Apostle declares, “He is the Head over the Church, which is his body.” (Col. 1:18) But according to the analogies of the figure the body and Head must co-operate, are intended to cooperate, must be together in every respect. If the Head is of the first-fruits the body must be of the first-fruits. It is in accord with this that we are told that the Gospel Church will have a special resurrection—the First Resurrection, the chief resurrection to glory, honor and immortality.

More than this we are told that the resurrection change which the Church will experience will be one and the same in kind with that which our Lord experienced, “We shall be like him, and see him as he is.” (1 John 3:2) The Apostle even declares that our resurrection is “His resurrection,” saying, “What things were gained to me, those I counted loss for Christ. .. that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” (Phil. 3:7-11) What does the Apostle mean here by saying “attain unto his resurrection,” except that Christ’s resurrection was specially, peculiarly different from that which would come to the world in general, the chief resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, and that the Apostle, a

reckoned member of the body of Christ, trusted to make his calling and election sure to a place in that body, and thus have a share in that same resurrection with our Lord—the First Resurrection?

This is the same thought which the Lord presents to us through the Prophet, saying, “Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth and not cause to come forth, saith the Lord? Shall I cause to bring forth and close the womb? saith thy God.” (Isa. 66:8) In other words, shall the Head of the Christ, the great Deliverer, be born from the dead and shall the body not also be born? The assurance of Scriptures is that although an interval of time elapsed between the birth of the Head, Christ Jesus, the first-born from the dead, and the birth of the Church, his body, as a part of his resurrection, nevertheless the latter is surely guaranteed by the former. As surely as the Head was raised up by the Father, so surely he will raise us up also by Jesus. Thus the First Resurrection will be completed—the resurrection of the blessed and holy, the resurrection of those who will be kings and priests unto God and shall reign on the earth, the resurrection of the “first-fruits.”

THE “AFTERWARD” CLASS

We, dear friends, are specially interested in the First-fruits class, in his resurrection, in the First Resurrection, in the resurrection of “the blessed and holy.” This, however, does not hinder our having a deep interest in the divine plan as it relates to the remainder of our race. Even though we have gotten rid of the gross darkness which once misrepresented the divine plan and taught that all (except the first-fruits) were to be tormented to all eternity. It is not sufficient that we should realize that God’s provision for the world in general is not eternal torment, for he has graciously made known to us something respecting the blessing which will come to the world as soon as the Elect, the First-fruits class, the Christ class, the Abraham’s seed class, shall be completed. In our text the word “afterward”

2H342

marks off all the remainder of the world who shall come into Christ from this First-fruits class, which now becomes associated with him under the peculiar high calling of this Gospel age. “Afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming” —literally, at his presence. What about these? What is the divine provision for them? Our text says that they shall be made alive. This implies that they are of a separate or distinct order or class from the Christ, the First-fruits, and so the Scriptures everywhere show that those who will be blessed

during the Millennial age will not receive a change of nature from earthly to heavenly. They will not have a heavenly calling. As human beings the entire race lost human nature, for which the earth was prepared as the proper and most suitable abode. It was this human nature then and the earthly paradise that our Lord Jesus redeemed, and that he proposes to restore during the Millennial age to all the willing and obedient of Adam's race who will accept his favor and the eternal life necessary to enjoy these blessings. God's provision for the salvation of mankind in general is by restoring them to the original God-likeness in the flesh possessed by Adam and lost, for him and for all others disobedient, his posterity. In harmony with this the Millennial age is specially called the "times [years] of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:19-21

From the statement of our text it is evident that the work of this age is kept entirely separate and distinct from the work of the next age. There are not two calls in the world today. It is not open for people to say, I choose the heavenly, or I choose the earthly: for the Apostle declares, "Ye are all called in one hope of your calling." (Eph 4:4) That calling is the heavenly calling, as he declares, and those who reject it can have nothing else now whatever God's mercy may provide for them in the future. Besides, our text clearly indicates that this claim of the earthly order to which the great majority of Adam's race will belong, will become Christ's—that is, will come into relationship to Christ during the Millennial age, because it specifically states, "at his coming."

The word here rendered "coming" is *parousia*, which signifies presence. Our Lord declared that at his second coming he would be present in the world. As we look back to his first presence in the end of the Jewish age, we find that it lasted in all about thirty-three years. But as we look forward to the second presence or second advent of our Lord we find that it will be of much longer duration, for, as the Apostle declares in this very chapter, he comes to reign, and he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet, even the last enemy, death, and he will then deliver up the Kingdom to the Father. And this period of his second presence and work in the world we are specifically told will be a thousand years, for does not our Lord tell us through the Revelator that the saints of this Gospel age, accepted as members of his body, shall live and reign with him a thousand years? Rev. 20:6

IN ABSENCE, IN PRESENCE

We who during this Gospel age become the Lord's people, and are accepted as members of his body, do so during his absence, when the clouds of error and obscurity cause special trials and difficulties and narrowness of the way, and when special faith and special obedience are necessary. Those who are faithful under these

conditions are to have the chief reward, joint-heirship in the Kingdom. But there will be another class found worthy of life eternal, though not accepted as joint-heirs or granted the heavenly reward. There are, we believe, millions living today who, under the glorious provisions of the Millennial age with sin and error and deception and falsehood out of the way, and the light of the glory of God shining clearly in the presence of the Lord, will be glad to accept the Savior fully and unreservedly and to consecrate their all to him. True, their consecration in that time will not mean suffering, sacrificing, dying daily, etc., because the Adversary then will be bound and deceive them no longer, the darkness will be past, the Sun of Righteousness will be shining, the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth, everything about them will be helpful to their uplift, not only in knowledge but in mind, in body, in morals. The day of the Lord's presence will be a glorious time for the world, and it would astonish us greatly if the number who would gladly receive the message of salvation then, under those favorable conditions of obedience, would not be very large indeed. With our own hearts loyal to the Lord, and willing to follow him and to suffer for righteousness' sake under present adverse conditions, it would seem as though none in the future under these favorable conditions could reject divine mercy and the offer of life eternal: but the Scriptures most unmistakably teach that there will be some who will refuse the grace of God, and who as a consequence will die the Second Death.

Since our Lord's presence will last a thousand years, and, as a whole, will be a period of blessing and enlightenment, it will easily be seen that it will not only afford an opportunity for those who have already gone into the tomb to come forth, that they also under favorable conditions may hear of the Lord's plan and participate in the resurrection of that time if they will. Their awakening will be one thing, their uplifting will be another. The awakening will be instantaneous, their uplifting or resurrecting will progress rapidly, step by step, to all the willing and obedient until the

2H343

last rung of the ladder of uplift and restitution shall have been gained and they shall be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. They shall be as Adam was in his perfection in Eden—"in the image and likeness of God." Even better than this, they will then have the knowledge which Adam with all his perfection of being lacked: they will have had the experiences proving to them the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the bitterness of its wages of death, and on the other hand the blessedness of righteousness and the joys of its reward, everlasting life in divine favor.

THE JOYS OF OUR LORD

In view of this, the Scriptural presentation of the great work of Christ during the Millennial age in lifting up and blessing the world in general, what a blessing there is in the assurance that we who now are called to be of the elect class will have the inestimable privilege of association with our Redeemer in this great work of uplifting the world, resurrecting the world, raising up the world out of the present sin-and-death conditions to the full perfection of life everlasting in harmony with God. If we are faithful, in a very little while we shall hear the Master's voice at his second advent saying to us, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.' Matt. 25:21

The joys of our Lord are the joys of the Kingdom and its work of blessing and uplifting the lost race in Adam, condemned to death and redeemed by Jesus and awakened and given an opportunity to obtain life. How wonderful is our privilege, dear brethren and sisters! I exhort those of you who have not yet made your covenant with the Lord to do so forthwith—to count that it is the grandest opportunity that could be imagined. It seems to me that if ever the holy angels could covet any matter it would be the privilege of being in such a position as we occupy to be privileged to suffer with Christ in his glorious service in the promulgation of his Truth and by and by reign with him, to enter his glorious joys and work a blessing to all the families of the earth. Then all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. All shall hear, all shall know, all shall have an opportunity, and only the willfully disobedient shall be cut off in the Second Death, and all who will may enter into life eternal through the great Life-Giver whose entire work is done in accord with and along the lines of the divine plan of the ages, which God purposed in himself before the world was.

The National Labor Tribune, May 20, 1906

FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION

Indianapolis, Ind., May 20—Pastor C. T. Russell spoke twice here today, his afternoon theme being his anti-infidel discourse, "To Hell and Back. The Bible in Harmony with Reason." His evening discourse, the sixth in a series on the Resurrection, was from the text, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thine heart that God hath raised him

from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Rom. 10:9) The speaker said:

We are living in a day when faith of any definite kind is coming into disrepute. To believe anything definitely and positively is to mark oneself as narrow minded in the estimation of the worldly wise. In the pulpits of Christendom it is growing proper to declare, directly or indirectly, that the essence of Christianity is works and not faith—that a man may believe or disbelieve what he pleases so long as his life is a moral, respectable one, and particularly if he be a regular attendant of worship in one of the popular sects. This, however, is contrary to the proposition laid down in the Scriptures. There we are told that even perfect works would not be acceptable before God without faith. (Heb. 11:6) We are told also that perfect works are impossible under present conditions, each one of Adam’s race being declared to be more or less depraved, mentally, morally and physically. The Scriptures point out that, this being the case, God is not judging his people during this Gospel age according to a rule of works, which would surely condemn all, but is testing them according to a rule of faith, on account of which he imputes to them righteousness, perfection, and requires no more of works than they are able to perform, rewarding them according to their perfect faith and not according to their imperfect works.

FAITH AND WORKS

Many seem to be perplexed along this line of faith and works, and to get the impression that the writer of the Epistle of James had one view of the matter and the Apostle Paul another. Our thought, however, is that they are both in absolute accord. The Apostle James says, “Show me thy faith without thy works and I will show thee my faith by my works.” (Jas. 2:18) Who does not agree with this, that faith without works is dead,

2H344

and that a dead faith would be valueless? We all agree that our faith should be attested by our works. But we all agree with the Apostle Paul that if God were to judge us according to our very best works he would never bring us into the Kingdom, but would condemn us all as imperfect—as able only to perform imperfect works. The Apostle, however, points out that with the Lord’s people the imperfect works are the result of an imperfect organization traceable to an imperfect heredity; and he tells us that in mercy the Lord, while requiring of us all the works we are able to perform as a testimony to our faith, will, nevertheless, not judge us according to our works of the flesh, which are sure to be imperfect in all, but will judge us according to the degree of our faith, our heart intentions, our efforts. How gracious is this provision, and how it adapts itself to all the various conditions of those who name the name of Christ.

There is no question whatever that some of those who accepted Christ were better born than others, that by nature they inherited better temperaments, were more evenly balanced, more just, more generous than others, though all are blemished and all come far short of the glory of God—far short of that glorious likeness of God, image of God, in which he created our first parents. What comfort it gives us then to know that not only the strongest characters accepting Christ may attain unto everlasting life through faith in him and obedience to the extent of their ability, but that the divine provision also is that the very weakest of characters accepting Christ, exercising faith in him, may be saved with the same abundant salvation although they are weaker according to the flesh than some of their fellows.

The Apostle explains the divine operation of grace, assuring us that where sin abounds grace does that much more abound, so that if we should reckon a hundred points as respecting perfection, and we should see that the very best amongst men have only fifty points of character and have lost fifty through the fall, while others have only twenty-five points of character, having lost seventy-five through the fall, the Apostle's teaching would be that salvation and the attainment of the riches of God's grace are as possible to the one as to the other. Where sin abounded to the extent of fifty points, grace would be needed and would be granted to the extent of fifty points to make good the deficiency; where sin abounded to the extent of twenty-five points of deflection from perfection, grace would abound to the extent of seventy-five points to make good all the blemishes of this one, who had accepted Christ and who to the extent of his ability was seeking to be his disciple, his follower in the narrow way of life.

THE NARROW WAY A PRIVILEGE

Many get the impression that God is endeavoring to drive mankind into the narrow way through threats of eternal torment, etc., but surely this is a gross misconception of the divine plan and very contrary to the Scriptural statement. Our Lord in stating the matter did not say that the Father seeketh such to worship him as are moved by fear, by dread. On the contrary he does say, "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth"—from a heart-appreciation of his glorious character and wonderful plan of salvation through Jesus. Again he says, not that he is seeking to drive all mankind to be his disciples, but the very reverse of this, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him." "And he that cometh unto me [drawn of the Father through the truth] I will in no wise reject." John 6:37, 44

Instead of urging everybody to become his disciples and threatening them if they did not, the Master treated the subject in the very opposite style, saying, if any man will be my disciple let him sit down first and count the cost. If any man will be my disciple let him take up his cross and follow me. (Luke 14:28; Matt. 16:24) Again we notice his own explanation that he taught his disciples in parables and dark sayings, so that others not in a proper condition of heart might not hear, might not understand and might not follow him. Something evidently is wrong with the thoughts of the majority of Christian people when they think that they must let down the bars and coax and cajole and threaten people to bring them to the Lord. The Truth changes not, and hence it must be that error has crept into the theories and practices of those who claim to speak in the name of the Lord contrary to his method and the method of the Apostles. Let us seek for the old paths and follow in the footsteps of the Lord.

Our text is along this line, and sets forth most distinctly that the heathen will not be saved in their ignorance; that unbelievers in Christian lands, though they be regarded as attendants at Church, etc., will not be saved in their unbelief; that it is not only necessary to believe with the heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, but it is also necessary to confess the Lord Jesus as the one who died and who rose again, and our faith in the merit of his sacrifices, if we would be saved—reckonedly saved, justified now and actually saved in the resurrection to life, the First Resurrection.

THE UNBELIEVER IS DAMNED

In full harmony with the above limitation of salvation to those who believe in the resurrection of Jesus, etc., and the condemnation of all others at the present time, is a statement found in Mark 16:16, which declares

2H345

that “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Although this text is in full accord with the point we are pressing, we do not quote it as a proof thereof, but to explain to you that it is no part of the Gospel—that all scholars agree that the last chapter of Mark from verse nine to the end is an interpolation, is no part of what St. Mark wrote, but was added to the Gospel some time about the seventh or ninth century. This is known because the passage is not found in the older Greek manuscripts.

However the words are strictly in accord with the general teachings of the Gospel, namely, that only those who hear about the Lord Jesus and who believe the message respecting his death, resurrection, etc., and who

make a consecration of themselves, who are baptized into his death—only these could belong to the class, the little flock, which God is now saving. All the remainder are damned—that is more properly rendered, condemned. The whole world was damned or condemned in Father Adam because of his disobedience, and the world has lain in that condemned condition as respects God for now six thousand years, and the only ones who have escaped that damnation or condemnation which came upon the world through Adam's disobedience are those who have accepted God's favor, mercy and grace through faith, and such during this Gospel age manifest the sincerity of their faith by their obedience to the terms of this great salvation, which God has provided in Jesus.

THE UNSAVED MILLIONS

Note again the terms of our text, and compare its statement with the ordinary sentiments of our time in religious circles. Are we not freely told by the great majority of people that they do not believe that the heathen are lost, which means that they do believe that the heathen are saved. They tell us that they do not think that God would permit them to be lost, etc. We reply that they have no authority for believing or disbelieving according to their own judgments, professions, inclinations. We reply that their in-harmony with the divine statement on the subject is the result of their false views respecting what is meant by being unsaved, condemned, damned. We point out to them that the world was unsaved for four thousand years before the Savior came, that the world was condemned to death or damned to death or sentenced to death because of Adam's sin. We point out that if God could permit the world to be thus sentenced or condemned for four thousand years before he sent the Savior at all, it would be no less wise for the divine Creator to permit them to remain in an unsaved condition for now nearly two thousand years since Christ died. The difficulty lies in the unscriptural thought that to be unsaved is to be in eternal torment. According to the Bible to be unsaved is to be out of harmony with God, to be outside the pale of his favor, blessing, holy Spirit, etc., to remain under sentence of death, and alienation from him.

Undoubtedly the heathen are lost, unsaved in the Scriptural sense—"Having no hope, without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12) It is not sufficient that they should worship the sun or Brahma or Buddha, nor that they should worship idols. This is not the worship of God—it is not acceptable to God; faith in those errors is not a ground for salvation, nor would any of them be saved by their good works. We must take the Scriptural proposition—we must speak to the people and declare that they can not be saved except by faith in Christ; that they must believe in their hearts that God raised him from the dead, which means also that they must believe in their hearts that Jesus is the Son of God, that he came into the

world and was made flesh and died for our sins, and that God raised him from the dead to be our Deliverer. More than this, the terms are that they must with their mouths confess Jesus to be their Lord, the Master.

NO OTHER DOOR

We wish to show, dear friends, that God has shut up the whole way of salvation, that there is no other door into it than the one door of faith. To those who think that this is a narrow way we answer, “Yes! thus the Lord described it,” but we point them to the fact that the narrow way will end with the end of this Gospel age. That the Lord appointed the narrowness of the present way for the very purpose of separation amongst men, and gathering through the narrow way to himself merely a little flock, the Bride of Christ, to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom. Beyond this narrow way, with its limitations of faith and confession—beyond this Gospel age, with its darkness covering the civilized and its gross darkness covering the heathen, lies the new dispensation, the Millennial age, the glorious Kingdom of God, for which the Master directed us to pray, “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.”

In that new dispensation there will be a demonstration so plain, so clear, respecting God’s character and plan, manifesting the fact of Christ’s death and resurrection and the salvation secured thereby, that a wayfaring man though a fool, need not err therein. Instead of the darkness of the present time, which needs the Word of God as a lamp to our footsteps, there will be the glorious rising of the Sun of righteousness, and the corresponding healing in its beams for all the maladies

2H346

which sin and condemnation have brought upon the world of mankind. The damned or condemned condition of the world will then terminate, all will be brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth that they might be saved (1 Tim. 2:4), and only the willfully perverse rejecters of the Kingdom will come again under the sentence, the curse of God, and again be damned or condemned to the Second Death (not eternal torment), from which there is to be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery in any sense or degree. It signifies a destruction which will be perpetual, a punishment of destruction, of extinction, which will be everlasting.

FAITH IN RESURRECTION THE TEST

The question arises, Why does the Lord lay the stress in our text, the whole stress, upon faith in the resurrection? Surely there are other things to be believed. Why does he single out this one thing as though it were the

all-important? Why does he not rather say faith in the coming Kingdom, or faith in the death of Christ, or faith in the love and justice and wisdom and power of God?

There is a reason which we will show. The Jews believed in a coming Kingdom of Christ which would bless the world. They had been believing this for over sixteen centuries, and their faith had been fanned by the types of the Law and by the various declarations of the prophets, and was still further encouraged by our Lord Jesus' own teachings that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand. All sorts of people believe in a coming Kingdom, doubtless first of all taking the thought from the promises made to Israel. We find that the Chaldeans hoped for a universal empire and tried to establish one, Nebuchadnezzar being the first universal monarch. The Medes and Persians overthrew Nebuchadnezzar and assumed to take his seat of universal empire, claiming that they could rule the world to its advantage. In turn Greece under Alexander the Great sought this distinction of world empire, to establish a kingdom for the blessing of all mankind. Following them came the Romans, whose empire reached further than any other, and was universal in the largest sense.

Next came the Papacy, with its claim that the kingdom should be a spiritual one, and that the popes should be the head of all earthly kingdoms—a claim which they still maintain, holding that the popes of the past reigned as vicegerents of Christ, that the popes of modern times have been deprived of their proper dignity and authority. And now we have Socialists on every hand claiming that the Kingdom of God is about to be established by them, that Socialism will accomplish all the wonderful things hoped for by the race for six thousand years. Meantime Christians have believed the testimony of the Law and the prophets, of Jesus and the apostles, that the God of heaven will in his due time send Jesus a second time to establish the Kingdom of the heavens, to break in pieces and destroy all opposition and government, to establish righteousness upon a firm basis. With all these various and conflicting thoughts respecting a coming Kingdom to bless the world, it is easily seen that this would not have been a proper test respecting Christian faith. Indeed many who are far from being the Lord's people would be ready to call the reign of Socialism the reign of Messiah.

None could deny the death of Christ. The Jews even admitted that he had been crucified. Besides, death is common to the world of mankind, and none would have thought of disputing the death of anybody. Hence we say that the resurrection of Jesus was one peculiarly unique—a subject upon which the followers of Christ differed from all other people in the world. They claimed that he had died indeed as a sinner, but that he was not a sinner; that his death had been purposed of God, foretold through the prophets, and with the intention of being the

ransom or corresponding price for Father Adam, upon whom the original sentence of death fell, and that by the redemption of Father Adam the redemption of the entire race of Adam was effected, because all had died under his sentence by heredity. The claim of the early Church was that the resurrection of Christ was the divine demonstration that he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and not personally worthy of death, that the Father loved him and raised him from the dead a New Creature, permitting his human nature to constitute a redemption of Adam. The Father had raised him up a quickening spirit, a Life-Giver, a spirit being, thus restoring him to the spirit nature which he had before he became a man, before he became our Redeemer. Thus the whole of Christianity rests upon this doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus.

RESURRECTION FAITH A TOUCHSTONE

Those who acknowledge the resurrection of Jesus from the dead must logically acknowledge that he was dead; they must also acknowledge that personally he was unworthy of death, else the Father could not have raised him from the dead. This implies, then, that his death was not on his own account; that he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and corroborates the Scriptural teaching that Christ died for our sins, that he poured out his soul unto death and made his soul an offering for sin on behalf of humanity. (1 Cor. 15:3; Isa. 53:10, 12) This implies that humanity was under a sentence of death; this in turn corroborates the statement of Genesis, that Adam had transgressed

2H347

the divine law, and had thus come under the death sentence. Thus we see that faith in the resurrection signifies a faith in the entire plan of God as it is set forth in the Bible. No wonder, then, that the Apostle speaks of this as the very touchstone of our faith "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved"—otherwise thou art unsaved, in the gall of bitterness and the bondage of corruption, still under the condemnation of sin and death.

The context bears this out: The Apostle is writing to those who had been trained, according to the Jewish religion, to look for salvation to works of the Law—to the keeping of the divine requirements as represented in the ten commandments, etc. He says that Moses describes that kind of righteousness that comes by the Law, that the man which does the things of the Law shall live thereby (v. 5). But, says the Apostle, the justification which God is now proposing or offering is not obtainable through the Law, nor obtainable merely by

the Jews who were under that Law Covenant, but is by Faith, and is open to all who can exercise the faith, whether Jews or Gentiles. He tells us that the language of faith is not that which inquires, "How could any one ascend up to heaven and induce the Son of God to come down to be the Savior?" nor does the language of faith say, "How could anyone descend into the deep, into death, to bring Christ up from the dead?"

But how does it speak? "Ah!" says the Apostle, "you who are Christians know the language of faith." It is in your mouths and in your hearts continually; it is the message which we have been preaching—that is the language of faith. This faith accepts the fact that God was moved with compassion and sent his Son, and that Jesus was that Son of God. The language of faith preached by the Apostle declared that the death of Christ was a sacrificial one for the sins of the world, and the language of faith also declares that God by his own power raised Jesus from the dead, and that he is no longer dead—that he rose and ascended on high. This is what we preach, then, what the Apostle preached; this is that which is to be confessed with the mouth, that Jesus is the Lord. And to thus confess truly, sincerely, it must be believed in the heart that God did raise him from the dead, and this would imply all the co-related features of truth respecting the sin of Adam, the condemnation of Adam and his race, the redemptive work of Jesus and the coming work of rolling away the curse.

The Apostle explains, "With the heart man believes unto righteousness (justification); and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," because the Scripture saith, "whosoever believeth on him must not be ashamed of him." (Rom. 10:11) This is the correct translation and approves itself. He that is ashamed of Jesus and his Word and the general plan of salvation so that he refuses to confess the truth is not worthy of the truth, is not in a saved condition. Those who now believe and who now confess are now reckonedly saved, and theirs is to be a special salvation, the salvation of the Elect, the salvation of the "little flock"—the only salvation that is open or offered at all during this Gospel age.

But as we have shown heretofore and as we may show again, there is another salvation of an earthly kind which belongs to the Millennial age, the terms and conditions of which will in some respects be the same as now but very different in other respects. Faith and obedience will be required then, also but the greater light and knowledge, the binding of Satan and the letting loose of all the principles of righteousness, will make the conditions of salvation then in many respects quite different from the very limited conditions of the narrow way of this present time, which the Scriptures declare few find and which we know still fewer are willing to walk in. Let us, dearly beloved—who have accepted

Christ, who have fled away from sin, who have laid hold upon Jesus by faith as the Redeemer— let us continue to believe and continue to confess the Way, the Truth and the Life, and then hope by his grace to share with him the glories of his Kingdom, which shall enlighten and bless all the families of the earth.

May 26, 1906

Republished from The National Labor Tribune,

June 6, 1918

PENTECOST ANNIVERSARY

A large congregation heard Pastor Russell yesterday afternoon at Carnegie Hall, Allegheny. His theme was the significations of Pentecost in connection with present and future blessings. His text was, “And also upon the servants and the handmaidens in those days will I pour out my Spirit.” (Joel 2:29; Acts 2:18) The speaker said:

To-day is approximately the anniversary of the day of Pentecost, one of the most notable epochs of history. It was the beginning of the Church’s history in

2H348

an important sense. True, our Lord Jesus Himself was the Head of the Church and had already completed His sacrifice and passed into glory, and during His ministry He had gathered about 500 trusting followers who had consecrated to Him and His service their all. He had assured these of their acceptance of the Father through Him, but told them to tarry before beginning the ministry of this Gospel age until they would be endued with power from on high. It was this blessing of the holy Spirit from on high which came to them at Pentecost, assuring them of divine acceptance and qualifying them for the divine service.

True, the Apostles and also the 70 sent out later were granted miraculous powers, by which they healed the sick, cast out devils, etc.; but in doing these works they were merely the representatives of Jesus, using the power of the holy Spirit granted to Him, and delegated to them. The blessing of the holy Spirit which they received at Pentecost, while it was from the Son, was granted them as an evidence that Jesus’ sacrifice had been sufficient and had been appropriated to them so that on and after Pentecost they had direct dealings with the Father and were recognized, accordingly, as no longer sinners, but as the servants and handmaidens of Jehovah — brought nigh, reconciled by the merit of Jesus’ sacrifice, appropriated on their behalf when He ascended up on high, “there to appear in the presence of God for us” —for believers.

“UPON SERVANTS AND HANDMAIDENS”

Let it be clearly noticed that the holy Spirit imparted to the Church on the day of Pentecost has been with the Church from then until now, has been upon the servants and handmaidens only, not upon the world in general. This is an important point, to which the Apostle Peter calls attention. He identified what took place in the upper room amongst the servants and handmaidens of the Lord as being a part of that which had previously been foretold by the Prophet Joel, referred to in our text. However, a critical examination of the prophet's declaration shows that our text is merely a parenthetical statement. The prophet tells of the general blessings of God which is yet to come upon all flesh — “I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh.” He points down to the end of this present evil world and the reign of sin and death —points down to the beginning of the millennial day of Christ, the thousand years of times of restitution, and declares that then God's spirit will be poured upon all flesh, so that the young men, the men of that time, will see with clearness of vision what the ancients saw obscurely as in a dream.

The law and the prophets, from Genesis down to Jesus, had foretold the coming blessing and release from the curse, when there would be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, when God would wipe tears from off all faces and cause the rebuke of his people to cease. (Isa. 25:8) Joel points down to that time and explains that the glorious transformation in the world's affairs will signify the removal of the curse, and, instead the pouring out of a blessing from the Almighty upon all flesh, granting all a realization of the things which had been previously told in visions, in dreams, in types, in figures and in dark sayings, and had been kept a mystery until the time for the revealing of the mystery of God and the full showing of all His gracious purposes toward the children of men, justly, legally, secured to Adam and his race through the second Adam.

After narrating the events due in the new dispensation, the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh, the Lord would grant a special blessing upon His servants and handmaidens. How true to the facts is this statement! No general outpouring upon all flesh has yet occurred because we are still in this time of evil, because Satan is not yet bound, because the morning of the new dispensation is not yet ushered in. The fact that we can see how the servants and handmaidens are now the recipients of divine favor in this time of evil should be a guarantee to us of the coming blessings and outpouring of the same God, under the same promise and secured by the same great sacrifice, upon all flesh.”

THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER

Here we are reminded of the Lord's declaration through another prophet that in the end of this age, after the election of Spiritual Israel, (Rom. 11:25-32) divine favor will return to Natural Israel. We are told how it will return — that they will be saved from their blindness, which has been upon them for more than eighteen centuries. The Lord also tells us through the prophet how this blindness will be turned away, saying: "I will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and of supplication, and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced and mourn." (Zech. 12:10) Be it noticed that this is separate and distinct from the Pentecostal blessing poured upon the servants and handmaidens because they believed. This outpouring upon Natural Israel will be while they are still unbelieving, and will have the effect of bringing them to a recognition of Him, who, as the "Lamb of God, taketh away the sin of the world." In this matter of receiving the outpouring of God's holy Spirit, the Jews will not be an exception to the remainder of the world, but merely a first-fruits of the world, for the same spirit of God, will be poured upon "all flesh," as God

2H349

assures us through Joel.

We are not to understand that this general outpouring of the holy Spirit upon Israel after the flesh and upon all the world of mankind, "all flesh," will mean their everlasting salvation. By no means. The Spirit of the Lord will then guide all through various agencies to an accurate knowledge of the truth, just as the holy Spirit now guides the servants and the handmaidens in this darker time of the gospel age, using the Lamp of Truth, the Word of God, for our instruction and guidance. The lamp will not be necessary to the world in the new dispensation, because "there shall be no night there." (Rev. 21:25) The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams, and all the night of darkness and sin and ignorance and superstition will flee away. And it will be in connection with that Light of Truth that "all flesh" shall receive a baptism of light and truth and grace. Then, as another prophet has declared, "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." (Isa. 40:5)

How glorious the picture here brought to our attention! How strange that good, kind, loving hearts among the Lord's people fail to respond to these grand declarations of the holy Spirit, which now are intended for the comfort and instruction and edification of the servants and handmaidens. Evidently the god of this world has done a great work of blinding the minds of many — not only with the gross darkness which is upon the heathen, but with the lesser darkness which rests upon

Christendom. O, that man could see the glorious character of God and the wonderful beauty of the divine plan under which the servants and hand-maidens now are blessed with the spiritual outpouring, and under which eventually a blessing of enlightenment shall reach "all flesh." We rejoice that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall yet fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. Isa. 11:9

EVIL EFFECTS OF FALSE DOCTRINE

Various false conceptions of God have resulted from this erroneous teaching that the holy Spirit is the third person of the God-head, as the catechism declares, but which the inspired Scriptures nowhere declare. It is this misimpression about God which gives foundation to various false theories prevalent to-day among Theosophists, Christian Scientists and others—that God is really a great nothing, merely a principle of good; that if you find a stick of wood that is good for anything, it means God is in the stick of wood. Pantheism is the name of this thought as applied in its grossest forms, namely, that God is everywhere and in everything. No such misleading, false view of God is to be obtained from the Bible. Everywhere He is represented as a person, and the Lord Jesus as another person, but fully in accord or oneness of spirit, disposition, purpose, will, with the Father, and that the holy Spirit is the spirit of righteousness, truth, holiness, which proceeds from the Father, proceeds from the Son, and that operates anywhere, everywhere, under the divine direction, being all powerful and omnipresent.

If God willed, His Spirit could now be poured out with enlightening influence upon the whole world, but He does not so will and hence this is not the case. He reserves that work for the future, when He promises that the holy Spirit, His holy influence, enlightening and uplifting, shall be poured upon all flesh. He does now pour out His Spirit, His influence, His power, upon His servants and handmaidens, the consecrated ones, and by this power the Lord works in these and for their advantage in all of life's interests and affairs. They are not to pray to the holy Spirit, but to the Father and to the Son, and in the name of the Son, on account of His merit. They are to come to the throne of heavenly grace in the strength of His atoning sacrifice finished at Calvary. They are to claim relationship with the Father and hopes of the glory, honor and immortality through Him who bought them with His precious blood.

While Jesus has been absent from His church throughout this gospel age both the Father and the Son have been represented in the church by the holy Spirit, the spirit of the truth. And the Lord has so ordered that in proportion as any become truly His they may have more and more of His spirit, disposition, dwelling in them richly. Hence the apostle urges that we be filled with the spirit — the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the

Father, the spirit of love, of gentleness, meekness, patience, etc. The more full we are of this spirit or character of Christ, the more are we copies of God's dear Son, and the better are we prepared for the glory, honor and immortality which the Lord has promised to them that love Him, and who accept and avail themselves of the privilege and blessing of the holy Spirit, now granted to all consecrated believers—servants and handmaidens.

“SPOKE IN OTHER TONGUES”

We cannot here now take time to discuss this question of the holy Spirit in detail. We cannot take up all the texts which, by translation and misinterpretation, have served to confuse the Lord’s people for 15 centuries. We must proceed with our subject, but meantime we suggest to the interested that we have this entire matter in print in the fifth volume of the Millennial Dawn series, and these are sold by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society at actual cost,

2H350

or loaned freely to those unable to purchase.

We note the effects of the outpouring of the holy Spirit upon the disciples. Tongues like unto fire seemed to rest upon their heads and they spoke with other tongues—that is, in languages other than the one of their birth. They understood that the time had come for the delivery of the great message which the Master had left for them, the Gospel message, and they began forthwith to tell the good tidings, not only of the death of Jesus and the redemption secured thereby, but also of His resurrection from the dead and ascension on high, and that the proof of their acceptance of the Father was in this demonstration of the holy Spirit and anointing. They preached the gathering of Spiritual Israelites to be joint-heirs with the Lord in His kingdom, that was by and by to bless the whole world during the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21)

As they were thus talking the people were astonished, and the peculiarities of the affair spread from mouth to mouth until a great concourse of people from all over Jerusalem was gathered about them. The peculiarity was that Jews from all parts of the world were still in Jerusalem, where they had been attending the Passover, the more devoted staying longer than the majority, and these all heard the languages of the country in which they were born—Medes, Parthians, Elamites, dwellers in Mesopotamia and in Judea—in the different dialects, accents, etc., and they queried how these men whom they recognized as unlearned Galileans—how they could speak in these languages. Others, not comprehending fully the situation, concluded that the languages they did not understand were mere gibberish and declared that the men were drunk. Then it was that the Apostle Peter explained the situation to the multitude—the death of Jesus, the Passover Lamb; His resurrection on the third day, which corresponded to the waving of the wave sheaf, and His ascension at the end of 40 days to the Father’s presence; and that this manifestation of a miraculous power in their speech was a gift from

heaven, indicating that their sins were cancelled, that they were accepted of God as members of the body of Christ, Spiritual Israel, etc.

“ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED”

Let us bear in mind this lesson from the type: that we have no standing or acceptance or purity of our own, that we are reckoned pure and acceptable to the Father through the merit of our Redeemer, that by his stripes we are healed, that through him we are accepted in the Beloved” and not of ourselves, and let us realize the necessity for the fiery trials which shall try us, that every element of the spirit of leaven, of corruption, of sin may be destroyed so far as our heart intentions are concerned, and that we may be more and more conformed to the likeness of God’s dear Son.” (Eph. 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:12; Rom. 8:29)

The miraculous gift of tongues, miracles, etc., granted to the apostles and early Church, were very necessary at the time, but were not long continued —nor ever intended to be. Those signs were for the convincing of the world and for the establishing of the faith of the Church; but the real proposition of the Lord was that the acceptance of his people and the begetting of His Spirit, disposition should work in them transformation of character, and grow in their hearts and conduct the fruits and graces of the Spirit. As these fruits of the Spirit began to grow the outward gifts began to depreciate in value. Seeing this we are not surprised that the Apostle said, in so many words:

“Whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge it shall pass away.” (1 Cor. 13:18) Serving their purpose they shall be discontinued. They belong to the kindergarten stage of the school of Christ and the Lord’s people are expected to go on from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge and from the gifts of the Spirit to the fruits of the Spirit. Let none then think that because they do not work miracles that they necessarily lack the evidences that they are begotten of the holy Spirit. On the contrary, let them look for the fruits of the Spirit in their hearts, in their lives — meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love. “If these things be in you and abound they shall make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . And so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. 1:8, 11)

SUPERIORITY OF THE GIFTS

In harmony with this note the Apostle’s declaration when he contrasts the gifts of the Spirit belonging to the kindergarten stage of the school of Christ and the fruits

of the Spirit belonging to the further developed stage of the school of Christ, he says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love, I become as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal." (1 Cor. 13:1) The intimation here clearly is that some of those who received the gifts of the Spirit were the merest babes as respects their development in the spirit of Christ and we have illustrations of some of these who were merely sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Ananias and Sapphira were among these. We know not what gift of the Spirit they had as an evidence that they were of the Lord's people, but we do have the

2H351

Apostle's assurance that some gift was given to every one in the Church at the time; yet Ananias and Sapphira lacked the essence of the matter and demonstrated that they were merely sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

Dear brethren and sisters, let us recognize the great blessing which came to the Church as a whole on the day of Pentecost; let us recognize that we individually and collectively were represented in those two wave loaves of the fiftieth day; let us see to it that all of the leaven of malice, envy, strife and works of the flesh and the Devil are consumed as respects our hearts, that we are purified from these and that instead we are filled with the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of love, gentleness, meekness, patience, brotherly kindness. Let us remember that these fruits of the Spirit are not instantaneous as were the gifts, but are to be developed, and that not without effort, painstaking care day by day, hour by hour. We are to be changed from glory to glory, to greater and greater likeness to our dear Redeemer, in whose perfect image we hope to be in the glorious final change in the First Resurrection, when we shall see Him as He is, share His Glory, be like Him, participants in His Glory, honor and immortality. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure." (1 John 3:3)

May 27, 1906

*Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
May 30, 1918*

“LIVED NOT AGAIN UNTIL THE THOUSAND YEARS WERE FINISHED”

HUNTINGDON, Pa., May 27, 1906—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today, to large and intelligent audiences. His afternoon discourse was his anti-infidel sermon, “To Hell and Back,” demonstrating the reasonableness and truthfulness of the Bible. His evening discourse, which we report, was from the text, “The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” (Rev. 20:5) He said:

Many have taken our text and its context to signify that at the second coming of Christ the First Resurrection will take place, including the change of the living members of the Church, but none others; and that the work of the Millennial age will progress with the living nations of that time, bringing them all to a knowledge of the divine character and plan, and giving them all an opportunity to be reconciled to God through the death of his Son; but forbidding the thought that any of the dead except those of the First Resurrection class, the Church, will come forth during the Millennial age to share in its blessing, opportunities and privileges. This text is the ground for the belief of many Adventists and pre-Millennialists that at the close of the Millennial age the wicked and ignorant dead, not of the Church, will be merely awakened to receive their sentence and to be remanded again to the prison-house of death — some claiming a prison -house of eternal torment.

This thought is entirely astray—entirely out of harmony also with the teaching of this text and its context. As we keep closely to the Scriptural statements they will lead us out of the fog into the clear light, beauty and harmony of the divine revelation.

GOOD TIDINGS TO ALL PEOPLE

The whole tenor of the Scripture is that God purposed a salvation for Adam and his race as a whole, and not for merely an elect portion of it. True, there are some special promises and a special salvation offered to the “very elect,” who will make their calling and election sure by so running in the race for the prize as to receive the “Well done, good and faithful servant,” and the glory, honor and immortality reward. But this blessing to the Elect, so far from hindering the general purpose of the divine plan to bless all the families of the earth, is

merely an incidental feature of it, for the Elect, the Scriptures declare, are to be God's agents and instrumentalities in communicating the blessing to all the nations in due time. Only an elect class of the line of Abraham and Israel were specially favored and blessed up to the beginning of this Gospel age; and only an elect class have been specially favored of God in the light of divine truth during this Gospel age. These favored ones were, we are told, drawn of the Father, blessed by the Son, and received an opening of the eyes of their understanding as a special favor, while the remainder of the race were passed by and not thus favored, and are still in measurable darkness, as the Apostle declares, "The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not." (2 Cor. 4:4) Up to this time, therefore, only elected ones have been favored; and thus it will be at the second coming of

2H352

Christ, for we are told that he shall come and gather together his Elect from the four winds of heaven. Mark 13:27

So then, these things being true, it follows that if only those alive in the world at the second coming of Christ shall be blessed by his Millennial reign, it will mean partiality with God, not only as respects the high calling and special privileges granted to the elect, but partiality shown amongst the non-elect—that the vast majority of our race for the past 6000 years has been permitted to die in blindness, in deafness, in ignorance of the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved, and that those living in this seventh thousand period would have all these blessings and favors denied to the others. Is it reasonable to expect this? Should we not expect that our God, who declares himself to be no respecter of persons, would treat the world in general alike, even though he has favored for special reasons elect classes for a time? Would not such a termination of God's plan of salvation be a virtual abrogation of his promises clearly set before us in the Scriptures? And can we think that God would permit his promises to fail? Let us examine some of them.

THE TRUE LIGHT FOR EVERY MAN

Going back to the earliest indications of the divine plan, we find it vaguely stated that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head—implying that this victory over Satan will mean a blessing to all of Adam's race. The Scriptures show us more particularly how this will be fulfilled, that this seed of the woman is primarily Jesus, who became partaker of human nature, who was born of a woman. But it means more—it includes the Elect, the body of Christ, the Church, as the Apostle explains (Rom. 16:20), "The God of peace shall bruise

Satan under your feet shortly.” The second great statement of the divine purpose respecting our race was made to Abraham saying, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” This seed the Apostle tells us was primarily Jesus, and in a secondary, larger sense it includes all of the elect Church, the body of Christ, the Apostle’s declaration being, “If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29) Does not this promise tell not only who the seed is, but tell also that the work of the seed shall be to bless all the families of the earth? And will God pass by this plain statement, to which he not only gave his word but also his oath, and will he only bless those members of the human family fortunate enough to be living at the time of the second advent—during the Millennial age? We think not. We will yet show that the plan is deeper and broader.

In the Law and in the Prophets the Lord taught the same lesson of the blessing of all the people. Moses was the type of the very Elect, Head and body, and all Israel represented the whole world of mankind as they, under the New Covenant, will be brought into relationship with God, and this is the statement of the Apostle Peter, “A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from amongst your brethren, like unto me (Moses). Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.” Acts 3:22, 23

In this picture in which all who will hear the voice of God through his Elect, the Church, are indicated as having an opportunity to hear, only the willfully disobedient being destroyed in the Second Death. Our Lord, speaking on the subject of his mission, declares that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. Adam and all of his race were lost and our Lord’s mission is not merely for an elect class, but in conjunction with that election he is to give the opportunity of life everlasting to every man, as he declared, “This is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” (John 1:9) And again he declares that he gave himself a ransom for all, and the Apostle assures us that in due time this will be testified to all. (1 Tim. 2:6) This is the message which the angels sang when they announced the Redeemer’s birth, “We bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people”—not merely to those people living during the Millennium, but unto all people. Luke 2:10

In our Lord’s last message to the Church he pictures the time described by the Prophet, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and none shall need say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord— when all the

blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. The declaration is, “All nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy righteous acts are made manifest.” (Rev. 15:4) This is not to be understood to mean the representatives of all nations living before the Millennium, but every nation, people, kindred and tongue for whom Christ died, many of which nations, kindreds, peoples have already passed into the oblivion of death, but are, nevertheless, in God’s providence, to have a share in the blessings accruing to the world through the great Redeemer’s sacrifice. Let us trust in the living God and in his Word to be its own interpreter, and our text will be found to be in full accord with all of its gracious provisions.

“LIVED NOT AGAIN”

Coming directly to our text, “The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.”

2H353

How can this text be understood in harmony with the remainder of the Scriptures? In what way can it be understood that will not bring it into conflict with God’s gracious promises, which can not be broken—in conflict with his oath that all the families of the earth shall be blessed through Christ? We answer that the matter is very simple: we must adhere closely to the Scriptural definition of what life is. The Bible tells us that from the divine standpoint the whole world is dead today— all except the comparatively few who have accepted Christ, the Life-Giver. Our Lord’s words apply to the young man who believed on him; he said, “Let the dead bury their dead.” Matt. 8:22

It is the same thought; the whole world from God’s standpoint is dead, only believers in Christ have passed from death unto life. The death sentence has been upon the world for 6000 years. We who are reckoned as already alive have escaped the condemnation, the sentence of death which is on the world. The Lord recognizes faithful believers as having life now, and assures such that it is his will that they should have a share in the life resurrection, which is for the good, the faithful, the justified, those who abide in his love. The remainder of the world who do not have a share in the life resurrection are still under sentence of death at the opening of the Millennium. To illustrate: Suppose that the Millennium began this very day, and that the world’s population aside from the saints, the Elect, is in round numbers 1,600,000,000. That vast multitude are all still dead from God’s standpoint, and will remain so throughout the Millennial age.

That is to say, justification by faith, which operates in the Elect and by which we are already reckoned as having passed from death to life, will not so operate during the Millennial age. Instead of the world's being justified to relationship to God at the beginning of the Millennial age, they will be placed in their fallen and dead condition in the hands of Christ, the Life-Giver. During that thousand years of Christ's Millennial Kingdom it will be his special work, in conjunction with his Bride, the Church, to uplift the world, raising them up out of the present sin-and-death conditions, physically, mentally and morally, and this work of restitution to the original human likeness of God, lost by father Adam and redeemed by Christ, will be possible of attainment during the Millennial age by the uplifting process. That uplifting process, bringing the obedient of mankind back to original perfection, is the resurrection, the anastasis everywhere spoken of in the New Testament. In other words, the word resurrection does not signify merely an awakening from the sleep of death, but it applies especially to that raising up which will be accomplished for the world after they are awakened during the Millennium.

We have spoken especially of the living-dead, those under death sentence and treated by God as dead in trespasses and sins, but who have not gone to the tomb. If it requires the entire thousand years to raise them up and to give them life, the same will be true of all those who are in their graves, who shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth unto the judgment resurrection. (John 5:29) Their awakening will not be their resurrection, but merely their coming forth unto resurrection. The resurrection raising up, uplifting of the race, during the Millennial age will be a raising out of death conditions up toward perfect life conditions. And not until the close of the Millennial age will the dead be thus completely lifted up out of their old conditions and brought into full relationship with the Heavenly Father "whom to know is life eternal." John 17:3

During the entire thousand years of their resurrection, the raising up, uplifting, under the blessed influence of the Kingdom of Christ—Satan being bound and all the blessed influences of righteousness being let loose, the blindness of Satan being taken away and the glorious light of the knowledge of God coming more and more into the hearts of mankind—will prepare the willing and obedient—for the grand consummation by the end of the thousand years, the end of the Millennium. Meantime the unwilling, the disobedient, will be cut off in the Second death, the death punishment everlasting will be visited upon them, they will have no hope of a future resuscitation. At the close of the thousand years, when Christ shall present all the worthy of the race to the Father—physically, mentally and morally perfect—then and not until then will they be accorded direct divine recognition and the gift of God, eternal life. Consequently, not until that time will the dead live again in the proper, true sense of the word—living as God has

recognized it from the beginning of his dealings with our race. Adam was a dead man from God's standpoint from the moment he came under the curse and was driven out of Eden under the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die." And not until Adam and his race have been uplifted out of sin-and-death conditions and brought back again into accord with the Father can they be said to live again. Thus, while the resurrection of Jesus occurred at the beginning of the Gospel age, and the resurrection of the Church, the faithful ones of the household of faith, will take place at the beginning of the Millennial age, the raising of the world out of sin-and-death conditions to the perfection of life—this resurrection of the rest of the dead will not be complete and they will not live again until the thousand years shall be finished.

2H354

THE JUDGMENT RESURRECTION

From this divine standpoint, those of the world said from the human standpoint to be living—and those of the world said from the human standpoint to be dead— will all be dead at the beginning of the Millennium and in the hands of the Mediator, the Christ, for the very purpose of raising them out of their sin-and-death conditions. Doubtless the work of enlightenment and restitution will begin with those who have not gone into the tomb; doubtless the darkest places of the world will be enlightened with the Sun of Righteousness before those who have gone down into the great prisonhouse of death shall be called forth. Nor are we to expect that they will all be called forth at once, but gradually, as the world will be prepared for their reception. As increased inventions and blessings shall prevail, and the earth yield her increase, conditions will be favorable for the proper care of those returning from the tomb.

Doubtless, too, their return will be in such a manner as will identify them with those of their kindred who had not gone into the tomb. To illustrate: the favored ones of the beginning of the Millennium would in due time come to understand that all that are in their graves are to be restored, and doubtless this will be accomplished along lines which will develop faith. Prayer will be made for the return from the tomb of a beloved father or mother or brother or sister, these in turn praying for others as prepared to receive and assist them, and thus the gathering from the tomb will proceed backwards, so that Adam probably would be one of the last to be awakened to come forth to be identified by his children as they were identified by the children all the way back.

Our Lord calls this the judgment resurrection, because opportunities of resurrection, of raising up out of sin-and-death conditions, will not only be open to all of Adam's race,

but, additionally, the Kingdom conditions will be such as to force them to a decision either to go onward and upward in accordance with the laws of the Kingdom then in force, or, refusing so to do, to receive stripes and chastisements and eventually be destroyed in the Second Death. Of that time we read in prophecy, “When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Isa. 26:9) The judgments of the Lord have not been abroad in the earth for the past six thousand years. On the contrary, sin and death have reigned, the righteous have suffered, evildoers have prospered. The judgments of the Lord signify the Lord’s rulings, the Lord’s decisions, the Lord’s rewards and punishments. During the Millennial age these will be abroad everywhere throughout the world; all then seeking to serve righteousness will be rewarded and will more and more come to appreciate it, and all who love unrighteousness will be chastened with stripes and punishments that they may learn the Truth from the divine standpoint—to love righteousness and hate iniquity. If after having had the full light and knowledge and opportunity, they sin willfully, the judgment of the Lord is that they share in the Second Death.

As the punishments of that time will eventuate to this class in the Second Death, the rewards of that time will eventuate to the other class, the faithful and obedient, in everlasting life; but it can not be reached until the close of the Millennium—until Jesus shall present his complete work to the Father, and the Mediatorial Kingdom undertaken for the purpose of putting down sin and re-establishing righteousness in the earth will have been completed. When he shall have put down all insubordination, all enemies against God, then shall the Son also be subject to the Father who did put all things under him, that God may be all in all. 1 Cor. 15:27, 28

THE RESURRECTION TO SHAME

In the Old Testament the word resurrection is referred to as a “coming forth unto shame and lasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2)—not everlasting contempt, as in our common version, for the Hebrew word does not signify everlasting, but merely lasting—to a completion. We can readily see how the blessings of the Millennial age, the enlightenment, the opening of the eyes and ears of understanding, will make a new world, especially as the Lord assures us that the sinful conditions also shall be brought into accord with the best interests of the human family. No longer will storms and cyclones, earthquakes and volcanoes and tidal waves do injury, but peace shall be promoted in the elements as well as amongst men. In a word, Paradise is to be restored. When, therefore, those who have fallen asleep in death shall come forth to the new conditions and clearer light and knowledge, we can well imagine how, their history being known, it will indeed be a coming forth to shame and contempt.

Imagine poor Nero as a sample of the worst men; imagine the poor Sodomites, although the Lord declares that they were not nearly so evil in his sight as were some of the self-righteous Pharisees of Bethsaida and Chorazin, who made long prayers and had a form of godliness. The coming forth of these to shame in the light of the new conditions will be painful, humiliating to them, and the majority of them surely will be in contempt amongst their fellows. To these the laws of the Kingdom will seem very rigorous, and the highway of holiness then to be opened up will at first appear quite steep. However, all the conditions will be favorable,

2H355

Satan bound, righteousness and truth and love prevailing. The willing and obedient of them will soon begin to make progress up, up, up, out of sin and out of death conditions, mental, moral and physical, and in proportion as they rise, in the same proportion will their shame depart, and in the same proportion will the contempt of their fellows in the world give place to feelings of sympathy and admiration. We rejoice that under the glorious conditions of the Millennial Kingdom every member of Adam's race will have a full and fair opportunity to get free from the bitter results of sin and to get back into the image and likeness of God.

THE TEXT SPURIOUS

Having shown that our text is in full accord with all of the gracious promises of God's Word we now call attention to the fact that the text is spurious. That is to say, the words of our text are not found in any of the oldest Greek manuscripts of the Greek New Testament. It is not found in any manuscripts older than the seventh century, and quite probably crept into it, not of intention, but as a marginal comment by some copyist. For it will be remembered that in olden times there was no such thing as printing—the copies of the Scriptures were probably made by pen. Leaving out the words of our text the remainder reads more smoothly than with them in, and this has given rise to the supposition that some one who copied the matter for his own benefit jotted down the words of our text as a comment—his own thought respecting the passage. His manuscript in turn being loaned to some one else to copy, the marginal comment was misunderstood and supposed to be an omission, and was copied into the text as a part of the Scriptures. However, as we have shown, this text is in full accord with the entire Scriptural statement, so that those who are not satisfied with the evidence that it is spurious may still in the light of the divine word, as we have set it forth, avoid being stumbled by this passage—may see how, even if it be true, it is in accord with the remainder of the Scriptures, which from any other standpoint of view it contradicts.

“BLESSED AND HOLY”

In conclusion, dear friends, I remind you that while it is proper for us to be interested in every feature of the divine plan, and that all Scripture is profitable that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished, nevertheless our personal interest in God's great plan is identified with the promises relating to the First Resurrection. They that will have part in this will reign with Christ during that thousand years; they will be the “blessed and holy” that have part in the First Resurrection, and on them the Second Death will have no power, but they shall reign priests with Christ for that thousand years. (Rev. 20:6) By the Lord's grace we, who now have the hearing ear and the understanding heart, have the opportunity for making our calling and election sure to a place in this spiritual class who will experience the First Resurrection. The blessings provided for these are not the earthly portion to which the world may attain through the judgment resurrection, but the heavenly portion, joint-heirship with Christ, partakers of the divine nature, “heirs of God.”

In proportion as we see the harmony of God's Word we are assured that these exceeding great and precious promises granted to the Church are not cunningly devised fables, are not poetical figures, but clear, plain statements of the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that love him more than they love houses or lands, father or mother, wife or children or self. Our Lord says, “He that hath an ear let him hear.” I trust, dear brethren and sisters, that that refers to you and to me, that we hear his Word, that we respond to his call, and that we will lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and to the extent of ability we will run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, until he shall become the finisher of it by giving us a share with himself in the First Resurrection, its glories, its honors, its divine nature.

The National Labor Tribune, June 10, 1906

JESUS THE ADVOCATE OF BELIEVERS ONLY

New York City, June 10—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., addressed two large audiences here today. In the afternoon, at the Grand Opera House, he delivered his discourse entitled, “A Cure for Infidelity—To Hell and Back.” In the evening, at Judson Memorial Chapel, his text was, “I write unto you that ye avoid sin. Yet if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is a propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for

the sins of the whole world.” (1 John 2:1, 2) We report the latter discourse as follows:

We have not in the past been sufficiently discriminating in our study on the Word. Failing to notice that the salvation of the elect Church is a matter separate and distinct from the world’s situation, we have applied the various Scriptures dealing with sin and its

2H356

forgiveness in a loose manner, which has failed to bring a clear-cut view on the subject. For instance, with the gradual opening of the eyes of our understanding we note in our text the declaration that our Lord’s sacrifice was a propitiation, satisfaction for our sins, the Church’s sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. We perceive that in this text the Lord sharply differentiates between the Church and the world, between our salvation and the world’s salvation. True, at one time there was no difference, for we were all “children of wrath even as others” still are; but we who have heard the voice of the heavenly Father speaking peace through Jesus Christ, we who have accepted that message, we who have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son, are no longer of the world, but, from God’s standpoint, constitute a separate and distinct class, a small minority, “a little flock.” The Scriptures tell us that we are called, chosen, separated from the world. Our Master’s words are, “Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world,” “Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you, and ordained you.” John 15:16, 19

OUR ADVOCATE, THE WORLD’S MEDIATOR

At another time we hope to take up the subject of Christ the Mediator, and to then show that it will be during the Millennial age that Christ will act as Mediator between God and man: that as he has already laid the foundation for the great work of reconciling the world unto the Father through the sacrifice of himself, he will during the Millennial age complete that work by reconciling the world to the Father—as many of the world as are under favorable opportunities will be glad to come to a knowledge of the divine character and plan and to obedience to the divine requirements. The Scriptures properly enough speak of our Lord Jesus as already the Mediator, from the standpoint that he has already been honored by the Father and indicated as the one who shall perform that great work of mediation — the one who must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet, and caused every knee to bow and every tongue to confess to the glory of God the Father. (1 Cor. 15:25; Phil. 2:9-11) The time for doing this work, however, the

time for exercising his power as the Mediator and putting all things into subjection is still future.

Just now we wish to emphasize the thought that our Lord Jesus is not the Church's Mediator before the Father, but the Church's Advocate. There is a sharp distinction to be drawn between the two thoughts. A mediator implies a hostility between two principals, requiring the intervention of a third party, and this is not the case with the Church. We are not rebels, we are not alienated from God, but now through faith in the blood we are children of God, and our Redeemer assures us, "The Father himself loveth you." (John 16:27) Even before the time came in the Lord's plan when the Kingdom would be established, the rebels subdued, we were glad to hear the Father's voice speaking peace through Jesus Christ, and we came to him: Surely, then, there is no need of a Mediator between the Father who loves his children and children who love their Father. However, the basis of our acceptance with the Father was our hearty renunciation of sin and our acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus as covering our blemishes and condemnation of the past, and our acceptance of the Father in Christ was on condition that we would henceforth walk in his steps, not after the flesh but after the Spirit, as set forth in the perfect law of liberty, the law of love to God and man.

It may be asked then, If we are children of God and the Father himself loveth us and has accepted us in Christ through the merit of his atoning blood, why should we need an advocate with the Father? We reply that the Father's requirement that our hearts be perfect in love to him and to do all is beyond our ability—not beyond our desires, our endeavors, our intentions, but beyond our accomplishment, because we have the treasure of the new mind in earthen vessels—imperfect bodies, born in sin, shapen in iniquity, on account of which the Apostle says, "We can not do the things that we would." (Gal. 5:17) This constitutes our need of an advocate with the Father, otherwise we should lose the standing already granted to us through faith.

But our Advocate not only applied a share of his merit on our behalf for the sins that are past, but stands prepared to apply on our behalf also the measure of his merit for the covering of every imperfection, every trespass which we may commit—so long as our hearts are loyal to the Lord and we are striving to do those things which would please him. In a word our Advocate stands ready to make good all our deficiencies, our shortcomings, all our trespasses which are not willingly ours, but ours through weaknesses of heredity, which makes us subject to temptations to which we are exposed daily hourly, not only from our own flesh but also from the world and the great Adversary, Satan.

“FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES”

This brings up the subject of forgiveness of sins. Some are inclined to say: If our sins were forgiven once why should we repeat the matter at the throne of grace? Why should we continue to acknowledge ourselves sinners when the Word of the Lord assures us that our sins and iniquities are covered from his sight, that

2H357

we are justified freely by his grace from all sin? There is a measure of correctness in this argument, but in other respects it is incorrect. So far as the original sin is concerned—our share in the Adamic condemnation that passed upon all men—the Scriptures assure us that we have escaped the condemnation which is on the world. 1 Cor. 11:32

To whatever extent, therefore, we believe the testimony of the Lord's Word that our sins are covered, that we are escaped from that condemnation, it would not be proper for us to reiterate to the Lord prayers for forgiveness of our share in original sin. That is all past and gone, and the proper attitude of faith in God's assurance forbids that we should repeat requests along that line, although it would always be proper for us to acknowledge the Lord's goodness in having forgiveness for our share of original sin, and to thank him for having lifted our feet out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay of sin and its condemnation, and for having placed our feet upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and put in our mouths the new song of rejoicing and thanksgiving and praise, which is our privilege and our joy since we have passed from condemnation to justification, from being children of wrath to sonship and joint-heirship with Jesus Christ our Lord.

There are more sins than our original sin which in the Lord's prayer are designated trespasses, and these should be considered, should be mentioned at the throne of grace daily. As New Creatures we have entered into a covenant with the Lord to walk in Jesus' steps in the narrow way, according to the law of love. And we all find continually that, however sincere and loyal our hearts are to the principles of righteousness and love, we come short of the perfect standard because of weaknesses, blemishes and imperfections of the flesh. These trespasses against the law of love should be mentioned at the throne of grace. It is to these that the Apostle is referring in our text. In the preceding context he is directing us how we should maintain fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, so that, so far from our imperfections separating us again from the Father and from the Son, our joy may be full, our fellowship complete. He tells us that as New Creatures

we must walk in the light according to the new nature, according to truth, according to righteousness: we must not walk in sin, in darkness.

But since we have the treasure of the new mind in a blemished earthen vessel, since our spotless robe of Christ's righteousness must be worn continually and thus be brought in contact with the world, the Apostle intimates that it would be impossible for us to preserve it without spot or wrinkle. Nevertheless our wedding-robe must be without spot or wrinkle if we would be acceptable at the end of the age as members of the heavenly bride at the marriage feast. How then shall we do? What must be our course in view of these apparently contradictory conditions? The Apostle explains that the blood of Christ not only met first the obligations of the past, satisfying, setting aside the condemnation which was against us as members of Adam's race—but that the same merit of the same sacrifice of Christ may be used for the cleansing of every spot, every imperfection, every blemish. He says, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us (keeps cleansing us) from all sin." (1 John 1:7) Thus and thus only can the Lord's children in this present time continue to abide in fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and be prepared for the glorious change of the First Resurrection promised to this class alone.

"IF WE DECEIVE OURSELVES"

The Apostle, surmising that some would claim that they had reached perfection and that their daily life was perfect, puts in a warning word, saying, "If we say that we have no sin (that we are free from any breaches of the perfect law of love toward God and man) we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." We make God a liar, and indicate that his Word is not in us—that we have not properly studied or understood his Word. There is no more serious condition for the Lord's people to get into than to imagine that they are perfect in the flesh. It implies that they are blind to many of their own failings. We may be sure that their neighbors and friends and kindred can discern blemishes in them, and that much more the heavenly Father discerns, as he declares in his Word that they come short of glorifying him—that they come short of the full glory of perfection which the perfect law of love demands.

While, therefore, faith in the Lord and a knowledge of his Word shows us clearly that we are purged from our old sins, that from the divine standpoint these are all covered for the household of faith by the robe of Christ's imputed righteousness, we see on the contrary that daily imperfections crop out, notwithstanding our best endeavors to walk as nearly up to the standard of the divine law as possible—we see that we can not do the things that we would. More than this, as year by year we grow in grace and knowledge and love we see ourselves

more clearly, so that after making progress in the Christian way for years, the best of the Lord's people will see more of their own blemishes than they noted in the beginning of their Christian-experience. They daily see more clearly than before the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine character and of the divine law; and as they look into the perfect law of liberty they discern more clearly day by day, and behold as in a mirror their own natural imperfections and shortcomings. Such would be completely

2H358

discouraged did they not realize the significance of the Apostle's words in today's lesson. He says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The Apostle, we see, is not referring to the question of moral sin again, and applying for a new robe of Christ's righteousness. All that was done in the past; that robe is now ours, and must never be laid off if we would abide in divine favor. But our robe must be spotless, and hence the gracious provision of the Father through the Son that the blood of Christ may upon our application be applied to cleanse us from all sins, even the slighter ones. Thus has the Lord provided that we may keep our garments unspotted from the world by making use of this privilege granted us of coming with courage to the throne of heavenly grace that we may obtain mercy (in respect to our shortcomings or trespasses) and find grace to help in time of need. Heb. 4:16

Nothing in this, properly understood, suggests any carelessness on the part of those who would keep their garments unspotted from the world. Imbued with the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, with a love for righteousness, they are, as the Apostle suggests, to "hate even the garment spotted with the flesh" (Jude 23), and strive continually and with growing persistency and carefulness to avoid such blemishes and necessity for confessing trespasses. But although this necessity grows less and less as we grow stronger and stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might, nevertheless, so long as the New Creature must operate through the earthen vessel, we must not feel discouraged with our best endeavors for righteousness, but the more earnestly wait for and hope for the glorious resurrection change, in which we shall receive glorious spirit bodies, which our Lord has promised to the faithful—perfect in every particular. Thenceforth we will know no sin, and need no further to confess trespasses, for that which is perfect shall have come, and the new mind, the New Creature, thenceforth will be able to express its high and glorious sentiments of obedience to righteousness perfectly.

“THEY WASH THEIR ROBES”

The Lord brings to our attention the fact that there will be two classes saved during this Gospel age, as well as another class that will be saved during the Millennial age. All saved during this age are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, ‘justified through faith in his blood.’ (Rom. 5:9) But the classes saved during this Gospel age do more than believe, do more than repent, do more than seek to live righteously. Both classes make a covenant with the Lord to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, both classes receive the white robe of justification as a result of such faith and consecration. One of these classes we have already referred to, the class which seeks to live up to its consecration daily, hourly, and which keeps its garments unspotted from the world, “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” This class in the Scriptures is designated a “little flock.”

The other class is designated the “great company.” Concerning the latter company note the statement, “These are they which came out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Rev. 7:14) This class, failing to keep their robes unspotted, failing to go to the Lord in prayer with every discovery of trespass, get their robes sadly bedraggled through contact with the world. They were vexed with the first spot, and with the second, and so on, but gradually they became more careless and less and less appreciative of the absolute spotlessness of the robe. For this reason they will not be accounted worthy of the high honor which the Lord proposes to give to the “little flock.” But before they can obtain any honor or any place in the everlasting Kingdom it will be necessary that they should pass through fiery experiences, disciplines, for their correction, for their purification. In some parts of the Scriptures this trial is referred to as the “fiery trial which shall try you.” (1 Pet. 4:12) Its primary reference is to a great tribulation in the end of this age, through which all except the little flock may be expected to pass.

In that tribulation time there will be a general cleansing, a general turning to the Lord on the part of these consecrated ones and an acceptance by the Lord, for we read that they shall come up out of the great tribulation and be granted palm branches, and be permitted to serve the Lord in his Temple before his throne. We notice, however, that the little flock, who keep their garments unspotted by daily, hourly, applying for their share of the precious blood for this purpose—these receive the higher honor, and instead of being before the throne are in the throne as the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife; instead of having palm branches, representing victory, they have crowns, which represent victory on a higher, grander plane, approving them as “more than conquerors through him who loved them and bought them with his

precious blood.” In other words, the great company mentioned here are chastened through tribulation to the point of the purgation of sins and the cleansing of the robe, and attain to the spiritual nature and will be highly honored servants of the Lord during the Millennial reign, while the little flock will be joint-heirs with their Lord in that Kingdom. The two classes are represented to us in Psalm 45: the little flock as the Bride all glorious with raiment of fine needlework and gold, representing the

2H359

embroidery of the fruits of the Spirit and the gold of the divine nature, while the great company—”the virgins her companions that do follow her” into the King’s presence.

The little flock in this symbolization of Revelation are pictured as 144,000, 12,000 out of each tribe of Israel. Natural Israel, as we have previously seen, was a typical people; the real Israel of God is Spiritual Israel. The promises and opportunities, however, went first to Natural Israel, and as many out of all the tribes who were of right condition of heart and received the Master were granted the liberty to become members of the house of sons. (John 1:12) The remainder of that nation were cast off from participation in the chiefest blessing—to subsequently have an opportunity in the Millennial age of attaining to an inferior blessing. Their casting off left vacancies in the appointed numbers of the twelve tribes, and it is to those vacancies that the Lord during this Gospel age has been inviting those who have an ear to hear the truth and who have earnest desires of accepting it. Many more will be called than will be chosen to this place, while the world in general is not even called, but only those who have an ear to hear. The great company, although called, failing to respond with full appreciation, fail to secure membership in this Spiritual Israel class, the little flock, yet, as we have seen, they will come through much tribulation and disciplines of the Lord to a grand position, though far inferior to that of the “very elect.”

“WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE”

The world has no advocate with the Father, but “we have.” The consecrated household of faith is represented in heaven itself by him who redeemed the whole world. This is in accordance with our topic of last Sunday, which many of you have doubtless followed through the public press. We there showed that after our Lord had finished his sacrifice at Calvary, been raised from the dead on the third day, spent forty days with the disciples, establishing them and preparing them for the work before them, he then ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf, as today’s text declares, “to be our advocate.” (Heb. 9:24) The

figure is a peculiar one. An advocate, an attorney, appears to answer for his client, not to answer for others; and so, although our Lord paid the ransom price for the sins of the whole world, or, as today's text says, was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, nevertheless he did not appear for the whole world. The world has not retained him as an advocate. Only believers have come into this relationship, and consequently only for these does he appear, only for these has he made satisfaction; only these, therefore, have been brought into covenant relationship with the Father.

The same Jesus, on the basis of the same sin offering finished at Calvary, will in the next age take up the cause of the world—not as an advocate, not as appearing before the Father for them and having them justified through faith, but as a go-between, a mediator between God and man. God stands for his own justice. Mankind in general, the world, are in more or less of a rebellious attitude, lovers of sin, blind to their true interests. The Mediator undertakes a work on their behalf, to bring in reconciliation between God and these his rebellious subjects, and to recover the latter by opening the eyes of their understanding, by giving them valuable lessons and experiences respecting the blessings of righteousness and the undesirableness of sin, and thus to bring back as many as possible to fellowship with the Father, and to restore them mentally, morally and physically to the original likeness of God. By the end of that Millennial age the Mediator will be ready to introduce the perfect members of the race to the Father, blameless and irreprovable—all those rejecting his ministries of reconciliation will have been cut off in the Second Death. Thenceforth there will be no more sorrow, pain, sighing, crying, dying, because all the former things will have passed away, the Mediator will have effected his grand work of destroying sin and bringing in everlasting righteousness.

How precious the thought that, while the world is mentally, morally and physically poisoned by sin and blind to its own best interests, the time shall yet come when they will be blessed with the opening of the eyes of their understanding and with all the assistances necessary for their recovery. And how the Lord's words resound in our ears, "Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear." (Man. 13:16) We may well thank God that the light of the knowledge of his goodness has shined into our hearts, and that we no longer need to wait for the Mediator's work to reconcile us, but now in advance turn to the Lord promptly, as soon as we have heard of his grace in Christ. And how gracious is his provision in all respects for our adoption into his family, our begetting of the Spirit to a new nature, that we may become heirs of God and joint-heirs with his Son in the glorious Kingdom which is to bless

the world. How blessed, too, is this special privilege which we are considering today, namely, that although in our imperfection we must concede that we are trespassers of divine grace and fail to come up to the terms and conditions of our covenant, nevertheless God has provided for us an advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous, whose righteousness has been imputed to us, by whose stripes we are healed, our blemishes covered and not counted to us, but counted to him who died for us on Calvary. Let us rejoice in this loving favor, and

2H360

more and more zealously strive to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and to keep close accounts with the Lord, so that our consciences will be sensitive, and even slight violations of the law of love will appeal to us as contrary to our covenant and send us to the blood again, which makes and keeps us whole.

The National Labor Tribune June 17, 1906

THE NEW COVENANT AND ITS MEDIATOR

Cleveland, O., June 17—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today to large and attentive audiences of Bible students. One of his discourses was a defense of the Bible entitled, “To Hell and Back.” The other which we here report, was based upon the text, “For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Covenant.” Heb. 9:15

On the last Lord’s Day we considered the picture of our Lord Jesus as the Church’s Advocate, “He ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us”—for consecrated believers. Today we examine another picture, representing our Lord’s glory and work—that of the Mediator between God and man—“the Mediator of the New Covenant.” Our Lord Jesus has already begun this work as a Mediator between God and man, but only begun it. The great bulk of the work of mediation lies in the future and will be accomplished during the Millennial age. The two parties to be mediated, harmonized, are God and man. God, the righteous Judge, condemned our first parents to death as unworthy to be the divine representatives in the earth because of their disobedience to his command, which was no direct promise of any mercy, but dropped a hint merely when pronouncing the “curse,” in the suggestion that ultimately the seed of the woman would crush the serpent’s head. For two thousand years no direct promise was made. The first positive statement of divine mercy toward humanity was made to Abraham, and the Apostle

calls this the first preaching of the Gospel—the good tidings of salvation. He says, “God preached the Gospel to Abraham in advance, saying, In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Gen. 22:18

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

This the Apostle refers to as the “everlasting” Covenant, because it is one that could not fail or pass away without absolute fulfillment. It contains no conditions or limitations which might fail. On the contrary it was doubly assured by the fact that the Lord made oath to it, that by two unfailing testimonies, the divine word and the divine oath, God’s people from that day to the present time might have absolute confidence that in God’s due time that promise, that Covenant, will be absolutely and most literally fulfilled. God himself undertook to find for Abraham a seed, and guaranteed the competency and success of that seed and its ability and power in blessing all nations. This left nothing for Abraham to do but to thank God and take courage, and seek to show throughout the remainder of his life his appreciation of the grace of God. Similarly all of the Lord’s faithful people from that day until the present may trust this Oath-Bound Covenant. Although the nearly 4,000 years intervening may seem to us a long period, nevertheless faith is to firmly trust that when God’s due time shall come all of his good purposes shall be accomplished.

This first great Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, is not the one several times referred to in the Scriptures as being found unprofitable and passing away and being superseded by the New Covenant. No! No! This Abrahamic Covenant had no mediator, as the Apostle pointed out (Gal. 3:17-20), because it had no conditions. It was merely a one-sided statement on God’s part—it bound him and him alone. Hence the appointment of a mediator to see to the carrying out of the provisions of that Covenant would have been inconsistent. Wherever, therefore, the Covenant with a Mediator is referred to in the Scriptures, the Abrahamic Covenant is surely not meant.

THE LAW COVENANT ADDED

The Hebrew people were rather inclined to forget and ignore the Abrahamic Covenant because of the impression which they had that the Law Covenant instituted at Sinai, with Moses as its mediator and with the nation of Israel as its beneficiaries, had superseded or included all the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. Hence they were continually looking **to** Moses and the Law and endeavoring to keep the Law. Without finding fault with their so doing, the Apostle points out that God’s purpose in the matter was entirely misapprehended by the Jews. God knew that the Law Covenant, which offered life to any one who would keep the Law, would fail to bless the Jews; and the Apostle

points out that the design of the Law Covenant was something else entirely, namely, to show the Jews and to show all mankind the impossibility of fallen man so keeping the divine Law perfectly as to be worthy of everlasting life under its provisions—"The man

2H361

which doeth these things shall live by them." Rom. 10:5

Hence the Apostle argues that just as all the remainder of the world realized that they were blemished and imperfect, that they did not come up to their own highest standards of righteousness even, but found their consciences sometimes accusing and sometimes endeavoring to excuse them, so the Jew found that the Law given to him at Sinai did not justify him before God but condemned him. Thus, the Apostle argues, the entire world stands before the Lord condemned, the Jews with their written Law, condemned because they did not and could not keep it—the Gentiles without a written Law, but with a sufficiency of light, of intelligence, to condemn them all, acknowledge themselves imperfect sinners and hence unworthy of life everlasting. Thus, says the Apostle, God's arrangement with every nation is such that their mouths might be stopped and all the world be recognized as guilty before God and unworthy of everlasting life. Why did God wish thus to convict the whole world of unrighteousness and of inability to lift themselves out of the horrible pit and miry clay of sin? He did this as a lesson preparatory to his manifestation to the world of his grace, his mercy, in the forgiveness of sins to those who will accept divine forgiveness and reconciliation when made available.

So then the Apostle argues that the Law Covenant made nothing perfect, but merely served as a mirror to display to the best of the Israelites their own weaknesses and imperfections, and the fact that their sole reliance must be upon the Lord's mercy—that they must not hope to justify themselves in God's sight by works of the Law, but be prepared to receive everlasting life as a gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But while the Law condemned Jews in general and justified none of them, it did serve another purpose, namely, as a test for the Lord Jesus, for he was born under the Law, was required to keep its every injunction, was found thoroughly obedient to its most exacting demands, and was thus demonstrated to be not only the perfect one but loyal in perfection even unto death.

REDEEMED FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW

The Apostle shows, that whereas the Hebrews thought that their Law Covenant was a blessing to them, it really brought

upon them a second curse or condemnation. As members of the race of Adam they were already under Adamic condemnation, but by reason of this Law Covenant, made with that nation only at Sinai, they came under a second sentence, as it is written, "Cursed (condemned to death) is every one that continueth not in all the words of this Law to do them." This "curse of the Law" (Gal. 3:10-13), therefore, would seem to put the Hebrews at a disadvantage as a doubly condemned people, and hence the Apostle pointed out that it was necessary on this account that our Lord Jesus should be born a Jew, born under the Law, that he might redeem Adam and all who shared his death sentence. (Gal. 4:4, 5) So then by reason of God's arrangement the Jews had the special tuition of the Law Covenant, and were made a spectacle to angels and to men in their endeavors to keep the Law and in their failure, and yet in God's providence they will suffer no loss eventually from this.

Why should the Law Covenant be made at all, since it did not give eternal life to the Jews, and God fore-knew that it would not do so? We answer that the Law was a schoolmaster to prepare the Jews for Christ and his message. (Gal. 3:24, 25) The Apostle assures us that although the Law Covenant did not give eternal life to any Jew, nevertheless it was of much advantage to them every way, chiefly because it committed to their care the divine oracles—the writings of the Law, the typical services of the Tabernacle and Temple, and the messages of God through the prophets. True, these prophecies were not for them but for Spiritual Israelites later, as the Apostle Peter, declares, "Not unto themselves but unto us did they minister the things now freely reported unto us by the holy Spirit from heaven." (1 Pet. 1:12) Spiritual Israel is blessed by the meaning of those types and shadows of the past, and by an understanding of the mystery of the divine plan presented in those types and prophecies. But Natural Israel obtained a great blessing in connection with the handling of those things, the perpetuation of the types, etc., etc.

CHRIST THE END OF THE LAW COVENANT

The Apostle assures us that the death of Christ for the redemption of them that were under that Law Covenant released them from its thralldom. Hence every Jewish believer might properly sing:

*"Free from the law, O happy condition!
Jesus, our Lord, has purchased remission."*

The Apostle tells us that the Law Covenant terminated at the cross so far as concerned every Jew who accepted Christ as the end of the Law. (Rom. 10:4) The other Jews who did not accept Christ will not be free from their Law Covenant until they do accept him and confess

him. As for those of us who were not Jews by nature but Gentiles, we never were under the Law Covenant, and hence were never redeemed from its curse or sentence, but we are under the Adamic condemnation, and the same sacrifice of Jesus at Calvary “once for all people” was a divine arrangement. It settles the Adamic condemnation for us who believe, as it settled

2H362

the Adamic condemnation and also the Mosaic condemnation for every Jew that believes.

The question then arises, If the Law Covenant has ceased for the Jew, and if no covenant was ever made with the Gentiles, where do we stand today? Under what covenant do Christians rest their hope? On what foundation do they base their faith? We reply in the language of the Apostle that the Law Covenant was added (to the Abrahamic Covenant) until the promised seed should come. Since Christ nailed the Law Covenant to the cross, having fulfilled it, there remains merely the one, the Abrahamic Covenant. It can never pass away, it is the Oath-Bound Covenant, the “Everlasting Covenant.” Our Lord’s sacrifice is referred to by the Apostle as the “blood of the everlasting Covenant.” (Heb. 13:20) It was in view of our Lord’s sacrificial death as a sin offering that Jehovah God made that Oath-Bound Covenant with Abraham, saying, “In thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed.” When our Lord Jesus proved himself loyal and faithful even unto death, “even the death of the cross,” his blood, his sacrifice, in obedience to the divine Law, constituted him the seed of Abraham, and the Father raised him up on the third day and highly exalted him, giving him a name above every name, and fully empowering him to carry out all the provisions of that Abrahamic Covenant — to “bless all the families of the earth.”

We who are received of the Lord as the Spiritual Israelites through faith and consecration base our faith upon that original Abrahamic Covenant. It is true that many today, like the Jews of old, suppose another Covenant necessary in order to make the Abrahamic Covenant effective. The Abrahamic Covenant was effective and a blessing to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob before the Law Covenant was given to all, and the Law Covenant, as we have just seen, condemned instead of justifying. The Apostle tells us that it was 430 years afterward that the Law Covenant was added to the Abrahamic Covenant. (Gal. 3:17) Similarly now we are not under the New Covenant, but we are better off because we are not under it.

In due time, during the Millennial age, the New Covenant will be in effect, but in the interim of this Gospel age the Spiritual Israelites are justified through faith and not through works of

the Law. The Apostle explains this whole matter in Galatians 3:10-12, which show that every Jew was under a special curse or sentence because of failure to live up to the terms of the Law Covenant. V. 13 shows how Christ was made a curse, or subjected to a special ignominy for the Jew. V. 14 points out that as through Christ's death Gentiles were permitted to come under this Abrahamic Covenant, so also the Jews are permitted to rise to a higher plane than being merely the natural seed of Abraham and to become spiritual Israelites. Then the Apostle proceeds (vs. 15-29) to show that God's provision now is that all who reclaim Christ by faith and who by consecration become reckonedly members of his body — all these, whether by nature Jews or Gentiles — are now one in Christ Jesus, and constitute together the seed of Abraham mentioned in the Abrahamic Covenant — the seed in which all the families of the earth are, in due time, to receive a blessing.

ABRAHAM'S SEED, IF YE BE CHRIST'S

The picture presented in the Scriptures is that our Lord Jesus is the heir of all things under that Abrahamic Covenant—nothing remains under it for the Jew, nor for us Christians, nor for anybody else. Christ has fulfilled the Law and he personally is the seed of Abraham, and in him alone center all of God's promises for the blessing of the world. However, in the divine plan, during this Gospel age, a call has been sent out first amongst the Jews and subsequently amongst all nations to gather a "little flock"—not many great, not many wise, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, to constitute what the Scriptures figuratively call the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heirs. If under this call of the Gospel age we become the Bride of Christ and if joint-heirs, then, as the Apostle declares, we will be heirs with Jesus of the Abrahamic Covenant—associated with him in the great work of carrying out that covenant in the blessing of all the families of the earth. The Apostle's words are, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29

The condition upon which the Lord is now selecting the Bride class is that the acceptable ones must exercise the faith, and that to such an extent that they will gladly consecrate their lives to the Lord's service and in opposition to sin. Of these consecrated ones the Apostle declares that they are "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together." (Rom 8:17) They are called during the time when Satan is the prince of this world, and sin abounds, in order that they make the demonstration of their loyalty and zeal, fighting the good fight of faith under the care and protection and provision and assistance of the Heavenly Bridegroom. These are

all volunteers whose Sacrifice and sacrifices are proved by love. "The love of Christ constraineth us."

MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT

Now we come to consider the New Covenant, its teaching and those to whom it's given and to whom it will be extended when the proper time comes. To the natural seed to whom God gave the Law Covenant through which they could have obtained eternal life and the Kingdom on earth, God made the promise of a

2H363

better Covenant than they had been under, and which resulted in condemnation. They needed a redemption. The Apostle reasons that when the Lord designated this future blessing a New Covenant, it implied that the former one, the Law Covenant, would be found unprofitable, and would hence be set aside or "vanish away," giving place to a new and better one. The Apostle declares also that this New Covenant is a "better Covenant," and adds,

"For if that first (previous or Law) Covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second. For finding fault with them, he said, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and house of Judah: not according to the (Law) Covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them forth out of the land of Egypt. ... This is the Covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their minds and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord:' for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 8:6-12

This detailed statement respecting the New Covenant to be made with Israel "after those days"—after the Gospel age has intervened, between their casting off and their being received again—is quoted from the prophecies. (See Jer. 31:31; Zech. 8:8; Isa. 54:13) All of these prophecies belong to the Millennial age, none of them to the present age. It is not true now, and has not been true at any time during this Gospel age, either of the Jews or of the Christians, that the divine law was so written in their hearts that they needed not to teach one another and to be taught "Know thou the Lord." On the contrary, this has been the lesson of the entire Gospel age—to know the Father and the Son, whom to know is life everlasting.

The New Covenant, therefore, clearly belongs to the future.

USHERED IN WITH TROUBLE

In full accord with the foregoing is the Apostle's picture of the installation of the New Covenant, as set forth in Hebrews 12:18-28. The Apostle here uses the marching of the firstborn out of Egypt, accompanied by all the remainder of Israel, and their gradual approach to Mount Sinai, where the Law Covenant was inaugurated at the hands of Moses, as a type or picture of how the Church of the First Born, delivered from the power of Satan, the antitype of Pharaoh, and followed by all who desire to recognize the true God and to engage in his service, have been for 1,800 years approaching the antitype of Mount Sinai, namely, Mount Zion, the Kingdom of God's Son.

Our Lord Jesus, the antitype of Moses, is the Mediator of this New Covenant. He has led us from Egypt and will lead us eventually to Mount Zion, the Heavenly Kingdom for which he has taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." His work is not merely for the Church of the First-Born, the Royal Priesthood, or, in another figure the Bride of Christ, or, underpriests, the members of his Body. These with Jesus their Head, constitute unitedly the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King, the Mediator of the New Covenant, that is to bless and uplift the world during the Millennial age. At the appropriate time Mount Zion, the Kingdom condition, will be reached and all of the Mediator class will ascend to the Kingdom—be changed to spirit nature. In the type this was shown by Moses going up alone into a mountain. Joshua, his servant, who subsequently joined him, may be here representative of the Great Company class, the tribulation saints of Revelation 7. Later Moses came down to the people, but covered with a vail. And similarly, after the glorification of the Church and an intermediate period of trouble, the Lord and the Church will be present amongst men, be veiled from human sight, spirit beings, present but invisible to humanity, for their instruction and uplifting.

The Apostle shows the intensity of distress amongst men that may be expected at the time of the establishment of the Kingdom, the reaching of the Mount Zion condition, the Kingdom condition. This coming trouble, he tells us, was typified in the symbolical lightning and thundering and shaking at Mount Sinai. The shaking of the earth then will have an antitypical fulfillment by the trouble here, by the shaking of society or unsettling of all the institutions of this world, financial, social and religious, a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, is the description given by the Prophet Daniel. (Dan. 12:1) In that terrible shaking time the Apostle

assures us that everything will be shaken that needs shaking, everything that is wrong, contrary to righteousness—only that which is established can stand. The Apostle assures us that we who receive this Zion Kingdom or Millennial Kingdom and become joint-heirs with Christ in it shall receive one which will be unshakable. The entire description reminds us of the words of the poet,— “When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.”

THE WORK OF MEDIATION

The message of the Gospel during this Gospel age attracts only a limited number of mankind, who incline to love righteousness, and it is amongst these that the elect are found. But the vast majority of our race, not only in heathen lands but also in civilized lands, do not love righteousness and hate iniquity so as to be ready to

2H364

die for the right, as is required of those who walk in the narrow way. On the contrary, the vast majority are ready to take that which is most congenial to their flesh, and really walk after the flesh and not after the Spirit. They are, therefore, in a condition of alienation and rebellion against God, and the Mediator, Jesus the Head, and the Church, are appointed to the very work of reconciling the world to the Father. There are two steps to this work of reconciliation. One side has already been made sure by the death of Christ. Our Lord's sacrifice met the demands of justice, and removed every barrier to man's reconciliation so far as God is concerned. But even though men know of God's willingness to receive them back again, the majority are not anxious to return to God's favor at the appointment of the Mediator during the thousand years in which he will do his work of subduing mankind, bringing the world to its senses, giving all an experience with righteousness, a full, clear knowledge respecting the divine character and plan that they may seek the Lord and receive his pardon and blessing.

The entire work of reconciliation is committed to the Mediator, who, by a system of rewards and punishments, will throughout the Millennial age not only cause every knee to bow and every tongue to confess, but also search the hearts of all, to the intent that ultimately only those who have love for righteousness will be in his favor and get eternal life, and only those who have love for unrighteousness will be in disfavor and die the Second Death.

How great, dear friends, is the privilege now accorded us of coming into harmony with God as members of the body of the world's great Mediator! How great is our

privilege in being adopted into God's family and made joint heirs with his Son, his Bride and joint-heir. Surely for such a grand opportunity of fellowship with the Lord now in the sufferings incidental to his cause in the present time, and the prospect of the coming glory and great work of blessing mankind, we may well lay aside every weight and every besetting sin and run with patience the race set before us.

The National Labor Tribune, June 24, 1906

“BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD”

Springfield, Ill., June 24—Pastor C. T. Russell addressed large and intelligent audiences here today. In the afternoon he delivered his discourse in defense of the Bible entitled, “To Hell and Back.” In the evening his address, which we here report, was on the text, “We are ambassadors, therefore, on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: We beseech you in Christ's name, be ye reconciled to God.” 2 Cor. 5:20

To every thinking person it must appear strange that the great Creator and Upholder of the universe, possessing all power in heaven and in earth, should in any sense of the word countenance sin and rebellion in any part of his dominion. It seems strange, too, that instead of exercising force and power to put down the sin, the omnipotent one should use what the Apostle terms, “The foolishness of preaching,” as his agency for ‘appealing to the rebels—the sinners. There is a reason for this apparent inconsistent conduct, and it is fully stated and explained in the Scriptures, which assure us also that it will not always be thus—that by and by the Lord will take control of the world in a different manner, and instead of appealing to mankind through preaching will send forth his commands, with penalties attached thereto for disobedience and rewards for obedience.

We are encouraged in Scriptures to look forward to that new order of things, to expect its inauguration at the second coming of Christ and the establishment of his Millennial Kingdom. We are assured that, as the great King over the earth, in that day he will lay righteousness to the line and justice to the plummet, restrain Satan the great Adversary, fill the earth with a knowledge of the glory of God, and hold every member of the race responsible for a proper use of that knowledge. We are assured that in his day the righteous will flourish and will attain to everlasting life in the glorious Paradise of God, and that evil doers will be cut off in the

Second Death. Isa. 28:17; 11:9; Rev. 20:2; Psa. 72:7
However, that statement respecting the future, although

so reasonable, causes the Lord's present method of dealing with the world and with the Church to seem more unreasonable. Why does the Almighty permit the "prince of this world," the "god of this world," Satan, to now rule amongst mankind and to hold the control of the vast majority through the power of ignorance, superstition and inherited weaknesses? Why does he use the apparently unwise method of merely appealing through the preaching of his Word to the few who have the hearing ears and understanding hearts? He assures us that he knows and that these are a comparatively small proportion of the human family, "a little flock." Nevertheless 6000 years have passed since the fall, and the preaching of a coming good time, a coming time of retribution, a coming time of rewards for the righteous and of punishment for the wicked, is all we have yet. This preaching appeals only to those who have some measure of knowledge and of faith, the remainder of the world being unable to profit thereby for lack of these. Why is it thus? persistently follows us. Inquiring for an answer which can come from God alone and which he has given us in the Bible, his inspired Revelation of his

2H365

character and plan, let us hearken for the explanation.

A TOO COMMON MISTAKE

Increasingly large numbers in civilized lands are adopting the theory of the general fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. They assume, contrary to the Scriptures, that man is an evolution from a beast, that God is accountable for his blemishes in that he did not make him perfect, but merely one remove above a monkey, etc., etc.; but this entire theory is so contrary to the Scriptures that those who hold it should make no claim on being Christians. A Christian is one who accepts the Scriptural teaching that man was created in the mental and moral image of God; that he fell therefrom by disobedience to the divine command, that this disobedience and fall made necessary the coming of our Lord Jesus in the flesh to be man's Redeemer, to give his life as a ransom price; that Christ did die, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; that we are "reconciled to God through the death of his Son."

From this the Scriptural standpoint then we see that it is a mistake to interpret the divine attitude toward man as being a coaxing, pleading one, as though the Father were pleading with his Son, were pleading with us and all the followers of Christ, pleading with the world of mankind. Such a course persisted in for sinners would seem to imply that it was the only course open to the Almighty, that it was this course or none, and if that were the case it would leave us without hope, for do we not know from

statistics that there are twice as many heathen in the world today as there were a century ago? and that the proportion of those reconciled to God as compared with those unreconciled is growing continually, a small proportion, a small percentage of the whole?

The Scriptural statement of the proposition is the very reverse of all this. The Bible clearly tells us that God created man in his own image and likeness, forewarning him that disobedience would mean the loss of divine favor and the death of the sinner. We perceive that the race has lost much of the original likeness of the Creator that many of the higher graces of the mind have become impoverished and depleted until man can no longer be called the image of God—indeed in many cases the outlines of the original character have been blurred so that some are almost totally destroyed. All about us we see the prevalence of his degradation, more pronounced amongst some of the descendants of Adam than amongst others but all sadly deficient in true manhood, the earthly image of the Creator. We see this death penalty working in the entire race affecting all mentally, morally and physically.

RECONCILIATION NOT OFFERED FOR 4000 YEARS

For over 4000 years God allowed the death penalty, “Dying thou shalt die” to cover the situation without sending to the world a single offer of reconciliation and indeed only vaguely and to the few did the Lord intimate that he would ever offer reconciliation. The one little nation of Israel was favored with special information not granted to the other nations of the world, as the Apostle declares, “What advantage hath the Jew? Much every way, because to them were committed the oracles of God.” (Rom. 3:2) But even the Jews were not offered a full, complete reconciliation, but merely a typical one, foreshadowing the better things that were to come with the Messiah. The Apostle assures us that the Law made nothing perfect, that it was merely a shadow of good things coming afterward, that by the deeds of the Law no flesh could be justified in God’s sight. (Rom. 3:20) But the sacrifices of bulls and goats yearly never took away sin, but merely in a typical manner pointed forward to the “better sacrifices,” by which in God’s due time he would actually take away sin—the sins of the whole world. Heb. 9:23; 1 John 2:2

True the Apostle declares that the Gospel was preached in advance to Abraham, but it was an indistinct statement and not intended for the world in general—intended for Abraham and his natural seed merely, to the intent that they would be able to exercise faith in the promise. There was no promulgation of the Gospel to the world of mankind until after Jesus had died and risen again and ascended up on high and appeared in the presence of God on our behalf—on behalf of believers.

MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION BEGINS

From that time onward the apostles and all believers were commissioned to be ambassadors for God—to tell whoever had the ear to hear it that Christ had died for our sins, that our Creator was operating in and through him with a view to the ultimate reconciling of the world unto himself, and that now therefore the door of return to divine favor was opened and made accessible to all those that desire this favor—to all who desire to return unto God and be abundantly pardoned and received back into fellowship divine, into the relationship of sons. Question, What took place in connection with the death of Jesus which made this Gospel message possible after his ascension, whereas it was not possible and not given before the death of Jesus?

The Scriptures answer that “We are reconciled to God by the death of his Son.” (Rom. 5:10) The meaning of this statement is that by the death of his Son, God made arrangement or provision by which he could be reconciled to those who desire reconciliation with him. The death of Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God when presented to justice was a sufficient offset to Adam’s sin and its death penalty, to work a cancellation of that sin and penalty in the divine reckoning not

2H366

only as the sin and penalty affected Adam, the original transgressor, but also as it affected all of his descendants. Thus again we read, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” 2 Cor. 5:19

Reconciliation between God and man signifies that both parties must be satisfied or reconciled. The Scriptures above quoted could not apply to mankind in general, because many of them were dead already and could not be reconciled to God, and many of us were not yet born and we could not therefore have been reconciled to God at the time his Son died. To apply those Scriptures to man, to have them signify that man experienced reconciliation to God by the death of his Son, would be absurd, because of all the thousands of millions of the race only a small proportion were then living, and only about five hundred had in any sense of the word accepted the Son or come into reconciliation condition through faith in him. It follows, therefore, that the reconciling that was accomplished by the death of Christ was not the reconciliation of man but the reconciliation of the Father.

We have already seen that reconciliation with the Father was necessary, because man had been justly sentenced to death and the sentence of justice is irrevocable—justice requiring to be satisfied before Adam and his race could

go free from the penalty. Justice stands as the representative of the divine character, because every divine regulation and operation is along the lines of justice. But there are other divine attributes; one of these is love which cooperated with the divine attribute of justice and provided the man Christ Jesus as a redeemer of the man Adam and the race of human beings which lost life and divine favor through him.

THE RECONCILIATION OF THE WORLD

It follows then that divine justice needed to be met first of all before there could be any message of reconciliation sent to the world of mankind—before any invitations could be extended to the fallen race to return unto the Lord that he might abundantly pardon them. This is what the Apostle declares, that Christ died “The just for the unjust that he might bring us to God”—that having satisfied divine justice, having made a reconciliation for our sins so far as God and his justice and sentence were concerned, he might justify believers, he might make known to the world this fact of the removal of the divine sentence, the restoration to divine favor to all those who would approach the Father through the Son, recognizing the merit of his sacrifice as the only basis of reconciliation. The Father as we have seen held the world at arm’s length, figuratively speaking, executing upon them the death sentence, “The wrath of God is revealed”—in the sicknesses, pains, sorrows and all the death-dealing conditions of this present time.

The only ones who can have comfort under this arrangement are those who can exercise faith in the promises of God’s Word. Those who do exercise faith are called believers, and the measure of their joy and peace under these death-dealing conditions is according to their faith. Those who can exercise much faith can have much joy and peace and blessing; those who can exercise only a little can have proportionately less; and those who either through ignorance or other depravity of the mind can not exercise faith at all can not have now any of the blessings, because they are exclusively by faith and to the faithful. These see what others do not see because they have the eye of faith—the eyes of their understanding are opened, they accept the Scriptural declaration that “God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.” By faith they realize the mercy of God in Christ and apply to themselves their individual share as members of the fallen race, saying with the Apostle, “We were children of wrath even as others,” but now we are reconciled, we are brought nigh to God, we are no longer strangers, aliens and foreigners, but of the household of faith and family of God and heirs according to his promises.

MINISTERS OF RECONCILIATION

The Scriptures assure us that all who have this hearing ear, all who accept this reconciliation with God by faith in the redemptive work of Jesus, are privileged to tell it out to others—it is no longer confined to any one nation or people, but whoever has an ear may hear. It is a fact, nevertheless, that only a few in any nation or kindred or tongue have the hearing ear; it is a fact therefore that only a small number believe, for, as the Apostle declares, “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.” 2 Cor. 4:4

All these who have been reconciled are commanded, as our text tells us, to be ambassadors on behalf of Christ—to represent Christ, to tell forth to others as he told forth to the apostles the privilege of reconciliation with the Father. As our Lord Jesus told us of the Father’s love for mankind, which sent his Son to be our Redeemer, so we may tell of the Father’s love; as the Son represented the Father in the message of reconciliation so we are the representatives of the Son in the promulgation of the same message to all who have the hearing ear. We therefore are represented in the Scriptures as being the members of his body—as though Christ were still in the world and still promulgating the message which he declared while he was in the flesh, saying, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and

2H367

ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matt. 11:28-30

But as Jesus did not convert the whole Jewish nation by his preaching of the good tidings of reconciliation, so his followers, the members of his body, need not expect to convert the whole world with this Gospel message—these good tidings that Jesus has died for our sins, and the original penalty, therefore, in due time shall be rolled away, and that those who know this now and who desire to seek the Father’s face may come nigh the throne of heavenly grace through faith in the precious blood. This preaching of the Gospel of reconciliation to God, effected by the blood of the cross, has from the first been to the Greeks foolishness and to the Jews a stumbling block, but only to us who believe in this message the power of God unto salvation. (Rom. 1:16) These few who are now able to hear, to receive, to appreciate, to enjoy this message, have indeed a peace, a joy, a blessing that is a pearl of great price. Blessed are their ears for they hear, blessed are their eyes for they see! But what about the great majority of mankind, blinded by the god of this world, and who can not come into

reconciliation with God at the present time because of their blindness, because of their ignorance, because of their unbelief, because of their inability to believe—What about these? When is it purposed to have their reconciliation effected?

THE WORLD'S HOPE FUTURE

We answer that only the household of faith has experienced this reconciliation with God in the present time. God has left the matter in its present form for the very purpose of selecting this certain class who have the eye of faith and the ears of faith and the obedience of faith. He seeks a peculiar people, a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation. But while God seeketh no others in the present time, the world still has a place in the divine plan. Jesus through his death was a propitiation, a satisfaction for our sins, the Church's sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2) Hence the time must come when the whole world will receive a blessing through that sacrifice of reconciliation.

What the world would consider the foolish way of preaching the Gospel instead of using force, is the divine plan because the Lord seeketh now those who at heart are loyal to the principles of righteousness, and who, when they see the possibility of reconciliation with God, gladly avail themselves of the privilege to lay aside every weight and every besetment of the flesh that they may patiently run the race, endure the tests and enjoy the reconciliation with the Father now. They consider it a privilege to have this reconciliation in the present time even though it cost them the disfellowship, the disfavor of the blinded world. They are glad at any cost to be on the Lord's side, on the side of truth and righteousness, in opposition to sin in themselves and everywhere. These have the promise not only of the life that now is but of that which is to come. They have greater joys, deeper and purer pleasures than others, and in the world to come are to have glory, honor and immortality and association with their Lord and Redeemer in the work of blessing and uplifting the world of mankind.

These who now have the ministry of reconciliation committed unto them find that not many great, not many wise, not many learned, have the hearing ear, and instead of receiving a blessing for their ministry of the truth the world hates them, says all manner of evil against them falsely and opposes them. Nevertheless they rejoice to be counted worthy, realizing that such experiences are the very ones which the Master had and which he forewarned them to expect. The unfaithful will neglect this opportunity of the ministry of reconciliation and ambassadorship for Christ, and thus will bury their talent in the earth and fail to get the great blessing that will be given to those who have and use these privileges.

By and by the Redeemer and the faithful little flock of his Church, now being selected from amongst men, will be exalted by the Heavenly Father to Kingdom honor, glory, dominion, and power, and it will be then that, under the Millennial Kingdom, Satan will be bound, the world will be enlightened as with the Sun of Righteousness and help will be granted to all mankind to return unto God's favor, to be reconciled to him; and it will be then that it will come to pass that whosoever will not obey the mandates of the Kingdom will be utterly destroyed from amongst the people in the Second Death (Acts 3:23), while all the obedient will be perfect, restored to all that was lost in Adam, mental, moral and physical perfection, fellowship with God and life everlasting in an Edenic home.

“BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD”

Some who are reading these discourses weekly in the public prints give evidence of feeling after the true God that they might know him more particularly. Some of these are already Christians—believers in the Calvary sacrifice for sins, and are now coming to a clearer conception of the divine character and plan, and are desirous of entering fully into his favor and thus of making their calling end election sure to a place in the glorified Church as members of the Bride, the Lamb's wife. Others evidently have never yet come to God in the true Scriptural sense and are inquiring the way. This discourse is intended as a partial reply to these queries.

As ambassadors for Christ we issue his call in his

2H368

name, and assure all who have an ear to hear that the satisfaction of justice is already assured by the death of God's dear Son, the Just for the unjust, and that whoever wills may now return to the Father and find him merciful, but that no man can come unto the Father except by the son—by accepting and appreciating the great sacrifice for sins. To desire to be reconciled to God means a desire to turn away from sin and to be in harmony with righteousness, with justice. Whoever has not this desire for righteousness yet says that he desires to be reconciled to God, understands not his own heart and words. God, justice, righteousness, love, goodness and all the fruits of the Spirit are on one side—sin, injustice, unrighteousness, selfishness, and the various works of the flesh and the devil are on the opposite side. No man can be on both sides; he can not serve God and Mammon; his servants we are to whom we render service. If our lives are in harmony with sin and unrighteousness we are not on the Lord's side but on the devil's side—we are not ambassadors for Christ, but lending our

influence in opposition to him and his cause. Let no man deceive himself; he surely can not deceive God.

He who serves sin, whose heart and will are on that side of the question, is an enemy to God, unreconciled. He whose heart is given to the Lord and is on the side of righteousness is of necessity an opponent of sin. Hence the Scriptures set forth that repentance, reformation of life, a turning away of the will from the ways of sin, is the first step towards God. The second step is the acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer, and the acceptance by faith of the merit of his sacrifice as cleansing away our sins. The third step is an approach to the Father, not in our own merit, but in the merit of Jesus, realizing the efficacy of his sacrifice as respects the sins that are past, and its efficacy also as concerns the imperfections and blemishes of our flesh, which necessarily will render imperfect our best endeavors in the future.

We are to come to the Father realizing that he has provided Christ as our sufficiency, that our sins were imputed to him and paid for by his death, and that his righteousness is imputed to us as a robe which covers our own unwilling blemishes and imperfections. Thus clothed with the robe of Christ we have a work before us as New Creatures, a work of battling with sin— chiefly within ourselves—and thereby the development of character, Godlikeness, in the fruits and graces of the Spirit. These are the reconciled ones, these are the heirs of the glory, honor and immortality which God has in reservation for them that love him. These only may now discern the deep things of God's plan which are hidden from the world; these may have the encouragements and precious promises which assure them that all things favorable and unfavorable are working together for their good, their development as New Creatures, their preparation for the Kingdom of glory and its grand work of blessing and uplifting mankind. These may and will delight to be ambassadors for Christ, to tell all who have the hearing ear of the great Savior they have found, and of the blessings of heart and life resulting from obedience to his Word—from becoming his disciples, his followers in the narrow way.

July 1, 1906

*Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
July 4, 1918*

“GOD’S VERY ELECT”

ALLEGHENY, PA., July 1, 1906—Pastor C. T. Russell preached in Carnegie Music Hall, Allegheny, to an attentive audience from the text, “There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect.” (Matt. 24:24) The discourse follows:

Some of the very best people in the world are inclined to dispute and antagonize the doctrine of the divine election, which the Scriptures declare is now in progress. It can not be denied that the Bible mentions the “elect,” and the “very elect,” and “his own elect,” but the good hearts to whom we refer, while still desirous of holding to the Bible as the inspired Word of God, find great difficulty in reconciling this doctrine of election with their own predilections—with their own conceptions of justice and love. The difficulty lies in their attempt to harmonize the Bible with certain false teachings, “traditions of men,” which have come down to us from the “dark ages.” The Bible teaching on the subject of election is very clear, very simple, very beautiful, very just, and very loving, when rightly discerned, as we hope to unfold it this afternoon.

The whole difficulty is occasioned by the erroneous theory that the non-elect are all to be everlastingly tortured. We must rid our minds of that tradition, which has no foundation in the Bible — not a text from Genesis to Revelation in its support. When thinking of the election of the Bible, of the little flock, of the elect and the great mass of mankind, non-elect, let us remember the political elections with which we are familiar, and apply our knowledge of these to the heavenly election. Congress, for instance, represents one election by the people of these United States; those

2H369

few men are the elect for that station, all others are non-elect, or, to use the words of the Westminster Confession of Faith, the remainder of mankind are “passed by” — not elected. Another elect class, for instance, is the Legislature of the State of Pennsylvania; other citizens of this Commonwealth are here also “passed by,” non-elect. Altogether these two elections to Congress and to the Legislature embrace but small proportions of the citizens, the remainder being “passed by.”

So God has had two elections: First, there was the elect nation of Israel, which occupied a favorable place in

divine providence, and, as the Apostle declares, those elect people, Israel, had much advantage every way over the remainder of mankind, because to them were committed the oracles of God, the Law, the types, the symbols, the prophecies. From amongst that elect and favored nation God made still further selection of faithful ones for his purpose, as outlined by the Apostle in Hebrews 11. Those overcomers who pleased God constituted the very elect of that dispensation, and in the resurrection they are to have a special reward, as we read, they endured many of their sufferings, and trials faithfully, hoping for a “better resurrection.”

GOD’S ELECTION DURING THIS GOSPEL AGE

Similarly during this Gospel age the Lord has been making an election according to favor. Not all the nations of the world have been equally favored by the Lord with the light of divine truth and revelation. Europe and America have been especially regarded while the great bulk of mankind residing in other lands have been proportionately disregarded. It is true that in the most favored lands there is great darkness, great ignorance, great superstition; but all these are deeply accentuated in heathen lands, as it is written, “Darkness covers the earth, gross darkness the heathen.” (Isa. 60:2) The lands that have been favored with the light of the knowledge of Christ have a rich blessing therefrom, and apparently the Lord himself and not any accidental circumstances created the conditions by which this light of revelation and this knowledge of the Word of God have reached these favored lands and have passed by the more densely settled but less enlightened ones. We see how the Son of God and his Gospel message were cradled in Palestine, from which the knowledge and blessing might have gone southward through Africa or eastward through India or Asia with their teeming millions; but contrariwise, under the Lord’s providence, this blessing was sent to the barbarians of Europe, who, under the influence of this light, have become in many respects the most civilized and enlightened.

This is an election which corresponds well to the election of the twelve tribes of Israel to be the special recipients of God’s messages through the Law and the Prophets. But as God did not expect all of natural Israel to be the very elect of that age, so now he is not expecting all Christendom to be the very elect, but has been selecting out from the favored nations those individuals who have manifested their faith, loyalty and love for him and for the truth and righteousness. This class, then, constitutes the very elect of this Gospel age. Turning to the last two verses of Hebrews 11, we see these two elect classes particularly mentioned—the very elect of the Jewish age and the very elect of this Gospel age, separate and distinct. The

Apostle shows this distinction saying of the worthy ones of the Jewish age, "These all having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise, God having reserved some better thing for us (the very elect of this Gospel age), that they (the very elect of the previous dispensation) without us (the very elect of this Gospel dispensation) should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:39, 40

It is a great mistake that some make, to confuse these two different elections and to ignore the distinctions which the Scriptures everywhere set up, differentiating the overcomers of this Gospel age from other overcomers of a previous time. Failure to distinguish between these two classes of elect ones has brought much confusion to many minds as they endeavor to draw comparisons between the spirit-begotten overcomers of this Gospel age on the higher plane and the faithful ones of previous times who lived and were called and tested before the outpouring of the holy Spirit at Pentecost—before the special privileges and opportunities of the heavenly calling. As illustrating the difference between the two classes of elect, notice the Master's words respecting John the Baptist, whom he so highly esteemed, and his contrast of John's relationship to himself with that of his accepted disciples. John belonged to the Jewish dispensation, and was indeed the last of the prophets, the last of that election; while on the other hand the disciples, called under the higher election, were begotten to the still higher nature, hopes and promises at Pentecost. Mark the Lord's words, "Verily I say unto you, there hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist; Yet I say unto you that the least one in the Kingdom of heaven (the election of this Gospel age) is greater than he (greater than John the Baptist—will occupy a higher station if he becomes one of the very elect of this Gospel age)." Matt. 11:11

NON-ELECT OF THE PAST

Glancing backward into the past let us notice that those whom the Apostle mentions as the overcomers of previous times, the "ancient worthies," were few indeed in comparison to the nominal whole. Not only was the Jewish nation a small nation amongst the others, but

2H370

the "very elect" out of that nation was a very small proportion of the whole, illustrating our Lord's words, "Many are called but few chosen." (Matt. 20:16) The nations of the world in general were not called of God into the relationship of the Law Covenant as the nation of Israel was called; the other nations were "passed by," and had neither part nor lot in the commonwealth of Israel, as the Apostle declared. (Eph. 2:12) Did this mean that all the other nations were going into eternal

torment because they had neither part nor lot with Israel? Nay, verily! God's promise to Abraham, in which Israel hoped, read, "In thy seed (Israel) shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 22:18) So far, then, from the election of Israel to divine favor meaning an injury to the other nations or heathen world in general, it means the reverse—it means their ultimate blessing.

Similarly in the nation of Israel the millions of that nation who were favored with a call but who did not make their election sure—who were not counted worthy of a place in the list of ancient worthies recited by the Apostle (Heb. 11)—were not on that account damned to an eternity of torture; not a text of Scripture says anything to this effect. When speaking of the fate of fleshly, nominal Israel, the Apostle points out that when their election period terminated at the coming of Jesus those who "received him not" were rejected—not cast into eternal torment, but rejected from the special favor which they had previously enjoyed as inheritors of the Abrahamic blessing. The Apostle tells us that the Israelites were specially blinded of God; and if we look about us we will see on every hand that as a nation, as a people, they are indeed amongst the most blind in respect to the real interpretation of the Law and the Prophets, which they handled and handed down to us who have become Spiritual Israelites, the favored of God during this Gospel age.

Neither does the Apostle leave the matter here. Under divine inspiration he tells us that the non-elect of that people—who were blinded, turned aside, disfavored—are ultimately to receive the great blessing and reinstatement into divine favor. Mark the terseness of his expressions on this subject. He declares to Spiritual Israel that, as we in times past did not believe God, yet have now obtained mercy through Natural Israel's unbelief and casting off, so likewise in due time Natural Israel shall obtain mercy through our mercy—that is to say, eventually "the very elect" of this Gospel age are to be used of God in bestowing blessings upon Natural Israel. The Apostle proceeds to show that this is God's covenant with Natural Israel, which still holds, although they have rejected Jesus for these nineteen centuries. Nevertheless that whole people are the heirs of certain promises of God which have not yet been fulfilled, but which must be fulfilled, because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. The Apostle points out, however, that in the divine plan this blessing can not come to Natural Israel until the full completion of this Gospel age—until the full number, the very elect, of Spiritual Israel shall have been completed—have made their calling and election sure. Then all Natural Israel shall be blessed, their blindness shall be turned away, their eyes of understanding shall be opened. They will receive their blessing through Spiritual Israel, is the Apostle's assurance. These matters are fully set forth by the Apostle in most explicit terms in Romans 11:25-33

THE NON-ELECT DURING THIS GOSPEL AGE

During this Gospel age there is a large class of non-elect as we may readily see: The Jewish nation, cast off from God's favor with our Lord's words, "Your house is left unto you desolate; and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Luke 13:35) These are the ones who the Apostle says, count themselves unworthy of the grace of God, the ones who God blinded and turned aside during the full period of this Gospel age, during the period of the gathering of the elect of this Gospel age. The Jewish nation certainly should be reckoned amongst the non-elect nations as respects this Gospel age favor with China, India, Africa, the great masses of the world of mankind unfavored of the Lord, and who as people know him not—the non-elect nations. True, a few out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue have heard the voice speaking from heaven and have responded, but these exceptions to the rule only prove its generality.

In the largest possible sense of computing those who have a knowledge of the Lord throughout the whole world, all who in any sense are recognized as Christians would not be one-fourth of the whole number. Those ignorant peoples, therefore, are all properly recognized as non-elect nations—"passed by" as respects divine favor and opportunity and privilege—not granted the same great favors, knowledge and opportunity that are granted to us of Christian lands. Are all those heathen people passed by, not elected, with a view to their ultimate torment? We answer, No, and will show presently what constitutes the divine arrangement on their behalf. Meantime we look at the reputed four hundred millions of nominal Christendom, described by a prominent Methodist Bishop as "white and black, ring-streaked and speckled sheep of the Lord's flock."

We fear that we must agree with the Bishop that the white-sheep who "keep their garments unspotted from the world," who shall walk with the Lord in white, who shall sit with him in his throne, who shall constitute his "very elect," are very few indeed, a mere handful out of

2H371

the four hundred millions of nominal professors. What about the remainder, who fail to make good use of their privileges and opportunities? What shall become of this great mass who have had some enlightenment, some blessing of the Lord, but of whom only a very small fragment will attain the blessing and be not only "called" but "faithful and chosen"? We answer that there is hope for these non-elect of Christendom, of Spiritual Israel,

but that no blessing can come to them nor to any until the “very elect of this Gospel age shall have been completed.” These very elect of this age, whose head and leader is Christ Jesus, our Lord, these must first be glorified before even the elect ancient worthies of the past can receive their blessing on a lower plane of human perfection, and both must be blessed before the blessing of the Lord can be extended to mankind in general.

THREE CLASSES OF ELECT ONES

The elect “little flock” of this Gospel age, which alone will constitute the Bride class, otherwise called the “body of Christ,” and which is to share with the Lord the Kingdom honors and glories, is made so prominent in the Scriptures that the two other classes of elect ones are in comparison not very conspicuous. For instance, the elect class already referred to, developed before the Gospel age, may be easily lost sight of in the glare of the brightness of the divine promises which shine upon the little flock of this Gospel age. Similarly a secondary class of the elect of this age are comparatively hidden from view by the effulgence of glory connected with the little flock of the very elect who are styled “more than conquerors.”

This second class of the elect of this age are in the New Testament referred to as the “Great Company,” in comparison with the still more select class of their still more faithful brethren who shall sit with Jesus in his throne. The Scriptures point out most distinctly that there is only one call of God during this Gospel age. Similarly there is only one election, as we read, “Ye are all called in one hope of your calling.” (Eph. 4:4) The only call issued during the Gospel age is to membership in the Bride of Christ—the body of Christ, the Church, the “Little flock.” The acceptance of this call includes not only faith in the Lord and in his promises, but also obedience—full consecration. The whole number of persons, however, who have ever made an entire consecration of time, talent, strength, influence, life, everything to the Lord and to his cause is very small in proportion to the whole number who have been privileged so to do through a knowledge of the grace of God. Yet only these consecrated ones have in any sense of the word entered the list or become even in a general way God’s elect.

But to be enrolled of the Lord and counted in as “his people,” his elect, his favored ones over whom he has supervision, does not mean ultimate success. Those who are outside, who have never made a consecration, who have never entered the lists, have no opportunity whatever of attaining anything offered to the elect. Others get a blessing through the elect in due time, but none can have the blessings of the elect except they become of that class through faith and a full consecration.

These are said to be in the school of Christ, receiving discipline, learning lessons, being taught of God, being fitted and prepared for their grand position of usefulness in the Kingdom during the Millennial age. These consecrated ones are addressed by the Apostle, and urged not to hold back but to go forward in harmony with their consecration, and to “Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God and your reasonable service.” Again he urges upon them all to lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and to run patiently the race set before them in the good tidings. Heb. 12:1

But the Apostle points out that not all who run in a race win the prize, but those who run according to the terms and conditions covering it. Hence he exhorts us to “so run as to obtain” the great prize—which great prize is the Kingdom honors and glories in joint-heir-ship with Jesus. The Scriptures clearly point out that any laxity on the part of these who have been called and have been accepted might mean their rejection from that high position, or might mean their ultimate destruction in the Second Death if they wilfully and intentionally turn from the Lord and from righteousness and truth, as a sow to wallowing in the mire. The Apostle, however, does point out that amongst those who do not turn back from the Lord, and amongst those who do not draw back unto perdition, but who still hold firmly to the Lord and to his Word and to the principles of righteousness, there will be two classes:

One class, the small class, the “little flock,” will gain “an abundant entrance” into the Kingdom; while the other class, we are told, will be “saved so as by fire,” or as elsewhere explained, will come up out of great tribulation, and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb”—robes which they should have had sufficiency of zeal to keep white, unspotted from the world, but robes which they nevertheless did not cast off so as to be found naked, without the wedding garment. This class of the elect, we are informed, will be “a great company whose number is indefinite— whose number no man knoweth.” The very elect, on the contrary, will be a fixed number, a foreordained number, and in all a “Little Flock.”

2H372

MAKE YOUR ELECTION SURE

Our Lord in the symbolical prophecy of Revelation points out those who will be with him in the Kingdom glories and honors, saying that they that were with him were called, chosen, faithful. On another occasion he told us that all are not called—that not many great, wise, mighty or learned or noble, but chiefly the poor of this

world, rich in faith. It is still another testimony of his Word that of the called few are chosen—he declares, “Many are called but few are chosen.” Accepting these testimonies as strictly literal, true, all of the called ones should be deeply interested in ascertaining the conditions which determine their acceptance with the Lord as his chosen. The Scriptures assure us that no halfhearted response to the call is accepted of the Lord. The Apostle exhorts, “I beseech you, brethren (justified through faith and called), that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God and your reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1) Such as have responded in this manner to the call are God’s chosen. They are reckoned as members of the Anointed One, “members of the body of Christ,” of which Jesus is the Head.

But still the matter is not finished. It is not sufficient that we should be chosen or accepted of the Lord to a membership in the elect Church—we must stand testing to prove our worthiness of that position. It is not sufficient that we consecrate, that we be sure that we have made a consecration—it is required of us that we demonstrate character, loyalty and faithfulness to that vow. The Lord’s peculiar people are for this reason subjected to peculiar tests, “fiery trials”—not for their destruction, not for their injury, but for their development. We are to remember, too, that it is not the flesh that is being tried but the spirit, the intention, the will, the heart. True, the flesh is very intimately associated with every thought and word and deed, but the Lord knows that in our flesh dwells no perfection, and hence he is not searching for perfection of the flesh. He has accepted us as New Creatures from the time that the flesh was reckoned dead. There the New Creature begotten of the Spirit was recognized as God’s child, and it is this New Creature that is under discipline, testing, trial. To the New Creation the Apostle appeals, urging that we make our calling and election sure by obedience, by conformity to the divine will.

Although the obedience required is that of the heart and not that of the imperfect flesh, nevertheless the Lord expects of his children that they will keep their bodies in subjection, under restraint, in harmony with the new will, to the extent of their ability. Anything less than this would seem to imply disloyalty to that extent—unfaithfulness. The test is this, To what extent will the New Creature strive for the mastery against the inclinations of the fallen flesh? Only the faithful, only the loyal, will ultimately constitute the “very elect.” To make our calling and election sure, therefore, means that we will to the extent of our ability live up to the covenant of self-sacrifice in the Lord’s service, which we covenanted when we accepted his call. “Called, chosen, faithful,” describes the attitude of these pupils in the school of Christ who graduate with highest honors. These are referred to by our Lord, saying, “They shall

be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up my jewels.” (Mal. 3:17) These are the very elect of whom the Apostle wrote, “If ye do these things ye shall never fail; for so an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Pet. 1:10, 11

FATE OF THE LESS FAITHFUL AND THE UNFAITHFUL

The unfaithful would be those who draw back into perdition—into the Second Death. But, as we have already intimated, the Scriptures point out and our experience in life shows another class, neither faithful to the full degree nor yet disposed to draw back and renounce the Lord and his righteousness. These are less faithful than the “more than conquerors”—less faithful than the standard which the Lord demands for the Kingdom class; nevertheless, because they “have not denied my name” (Rev. 3:8), and “because they have not counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing” (Heb. 10:29), and because they have not turned back in the sense of returning to willful sin—because they have not returned as the sow to the wallowing in the mire willfully, willingly, intentionally, casting aside their justification and relationship to the Lord—therefore the Lord will not utterly reject them. Although they can not have the highest place in the Kingdom, the kingly position which can go only to those who are copies of God’s dear Son, the Lord proposes to carry them through so long as they are exercising faith in him. He will give them chastisements, corrections, and will ultimately cause them to appreciate him and his righteous arrangements more highly; he will bring them through great tribulations to an honorable place in his future service. These are the great company of overcomers with palm branches, of Revelation 7; these are they that will be before the throne but not on the throne, who will have the palms of overcomers, but not the crowns of the “more than conquerors.” These are they that were not sufficiently alert to keep their garments unspotted from the world, and must through tribulation wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

2H373

We leave for another occasion the connection of our text, contenting ourselves at the present time with a clear discernment of God’s election of the past and of the present age. We have seen them to be entirely just in that they worked no injury to the non-elect, but reversely are intended of our Lord ultimately to work to their advantage. We have seen that the terms and conditions of the election are such that the great majority of mankind under present conditions can neither appreciate

nor respond to the terms, and that God is using present circumstances and conditions for the development of the classes he desires to make use of, and through whom he will show forth his justice, wisdom, love and power to the whole world of mankind. We have seen that although this election is wholly of grace and not of works, nevertheless works are required, sacrifices necessary, to an attainment of this election, and I trust that we have all resolved that more earnestly than ever we will strive to make our part in this calling and election of God sure, secure—to attain that for which we have been apprehended of the Lord. Phil. 3:12

These elections are well illustrated by those with which we are acquainted in the political world. The choice of some to be legislators, some to be congressmen and senators, implies no injury to the non-elected citizens, but, contrariwise, is intended for their blessing through the enactment of wise legislation, etc., in their interests. Similarly in God's election the ancient worthies are to have a great blessing in the great work of blessing Israel and all the families of the earth, and the little flock of this present Gospel age is to have, with the Lord Jesus, the most important share in the work of restitution, and thus God's elections in the end will work out the greatest blessing for all mankind. His guarantee is that all shall be blessed with the knowledge and opportunity of the eternal salvation, and that the only ones who will fail in attaining it will be those who wilfully, intelligently reject the divine arrangement and refuse to conform to the reasonable conditions which the coming Kingdom will impose. Seeing that we know these things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? How self-sacrificing, how devoted, how loyal to God, his Word and all his people should we be if we hope to attain a place in the glorious company of the "very elect." Let us by the grace of God more and more strive to this end, remembering by the way that God is for us, that he wishes us to attain that to which he has invited us, that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, that he will provide a way of escape from which we could not conquer, that all things shall work together for good to them that love him, that all these blessings are ours in Christ, and that our Lord is pleased to have us claim and appropriate his promises and blessings—to be full of faith and thug to be his "faithful."

July 8, 1906

*Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
July 11, 1918*

“MANY ARE CALLED, FEW CHOSEN”

Hartford, Conn., July 8, 1906. Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today to closely attentive audiences. His afternoon topic was A Cure for Infidelity—“To Hell and Back.” His evening discourse, which we report, was from two texts, “Come unto me, ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Many are called, but few chosen.” Matt. 11:28; 22:14

As many of my audience keep track of the Sunday topics through the public press, I remark that the subject today is closely related to that of last Sunday on “God’s Very Elect.” Our text assures us that the called ones of this Gospel age are many in comparison with the few who will be eventually chosen as the very elect—whom, in our discourse a week ago, we found to be elected or chosen to be the joint-heirs with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom, which is to bless the world of mankind in general—the non-elect. Today we consider the call or invitation which has been made during this Gospel age—the class to whom it has been extended.

This discourse has been republished in Bible Student’s Monthly, Volume 8, Number 7, now republished in Harvest Gleanings, Volume 2, pages 744-747, under the same title.

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” Rev. 2:17.

2H374

Saint Paul Enterprise, July 14, 1906

THE TRUE VINE AND THE VINE OF THE EARTH

Appleton, Wis., July 14.—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., addressed a large audience in the Chautauqua building this afternoon, his topic being “The Bible Defended—To Hell and Back.” We report his forenoon discourse on “True and False Vines” from the text, “I am the true vine and My Father is the husbandman.” (John 15:1) The speaker said:

Our Lord’s discourses abounded with striking parables, which have given food for thought to His followers for centuries. Amongst them the parable of the vine is especially beautiful and suggestive. The more one knows of grape culture the better he may understand and

appreciate the force and beauty of this parable. It illustrates in a remarkable degree the oneness of Christ and all of His members—true believers, consecrated with their Master to do the Father’s will even to death. The vine is composed of branches, practically all branches, and this well illustrates our Lord’s double declaration—first, that He is the vine, and, secondly, that this vine includes all of His consecrated saints— “Ye are the branches.” We must sharply distinguish here between our definition of the branches and one which has become quite popular. Our Lord points out that each individual Christian is a separate and distinct branch, whereas with the growth of sectarianism there came quite a disposition to speak of various denominations as branches—as, for instance, the Presbyterian branch, the Methodist branch, etc. None of us, however, can agree to this proposition, nor furnish Scriptural authority for the dividing of the Lord’s people into various sects, parties and denominations. We are all witnesses that the Scriptures positively declare that there is but one head of the Church, and that there is but one Church, which is His Body; that there is but one Bridegroom, our Lord, and that He has but one Bride, the true Church; that there is but one temple of the living God, of which our Lord Jesus is the foundation and capstone, and that each who is truly His is a living stone in this one temple. There is a general tendency to a recognition of the oneness of the Church of Christ, which is taking the form of a proposed federation of the churches of various denominations. We assent that at least outwardly this indicates a commendable sentiment—a recognition on the part of Christians that there is but one vine and that the individuals are the branches.

Looking back over the eighteen centuries of the Church’s history we perceive that our Lord and the apostles recognize but one Church with the one name— “the Church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven” —“the Body of Christ, which is the Church.” (Heb. 12:23; Eph. 1:23) But even at that early day there was a sectarian spirit manifested, as St. Paul clearly calls to view. Some even then were disposed to separate themselves from others under different leaders; as, for instance, the Apostle notes some said they were of Peter, some of Paul, and some of Apollos. The Apostle rejected this as the spirit of schism, a spirit of division, and declared to the dear household of faith that these conditions were an evidence of carnality. He asks, “Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were ye baptized into the name of Paul?” (1 Cor. 1:10-13) The Apostle disowns any responsibility for this spirit and exhorts the Lord’s people, “I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions amongst you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Later on in the same epistle (1 Cor. 11:18-19) the Apostle says, “There must be

also factions among you, that they which are approved may be manifested among you.”

MERELY BABES IN CHRIST

Further discussing this subject of a sectarian spirit among the Lord’s people, the Apostle points out that it is a sign of carnality—that the new nature has not made sufficient progress in the heart—that carnality or a worldly spirit is still there. This he styles spiritual infancy and notes the cause thereof, saying: “I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal—even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?—(worldly; human?) “Who then is Paul and who is Apollos but servants by whom ye believed and each as the Lord gave to him? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. Ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.” 1 Cor. 3:1-9

Here is the proper thought clearly set forth; the believer does not belong to any man; each is a free man in Christ, belonging to the Lord only, though pleased to recognize any whom God may seem to use as His ministers of truth and grace. This being true, there is no reason why the Lord’s people should divide into sects and parties of various denominations. This was recognized in the early Church, but soon its spirit was lost

2H375

and an attempt was made to maintain the oneness of the Church by force—by persecuting those who differed—by putting them to death, etc. In this manner a practical oneness of Christendom, at least outwardly, was effected, which lasted for centuries. There were no competitive denominations among the Lord’s people because none were permitted—the persecution was made too hot. There were some indeed who did not join, who sought to maintain individual union with the Lord outside of the Roman Catholic Church; but they were so ostracized and persecuted that their numbers were small, their influences in the world almost nil and their history unwritten. This was the wrong attempt at Christian union—contrary to the word and spirit of the Lord and of the apostles, who urged that love was to be the bond of union between the Lord’s followers and not force, and surely not persecution.

REFORMATION BY SECTS

As might have been expected the prosperity which attended Roman Catholicism led to corruption of doctrine with corresponding bad influence upon the people under their sway of error. We shall not discuss these doctrinal errors particularly at this time, but merely note that the Reformation movement of the sixteenth century was a protest against the false doctrines and false practices of Roman Catholicism on the part of some who had been among the most ardent supporters of that system. It was not a protest against Christianity, nor was it at first even a protest against the Roman Catholic organization, but merely against the corruption of doctrine and practice, which it sought to amend. It was only after the reformers found a general resistance on the part of the entire system that they reluctantly got out and denounced it. Whoever is familiar with the history of the rise of the various denominations of Protestants knows that they rose one after another, each apparently seeking for clearer light and greater harmony with God and the teachings of Jesus and His apostles—each aiming to get back to the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. It should not surprise us that these reformers were only partially successful, it should not surprise us that they would have their limitations every way, and particularly that each in its turn should take the position of the papacy, namely, that there is but one true Church and that it was the one. The time was when the various denominations of Protestants had very little sympathy for its fellows—each declared that it was the true Church and branded the others as erroneous. We can sympathize with these misconceptions respecting the oneness of the Lord's people; we see that the reformers were loyally seeking for the ideal set before us in the words of Jesus and the Apostles, but this does not blind us to their error on the subject.

THE TREND TOWARD FEDERATION

For several centuries thinking people, striving for reforms and for the Scriptural ideal of the oneness of the Church, proceeded to make sect after sect, denomination after denomination, to antagonize one another. Now we see the pendulum taking an opposite turn. Instead of antagonism the cry now is for union, federation. But while this is a commendable tendency in some respects, it is far from commendable in others. It is commendable in that it recognizes a broader sympathy amongst the Lord's followers—a recognition of the fact that there are good people, honest minded, consecrated ones in all denominations, including the Roman Catholic. It is commendable in that it is disposed to recognize the spirit of Christ as well as His Word. But this strong feature is also its danger point. The tendency today is to entirely discard doctrine and to entirely ignore the words of Jesus and the Apostles and to take instead of the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of the World—worldly wisdom as to what constitutes the mind of the Lord. Thus we find the

leaders of thought today are stamping upon the people their own spirits, their own minds, in respect to religious matters, to the total ignoring of the Word of God, which is able to make men wise unto salvation, and which was sent that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished. 2 Tim. 3:15-17

Under the lead of “Evolutionists,” “Higher Critics,” “New Theology” advocates, the ministry and the more intelligent of the laity are sent drifting away from all anchorage in divine revelation—into what we might term “Moral Infidelity.” More than this, the tendency of these leaders in federation is toward the enforcement of their views upon others. Some of them are already looking forward to the political influence and power to be gained through this federation, to the use of force—the civil power cooperating with the religious, after the manner of the “Dark Ages,” except that they claim to act thus upon a much higher, nobler, more just level. We would hold that however good the intentions of these people may be, the results of their efforts will not be advantageous in the highest sense—not be in harmony with our Lord’s desire and prayer for His followers, that “they may be one with us.” A mechanical union is not the kind for which the Lord prayed. He desired a union of heart among His followers, induced by His Truth and His Spirit, hence His prayer was, “Sanctify them through the truth, thy Word is Truth,” and the end of this sanctification would be unity of heart, of mind, of purpose—very different indeed from the unity of the “Dark Ages,” or of the unity of federation which is now proposed with so great exultation,

2H376

and which the Scriptures show is coming, and which they also show will result very differently from that the projectors intend.

WHAT IS THE FLAW—THE DIFFICULTY?

The difficulty is that there are two vines. The one, the vine of the earth, is very prominent, very great, very influential throughout the whole civilized world. It has its own husbandmen, it has its own caretakers, it has sectarian branches, and brings forth its own fruitage—entirely separate and distinct from the true vine of our text. The latter is small, comparatively unknown to the world, though its branches, its members, are to be found in every quarter. Of this vine and its branches we read, “The world knoweth us not even as it knew Him not.” The world sees, recognizes, knows only the vine of the earth and its large, prosperous development.

The true vine—composed of the “little flock” to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom—is

united, has one heart, one purpose, one spirit, even as it has one Lord, one faith, one baptism. It is not a sect, and its members are not sectarian. Each member according to the injunction of the Lord is to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ made him free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage to any sect or party. The Scriptural thought is that the personal relationship to the Lord of each individual believer is the tie which will constitute him a member of the Body of Christ, and that then by his relationship to the Lord, by his possession of the Lord's Spirit, he will be related to every other similarly consecrated believer. Thus in the illustration the sap from the root of the vine, the Lord Jesus, will extend to every branch, every member of His Body—that all may be nourished, strengthened, developed, fruit-bearers. These need no bondage, need no earthly name: united to Christ they are in fellowship with all who have the same spirit and can sing, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love."

If we were to attempt to apply these principles to the great mass of professors we would find it impossible for various reasons; they have not the spirit of such a union—they have not the vital union with the Lord Himself through faith in His Word and consecration to His service. What they are now doing, therefore, in the way of sectarian branching, uniting with one another, and thus attempting to combine as a whole, is as near to the divine pattern as the carnal mind can approximate. We are not blaming them; we are seeking merely to discern the real cause of their difficulty. The fault lies far back, and is represented in another of our Lord's parables wherein He likens the true children of God to the wheat, and tells us after the sowing of the wheat by Himself and the Apostles the enemy, Satan, came and sowed tare seed—erroneous doctrines, which later developed a spurious crop of imitation wheat—imitations of the real children of God, nominal Christians. To understand the Scriptural teachings respecting the consummation of this age and the introduction of the new dispensation we must take into account, therefore, not only the wheat but the tares—the gathering of the wheat into the heavenly garner, and the time of trouble to come upon the tares, which will thoroughly convince them that they never were wheat. Applying the same to the lesson of our text, we find that the harvest or end of this age will show clearly and distinctly—first to the Church and subsequently to the world—that there is a true vine of the Lord's own right-hand planting, a true Church, whose names are written in heaven and whose members are counted as the members of Christ, joined to Him, their Head. It will demonstrate also that there is an earthly vine, great, flourishing, and with an abundance of clusters of fruit of its own kind, which is not of God's planting, but the work of the Adversary—the result of false teachings, the propagation of error.

THE VINE OF THE EARTH

Let us glance at this vine of the earth—sectarianism, with its various branches—which in the end of this age will appear in a confederate form as the one great vine of the earth, as pictured in Revelation 14:18-19. It has a great deal of the form of godliness with a very little of the Spirit of the Lord maintained for a time by its hold upon some of the members of the true vine not yet separated from it. It boasts of great works, and indeed some of these are quite beneficial to the world. It cries out, Have we not done many wonderful works and in Thy name cast out devils? But the Lord declares, “I do not recognize you.” (Matt. 7:22-23) We are not to get the thought that the Lord does not approve of hospitals, asylums, charities, etc., but we are to get the thought that all of these will be right and proper enough for the natural man, wholly irrespective of Christ and His present election of His little flock, the Church, the true vine. These benevolent institutions would be proper if there were no God nor Christ nor hereafter; and as a matter of fact the majority of these institutions are supported by the state, directly or indirectly, from humanitarian reasons. They are not the fruits of the Spirit which all the branches of the vine are called upon to bear and of which our Lord declared, “herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.” The fruits of the spirit are meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love.” If these things be in us and abound they will demonstrate that we are neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord, in acquaintance with Him and

2H377

participation in His spirit and, on account of these fruits of the spirit, of love, an entrance shall be administered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Pet. 1:11

There is a difference between the fruits of the true vine called for in the Lord’s Word and developed under providential supervision and the fruits of the vine of the earth. The branches of the vine of the earth bear fruitage which has the form of godliness without its real spirit or power. Much of its benevolence is for politic’s sake rather than for mere love. Much of its meekness is merely feigned, a covering for pride of heart; much of its gentleness veils hardness and cruelty; much of its patience is for self-interest; much of its charity is for advertising, or to conciliate others, or as a sop to conscience, or to keep on the right side of the public. How different are these fruits than the kind commended by the Apostle and produced by the holy Spirit of the Lord operating in the heart, transforming the mind and cleansing and sanctifying words, thoughts and deeds.

The vine of the earth has spread its branches in every direction; it glories in its numbers, boasting 400,000,000 Christians, many of these, alas, in prisons and penitentiaries, etc., and many of them very dishonoring to the name they bear, nearly all of them needing a genuine conversion to make of them the Lord's jewels, vessels of honor, sanctified and prepared for the Master's use. (Malachi 3:17; 2 Tim. 2:21) This great aggregation of Churchianity, symbolically styled in the Scriptures "Babylon"—mother and daughters— full of pride and boastfulness, is nearing her harvesting time, which is most distinctly pointed out in Revelation 14:18, in the words, "another messenger came from the altar, he that hath power over the fire; and he called with a loud cry to him that hath the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather in the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God, and the winepress was trodden without the city and blood came out from the winepress even unto the horse bridles, as far as 1,600 furlongs." Thus symbolically does the Lord represent the trouble coming upon nominal Christendom, Babylon, in her fall in the great time of anarchy with which this age will close and the new dispensation be ushered in.

We are not claiming that the vine of the earth is composed of murderous thugs. We are claiming as the Scriptures do that it is composed of very intelligent, refined, cultivated people, who under various names represent the wisdom of this world, the aristocracy of this world, the wealthy of this world, and unwittingly they represent the "prince of this world" in that they are propagating false doctrines and misrepresenting the Lord and His cause among men. These having been blessed with a considerable measure of the light which has shined forth from the true church, personally and through the Scriptures, are much advantaged every way over the remainder of mankind. One advantage is witnessed in the superiority of Christendom over the remainder of the world. The trouble is that the light has to so large an extent been received into hearts that were not good and honest, but selfish and dishonest. The effect has been to give wisdom, riches, place and power into hands not controlled by the love of God which should accompany the light but still controlled by selfishness. The result at this present time is the organization of trusts and syndicates which are aggregating to themselves the surplus of the world, fabulous riches and wonderful power. The Scriptures indicate that the same aggressiveness on the part of this class will bring about the final catastrophe of this age in the wreck of the entire social structure by the masses. This will be a terrible vintage of the vine of the earth — "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, no, nor ever shall be." Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21

PRUNING THE TRUE VINE

The true vine is separate and distinct from all others and has special care. As in nature, a vine may run to wood instead of to fruit, so with the Lord's people— there is a tendency of development toward outward show, spread, that is often out of proportion to the amount of fruitage. As it is proper enough that a vine should grow larger and larger, making new wood each year, so it is proper that the Lord's people should increase, spread and broaden year by year. But the important thing is the fruitage, as only so much growth can be allowed as will not interfere with the proper development of the fruit. We know how this is in respect to the natural vine. The husbandman notes the fruit buds and cuts off the stock beyond them, so that the sap and strength of the vine may go into the grapes. So it is with the church, the Lord informs us; our outward growth or tendency to spread is watched over by the husbandman and pruning is done to the intent that we may bring forth more fruit, as the Master declared:

“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.”

Our Lord explains that the Heavenly Father himself is the husbandman, the caretaker of the true vine. Whatever the channels or agencies employed by the divine power in the care of the vine, the entire matter is, nevertheless, of the Father, the husbandman. He may send adversity, sickness or doctrinal tests or what not to hinder us from too much of an outward spread and to

2H378

concentrate our hearts and minds on the real work of life, namely, the cultivation of the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit in our hearts, and so far as possible in all the affairs of life. Trials, temptations, testings, cut off worldly tendencies of such branches and help to concentrate the sap which flows from the vine to each branch in fruit. The sap of the vine corresponds to the holy Spirit of the Lord, which invades the entire church, His body, and through this holy Spirit the fruits of the spirit are developed in us and we are more and more conformed to the image of God's dear Son, our Lord.

BRANCHES WHICH BEAR NO FRUIT

Our Lord declared that every branch in Him, every member of the true vine, who under the supervision of the heavenly Husbandman refuses to respond to the prunings and disciplines—refuses to bring forth the fruits of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love—such will be cut off from membership in the vine; and the declaration is that such cut off branches are burned, which implies that as branches they are destroyed so they could never be re-grafted if once cut off. Whatever the position any of us

may gain in any part of the divine arrangement, we could not be members of the vine if once cut off.

The great lesson to us, then, dearly beloved, is first of all to make sure that we are members of the true vine, and not merely members of the vine of the earth. If we have any doubt about the matter we should go to the Lord at once and give him our hearts, minds, all that we possess, a living sacrifice, entreating that we should be given a membership in His Body, His Church, the true vine. The next important point is to abide in Him, for, as our Lord declared, without Him we can do nothing. A branch without connection with the vine is of no value. We must, therefore, not only become united to our Lord Jesus, but must retain our relationship by conformity to his will and Word. This includes the fruit-bearing, the development of the fruits and graces of the Spirit, and if we have not these we are not properly His members; not walking in His footsteps, not filled with His Spirit. As we read, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." (Rom. 8:9) Let us then resolve afresh and more earnestly than ever before that we will glorify our Father in heaven by bearing much fruit—much of the fruitage of the holy Spirit in heart, so shall he love us and care for our development now and glorify us with Himself by and by, and make us joint-heirs with His Son in the glorious Millennial Kingdom under the whole heavens, which shall bless all the families of the earth.

July 15, 1906

*Republished from the National Labor Tribune,
July 18, 1918*

“HUMANITY’S YOKES AND CHRIST’S YOKE”

JAMESTOWN, O., July 15, 1906—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here yesterday at the Opera House. His afternoon topic was "Bible Theology Triumphant." In the evening his text was from Matthew 11: 29, 30, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." The evening discourse follows:

Our Lord in his text seems to contrast his yoke with other yokes, his burdens with other burdens, and to declare that there is an advantage to those who follow him. Some one will perhaps be inclined to say, "I prefer to take no yokes and no burdens; I desire to be free. Liberty is my watchword!" Some of the best and noblest minds are inclined to take this position and to consider it a logical one. It usually requires years of experiences for humanity to learn that it is not free, but in

slavery—that all mankind were born in slavery of sin and death, and that no one can liberate himself. Humanity is so accustomed to the slavery of sin and death that it does not realize its actual condition until attention is called to the matter and the attempt is made to secure liberty; then the galling chains are found to be fastened and clinched in every fiber of our bodies and in many of the tendencies of our minds. When the Apostle Paul got a glimpse of the true situation, of his bondage to sin and death, it led him to cry out, “O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this dying body?”—this blemished body, this body so full of weaknesses and imperfections and so enslaved to sin? The Apostle answers his own question and states the only way in which liberty can be secured, saying, “I thank God (for deliverance) through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 7:24, 25

When once our eyes begin to open to the situation, and daily thereafter as we study it, we learn to appreciate more and more what it is to be slaves to sin—that while we may be called free moral agents in the sense of being free to exercise our wills for good or for evil, it is merely to this degree that we can have any freedom. How to perform all that we will of good, how to restrain

2H379

the tendencies toward evil, as the Apostle declares, “we wot not”—we know not. Beginning at the grossest manifestations of slavery, we find some evidences in every human being; some have passions that are difficult of control, others have appetites which they are unable to conquer, others have ambitions which run away with them and make shipwreck of their lives so far as the higher and nobler attainments are concerned. All these are elements of selfishness and are accompanied by hundreds of pernicious manifestations which bring unhappiness to themselves and others; and these, each and all, substantiate the thought that we are slaves to our fallen condition. The Scriptures tell us where this slavery began—that it started with father Adam’s disobedience to the divine arrangement, his fall under the condemnation of sin and death, by which his talents and powers were impaired and by which he gave life to an imperfect race—a sinner race, a dying race, “born in sin, shapen in iniquity.” (Psa. 51:5) The Apostle suggests that Adam sold his race into this slavery of sin and death by his act of disobedience, saying, “We were sold under servitude to sin”—for the small price of the forbidden fruit. Rom. 7:14

DIVINE RELIEF FOR THE SLAVES

While God permitted the slavery to come upon Adam’s race, he declares it to be his intention ultimately to abolish this slavery. He merely permits it, his Word declares, as a lesson that man may learn the exceeding sinfulness of his sin and that divine justice in opposition to sin may ultimately be manifested, that divine love and power may be exercised in the overthrow of this slavery.

God's Word assures us that as by man's disobedience the many, the whole world, became sinners, so he has provided that, through a redemptive work accomplished by Jesus Christ the righteous, he is both able and willing to provide a way by which the slaves of sin and death may escape from their bondage and ultimately profit by their experiences—by their knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the bitterness of its wages, death. It was to this end that Christ appeared in the flesh, that he “by the grace of God might taste death for every man.” (Heb. 2:9) The result is manifested only in part as yet.

The great work of the Redeemer for the race belongs to the future, when, as the Messiah, the King of glory, he shall reign as King of kings and Lord of lords, and put down sin and insubordination, and bring everything and every person into full harmony with the divine law—or, failing this, they shall be ultimately destroyed from amongst the people, so that by the termination of his reign there will be a clean universe without sin, without slaves of sin, without death. Then will be fulfilled the assurance of the Lord through the prophet that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess Jesus, to the glory of God the Father; that the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth, and that all blind eyes and deaf ears shall be opened and the knowledge of the Creator be so world-wide, so generally diffused, that they shall no longer teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest. (Isa. 45:23; 11:9; 35:5; Jer. 31:34) For that happy day we wait in hope, in faith, with the assurance of the Lord that in that time all tears shall be wiped away from all faces and the rebuke of his people shall forever cease. (Rev. 21:4; Isa. 25:8) We have the assurance that thenceforth there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things of the sin-and-death condition shall have passed away, and he that sitteth upon the throne shall declare, “Behold, I make all things new.” Rev. 21:5

GOD'S FAVOR IN THE INTERIM

In the divine plan there are fixed times and seasons which are unalterable—the “day of Christ” cannot come until its due time. Hence the blessings of the Millennial age must be waited for by the world, God having a previous work to accomplish during this Gospel age. This work, various parts of the Scriptures assure us, is the gathering out from amongst mankind of a special elect class to be the “Church of the Firstborn—the Lord's jewels. As we have seen on previous occasions, this elect class is sometimes called the “body of Christ” and sometimes the “Bride of Christ.” Both of these figures signify the closest possible intimacy and union of these elect ones with the great King of glory. We are assured in the Scriptures that these elect shall sit with the Lord in his throne, and with him be the judge of the world when the world's time for trial for life eternal

shall come. It is to this special elect class that our text refers. These are called or invited to exercise faith in the Lord, to come out on his side, to accept his deliverance from the yoke of sin and death. There is, however, a condition attached, and that is that only those who wish to take the Lord's yoke and be associated with him in the bearing of his burdens are now invited.

It is asked, Why should the Lord impose burdens and yokes upon those who are now being called during this Gospel age whereas he intends to completely break the yokes and do away with all burdens during the Millennial age? We reply that the Lord is now seeking a certain class, a "peculiar people." He has for this class a particular service, an honorable station in his Kingdom higher and grander every way than the blessing that is yet to come to the world. God never proposed

2H380

that mankind should be independent of his Creator— no such liberty was ever planned for any creature. The divine laws, which are just and wise and loving and good, must be maintained in the interest of all creation, individually and collectively, and this is what the Scriptures term the "liberty of the sons of God," (John 1:12)—a liberty, privilege, opportunity of doing right, but no liberty to do wrong.

When the new conditions of the Millennial Kingdom shall have been fully attained, when Satan shall have been bound, evil brought into subjection and the knowledge of the glory of God be filling the earth— with a reward for every good effort and a correction for every wilful misdemeanor—that will be a time of absolute liberty, absolute freedom from burdens and yokes for all of the right-minded. The Apostle Paul pictures the enslaved world now and the liberation of the world future in Romans 8:19, 20, 21, 22, saying, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God, (waiting for the glorified Church, Head and body, in Kingdom power, to grant Millennial blessings.) Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption (slavery) into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. For the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now (under its slavery to sin and death)."

CHRIST'S YOKE AND BURDEN

The question arises, If the world is to be delivered into the full liberty of the sons of God during the Millennium, why is not this liberty true of the Church in this present time? Why are we not set at liberty? Does not the Apostle say, "Ye were called unto liberty?" Yes we were called unto liberty and that liberty we will attain when we receive our resurrection bodies—when that which is perfect shall come. But meantime,

while we are still in the flesh we groan, being burdened. We have a burden; not only do our imperfections and weaknesses of the flesh burden us, but the weaknesses and frailties of our friends and neighbors all have their influence upon us—we are in so close and so constant contact that the burdens of the world and especially of our friends are upon us, too, “We that are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened.” The Lord was also burdened; he had not the weaknesses and frailties of his own flesh, but he did have the burdens of the contradiction of sinners against himself (Heb. 12:3) the weakness, perversities, etc., of his own people, through whose malice he was eventually crucified, and he had the burdens of his disciples. All these bore more heavily upon the fine, noble, tender, affectionate nature of our Lord than they could do upon us who were born in sin and shapen in iniquity, while he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from the sinner race. Our text speaks of our Lord’s burden, and also of his yoke by which he drew that burden—the figure being that of an ox yoked to a cart with a load.

When we think of the load which our Lord carried—bearing the sins of the whole world, suffering the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God—it seems strange that he could and did say truthfully of it that it was a light burden. To us it seems like the most severe burden imaginable until we come to an understanding of the matter from the Lord’s standpoint. Then we see why the load was so light for him—how he could endure to leave the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, to humble himself and take a lowly nature, the human, that he might be found in fashion a man and humble himself still further, even unto death—even the death of the cross. (Phil 2:8) When we consider all this, we are indeed interested in knowing what kind of a yoke his was which enabled him to draw this great load so cheerfully, so willingly, that he did say, “I delight to do thy will, O my God.” The secret of the light load lay in the easy yoke. Nevertheless even here is another peculiarity; a yoke of itself is burdensome, undesirable. We can indeed imagine ourselves, always used to a yoke of sin, taking another yoke and finding it easier. But how about the dear Master, who in all the previous time had been free from any restraint, without a yoke of any kind, simply, joyfully recognizing the Father and responding to his will, but never being yoked to any burden, to any obligation, to the accomplishment of any difficulty involving trial, suffering, pain, endurance?

“MY YOKE IS EASY”

As a yoke signifies bondage or service, we must examine critically this yoke which our Lord wore and which he recommends to us as the only one by which we can be his disciples and find rest and peace to our souls, for he is addressing the laboring and heavy laden who

are looking to him for rest. The Master's yoke, by which he was able to endure all of his trying experiences and to count them but a light burden, was his hearty, glad submission to the Heavenly Father's will. This willingness on our Lord's part, this full confidence in the Father, this full trust in the divine plan that it would work out a blessing for him and for the race which he wished to redeem—all this led to the full submission of his will in everything to the Father's will, as expressed in his own words, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God! I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy Law is written in my heart."

Now, then, applying this matter to ourselves, who have come to Jesus, who desire to experience more and

2H381

more of his rest and his peace—applying this to the Lord's faithful ones who have felt the heavy load of sin and have labored hard to strive against the slavery to sin, we see that the Lord's proposition is that he is willing to transfer such faithful ones, so that henceforth like himself they may have a joy in the burdens and trials and difficulties of life which they could not experience except by becoming his disciples and yoke-fellows. It is one thing to fight against sin, to strive against slavery to sin in our own strength, and quite another thing to join with the Lord as co-laborers, and thus to have our puny powers supplemented by his grace, his strength. Our Lord's words were addressed directly to the Jews—who as a people had professed a turning from sin to harmony with God and with righteousness—to a people striving to keep the perfect divine law in its entirety. The conscientious Jews must have realized their inability to keep the law and proportionately must have felt discouraged, must have felt weary and heavy laden in their continual labors to live up to the standard of divine perfection.

It was to these that Jesus offered the privilege of becoming co-laborers with him in his burden. There is a similar class today in Christendom, not under the Jewish Law, but nevertheless realizing laws, rules and standards of divine justice and righteousness, and desiring to conform their lives thereto. These, like the conscientious Jews, find insurmountable difficulties—they can not do the things that they would. It is to these and these alone that the Lord sends the invitation, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me"—become my disciples, yoke-fellows with me in the bearing of the burdens which I have undertaken, and by and by you shall be sharers with me in the glories that shall then be revealed in the Kingdom, and meantime you will find rest to your souls—a rest and peace which is unobtainable either by

those under the Law or those who have come to a knowledge of righteousness during this Gospel age. There is just one way to get rid of the labor and heavy load, and that is to accept the Lord Jesus and his terms, his yoke, his burden.

We are to accept the Lord Jesus by faith, we are to recognize that he has paid the ransom price for the sins of the whole world—that his death at Calvary was a propitiation, a satisfaction, as a result of which all mankind are ultimately to be released from these burdens of sin, slavery and death. As our faith grasps these facts, we are invited to appropriate them to ourselves, to count our sins as covered by our Redeemer's merit, if we are of those who desire to become his followers, his disciples—to walk in his steps, to be his yoke-fellows. It is to these alone that he addresses the invitation of our text.

Whoever, therefore, would cast in his lot with the Lord Jesus, to be a sharer now in the ignominy and sufferings and self-denial and burden bearing with him in the present time, and by and by a sharer with him in the glories of the Kingdom, all such should make sure that they take up his yoke and no other. There is a Methodist yoke, a Presbyterian yoke, a Lutheran yoke, a yoke which each denomination holds out; but none of these did our Lord call us to put on, none of these is what the Lord designates "my yoke." Jesus was neither a Roman Catholic nor a Baptist nor a Methodist nor a Presbyterian nor a Lutheran nor an Episcopalian, and as he wore no such yoke so he has invited his disciples to wear not these but his yoke—"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." We have already seen that our Lord's yoke was a willing, hearty, complete consecration of time, talent, everything to the Father's will—a full submission of his will to the Father. And this should be our yoke. We are not to submit ourselves to each other, but to the Lord, and, as the Apostle says, to each other by the will of God (1 Pet. 2:13-15)—to whatever extent we recognize the Lord's leading and guidance through one another. It is Jesus' yoke, however, and only in proportion as this is recognized do we have fellowship with him, and realize that he is the real burden-bearer who carries the brunt of the load and gives us the rest and peace which he here promises.

THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY

Elsewhere the Lord declares, "If the Son shall make you free ye shall be free indeed." Where then is the harmony between such freedom and the yoke of service mentioned in our text, which signifies a bondage? Our Lord gives his faithful ones release from the weight of sin and its death penalty and shows them that he has paid

it all—paid their debts; that he is a propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world. That through our acceptance of him as our Redeemer, Teacher, Guide, we are justified freely from all things in the sight of the Heavenly Father, who thenceforth regards us no longer as strangers, aliens and foreigners, sinners condemned to death, but as sons begotten of the spirit of truth, and by and by to be delivered from every vestige of bondage in the First Resurrection. In proportion as we are able to realize this—in proportion as our knowledge is clear and our faith strong—we are able to appreciate this liberty, to enjoy it now by faith, and to rejoice therein exceedingly.

True, we have bound ourselves unto the Lord with a covenant of faithfulness unto sacrifice, sacrifice unto death; and it is under these terms that we have the peace and joy on our journey to the heavenly Kingdom and may attain our hopes eventually; but meantime

2H382

we have absolute liberty, in that we may turn away from the Lord if we will—he will not hinder us. As our acceptance of him was based upon a full surrender of the will, so he leaves it open to us whether or not we will take back our hearts, our consecrated selves. The Lord holds none of us in bondage, he seeketh such to worship him, to serve him, as do so in spirit and in truth. If they do not appreciate the privilege they are at liberty to withdraw. Of course, however, if we withdraw, if we draw back after having once understood and appreciated and enjoyed the Lord's favor, such a drawing back would be, as the Apostle declares, unto perdition, unto destruction, unto the Second Death, from which there would be no hope of a recovery by a resurrection or otherwise. Our Lord's redemptive work guarantees to each member of the race but one full complete opportunity of coming into harmony with God, and if that be wilfully and intelligently rejected we are not to expect to have it offered to us again. In this sense of the word the Lord sets before his consecrated ones now a life-or-death proposition—eternal life or eternal death. But while only the Church, the enlightened, are thus passing a life-or-death trial now, the Word assures us that ultimately every creature shall have a full opportunity—if not in the present life and under present conditions, then in the future life and under its more favorable Millennial age conditions.

“TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?”

During the Lord's ministry some who follow him for a time, failing to enter into the spirit of his teachings, failing to get the eyes of their understanding opened because their hearts were not in the proper attitude,

turned away from Jesus, saying, “These are hard sayings; who can hear them?” The way was too narrow for them; they had not a sufficiency of consecration nor a sufficiency of love to lead them to full self-surrender and the taking of the Lord’s yoke. It was then that the Lord turned to some of his faithful who had remained and who had taken his yoke to follow him. Jesus questioned them, saying, “Will ye also go away?” and their answer was, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

Is it not so with us, dear friends, who have tasted of the good Word of God and been made partakers of the holy Spirit, and been enlightened and brought to a knowledge of the powers of the world to come? (Heb. 6:46) And do not we decide, like the Apostle, that although we have liberty to turn from the Lord—liberty to turn back from the narrow way—liberty to turn back to the ways of sin, like the sow to wallowing in the mire—do we not agree that we could not think of so doing, that we have formed a hatred for our former taskmaster, sin, and a dislike for the wages, death. Have we not, on the contrary, learned to love him who redeemed us, who set us free and who has waged a warfare against sin and every evil which ultimately, when his Kingdom is established, shall prevail.

And are we not so in love with this Savior, this true yoke-fellow, who has become our burden-bearer and the burden-bearer for the whole world, that we could not think of leaving his companionship; that we could not think of using the liberty we have to turn from him, to turn back from the ways of sin and death. I trust that this is the sentiment of our hearts, and that the more we recognize in the Word of the Lord what great things have been done for us, the more we esteem it a privilege to take the Redeemer’s yoke upon us and learn of him, and learn to appreciate the fact that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. The burden is light because we love righteousness and hate iniquity, and therefore delight to wage a good warfare against sin, especially in our own mortal bodies; the yoke is easy because we love our Lord and the Heavenly Father, whose service is represented by the yoke.

“MEEK AND LOWLY OF HEART”

Ah! there is a depth of meaning in the Master’s words, “I am meek and lowly of heart”—follow my example and you will have rest. Only those who have meekness and lowliness of heart are prepared to humble themselves, to acknowledge their own unworthiness and their need of help, and to accept the Lord’s proffered assistance and to take his yoke. The haughty, the high-minded, the self-sufficient, the proud, are at a disadvantage, because they are not of the spirit which the Lord approves, and they will not therefore be of the class whom he is now seeking unless they humble themselves. Moreover, if any were meek and lowly of heart so that he could take the

yoke of the Lord in a full consecration, unless he continue in this meekness and heart-holiness he is not at all likely to continue to be a yoke-fellow with the Lord. Let us then, as we appreciate the privilege we enjoy, seek to maintain it by continuing humble, as the Apostle expresses it, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. I Pet. 5:6

*THEY do the least
Who talk the most,
Let words be few.*

2H383

July 22, 1906

*Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
July 25, 1918*

“RECONCILIATION--GOD, THE CHURCH, THE WORLD”

ELGIN, Ill., July 22, 1906—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today. In the afternoon his topic was "The Bible Theology Defended." The evening discourse, which we report, was from the text, "We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: We beseech you, on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:20

Reconciliation is the keynote of the Gospel. It implies an estrangement, and the Scriptures explain to us that sin was and still is the cause of the estrangement and a hindrance to reconciliation. Amongst the heavenly hosts there is no need of a Gospel of reconciliation, because nothing has intervened between divine goodness and the members of the holy angelic hosts. A message of reconciliation would be as inconsistent in heaven as it is reasonable on earth. There are two sides to this reconciliation, and the difficulty with many is their failure to recognize this fact—they see but one side. Some see that mankind needs to be reconciled to God, but do not see that reconciliation was equally necessary as respects the Almighty. Others see that the Creator justly sentenced mankind on account of sin and his offended broken law—his divine justice needed to be appeased before any message of peace could come to the sinner race. The full thought of the Scriptures on the subject takes in both of these views. Our text and its context present both ideas of reconciliation.

Divine law was made for perfect beings because God's work is perfect. Had he created sinners blemished and biased as we now are it would not have been just to have placed us under a perfect law and to have required of us

perfect obedience to it. Had we been created imperfect, justice would have claimed that we be treated according to our actual standing, even though this would have implied ten thousand variations of the application of divine law to the various conditions of human depravity and blemishes. On the contrary, not only were angels created perfect, but man also was created in the image of God—perfect. It was sin, disobedience, that brought upon our race what we and others call “The Fall.” Sin brought our first parents under divine sentence of death, as unworthy of life, and their dying, accomplished gradually in 930 years, included mental, moral, and physical death under the sentence, “Dying thou shalt die.”

“RECONCILED TO HIMSELF”

What affected our first parents mentally, morally and physically, necessarily affected all of their children through heredity—hence we are all sinners, all blemished, all dying. What can be done? The Scriptures answer that God must be just, that his sentence can not be trifled with, that it is irrevocable. But, we ask, can not the sentence be paid? Can not each pay his own penalty? The Scriptures answer, No! that the penalty upon each individual of our race is death, extinction, and that since each must pay his own penalty, “None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him” (Psa. 9:7, 8), nor save his own soul from death. At a glance, then, we see that the case is hopeless so far as we are concerned—that we must look away from ourselves and from our race for any hope of reconciliation with God, for any hope of life eternal, his gift for those who are in harmony with him.

Here the Scriptures come to our assistance, and inform us that God is not only just but loving, and that his love had already a provision when his justice pronounced the death sentence. What provision did divine love make for us? Our context answers that “God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ” (v. 18): and again, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself”—“not reckoning unto them their transgressions” (v. 19) “but reckoning those trespasses unto his son Jesus, who died for your sins, the just for the unjust, that he might reconcile us to God.” (1 Pet. 3:18) We see, then, how God reconciled us unto himself through Jesus Christ—through the work which Jesus did for us.

We see, then, that it is not necessary that God should break or violate the divine law in order to have mercy upon us, but that divine justice has been fully met, that the penalty upon Adam and upon his race has been paid. The penalty pronounced upon Adam was death, “Dying thou shalt die.” Christ has paid that penalty, he died for

us—he died as Adam’s Redeemer, and therefore the Redeemer of all the race condemned in Adam. Hence the Scriptures declare that “As all in Adam die, even so shall all in Christ be made alive, every man in his own order.” (1 Cor. 15:22, 23) We were in Adam once condemned to death, to extinction; by

2H384

the Creator’s favor Jesus appeared as our Redeemer and paid our penalty; he was the satisfaction for our sins (the Church’s sins), and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2) We are glad, we rejoice to know that God has laid so broad a foundation for reconciliation—that so far as he is concerned the arrangement for salvation is quite sufficient to effect the reconciliation of Adam and of all his race, so to cancel their sentence as to permit divine love to operate through Christ to every member of the race, and to grant to each member life everlasting upon the reasonable conditions which God has established.

A LONG WHILE UNRECONCILED

Some one may inquire, Was not God always reconciled to the world? We answer No, that, according to the Scriptures, during a period of 4126 years God was not reconciled. He allowed the curse of death to rest upon the entire human family, affecting, blighting, destroying them mentally, morally and physically. As our context declares, God was manifested in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. Hence there was no reconciliation previously. The ministry of reconciliation, the Gospel, has only been preached since Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man. (Heb. 2:9) What about the hundreds of millions who died during those 4000 years before Christ came—before he tasted death for every man, before the ministry of reconciliation was committed to believers or to anybody?

We answer that they were all “children of wrath”— that they all died under Adam’s sentence, that they have had no chance since to hear the Gospel because they are dead, and because the “dead know not anything.” (Eccl. 9:5) If they are ever to get a blessing from God, if they are ever to hear the message of reconciliation, if they are ever to have an opportunity of being reconciled to God and gaining life everlasting, it must be in the future—it must be at an awakening from the tomb. And this is the clear statement of the divine Word, that the hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth—the unjustified as well as those justified through faith. The unjustified, condemned, evil in God’s sight, will come forth not to be tortured, but to be made acquainted with the fact that the Creator is both just and loving, powerful and wise, and, if they will, to come into accord with him and his wise regu-

lations, designed for the benefit of all his creatures. Nothing could be more plain than this abundantly sustained Scriptural proposition: God so loved the world while they were sinners that he sent his only begotten Son for their redemption. That love therefore must have included those who lived before Jesus came as much as it included those who had not yet been born, and the provision of God in Jesus as truly belongs to those who died before he came as to us who were not yet born at that time. The loving provision of God applies to Adam and his entire race. Thank God that we are more and more coming to see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of his wisdom, justice, love and power. Eph. 3:18, 19

RECONCILING THE CHURCH NOW

As the Apostle declares in the verse preceding our text, God's real work is "the reconciliation of the world unto himself." However, he begins his work with an elect class and not with the world. He tells us these elect ones are chosen out from the world as a peculiar people; he tells us that they are to be a Royal Priesthood, to show forth his praises before the world. These our text tells us are elected of God to be his ambassadors—to proclaim to the world the great fact that God has operated through Christ for the reconciliation of himself, the reconciling of divine justice; and that now as a consequence he is ready to receive all that come unto him through Christ—all who desire to be reconciled to God. Each one who hears of the grace of God, who comes to an understanding of the great mercy of God manifested in the giving of his Son, is privileged to come unto the Father through him, and by faith to realize his sins are covered by the merit of the precious sacrifice, and on the basis of that faith to begin a new life, to consecrate himself to God and his service. All thus coming to the Father are reckoned as justified, cleared of all guilt, and privileged as consecrated followers of Jesus to be associated with the great Redeemer in his work of reconciling the world.

SACRIFICIAL MINISTRY

Although God is reconciled through Christ, only a few have yet the hearing ear. The great mass of mankind are deaf to the voice divine speaking peace through Jesus Christ, they are blind to this grand display of divine love—"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." (2 Cor. 4:4) Hence, as the Scriptures declare and as observation teaches, those who do hear and those who do see are now but a "little flock." Of these the Apostle in our text is speaking when he says, "We are ambassadors for Christ"—we are the representatives of Jesus in making known to the world the blessings which he has to offer, secured through his sacrifice.

It might be assumed that these ambassadors of the Lord would be well received by the world, highly esteemed amongst men, powerful, influential. But on the contrary the very reverse is the case, as the Scriptures declare. Not many wise, not many great, not many

2H385

learned, not many noble, not many rich are in this little flock, says the Apostle, and the world does not respect them. Our Lord tells the reason, saying, "Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19) "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not" (John 1:5)—"the darkness hateth the light." Consequently this ministry of God, this ministry of the Gospel, this ambassadorship, while a high privilege, a great honor, is a ministry of suffering, involving self-sacrifice, self-denials.

The Lord foreknew all this, and so arranged matters purposely that the trials, difficulties, persecutions and oppositions of the world might serve to test, to sift, to polish the peculiar elect class whom he is now selecting from amongst men. These, we are told, must be copies of God's dear Son—not in fleshly likeness, but in heart likeness. They must all love righteousness and hate iniquity to the extent that they would be willing to suffer for righteousness' sake, and take it gladly, joyfully. By thus enduring hardness as good soldiers of Christ they obtain the mark of divine approval as overcomers of the world, and thus they are made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—the Millennial Kingdom, which is to be God's agency in the blessing of the world of mankind, which he has already reconciled unto himself through Jesus Christ.

THE MINISTRY OF GLORY

But although the elect have a ministry of suffering now because the world has not the hearing ear, because the Adversary is deceiving mankind and misleading them as respects real joy and real happiness and real pleasure, nevertheless the time is coming and is near at hand when all this will be changed, when the petition of the Lord's prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," shall have been accomplished, when the elect Church shall have been glorified with Christ and have received of the Father the glory and honor and immortality of the First Resurrection. Then their work as ambassadors of God will be on a totally different plane. When God's Kingdom is in power his ambassadors and representatives will be honored, not only of the Father and of the Son and of the angels, but also of the world of mankind, whose eyes of understanding will then be opened to see things in their proper light.

If it is a joyful thing for the Lord's consecrated ones to proclaim the good tidings now, under adverse conditions, to those who are deaf and blind to the truth, seeking for such as have the hearing ears and understanding hearts and the partially opened eyes—seeking to open the eyes of their understanding wider and to open their deaf ears—if this be a pleasurable work for the Lord's faithful ones now, how grand will be their glorious privilege in the future when, armed with the power of God, they not only begin but carry to a full completion his great work of reconciling the world—making the whole world to know of his love and goodness, his wisdom, power and justice, that thus all may be brought to a knowledge of the truth that they may be saved—not saved from torment and torture, but saved from the wages of sin, death—saved from sin and its penalty.

THE MINISTRATION OF GLORY TYPIFIED

Preceding our text but discussing the same matter, the Apostle shows (2 Cor. 3:6-16) that the scenes enacted at Mount Sinai in connection with the giving of the Law were typical of what is to be expected on a much higher antitypical scale at the second advent of Christ, when the New Covenant will be sealed, ratified and go into effect for the benefit of the whole world. We have heretofore shown that the elect of this Gospel age, as the members of the Christ under Jesus the Head, are accepted of God under the original Abrahamic Covenant—not under the Law Covenant given to the Jews nor under the New Covenant which is to be given to restored Israel and to the world. The Church of Christ, now associated with him as sacrificers, sharers in his sufferings, in his death, am to be with him in glory, the dispensers of divine favors to the world, blessing all the families of the earth in his Millennial Kingdom under the terms and

conditions of the New Covenant, which Covenant is sealed by the blood of the better sacrifices.

Looking back to the type we see Moses, the representative of Jesus, the Head of the Church his body, called of God to go up into Mount Sinai in the midst of shakings and quakings, fearful sights and sounds. This represents not only the experiences of each individual member of the body of Christ, but it represents also the great time of trouble with which this Gospel age will end and the final members of the body of Christ be glorified. The mountain into which they go symbolizes the Kingdom of God, as a mountain everywhere throughout the Scriptures is the symbol of a kingdom. When Moses, later, came down from the mountain the record is that his face shone with the glory of the Lord to such an extent that he was obliged to put on a veil in his communications with the people in the sealing of the Covenant of which he was the Mediator. This was a type of the glory of Christ, Head and body, in the Kingdom. So glorious will they be as spirit beings that it will be impossible for natural men to have intercourse with them except as they are veiled, hidden from the sight, their glories realized by faith.

It is of this glory that the Apostle here is writing, contrasting Moses and the Law Covenant and Israel with

2H386

Christ, the New Covenant and the world. He says of the Church, "Our sufficiency is of God, who also has made us sufficient as ministers of the New Covenant" (2 Cor. 3:5, 6); then he adds, referring to the Law Covenant as a ministration of death, because it did not really give life to any that were under it, "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was transitory (typical): how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be more glorious? For if what faded away came with glory, much more is that which is permanent arrayed in glory."

The ministry of suffering, which during this Gospel age is the portion of the Lord's people, the Royal Priesthood, is not a ministry to the world directly, but the ministry incidental to the gathering of the body of Christ, the Royal Priesthood. The Apostle explains the matter, saying, that it is "for the work of the ministry, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." When we all shall have reached that glorious consummation of the Church, the little flock, the Bride,

the body of Christ, then the world's reconciling will be the great work of the Millennial age, carried on in power and great glory, to the praise of our Redeemer and the Father, and for the blessing of all families of the earth. Eph. 4:12, 13

RECONCILING THE WORLD

Some one may say, "If the world is blind and deaf so that the Master said to his followers, 'Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear,' how could the poor world be any better off in its blind and deaf condition in the future than it is at present? Where would be the advantage of repeating the story of God's grace to those who are thus blind and deaf thereto? If the god of this world now blinds the minds, why would he not do the same in the future?" These are good and important questions, and the Scriptures give us satisfactory answers to them, assuring us through the Prophet Isaiah that in the day of Christ, the Millennial day, the day of his Kingdom, all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears be unstopped. (Isa. 35:5) Again the Lord informs us that at the very beginning of his Millennial reign Satan shall be bound that he shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished. Rev. 20:3

Here, then, is the secret of why the world can not hear now, and the assurance of the change which would permit it to hear in its due time. As the Adversary now deceives the whole world so that only a comparatively few can exercise the eye and ear of faith to hear the voice divine, to see the riches of God's grace, so his binding and the restraint of evil, the dispelling of the mists and clouds of darkness, error and superstition, and above all the eye salve of truth which will then be dispensed freely to every creature, will be all powerful to the enlightenment and uplifting of all the families of the earth—whosoever will. And as for the remainder, who will not hear with their eyes opened and their ears unstopped, knowing of the grace of God, for these what remains? The Scripture answers, "the blackness and darkness" of destruction, "the soul that sinneth (wilfully, intelligently) it shall die"—the Second Death; "he that will not hear that great Teacher shall be cut off from amongst the people." Jude 13; Ezek. 18:20; Acts 3:23

"BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD"

To know that God has a great, loving, God-like plan of salvation from sin and death, which ultimately will be offered to every member of the race, constrains us, as the Apostle says, to enter joyfully, gladly, into relationship with our Creator. To be reconciled to God implies harmony with his law of righteousness, a desire to do the divine will, an opposition to sin and a desire to be ambassadors for God, to tell of his good tidings and help

forward in every manner possible his great and glorious cause. Not that he needs our help, but that we appreciate the privilege of being co-laborers with him as the highest imaginable favor in the world.

We make this appeal, “Be ye reconciled to God,” with the full understanding that the world in general is deaf and will not hear, but with the expectancy that our message now will be heard only by those who have the hearing ear, who are described by the Apostle as “Even as many as the Lord your God shall call”—as many as shall hear and heed the call of God speaking peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Our appeal, then, is not to the heathen world, but to believers who have heard of the grace of God—that they be reconciled— fully reconciled to God. Amongst the Lord’s people we find some in a measure of reconciliation and others in a state of partial reconciliation: our message is to all, “Be ye reconciled to God,” accept his Word, accept his way, conform your heart and life to his arrangement, learn to look for his way in all the affairs of life and do not seek to do his work in your own way. He is the Captain, we are the soldiers to obey; he is the Head, we are the members of his body, to be directed by his will; he is the Bridegroom, we are prospectively his espoused, who should and do desire to be fully conformed to his perfect will in everything. In proportion as we attain this reconciliation to God we are attaining

2H387

a harmony with righteousness and truth and everything which he provides for us; in the same proportion we are learning that we are not our own but his, bought with a price, even the precious blood, and that it is our privilege to glorify him in our own bodies and spirits, which are his. Let us be reconciled — fully reconciled to God, and have in return the blessed assurances of the Word that “all things are ours for we are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.” 1 Cor. 3:22, 23

July 29, 1906

*Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
August 1, 1918*

RIGHT AND WRONG VIEWS OF BAPTISM

ASBURY PARK, N. J., July 29, 1906—A convention of Bible students, believers in the “Atonement through the Precious Blood,” has been in session here during the past week. Able Scriptural presentations have been made by various speakers on topics doctrinal and practical. About 1,200 were in attendance. The teachings of the Scriptures are revered by these people as the Word of God, and for the time these teachings seem to fill their hearts, their lips and their faces—references are frequently made to the “joys of their salvation.” Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., spoke twice. We here report extracts from his discourse on Baptism. His text was from Jesus’ words, “Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” (Matt. 20:22) He said:

This discourse has been republished in Harvest Gleanings, Volume 1, pages 598-603, (Bible Student’s Monthly, Volume 5, Number 9) entitled, “What is Baptism?”

The National Labor Tribune, August 5, 1906

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST-BORN

Pastor C. T. Russell preached Sunday in Bible’ House Chapel, Allegheny, which was uncomfortably crowded, Carnegie Hall being unobtainable on account of renovations. The closest of attention was given to a discourse from the text, “The general assembly, the Church of the First-born, who are enrolled in heaven.” (Heb. 12:23) The speaker said:

Some of us have just returned from our Asbury Park Convention of Bible students. Others are hoping to attend a similar convention at St. Paul in another week. Wonderful spiritual blessing, comfort and uplift attend these conventions, and although in the aggregate they cost a considerable sum of money, we are more and more convinced that it is well spent—that the highest use to which money can be applied is that of serving the New Creature, ministering to the spiritual hunger and thirst, and providing more and more the rest of soul—the peace of God which passeth all understanding. We do well, therefore, that according to our circumstances we remember the admonition of the Apostle to “forget not the assembling of ourselves—and so much the more as we see the Day drawing near.” (Heb. 10:25) These conventions, we might

remark, are not only a blessing to those in attendance, but through them blessings to the dear ones not privileged to be in attendance, and thus the spiritual refreshment is widespread. Our Asbury Park convention, you will be glad to know, was well attended—our regular attendance of about one thousand was augmented by interested Christian people from the Park, Ocean Grove and adjoining towns, so that some of our public services quite crowded the commodious auditoriums provided for our use.

LONGING FOR THE “GENERAL ASSEMBLY”

Pleasurable and profitable as these conventions are, they beget more and more a longing for the general assembly of the Church of the First-born ones mentioned in our text. If it is pleasurable to assemble with one or two thousand of the Lord’s true children, how much more will be our joy when under the new conditions there shall be a general assembly which will include all of the faithful in Christ Jesus, and the Master himself and the apostles. What a gala time that will be! The Apostle assures us that at the same time there will be an innumerable host of angels. Ah, yes! Elsewhere we read

2H388

of the interest of the angels in the affairs of the Lord’s plan, that they desire to look into the divine revelation respecting man’s salvation. With an unselfish love they witnessed the dear Redeemer’s voluntary humiliation when he took a bondsman’s form and was found in fashion as a man. They wondered at his humility, and so surely as they possessed the same spirit they must have loved him the more because of his faithfulness even unto death, even the death of the cross. With growing interest they watched the development of the divine plan, under which on the third day he was raised from the dead, no longer man but a spirit being, the express image of the Father’s person, highly exalted far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named—next to the Father and partaker of the divine nature.

And if interested in the beginning of the divine plan, in Jesus, we may be sure that they are still interested in the part assigned to the Lord’s followers, called out from the world to lift up the banner of Jesus as the standard of the people, to walk in the Master’s footsteps, to be misunderstood, to be slandered, defamed, to endure hardness as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus, and by these various experiences to be so shaped and polished as the Lord’s jewels as to be fit ultimately for the glorious setting which the Lord has prepared for his faithful—with Jesus in his Kingdom, glory, honor and immortality. No wonder, then, that the Apostle tells us

that at the general assembly or general convention of the Church of Christ there will be present an innumerable company of angels. One translator renders this passage “myriads of messengers in high festival.”

When we remember the Apostle’s declaration that the angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, we can well understand that when the elect Church of this Gospel age shall have been completed and gathered in general assembly beyond the vail, these ministering spirits, who have had so much to do with the pilgrimage of the little flock, will indeed exult with them in the blessings then attained to. Is it any wonder that all of the Lord’s faithful people look forward to that day of general convention with the longing unspeakable? It will mean the end of the journey at the Father’s house. It will mean the entrance into the place prepared for the elect of God, the Bride, the Lamb’s wife—his faithful little flock who, during the present ages have followed the Great Shepherd through evil report and through good report, as deceivers and yet true, as poor yet making many rich, as having little that the world esteems valuable yet possessing all things, in that all things are ours, for we are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.

THE GENERAL ECCLESIA OR ASSEMBLY

Our word Church, sometimes used in referring to a denomination and sometimes in referring to a meeting place, gives to the average reader a very imperfect conception of the significance of the Greek word Ecclesia which it translates. The word ecclesia signifies—“the called-out assembly.” As it is applied only to believers in the Lord Jesus, it signifies those believers in Christ called out of the world—separated from the world, its spirit, its aims, its ambition, etc. It is for each of us to apply this called-out feature as carefully as his knowledge and judgment will permit, to look well to his own heart and life, to see to what extent he has obeyed the call and become separated from the world. Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but now because ye are not of the world (because ye are the called-out ones and have obeyed the call) therefore the world hateth you (does not fellowship with you), are the Lord’s words. John 15:19

We look about us in the world to inquire where is this ecclesia of which the apostles spoke and wrote— where is it now? The Scriptures answer us that the Adversary sowed tare seed amongst the wheat, which almost choked it, swamped it. And thus we see that nominal Christendom of our day is not so much a wheat field as a tare field, and the majority—the tares— are themselves

deceived, and think of the heads of wheat in their midst as freaks, oddities, a “peculiar people,” because they have not the spirit of the world, the spirit of the tares—because they have the spirit of Christ, the spirit of sacrifice and self-denial, the spirit of service for God and all the interests of his cause; because while not free from selfishness they are not controlled by it, but by the contrary spirit of love.

Looking around over this wheat field, which is really a tare field, we find according to census reports 400,000,000, including nearly all the great, the noble, the wise, the learned, the rich. That there is a mistake in calling this great mass Christendom (Christ’s Kingdom) is evident from the Lord’s own testimony that his called-out ones are a little flock. He said, “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.” (Luke 12:32) Moreover he admonishes us that not many great, not many wise, not many noble, not many learned, not many rich hath God chosen, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be the heirs of the Kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:26, 27; James 2:5) With this Scriptural description of the Lord’s called-out ones we need make no mistake—the Lord knoweth them that are his, even though they be but a small minority and very insignificant in the world’s affairs. Their time for glory, honor and immortality is

2H389

not now, but will come with the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven, for which we pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” at the second advent of Jesus, their Lord, who will exalt them, glorify them, make them his Bride and joint-heirs.

“WHENCE COME DIVISIONS AMONG YOU?”

The tare class, which bears the name of Christ, is much more numerous, great, influential, rich and learned than the wheat class, and has had a general control for some time, and has divided the wheat fields with various creed-fences, naming one department Presbyterian, another United Presbyterian, another Roman Catholic, another Lutheran, another Episcopalian, another Reformed Presbyterian, another Methodist, another Baptist, etc., etc. These divisions are possible because of the minority of the true wheat—because of the majority of the tare element, the carnal element. There was a disposition in the same direction in the days of the Apostles, and they called attention to it, saying, Why saith ye I am of Paul, another I am of Apollos, another I am of Peter, are ye not carnal? Is Christ divided? Did Paul or Peter die for you? or is there any reason which would lead you to ignore the name of Christ and to take another name? 1 Cor. 1:12, 13

Thus did the Apostle head off this spirit of denominationalism in his day. Roman Catholicism took still another way of hindering divisions, and during her reign persecuted everything tending toward schism, division. This however, so far from producing the real unity of the Church, was merely a unity of the tares— a destroying of the true wheat and in opposition to the spirit of the liberty wherewith Christ makes free all who are his. So soon as the Reformation woke up the people, the desire for the truth led to the formation of various sects and parties, each one striving for more truth, and more truth than the other would permit. This seeking for truth and willingness to separate from error has continued for four centuries, but is now giving way to a spirit of federation, a desire for outward union—a relinquishment of truths which led to present divisions. Thus seen the present movement toward union or federation is in many respects a bad omen—of carelessness, indifference, as respects the truth, those who desire to make a fair show in the world — a drive for power, ecclesiastical and political, which can be secured through union and not otherwise.

PROPER AND IMPROPER CHURCH UNION

While holding that the Church and Christ are one, that it should never have been divided, that divisions are evidences of error, carnality, we will surprise some, perhaps, when we declare that the coming federation of Protestant denominations is a step backward instead of a step forward. As the Reformation movement was a step forward in the right direction—the direction of seeking for and finding the truth and following Christianity, so surely the present movement in an opposite direction is another terrible omen. It means an abuse of the truth and carelessness as to what is and what is not truth—a ceasing to go forward in the quest of truth. The proper course, The Scriptural course, lies in the opposite direction from federation. As the Lord called out his people during the Reformation period, as the truth kept calling the truth-hungry step by step, nearer and nearer to the light and to the Word, so these processes should go on until all denominationalism would be broken up—until each individual would stand committed to a faith of his own, called out of all sectarian bondage to stand related to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith and obedience and the spirit of adoption, and through him related to all true Christians.

Do I make myself clear? Let me state it again: Each individual Christian should step out of all denominational bondage and be rid of all credal fences; should recognize his allegiance to the Lord Jesus and him alone; should hearken to the Word of God through Jesus, the apostles and the prophets, and should give heed to other teachers only in proportion as they would call attention to and prove their suggestions by the inspired Word. All

such Christians, united to the Lord by an intelligent faith and by a covenant of sacrifice, should be a member in the body of Christ—one of the called out ones. And these, having the Lord's Spirit and the direction of his Word, would be glad to meet with each other, to fellowship each other, to build one another up in the most holy faith and in the fruits and graces of the Spirit. These would speedily find themselves isolated from the world and from the tares by reason of their faithfulness to the Lord and to his Word, by their adherence to the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and by their ignoring of the bondage of human creeds and sects.

THE CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN ONES

There is such a movement in the world. The truths of the Scriptures which we are presenting orally and through the printed page, are having this very effect: they are inducing individual liberty amongst Christian people, which enables them to rise above all sectarian limitations and bondage to a clearer knowledge of God and of his Word, and to a fuller degree of separation from the world, its spirit, its methods. These are coming to know the meaning of our Lord's words, "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed," and will appreciate the Apostle's words, "Stand fast therefore

2H390

in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage." (Gal. 5:1) As these attain a clearer knowledge of the divine plan, and sacrifice their standing with sectarianism and popularity, with the tares and immature wheat in bondage with them, they find a closer fellowship with the Lord and with all who have his Spirit and are being guided by his Word. These are growing in numbers in all parts of "Christendom," and each one who attains to this liberty himself realizes it to be his special privilege as a brother and an ambassador for Christ to seek others of the true wheat class and to lead them also into this true liberty, true union. For be it known that as each individual reaches a point of individual liberty in Christ through a knowledge of the truth he becomes joined to others who have the same Spirit of the Master—joined not by creeds nor laws nor regulations of men, but by the Spirit of the Lord, as the apostle suggests, "We are members in particular of the body of Christ," to such an extent that if one member suffer all the members suffer with it, if one be honored, all rejoice. The poet has well expressed the same correct thought respecting the heart-unity of these who are individually free from all human yokes of denominational bondage, saying,

*"Blest be the tie that binds,
Our hearts in Christian love.*

*The fellowship of kindred minds,
Is like to that above."*

While therefore the federated work will still progress, as the Scriptures clearly indicate, gathering more and more tightly into their bundles tares of various denominations, the Lord of the harvest is seeing to it that all of the true wheat is being otherwise gathered, separated from these bundles, separated from these tares—in spirit, not necessarily in person. Respecting this harvest work now in progress the Master advises, "Gather together my saints unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up my jewels." (Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:17) We rejoice, therefore, dearly beloved brethren, in all the polishing experiences that come to us as the Lord's jewels, and hope soon to be gathered to him and to all the faithful beyond the veil in the glories of his kingdom. But meantime, while we are on this side of the veil, it is our privilege to be laborers, co-laborers with Christ, to seek out the true wheat and to assist them to the truth, which will ripen them and gather them to the Lord as separate and distinct from human institutions.

ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST-BORN ONES

The part of our text which reads the "Church of the First-born," according to the Greek text, would be more properly translated, "The called-out assembly of the first-born ones." We have seen what is signified by the expression called-out assembly, that it ignores all sects and parties and includes all true Christians who have left the world behind and are traveling the pilgrim path toward the heavenly Kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him. We have seen, too, that the Apostle is calling attention to the general assembly of all such in the future, in the Kingdom, that any little group of the Lord's true people is an ecclesia or assembly of the called-out ones, but that the general assembly in the end of this age beyond the veil will include every member of the elect Church from Christ the Head down to the smallest member, the least in the Kingdom, the elect number being then complete. Now we wish to inquire what is signified by these words, "first-born ones." The answer is that from the Lord's standpoint the elect Church of this Gospel age is by no means all that are to be saved, but they do constitute an assembly of the first-born ones. The same thought is brought to our attention by the Apostle James (1:18), where he remarks that we are begotten by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first-fruits unto God of his creatures.

The Apostle Paul also speaks of "Christ the first-fruits," referring not to our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, only, but to all the members of his body, all of whom by the grace of God through Christ are members of this first-fruits class, this first-born class. This thought is in accord with all the other teachings of Scripture to the

effect that through this glorified Church through the Kingdom of God, all the families of the earth will be blessed with an opportunity to be born again to be regenerated. Adam attempted to generate a race, and to a certain extent succeeded, but he bestowed only transitory existence because he had incurred the divine sentence of death, “Dying thou shalt die.” Our Lord Jesus by the grace of God purchased Adam and all his race with the sacrifice of himself, paying the death penalty on our behalf. In the divine plan we who are now favored with a knowledge of God’s grace have an opportunity of coming to life through Jesus—yea, to a life more abundant—to glory, honor, immortality, association with him in the Kingdom. But the divine plan does not cease with this development of the first-born, but during the Millennial age will progress, extending to all the families of the earth. Christ, Head and body, is the great Life-giver, through whom all who will may be begotten again, may be regenerated may return to their former estate, to the full perfection of human nature, in the image and likeness of God, and to the full possession of the earth, which will then be constituted the Paradise of God—all of which privileges and blessings and opportunities were

2H391

bought with the blood of Christ.

“WHOSE NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN HEAVEN”

The Lord, the apostles, the faithful all the way down, have had their names cast out as evil by the nominally righteous people of their time. The Prophet referring to this matter says, “Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out, said, ‘The Lord be glorified;’ but he shall appear to your joy and they shall be ashamed.” (Isa. 66:5) It is fortunate for the Lord’s true people that the divine arrangement recognizes not the earthly rosters of honor amongst men, but that God keeps a special roll of his own, on which the names of his faithful are recorded. Oh that all who are truly the Lord’s might speedily discern that nothing in the Word of God either suggests or hints the writing of their names on earthly sectarian Church rolls, and that to have them there written counts nothing to their advantage but frequently much to their disadvantage, for to be highly esteemed amongst men makes it all the more difficult to be faithful to God—to have a high station in the lists of some denomination will make it all the more a difficult trial or test to those who now must hear the voice of the Lord, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen; Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues (punishments).” Rev. 18:2,4

Not all who say, Lord, Lord, have their names written in heaven as members of the Lord's first-born, but only those who after repentance, renunciation of sin and the acceptance of Christ as their Redeemer make a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, to know and to do his will—to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. True, it is not sufficient that we have our names thus written, it is necessary that we should abide in the Lord's love by obedience to our vows of consecration. If we draw back our names will be blotted out of that heavenly record. But we have the assurance that if we go on faithfully to the extent of our ability and trustingly hold on to the Lord Jesus we shall be granted an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom. Our Lord's assurance to such is that he will not blot out his name in the book of life.

Beloved in the Lord, seeing how clearly the divine Word outlines this matter of the Church of the firstborn and their relationship to the Lord and to each other, let us strive more and more to attain to this glorious condition, counting it all joy if it shall cause something of self-denial, if it cause us to be misunderstood by brethren of the wheat class or by neighbors and friends of the tare class. Faithful is he who has called us, he also will do exceedingly and abundantly more than we could ask or think. He requires that we shall be tested, that we may prove our loyalty to him under all conditions, and that thus we may be fitted and prepared for the great work of his Millennial Kingdom, that we may be prepared to be his agents and assistants and co-laborers in the great uplift of the world which will then be inaugurated, an uplift which will be eternal to all who will accept it, only the willful evil doers being condemned to the Second Death. Having such confidence let us go on our way rejoicing, meantime thinking of and by faith enjoying that general assembly of the first-born ones whose names are written in heaven.

August 12, 1906

*Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
August 15, 1918*

THREE SALVATIONS TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE

CHATHAM, Ont., August 12, 1906—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., spoke twice here today to large audiences. In the afternoon his topic was “The Bible Defended—Eternal Torture Unscriptural.” The evening discourse, which we report, was on the Three Salvations provided in Christ, from the text, “I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation.” Jude 3

Common sense views are much nearer to the Scriptural presentations than people generally realize. The smoke and fog and superstition of the “dark ages,” as a veil, cover the minds of the people when they approach the Bible, so that they may fail to grasp the breadth and beauty of its teachings. So long have civilized peoples been under the spell of false doctrines that the very sight of a Bible arouses the errors which they imbibed in childhood—to the effect that when the saints shall all have been glorified in the kingdom all the remainder of mankind will be relegated to eternal torment. No wonder so many of the intelligent people of the world repudiate such teachings; no wonder that the masses, bound by superstition, fear and dread the Book, and no wonder that even the saintly class handle God’s Word with reverence rather than appreciation and love. As a consequence, many of the more intelligent minds are infidel, and those who reverence the Scriptures do so of constraint and not in that spirit of love for the Father which would bring to them the largest

2H392

advantage from the time spent studying its lessons.

Let us note how common sense is in better agreement with the Bible than are the various creeds of Christendom. We do not admit that common sense is sufficient to give us a knowledge of the divine arrangements for the future of mankind. But neither can we admit that the creeds of the dark ages are sufficient authority. If we were obliged to choose as between a common sense view of our day and the creeds handed down to us, we would choose the former—every reasonable person would do so if freed from fear and superstition. But holding that neither the common sense views of our day nor the erroneous views of the “dark ages” are authorities on the subject of man’s future, we hold that the Bible as God’s revelation is the only authority on this subject. And this being true it behooves us to give special care, as the Apostle suggests, to the “faith once delivered to the saints.” Having convinced ourselves that the Bible is a divine revelation, the proper course is to trust it implicitly and not to be turned aside either by the highest critical views of our day nor by the monstrous views of the past. Let God be true, though it make every man a liar. Rom. 3:4

COMMON SENSE RE-SALVATION

With the understanding, then, that we are not referring to common sense as proof—with the understanding that we will refer to the Bible as proof, we now contrast common sense with the nonsense of the past. Common sense recognizes what the Scriptures plainly teach, that all men are imperfect physically, mentally and morally, and that while “to will is present with us,” to perform all that we will we sometimes find impossible. Common

sense agrees with the Scriptures again that it would not be reasonable to judge all men by their actual obedience to one general standard, some being weaker and some stronger, some more and some less able to recognize right from wrong and to obey the right. Common sense would agree with the Scriptures again in declaring that there might reasonably be a varying in the degrees of reward granted to those who at heart prove loyal to the divine arrangements and who would strive to be obedient thereto. Common sense would further agree with the Scriptures that the responsibility of each individual is in proportion to his knowledge of the truth, in proportion as the eyes of his understanding are opened, so that he discerns with clearness and distinctness the right and the wrong paths. Common sense would again agree with the Scriptures that ignorance would be no ground upon which to grant a reward of life eternal, neither would it be a ground on which to impose the sentence of eternal death.

Common sense would again agree with the Scriptures that in order that all mankind may have a trial, a testing as respects their loyalty of heart to the Lord, all must be brought to acknowledge the truth, that they may be saved from their sins and the penalty of those sins. Common sense agrees with the Scriptures that it would never do to usher into heaven those who at heart and in all their experiences are utterly opposed to the divine arrangement and in harmony with sin. Common sense again agrees that very few of mankind, even at heart, are in accord with the Almighty and his laws of justice and love. Common sense thus agrees with the Bible that at the time death comes upon the majority of the race they are not fitted for heaven. And common sense again agrees with the Bible that the great mass of mankind thus unfitted for heaven could not justly be tormented to all eternity for their alienation from God, which, in part at least, was due to their having been born in sin and shapen in iniquity when in sin their mothers conceived them. (Psa. 51:5) Common sense, then, in harmony with the Scriptures, would expect that the masses of mankind unfit for heaven would not be utterly destroyed in the Second Death, but that in God's providence the time would come somewhere when they would be brought to a knowledge of right and wrong and supplied with the necessary help to rise out of the present conditions of sin and death.

“WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?”

Let us now look into the Scriptures: we find them clearly teaching as in our text a “common salvation—a general salvation, and also a special salvation. The common salvation, which in God's providence is for the race as a whole, is frequently referred to in the Scriptures, as, for instance, when we read that God so loved the world that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly; and again when we read that Jesus in his sacrifice was a propitiation, a satisfaction, for our sins (the Church's

sins), and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world; and again, we read that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man; and again that as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive. (Rom. 5:6; 1 John 2:2; Heb. 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:22) This common salvation— this general salvation—is the work of God, and will ultimately be accomplished. Of it as a whole the Apostle says, “There is one God and one Mediator between God and man (not between God and the Church, but between God and man, the world), the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all (not merely for the Church), to be testified in due time (not merely during this Gospel age, when some hear the testimony, but ultimately to be testified to all, the due time for some to hear being the coming age, the Millennial age).” 1 Tim. 2:4-6.

2H393

Having determined upon this general, this common salvation of Adam and his race, God laid the foundation for it in the death of Christ, who redeemed the whole world, bought the whole world with his own precious blood, with the sacrifice of himself as the ransom, the substitute for Adam—thus redeeming Adam and all who were in his loins when he sinned—the entire race. But God has not been in haste to put the common salvation into effect. Over 4000 years elapsed from the time Adam sinned and was condemned to death before God sent his Son- to redeem the world, nearly 2000 years have elapsed since, and yet the world in general knows nothing of this common salvation, this general salvation, which God has purposed and is preparing for. “A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday” is the prophetic word, and the Apostle adds, “A day with the Lord is as a thousand years.” (Psa. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8) From man’s standpoint of brevity of life the six thousand years which have elapsed since sin entered the world seem a long time, but from God’s standpoint it is different. Nor have these six thousand years or six great days been wasted. They have served various purposes: for instance, (1) In this time a race has been begotten just about sufficient to populate the whole earth; (2) During this six thousand years man has been learning to exercise his will, and the competition of selfishness has served to develop his mind and additionally he is experiencing the evils of selfishness and that the wages of sin is death. As the Apostle explains it, all mankind is having a lesson on the “exceeding sinfulness of sin.” (3) A grand object lesson is being given to all the heavenly hosts of what sin is, of what its downward tendencies are, and of what its sure end is—destruction; and in addition to this lesson on divine reparation and justice they are learning of the love of God, which has provided in Christ a salvation for the entire race of Adam—so many of them as will avail

themselves of it when the opportunity shall have been granted them.

“CALLED FOR A PURPOSE”

While the common salvation of the race delays and thus furnishes good opportunities for the learning of great lessons, God has not been idle, but, as the Scriptures point out to us, he calls from amongst the redeemed race a special class—an elect class. The Lord Jesus himself, the Redeemer, is the Captain, the Forerunner, the Leader of this elect class of called-out ones, all of whom pledge themselves to walk in his steps to the best of their ability—in justice and in love doing good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith. (Gal. 6:10) The Apostle tells us that these were called according to a purpose. (2 Tim. 1:9) It does not surprise us to note that a God of wisdom has a great and wonderful plan, and that his purposes may permit him to use and to bless various classes of his creatures. But, we inquire, for what purpose were these called? and the Scriptures answer us that he called us according to his purpose that in the ages to come we might show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. (Eph. 2:7; 1 Pet. 2:9) This shows us that the purpose of our call does not end with our own salvation in this age, but that God’s purpose in connection with our calling and election reaches into the future. Other Scriptures show us that in the coming age this elect class of the present time will be associated with their Lord and Redeemer, and they are figuratively called the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife, because they are specially beloved and will be specially honored in their association with him and in their co-operation with him in his work of the coming age.

What will be the work of Christ and the Church in the coming age? The Scriptures assures us that it will be a work of judging the world. Hark to the Apostle, “God hath appointed a day (an epoch, a period—the Day of Christ, the Millennial day) in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.” (Acts 17:31) Harken to the Apostle again, speaking of the Church, and how she, glorified as the Bride of Christ, will be his associate in this work of judging the world: he says, “Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?” 1 Cor. 6:2

FALSE CONCEPTIONS OF THE WORLD’S JUDGMENT

This coming day of the world’s judgment is referred to frequently throughout the Scriptures and uniformly in terms of joy, as signifying a great blessing. Notice, for instance, the language of the Prophet David: “He shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge

the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with his truth." Psa. 96:10-13

The Church is on judgment now — on trial. Do not the Lord's people rejoice that through the knowledge of Christ they are now having a trial for life everlasting? All mankind were judged once in Adam, and all were condemned as unworthy of eternal life under the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die." The execution of this sentence of death has brought the mental, moral and physical troubles which today constitute mankind a "groaning creation," as the Apostle explains. (Rom. 8:22) In God's providence, as

2H394

we have seen, the entire race of Adam has been redeemed from the death sentence which is still on it — the price has been paid, but mankind has not yet been delivered either actually or reckonedly. The Church has been delivered reckonedly from the death sentence; as the Apostle explains, we who believe are reckoned as having passed from death unto life, from condemnation under sin to justification of life in Christ. We who have thus passed are on trial now, because, as the Apostle again declares, "Judgment begins at the house of God." 1 Pet. 4:17

As soon as this judgment or trial of the Church, the called-out ones, shall have been completed, then the world's trial will be due as the next thing in order. Then the judgment of the world will begin. As the judgment of the Church did not mean the condemnation of the Church, neither does the judgment of the world signify the condemnation of the world. The whole world has been under damnation or condemnation from God for 6000 years, and now shortly, in the opening of the seventh thousand or the great jubilee Sabbath, the sins of the whole world are to be remitted just as during this Gospel age the sins of believers have been remitted. Do the Scriptures teach that those who accept Christ in sincerity are forgiven all their past sins? Assuredly they do, as all Christians agree. On what score, on what condition? Because turning away their hearts from sin, they accept of Christ as their Redeemer. So it will be with the world when they turn away from sin and accept of Christ as their Redeemer; they also will be forgiven as freely as we who now believe have been forgiven. We who believe now have already enjoyed special favor in that the ears and eyes of our understanding were graciously opened by the Lord, whereas the world, as we are told, is blind and deaf at the present time. We should indeed rejoice that in God's due time all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears unstopped, so that the knowledge of the Lord shall then fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. Isa. 11:9

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SIN

Look again at God's treatment of believers specially called, separated from the world during this Gospel age. Note that while their condemnation is lifted, the blemishes mental, moral and physical are not miraculously and instantly removed. Through a lifetime we struggle with the weaknesses of the flesh, some of which we inherited and some of which perhaps we aggravated before coming to a knowledge of the Lord, before hearing his call. Our obliquities, physical, mental and moral—marks of our wrong doing and inheritance — continue with us to be battled against. As New Creatures we are polished and shaped while we are striving to war a good warfare against the downward tendencies which we inherited. We are glad that the Lord judges us not according to the flesh, but according to the mind, the spirit, the will, the intention. Similarly he will judge the world during the Millennial age, forgiving the obliquity of the past. They will be obliged to contend with their mental, moral and physical infirmities and blemishes. The Lord and the saints, the glorified Church with him, will during the world's day of judgment, during the Millennial age, judge the world in righteousness and with mercy, not punishing them for past sins, but allowing the degradations and weakness which those sins brought upon them to be their punishment.

Could all see this point, viz., that every transgression of conscience indelibly marks character and degrades it, and that in proportion as each person thus degrades himself his station in the future life will be that much lower and his difficulties and obstacles in his day of judgment in the future life will be that much harder to overcome—could all realize this it would lead the world in general to a much more careful use of time, opportunities and talents for their mental, moral and physical development and surely not for their impairment and degradation. The wrong thought, inconsistent, unreasonable, has had a bad effect upon mankind. The wrong thought, as taught by Protestants has been that all sinners share alike an eternity of torture. Fortunately the majority of Christendom do not take this seriously, otherwise, no doubt, there would be many more in the insane asylum than are there now, or there might be more who would take the course of one man who said to me, "I knew that I was a sinner; I believed that God had a great place called hell, where he intended to torture myself and multitudes of others; I believed that I was going there, and determined that I would merit all that I would get. The result was that I was a very bad man—I did everything that was evil. Now that I see God's Word and plan in the true light I am ashamed of myself, have turned over a new leaf, and have consecrated my heart and every talent I possess to his service.

THE WORLD'S SALVATION RESTITUTION

The salvation which the Scriptures declare God has provided for mankind in general is restitution — restoration to all that was lost —to the full perfection of human nature as Adam possessed it when God created him in his own image and likeness, which image and likeness were lost through the fall. As mankind has been in this condition, falling for 6000 years, the divine provision is that in the seventh thousand he may be uplifted and restored, brought

2H395

back —gradually, during the thousand years —to all that was lost. This salvation of the world through knowledge, through the judgments of the Lord's Kingdom, through the assistance that then will be given to every man —rewarding those who strive against their own weaknesses and punishing with stripes every transgression against the diving law—this progress of judgment will gradually bring the world during the thousand years, the Millennium, up out of this sinful and fallen condition to full perfection. This will be the world's resurrections and will require a thousand years for its accomplishment — to fully raise them out of the sin-and-death conditions into which they have fallen.

We might reason that if the delusions and misunderstandings of the present time were upon mankind, the results of the Millennial age would be doubtful. But the Lord distinctly tells us that during that Millennial Kingdom Satan shall be bound for a thousand years and shall deceive the nations no more. With Satan bound, and all the influences making for righteousness let loose, how great will be the mental, moral and physical uplift of that thousand-year reign of Christ and his Bride —judging the world in righteousness, helping them out of their difficulties and trials by a system of rewards and punishments, that they may learn the way of the Lord perfectly. Meantime, too, the earth itself is to be brought to perfection, so that at the end of the Millennial age it will indeed be Paradise restored, and the restored race will be granted the full dominion of the earthly paradise as Adam had it originally, with the advantage that their fall into sin and their recovery by the grace of God in Christ will have worked out in them lessons of experience that will be profitable to them. What about those who resist and love sin rather than righteousness? The Scriptures distinctly tell us respecting this class, without saying whether it will be a small or numerous one, that the punishment, the penalty of their course — will be the Second Death —utter destruction.

AT THE SECOND COMING

This common salvation, which will operate toward the world along the lines of restitution, the Apostle tells us will come to them at the second coming of Christ. Hearken to his words. "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he will send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:19-21

We see, then, that the time of the world's blessing, the world's salvation by restitution, comes after the salvation of the Church, because the special teaching of the Scripture is that our Lord at his second coming will gather his saints unto him as his jewels, and that then this jewel class, called also the espoused virgins of the Lord, will become eternally united to him in his power and great glory as the "Brides," the "Lamb's wife." Thus it may be distinctly seen that from the standpoint of Scripture the salvation of the Church, which belongs to this age, is wholly distinct and apart from the salvation of the Lord, which belongs to the next age, except that the one sacrifice given at Calvary is the basis not only for our salvation but also for the world's salvation — "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man." Heb. 2:9

"OUR HIGH CALLING IN CHRIST"

Those called out of the world during this Gospel age are promised a "heavenly calling." They are promised a change from earthly to spiritual nature — they shall be like Christ, see him as he is and share his glory — "far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named." (1 John 3:2; Eph. 1:21) These alone are to go to heaven — be changed to heavenly or spiritual nature. For the world in general we have seen that God's Kingdom or rule shall come down to earth, come down to their conditions, so that earth after the restitution work of the Millennial age will be a paradise of God though it will still be earthly, not in the sense of spiritual. It will, however, be spiritual in the sense that it will be in accord with the Father of spirits and with all the spiritual realm of the universe. The Church, those called out and approved during this Gospel age, are promised a share in the First Resurrection, in which none shall have part except the "blessed and holy," — "Blessed and holy are they who have part in the First Resurrection; on such the Second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6) It is to this high, heavenly calling that the Lord has invited the faithful ones, and we praise his name for the hearing ear and the discerning eye of faith whereby we may behold things which are invisible

as yet, the glory, honor and immortality which God has in reservation for them that love him —supremely.

Amongst these called-out ones the Scriptures show us two classes. One a “great company,” the other a “little flock.” Both classes will be spiritual, both will be overcomers of the world, both will enter into the Lord’s favor. And yet there will be a great difference in the glory and station of these two classes: the glory, the victory of the “great company” is represented by the palm branches; the glory, the victory of the “little flock” is represented by the crown. The honor and

2H396

dignity of the “great company” will be to serve God in his Temple and before the throne; the honor and dignity of the little flock” will be to sit with Christ in his throne, and to constitute the Temple of the living God, from which will flow the river of the water of life pictured in Revelation 22, to which water of life during the Millennial age the Spirit and the glorified Bride will say Come, to all the families of the earth, and whoever will desire to come will be permitted to take of the water of life freely and to attain life eternal.

As we look about us amongst the Lord’s consecrated ones we may to some extent discern the two classes, and yet it is not for us to determine either for ourselves or others whether we shall be amongst the overcomers, the “great company,” or amongst the “more than conquerors,” the ‘little flock.” It is for us, however, to realize two things: First, that the very humblest position in the service of our Lord in glory will be more than we have deserved and such as we may heartily rejoice in; and secondly, that since the Lord has specially invited us to be of the “little flock,” and since obedience to the reasonable requirements will give us a place therein, loving loyalty to him urges us to lay aside every weight and every besetting sin and to run with patience the race set before us; looking unto Jesus, the Author of our faith, until he shall become the finisher of it. (Heb. 12:2) Let us therefore, dearly beloved, strive to be overcomers in the highest sense, that we may have more of the Lord’s favor, not only in the present time but also in the age to come, that we may not only be closer to him then but now, for it is those who suffer with him who have the promise that they shall reign with him.

The National Labor Tribune, August 19, 1906

THE SECRET OF THE LORD

St. Paul, Minn., August 19, Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny is one of the speakers at the Bible Student’s Convention, held here this entire week and has a large attendance from all over the United States and Canada with four from Scotland. Pastor Russell discoursed this

morning from Psalm 25:14: “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear (reverence) him, and he will show them his Covenant.” He considered first the proper and improper kinds of fear, and then delved into the “secret.” He said:

The emphasis of our text is upon the word “him:” “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.” Many other Scriptures agree with this, and assure us that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Prov. 1:7) Other fears, however, are discountenanced amongst the Lord’s people, who are exhorted to be of good courage and to fear not the fear of others, but to let the fear of the Lord be their only one. (Isa. 8:12, 13) The Scriptures not only declare that all other fears are tormenting but assure us that the fear or reverence of the Lord is comforting and helpful and safe for us. And to these testimonies our experiences fully agree. We are repeatedly cautioned against the “fear of man, which bringeth a snare” (Prov. 29:25); and our Lord, emphasizing this matter, declared the reason for this to be that man could do no more at worst than take from us our present life, while on the other hand our hopes respecting eternal life are with God. (Matt. 10:26-28) The world, by reason of sin and its blinding effects, is more or less under the control of “the prince of this world,” Satan, and more or less committed to principles of unrighteousness, iniquity, in thought and word and deed. On the other hand is the divine covenant and law, and those who recognize these are to seek to think, speak and act so far as possible in accord with their spirit and intent. These, however, are the few addressed by our Savior, saying, “Fear not, little flock; it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the dominion.” Luke 12:32

It is this little company of the Lord’s consecrated ones that is addressed in our text as those who fear him. Under present circumstances it is a question of whether we will fear the world or fear “Him.” The Lord is, in a general way, believed in by all civilized people, but he is realized by but fewer—only a few recognize his real power and authority and their responsibility to him. Consequently these few are, as respects the world in general, “peculiar people,” zealous of good works—zealous both for righteousness and for all the ways of the Lord as they see them. The majority of mankind, on the contrary, recognize the Lord but vaguely, and pay little heed to the spirit of his instruction, being governed more by the god of this world, by self-interest, by the ideas of the majority, by Mammon.

THE FEAR OF MAMMON

Remarking on this condition of things, our Lord forewarned us: “Ye can not serve God and Mammon.” (Matt. 6:24) And since the majority are serving Mammon, fearing to displease Mammon, seeking to have the approval of Mammon and the emoluments paid

by Mammon to his servants, it follows that only a few are properly fearing and serving the Lord and looking to

2H397

him for the honors and emoluments which he has promised to his faithful ones—not in the present life, but in the life to come. Mammon controls in business, leads in every social function, and manages all the finest churches and religious functions. Mammon is Confucian where Confucianism is in the ascendancy; it is Mohammedan where the followers of Mohammed are most numerous; it is Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, etc., according to the locality and the influence. Mammon is too crafty, too wise, to be irreligious. It is well known that there is a religious element in human nature which must be satisfied with something, else the present order of things would collapse forthwith.

Thus seen, Mammon 's empire is the world—mankind in general, and from this standpoint we can readily see the force of the statement that the fear of man bringeth a snare, for the fear of man is the fear of Mammon. To go contrary to Mammon's laws in any part of the world is like rowing against a strong tide—it is very wearisome to the flesh, and the progress is so small that were it not for the encouragements that lie beyond the present life none could endure the strain.

Our text tells us of the “secret” of the Lord being with those faithful ones who hearken to his Word and have respect thereto, with reverence, fearing to such an extent to displease him that they dare brave the opposition of the world. This secret is to this class the power of God working in them to will and to do his good pleasure, regardless of the sneers and disapproval of Mammon and his more or less blinded devotees. They must resolve first to be true to the Lord, to reverence him rather than man and human institutions, and to trust to him for the strength, the courage, to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus, the great Leader whom he has appointed. After they have thus manifested their loyalty of will, of purpose, of intention, and after he has to some extent tried them—not suffering them to be tempted above that they are able, but with the temptation also providing ways of escape—he gradually makes known to them his “secret,” which so illumines and transforms and strengthens them, and develops in them his spirit of perfect love, that his word is fulfilled in respect to them, namely, that “perfect love casteth out fear.” Thus it is that those who have the fear of the Lord, and who are granted an understanding and appreciation of his secret, gradually lose all fear of man and become more and more courageous, strong in the Lord and in the power of

his might, so that they are able to say in the words of inspiration, "I will not fear what man may do unto me."

WHAT CONSTITUTES THE "SECRET OF THE LORD"

We can not hope to explain the "secret of the Lord" to any others than the class for whom it is intended; but since there is a measure of fear of the Lord in many hearts that have a still greater fear for Mammon and the opinion of the world, we may hope to be able to make clear the Lord's "secret" just in the same proportion that each of our hearers possesses the "fear of the Lord." Those who have a little fear of the Lord, a little of the proper reverence for him, may understand a little about this secret; but they will be hindered from understanding much respecting it by their fear of Mammon—of sectarianism—the fear of man that bringeth a snare. These ensnaring fears will be continually suggesting to them that the way of the Lord is not agreeable to the flesh, that it is not popular with the world, that it would constitute them a peculiar people, that it would hinder them from sins and follies in which they are fond of indulging, that it would break their influence with many of their friends in Churchianity, that it would make them practical nonentities in the world, because according to the worldly proverb they "might as well be out of the world as out of fashion." Hearts thus ensnared can not hope to see, understand and appreciate the secret of the Lord in any considerable measure; but in proportion as the fear or reverence of the Lord stands out boldly beyond all fear or reverence for man or human institutions, in that same proportion it is the privilege of each of us to appreciate and enjoy the "Secret of the Lord."

"HE HAS COVENANTED TO SHOW IT UNTO THEM."

The latter part of our text is not the best translation of the original. The whole text should read, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he has covenanted to show it unto them." However, the translation makes no real difference in the matter, because the Lord's "Oathbound Covenant," which we discussed this afternoon, is really the kernel or pith of this "Secret of the Lord."

To some it may seem peculiar that the Scriptures should intimate that God has secrets, that some are privileged to understand the divine plan while others are not so privileged. Such will perhaps say, Where is the revelation of God's secrets? Surely it is not in the Bible, for if it were in the Bible it would not be a secret, since the Bible is open, accessible to all the civilized world today. We

answer that the Bible is accessible to all civilized men, but it is not open to all. To the majority even of professed Christians it is a sealed book, and to none more so than to the ministry. The Scriptures themselves so portray the matter, saying, "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book

that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I can not for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to one that is not learned, saying, Read this I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore, saith the Lord, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.” Isa. 29:11-14

Our Lord spoke in the same strain at his first advent, saying respecting the humble ones whom he chose for his apostles, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent (scribes, Pharisees, Doctors of the Law) and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for thus it seemed good in thy sight.” (Matt. 11:25, 26) At the first advent the Pharisees were too self-satisfied, pleased with their own theories, proud of their attainments, and boastful of their progress and of the divine favors enjoyed; the scribes were too learned to be associated with such as constituted the Lord’s companions, and, besides, they were becoming more and more filled with the “higher criticism” views of the Greek philosophers; the Doctors of the Law were too proud and too pretentious. All of these were hindered from becoming the Lord’s disciples and learning from him the “Secret of the Lord,” because they were all under the influence of Mammon—the great institution of their time which would condemn and ostracize all who would not support it. In an earthly way they had everything to lose and nothing to gain by becoming followers of the lowly one. On the contrary, those who did come to Jesus and become his disciples had very generally less to lose of an earthly kind, and hence were the more attracted by the future prospects which our Lord held out to them. From the worldly standpoint they were foolish babes to place so much reliance upon things unseen as yet and to measurably ignore the prospects and opportunities held out to them by Mammon in the present life.

“THE MYSTERY HID FROM AGES”

That which is spoken of in our text as “the Secret of the Lord” is in the New Testament called the “mystery of God.” The thought is the same, namely, that God— while revealing his plan through the Law and the prophets in the Old Testament, and through the words of our Lord and the apostles in the New Testament—has so expressed the matter that it can be understood only by those who come properly into accord with

the Lord—that fear him. The worldly man in reading the Scriptures fails to understand his secret, and only those that fear and reverence him to the extent of making a full consecration of their all to him can comprehend it. The Apostle clearly sets this forth in his letter to the Corinthians, saying, “Your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God., but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our honor, which none of the rulers of this world knoweth

As it is written, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.” 1 Cor. 2:5-15

St. Paul, speaking of this mystery or secret of the Lord, intended for his people, but not for the world nor for the merely nominal Christian, declares, “I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God; even the mystery which hath been hidden from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.” (Col. 1:25-29) Speaking of the Church in the same strain, he continues, “That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love and in all riches and full assurance of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.” (Col. 2:2, 3) Continuing along the same lines, he exhorts, “Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ.” (Col. 4:3) In his epistle to the Ephesians the Apostle also speaks of this mystery, saying, that God’s grace in Christ “that abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he had purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ.” Again in the same epistle he writes of God’s favor to himself, “That by revelation he made known unto me the mystery in which other ages was not made known to the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit., to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.” Eph. 1:9, 10; 3:5, 9

THE MYSTERY TO CEASE UNDER THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

St. John the Revelator, speaking as the mouthpiece of the glorified Lord, tells us of this mystery also (Rev. 10:7), saying, “In the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants

the prophets.” Thus we see that the mystery has been in operation from the beginning of the world and is still a mystery so far as the world is concerned, and will continue to be a mystery until the end of the present dispensation and the opening of the Millennial age, the only exception being the revelation of the mystery granted to the saints—to those who are fully consecrated to the Lord, the class mentioned in our text, “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; he has covenanted to show it unto them.”

“HE THAT HATH AN EAR LET HIM HEAR”

It was for this reason that our Lord spake in parables and in dark sayings that are not yet understood by the world, neither appreciated by any except the few, his “little flock,” the consecrated. Thus it is written, “All these things spake Jesus unto the multitudes in parables, and without a parable spake he not unto them; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.” (Matt. 13:34, 35) The apostles came unto Jesus privately saying, Lord, declare unto us this parable; and Jesus said unto them, “To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God: but unto them that are without (outsiders ensnared by the fear of men) all these things are done in parables: that seeing they might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand.” Mark 4:11, 12

Now, dear friends, we will do our best to make plain this secret, this Mystery, hidden from ages and dispensations; remembering, however, that only in proportion as the fear of God predominates over the fear of man: only in proportion as perfect love casts out the fear of man and makes us truly freemen in Christ Jesus—only in that proportion can we hope that our message on this subject will be understood and appreciated. From our Lord’s words, and from the Apostle Paul’s words already quoted, the mystery is uncovered to those who have the eyes of their understanding opened and the ears of their hearts unstopped. It is the message of the coming Kingdom,—the message of the “Oath-bound Covenant” discussed this afternoon.

This message explains all the difficulties and perplexities which have hitherto confused us. It shows how sin entered into the world through Adam’s disobedience, how death has been the penalty of that sin, resting upon the whole race of Adam, degrading us mentally, morally and physically to the tomb. It tells us of God’s love for us while we were yet sinners, which led to his sending of his Son to be our redemption price, “that we might live through him”—that we might be recovered from

death through him. It shows us that Christ Jesus by the grace of God tasted death not merely for a few, but for every man; and that not merely a few but every man shall have a resultant blessing from that great sacrifice for sins, and a full and fair opportunity for returning in heart to the Lord and for receiving back again all that was lost through Adam's disobedience, with superadded blessings and everlasting life if obedient. It shows us that this one purpose of God to eradicate sin from the world, and to utterly destroy all who will not come into accord with his righteous arrangements has never been changed; and although the time for the accomplishment of these promises seems long to us, it is not really long from the standpoint of him with whom a "thousand years are as one day." It shows us that in the dawning of the seventh day of the Lord, the Millennial day—at the close of man's six thousand years—these blessings are to be realized by the world through the establishing of a glorious Kingdom of God under the whole heavens, which will enforce righteousness and shower blessings upon every creature.

“THE CHURCH’S IDENTITY WITH THE MYSTERY”

The unfolding of the mystery shows further that during the Jewish age God dealt with the house of Israel as a typical people, giving them a typical Law, a typical "Day of Atonement," typical sacrifices, shadowy promises; and during that period selected a few faithful souls from that nation to be his special servants in the earth during the Millennial age. These are particularly described by the Apostle in Hebrews xi, all of whom "having obtained a good report through faith, received not the (blessings) promise. "(Verse 39) It reveals to us further the Lord's object in respect to the promulgation of the Gospel during the period since our Lord's death, namely, that the preaching of this mystery to the Lord's consecrated people who fear him has been with a view to selecting a little flock from amongst all kindreds, people and tongues, to be Christ's Bride and joint-heir in the Kingdom, to be associated with him as members of the seed of Abraham for the blessing of all the families of the earth. The Apostle's words, we recall, are very explicit on this subject; he declares, "If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29

Not only is the message itself called a mystery, but the Church class, the "little flock," now being selected from the world, is Scripturally designated "the Mystery of God," and the false systems "the Mystery of Iniquity." "The Mystery of God" is the class associated in the divine plan, and therefore a part of that which is mysterious to the world. As the Apostle declares, "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." The secret of the Lord is with this class. It is their

2H400

joy, their strength; it is the power of God working in them to will and do his good pleasure. The more they comprehend this mystery the more of this power of God do they possess, and progress in the mystery implies progress in obedience and reverence and service. These in turn mean progress in the graces of God, as the Apostle, explaining and speaking of our advancement as Christians, says, "I pray God for you that the eyes of your understanding being opened (gradually as we lose the fear of man and increase in our reverence for God) you may be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths (of the mystery), and to know the love of God which passeth all understanding." Eph. 3:18, 19

THE CHURCH AS A SECRET SOCIETY

From the foregoing it will be discerned that the Lord's saints constitute the most secret society on earth. No one can be fully inducted into this society and its mysteries except as the reverence of the Lord abounds in his heart, and as he becomes free from human bondage, sectarian bondage—free in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed those who are truly his. This secret society needs not to hide its books, neither to withhold its secrets, neither to speak quietly, for while telling the good tidings of great joy to all people, the limitations are upon those who hear—for none can hear the secret of the Lord, none can understand this mystery, except in proportion as he has revered the Lord and his word and made a consecration of himself thereto.

I wonder how many of my audience this evening are members of this society? How many are able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, I am sure that all such have love for the brethren in their participation in the fellowship of this mystery. I am sure that all such realize that the blessings and favors thus conferred upon us no man can take from us, and that they shall continue to be ours so long as we shall continue to have fellowship in this mystery, which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. 1:27

I wonder further how many of you are still blinded in greater or lesser degree by the god of this world and the creeds of the dark ages which he assisted in formulating, and has since fostered, so that you are unable to appreciate what we have just been saying respecting the mystery of God. I wonder how many such are desiring to have the eye salve of truth, which our Lord specially commended to this Laodicean stage of the Church, saying, "I counsel thee to buy of me an eye-salve to anoint thine eyes that thou mayest see." (Rev. 3:17, 18) The eye salve must be bought by the individual who desires to use

it: it can not be bought by one for another, even as we can not have experiences one for another. The cost of this eyesalve is the spirit of self-sacrifice—the willingness to make a full consecration of ourselves to the Lord. Our Lord expresses the matter thus, saying, “He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, he shall know of my doctrine.” Whosoever will resolve that he will no longer fear man neither be in subjection to the creeds of the dark ages, but that he will accept the Lord as his Shepherd and be a true sheep, and listen only for the voice of his Word, and walk only in accordance to the directions of that Word, fearing God and not fearing man, he shall be blessed. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; he hath covenanted to show it unto them.”

I trust, dear friends, that some who have heretofore felt indifferent respecting the divine plan—the mystery of God kept secret from the world intended only for them that fear him—may become so deeply interested, so desirous of cooperating with the Lord in their hearts, in their thoughts, in their words, in their actions, that they will make a full consecration of themselves to him. Just now is the moment to make this resolve, accepting the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins through faith in the blood of Jesus, and at once starting on the way to a clearer comprehension of the mystery, and ultimately to our participation in some part of the glorious work which the Lord is preparing us for.

From this standpoint we realize that the great work of God is future; and our special work in the present time is to be the Lord’s witnesses before men; to endure hardness as good soldiers, to crystallize character, to learn obedience by the things which we experience, and to be squared and fitted and polished, and thus made meet for participation in the glories of the Kingdom, and for usefulness as members of it in the blessing of all the earth in the Millennial age, and for the enjoyment of our heavenly Father’s favor to all eternity.

“The Lord knoweth them that are His.”

2 Tim. 2:19.

“He is looking for those who humble themselves, and who are glad to have His truth at any cost, and whose hearts, long famished, hunger and thirst for the truth, and who know the Shepherd’s voice, and who find in His message that which ‘satisfies their longings as nothing else could do.’ These will gladly accept the armament and by becoming faithful students will make it their own—will put it on. These will be kept while others will fall at their side.” R. 4439, c.1, p.1.

2H401

August 26, 1906
Republished from The National Labor

“WHOSE DAMNATION IS JUST”

Cumberland, Md., Aug. 26, 1906. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today in the Opera House. The afternoon discourse was a vindication of the Bible. The evening discourse was based upon the Apostle's words, “Whose damnation is just.” (Rom. 3:8) We report the latter discourse:

In the divine order justice has a place in every human mind—an appreciation of right and wrong. This quality, originally perfect in father Adam is more or less confused amongst his children today because of the fall. Even where this quality of mind itself is in good evidence other organs may be deficient, so that conscience may not always approve the best things. For instance, the Apostle Paul tells us that it was with all good conscience that he persecuted the Church of Christ for a time. The conscience was there, but was misdirected through ignorance. So with all mankind:

we not only need to have a conscience and to keep it tender, sensitive, as the regulator of our lives, but we need to guide it aright, and the only safe course is to guide it with the wisdom from above, first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits. Blessed is the man or woman who follows his or her conscience carefully, for the Lord will ultimately direct such into the right channel even as he did Saul of Tarsus.

From time to time we hear of the lynching of evil doers, or see other evidences of the indignation of the general public against wrong doers. We have often been surprised at the zeal which seems to energize some in connection with the punishment of evil deeds, the more so as we learn to appreciate the fact that “There is none righteous, no not one”—none perfect; that all of these who so hotly pursue the evil doers must realize that they themselves have weaknesses, frailties, imperfections, if not of the same kind, of some other kind—if not so had, nevertheless reprehensible. We conclude that the majority of people live more or less in violation of their own consciences and continually endeavor to stifle them; but that when occasion offers in connection with the crime of another, they ease their consciences by co-operating in the work of punishment. At the same time—in the case of lynchings, for instance—many seem to gratify the low, base, murderous spirit of the fallen nature, their consciences helping to excuse them for the time by thought that to some extent they are gratifying their murderous instinct in the service of justice—not, however, that they would approve of having justice done to themselves in connection with their shortcomings, not that they would judge themselves and chasten themselves, as the

Apostle suggests to the Church, hut that their fallen natures enjoy the opportunity of taking vengeance on others.

It is related of our Lord that when a woman convicted of sin was brought before him with the words, "Moses in the Law saith such should he stoned, hut what sayest thou?" Jesus turned the attention of the self-righteous judges and accusers of the Law upon their own hearts by saying to them, "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone at the woman." The country would surely be safe from lynchings if those who applied the instruments of torture would first see to it that they themselves were wholly without sin. Likewise many who feel it to be their duty to speak slanderous words of others, if they would hut hear the Master saying, "He that is without fault may speak against his neighbor," would be silenced. Let us more and more learn to turn loose upon ourselves our innate love of justice. Let justice have her perfect work in arraigning every evil thought, word and deed, and soon our hearts will be crying to the Lord for help and mercy, which to such he is ever ready and willing to give.

"VENGEANCE IS MINE"

God's message in his Bible to his people is that they should utterly root out those murderous and vengeful feelings which are so common amongst men, and that instead of these the followers of Jesus should cultivate his spirit of love, gentleness, meekness, patience, long-suffering. To these the Lord says, "Avenge not yourselves: . . . Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Hence the Apostle argues, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." (Rom. 12:19. 20) The spirit of the world, the spirit of the uncircumcised heart, is contrary to all this, and even after the voice of the Lord is heard and the hand is restrained from taking vengeance, and instead extends to the enemy the food and drink, nevertheless often the heart has the bitter feeling, the enmity, the murderous spirit, and manifests it in bitter words, evil speaking, insinuations, etc. Hence the highest evidence of progress in the Christian way, in the development of the Spirit of Christ, is not manifested in merely restraining from outward vengeance, hut is specially manifested in the restraint of that little hut powerful member of our bodies,

2H402

the tongue. When it is brought in subjection, so that it speaks evil of no man, injures no man, but contrariwise is continually used in blessing, comforting and uplifting others, this is the best evidence of a high attainment of the spiritual likeness of God's dear Son.

We see continually that in our fallen condition we are unable to think charitably enough of each other's blemishes, and hence are unfit to be each other's judges in the sense of condemning and punishing one another. We are in this saying nothing against the proprieties of the world's judging and punishing criminals, but rather refer to the higher judgment of motives, sentiments, conduct, which does not come properly within the scope of human law and regulations. Christians, indeed, are expected to live up to the highest standards of human law, but more than this is expected of those who are followers of Christ. The law is for the unregenerated, whereas all the regenerated ones, begotten of the Spirit, may be properly expected to live on a higher plane, and to speak and act toward their neighbors along the lines of love, whereas earthly law merely attempts to follow the lines of justice.

The Christian, therefore, is admonished that God keeps the matter of justice in his own hands, and the more acquainted with the Father and with the Son we become, the better will we appreciate the fact that the divine vengeance will be along the lines of absolute justice tempered with mercy. The divine character guarantees this: if he who formed the eye can see, he who gave us conscience and the sense of justice, and who outlined for us the character of love—surely he will be just and will fully substantiate his right to be considered the God of love.

“WHOSE DAMNATION IS JUST”

With these thoughts we come to our text, inquiring what kind of a damnation would God consider to be just. At the threshold of our inquiry we meet with two difficulties: (1) From early training the word damnation pictures before our minds devils, flames, anguish, tears, shrieks and groans. Is this the just damnation which a just and loving God would provide for any of his creatures? Our common sense answers, No! surely not. It would need to be proven to us beyond all peradventure before we could believe that he who instructed us to love our enemies and to do good to them that hate us would himself undertake to give an eternity of anguish and torment to the enemies of his government. Nevertheless this misconception, handed down to us from the “dark ages,” blinds the majority of Bible students, and hinders them from seeing the just damnation which God has provided as a penalty for sin. (2) Another difficulty we contend against in examining the subject is that the word damnation has come gradually to have a different meaning from that which it originally had in the English language. The word in its original signification had the same meaning as our word condemned. Hence our text properly translated would read, “Whose condemnation is just,” and this is the translation given by the revisers. However, with the mind poisoned with the wrong thought of devils, flames, tortures, etc., it requires time for the

majority to get rid of the smoke, confusion and delusion which came to them in childhood days—which have come down to us all from the “dark ages.”

HOW UNBELIEVERS ARE DAMNED

The Apostle says, “He that believeth not is condemned (damned) already.” (John 3:18) In the same verse he tells us that he that believeth is not condemned. The thought is that the whole human family originally came under divine sentence or condemnation through father Adam’s disobedience. When Adam sinned a sentence of death came upon him, and we his children were born sharers in his blemishes by heredity, and sharers likewise in his condemnation, curse or damnation, as any may choose to translate the thought. Believers in Christ are reckoned as justified by their faith—as passing out from the remainder of the world, freeing themselves of the original Adamic condemnation. Believers are no longer condemned, even though, as the Apostle declares, we were once children of wrath even as others. (Eph. 2:3) The remainder of the race remains under the wrath, under the curse, under the damnation, under the condemnation; hence the whole world except believers is in this condition, in the old form of expression, damned—condemned.

When we come to the Scriptures to see what they say about this damned or condemned condition, we find nothing whatever respecting an eternity of torture; but, on the contrary, the plain statements of Genesis show that the original condemnation or sentence or wrath or curse was a sentence to death, with all that this implies of dying processes, aches, pains, imperfections and blemishes incidental to the dying. Here we have the curse, and although it is a terrible one it is not the unreasonable, unjust one misconceived in the “dark ages.” It was just that God should refuse eternal life to his creatures when they proved themselves imperfect, disloyal, unworthy of the Lord’s gift of life eternal.

Those who are now reckoned as having escaped this condemnation, as having been justified by faith, are represented as being on trial and in danger of a second condemnation if they should now prove themselves disloyal to God and the principles of his government. In other words, God’s intention is to save us from our

2H403

sins and not to save us in our sins. Whoever, then, being justified by faith, regenerated, begotten by the Spirit, loses this and turns again to sin, desires sin, clings to it, must thereby lose his standing of justification and come into condemnation — come again under the sentence of death. As the original condemnation was death, the Lord

distinguishes this second condemnation as the Second Death, from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery. It is everlasting punishment, everlasting destruction—not everlasting torment.

Can we not agree that the damnation—condemnation—of all such is just? Surely we can see that since life everlasting is a gift of God he is in no way obligated to give it to anybody, and he declares that he is pleased to give it only to those who desire it on his terms. We thus see that the divine arrangements are all just, loving and wise — precisely what we should have expected had not our minds been perverted by human traditions, which misrepresented God, but thoroughly represented the depraved sentiments of their authors, who further manifested the same spirit in their conduct, tearing one another limb from limb on the rack or burning one another at the stake, for differences of opinion, contrary to both the letter and the spirit of the divine regulation.

KNOWN BY THEIR FRUITS

The Scripture's teachings appear to some to be in conflict in respect to human judgments of one another. Our Lord's instruction is, "Judge nothing before the time." (1 Cor. 4:5) He promises that in due time, when our change shall come in the First Resurrection, we will be perfected, thoroughly competent for judgment in every matter, and indeed promises that the saints shall judge the world. But it is in the meantime that the followers of Jesus are commanded to 'judge nothing.' On the other hand, the Master's injunction was that we should do a certain kind of judging. He said, "By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" Surely not, and the intimation is that they would know better than to go to a thistle expecting figs. So we should have a sufficiency of general discernment to know where to look for the fruits of the Lord's Spirit — "By their fruits ye shall know them." Matt. 7:16

If we find any one bearing the fruits of the Spirit— gentleness, patience, meekness, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love for God and for man, loyalty for God and his Word—by these fruits we may know that such an one is no longer a child of wrath, but has passed from death unto life. We do not need that he shall tell us that he has joined some earthly Church, we do not need that he shall make first a long and elaborate confession of what he does and does not believe. He may be in more or less of ignorance or more or less of enlightenment, but so surely as he bears this fruitage he belongs to the true Church of Christ. Each one of the Lord's people should be able to form such a judgment. On the contrary, each should be able to know these things, these fruits of the Spirit of Christ, and should remember that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. If, therefore, they see in others the spirit of anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, selfishness, having full sway, full control of the heart and life, hands and tongues,

they should judge that these evil fruits never grew on any branch of the vine; they should remember that the Apostle has designated these fruits to be “works of the flesh and the devil .” The evidences are that such as have these fruits are yet in the “gall of bitterness,” however outwardly respectable they may be.

But here again we must distinguish as between the flesh and the spirit. If a brother or sister manifest these evil fruits, yet with contrition and tears tells us that these are weaknesses of their flesh, to which their hearts do not give assent, we are not to judge the heart, we are not to condemn the New Creature, but rather to accept his statement of the matter, and to judge him not according to the flesh but according to his real heart-intention. The New Creature, the heart, we are unable to judge, we are unable to read, unable to fathom fully. We must leave that for God.

The Apostle in our text is discussing the matter along this line. He is speaking not of God’s judgment, but of the general judgment of himself and the Church against the persons whom he arraigns. Some in their opposition to the Gospel message misrepresent it, and defame the messengers and the One whom these messengers represented, the Lord, saying that his message through the apostles inculcated evil doing and sin in order to bring about good results. The Apostle resents this, and declares that the condemnation, i.e., the damnation of those who said such things, was just—that he had a right to condemn them, and to say that this misrepresentation of the message of the Lord was evil, and betokened that those who spoke in this way were the servants of evil. Such fruit of animosity, of opposition to righteousness, could not, the Apostle reasons, grow upon branches of the Vine, but being the fruit of thorns and of thistles indicated clearly that those who said these things, and thus opposed the good tidings of great joy, must at heart be aliens and strangers and foreigners from the Lord of glory, whose Spirit they did not possess and did not manifest.

As it was just that the Apostle should condemn those in his day, and should even specify Alexander the coppersmith, Hymenius and Philetus, so it may be proper

2H404

for the Lord’s people today, in the interest of the Truth, to openly rebuke and reprove those who oppose themselves to the divine message now promulgated; but in any event the reproof should be in moderation, merely a sufficiency to show to others the true character of the wrong doers, that others may not be led away by the transgressions of the wicked. Nothing in the Apostle’s language, in reproving any of his opponents, savors in any degree of malice or anger, or hatred or strife, but

rather pity for the evil doers, and a desire in exposing them not to injure them, but to help others to avoid their snare and their fall.

DAMNATION ENOUGH ALREADY

While on this subject let me assure you that the words “damned” and “damnation,” as used throughout the New Testament, in every instance have such a meaning as we have here pointed out, namely, condemnation. The world is now suffering divine condemnation or damnation on account of original sin, and struggles under a heavy curse, a heavy penalty. For six thousand years the condemnation (damnation) of death has rested upon our race, and under it thousands of millions have gone down into the great prison-house, the tomb. As we look about us and see the mental, moral and physical decrepitude of our race—as we perceive that the whole creation is “groaning and travailing in pain together,” let us rejoice that God’s plan is to turn away the wrath, to turn away the condemnation, to turn away the curse of death, with all of its concomitants of sorrow, pain and trouble, and lift our race up, up, up out of this sin-and-death condition back to harmony with himself—so many of the race as will, when they have the full opportunity, accept the Lord’s arrangement.

This is the salvation which the Scriptures everywhere declare—a salvation from sin and from its death penalty. This salvation the Scriptures declare, “began to be preached by our Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” (Heb. 2:3) Although the Lord gave to the prophets and to Israel special experiences and manifestations of his favor, yet this message of salvation was never proclaimed until Jesus came. His death as our sin atonement is the basis of our reconciliation with the Father—the basis of all salvation which God has provided. The minds and hearts of people have been turned away from the Scriptural presentation to a false one; taught, contrary to the Scriptures and contrary to reason, that the wages of sin is eternal torment. We have misunderstood the character as well as the Word of our heavenly Father when we supposed that salvation would mean salvation from eternal torment. But now, as we hearken to our Father’s word more attentively, as we get rid of the smoke of the “dark ages,” we hear the testimony of the Scriptures that “the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life.” (Rom. 6:2 3) Now we see that we are redeemed from death in order that we might through faith in Christ be made recipients of God’s gift of life everlasting. How much this true view comforts our hearts, clarifies our minds and enables us to worship our Creator in spirit and in truth, and to see that the salvation which he has provided in Jesus is a salvation from death, from destruction, and that the Saviour who is appointed is the Life-giver who redeemed our race, and proposes under the divine plan to restore to absolute perfection and to a worldwide Eden

all the family of Adam who will learn the proper lesson—learn to love righteousness and hate iniquity.

The salvation which our Lord will offer to the world during the Millennial age will be actual, tangible evidence by uplift out of imperfection day by day and year by year. But a still greater salvation is now proffered to a special class—an elect class. A salvation out of death, but to a life that is higher than was redeemed for Adam and his race. This elect class is called to a perfection of life on the spirit plane. Their salvation, however, is not a tangible matter at the present time, but merely by faith; they recognize themselves as justified freely, covered with the precious robe by faith; they present their bodies living sacrifices by faith; they follow in the footsteps of Jesus by faith; they lay down their lives in the service of the truth and on behalf of the brethren, even unto death. Their salvation by faith and their actual salvation is accomplished in the First Resurrection, in which they will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—changed from corruption to incorruption, from dishonor to glory, from human nature to spiritual nature.

This, dearly beloved, is our salvation, the one that is now proffered, one in which we hope to make our calling and election sure, one respecting which the Apostle urges that we lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, that we may attain to it through the First Resurrection. We shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness, but meantime we are by faith satisfied to contemplate that glorious change for ourselves, and also blessed and comforted with the testimony of the Lord's Word respecting the blessing which shall flow through us to all the families of the earth—so great salvation.

* * * *

“Feed” upon the promises.

2H405

*Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
September 12, 1918*

“THE GRACE OF GOD BRINGETH SALVATION”

TERRE HAUTE, IND., Sept. 9, 1906—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., spoke twice here today to large and intelligent audiences. His afternoon discourse was on the “Bible Defended.” We report his morning topic from the text, “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all (for all) men.” (Titus 2:11) He said:

Our text, in unison with many other Scriptures, emphasizes the difference between God's grace and the salvation which it effects on those who rightly receive it. In unison with other Scriptures our text also teaches that there was a long period of time—over 4000 years from Adam till Christ—in which God's grace did not appear; but in which, on the contrary, law reigned without grace and without salvation. The divine arrangement for human salvation is as systematic in its every detail as the work of an earthly architect; yet many Christian people, ignoring this, are in confusion and require to be reminded afresh of the Apostle's words to Timothy—”Study to show thyself approved unto God; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” (2 Tim. 2:15) It is this matter of rightly dividing the Word that brings a special blessing and enlightenment to those who heed the divine injunction.

Our text illustrates this matter of a proper division of the Scriptures. It indicates that something had occurred in apostolic times which was distinctly separate and apart from anything which had previously occurred, namely, the grace of God had appeared. The Apostle's language intimates that human salvation would be a matter of the future—the result of God's grace. Here, then we have three great divisions in the divine plan: (1) A time when God's grace was not revealed, was not manifest to man—when only the justice and wrath of God were displayed; (2) a time when the grace of God is revealed to such as are able to see it, “teaching us” as the Apostle declares in the succeeding verse, but not teaching others who now are blinded by the god of this world and unable to discern the grace of God, as the Apostle elsewhere intimates (2 Cor. 4:4); (3) a coming time in which the salvation will be actual and manifest.

MAN'S FIRST LESSON, DIVINE JUSTICE

It was eminently proper that God should give our race a lesson along the lines of divine justice before proceeding to give any lessons respecting divine mercy and love. When the first perfect man wilfully disobeyed the Creator and knowingly brought upon himself the penalty of sin, “Dying thou shalt die” (Gen. 2:17), the sword of divine justice was unsheathed and fell heavily upon him, and incidentally, through heredity, upon all of his posterity. The flaming sword of justice drove our first parent from Eden, heeding not their crying, their tears, their sorrows, their promises of repentance. Its smiting is Scripturally called the “curse,” the divine sentence—the “wrath of God.” For six thousand years and more this sword has not been sheathed; it has continued to smite throughout the whole world until, according to reasonable estimates, about 20,000,000,000 of Adam's race have fallen under it into the tomb, into sheol, into hades, the state of death.

Its smiting affected not only the physical but the mental and moral elements of human nature. Mental weakness as a result is to be seen everywhere, and is felt by every member of the race to the amazing extent that in civilized lands about one in every two hundred of the adult population is deemed unfit to be at large—is consigned to an asylum. The smiting of the sword of justice with the death penalty has affected man's moral degradations too as witness the prisons and penitentiaries, etc. of Christendom, the records of police courts, and the proverb that "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn." The effect of the stroke of justice upon man's physical powers is not only shown by the number that have gone to the tomb by the abbreviation of human life; for while father Adam lived 930 years—or rather was dying for 930 years under the stroke of justice—his children of today, born in sin, shapen in iniquity through heredity, live on an average of about thirty-five years.

In all this the divine justice is speaking to the world in thunder tones, which it might be expected to be able to hear—which all would hear were it not that the god of this world, Satan, deludes and deceives the masses by attracting their attention away from this real wage of sin and these real results of the death penalty, causing them to hate the Almighty Creator by telling them that the penalty for sin is beyond the present life—an unending torture. Nevertheless divine justice stands revealed, and they who discern it not in the present time will look back from the future and more favorable standpoints and discern it clearly.

MAN'S SECOND LESSON—DIVINE LOVE

Two thousand years and more passed before any intimation was ever given to our race of divine mercy. The first intimation, vague at the time, (still vague except to those guided by the Holy Spirit), was made to

2H406

Abraham in the brief statement that at an unnamed date in the future God would have mercy upon mankind and would use Abraham's seed in blessing all the families of the earth. The Apostle Paul (Gal. 3:8) calls this the first statement of the Gospel—the first announcement of the good tidings—saying, God preached the Gospel in advance to Abraham, saying, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 22:18) Nevertheless the blessing did not begin there. On the contrary, justice still wielded its sword, smiting all the race of Adam, of Abraham's seed as well as of the heathen nations. As the Apostle again declares, "Sin and death reign:" the time has not yet come for righteousness to reign.

It was over 4000 years from father Adam's transgression until our Lord Jesus appeared amongst men to be the Redeemer of Adam and his race and ultimately to be

their Saviour from sin, degradation and death— to afford one opportunity to all. This great event was referred to in our text by the Apostle as the grace of God which appeared at that time, but which had not appeared previously. An intimation of grace had been indeed made, as we have seen, to Abraham, but only an intimation, for how God would cause the seed of Abraham to bless all the families of the earth was not stated—merely the effect. However, when in due time God sent forth his Son to redeem the world—to pay to justice the ransom price for Adam’s forfeited life and thus to purchase Adam and all of his race from the sentence of death and from the power and dominion of sin, and when it was made known that all this was designed to be a free gift of God, “not of works lest any man should boast”—it was manifest that God did not intend to bless all the families of the earth through Moses and the Law Covenant, which were quite insufficient for the work, but that his blessing would be one of grace, of mercy, of unmerited favor, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The same thought is presented by the Apostle when he declares that herein was manifested the love of God in that “he gave his only begotten Son.” (John 3:16) God was a God of love prior to the sending forth of his Son, but his love was hidden—not revealed, not manifest to men. He was just as loving before he created man, just as loving when he pronounced the sentence, and at that very time had fully formulated the plan of man’s redemption and his ultimate rescue from the power of sin and death, but it was hidden, covered; it was manifest for the first time when he sent his Son to be man’s redeemer, as the Apostle declares.

FOR ALL MEN, NOT TO ALL MEN

Our common version declares that God’s grace hath appeared to all men, but the incorrectness of this statement is manifest, for hundreds of millions today, as well as during all the centuries since our Lord’s first advent, have seen nothing of the grace of God—it has not appeared to them. A more correct translation, in harmony with the facts, is “the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared for all men.” God’s grace is world-wide. It makes provision through Christ as the Redeemer for father Adam, and hence makes provision equally for all of the race of Adam, who inherited weaknesses, blemishes, etc. through his disobedience. Indeed, so far from all mankind being able to discern the grace of God, we are surely correct in declaring that it has appeared as yet to but very few, only believers, only those who have the eye of faith, only those who have the hearing ear. Indeed, God’s grace is not more manifest outwardly to the world than during the preceding ages. It is the household of faith, which possesses the eye of faith, that now beholds Jesus as the Lamb of God

which taketh away the sin of the world—which recognizes that thus God can be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth. This grace, however, is for all men so surely as the divine Word is true. The fact that only a fragment of humanity yet sees, yet knows, yet appreciates, is yet able to avail itself of the divine grace under its present limitations, proves nothing against the great fact that God has provided Jesus as the world's Redeemer, by and by to be the world's Deliverer or Savior.

But why the secrecy? Why did he not at once reveal the entire matter to the whole world of mankind as soon as Christ had died for our sins? The Scriptures answer that in the divine order and arrangement the sending of Christ as the world's Redeemer and Deliverer would not have taken place at the end of 4000 years of human history, but at the end of 6000 years—that God's purposes, his plan for the world, is 6000 years of a reign of sin and death, to be followed by 1000 years of the reign of grace unto salvation, unto life everlasting to so many as will accept the divine terms. Why, then, did Jesus come nearly 2000 years in advance of this date? We reply that it was because God had another feature of his plan to work out, indirectly but not directly connected with the world's salvation. This other feature is the selection of a little flock from amongst mankind to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife—to be associates with Jesus, the great Redeemer, in his work of human salvation.

In accord with this, the Scriptures tell us that the grace of God is now recognized only by a limited class, "even as many as the Lord your God shall call" (Acts 2:39), and that these must be taught in the school of Christ, tested as respects their obedience and devotion, and thus be enabled to make their calling and election

2H407

sure. With the completion of this elect company, with the dawning of the seventh thousand or Millennial epoch, the divine providence would be ready to take its next step. The next step for the elect Church will be in a participation in actual salvation from every power of sin and death in the First Resurrection, and then, under the Kingdom of God's dear Son—in which they will be associated with their Lord and Bridegroom—a general blessing of enlightenment will reach the world of mankind, causing their blind eyes to open and their weak ears to be unstopped, that the grace of God may appear to them also, that they may taste and see that the Lord is gracious, and that, being rightly exercised by this knowledge, they may be blessed with the opportunity for restitution to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary. As a knowledge of God's grace preceded the

Church's salvation, so a knowledge of his grace will precede the world's salvation.

September 9, 1906
Republished from the National Labor Tribute,
September 12, 1918

“THE GRACE OF GOD BRINGETH SALVATION”

Let us note how the grace of God brings salvation now, and the different manner in which it will bring it to the world in the next age, the world's day of trial or judgment. With us, in proportion as we see the grace of God and appreciate his loving kindness toward us, a test comes to us as to whether or not we appreciate the Lord, his character and his mercy. If we do appreciate these the effect will be a transforming work in our own hearts and lives—a willing or desiring to serve and please and honor the gracious God whom we have come to know. In proportion as his grace appears to us, in proportion as we discern its lengths and breadths and depths and heights, in that same proportion should our love and obedience and joy abound. If we be otherwise minded, unappreciative of divine favor and willingly love and serve the evil, it will be a demonstration that we are not of the Kingdom, for whom God's grace was specially intended; and after enjoying a measure of blessing our portion will be the Second Death, without hope of resurrection or further opportunity.

WHAT GOD'S GRACE TEACHES US

The term “grace of God” properly includes not only the primary blessing of our redemption by the precious blood and an opportunity of life everlasting through the Saviour's merit but it includes also the precious promises now made to those who have the hearing ear, as many as the Lord your God shall call.” Then as these progress in love and in obedience, grow in divine favor or grace to still larger knowledge and appreciation of the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him, the called ones according to his purpose—in proportion as their hearts are rightly moved, in the same proportion their eyes continue to open more widely, giving them to see more and more of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love and grace divine. As our Lord said to some of this class, “To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven; but to all who are without, these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings.” Mark 4:11, 12

The Apostle in our context enumerates some of the things which God's grace teaches us who have the hearing ear and the seeing eye of faith and understanding. Its teaching is that, denying ungodly and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world (epoch), looking for that blessed hope and the anticipation on the one side, and the effect of this hope

in our purification of heart and separation from the world on the other side. God's grace teaches this, the Apostle said. Nowhere does God intimate that his grace is intended for wilful and deliberate sinners. It is provided for those only who, when brought to an understanding of the truth and righteousness, will seek and strive for it under divine assistance and encouragement.

God's grace through his Word shows those who have their eyes of understanding open that their salvation is to be brought unto them at the second advent of Christ; that at present they are merely saved by hope, by faith. God's message of grace to these is that he who rightly receives these hopes, these promises of God will find them a strengthening and cleansing power working in his heart to a thorough renovation of its thoughts and intents, to the casting down of its natural selfish ambitions and every high thought and aim, and to the bringing of every thought into subjection to the will of God in Christ. God's grace through his Word teaches that, in order to attain this standard of heart perfection, a close guard must be kept upon the mortal body, whose admitted imperfections and weaknesses are reckonedly covered by the merit of the Saviour's sacrifice. The New Creature of the mind, the heart, can only live and prosper and attain its perfection by striving against the natural tendencies, or, as the Apostle expresses it, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts —worldly desires. Ungodliness must first be fought down and most violently opposed by the New Creature, the new will; and worldly lusts or desires or ambitions must be remembered as being contrary to the interests of the New Creature—calculated to lead away the heart, the strength, the time, the talent, in other directions than those marked out by the Captain of Salvation in whose footsteps we must follow.

Stating the matter from the reverse, the positive

2H408

standpoint, the Apostle says that our outward deportment of the flesh should correspond with the inward desires of our hearts to such an extent that we should live soberly, taking serious views on life, realizing increasingly the momentous results of our present warfare with sin-and-death conditions—that it means for us either victory or defeat, and that victory means the crown of glory, immortality with our Redeemer at his second coming in power and great glory for the establishment of his Kingdom. The Apostle suggests further that the influence upon us will be to live righteously, that is, justly. We not only appreciate the fact that the present life is short, and that anything gained by injustice should be of profit but a little while; but additionally, as we become filled with the spirit of the Lord, love for our

neighbor insists upon our dealing with him righteously, justly, according to the Golden Rule, doing to him as we would have him do to us. We to whom God's grace has been revealed, should be godly in this present life, urges the Apostle. What does he mean by this expression, "live godly?" He means that we should take for our standard not the rules or laws or conduct of imperfect men, nor of our own imperfect minds, but that God should be our portion, as our Lord expresses it, "Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven." True, we find that the copy before us in an absolutely perfect one, and that our God-likeness comes far short of the standard. Nevertheless that is our standard, and we are to keep it continually before us and never lower it, but go onward keeping it more and more carefully daily in our outward lives in accord with this pattern, in our hearts, in our minds, in our wills, in our endeavors.

"THAT BLESSED HOPE"

The Apostle says, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure," and in our context he speaks of our looking for that blessed hope as being a source of strength and power to those who have been granted a view of divine grace in the present time: What does the Apostle mean by "that blessed hope?" What hope? Where is it stated? We reply that this is the same hope to which the Apostle refers when he says, "Which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the veil." (Heb. 6:19) And this last quotation furnishes us the key, for in connection with it the Apostle tells us respecting the hope, what it is. He assures us that it is the hope of being of the seed of Abraham, the hope of being heirs of the great Oath-Bound Covenant which God made with Abraham, saying, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The Apostle explains that this Oath-Bound Covenant, the promise which has been so sure a hope, so firm an evidence to all of the Lord's people, and is now the anchorage of our hope in Christ, is to be attained by those who become the Bride of Christ. Hear his word: "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29

O glorious hope! Well may those who have this hope purify themselves and keep before their minds the glorious Pattern. Well may they account all things of an earthly kind as but loss and dross that they may win Christ and be found members in him, in the glorious First Resurrection. Well may they deny themselves all worldly lusts and ambitions that they may thereby the more surely attain to this great ambition, this God-given ambition of joint-heirship with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom which is to bless the world of mankind. Do we not then see that a great favor has been bestowed upon us in that the eyes of our understanding have been at least partially opened to discern the grace of God

manifest in our dear Redeemer's sacrifice, which is yet to bring salvation to us in the First Resurrection, and to the world of mankind during the Millennial age? How gracious are the divine provisions, not only for those who shall be ultimately saved to life eternal, but gracious also toward those who shall sin wilfully, and dying the Second Death shall be as though they had not been. Obadiah 16

September 16, 1906

Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
September 19, 1918

“WHAT IS SIN AND WHO ARE SINNERS?”

McKEESPORT, PA., September 16, 1906—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny spoke twice here today. One discourse was on the Bible teaching respecting “Hell — A Cure for Infidelity.” We report his second discourse, from the text, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Rom. 3:23 He said:

The world is afflicted with many counterfeit standards of righteousness, which are largely the result of neglect of the divine Word and the substitution therefore of human theories and creeds formulated in the “dark ages,” under the delusion that the divine penalty for sin is eternal torment. Reason insists that the kind of sin which would permit such a punishment must be of the blackest, deepest dye; and under the preaching

2H409

of Protestantism, that the final destiny is fixed at death for either an eternity of woe for the sinner or an eternity of bliss for the righteous, the mental operation is to conclude that the dying friend was not sufficiently wicked to justly merit eternal torture and hence must be esteemed as sufficiently righteous to secure some place in heaven even though on a lower plane. Thus this horrible error of eternal torment fails to accomplish the desire of its advocates—fails to turn man to righteousness, to consecration to the Lord. Its very atrociousness nullifies its influence upon human character, so that as a consequence nearly all the criminals of Christendom are firm believers in the doctrine of eternal torment, but hope they will somehow escape. The net result of this horrible doctrine, therefore, is the vilification and misrepresentation and nullification of the power of God's Word, which, as our Lord explained, is intended to sanctify the lives of believers. “Sanctify them through thy Truth; thy Word is Truth.” John 17:17

WHAT CONSTITUTES SIN?

The Apostle answers this question saying, “Sin is the transgression of the Law,” the divine law. (1 John 3:4) This divine law, as the Scriptures explain, was originally written in the very heart and character of man—Adam was created in the image and likeness of God. He needed not to have specifications of the divine law, such as “Thou shalt” and “Thou shalt not,” because his organization, including his brain, was in that perfect poise and balance which permitted him to have a correct judgment as respects right and wrong from the divine standpoint on every question. In harmony with this, the Apostle declares that his sin of disobedience in the garden was not of any accident nor deception nor ignorance. (1 Tim. 2:14)

He sinned wilfully and deliberately. We admit that he had a strong provocation. His wife had transgressed the law, and he presumed that this would involve her death and that he should thus be left without his companion. His act of disobedience was therefore in the nature of suicide, with the full knowledge and intent that he would share the death penalty with his loved helpmate.

The very strength of Adam’s good character, his love, became his snare. He should have remembered that his first obligation was to his Creator. He should have realized the wisdom and love of that Creator, and that as he had done for him graciously thus far he would continue to protect his best interests if he remained faithful. We do not know what provision the Lord would have made for the recovery of mother Eve from the results of the serpent’s deception, but the divine character assures us that some way of relief and forgiveness and restoration would have been provided. Adam, however, though perfect, had no large experience and acquaintance with his Creator, his knowledge of him was limited; hence he failed to appreciate the possibilities of the case and took the matter into his own hands, with the dire results upon himself and his posterity which God foreknew and from which divine mercy has prepared through Jesus a rescue, and in connection with which divine wisdom, love and justice and power will be manifested as never before.

Father Adam’s transgression is what in all the creeds of Christendom is termed “original sin.” It is on account of that sin that all the creeds declare that God condemned to eternal torment all of our race except such as would hear of and accept our Lord Jesus and become his disciples and followers. We dissent from this, and quote the Scriptures in proof that “the wages of sin is death”—not eternal torment; that our Lord Jesus redeemed us from death—not from eternal torment; that in the resurrection he will deliver us from death, from the tomb—not from eternal torment; and that this is true not only of the Church of this Gospel age, the elect, whose

eyes of understanding are now open and whose ears of understanding are now unstopped, so that they now see and hear and appreciate the grace of God in Christ; but that it will be true ultimately during the Millennial age to all others of the human family that as the Apostle declares, "He will have all men to be saved (from death, from sentence or curse of death, the tomb), and to come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2:4) God's time for bringing the masses of the world to a knowledge of the truth is not in the present time but in the future, during the Millennial reign of Christ. Now only the few have the special favor and blessing of enlightenment, but ultimately every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God. As now the full knowledge coming to us brings us responsibilities and means the decision for either life or death eternal, so then, in the Millennial age, to the masses of mankind the full knowledge will bring full responsibility, with the reward of either life eternal or death eternal — the Second Death.

Coming back now to what constitutes sin: The ordinary conception seems to be that if a man were to violate the divine law in ninety-nine points out of a hundred, yet preserve some one point of character, this one point would save him from the penalty of the divine law—from the supposed eternal torment. But looking into the Word of God we find the very reverse to be true: the slightest infraction of the divine law would be sin—that if any man could keep the divine law in ninety-nine parts and should fail in one point he would be guilty of the infraction of the law as a whole

2H410

and subject to its penalty—death. Our first view of this matter might cause us a shock, and suggest that the Almighty would be harsh in thus establishing a standard of absolute perfection as a condition in his favor and his blessing of everlasting life. But the more we examine the proposition the more we can see in it an absolute justice and wisdom.

Wisdom shows us that if the Almighty sanctioned or condoned sin in the slightest degree it would be wrong, unjust; and we see how unwise it would be, too, when we consider that if a concession were granted for one sin for one individual, justice should require that a similar concession should extend to all of God's creatures—that each should have the liberty of sinning once and still retain divine favor. Thus sin would be sanctioned in the divine government, which is not supposable, and this would mean more or less of the practices of sin and of divine recognition of it throughout all eternity. On the contrary, God has denounced sin in its every form, even the very slightest, and has declared that death is its

proper penalty, wage, “The soul that sinneth it shall die.”
Ezek. 18:4

“ALL HAVE SINNED AND COME SHORT”

Before examining what remedy God holds out for sinners, we want to ascertain exactly who are sinners. The majority of the intelligent people of Christendom seem to believe that they are not sinners. True, they do not on the other hand generally claim to be saints. The well-to-do, who live decently, avoid fights, drunkenness, profanity, etc., are esteemed to be the “best citizens,” and are far from thinking themselves proper subjects for the “mourners’ bench.” Do they not avoid the grosser forms of sin? Do they not give time for Church attendance? Do they not occasionally read their Bibles? Do they not attend Sunday School? Do they not give money or time to benevolent work, and would it not be dishonoring themselves to in any wise confess that they were sinners—that they needed salvation from eternal torment? Surely God would not eternally torment such as they—only the most degraded and most depraved would meet such a fate. Thus measuring themselves with themselves, the people of Christendom are as a rule quite self-satisfied, just as were the Pharisees, the holiness people of our Lord’s day, who pointed with pride to the fact that they gave tithes of obedience to many of the outward demands of the Law, that they contributed liberally to the support of the Temple and to the poor, and that they occupied prominent seats in the synagogue. They felt in consequence that God had cause to feel proud of them, and that when he would be making up his lists for the eternal state he would surely not leave out their names.

To such our Lord said, “The whole need not a physician.” He had come as a physician to the sin-sick, and they did not realize themselves to be sin-sick, and hence they had little interest in the physician. Our Lord’s words were uttered in sarcasm, as pointing out the fact that they thought they had no sin and no need of a sin cure, and hence they were but acting on their misconception when they rejected him and his favor of divine grace and mercy. The prototype of this is to be found today all through Christendom, both inside and outside of the various denominations. For be it understood that sectarian membership in no sense of the word cancels sin or purifies the heart or gives divine forgiveness. Under false teachings, therefore, many professed Christians are indulging in false hopes—in thinking that they are the Lord’s people when as yet in reality they are in “the gall of bitterness.” Without having consecrated themselves to be his followers, they, like the Pharisees of old, stand in the Temple and pray, “I thank thee, O Lord, that I am not as other men, nor even as this publican.”

The first thing for all such to learn is what constitutes a sinner from God’s standpoint. Who needs to be

forgiven? Who needs the great Physician's cure, and thereby reconciliation to the Father? We have already shown what original sin is, and how in consequence of heredity all are sinners, all are imperfect, some more and some less imperfect, but all short of the divine requirement—perfection. Since we have lost the original image of God, which would enable us of ourselves to know perfectly right from wrong, it is necessary now that we have before our minds the divine standard as expressed in the divine Law. This standard as set forth by our dear Redeemer himself is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul, strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." According to this standard who is perfect? Who can claim that his entire heart is given to the Lord and filled with loving desires of obedience to him? Who can claim that he is so free from selfishness that he loves his neighbor as himself, and would do for his neighbor as for himself?

The Scriptures answer the question, telling us, "There is none righteous, no not one." (Rom. 3:10) Again, in the language of our text, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The glory of God as a standard is that perfection which was given to father Adam in his creation and which was blemished by his disobedience and his death sentence. The Prophet tells us of this when, speaking of Adam, he says, "Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over all the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea." (Psa. 8:5-8) We are all short of

2H411

perfection, short of the glorious grandeur of human nature which originally constituted it the image of the divine nature. The Apostle, we remember, states the whole matter in brief form, and explains how and why we are all thus degenerates, saying, "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, because all are sinners." Rom. 5:12

THE SICK NEED THE PHYSICIAN

Thus we see that the whole human family is not only sick physically, ailing in one way or another, dying under the divine sentence, but that it is sick mentally as well. Harken to the inspired description of the condition of Adam's race: we are assured that we are all "born in sin, shapen in iniquity" (Psa. 51:5), and also that from the crown of the head to the sole of our feet we are full of blemishes—there is no soundness. (Isa. 1:6) If we look at the statistics of the insane we are horrified to find the immense proportion of our race who are mentally

unbalanced to such a degree as to be unfit to have their personal liberty, and we see also that amongst those who do have their liberty sanity is a question of proportion—all are more or less insane—unsound of mind, of judgment. The Apostle declares that those who renounce their own wills entirely and accept the will of God as set forth in the Word of God, that these alone have the spirit of a sound mind. Surely there is no soundness here for us to boast of, and this Scriptural declaration is well upheld. As for physical soundness, the doctors' signs and apothecary shops and the patent medicine advertisements, no less than the hospitals, declare that the race is sadly degenerate physically, that there is no soundness at all, and the death records of the world, 90,000 a day, fully corroborate this statement of physical unsoundness—from head to foot.

Prison statistics show us that the world in general is morally sick also, and day by day the public print lays before us evidences that many who are not in prison are morally unclean, leprous; and whoever will be honest with himself and look into his own heart, and then look into the mirror of the divine law, must admit to himself—whether he confesses it to others or not—that he is also by nature unclean, imperfect, that he comes short of the glory of God, and that by nature he is not fit for eternal life and heavenly glory.

What shall we do? Is there a balm of Gilead and a good physician able and willing to take charge of this case—of Adam and his race more or less defiled mentally, physically, morally. Is there hope at all for the recovery either of the dying ones or of those who have already gone to the tomb? The Scriptures answer “Yes.” Jehovah, who condemned our race for its infraction of the divine law, has laid help upon one who is mighty to save—one “who is able to save to the uttermost all those who come unto the Father through him.” (Heb. 7:25) He himself assures us that he came to seek and to save that which was lost—Adam and his race. Some may suggest that his power is limited; that the worst of sinners, the vilest of the vile, would still be hopeless; but we remind such of the Scriptural declaration that he is able to save to the uttermost all who come to the Father through him. We remind such that according to the Scriptures Jesus paid the death penalty for Father Adam's transgression, and thus redeemed him and all who shared his penalty in each and every degree. To whatever extent, therefore, our blemishes, mental, moral and physical, are the results of heredity, to that extent they are forgivable, and the Redeemer stands ready to restore even the vilest of the vile to full harmony with the Creator.

But there are conditions, as expressed in the Saviour's words, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” None can have divine forgiveness or in any sense of the word have eternal life, the eternal life lost by father Adam, except as he accepts by faith the redeeming work

of the Saviour; for, as the Apostle declares, "There is no other name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) The one way of approach to the Father during the Gospel age is repentance of sin, turning from it, acceptance of the merit of Christ as compensation for our deficiencies, and then a consecration to the Lord to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Whoever attempts to come to the Father in his own righteousness, or in the righteousness and merit of any other than this Saviour the same is a thief and a robber, and is trying to climb into the sheepfold in some other way than that divinely appointed. He will not secure admittance; there is only one door to the fold. John 10:1

THE GOOD PHYSICIAN

The great Shepherd, the good Physician, appeared amongst men and gave his life as their redemption price nearly nineteen centuries ago, and then began immediately to invite any who desired to go free from their sin-sickness to come unto him, to accept the healing balm of his grace and to become his sheep, his followers, hearkening to his voice, and to be guided thereby to the green pastures and still waters of refreshment in the present life, and at the end of the journey to be received into the heavenly fold. But comparatively few of Adam's race have ever heard his voice in any sense of the word, and of those who have heard something the majority merely hear indistinctly, vaguely, and have not understood the clear true import of the invitation. Only comparatively few of the race have

2H412

heard in the proper, definite, full sense of the word that brought them face to face with the facts and made them responsible. Speaking of this class our Lord said to the few who heard him, who recognized the "voice from heaven," "Blessed are your ears for they hear." And all of this class who do really hear the Master's voice are indeed most wonderfully blessed, and, like the Apostle, they say, "Lord to whom should we go; thou hast the words of eternal life?" These find in the Master's words the promise of a blessing in the life that now is and also in that which is to come, and a peace and joy which they never knew before, and which the world can neither give nor take away. Blessed indeed are those ears which hear.

OTHER SHEEP OF ANOTHER FLOCK

Nothing in our Lord's words in any sense intimates that those who do not hear his voice directly, neither through the apostles nor through the Scriptures nor through any of his followers, should never hear and should never be blessed. Quite to the contrary, the Prophet foretold that

the time shall come when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. (Isa. 35:5) And our Lord himself declares, "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." (John 10:16) He has not yet begun to bring the other sheep; he is still taking the flock he first started to call, namely, Spiritual Israel. He found first of all the Israelites indeed amongst the Jews, and during this Gospel age he has been finding a similar class amongst the Gentiles, and these have been invited, and of these a little flock has been called out under the lead of the Shepherd. By and by these shall reach the fold, the heavenly condition, and then the greater work of dealing with all mankind will begin.

The little flock now called out from the world the Scriptures denominate the Bride of Christ. They are to be associates with the Lord in the glory and honor of his Kingdom and in his future work of finding the remainder of the sheep, giving them ears to hear, and leading them forth from the bondage of sin and death to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. It will be during the Millennial age that the great Shepherd will call the other flock and bless them, open their eyes and open their ears, and discipline them with his rod and staff, that whosoever will of them may ultimately attain eternal life. The two flocks will come back into harmony with God, but the one flock will be of the heavenly fold while the other flock will be of the earthly fold. The little flock will be brought to perfection as spirit beings, partakers of the divine nature, glory, honor and immortality; the subsequent earthly flock, the world in general, will be brought by the highway of holiness back to restitution. Their eternal state of blessedness will be that of an earthly paradise, related to God as was Adam before his transgression, but now so blessed by their experiences with sin and restitution that they will hate sin and love righteousness, and will therefore be the recipients of life and divine favor everlasting.

"LABORING AND HEAVY LADEN"

The Scriptures forewarn us that the little flock who now have the hearing ear will consist chiefly of the "poor of this world, rich in faith." (Jas. 2:5) They assure us that we need not expect to find in this flock of the present time many wise, many great, many learned. How strange, we say—the very reverse of what we would expect! Our thought would have been that the grandest and noblest and best educated, the most favored of the race, would have been the first to realize their degradation and their need, to hearken to the voice of the Lord, and to accept the same and become his followers; that the ignoble rather should hear and accept now is an astonishment. The Scriptural explanation is that the favored ones of the present time, contrasting themselves with the ignoble and degraded, have a self-righteous feeling and are not therefore sufficiently humble-minded

to realize their own unworthiness and to accept the grace of God.

On the contrary, those heavy laden with the disabilities of this life, with their own ignoble, depraved dispositions, with their own load of sin and imperfection, weary with these, weary with their endeavors to overcome their own frailties—these are the ones who, hearing the Shepherd's voice, gladly respond and accept his proffered assistance as their burden bearer, their sin bearer. With joy they behold that while divine sentence was justly upon them and upon all, divine love has provided the remedy in the death of the Redeemer, so that "God can be just and yet the justifier of those who believe in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26) By faith they accept his assistance, by faith they become his sheep, by faith they follow him and have joy and peace in so doing—even though the way be narrow, even though it be rough with defects and trials, nevertheless in his presence and under his guidance they have joy and peace. Happy these sheep! Blessed are those whose eyes and ears of understanding become opened now to a realization of the facts and privileges of the present, and who become members of the flock now being called. For them is reserved the glory, honor and immortality, joint-heirs with their Shepherd in the Kingdom. They envy not the rich their joys of the present time, they envy not the earthly great and wise, for they realize themselves heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be that they abide in his fellowship,

2H413

that they suffer with him, enduring hardness as good soldiers in their conflict with the world, the flesh and the Adversary, and in their loyalty to his standards.

Dear brethren and sisters, Are we of this class? Have we realized that by nature we are all sinners? Have we hungered for righteousness as well as striven against sin? Have we accepted the righteousness of Christ proffered us, have we put it on us as the wedding garment? Do we realize ourselves as justified freely from all things in the Father's sight through the Redeemer's merit?

Have we made a consecration of ourselves to his service, and are we seeking to embroider our wedding garment with the graces of the holy Spirit? Are we striving to serve our Redeemer and to be co-laborers with him in so doing good to all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith? If so, blessed are we; if not, shall we not forthwith begin and avail ourselves of the privilege, and be permitted to hear the voice more and more as we seek day by day to obey and to follow on?

September 30, 1906

Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
October 3, 1918

STRIVING FOR AN INCORRUPTIBLE CROWN

Columbus, O., Sept. 30.—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today in the McKinley Memorial Auditorium. He had large and intelligent audiences. His afternoon topic was: "A Cure for Infidelity." His evening discourse was on "Running for Worthy Prizes," his text being, "Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run that ye may obtain." (1 Cor. 9:24) Pastor Russell said:

Everywhere throughout the Scriptures the thought kept before our minds is that one may roll downward deeper and deeper into sin and degradation and that the end of that way is death, destruction; and, on the contrary, that everyone who would attain to life and the glorious characteristics of the divine character, which are conditions upon which the gift of life will be given, must strive, run and attain. In other words, a willing mind and its exercise are declared to be necessary to the attainment of divine favor, and to the life eternal which is its reward. Too many, alas, even among Christians, seem to have the impression that negative goodness may be satisfactory to the Lord— that moral willingness to abstain from wrongdoing under favorable conditions

would have the divine approval. Of course negative goodness is better than none, better than viciousness and wilful misdoing; yet there is no promise of eternal life to the morally, negatively good. Only the positively good—those who love righteousness and hate iniquity—can have the divine approval.

Some may be inclined to demur to this proposition and to claim that it is asking too much of humanity that—born through heredity with a tendency toward sin, and surrounded by sinful and degrading influences—we should be called upon to surmount all of these and to attain a fixed character for righteousness—the very reverse of the one with which we were born. The query naturally and properly arises, “Are we not less favorably treated by our Creator than were the angels, who, created perfect, in the divine likeness, have merely been required to maintain that character without knowing what it is to strive, to fight, to overcome the downward tendencies that oppress the fallen race of Adam? Why should not man have as favorable an opportunity as the angels? Even though man, through original sin, fell into a degenerated condition, mental, moral and physical, why does not the Creator make an easier path out of the sin-and-death conditions back to His fellowship and eternal life? In other words, why is there no other way to God’s favor than the rugged, narrow way on the terms of taking up the cross to follow in the footsteps of Jesus? Why are we called upon to run up so steep a hill of natural depravity to attain God’s favor and life eternal?

NO INJUSTICE WITH GOD

These questions are pertinent and reasonable, and the Scriptures answer that God has appointed for the world just such reasonable opportunities for reconciliation with Himself as we might have expected. He has not proposed to violate the principles of His government nor to accept to His favor any who are out of full accord therewith; but He has provided for the world a reasonable way of return to His favor and to all that was lost through original sin. But His time has not yet fully come for opening up to the world His gracious provision for their recovery — their “restitution.” (Acts 3:19-21) Through the prophets He points out that their opportunities will be grand, all that could be asked or expected—so full, so complete, that none but wilful rejecters of the divine favor shall ultimately miss the goal of full restitution to the divine image and likeness as

2H414

Adam enjoyed it, and an Edenic home and life eternal.

“The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” As the Apostle Peter declares, “All the holy prophets since the world began” have told of the glorious restitution work which God will surely inaugurate in the hands of Messiah, His glorious Son, whose consort in the glory and honor of the Kingdom will be the Bride class, selected during this Gospel age. The point which generally confuses the judgment is one that is made very clear in the Scriptures, namely, that in advance of giving these restitution blessings to the world in general during the Millennial age, and on reasonable and moderate terms and conditions, God in the present time is selecting an elect class to be the Church, the Bride of Christ. And since He intends a very high exaltation to these, an exaltation to a nature not only higher than human, but also higher than angelic—the divine nature—therefore the Lord has made the call of this Gospel age a restricted one, and has made the way to life now narrow and difficult, so that only by great exertion can any attain it. The object of this He clearly explains to be that He seeks “a peculiar people, zealous of good works”—so zealous for truth and righteousness that they are willing to lay down their lives in their service; so full of faith that they can walk by faith and not by sight; so full of love that they would delight to do the Father’s will, even at the expense of their earthly interests, in that they will love all who have the Father’s Spirit to the extent that with pleasure they would lay down their lives for the brethren. When it is seen that this specially elect class of this Gospel age is called and elected to be with Jesus in His glorious Kingdom, and to share with Him the honors of uplifting the human race out of its present fallen condition, then we see the secret, the reason, why God has made the way narrow, steep, and difficult to run in.

“THE RACE SET BEFORE US”

Although nothing in the Scriptures refers to the world of mankind in the next age running a race, we may, nevertheless, understand from the various Scriptures which delineate the terms and conditions of divine favor at that time that there will be something equivalent to a race. Some, then, may run swiftly up the highway of holiness, and by their love and zeal attain the joys of the Lord more speedily than others. But the running, we understand, will not be compulsory; the requirements shall be that they shall walk up the highway, and even then assistance will be granted on the way. One probable reason why no running is spoken of in connection with the highway of holiness leading to life in the next age is that those disposed to run in the way of righteousness and hating iniquity, will be called out, selected, elected from the world, during this Gospel age. These are the jewel class that our Lord

refers to—He will make up His jewels at His second advent. He has indeed a glorious future for all who shall, however gradually, attain to the image and likeness of God lost in Eden. All will be in the hands of the great Mediator, who bought them with His precious blood, and who will during the Millennial age do for them everything that can be done, everything that could be asked for assistance; so that we are guaranteed that none of them shall fail by reason of any of the weaknesses of heredity, but that all who will, who desire righteousness done, may know they may attain thereto, and may at the close of the Millennial day be absolutely perfect, so as to need neither covering nor assistance further. They will be like unto the angels; they shall have attained full perfection of human nature as God designed it; and all who refuse the lessons, corrections and chastisements of the great Mediator during the millennium shall be utterly cut off in the Second Death, as the Apostle Peter assures us. Acts 3:23

The race set before us—set before believers during this Gospel age—is the uphill one, the difficult one. It is everywhere in the Scriptures described so to be. The Lord does not wish to make it easy; He wished to make it difficult, so that it would sift and test and prove and separate to Himself all those who have the spirit of loyalty and obedience so wonderfully manifested in our dear Redeemer. These must all attain to this likeness of God's dear Son if they would be joint-heirs with Him in the kingdom; and present opportunities, call, pruning, chastening, polishing, instructions in the School of Christ, etc., are all with a view to the testing and proving and perfecting of these. These and these alone are in the race course set before us in the Gospel, and the Apostle exhorts such and none others when he says: "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Heb. 12:1-2

ILLUSTRATED BY GRECIAN GAMES

Running races was one of the favorite athletic sports in olden times, especially among the Grecians, and the Apostle takes this fact, well known to all of his readers, to illustrate thereby what should be the course of the Christians. As these runners exercised great care in their diet and in all of life's affairs, and bent every energy to their racing so the Christian should make business, pleasure, food and raiment all to bend to the central all-absorbing ambition of his new life, his Christian career. As the runner for an earthly crown of laurels and for the applause of spectators would cast away all of his clothing except the merest breechcloth, this should furnish an illustration of how the zealous

2H415

Christian would so appreciate the greater prize, the crown of eternal life and glory and immortality and joint-heirship with Jesus in the kingdom, that he would be willing to sacrifice time, influence, wealth, every-

thing, that he might win Christ and be found in Him— a member of the Anointed One, a member of the Messiah. In our text the Apostle says many run, but only one receives the crown, and similarly our Lord declares many are called, few are chosen. The thought is that it is not enough merely to take the name of Jesus and to declare ourselves His friends. That, indeed, is comparatively easy and a great honor, that requires little sacrifice at all, we might say. The running which will get the prize signifies much more than merely taking the name of Jesus—it means the taking up of the cross to follow Him through evil report as well as through good report; it means such a zeal for Him, for His truth, for His Word, for His brethren, for the cause of righteousness which He represents, as will make us practically oblivious to all other affairs of life. This is the kind of racing that will get the prize. To these racers by and by will come the word. “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Thou has been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things; I will make thee ruler over five cities.” Matt. 25:21

As was sometimes the case in earthly races a secondary prize was given to those who endured faithfully to the end of the race, so the Lord intimates to us that He has a secondary prize for those who manifest their loyalty to Him, even though they may not put forth that degree of zeal in running which He has promised to reward with joint-heirship in the kingdom. This class is also spoken of as overcomers, while those who attain to the highest honor are described as “more than overcomers “—more than overcomers of the world and its spirit. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him, says the Lord; and the Apostle intimates that any drawing back would be “unto perdition”—unto the Second Death. (Heb. 10:38-39) Let us resolve, dear friends, that having tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, and been made partakers of His holy Spirit, we shall not be of those who fall away, who draw back and renounce the Lord and His righteousness, but of those who go on unto salvation—not the salvation of the Great Company, which will be before the throne, but the salvation of the winners of the first prize, who will sit down with the Lord in His throne and constitute His Bride and joint-heirs in the kingdom.

“THE HOPE SET BEFORE US”

The Apostle speaks of the hope set before us as though He would suggest that there are other hopes before the world, and invited some to one and some to another. Quite to the contrary, the Apostle assures us, “Ye are called in one hope of your calling.” (Eph. 4:4) Hence, although there will be a “little flock” of the elect who will gain the Divine nature and a

“Great Company” who will receive eternal life on a lower spiritual plane of perfection, these were not separately called. It was the one call, and each one had the opportunity of making his calling and his election sure, and only his own carelessness in running the race prevented his being the winner of the chief prize. With this thought before our minds how careful should all Christians be to, as the Apostle says, “Walk circumspectly,” “run with patience,” “endure hardness,” strive to enter in and attain all the glorious things which God has in reservation for His elect—things beyond anything that eye hath seen or ear heard or the heart of man ever imagined—things which we only know of because God hath revealed them to us through His Spirit. I Cor. 2:9

But while God sets forth in the present time only one hope, only the one calling, only the one invitation, the world sets forth various hopes, various ambitions, various invitations, and urges these persistently. Indeed, the large part of the required overcoming on the part of the elect is the resistance to the blandishments of the world—the resistance to the hopes and ambitions which the world holds out. Hence the Apostle, summing up the whole of our race, declares: “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” L John 5:4

Only as we have faith in God and faith in the gracious promises of His Word could we possibly renounce the world, its ambitions and pleasures, and turn our backs to these to gain the glories and honors which God has promised to those who love Him and who demonstrate their love by their faithfulness in the race. The natural eye cannot see these spiritual things, hence only in proportion as we have exercised the eyes of faith, the eyes of our understanding, are we able to comprehend more and more and appreciate the length and breadth and height and depth of the Divine arrangement and to follow the same.

WORLDLY HOPES IN CONTRAST

It is fortunate for the world that it has hope as an element of its character, that it has ambition. Could we imagine such a thing as an utter destruction of human ambitions and hopes we should be obliged to imagine a rapid degeneracy of our race into a hopeless, ambitionless condition manifest in the most degraded races of heathendom. We are not, therefore, condemning the world for having ambitions; rather we are glad that at least a small portion of humanity have ambitions, which not only propel them through life, but which

2H416

help them to stimulate others and to pull others more and more out of degradation and despondency. These men of worldly ambition are captains of industry, captains of finance, captains of politics, kings among men; and

although their motive power is generally entire selfishness, nevertheless the world is better for them in some respects. Yea, although the Christian may receive severe trials from the example of such ambitious men, he nevertheless may receive a blessing also when he compares the hopes and aims of these men with his own hopes and aims as set before him in the Gospel. Let him consider further what these men will endure and do selfishly for the sake of earthly power or influence or wealth, and see in contrast what would be the Christian's reasonable service, self—denial and energy on behalf of the King of kings, and the inexpressibly greater reward which He has promised to His faithful ones.

As we see the captains of industry giving careful attention to every detail and accomplishing large results financially—as we see politicians great and small striving for offices and honors among men, and then remember that they do not even hope to enjoy these for any length of time—we are astounded at their diligence in business and fervency of spirit in serving worldly interests, selfish interests. In contrast we say to ourselves respecting those who have heard the voice from heaven, whose eyes of understanding have to some extent opened to see the wonderful things of the divine promise and whose ears of understanding have heard the invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ in all those glorious things—what manner of persons ought we to be?

If worldly men will give their time, their thought, and will invest all their capital in the hope of still larger returns of an earthly kind—if they will sacrifice their all to attain their earthly ideals, how should it be with us who from the standpoint of faith are risking nothing when we accept the Lord's gracious declaration that if we give ourselves and all we have unreservedly to Him, then all that He has shall be ours; that His power divine will guarantee that all life's interests shall work for our highest welfare; and that if we are willing and obedient and self-sacrificing runners in this race we shall have the great prize of glory, honor and immortality, riches of grace which will never fade away, eternal in the heavens. Surely, then, the Lord's people have in the Gospel message the grandest incentive, the greatest ambition that could possibly be conceived and they should indeed, as more and more their eyes open to the riches of God's favor bestowed upon them, lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and run with patience the race set before them.

DIFFERENT RACE COURSE VIEWS

The race course of the Christian may be viewed from different standpoints. From one viewpoint it is one race

or striving from the beginning of his consecration to the Lord until death—until his resurrection. From this standpoint the course of many show variations, sometimes good running, sometimes slow, sometimes a standstill, and, we fear, sometimes a retrogression. From this viewpoint only the Lord himself knows positively who are in the race, and to what extent they are faithful to their talents and opportunities. From this viewpoint we may not judge one another, but rather remember that the Lord is the Judge, and that His decision will come in the end of this age and be manifested by the granting to some a share in the First Resurrection and to others, the Great Company, a less favorable change and blessing. Then every man's work shall be manifested. We may see that some who seemed to be running very slowly were really laboring against heavy odds of disadvantage through an unfavorable heredity, while others —whom perhaps we thought to be swift runners in the race — may not have so high an honor from the Lord's standpoint, or perhaps they had much advantage every way over the great majority by reason of good, natural traits and characteristics. The proper thing for each racer then is to do his best and to leave the entire matter of results to the Lord, knowing that he will receive exceedingly and abundantly more than he could have deserved as the reward for every self-denial, every faithful sacrifice in this race course in seeking to please the Lord and to win the glorious prize of the high calling now set forth.

A totally different view of the racecourse, and yet one in harmony with the letter and spirit of the Word, would represent the Christian's attainment of character-likeness to the Lord. The Scriptures assure us that all the elect will be copies of God's dear Son (Rom. 8:29); that the experience and development of character which began with our consecration to the Lord and entrance to the School of Christ culminated in the attainment of the Lord's character-likeness. This experience of the Christian may be likened to a race course, too. Only those who have accepted Christ as their Redeemer and have then made a consecration of their all to the Lord are admitted to this School of Christ of this race course. When first they enter they are, of course, very deficient—they enter that they may progress in knowledge and in grace. The start is at the point of a desire of heart to do the Lord's will; the finish of this course of study or this race will be the attainment of that degree of knowledge and of love which the Lord would approve, without which we could not be fit for the Kingdom.

If death should intervene and hinder the students from learning the lesson, or in our other picture hinder the racer from reaching his goal of perfect love, then he could not receive the crown of life, he could not be considered fit for the Kingdom which is promised only to the “overcomers.” (Rev. 3:2 1) Our confidence is, however, that whoever is accepted of the Lord as a runner in this race comes so completely under the divine supervision and care that all of his earthly interests and life itself are guaranteed to be favorable to him, that he may have the opportunity for learning the lessons, the opportunity for running the race and proving himself an overcomer.

Starting at zero, we may divide this supposed race course by four quarter marks. The race is begun with a kind of love toward God—not the perfect love which will be reached at the end of the race, but nevertheless a love which is necessary toward even making a start. This we will call duty love; as the Apostle says, we realize that it is our “reasonable service” to seek to do the Lord’s will, because we are appreciative of what He is doing for us in the redemptive work of Jesus. The duty love of this first quarter will never be lost; it will always hold a high esteem in the heart and mind of the runner. But as he progresses to the second quarter of the course he finds that duty love has begotten in him a still higher character of love. While still acknowledging duty love he now has even a higher love, an appreciative love, or a character love. As we at first loved God and desired to serve and please Him because He had first loved us, so when we reach this second quarter in the Christian’s experience and race course we have reached the point where we begin to appreciate God not merely as a benefactor, but because He is good, because of the virtues of His own character, because we are learning as we become acquainted with Him to appreciate the justice which is the foundation of His throne, and the wisdom and love and power which govern all the divine course of action toward humanity.

In this second quarter of our race we learn to try our hearts before the Lord and to worship Him in spirit and in truth—because He is good, because He is worthy of worship. Thus we now have not only the duty love, but also the love of appreciation of the Creator, and we press on into the third quarter of our race, where we begin to appreciate these same elements of character even in their imperfect manifestation in the church—the bride of Christ. This stage or degree of attainment in the race toward the mark of perfect love the Apostle refers to, saying, “See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently” (1 Pet. 1:22) and again, “We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16). As we progress toward the end of this third quarter mark our love for the brethren grows so deep and strong that we learn to

sympathize with them as new creatures in their battlings with the weaknesses of their own flesh in a way that we could not do when first we entered this race course. Those who have attained to this degree of love know each other no longer after the flesh, with its weaknesses; but ignoring these they know each other according to the spirit, according to the heart-intentions and strivings, even as the Lord knows us. Their growth in knowledge and love has thus brought them to an appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love which they knew not at the beginning of this course, and which enables them more and more to appreciate the great divine plan which embraces all mankind in its scope and especially cares for the truly consecrated ones. Thus we start upon the fourth quarter mark of this race course, the final stage. The duty love toward God increased to love of the divine character, and this led to the loving of the brethren, because we saw in them the same spirit of the Father, God-likeness; and this producing a deepening of our heart's love and the emptying of our hearts of selfishness and worldly views, brings us to that broader view of the whole world of mankind which enables us to look with sympathy upon all — even upon the vilest.

Not that we sympathize with villainy or impurity, but that we realize that humanity is under these defilements largely through heredity and through besetting temptations; and having learned something of the divine grace and strength needful to overcome these downward tendencies in our own mortal flesh we have a growing sympathy for the poor world which knows not the Lord and has not the Almighty arm to assist out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay. This broader sympathy enables us to understand parts of the divine Word which at first were obscure to us, for we are now learning to look at the world and the sin which is in the world from God's standpoint of sympathy, and are therefore prepared to appreciate the love of God which has provided a way of escape from sin and death, and which ultimately shall reach to every member of the race. In this last quarter of the race, therefore, we begin to be able to fulfil our Lord's highest description of love, namely, to have love for our enemies and those who despitefully use us and persecute us. We are enabled to do this because of a fuller measure of the love of God in our own hearts and a fuller measure of knowledge and, incidentally, sympathy for the world in its degradation and blindness. Thus we reach the climax of our love—love for enemies—the mark of perfect love, the end of this race course.

2H418

“HAVING DONE ALL, STAND”

From the very earliest moment of our faith in the Redeemer, turning from sin and consecrating to God, we

are covered with the merits of Christ's righteousness and have, to some extent, the mind of Christ—that is to say, we had a mind and will to do the will of God, and we entered the School of Christ that we might learn those lessons, or, under the present figure, we enter this race course that we might run to attain this condition of heart, which alone could be acceptable in God's sight—the condition of perfect love. When we reach this climax of perfect love in our hearts it does not imply that we have reached a perfection of conduct so that the mortal body will always express perfectly this high standard of love. Indeed we may not reach this grand and desirable condition until we receive our new bodies in the resurrection; but so soon as we have attained the perfect love in our hearts it surely will have great influence and control over the words of our mouths as well as over the imaginings of our hearts. It will surely affect our conduct toward the Lord, the brethren and our enemies in some appreciable degree that we may discern and that our neighbors and friends can discern. The New Creature may occasionally find that with a heart full of love for the brethren or for an enemy he has not been wise or tactful in the exercise and demonstration of his love, but has given offense at the very time he intended to do good. Such imperfections of the flesh, however, the Scriptures assure us, are not charged up to us as New Creatures, but the Lord, who knoweth the heart, regards our standing of perfect love and covers all the blemishes of the flesh with the merit of the Redeemer's sacrifice.

After we have reached the mark of perfect love, what then shall we do? We answer that then, for the first time, our experiences correspond closely to those of our Redeemer, who did not need to go through the school of experience and discipline and instruction to learn the different steps of love and to attain perfect love. He did not need to run this race and to reach this mark of perfect love, because, as the perfect one, He was always there; and when we reach that degree we are merely attaining in our hearts to the condition in which our Lord was from the very beginning of His ministry. Our future experiences from that point onward are described by the Apostle, who says, "Having done all, stand"—having attained to the condition of perfect love which casts out fear, which reverences, loves the Lord in His true character, worships Him in spirit and in truth, loves the brethren and delights to lay down life in their service, and loves enemies and delights to do them good—having reached this point, stand there. But what is there to move us away from such a position when once we have attained it? We reply that the Lord permits trials and difficulties of various kinds to come upon us at this time to test us, to prove our loyalty to these principles which at this time we clearly see. Thus it was with our dear Redeemer, Who had this love, Who saw the situation and Who was controlled by this spirit of perfect love, which led Him to present His sacrifice even unto its consummation. Thus it will be in all who

are copying Him; their endeavor to stand at the mark of perfect love will mean sacrifices and self-denials of various kinds, and all of these will tend to make them strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and to prove them to be conquerors and more than conquerors through Him that loved them. Let us, too, stand fast in the liberty, in the grace, in the love of God and of our Lord Jesus, exemplifying the same toward all with whom we have contact.

October 7, 1906

Republished from The National Labor Tribune,
October 10, 1918

“BLOOD ATONEMENT AND THE JEWISH ATONEMENT DAY”

ALLEGHENY, PA., October 7, 1906—The following is the text: “Without the shedding of blood there is no remission (of sins),” (Heb. 9:22) He said:

The Jewish Day of Atonement is at hand with its lessons, which are still more important and significant to true Christians than to Jews, because the true Christian claims and acknowledges all that Moses and the Jewish Law taught as being typical, and professes to see not only the type but also the antitype—the spiritual meaning and fulfilment in Christ of the sacrifices offered for sins according to the Jewish Law on the tenth day of the seventh month of each year, according to the Jewish calendar. The fact that both Jews and nominal Christians are losing faith in sacrifices for sins should stir us all the more to a careful examination of the subject, to ascertain whether the doctrine of atonement for sin, of the shedding of blood, is merely a legend of the past, unworthy of further acceptance by the enlightened, or whether it represents a foundation principle of divine truth and government, the ignoring of which would mean an abandonment of the faith once delivered to the saints and necessary to their acceptance

2H419

with the Heavenly Father.

“Blind unbelief is sure to err!” writes the poet, and we concur with him and perceive that the growing unbelief in the atonement for sin is the result of unbelief—the result of the rejection of the Word of God, which undoubtedly in most clear and explicit terms repeats this doctrine, our text being an illustration, “Without the shedding of blood there is no remission (of sin).” But there must be a reason for the rejection of a doctrine so prominent in the Scriptures. There are two reasons for it: (1) an error has been generally received which has discounted this statement of the Word of God, and led to

its nullification and the substitution of another theory wholly opposed to it. The error was the eternal torment doctrine—that the wages of sin is eternal torment. That unscriptural proposition not only disgusts every intelligent conception of our Creator's justice and love, but it makes absurd the thought that the killing of animals in the past or even the sacrifice of Jesus at Calvary should be the price of torture.

As human thought has expanded and discerned the injustice of this doctrine of eternal torment, it has proportionately inclined to reject the Bible, which is supposed to teach that doctrine but does not teach it. And as people have rejected the Bible they have substituted for its teachings a human theory which is directly opposed to the Scriptural teaching—the Evolution theory—that men were not created but were gradually evolved from lower forms of animal life, that no Eden ever existed; that no perfect pair of the human family ever were on trial, or failed or were condemned by the Almighty, and hence that no one needed to be redeemed by the precious blood or anything else. The outcome of this theory is that if there is a God he gave evolution a start, and is merely watching how it will work itself out; and from this standpoint man's prayer should be, O Lord, let us alone until we have evolved ourselves, and wrought out for ourselves a great salvation, special uplift and human perfection.

A GREAT FALLING AWAY

Whatever we may say respecting the intelligence of our day and its many advantages and conveniences, we must agree with the Scriptures that so far as faith in the Bible and the God of the Bible is concerned a great falling away has occurred both amongst Jews and Christians. As a rule only the poor Jews any longer believe in an atonement for sin and enter into the celebration of the Day of Atonement. The wealthy and educated Hebrews almost without exception are known as Liberals, which is but another name for unbelievers. They have a spirit of patriotism which leads them to conform to circumcision and an outward form of godliness in the celebration of Sabbaths and festivals, but their celebration is more from the standpoint of keeping alive patriotism by remembrance on these occasions of the doings of the past by their forbearers who had faith in these things—faith which now almost all except the poor and ignorant have lost.

Indeed every intelligent and thoughtful and honest Jew would surely find it difficult to commemorate some of their festivals, for instance and especially this one, the "Day of Atonement." Why? Because under the circumstances with them all that they can do will be a mere farce. How so? Because, according to the Law of the Day of Atonement, only a high priest of the lineage of Aaron could make the sin offering and secure to the

people a covering of acceptableness with God for the year following. The Jews have no high priest to make such an atonement, to offer such sacrifice—they have no priest at all; not a Jew throughout the world could prove his lineage and right to the priestly office. All the records are lost, as every Jew must admit. Furthermore, the Day of Atonement could not be celebrated and its sin-offering presented to the Lord in any other place than the Holy Land, nor under any other arrangement than that of the Tabernacle or the Temple. Hence for these two reasons—that they have neither a place for making the sin-offering that God will accept, nor a priest that could make the sin-atonement—for these two reasons the Jews very properly make no effort to celebrate their Day of Atonement in the manner described in the Law.

What then do they do? Year by year, on the Day of Atonement, the sincere ones confess their sins and mourn for the Lord and pray; and then at the end of the day, while knowing that no sacrifice for sins has been offered, they put away their mourning and accept matters as though they had been forgiven. But in reality they have neither representative nor mediator before the Father, and therefore as a nation they have been under divine disfavor for more than eighteen centuries, although as a people they are still heirs of certain precious promises of the far past, which the Scriptures assure us they will come to inherit by and by at the second coming of Christ. Then they shall acknowledge him and mourn for their errors of the past and the present, and then he will be merciful to them and pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication and blot out their sins. This is God's covenant with them, as the Apostle points out in Romans 11:26-33.

Still more serious is the condition of those Christians who have once tasted that the Lord is gracious, who once realized that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, who once appreciated that he was a propitiation for our sins, the Church's sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world, and that we are redeemed not with corruptible things, such

2H420

as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, and that he was the antitypical Lamb of the Passover as well as the antitype of the bullock of the Day of Atonement sacrifice. To whatever extent the eyes of our understanding have been blessed and opened to this knowledge of the grace of God in Christ, to that extent has been our measure of responsibility, and in the same proportion is the guilt of those who, having once appreciated the blood of Christ, have turned from this precious faith and are now counting the blood of the Covenant wherewith they were sanctified a common

thing, and are doing “despite unto the Spirit of grace.”
Heb. 10:29

For those who do this intelligently, with full knowledge, we can have no hope, for the Scriptures imply that there is a sin unto death—the Second Death. But we may hope that the majority of those who are now turning from Christ, from faith in him as the Redeemer, from faith in his blood as the sin atonement—turning to Evolution theories, Christian Science theories, etc.—we may hope that many of these have sinned only in part, have understood and appreciated only in part, have been blinded in part by the errors of the past, and that their sin in rejecting the blood atonement is proportionately one of ignorance and therefore pardonable with stripes.

“CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE”

The Apostle, when writing about how some would fall away, urges believers, “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.” (Heb. 10:35) Those Christian people who are still struggling to hold to the Word of God, to reject the philosophies and Science so-called respecting Evolution through human conceptions of salvation contradictory to the Bible, have need of a word of encouragement. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward—hold fast to the faith once delivered to the saints. (Jude 3) So far from rejecting God’s Word let such begin afresh to search the Scriptures—to discriminate between the errors of the “dark ages,” which have come down to us in the various creeds of Christendom, and the truth of the Lord’s Word, which to some extent was mixed and intermingled with the errors in those creeds. Let us not make either mistake: (1) To cast everything away and lose our faith; nor (2) to hold on to everything of the creeds, scriptural and unscriptural, and thus to confuse our minds and hearts with the errors. On the contrary, let us do a sifting work, rejecting everything contrary to the divine Word, however ancient and honorable, and accepting everything, every statement of the Word, whether popular or unpopular with our neighbors and friends.

Those who are taking this course are finding that at this very time, when many are falling away, the Lord is providing for the truth-hungry who are looking to him in prayer and in the study of the Word. For these he is now providing a feast of fat things, an opening of the eyes of their understanding, and an appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God as displayed in the divine plan, such as they never before had dreamed of—such as but a little while ago they would have supposed too good to be true, a mere dream of human fancy. Truly the words of the Lord through the Prophet are fulfilled as our eyes are opened to see the beauties of his Word. When stripped of human tradition

we see that as the heavens are higher than the earth so are God's ways higher than man's ways, God's plans higher than man's plans; and thus seeing the riches of God's grace, our hearts are more and more refreshed, and we are more and more enabled to follow the Apostle's admonition to stand in this evil day with our loins girded about with truth, having on the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the sandals of preparation and knowledge, and the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Thus armed with all the divine panoply we are assured of victory, and that nothing shall cause us to fall. Mark how this is delineated by the Prophet David saying, "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand: but it shall not come nigh thee. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation." Psa. 91:7,9

THE JEWISH ATONEMENT DAY

Let us glance at the Jewish Atonement Day and then at its antitype, that our faith may stand not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:4) Whatever man's wisdom may say respecting Evolution, we are hearkening to the source of all wisdom when we hear from the Word of God the testimony through the Apostle, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men, because all are sinners." Rom. 5:12

In this brief statement we have an explanation of the whole situation. The Apostle here reiterates the story of Genesis, that father Adam was on trial as the head of his race, and that all of his posterity have been involved in his fall, which came upon him in harmony with the divine sentence — a fall which affected him and his posterity mentally, morally and physically — even unto death. It should be noted that the penalty was not eternal torment, but death. Unless this be dearly appreciated and understood, the Atonement for sin which God provided can not be clearly understood.

2H421

The Atonement was a life for a life — the life of Adam and his race was forfeited as a penalty for sin and the Atonement Day sacrifices offered the lives of the bullocks and goats as sin-offerings for the satisfaction of that original sin and the reconciliation to God of the sinners.

The Apostle, while acknowledging that under God's arrangement those Atonement Day sacrifices did cover the sins of the Israelites for the year following Atonement Day, points out that the fact that the forgiveness and reconciliation was only for a year, so that it was not a full atonement that was affected but only a partial one. His words are, "Those sacrifices which were offered by the Jews year by year repeatedly could never take away sins nor make those coming to God under the efficacy of those sacrifices really and permanently acceptable to God." The whole thing was on a temporary basis and intended, as the Apostle

explains, to be a type or foreshadowing of the real sacrifices for sins, which in God's due time would accomplish a complete cancellation of the sentence against Adam and his race and bring all mankind into harmony with God as the Jews were, only much more effectually, because Moses their Mediator, during their year of sin-covering, was unable to lift them up out of their degradation and imperfection to harmony with God. On the contrary Christ, under the covering of his sin-offering, is able as the better High Priest and Mediator to lift up and bless and bring back to harmony with God all those for whom he makes atonement — and it is refreshing to remember that he is to make atonement for the sins of the whole world.

THE BULLOCK AND GOAT OFFERING

It will be remembered that the typical sin-atonement under the Jewish arrangement was divided into two parts for two classes, and that there were two distinct sacrifices. The bullock was offered first, and was not for all the people, but merely for the priestly tribe, the tribe of Levi. Then the goat was offered, not for the tribe of Levi, but for the other eleven tribes, styled "all the people." As we have already seen, the bullock represented Christ Jesus, and the atonement made with the blood of the bullock for the tribe of Levi represented that the blood of Christ is now applied on behalf of the household of faith— believers—who are the antitypes of the tribe of Levi. In harmony with this, the record is that when our Lord Jesus ascended on high he appeared in the presence of God for us — the Church — "on our behalf." His sacrifice effected the cleansing of our sins, but not of the world's sins, not of the sins of the Jews — merely the sins of believers.

Forthwith the second part of the sacrificing of the Day of Atonement proceeded: the goat was slain, and its blood was offered as the blood of the bullock had been offered, but for a different class, for all the people. That goat represented not all believers, but merely the consecrated ones, the 'Royal Priesthood,' who presented their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, their reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1) These are permitted by God's grace to become associated sacrifices with Jesus their Head, that they may also in due time be glorified together with him as his joint-heirs in the Kingdom. (Rom. 8:17) The great High Priest, Jesus, does all the offering; he accepts us as members of his body, and counts our suffering for righteousness' sake as part of his own sufferings, so that the Apostle could say, as all other of the same body may also say, "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24) When the last member of the consecrated priestly class shall have fully submitted his will to the Lord, and shall thus have finished his sacrifice at the hands of the great High Priest and as one of his members, then this

second part of the Atonement Day work will be concluded, and then the blood of the goat shall be sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat, even as previously to our Lord's ascension the blood of the bullock was sprinkled in the Most Holy on our behalf.

Thus seen the entire Gospel age is the antitype of the Day of Atonement. The type occupied a few years, the antitype several centuries. In the type the sacrifices were the bullock and the goat, in the antitype, as the Apostle declares, we have the "better sacrifices" of Jesus and of those whom he accepts as his very elect, and who have the promise that, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." These, by nature "children of wrath even as others," by grace have been saved from that state and adopted into the family of God as his children, assured that if they present their bodies living sacrifices they will be in God's sight "holy, acceptable sacrifices," and that if they thus follow Jesus, their pattern now, they shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; if so be they suffer with him that they may also be glorified with him. We can not at this time enter more fully into a discussion of these types but refer the interested to our small pamphlet entitled, "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices," published by the Tract Society at a nominal price, or to be had free if so requested.

"THE LIFE IS IN THE BLOOD"

To understand why the blood is so frequently referred to in the Scriptures as the agency or channel through which sins are forgiven, and why the Jews were prohibited from using blood as food, we must bear in mind the Lord's word, "The blood is the life"

2H422

(Deut. 12:23); and again, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." (Lev. 17:11) So, then, wherever we read throughout the Scriptures respecting blood atonement — as, for instance, the expression, "the blood of the cross"—we are to remember that the word blood is merely symbolical of life poured out or sacrificed. The blood being the life of every creature, the shedding of the blood in every case represents to that extent the death of that creature. So far as our Lord was concerned it mattered not whether a single drop of his blood had fallen to the ground as a result of the spear thrust and the nails; it was the blood of the cross in the sense of being the life that was given for us on the cross — this it was that constituted the merit on account of which our sins could be cancelled, and indirectly the sins of the whole world.

“THE SHAME OF THE CROSS”

The Apostle recognizes two classes of opposition to the Gospel message in his day, and now after eighteen centuries we may still see opposition to the Word of God from the same two directions. St. Paul said, “The cross of Christ is to the Jew a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness.” The Jew was so intent in his looking for the honors and glories of Messiah’s Kingdom, and took so superficial a view of the typical atonement sacrifices of his own time, that he supposed no further sacrifices were necessary and that the glories of Messiah would at once be revealed. He did not realize the world’s need to be redeemed by the precious blood—that in no other way could God be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus. (Rom. 3:26) He did not realize that a penalty for sin had been announced, and that such penalty was a death penalty, extinction, and that the divine Judge could not set it aside without compromising the righteousness, the justice of his own laws and government. He did not see that God’s love proposed to meet the requirements of his own justice, and thus give to the Jews and to mankind in general an exhibition of justice and love co-ordinated in human redemption and restitution, and hence he “stumbled” at the message of the Gospel—that the blood of the cross was necessary and had been shed, and that only believers in this could be justified in God’s sight.

The Greeks of the apostles’ day were the worldly-wise followers of Plato; and we still have the same class in our day—people too wise to accept the simple statements of God’s Word respecting the recovery of the Redeemer from the power of death by a resurrection. Worldly wisdom says, “Not so; to us this story of the fall, the redemption and the resurrection is foolishness. We prefer to believe that man has been rising from a protoplasm up to his present status by evolutionary processes, and that there was no redemption because there was no fall, and that there will be no resurrection because, according to our theory, the dead become more alive in the moment of dying.”

Thus the battle of the cross, the divine plan, the wisdom of God, and the power of God connected therewith, is an old story and still foolishness to the world; but the Lord declares that the time is coming when the wisdom of his plan shall be manifested and when the folly of the worldly wise shall be likewise shown. Then, the Lord tells us, he will remove the rebuke of his people; they shall no longer be called foolish, but shall be recognized as having declared the wisdom of God and the power of God as he himself revealed it in the cross of Christ.

*“In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o’er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.”*

[The National Labor Tribune, October 14, 1906](#)

“AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT”

Dallas, Tex., October 14—A convention of Bible Students, Believers in the Atonement of the Precious Blood, representing Texas, Alabama, and Indian Territory, opened here yesterday. Amongst its speakers is Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., whose discourse of this evening we report. His text was, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” (Heb. 9:27, 28) He said:

Our text has long been misunderstood: to the majority of minds it signifies, Beware of doomsday, and bids humanity quake at the thought of inexpressible agonies awaiting all who have not made their peace with God through Christ. We quite agree that the Scriptures do teach, “a just recompense of reward to every soul of man that doeth evil:” we agree that none of God’s laws can be violated with impunity, that “Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap;”

2H423

but we dissent strongly from the usual thought that the divine Creator purposed from before man’s creation an awful and unjust torture, inconceivable in its severe and prolonged sufferings. This erroneous view has come to us from the “dark ages,” and we thank God that gradually the eyes of our understanding are opening, so that some of the features of the nightmare of horror which once engulfed us are fading away, and our minds are attaining a saner view of the Almighty and a better understanding of his Word.

Error is frequently inconsistent, as in the case before us: it claims, on the one hand, that the sufferings of the ungodly, the unregenerate, begin in the very moment of death and last through all eternity, without change or abatement; then it takes the text before us and contradicts itself, saying that the whole world of mankind will need to wait until the Day of Judgment, and that then and there they will enter upon their hopeless torment. If the one view be right the other one must be wrong, all will admit; but we hold that both these conceptions of the future are erroneous, that both of them are inconsistent with the divine testimony. Scripturally considered, the judgment of the Church takes place during this Gospel age, while the world’s judgment will transpire during the Millennium. Scripturally considered, the Church, the Elect, now on trial for eternal life, will receive their reward, be glorified, fully empowered, and

will then constitute the ‘judges of the world.’ It is in harmony with this that the Apostle declares, “God hath appointed a day (the Millennial day—a thousand-year day) in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.” (Acts 17:31) That “Man” is the great Christ, the antitypical Moses—the antitypical seed of Abraham—Jesus the Head, and the Church, the members of the body. Gal. 3:29

JUDGMENT INCLUDES TRIAL

We are not now discussing our text: we are merely considering first the erroneous views which generally prevail respecting the Judgment. What Christian does not recognize the fact that he is now on trial as a member of the body of Christ, to determine whether or not he shall be counted worthy to maintain his blessed relationship and to have it confirmed and extended into the future glory, honor and immortality which God has promised to the faithful. By faith and consecration we join the Church of Christ at the present time on “probation,” as our Methodist friends illustrate. The probationary period is our earthly life; and our Lord declares that if we are faithful to our covenant of sacrifice we surely shall have the full and blessed reward of permanent membership in his Church, his body, by participation in the First Resurrection. He tells us that our names are written in the Lamb’s book of life from the moment of our accepted consecration. He tells us that a crown of life was set apart for us at that moment, and assures us that if we are faithful he will not blot out our names and will not give the crown to another—implying that unfaithfulness would result in the blotting out of our names from the elect class and the giving of the place and the crown to another who would prove more faithful. Surely all can recognize, then, that this probationary period is the Church’s judgment time, and that the rewards at the end, at the second coming of Christ will be merely such as are warranted by our course while on trial—in a word, that our trial is a testing of our faithfulness, loyalty, in harmony with our covenant of sacrifice, by which we entered the Lord’s family and on account of which we received the begetting of his Spirit.

In the Scripture we have quoted the Apostle shows clearly that the world’s day of judgment is future, and he confirms this when he says, “Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2) Since it requires all of this Gospel age to predetermine who are the real saints who shall reign with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:4), since it requires all of this age to determine who shall constitute the elect judges of the world, it must be manifest to every thinking person that the world’s judgment or trial-day can not come until after the Church’s judgment or trial is completed. Moreover, the character of the Church’s judgment or trial during this age should furnish such an illustration of the subject of

trial or judgment as would forever set aside as foolish the ordinary view that has come down to us from the “dark ages,” that the world’s day of judgment would be a twenty-four hour day, in which Christ would merely deliver sentences against the race, ignoring all opportunities for trial, for testing them in the knowledge of the truth.

Most explicitly and most reasonably the Scriptures show that the Millennial day, a thousand years long, is to be the world’s period of trial, of judgment; that during that day the Sun of Righteousness will arise, and cause the mental illumination of the whole world with the knowledge of God, of truth, of righteousness. Then all the blind eyes shall be opened, much after the manner that the eyes of our understanding are now opened to see the Lord and to understand his Word. The veil of ignorance that is now spread over all things, the Lord assures us, will be abolished, will be removed during that Millennial day, when his Kingdom shall take control of the world’s affairs, banishing its sin and ignorance and superstition, and binding Satan, the prince of darkness and error. Thus will the Lord grant a trial to the world of mankind somewhat similar to the trial for everlasting life or everlasting death. The Church,

2H424

now on trial, will then, by obedience, have proved loyal to the Lord and to righteousness, and therefore worthy under the Lord’s terms of life everlasting.

But during this Spirit dispensation all these who are recognized as the Church and thus placed on trial are first begotten of the Spirit; hence, if their trial pass successfully, it means that they will be born of the Spirit in the First Resurrection and have eternal life as spirit beings and no longer as human beings. The world, on the contrary, will not be begotten of the Spirit and be on trial for eternity as spirit beings, but under the terms of the Lord’s promise their trial will be for worthiness or unworthiness of eternal life as human beings—as inhabitants of the earth, restored to Paradisaic conditions during the Millennium. The trials are alike then, in that they mean either life eternal or death eternal. Whoever of the Spirit begotten, Spirit-enlightened ones now sins wilfully and deliberately, passes under condemnation of the Second Death, the Apostle assures us. (Heb. 4:6; 10:29-32) Whoever of the world in the next age, after having attained a full enlightenment, a full opportunity of reconciliation with God, shall then wilfully and deliberately reject and neglect divine mercy shall die the Second Death—or, as the Apostle Paul declares, “such shall be destroyed from among the people” and “be punished with everlasting destruction.” Acts 3:2 3; 2 Thess. 1:9

OUR TEXT MISUNDERSTOOD

Having glanced at the erroneous views respecting the Day of Judgment and briefly presented the Scriptural view, we now turn to our text to consider it. We have already noticed the erroneous light in which it is generally viewed, and now call attention to the fact that it is not referring to the death of mankind in general nor to the judgment of mankind in general. The entire text clearly demonstrates that the Apostle is discussing the typical priests of the Jewish people and their typical sacrifices, and is fitting to these types their antitypes. After describing the sin offering of the Day of Atonement, he tells us that the earthly priests who made these sacrifices typified our Lord Jesus. Their going into the Most Holy represented the going of Jesus, our High Priest, into heaven itself, their sprinkling of the Mercy Seat and thus making atonement typified his presentation of the merit of his own sacrifice to the Heavenly Father, his application of his own blood of atonement. The coming out of the earthly priest from the Most Holy represented the Second coming of Christ, the gorgeous robes typifying the divine glory, honor and power of Messiah. As, then, the earthly priest proceeded in his glorious robes to bless all the people, to assure them of divine forgiveness and reconciliation, and to give them comfort, encouragement and assistance during the ensuing year, so the Christ will bless all the families of the earth, encouraging, helping, uplifting them, and bringing so many as will back into full fellowship with God and back to the full perfection of God-likeness.

This is the picture the Apostle lays before our mental vision in the context. Then he proceeds to show that there was a special trial or testing upon those earthly priests before they could enter the Most Holy and make the atonement there; in order to be the officiating priests in the Most Holy they must die—not literally, not actually but in a typical manner. They did this under divine direction by taking an animal, a bullock, to represent the priest. When he laid his hands upon it, it signified that it was his representative, and when he smote the bullock and killed it and took of its blood and went into the Holy and Most Holy it illustrated how Christ, begotten of the holy Spirit, a New Creature, sacrificed his human nature and then presented his human life (represented by the blood) as a ransom price to justice for the life of Adam and all of his posterity who died through his disobedience. Thus in type every year the Jewish priests represented far more than they knew—they represented the antitypical sacrifice of Christ Jesus. The Apostle declares that in doing this year by year continually, repeatedly, they illustrated the fact that it was not the real atonement for sin that was effected, but merely the typical one, reckoned good for the year. But the Apostle explains that Christ, having become a high priest of a higher order, enacted all of these things on a higher plane—on the antitypical plane.

His sacrifice was not that of a bullock but of himself. The blood, the life, which he took into the Most Holy, even heaven itself, when he ascended on high to appear in the presence of God for us, was the real merit of his own sacrificed life. It needed not to be repeated ever, because it fully met the requirements of divine justice.

“AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT”

The Jews repudiated the cross of Christ—as the Apostle says, they “stumbled over it.” They were looking for a Messiah who would enter upon his glorious career as the emperor of the world, the seed of Abraham, to bless all the world, and who would associate their nation with him in this work. They were too proud and boastful of heart to accept the message that Messiah must first die, must first redeem the world, and must present the redemption blood to divine justice before he could be just and the justifier of them that believe—before he could accomplish the work of blessing Israel and all the families of the earth. The Apostle in our context demonstrates the fact that the death of Christ as the High Priest of the world was taught by

2H425

Moses in the Law during the entire period of Jewish history—that every high priest of the family of Aaron who killed the bullock thus represented his own death, his own consecration to death. And then he points out that even after passing into the Holy and partaking of the bread and then in the light of the candlestick and offering incense upon the golden altar, the high priest had the great test of all before him, for, according to the Law, if he had not performed the entire work correctly his attempt to pass under the second veil into the Most Holy would have meant his death, his extinction.

This is the judgment of our life—the crisis—the test that came upon every Jewish high priest as he attempted to serve in the office of the high priest on the Day of Atonement. As thus in the type God appointed unto men, (High Priests), once to die relatively in the killing of the bullock, and after this to have a judgment or decision, Heb. 9:27, respecting their worthiness or unworthiness upon attempting to enter the Most Holy; so, according to the Apostle, it was also with Christ. Christ fulfilled all those things in the antitype. He was offered once to bear the sins of many: he not only consecrated at Jordan when he was baptized and received the holy Spirit, but during the three and a half years of his ministry he carried out that offering or sacrifice and finished it at Calvary —there he passed under the second veil. According to the type, if his work had in any measure or degree been defective he would never have risen from the dead, he would have perished in death. But his resurrection on the third day on the other side of

the veil, a spirit being, was evidence that his work of sacrifice had been thoroughly done, that it was acceptable to the Father.

The Apostle sums up his argument by pointing out that as Jesus had thus died, had thus passed his judgment, and had the evidence of divine acceptance in his resurrection, we all who believe the record and trust in him may know that the next feature in order will be the coming forth of this great High Priest in his due time to bless the world. The Apostle emphasizes this by saying that he will appear the second time without sin. This does not signify that at his first appearing he had sinned, for the Scriptures quite to the contrary declare that “in him was no sin,” but he appeared the first time as a sin offering—to take the place of the sinner, to suffer in the sinner’s stead; and the Apostle would have us understand that our Lord at his second advent will not be manifested as a sin offering—he has already accomplished that in the sacrifice of himself—but his second coming in power and great glory will be

“WITHOUT SIN, UNTO SALVATION.”

The Scriptures everywhere point us to the fact that while believers in the present time may properly enough claim to be saved, nevertheless, as the Apostle says, “We are saved by hope” (Rom. 8:24); the actual salvation is to be brought unto us “at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 1:13) In other words, those who accept the Lord’s message by faith now have their probationary trial now, and must wait for the salvation until the second advent of our Lord. The salvation of the elect class will be the very first item connected with the Lord’s second advent. His promise is that he will come again and receive them unto himself, that he will grant them a share in his resurrection, or, as the Prophet mentions the matter, “God will help her (the Bride of Christ) right early in the morning.” (Psa. 46:5) The salvation of the Church will be immediately followed by granting the world its opportunity of salvation—the forgiveness of all sins of heredity, the punishment with stripes of every wilful sin, administered in such a corrective manner and with such encouraging assistances as will be most helpful to the world, to lift whosoever will out of sin and death conditions up, up, up gradually during the Millennial age to the full perfection, full salvation, full attainment of all that was lost in Adam and redeemed for us by the precious blood. This is the salvation which Christ brings at his second coming, the salvation which only the Church knows how to anticipate and appreciate now, the salvation of which the Apostle speaks when he says, “God will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth.” I Tim. 2:4

“THEM THAT LOOK FOR HIM”

The Apostle declares that the Lord will appear at the second advent “unto them that have been watching.” He

is very evidently, not looking to any manifestation to the natural eye, for in that Christ will appear to those who are searching for him as much as to those who are looking for him. But the Apostle wrote under inspiration and phrased his language properly. Our Lord's second advent is not to be in the flesh, for as in the type the high priest put on the glorious garments when he came out to bless the people, so in the antitype our Lord will be clothed in the glories of the divine nature during the time of his pouring out blessings upon the human family. As no man has seen God at any time except as God was manifest in the flesh, so none will be able to see the glorious High Priest except as he shall be manifest in the flesh, for the Scriptures declare that he is the express image of the Father's person. If, therefore, the Father's person can not be seen neither can the Son's person be seen. As the Apostle declares, the King immortal, invisible, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen or can see, is a description which fits both the Father and the glorified Son. 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16

2H426

Hence those who will recognize the Lord at his second coming must be those who will look for him, and they alone. And only the enlightenment of the eyes of the understanding will enable anyone to look for the presence and power and blessing of the Invisible One— not seen to the eye of flesh. The truly consecrated of the Lord's people will, therefore, earliest be ready to recognize the presence of the Son of man—to recognize manifestations of his glorious reign begun. And when these shall have passed beyond the veil to be with him, the great time of trouble will manifest to the world the change of dispensation, the consummation of this age. Then, quickly following that manifestation, will come the Lord's manifestation to the world through his ancient worthies in the flesh; and gradually, as the eyes of understanding shall open to the situation, every eye shall see him—shall recognize that he who died on Calvary is indeed the great King through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed in proportion as they will render obedience to the righteous requirements which then will be clearly discerned by every creature, because then the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep, so that none shall need to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, for all of them shall know him from the least to the greatest of them. Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34

In conclusion, then, let us have right views of the judgment or trial time of the world in the next age—right views of our own, the Church's trial time in this age, and correct views of our text, which points out to us that the judgment or trial which came upon every priest every year when he attempted to take the blood of atonement into the Most Holy was a type or picture of

the sacrifice of Christ and its acceptableness to the Father, and of the test which was upon him by which his resurrection was demonstrated, that his sacrifice as a whole was perfect and acceptable, and therefore the basis of the reconciliation for the sins of the whole world.

[The National Labor Tribune, November 18, 1906](#)

RESTITUTION TIMES COMING

Worcester, Mass., Nov. 18—Pastor C. T. Russell, of Allegheny, preached here today in our large auditorium, “Mechanics’ Hall,” to a large audience. His discourse, “A Cure for Infidelity—To Hell and Back,” was listened to most attentively for nearly two hours by nearly 2000 people. We report his evening discourse from the text, “Times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” Acts 3:19-21

Few seem to realize that the doctrine of Evolution, which is spreading so rapidly amongst the most intelligent people, is diametrically opposed to the teachings of God’s Word. Nor should it surprise us that linked with the doctrine of Evolution goes the higher critical view of the Bible—the refined and cultured way in which in our day infidelity is referred to and glossed over. With these teachings now entrenched in all the text books of the colleges, seminaries and high schools of the civilized world, it is impossible for the students to graduate except as they shall show themselves proficient in this fundamental error, which already has so largely undermined the divine revelation. It is safe to say that nine out of ten of all the graduates of theological seminaries are evolutionists and in full sympathy with higher criticism. Thus infidelity has already grasped the pulpits of Christendom to such an extent that only here and there can a preacher of the gospel be found, one who believes in the Bible and its revelation, its good tidings. And these are considered by the associates in the ministry to be “back numbers”—“old fogy”—fools for Christ’s sake—for the truth’s sake.

This falling away from the faith once delivered to the saints is freely predicted in the Scriptures, and is a marked sign that we are in the closing time of this Gospel age and close to the dawning of the Millennial epoch. Did not our Lord say, “When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8) Did not the Apostle Paul say, “Evil men and leaders astray shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived?” (2 Tim. 3:13) Did he not predict that in the end of this age the Lord would permit or “send strong delusions,” that nominal professors, lacking the spirit of the truth, should be deceived, “that they might believe a lie,” that they might all be condemned—that it might

ultimately be seen that they were not at heart spiritual Israelites indeed, not therefore of the elect, and not therefore permitted to share in the highest salvation which God has provided for these? The Apostle tells us why this strong delusion is sent in the end of this age, why these are not protected from the delusion. He says that it is because “they received not the truth in the love of it, but had pleasure in untruth”—therefore they are ensnared by the error and stumble into unbelief. 2 Thes. 2:11

2H427

THE WORLD'S WISDOM FOOLISHNESS

Through the prophet Isaiah the Lord pictures the end of this Gospel age and the very conditions which now surround us, and tells us the reason therefore. We quote, “The book is handed to one who is learned, saying, Read thou I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: Again it is handed to one who is unlearned saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot for I am unlearned.” Thus, saith the Lord, the word is become to all of you as a sealed book. The reason for this is stated, “Because this people draweth nigh to me with their lips while their heart is far from me.” (Isa. 29:11-13) The lesson for us is that God reveals the secrets of his Word and plan only to those who are of a contrite heart—to the honest hearted who love the truth, and who will hold to it at any cost of property or worldly prosperity or honor of men—esteeming the riches of Christ of greater value than all the treasure of the world.

The prophet, picturing our day, shows the creeds in which many have been seeking to rest under the figure of a short bed and narrow cover. An intellectual babe might roll and crow and have abundance of room in such a trundle bed, but those of more developed mind, whose eyes of understanding are opening, find that the trundle bed of the past is too short and its covering too narrow. They cannot properly stretch themselves; they are cramped and uncomfortable in such beds; neither is the covering sufficiently ample that they may wrap themselves and feel comfortable and secure. The Calvinistic creed, for instance, as a sample of many others has become too short, too cramped. Intelligent people cannot continue to rest in its provisions and limitations. As taught in the creeds the doctrine of election at one time served to cover and satisfy those in the Westminster creed bed, but as their minds have grown, these are unsatisfactory and they feel that if only a handful are to be saved they are not certain that the handful will all be Calvinists, and moan, “ ‘Tis a point I long to know.”

Mark the words of the Prophet respecting the higher critics and doctors of divinity of our day, and their leaving of the

Bible to follow the paths of science, falsely so-called, the path of the higher critics and evolutionists. He says, "Behold, I proceed to do a marvelous thing— a marvelous thing and an astonishment: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish and the understanding of their prudent men shall be buried." Isa. 29:14

THE BIBLE OPPOSES EVOLUTION

The Bible does give some ground for supposing that the lower animals were developed to their various perfections somewhat along the lines of evolution. For instance, the statement that God caused the sea to bring forth fish of every kind. It is not said that God formed the fish and put them into the sea, nor that he formed any of the lower animals. Furthermore, this is not the question of contention by evolutionists. Their attack is upon man himself: their claim is that man sprung from the monkey, and that the monkey originally sprang from protoplasm. Their claim is that these various steps of evolution have brought us as a race to our present condition, and that the process of development into gods is gradually going on. The Scriptural proposition is the very reverse of this. The Bible tells us that man was formed by the Almighty, was a direct creation and that he was made perfect and upright, the mental and moral image and likeness in the flesh of his Creator, the Almighty Spirit Being.

Whoever takes the evolutionary theory must reject this statement, and hence the attempts of the higher critics to make the book of Genesis appear ridiculous and foolish and unreasonable. But it is not the book of Genesis merely that would need to be demolished in order to support the evolution theory. The entire Bible speaks with one harmonious voice respecting the fall from divine favor and likeness into sin-and-death conditions. The Apostle tells us that sin and death began to reign in Adam's day and he explains the cause therefore saying, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as the result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because all have sinned. (Rom. 5:12) Our Lord Jesus contradicts the evolution theory most emphatically in his statement, "The Son of man came to seek and recover that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) The prophet David, picturing man in his original state, before sin entered, says, "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, thou crownest him with glory and honor (God-Likeness), thou didst set him over the work of thy hands—all sheep and oxen, yea, the beasts of the field; the fowls of the air and the fish of the sea." Psalm 8:5-8

How could these testimonies of the divine Word be reconciled with the theory of evolution, even if the book of Genesis and its account of man's original perfection were blotted out of the Bible? Whoever is willing in his mind to contradict the Lord, the apostles and the

prophets, and assume that the worldly wise men of our day are better informed and more authoritative teachers, let him honestly repudiate the Bible in toto, and acknowledge that if its teachers are unworthy of credence on this subject, they are unworthy of confidence on any subject; and that if the worldly wise, the higher critics, are authoritative on this subject, their wisdom should be recognized also in other directions, and they should make us a new Bible according to their own presentations, their own so-called scientific guesses

2H428

respecting the past and future. On the contrary, whoever has set to his seal that God is true, that Jesus is the Son of God, and that the apostles and prophets were the inspired mouthpieces, let such say to themselves and to others—We utterly repudiate this so-called wisdom of the world, and anchor our faith in the word of the living God—We abandon evolution as it relates to mankind in every sense and particular, and will hold fast to the Word of Life and to all the exceeding great and precious promises of the scriptures.

RANSOM CONTRADICTS EVOLUTION

Those who will look at the subject from the Bible standpoint will see that its every teaching is in accord with its teaching of Adam's perfection and his fall. The penalizing of Adam's sins with the death penalty presupposes that the original sinner possessed intelligence of a high order, which would properly qualify him for a trial at the bar of God for either life or death eternal, and the death sentence corroborates the declaration of the Scriptures that Adam was disobedient in his trial. Thus the phenomena of death and mental, moral and physical impairment are all accounted for by the Scriptures through this doctrine of sin and its penalty. Every person and every theory which in any sense or degree either repudiates or ignores this Scriptural teaching, that all men are sinners and that their dying condition is the result or penalty of sin, are surely, therefore, in error.

In line with this we find the Scriptural doctrine of a ransom—that as sin and its penalty started in father Adam's disobedience and was inherited by all of his posterity, so God's provision for the future resurrection of Adam and his race made provision for their redemption. Thus the apostle states the matter, "As by a man (Adam) came death, by a man (Christ) also came the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive," "every man in his own order." (1 Cor. 15:21-23) If, as the evolutionists tell us, man is "falling upward," wherein was the justice of the divine sentence against him? Why should God speak of him as a sinner, a transgressor? Is it sinful to evolve upward? Surely not! Why should man be spoken of as under

the curse or penalty for sin, since self-development is not sin? Why should it be written that Justice demands a ransom price before Adam and his race could be released from the death sentence and be granted an opportunity for eternal life? Why did the Law given through Moses symbolize sin-offerings and divine propitiation through Day of Atonement sacrifices, etc., and the High Priest's services, if there was no fall, no sin, and no need of a redemption and sin-offering as a reconciliation to God? Why should the New Testament continue the same story of the necessity for the death of Jesus as the redemption price, that by his stripes we might be healed, that through the sacrifice of his life the world might be granted a resurrection of life in due time?

Why is the doctrine of the second coming of Christ and the resurrection so prominently before us in the Bible if there was no fall into sin and death, no need of a redemption, and no need that at his second coming the sins of the world shall be blotted out, and the world of mankind uplifted out of sin and death conditions back to full perfection of human nature and all that was lost in Adam? There can be no answer to these questions before an honest mind. The matter is a simple one: we must either reject the Bible doctrine of man's creation in perfection, his fall into sin and its penalty of death, his redemption by the precious blood of Jesus and his recovery by and by from sin and death and restoration to full perfection during the Millennial age at the hands of the great Redeemer, or, on the contrary, we must repudiate in toto all the theories of human evolution as being absolutely, unqualified, untrue, "Let God be true though it prove every man a liar." Rom. 3:4

RESTITUTION OPPOSED TO EVOLUTION

The pity is that very few Christian people are aware that restitution is the Scriptural teaching respecting the future hope of the world. I am sure few if any of this audience ever heard a discourse from our text. In fact, experience proves that remarkably few ministers or laymen know that there is such a statement in the Scriptures—that God through the inspired Apostle declares: Times, years of restitution are just before us—to begin at the second coming of our Lord, and, as our context declares, are to be seasons of refreshing of blessing, of uplifting to the world of mankind. Yea, notice that in our text the Apostle declares that all the holy prophets since the world began have foretold these coming times of restitution and blessing. Strange that for so long we have overlooked the teachings of God's Word, the real hope set before the world. The hope before the church, is a heavenly one, the prospect of a change from an earthly nature and conditions and surroundings to the heavenly, to be accomplished in the first or chief resurrection. The blessing promised to the world is not a change to another

nature, but a restitution of the present human nature to its original condition and connected with this earth, its future home of paradise.

Restitution, as all are aware, signifies the restoring or putting back to previous condition. It is consistent, therefore, that the Scriptures point out the glory of God exhibited in our first parents, lost through sin, redeemed by the precious blood, and assure us that ultimately

2H429

all the world of mankind who will render submission, to the voice of the Lord which they hear with the ears of their hearts, and be restored to all that was lost, to the full perfection and dignity of the human nature, the fleshly image of the divine nature. All of this restitution is predicted upon the fact that Jesus paid Adam's penalty and thereby attained the legal right to release Adam and all of his posterity from the death penalty by an awakening and a restitution, otherwise called the general resurrection, as the perfecting of the church is called her change, or the chief resurrection to glory, honor and immortality.

THERE IS A REASON

There is a reason why the Scriptural doctrine of restitution, spoken by the apostles and all the holy prophets since the world began, has been overlooked by theologians in general. For the same reason the doctrine of the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead have lost their trust and power in the faith of Christendom. The reason is that false doctrines were added very early to and engrafted upon, the faith once delivered to the saints. These traditions of the ancients have largely made the Word of God of none effect in the minds of the people, have rendered many of the statements of the Scriptures unintelligible, and have prepared the masses of Christendom to believe a lie—the lie that is now being made so prominent, that death is not death, that there is a soul that cannot die, that there was no redemption from the fall, and that there will be no restitution.

This false doctrine is based on the human theory that a man does not die, that the soul cannot die. It is in complete opposition to the Scriptural declaration, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die,” “the wages of sin is death.” “God is able to destroy both soul and body.” The theology that man when he dies is not dead but more alive than ever renders meaningless the doctrine of resurrection from the dead, and also the doctrine of the second coming of Christ for the purpose of resurrecting the dead and granting them blessed opportunities during “the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” This false doctrine that man is alive when

he is dead is the basis for all the horrible teachings regarding purgatory, respecting the doctrine of prayers to the saints, supposed to be alive in heaven, when according to the Scriptures, they are dead and waiting for the second coming of our Lord and the resurrection of the dead.

Note the Apostle Peter's statement on the Day of Pentecost—"David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34); and if David has not ascended, why should we suppose that others of the prophets and saints, except the Lord, have ascended? Our Lord's word on this subject is, "No man hath ascended into heaven"—save the Son of man. (John 3:13) Everything in the Scriptures agrees that the prophets of old as well as the Apostles, and all the faithful as well as the unfaithful, fall asleep in death and "know not anything" until awakening in the resurrection morning. (Eccl. 9:5; Job 14:12) Hence Scripturally death is spoken of as a sleep, as when we read that Jesus said of Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps," and afterward explained that in common parlance he meant that Lazarus was dead. Again of Stephen, the first martyr, it is written, "He fell asleep." The doctrine that the dead are more alive than ever before is responsible for many of the unreasonable views of the people now so generally entertained, even by some who were themselves Bible Students, but are now not, and who wrest the scriptures from their true import to conform them to one of the creeds of the "dark ages."

Let us go back to the Bible and common sense. Let us believe the record which God has given us of Adam's original creation in his likeness, of his fall into sin, of the share that we all as his race have in his imperfection and unworthiness; and then let us hope in the redemption accomplished by our Lord and in the resurrection of salvation from death as it shall finally be accomplished through his power: now the high calling of salvation to the church—and during the Millennial age the blessing of the world by restoration, restitution processes, which shall bring them back to all that was lost, plus valuable lessons in knowledge which will be to their eternal advantage. Let us see further God's reasonable provision that any who once really see and understand and appreciate the divine plan if they sin wilfully, deliberately, will become subject to the Second Death—utter destruction, from which there will be no redemption, no recovery by resurrection or otherwise.

RESTITUTION SPOKEN BY THE PROPHETS

Did time permit, it would afford us great pleasure to go through the various prophecies and point out wherein all the holy prophets have spoken of the coming times of restitution. Moses the prophet distinctly set forth that in due time He would send a greater one than himself, "A prophet like unto me," the Messiah, and that through

him blessings more abundant would come—blessings of relief and uplift and succor, forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. Peter quotes this in the words just following our text, and indicates that the fulfillment of it will be in the times of restitution, the times of refreshing and rejuvenation which God has proclaimed through all the prophets. Then, says the apostle, under those favorable conditions, “It

2H430

shall come to pass that the soul that will not obey that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” (Acts 3:23) God himself prophesied of these coming blessings of restitution, declaring to Abraham unconditionally, “In thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed.” As the curse was death, the blessing of our Lord will be the reversal of the death and dying, namely, restitution to life.

Job, a prophet, taught the restitution of all things in a figure, himself representing the human family losing all of his possessions—everything—and in God’s providence, in due time, got back all that was lost, person for person, animal for animal. David the prophet over and over tells us about the blessings that shall fill the earth when Messiah shall reign, cause wars to cease, succor the poor and needy, and uplift the world out of degradation back to divine favor. The prophets mainly refer to Israel when speaking of the restitution times; and without ignoring fleshly Israel and the blessings which will begin with them and extend to all the nations, we should not forget that Natural Israel was a typical people; that one of its tribes, the Levites, represented or typified Spiritual Israel with its Royal Priesthood, the Gospel Church, under the leadership of Christ, while the other tribes represented the remainder of mankind, who are to receive a blessing and instruction and uplift through the priestly class, the Lord’s people now being selected from among mankind.

But doubtless all in this audience would be impressed more by the words of Jesus himself than by all the testimony of all the prophets. Hearken, therefore, to the great Teacher, the great Prophet, telling of restitution. He spake through his subsequent mouthpieces, the apostles, to tell us through our text of the coming restitution times, and to tell us through the Apostle Paul that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain together waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God—when their groaning and travailing in pain shall cease, and when they, by the grace of God, by acceptance of his favors of the Kingdom, shall regain the liberty of the sons of God—freedom from sin and death—restoration to divine favor. Not only so, but in his own dark utterances with his own lips, he

corroborated the testimony of the angels who announced his birth and who declared that it meant “good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people.”

Our Lord told that he came to “seek and to save that which was lost;” he told how as the good Shepherd he was giving his life for the sheep, and as a result he would lead all of his true sheep, both of the present flock and of another flock yet to be called, to the fold. He told how he came “not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them;” he pointed to his second coming as the time when he would reward the servants of this Gospel Age, the church, and that then he would set up his kingdom and give his faithful servants, the church, dominion over the world for its blessing and uplifting. He told how the time of blessing and uplift would not only be for the then living people, but also that all in their graves should hear his voice and should come forth, and that those who would hear in the sense of obey should live, ultimately be freed entirely from all the sin-and-death conditions of the present.

RESTITUTION EVEN FOR SODOM

So prone are we to think of God as less merciful and less generous than ourselves instead of more so, that we are inclined to limit the gracious promises of his Word and to suppose that they are merely for the saints of this Gospel age. On the contrary, while the exceedingly great and precious promises are for the saints, there are other promises to the world in general which shall be theirs after the saints shall be glorified with their Lord. Whoever will read carefully and prayerfully and intelligently Romans 11:25-32 will find distinctly stated the great blessings that are to come to natural Israel at the second coming of Christ; and after the church shall be glorified, that Natural Israel “shall obtain mercy through your mercy”—through the mercy of glorified Spiritual Israel during restitution times.

But notice particularly a nation of the past, admittedly a very sinful nation, and see what our Lord declares to be their future prospects. He testified that all of the Sodomites were destroyed, saying, “Fire came down from heaven and destroyed them all.” But he tells that in the Day of Judgment, the great Millennial day of his Kingdom, when the whole world shall have a judgment or trial of eternal life, the Sodomites will not be forgotten. More than that, it will be “more tolerable” for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgment than for you—you of Chorasin and Bethsaida, who have had larger opportunities and have failed to profit thereby. But why should it be more tolerable for the Sodomites than for some others? Were they not wicked sinners? Our Lord testifies that they were sinful men. There is no excuse made for their iniquity, but he also testifies, saying, “If the mighty works that have been done in you had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah they would have

repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” Thus we see why it will be more tolerable for them in the Millennial day than for some who were more highly favored and who therefore sinned against greater light. Matt. 10:15

Turn now to Ezekiel 22:48-63. Hear what the Lord has said through his prophet respecting Sodom in the times of restitution—in the Day of Judgment—in the Millennial Day—under the reign of our Lord’s Kingdom for the blessing and uplifting and trying and testing

2H431

of the whole world for life or death everlasting. The prophet declares the sin of the Sodomites, and his word agrees with our Lord’s testimony that the Israelites were more blameworthy, and then he tells that in due time he will restore the Israelites, not for the merit or worthiness of either of them, but because of his own gracious plan and arrangements to give to all under the Millennial reign of Christ the fullest opportunity for knowledge and obedience and return to all that was lost and to life everlasting.

Mark the words of the prophet and remember to associate them with Jesus’ words respecting the same people, all of whom had gone into destruction, the tomb, the state of death, none of whom remained alive. He says, “This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they committed abominations before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.”

God did not take them away and deliver them over to devils for their torture eternally, but he did rain down fire from heaven and destroyed them all. He made an example of them as evil doers, and they have been dead ever since, knowing nothing. And the moment of their awakening, when they shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth, will be to them the very next moment of consciousness to that one in which they “suffered the vengeance of eternal fire” from heaven.

They will come forth to learn that they were redeemed from the death sentence and that while they will be held responsible for and suffer punishment for their wrong doing in proportion to their knowledge, nevertheless the Lord will be ready to help them out of all their difficulties and to forgive their transgressions and to remember their sins and their iniquities no more if they will render obedience to him and accept his offer of restitution, return to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed for them by the precious blood of Christ. Notice how the prophet continues and tells of the resurrection also of the Israelites and their unworthiness of God’s favor, and then his concluding words, “Nevertheless I will remember my

covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant (the new covenant). Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder (Sodom) and thy younger (Samaria); and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And I will establish my covenant with thee; thou shalt know that I am the Lord.” How wonderful it seems that we have overlooked such plain statements of the Word of God. Verily, our wresting of the Scriptures and turning of things upside down has resulted disastrously to us. It was unprofitable that we forced theological definitions upon such simple words as describe death, destruction, to make out that these simple words mean life in torment and everlasting suffering. Christendom has every reason to be ashamed of its neglect of the Word of God and its following after the traditions of the ancients and the philosophy of Plato and other sciences, falsely so called. Let us note now in conclusion the words of the Lord through Ezekiel to the Israelites respecting the effect of the outworking of his glorious plan of restitution. He says:

“That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done saith the Lord God.”

[The National Labor Tribune, December 3, 1906](#)

BLOWING OF THE SILVER TRUMPETS

Pastor C. T. Russell preached Sunday afternoon at Carnegie Hall, Allegheny, to a large audience of about 600. His text was: “Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the Day of Atonement shalt thou make the trumpet to sound throughout all the land.” Lev. 25:9

Two months ago we considered together the typical and antitypical Atonement days. We see that the Jewish “Day of Atonement” in which the sin-offerings were sacrificed and the work of atonement for the sins of all the people was completed, typified this Gospel age, by the “better sacrifices” of which reconciliation is effected for the sins of the whole world. We saw that our Lord Jesus began these sacrifices by offering up himself without spot to God. We saw that on the basis of that sacrifice finished at Calvary believers throughout this age have been made acceptable to God, and have been permitted to be offered also as members of the body of Christ, “living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God and their reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1) We saw thus that the entire Gospel age has been the antitypical day of atonement, and that its close signifies the end of the Gospel age, when the last member of the body of Christ shall have suffered with him and shall also

have entered into his glory, to participate in the glory, honor,
immortality in the Kingdom of God, then to be established

2H432

under the whole heavens.

Our text shows that our subject of today is closely identified with the Day of Atonement type, for the declaration is that the trumpet is to be sounded in the Day of Atonement. A trumpet symbolizes a public message, an open proclamation. The Jews had silver trumpets specially prepared for this particular service. For other matters they frequently used rams' horns for trumpets. But it was for the priests to blow on the silver trumpets on the Day of Jubilee, and then for each and all of the people who heard the silver trumpet sounding clearly and loudly to repeat upon the rams' horns and in every way they could the message which they heard, until starting from the Tabernacle or Temple it echoed over the entire land of Israel.

ISRAEL'S TYPICAL JUBILEE

What did that Jubilee announcement signify to the Jew? We answer that it signified emancipation, freedom, liberty. According to the Law every fiftieth year was a Jubilee year, and in that Jubilee year every debt was cancelled, every property restored and all things throughout the nation of Israel came back to their original status. For instance, under their Law, if a man became involved in debt he and his children were obliged to make it good, even though it took all of their earthly possessions, and even though it involved their going into the service of the creditor. Thus a householder through a misfortune might be involved in debt so as to lose his entire estate and his own liberty and the liberty of his family. Indeed some of the Israelites were born to a state of servitude because of a debt incurred by their father. But these debts, these obligations, all according to the Law, terminated, were cancelled in the Jubilee year. All reckonings were made as from that date or to that date. When that year came round, in the Day of Atonement and at its very beginning, the silver trumpet was sounded and then the rams' horns echoes of it were repeated, announcing to all Israelites that they were freed: that the year of release, of return to the former estate, was come; that they were no longer in servitude and that they could have back again all the fields and vineyards and everything that they had previously possessed and lost. It can be readily understood that this year of Jubilee therefore meant much to every Israelite, especially to those who were impoverished through misfortune of any kind. True, all did not get back their possessions and freedom immediately—it required a little time and caused considerable confusion for the re-establishment of matters upon their previous basis. Then, again, all did not hear the trumpet at exactly the same time. The priests and Levites who were nearest to the High Priest, who blew the trumpet, heard first but ultimately the good tidings thus announced spread everywhere to every ear.

THE ANTITYPICAL JUBILEE

The fiftieth year in the type represented the Millennial age in the antitype, just as Israel's High Priest represented the household of faith and the consecrated ones of the present time. All the people of Israel represented all mankind who will ever come into harmony with God—all who will ever be blessed with the New Covenant, participating in the Jubilee blessings. Be it noticed that the priests themselves did not share in the Jubilee blessings. The priests and the Levites had no inheritance in the land given to them, thus typifying the fact that the Royal Priesthood and spiritual Levites will in the future not have an earthly inheritance but a heavenly one. As the tribe of Levi surrendered its share in the earthly inheritance in order to be the Lord's special people, sanctified, separated to his service, so Christian people, spiritual Israelites, give up their interest in the world and all earthly prospects for the opportunity of becoming heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, to the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept in the power of God through faith and salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." I Pet. 1:4, 5

The priests who blew upon the silver trumpets were disinterested, except as they possessed the spirit of love and devotion to their brethren and appreciated the divine arrangement made for their release from difficulties. And since the silver trumpets of Jubilee could not be sounded until after the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement had been effected, the implication is that not until the close of this Gospel age would it be proper for the Royal Priesthood to blow upon the silver trumpets of truth this message of the coming Jubilee—that the day of Christ is at hand, the day of the world's blessing and uplift, "the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21) It was expected of the priests that they would be sympathetic with the people for whom they were appointed to minister and hence expected of them that they would have a grand share also in the rejoicing of the Jubilee year. The Apostle points forward to that glorious time of restitution when the Jubilee blessings will be brought to mankind during the Millennium: he says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now— waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." Romans 8:19, 22

True many of the world of mankind, in their slavishness to sin and the weaknesses of that sin have entirely lost sight of the fact that there is a jubilee of blessing provided by the Lord; hence to many the sounding of

the Jubilee trumpet comes as an astonishment and surprise, and they need to inquire the meaning of it. Knowing the selfishness of fallen human nature we can readily surmise that when the trumpet of Jubilee would begin to sound and the people begin to inquire respecting its meaning, there would be a tendency on the part of masters of the situation to say to those under their control, "Pay no heed to that trumpet: go on with your tasks." We can readily imagine, too, that some of those hearing the trumpet and learning respecting the restitution which is announced would be impatient of all restraint, that more or less of disturbance would thus be created throughout all the land, and that the disturbances would continue to a considerable extent until the readjustment of matters, until the forfeited land had been restored, until those in servitude had gotten their liberties, etc.

SLAVES OF SIN AND DEATH

The world of mankind, the Scriptures tell us, were "sold under sin." By his disobedience father Adam lost his liberty, lost his estate, for he was the king of earth. All of his children were born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and are therefore, as the Apostle declares, slaves of sin. Some have no knowledge of the coming times of blessing, release and restitution; others have more or less confused conceptions of a blessed time coming, which is frequently referred to, even by unbelievers, as the Golden Age, and by many Christians as the Millennium. Matters have gone on so long in this way that the Scriptures indicate that when the second coming of our Lord as an event at hand is proclaimed, and the Jubilee is announced as his great work of blessing the world, many will say, Where is the promise of his coming? for all things continue as they were from the beginning. (1 Pet. 3:4) That is to say, the long period of the reign of sin and death and their ignorance of the divine plan leads them to suppose that God intends present evil conditions to last always; that people will always be born in pain and imperfection; that they will always live in sorrow and trouble, vexation and disappointment; that they will always need to battle with the world, the flesh and the devil, and that sin and death will always reign and the race of mankind as a whole be their subjects.

Even some who are the Lord's true people have become so blind and deaf to his gracious promises that they are misled by such suggestions, forgetting the testimony of the Lord that the time is coming when all the families of the earth shall be blessed so that they will be no longer a groaning creation, but, on the contrary, God will wipe away all tears from off all faces, and cause the knowledge of his glory to fill the whole earth ocean deep. (Rev. 21:4; Isa. 11:9) The result we are assured will be that there will be no more crying, no more

sighing, no more dying, because all the former things will have passed away and he that sitteth upon the throne proclaims:

“BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.”

This overturning of the present institutions and making of all things new is the work of the Lord during the Millennial age—it is the work of reconstruction, the time of Jubilee, the time of joy. This is the first message of the New Testament sung by the angels, “Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people” —not merely to the elect. True, the elect, the priests, the Levites, first hear the joyful sound of the Jubilee trumpet and first make it known to the people, but it is for all the people, for all the “families of the earth.”

The making over of mankind and the thorough reconstruction of all the affairs of man, putting all things back to the basis of love and obedience to God, will require the entire Jubilee year or Millennial epoch, and will be the work of Christ, the great High Priest, and his Royal Priesthood, the glorified Church. Making all things new is but another way of saying restitution or renewing, restoring. This making new, or renewing or restoring of the race, signifies the bringing back of whosoever wills into full harmony with the Heavenly Father, as Adam was. It means more than the bringing back to a heart harmony—it means the taking away of the stony heart out of the flesh as the Lord promises to do under the New Covenant arrangement. It means the bringing up of man out of his servility to sin and death, and from under his load of imperfections of mind and body, back, back to the original perfection, to the image and likeness of God, which Adam possessed in Eden before his transgression.

PARADISE LOST—PARADISE RESTORED

It was the Israelites who realized what they had lost in the way of liberty and possessions who would take the most comfort and joy from the sound of the Jubilee trumpet, and from the understanding that the time was at hand for a return to liberty and to inheritances lost. So it is amongst mankind—those who realize what they have lost can best appreciate the great blessing implied by this restitution trumpet message: nevertheless the blessing is coming to every member of the race, whether he has yet realized his losses and God’s provision for him in the future or not. The assurance of the Scriptures is that in that glorious day when the trumpet shall have sounded and the work of restitution will have begun—then all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be

unstopped. The majority then will begin to realize for the first time to

2H434

what extent they have been slaves of sin and receiving the penalties of their taskmaster, and will begin to glorify God on behalf of the liberty accorded them in the gracious arrangement for the Jubilee, the setting free, the emancipation.

We can well imagine better than we can picture the joy of the whole earth as they shall begin to return to the inheritance of human perfection, mental, moral and physical, and to a repossession of Paradise. While Paradise, originally lost by Adam, was but a garden, a sample of what the world is yet to be under the restitution accomplished by the second Adam, the Paradise of the restored future is to be the entire earth. Heaven is God's throne, earth his footstool, and he has promised that he will make his footstool glorious. (Isa. 60:13) The Millennial reign of Christ will accomplish all the wonderful things of restitution which the Lord has promised—blotting out sin and death and lifting the slaves of these gradually upward to the original perfection, and utterly destroying all who refuse to come into harmony with that righteous arrangement in the Second Death, from which there will be no recovery.

THE DELAY OF THE JUBILEE TRUMPET

Some may say, Why did we not sooner hear the message of restitution this blowing on the silver trumpet, proclaiming Messiah's Kingdom and its glorious work for the race? We answer, because it was not due time to be blown, to be announced, to be proclaimed, until the closing of the Day of Atonement. Since this Gospel Age is the antitype of the Day of Atonement, this would signify that not until nearer the closing time of this age would it be the proper time to make this proclamation. When the Lord makes a type it is significant in every particular. Now, therefore, this blowing of the silver trumpet of Jubilee and announcing Messiah's Kingdom and the blessing of the world is not only opportune as respects mankind in preparing them for what is coming, but it is also an indication that we are in the harvest or closing time of this Gospel age—it indicates that the time for sacrificing is about ended and the time for the Millennial glory and the blessing of the whole world with divine forgiveness under the New Covenant is just about to be ushered in. The announcement must precede the various steps incidental to the return of every man to his inheritance and estate.

Everywhere around us we find that the people are awakening to a consideration of what are their rights and liberties and

how to obtain them. It is but natural that selfish minds should view every blessing from a selfish standpoint rather than from the divine. It need not surprise us then to find that many unjust, ungenerous views are held, not only by those who now possess the wealth and power and title of earth, but also by the masses, who feel that they have lost their inheritance in the earth—their proportion of it and of the blessings which flow from such possession. This is leading many into Socialism, and eventually will undoubtedly lead the majority still further into anarchy, in a desperate effort to grasp for themselves the rights and liberties which they now perceive are the surplus and advantages in possession of the favored few.

Our standpoint of view as Christians leads us to think less of these financial, political and social differences amongst men, and to think more of the great loss all have sustained through the fall. From our standpoint the chief bondage our race is under is that of sin and death. These monarchs have usurped control of the race and enslaved it, and have by this time well-nigh destroyed in man the original likeness of his Creator, mentally and morally degrading some of the race almost to the level of the brute, and some, we might say, below that level. Glad we are that this great slavery will soon be at an end and that the King of glory will reign for the uplift of these slaves and the release of their fetters of weakness and heredity. The Apostle tells us what we may ultimately expect will come to all of the groaning creation if they will avail themselves of the blessings of this Jubilee time. He says, “The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:21) Creation here does not refer to the lower animals, as Brother John Wesley suggested, for we find nothing in the divine Word to indicate either redemption or restitution for future eternal life for lower creatures. Man is the heir of all the blessings which God has promised through the redeeming blood although the lower creatures will undoubtedly profit by his restitution to perfection, even as in some respects they suffered from the fall of Adam their lord. Psa. 8:5-8

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET OF JUBILEE

The Scriptures tell us of seven trumpets, symbolically seven messages, and the last of these seven is called the “trump of God,” because it relates to the events of the great day of God Almighty. Thus the jubilee trumpet and the seventh trumpet, or the trump of God or last trump, synchronize, harmonize. To our understanding this trumpet or message is already sounding—it began in 1874 and will continue to sound, to be a proclamation of Jubilee to all who will come into harmony with God, for a thousand years. The effect of the trumpet on those who hear it varies. To some, full of plans and schemes of

more or less selfish character, religious, political, social, the sound seems discordant; they are not prepared for the change of dispensation, and wish that it would tarry for a while until their

2H435

schemes could be perfected. But it will not tarry; it cannot be stopped; the great High Priest himself blows the trumpet.

Opposition to the message can only work injury to the opposers, as it works blessing to those who hear it with joy and who co-operate with its sentiments and teachings. Opposers will find that they are fighting against God in trying to prolong the present dispensation, the present reign of selfishness and sin. The result, as the Scriptures clearly indicate, will be a great time of trouble such as was not since there has been a nation: in that trouble, by that trouble, all opposition shall be thoroughly broken down—"ground to powder," on the ruins of present institutions the Lord will erect his Temple and Kingdom, through which blessings shall flow as a river of water of life and the blessing of all the families of the earth. Then during the Millennial Kingdom shall go forth the message, the invitation, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17

Prophetically we are told what will occur in the beginning of the sounding of the seventh trumpet—the Jubilee trumpet—"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying: The kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. . . . And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst have regard unto thy servants, the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them that destroy the earth." Rev. 11:15, 18

“HE THAT HATH AN EAR TO HEAR”

Those who do hear the message and whose hearts are in the right attitude towards the Lord that they are ready to rejoice in the truth and say, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven," these will have a special blessing; for while they will indeed share with the world the troubles that are to close this age, they will at heart have what the Lord has promised, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." They will be able to rejoice even in the midst of tribulation, knowing that the tribulations are about to work out the great blessing which God has foretold. But we must not expect that many will have the ear to hear or the eye to see and appreciate the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the divine

plan. The heathen are totally blind as respects God's gracious plan and Christendom is practically blind—blinded by false doctrines and cruel absurdities handed down from the “dark ages.” Many Christian peoples, for instance, are so bent upon converting the world by these means, through sectarian methods, that they are quite unwilling to even consider the Scriptural teaching respecting how the Lord proposes to convert the world—through the time of trouble introducing the Millennial age and its glorious blessings and instructions to all the families of the earth.

Through the prophet of old the Lord foretold the blessings of this time, saying, “O the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred five and thirty days” — to the autumn of 1874 A.D. (Dan. 12:12) Ever since that time a growing blessedness has come to the Lord's people who are walking in the path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. But, on the contrary, the confusion grows more and more tense for those who are still in Babylonish darkness and confused by the theories and creeds of the “dark ages.” It is high time that those who are awake should give ear to discern the voice of the High Priest speaking through the jubilee trumpet, announcing the end of the present dispensation, the inauguration of the New as being just at hand. Those who do not give ear will have their portion with the hypocrites, as our Lord declared, even though they be not hypocrites themselves, but true children of God. “Light is sown for the righteous and truth for the upright in heart,” but if any man love not the truth, if he love sectarian error more, the light and blessing are not intended for him at the present time. He will need to pass through the great time of trouble, and there learn lessons which he is now refusing to learn.

*“Blow ye the trumpet, blow
The gladly solemn sound;
Let all the nations know
To earth’s remotest bound:
The year of Jubilee is come,
Returning ransomed sinners home.”*

*“Ye, who are sold for naught,
Whose heritage was lost,
May have it back unbought,
A gift at Jesus’ cost:
The year of Jubilee is come,
Returning ransomed sinners home.”*

The Lord, through the Prophet David, declares, “Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound:

they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.” (Psa. 89:15) This prophecy is being fulfilled today, for the Psalmist has reference to this very Jubilee trumpet and its message, and those who could hear and rejoice therein. David by inspiration, uses the very Hebrew word *turnah*, that was used by Moses in our text when speaking of the sounding of the Jubilee trumpet. This is not accidental, but of design, and constitutes

2H436

an attestation to us of the divine foreknowledge and arrangement of all the affairs of God’s people, not only during this Gospel age, but also in respect to the coming blessings of Jubilee refreshment of all the families of the earth. Assuredly it is true that all who hear this joyful sound of good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people are blest and refreshed thereby. “Blessed is the people!” More and more as the trumpet is sounded the Lord’s people who have the hearing ear throughout the whole world are being awakened and recognizing the Master’s voice and the harmony of his announcement with that which was foretold. We have no fear that all of the world will hear this summons. But as we have already seen, some will be wise virgins and others foolish.

The prophet declares that those who heard the message of this trumpet with joy “shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance”—there the presence and favor of the Lord will be with them, their daily walk will be in accord with the divine will, for they are of the class which can say with the Master, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart.” It is not given to others to fully, clearly, distinctly hear and understand and appreciate this Jubilee trumpet. Those who hear a little should at once permit that little to sanctify their hearts and separate them from the world and its spirit, that they may hear more and more distinctly, remembering the Scriptural declaration, “None of the wicked shall understand.” (Dan. 12) Let us who hear go onward day by day, blowing

upon the silver trumpet and having this hope in our hearts, purify ourselves, as the Apostle declares, sanctify ourselves, even as he, the Master, is pure, that we may ultimately be counted worthy to share in his kingdom and glory through the riches of his grace.

[The Pittsburgh Dispatch, December 10, 1906](#)

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION

ST. LOUIS, Mo., Dec. 9—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today to large and attentive audiences. Twenty-four hundred persons heard him preach on the subject, “To Hell and Back,” at Olympia Theater. Several hundred others were turned away. His morning discourse was from the text, “I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.” (Deut. 5:9-10) A report of the discourse follows:

No one of intelligence can question the fact that our text is corroborated by all our experiences in life. However unjust some may claim it to be that the children should inherit the weaknesses resulting from parental dissipations and violations of the divine law, however atheism may question the existence of a God or infidelity doubt the inspiration of His Word, the facts remain. None can question the two facts of this text: (1) That sin and its penalty can be inherited, and (2) that God is merciful to such as renounce sin and turn to Him and seek to walk according to His direction. To whatever extent these blemishes upon evildoers and their children and these blessings upon welldoers and their posterity may be termed natural laws and laws of heredity, it does not alter the result, because the Almighty is the one who made these laws of heredity.

Under the delusions handed down to us from the “dark ages”—that God had condemned to eternal torment all the children of men because of Adam’s sin—we are all inclined properly enough to feel rebellious against any such decision or conclusion, and to assert that from the standpoint of human reasoning it would be entirely unjust to torture the posterity of Adam eternally for his transgression—“original sin.” But as we get the eyes of our understanding opened to see what is the real penalty for sin—that it is death, extinction, and that our perfect parents, fully informed respecting the divine will, were culpable, worthy of death—and when we learn further that whatever is enjoyed by Adam’s posterity in the way of life (however disadvantageous the conditions) is that much of divine leniency and mercy, and comes that much short of being the full penalty, death, extinction—then we begin to see

that life under any conditions and disadvantages is still a boon, better than extinction. When further we begin to learn of the divine arrangement by which the race was redeemed from the death sentence by the sacrifice of Christ, and that this redemption guarantees an opportunity for eternal life to every member of Adam's race, then we begin to reverence and adore the Creator as not only just in his sentence of death, but now revealed to the eyes of our understanding as merciful in providing for our recovery out of that death by a resurrection from the dead.

IN WRATH HAVE MERCY, LORD

Recognizing the wrath of God as manifested in the death penalty (not in an eternity of torture) we can see

2H437

what the Scriptures everywhere declare, that the wrath of God is resting upon our race, that every member of it is subject to this penalty which came upon father Adam, and has been entailed upon all of His posterity. This is the curse, the condemnation everywhere referred to throughout the Bible. As we have previously seen, it is a death curse or sentence, but this includes all the incidentals leading up to death, such as mental moral and physical degradation. The Almighty Creator did not wait for us to cry out for His pity and compassion, but from the very beginning, foreknowing our fall into sin, he had the plan arranged for our redemption and ultimate recovery from this condition of wrath, curse, death. We are informed that our Lord Jesus was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world—in the divine purpose and arrangement— though only now being made manifest to the Church and shortly to the world. Thus viewed, there has been no injustice practiced against our race in allowing the children to share with their father Adam in his penalty. Rather they had esteemed it and do esteem it better than the sentence itself; and, furthermore, in the Lord's providences, the world's present experience in the fall— and later on in the recovery from the fall in the hands of the great Redeemer during the Millennial age—is to prove a lesson, a schooling, in the exceeding sinfulness of sin, which the race as a whole will never forget, and out of which many (now the Church, later on the world) will draw lessons of wisdom and grace.

Looking still more deeply into the divine plan as it is revealed in the Lord's Word for those who are His, (Psa. 25: 14—we find a particular reason why it was not only advisable but necessary that this law of heredity should operate in our race, even though it brought in its train a terrible list of experiences. The reason for this is based upon one element of the divine character—justice—the very element which at one time we supposed was violated by this law of heredity. As our eyes

open to the teaching of the Scriptures we perceive that if God had not permitted His law of heredity to operate, but had permitted each individual of the race to come forth to perfection and to stand an individual trial, such as father Adam was subjected to, it would doubtless have meant that at least one-half of the race, possibly more, would have deliberately chosen a course of sin, as father Adam chose it. To expect more than one-half to be obedient would be unreasonable. Rather from what we see about us in the experiences of life, we would have been apt to conclude that only a very small majority, perhaps one-tenth, would have been obedient to God, while the remaining nine-tenths would have been disobedient. Some might ask, would not even that have been better than the divine arrangement as we see it operating now, that the whole race should suffer for one man's disobedience? We answer, no! Not according to the testimony of the Scriptures. The Bible shows us that while this law of retribution has worked such terrible havoc in Adam and his race for now 6,000 years— while 20,000,000,000 have been born in sin and sorrow and pain, and after a few years of trouble have died in sorrow and pain —nevertheless, in God's due time all of these shall have more favorable opportunities of knowing God's true character and of attaining to a full character-development in His likeness during the Millennial age. This means that probably many more will gain eternal life and blessing under the divine arrangement, condemning all for Adam's sin, than if God had permitted each to be born in perfection and to stand his trial for life or death, as Adam did, and without a Redeemer and restitution possibilities.

CONDEMNED IN ONE, REDEEMED IN ONE

A great economic law is connected with the divine arrangement: the condemnation of a race in one man's loins because of his transgression made possible the divine arrangement that a second man should pay the penalty for the first, and redeem both him and all who were in him at the time of his condemnation. This is at once a demonstration of divine wisdom and of divine justice. Suppose, for instance, that the law of heredity had not prevailed, had not been instituted by our Lord, but that each individual had come forth perfect and had been personally placed on trial and been personally condemned to death, would it not have required an individual savior for each one condemned under such an arrangement? Surely it would. Hence, had one-half of the race proved themselves sinners and been personally condemned, it would either have been necessary to have avoided redemption altogether or to have redeemed the sinner half of the race at the expense of the righteous half—a perfect being's sacrifice for or instead of each imperfect life. Estimating the total number of our race at twenty billions justice would have been obliged to require ten billions of perfect beings to be offered as the ransom price for the ten billions of sinners. Under the

very best estimation that we can possibly make, this would have required the death of all the perfect ones of the race as redeemers for all the imperfect ones, and what a havoc that would have implied—with just as many dying as under present conditions, namely, one-half as sinners, the other half as redeemers, ransoms.

Besides, we perceive that it would not have been just on the part of the Almighty to have compelled the righteous ones to suffer for the unrighteous as their redeemers—hence there would have been no assurance even then that any but a fraction of the sinner race would have been redeemed. On the contrary, how wise,

2H438

conservative and economical was the divine arrangement that by one man's disobedience under the laws of heredity the many would be born sinners and sharers in his penalty, death; and that then in due time one Savior, one perfect one, the "Man Christ Jesus," might redeem Adam, and, redeeming him, redeem all of his race from the death sentence, the curse, the wrath of God, and as a result of the redemption obtain the right, the authority, the power during His Millennial Kingdom, and in association with His glorified Church of the Gospel age, to bless all the families of the earth, and to uplift as many as would be willing out of all their ignorance, weakness and sinful and dying conditions to all that was lost in Adam.

We have seen that in harmony with the divine law it would not have been just for the Heavenly Father to have obligated the righteous to die for the sinners, and that hence the redemption of the sinners would have been problematical—very doubtful. But, on the contrary, the Heavenly Father well knew in advance the loyalty of His first-begotten, His only begotten, who is declared to have been the "beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. 3:14) He knew not only of His loyalty, but that His experiences with Him in glory would every way qualify Him for the tests and the sacrifices necessary for the redemption of the race with His own precious blood. The Scriptures assure us furthermore that the Father set before Him some certain joys, certain blessings, certain promises, in connection with this work of man's redemption: as we read, "Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 12:2

RETRIBUTIVE JOYS AND REWARDS

We are to remember, too, that the Scriptures distinctly teach that the affairs of our world, sin, retributive punishment, the redemption through Jesus, the call of the Church and their

sufferings with their Redeemer, and the promises of future blessing and glory both for the Church and for the world, are subjects in which the angels of God are interested. As the Apostle Peter says, “Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently ... Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow... Which things the angels desire to look into.” (1 Pet. 1:10-12) They wondered when all the sufferings of Jesus and the Church would be completed, and when the glory time would come and recovery from sin and death conditions—when God’s purpose would thus ripen and bear fruit in the recovery of those who fell from His favor in Adam’s disobedience, but were redeemed by the precious blood.

The great lesson of what constitutes disobedience, and how serious a sin it is and what it would lead to if allowed to take its course, was illustrated in man’s experiences, and all the hosts of angels looked on with amazement, no doubt. God’s justice was fully demonstrated in the infliction of the death penalty and the permission of its inroads upon the mental, moral and physical perfection of His creatures, bringing many of the race down almost to brutality. God’s love was manifested in the gift of His Son, in the arrangement of His plan by which, for the joy set before Him, Jesus might become Adam’s Redeemer, the Bridegroom of the elect Church, and ultimately the great King of Glory who, during the Millennial Age, is to restore, revive and bless and test Adam and all his race.

CHRIST AND CHURCH CRUCIALLY TESTED

We cannot wonder if all the holy angels looked on in amazement as they beheld the only begotten son of God leave the glory which He had before the world was and humble Himself to take human nature—to be born a man that He might redeem Adam and his race. It must have seemed wonderful to them, not only that the Heavenly Father would arrange such a plan, but wonderful also that the glorious “Only Begotten,” “FirstBorn” should be the one to whom the proposition would be made, to show His faith and love for the Father, to do His will to the extent of such a sacrifice, not only of glory but eventually of life. They had yet to see a further operation of the divine law of retribution operating in Jesus for His blessing and honor. So intent were they in looking at the humiliation of the Only Begotten and then at His death that apparently they did not so carefully note the fact that the Heavenly Father had set before Him great joys—great blessings, great exaltation, when He should have finally finished His work.

Already the Only Begotten was next to the Father in glory and dignity, honor and power—what more of divine honor could have been bestowed upon even “the First Born of every creature?” The Only Begotten Himself appears not to have thought particularly of the promised glory. The joy set before Him, however, seems to have been that He would do the Father’s will and thus demonstrate His absolute loyalty even unto death. While no doubt it was a joy to the Lord to be the Father’s agent in the rescue of Adam and his race from sin and death, nevertheless we believe that his chief joy in connection with the matter was that thus he might demonstrate to the Father his absolute love by his submission and obedience. Our Lord’s own words were:

“Father, glorify thou Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” (John 17:5) He knew

2H439

of the Father’s proposed high exaltation of Him as a reward, but He did not mention this; He would merely ask of the Father that when He had accomplished the divine purpose He might have back the same honor and position and divine favor which He had laid aside when He humbled himself to become Adam’s redemption price, the world’s savior. Such modesty and loyalty are difficult for us to comprehend because of our fallen, imperfect conditions.

But the Apostle explains to us, speaking under the power of inspiration, that because of our Lord’s obedience in leaving the glory, becoming a man and dying for our sins—therefore God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess of things in heaven and things on earth. (Phil. 2:10-11) Elsewhere in the Scriptures we are assured that our Lord became partaker of the divine nature in His resurrection; that thus He attained a reward far above anything that could have been thought, not only above angels, but also far above His own pre-human condition. In thus rewarding the faithful the Lord is carrying out the spirit of our text—He has been exemplifying what is otherwise taught in the Scriptures—“whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.” (Gal. 6:7) Adam sowed disobedience and he and his race have reaped a terrible harvest of degradation, suffering and death. The Only Begotten sowed obedience, as prophetically expressed of Him at the time of His baptism: “I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy law is written in My heart.” (Psa. 40:8) Laying down His life in harmony with the divine program was His sowing, and the reaping at the resurrection was glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature. How richly Jehovah rewards every demonstration of loyalty to Him and the principles of righteousness!

The same principle of retribution, good and evil, is manifested in God's dealing with His people during this gospel age. Those who follow in the footsteps of Jesus and lay down their lives in harmony with the divine plan and co-operation in the same are promised not only peace and joy and love and the holy Spirit in this present life, but that by and by they shall be joint-heirs with their Redeemer and Lord in His kingdom glory as His Bride. But those who sow sparingly, the Apostle assures us, will reap sparingly; those who sacrifice little will get a smaller blessing, and proportionately those who sacrifice nothing have neither part nor lot in the call of this present time, while those who, on the contrary, sow to the flesh may expect to reap corruption, death—the Second Death.

RETRIBUTION COVERING THE WORLD

We have already seen that this law of retribution has operated in our race as a whole, bringing all under condemnation. We are all witnesses that it operates with greater intensity upon each individual according to his will, desire, intentions. Those who wilfully, deliberately violate conscience and the laws of nature step onward in the downward way, increase their difficulties. Every evil thought, every evil word, tends to break down the moral and physical degeneration, disease, imbecility, etc. On the contrary, those (outside the church, the world, heathen) who recognize with more or less clearness the principles of right and wrong, justice and injustice, receive under this law of retribution a measure of blessing, their mental, moral and physical fibers may be somewhat strengthened, and their characters and dispositions considerably rectified, to their comfort and advantage even in the present life.

In the life to come, after being awakened from the sleep of death, during the Millennial age or times of restitution, this law of retribution will still be enforced. When the eyes of understanding of all shall be opened and the clear light of truth shall shine upon all, the willing and obedient will quickly come into divine favor and receive the more abundantly of the restitution blessings, while those who in any measure or degree shall resist the light of that glorious day will make correspondently slower progress toward the full protection it offers, and those who persist in their opposition shall ultimately be destroyed in the Second Death. Furthermore, the Lord intimates clearly that the conduct of the present life, in either upbuilding character or deteriorating it, will mean proportionately more or fewer "stripes" in the life to come. Those who knew the Master's will and did it not will be beaten with many stripes; they by reason of the breaking down of their characters and the greater demoralization of their consciences and powers will need and proportionately receive that much

more chastisement from the corrective rod of discipline during the Millennial age than if they had taken the opposite course of living in accord with their consciences.

The Lord declares that those who have sinned with little knowledge will receive proportionately fewer stripes. (Luke 12:47-48) And this also is what we should expect under the divine law of retribution and compensation. There is a force and power in this teaching of the Scriptures respecting a future retribution with which the present life has to do, and which mean greater or less stripes or corrections by and by in proportion as the individual has been faithful to present responsibilities and light—there is a force in this that does not attach itself to the ordinary and unscriptural teaching that all who do not gain the prize of eternal glory now offered to the Church, the saints, will share alike in an eternity of torment, unthinkable and untellable

2H440

in cruelty and atrocity. Let us hold fast to the teachings of the Divine Word: let us remember that error never does sanctify, that our Lord presented the correct thought in His prayer, “Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth.” John 17:17

“ELSE WERE YOUR CHILDREN UNHOLY”

The Apostle, addressing those who recognize the distinction between believers and unbelievers, the justified and unjustified, calls attention to the fact that the children of believers, especially where both parents are of the consecrated or saintly class, should be considered as sharers with them in their justification, in their reconciliation to God. This would apply only until such time as, having reached the age and development of personal responsibility, they should either endorse the faith of the parents or by slighting it shall take their stand in opposition with the world. Supposing that all would recognize this fact the Apostle points us to an item which might cause confusion to some. The question relates to those children, one of whose parents is a consecrated child of God and the other an unbeliever, and is, What would be the relationship of such children to God? Would they be counted as unbelievers because one of the parents was an unbeliever, or would they be counted as coming under divine protection and care because one of the parents was a child of the Lord?

The Apostle settles this question and assures us that whether it was the father or mother who was a consecrated child of God, the children would be reckoned as his or hers, and therefore in relationship to the Lord, covered with the merit of Christ’s righteousness, and

under the special providential guidance of the Lord until years of judgment should be reached. Thus we see in operation the same principle that was applied to Adam and his children when he sinned; they were counted with him. And now, since the redemption price has been paid, anyone who becomes the Lord's is counted as having passed from relationship to Adam into relationship to God through Christ, and his children are counted thus also—in relationship to God during their minority.

“SHOWING MERCY UNTO THOUSANDS”

The portion of our text which declares that the Lord shows mercy unto thousands is applicable to the present as well as to the future life. God shows mercy unto thousands under sentence of death in that, under present conditions, He permits and arranges that the sun shall shine and the rain shall fall upon the evil and upon the good, upon the just and upon the unjust. To those who have the eyes of understanding to appreciate the teachings of the divine plan of the ages, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, but imputing them unto Christ. True, this Scripture is a comprehensive statement, covering the Lord's favor to believers in this present time, and as well His ultimate favor to all the families of the earth during the times of restitution, the Millennial age. Let us, however, subdivide these blessings that we may appreciate them more fully, thus:

God in the present life shows mercy, and all who have the hearing ear may now hear His voice “speaking peace through Jesus Christ our Lord.” By faith these may now understand that God has graciously forgiven them for Christ's sake. The ears of such believers throughout this Gospel age have heard the Father's invitation of divine mercy that they may become associated with Christ as members of His body, members of His church, members of His bride; and that the terms or conditions upon which they may thus become associated are that they shall make a full surrender of themselves, minds and bodies, to Him and under His direction. This step of consecration or sanctification having been taken, its reward has followed forthwith, namely, the begetting of the holy Spirit—that such should be new creatures in Christ Jesus, changed now as respects their wills, their hearts, and to be fully changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, in the resurrection early in the millennial morning.

True, these like their Master are expected to prove, to demonstrate, their loyalty to the Lord and the principles of righteousness at any cost, even unto death; but even here the Lord's mercies are with them, for they would be insufficient for such things except as grace sufficient would be supplied them through the Redeemer and by the holy Spirit. While they follow their Leader, their

Lord, their Redeemer, and seek to walk in His steps through the valley of the shadow of death, they will have His companionship all the journey through; He will lead them by the green pastures and still waters of the divine promises, giving them meat and drink in due season, and finally bring them to the heavenly fold and the glory of the Father's house. That these should be made partakers of the divine nature with Jesus will certainly be an astonishment to both angels and men, and a fresh evidence of the wisdom of complete faith in God and absolute obedience to His arrangements.

But God's mercy is not confined to the little flock nor to the present life, the present age—we have His testimony through the prophet that “His mercy endureth forever.” It does not surprise us then to find that the mercy of the Lord will be world-wide and ocean deep for all the race of Adam during the millennial age—not for those who shall remain in alienation and opposition when the eyes of their understanding are opened in the millennial age; but He will show mercy unto thousands

2H441

and myriads of those who then see His glory, taste of His goodness, accept of His favors and come into harmony with Him. O, the riches of the grace both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! How

unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! (Rom. 11:33) “The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His covenant.” Psalm 24:14

December 16, 1906

**Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
April 3, 1917**

GOD'S GIFTS AND CALLINGS

Marion, O., Dec. 16.—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today to attentive audiences in one of our largest auditoriums. His afternoon topic was “A Cure for Infidelity—To Hell and Back.” In the evening his discourse was on “God's Gifts and Callings,” from the Apostle's words, “The gifts and callings of God are without repentance.” (Rom. 11:29)

He said: The Apostle in our text, and the Scriptures everywhere, assure us that God knows the end from the beginning, and that all of His purposes shall be accomplished eventually. Such wisdom we finite beings are unable to comprehend, and yet we all recognize the fact

that our God must be greater than we, not only in power, as our Creator, but also in wisdom and in all the attributes of perfection. Those who thus recognize an Almighty One will not expect to comprehend fully all of His powers, for such a comprehension would imply equal or superior wisdom or ability on our part. Our Lord freely declares to us His greatness as well as His unchangeableness, and the superiority of His plans and arrangements to anything that we have ever comprehended.

God says through the prophet, “Your ways are not as my ways nor your plans as my plans; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isa. 55:8-9) Again, “The word that goeth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa. 55:11) And again, “I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” (Mal. 3:6) The inference of this last citation is that Israel had come so far short, been so rebellious against divine favors, that if it were possible to imagine God as a changeable being, we might surely expect that He would rescind his covenant arrangement with that people and utterly destroy them. The same thought is emphasized by another Prophet, who — after telling of God’s coming favor to Israel and to other nations in their restoration to “their former estate,” the forgiveness of their sins and the remembrance of their iniquities no more (Ezek. 16:52-63)—tells them frankly, “Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel.” Ezek. 36:22, 32, 38

GOD’S GIFTS TO ABRAHAM’S SEED

From Genesis to Revelation the Word of God sets before us the Abrahamic Covenant as the primary statement of the divine plan for human salvation. The Apostle declares this, saying, “God preached beforehand the Gospel unto Abraham.” (Gal. 3:8) True, that message of favor or good tidings has since been elaborated and opened up to the Lord’s people, not only by the testimonials of the prophets but also by the testimony of our Lord and the apostles, who continually referred to that covenant of grace as the basis for all of our hopes. The Apostle Paul speaks of it, saying, “Which hope we have as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail, whither our forerunner is before entered.” (Heb. 6:19,20) The Apostle thus applies some of the precious features of that Covenant to Christians—Spiritual Israelites; but this does not alter the fact that the promise itself was made primarily to Natural Israel, as the Apostle shows. Spiritual Israel is to get the cream of that Covenant, but Natural Israel is yet to have a goodly portion of divine

favor in harmony with that promise; yea, “all the families of the earth” are vitally interested in it. It reads, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Gen. 22:18

Faith in this promise has been a condition for a share in its blessings for the 37 centuries since it was given. Abraham believed, and this was the basis of the covenant; Isaac and Jacob believed, and thereby shared its hopes and joys and comforts. The nation of Israel believed, and all were accepted of God as His holy people, separate from other nations. But faith was not strong in all of the nation, nor did they all have the spirit of believers—the spirit of obedience. Indeed, it was the unbelieving condition of heart in the majority which led that people so frequently into idolatry, until by captivity among the heathen the Lord sifted out the unbelieving, and in the return from Babylon brought together

2H442

a remnant of 50,000 of all the tribes out of the hosts who went into captivity. These restored Israelites never afterward showed signs of faithlessness to the extent of idolatry, and we find them at the time of our Lord’s first advent the most religious people in the world.

Their faith in God and in His promise or covenant to Abraham was strong; nevertheless, another condition was set up, namely, a kind of spiritual pride. They felt themselves worthy of the honor which God had bestowed upon them—that He desired to carry out a certain plan and could find no other people as suitable as themselves, and was so dependent upon them that, without their co-operation, His word of promise to Abraham would fail. This spiritual pride, the Scriptures point out, prevailed to such an extent that only a comparatively few were in the right condition of heart to be pleasing to the Lord, and only to these, therefore, was God’s favor in Christ specially manifested. Thus we read of the majority of those who rejected Jesus and the few who accepted Him, the Apostle’s declaration that Jesus came unto His own and His own received Him not; but as many as received Him to them gave He privilege to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on His name—who accepted Him as the Savior, the Sent of God. John 1: 11-12

This was a crisis in the affairs of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh—a testing time—a judgment as to whether or not they were fit to be God’s holy nation. Their rejection of Jesus and his testimony showed that they were not fit as a nation for God’s purpose. But God’s favor toward that people was manifested in the fact that He rejected none of those who were fit for His purpose. These “Israelites, indeed, in whom there was no guile,” were favored of the Lord in that to them it was given to know the mystery of the kingdom—to appreciate the special features of God’s plan in connection with His election of a little flock to be His kingdom class,

joint-heirs with Christ. The Apostle adds his word just at this point, saying, "Israel hath not obtained that which she seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Rom. 11:7

"THE ELECT OBTAINED IT"

What does the apostle mean by this statement? Who were the elect, and what did they obtain? Who were blinded, and what is their portion? Elect here is used in the sense of the chosen, the acceptable. Primarily our Lord Jesus was the acceptable Jew—the one who kept the divine law particularly, and demonstrated His loyalty to God even unto death, even the death of the cross. The Scriptures assure us that our Lord's previous acquaintance with the Father, establishing His confidence in God's faithfulness, constituted much of His strength in the trials and difficulties of His consecrated life and in His faithfulness even unto death. He was with the Father even before the world was, knew of His faithfulness and learned to trust Him even where He could not trace Him, and all of His promises were sure. So when it came to the laying down of His life in obedience to the Father's arrangement, as a redeemer for all, for Adam and his race, His faith enabled Him to come off more than victor, more than conqueror, enabled Him to rejoicingly do the Father's will, as it is written of Him, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy law is written in My heart." Jesus, as the only one born under the law who ever kept the law or was able to keep it, became "heir of all things"—every feature of the divine promise made to Abraham thus came to Him as the sole heir of that Abrahamic covenant. He was the seed of Abraham, and through Him and Him alone could the blessing of God proceed. The Apostle expresses this in Galatians 3:16.

But it was the Heavenly Father's plan, as the apostle declares, to bring many sons to glory through the Only Begotten Son, the captain of our salvation—or literally forerunner as well as guide. The Scriptures beautifully picture these sons as a bride class, which God purposes shall be selected from the world to be associated with His Son in the kingdom. Hence, as soon as our Lord Jesus had finished His sacrifice the work of selecting those who would be associated with Him in the chief favor of the Abrahamic covenant began. At Pentecost God recognized those who had already shown themselves Israelites indeed by their acceptance of Jesus as Messiah and becoming His disciples, and this same Pentecostal blessing extended still further to that nation to seek and to separate to the Lord every true Israelite in whom there was no guile. Therefore, the Lord directed the apostles that, while eventually their ministries should be to all the people, yet they were to begin at Jerusalem—begin with the Jews.

THE GOSPEL AGE A PARENTHESIS

When we get a clear view of the matter we perceive that this entire Gospel Age, from the death of Christ to the second advent, is in many respects a parenthesis in the divine plan. During this period a work has been going on which no Jew had ever expected. Nothing was said to them in the law or in the prophets respecting a spiritual class of Israelites, to be changed from human nature to divine nature and made like unto the angels, heavenly beings. True, this class was referred to in the law in a figurative way, in that they were typified by the high priest and the under-priests, and by Melchisedek and by Moses, who was a figure of the great antitypical Leader, who ultimately was to bring the people from under the power of Satan, the antitype of Pharaoh,

2H443

and from under the dominion of sin, the antitype of ignorance, darkness, bondage, the antitype of Egypt, into the glorious liberty and privileges of the children of God, typified in the land of Canaan.

But these types and shadows of good things to come were not seen nor understood previous to the coming of the holy Spirit at Pentecost, and have not been understood since except by those who are partakers of that same spirit of anointing. But Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets looked for and expected a kingdom of God under the whole heavens—in the earth, and not a heavenly or spiritual kingdom. This spiritual phase of the matter—that Messiah was to be a spirit being, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named, and that the Church of the Firstborn Ones, selected during this Gospel Age, are to be with Him and to be like Him on this spirit plane — these things were not revealed in times past. Hence the Apostle calls this matter the “mystery” — the mystery hid from past ages and dispensations, but now made known unto the saints. Eph. 3:3

With the end of this Gospel Age the parenthesis closes, and the general outward fulfilment of God’s promise to Abraham continues just as though this parenthesis of time had not intervened. As soon as the last member of the Church shall have been glorified, the seed of Abraham in its fullest, completest sense as God meant it to be, as men did not understand it, would be fulfilled. The Apostle refers to this, and shows that the Church, as the espoused virgin, shortly, at the second coming of Christ, will become His bride and joint-heir in this promised kingdom, and be with Him an inheritor of that Abrahamic covenant and have the privilege of administering its blessings to all the families of the earth. The Apostle’s words addressed to the Church are: “If ye be Christ’s (bride) then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29) So then Christ

and the Church, His bride, must be completed before the Anointed Messiah will be complete and begin the work of blessing all the families of the earth.

THE FIRST WORK OF THE “SEED”

This brings us to the exact point referred to by the Apostle in our text. In the preceding context he had been telling us that the natural Israelites were broken off from divine favor, were turned aside in blindness, that the spiritual Israelites might be developed, then He assures us that the blindness is not perpetual and total, but shall continue only until “the fullness from the Gentiles shall have come in”—until the fullness of the specially elect ones, spiritual Israel, shall have been completed from among the Gentiles, added to the remnant of natural Israel found worthy of the favor as “Israelites indeed.” The Apostle tells us that then, “all Israel, shall be saved.” We are to take these words in harmony with their connections; we are not to suppose that the Apostle means that all Israelites are to be saved to the spiritual, divine nature, because He has already told us that this will not occur until the elect class is completed, and it is the elect class alone that gets the divine nature. Neither are we to understand the Apostle to mean by these words that all Israel will be saved to eternal life by restitution processes, bringing them up to full human perfection. The opportunity to thus come to perfection and everlasting life is a part of God’s provision for them, but the Apostle is not here speaking of this. He is speaking of their being saved from the blindness which came upon them when they rejected Messiah—all Israel shall be saved from their blindness. vs. 26-27

The Apostle here refers to the promise of the New Covenant, which elsewhere he quotes at length from Jeremiah 31 :31-34—”The days come saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah”—”after those days saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their minds and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” (Heb. 8:8-12) The Apostle had this promise in mind, as well as others which declare that in due time God will regather the scattered people, bringing them back into His favor, have mercy upon them and blot out their sins. This New Covenant will become operative as soon as the Church has been glorified. The Church will be the heir of God under the Abrahamic Covenant, while Israel will be the heir of God’s favor under the New Covenant, which will apply to Israel first and subsequently to all the families of the earth.

The Apostle emphasizes this matter and leaves no doubt respecting his meaning when in the twenty-eighth verse he says: "As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your own sakes; but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." What could be more plain, more simple, than this statement? Who could misunderstand that the Apostle is here referring to Natural Israel, broken off from special favor and relationship to God, that the favored ones from among the Gentiles might be gathered into membership in the Church of Christ, Spiritual Israel? And how strong, how convincing, is the statement that, in harmony with divine predestination on the subject, Israel is not forever cast off from divine favor, but is included

2H444

among God's elections—elect of God as a people, not to the highest place, the spiritual, but to have the first and highest blessing of all the families of the earth under Messiah's Kingdom, and this not for their own sakes, but for the father's sakes—for the sake of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—for the sake of God's promises made to them—for the sake of all the faithful of that nation who walked with God, and to some of whom the Apostle makes reference in his list of ancient worthies in Hebrews 11.

Why? Because they were not worthy as those called during this Gospel Age? We think this is not the reason, but that they lived before the time for the call to the spiritual class. The Apostle proceeds to show this distinction in the gifts and callings of God, saying, "These all having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us (the Gospel Church), that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:39,40

In other words, God's callings and selections are definite, positive, separate and distinct, as the various wheels in a great machine are separate and distinct from each other, while they all co-operate together in the work for which the machine is constructed. Note a further evidence along this line in the fact that our Lord said of John the Baptist, "There is not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist," and then He added, "And yet I say unto you the least in the Kingdom is greater than He." (Matt. 11:11) Here the Kingdom class, the Gospel Church, the Bride class, is declared to be superior in every way, so that the least one in it would be on a higher plane than the highest one on the earthly plane—John the Baptist being admitted to be one of the highest among the prophet class, and therefore to share among the highest honors that will come to that class.

“THE GIFTS AND CALLINGS OF GOD”

Putting the foregoing matters together we find, first, that God’s principal gift or favor or call to His service was to His only Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus, who in obedience to that call left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, humbled Himself, became a man, and as the man Christ Jesus tasted death for Adam and all his race, as our ransom price, and was subsequently highly exalted of the Father above angels, principalities and powers to the divine nature, glory, honor and immortality, and all power in heaven and in earth, that He may now in this glorified condition carry out to the full of the Father’s gracious plans respecting our fallen race. We see, secondly, the selection of the Bride class, to be associated with Christ in His Kingdom—composed first of those Israelites who were of proper condition of mind to receive our Lord at the first advent, and then of others from among the Gentiles of similar condition of heart.

Thirdly, we see that in previous times God had a special people who are to be connected with His plan—associated with the glorified Christ in the Kingdom work, only on a lower plane, on the earth plane. “They without us shall not be made perfect.” The Church must be perfected first by the prime, the first resurrection, and then these ancient worthies will be resurrected, perfected as men, that they may be the earthly representatives or instruments of a spiritual and invisible Kingdom in administering the divine law to mankind. Fourthly, we see that as soon as the Gospel Church shall be completed and glorified, the blindness will be turned away from natural Israel, so that they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and all come to perfect knowledge of divine goodness and mercy. This will be under the favorable conditions of Messiah’s Kingdom, when everything will be favorable to the righteous and unfavorable to evil doers, and we may hope that large numbers will respond to privileges then opened to them to attain full perfection of human nature and the blessing of the Lord under the whole heavens. It will be among these that the ancient worthies, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets shall be princes, and to their words we may be sure the natural Israelites will the more readily respond when once their eyes are opened.

[The Greensburg Daily Tribune, January 7, 1907](#)

THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER

Allegheny, Pa., Jan. 6. Pastor C. T. Russell addressed the Bible House congregation today in Carnegie Hall on the Formation of Character. He took for his text 1 Peter 1:7, “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold

that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen we love." He said:— We live in a day when Mammon, wealth, is almost worshipped. At its shrine, time, talent, honor, principle,

2H445

life itself, are being sacrificed by thousands upon thousands. The Apostle wrote that "Charity covereth a multitude of sins," but in the judgment of the world today wealth will cover almost anything. On the other hand it may be said that there never was a time when there was so much "muck raking" so much exposing of graft and grafters as now, and some point to this as an indication of a higher standard of morals than was ever before attained. Without stopping to discuss the question of general standards, we hold that it is a self-evident fact that the reason why so much "muck-raking" is possible today is that the majority of humanity are grafters or would-be grafters to the extent of their ability. While strenuously opposing those grafters through whom they suffer the majority seem willing enough to profit by the graft whenever it comes within their reach. Truly and wisely the Apostle wrote that "the love of money is the root of all evil," and never was money so plentiful as now, never were the misses so awake as to its evils, and never were so many striving with might and main so that they use what they control as "their share of it" — perfectly willing to grasp a little more rather than a little less.

At a time when this spirit of mammon worship and craze for wealth seems to be sweeping the whole world before it, it is well for the Lord's people to take notice that many things that are highly esteemed amongst men are an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and to thus instruct their own hearts, and, to the extent of their ability and opportunity to extend the instruction to their children, relatives and neighbors. True, the world has not forgotten the Scriptural statement that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," and hence there is a great endeavor to preserve the good name by outward manifestations of honesty where both heart and head and justice and love are wrested and twisted if not entirely ignored. At such a time as this it is important for those who desire to maintain their favor with God to look well and carefully to the principles laid down in his Word and to be more vigilant than ever in the conforming of their lives; realizing that there are trials and difficulties along this line such as were unknown to their forefathers in the more quiet times of old, when character had so much to do with a name and when wealth could not cover so great a multitude of sins as at present.

FAITHFULNESS THE STANDARD

Faithfulness is the standard by which character is to be tested and determined, and this text applies not only to God's consecrated people, called in the Scriptures saints, but in a large measure it applies to every man everywhere according to his light and opportunities. Nearly every parent can witness to the fact that children of today are less reliable, less faithful, have less character than those of his childhood days. Nearly every employer of servants can witness to the fact that servants are less reliable than in years gone by—that they have less character, that wages and pleasure are their chief consideration; and since there is a great demand for service of every kind, principle, character, faithfulness, seem to have little weight in the minds of the employed. Storekeepers can testify that the employees in whom they could place confidence for faithfulness to duty, watched or not watched—in whose honesty they can thoroughly rely, and in whose loyalty to principles of righteousness and honor they can have confidence—are much more scarce than formerly. While with some the secret of this loss of character is the love of money, with others it is a love of pleasure, of show, of dress, of amusement—"lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." With the present demand for the services of all healthy, intelligent people, there comes a test of character, of faithfulness to principle, unknown a short time ago when situations were more difficult to obtain. Even those who hold situations very frequently cannot be relied upon, but prove unfaithful, lacking of character, and when called to account content themselves with saying, "Cancel my engagement; I will find another situation."

Thus we see that present conditions are destructive of character—unfavorable to the cultivation of the principle of righteousness in the mind of the average man or woman, boy or girl. Parents cannot place as much reliance upon their children as formerly nor children upon their parents, husbands upon their wives nor wives upon their husbands, teachers upon their pupils, nor pupils upon their teachers, pastors cannot so thoroughly rely upon the character and principles of their congregations, nor can congregations so fully rely upon the fixed character of their pastors. Every now and then they have the confession of some minister that he has long been preaching a creed which he did not believe, and they have reason to doubt if there be not other equal inconsistencies in these men and in others of the "cloth."

"AWAKE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SIN NOT"

This appeal of the Apostle is especially appropriate today, and it should be the effort of all of us to lift up the proper standard of righteousness not only in our teachings but in all the acts and affairs of life—"lift up a

standard for the people.” This standard of character, as we have already remarked, is faithfulness.

Every messenger of the Gospel should realize that he has taken an obligation, not only to God, but also to the congregation that he serves—to minister to them the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

2H446

How any can satisfy their conscience with less than this is difficult to understand; but the fact is borne in upon us from day to day by their public utterances, in which many of them seem to glory in their shame—in their confession of years of disloyalty to the truth and to their confiding flocks. Such men should not be trusted in the future; not a word of theirs should be believed until they bring forth fruits in their lives, evidencing a thorough reformation—truth in the inward parts. Every professed Christian should arouse himself to ascertain clearly, positively what creed he has professed; he should re-examine it in the light of the divine word, and either reapprove and freshly avow it if found to be true, or he should reject it and pronounce it as no longer his if found to be untrue. How can we have honesty or faithfulness in our dealings with our fellow creatures or with ourselves if we are deficient in this quality in respect to the things of God—if we handle the Word of God deceitfully, and draw nigh to him with our lips while our hearts are far from our professions, or, while our minds reject them, how can we expect to have the divine blessing and enlightenment—”meat in due season.”

As the Apostle says, “Lie not one to another, brethren — neither falsely misrepresent the views and teachings of another nor falsely misrepresent our own. Let us be thoroughly honest, and, beginning with honesty in our religion, let us allow this quality of faithfulness to pervade all the avenues of life. As parents, with children, be honest, truthful, faithful to your trust, not shirking the same, but at the sacrifice of time and pleasure do your duty toward those whom the laws of nature and the Word of God tell you, you have the responsibility — toward your offspring. As children forget not your responsibility in the sight of God according to the laws of nature — “If any provide not for his own, specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel.” (1 Tim. 5:8) As employers, as teachers, as superintendents, let us appreciate more and more the responsibilities of life, the duties of life; let us make character by attending to these duties —by faithfulness. As pupils, as employees, as servants, clerks, let us learn that there is a principle involved in even the slightest affairs of life; that whoever is obedient to these principles is making character, and whoever is neglecting them is undermining character. Loyalty to God must come first, but loyalty to obligations as pupils and servants must certainly be remembered and practiced, if we

would grow in character development. Our Lord's words apply in all the cases most specifically, "He that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in much." If we do not learn to be faithful and conscientious in respect to the small affairs of life we will not have the character which should make us faithful in the larger duties and responsibilities that may yet come to us in the present or in the future life.

"CALLED, CHOSEN, FAITHFUL"

These are our Lord's words and in his own order; faithfulness is placed as the finality, the culmination, the test. It is not sufficient that we have been called of the Lord; it is not sufficient that we have accepted that call and come under the terms and conditions, and thus have been accepted of the Lord as his chosen ones. It is necessary that beyond this we shall develop character, and, as the Apostle expresses it, become "copies of God's dear Son," ere we can be counted of the Lord as faithful. And without this character development, faithfulness, we cannot hope to inherit the Kingdom. Faithfulness thus is made the test of the graduation of the Church from their present position and condition to the glorious station to which as the Bride of Christ they have been called to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be that they suffer with him, that they may also be glorified together. Rom 8:17

The suffering here referred to by the Apostle as necessary to the Church's share with Christ in the heavenly glory of the Millennial Kingdom is presented in the Scriptures from the two following standpoints: (1) It represents our sacrifices, our participation with our Lord and master in his sacrifice — suffering with him. (2) This suffering is held out before us in the Scriptures as a necessary condition to the attainment of the Kingdom, because the suffering is attendant or incidental to the trial of our faith. This is referred to by the Apostle in our text when he declares that the trial of the faith of the saints is much more precious, much more carefully done, than the trial of gold in the fiery furnace. He explains to us the reason why this should be so — because although gold is one of the most precious metals, it is nevertheless a perishable thing, its value is comparatively perishable, it may have greater value at one time and less at another, and the Scriptures assure us that the time is coming when by reason of the change of dispensation gold will have no such value as at the present time. Hence the Apostle contrasts it with the character of the Christian whose value will increase, because when the present testing time is ended, all the faithful, those who stand the trial, will be changed by the power of the Lord from earthly nature to heavenly nature, and become inestimable value as inheritors of the exceeding great

and precious promises and their reward the divine nature. 2Pet. 1:4

“GOLD TRIED IN THE FURNACE”

When we read in the Scriptures of our faith, the thought is not that of a testing of physical strength, but that of trying out impurities, refining. This is shown by

2H447

the illustration. Gold tried in the furnace is gold that is melted under the proper heat to separate the dross from the pure gold. This cannot be done without the heat, and yet if the heat were not regulated the effect would be the burning of the gold and its evaporation as gas. Hence in all furnaces where gold is tried or refined all the arrangements are very carefully made, and the refiner is a person of great skill, lest any of the precious metal should be destroyed—so that the proper purification might take place without destruction. And this is the thought, which the Lord everywhere holds out to those who are his consecrated people during this Gospel age. He informs us that we have been accepted of him through the merit of Christ, that our faith is counted to us for righteousness, that our good endeavors are counted as they were the actual accomplishment of all that we strive to accomplish, that our unintentional weaknesses and frailties are all considered by the heavenly Metallurgist who has charge of the refining process.

The refiner of gold first ascertains what are the peculiar characteristics of the dross with which it is combined, and then he arranges such fluxes in his furnace as will best combine with those elements of dross in the ore so that the heating process be not in vain. Thus it is with the heavenly Refiner, who knows his people individually, particularly, and who so arranges for all those who have consecrated themselves to him and who willingly abide in his care that the difficulties and vicissitudes of life to which they shall be exposed shall be fiery trials so combined and regulated as to most easily dissolve and separate their dross—to the intent that when the trying or purifying process is complete they may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing—fully acceptable to the great Father of Lights.

SAINTS FORMING CHARACTER

We come now to the crux of our lesson. We have already seen how desirable it is that the world should form character, how great a loss it experiences if it fails so to do. We may well imagine and will remember, too, that every point of character lost by the world will be one that will need to be regained in the life to come if they would attain at any time to divine favor; and every point

of character gained in the present life would be that much of an aid in the future life to their attainment of divine favor under Christ's kingdom. But now we notice the still more important testing which belongs to the Church—not the nominal Church, but the real Church—those who have made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice, of time, talents, influence, life itself, to him and to his service.

The refining process means so much to these, because having been enlightened more than others, having tasted of the heavenly gift, having been made partakers of the holy Spirit, having come into this especial relationship with God, there is a trial, a testing for either life or death. Should they not attain character that would be pleasing to God, (who would grant them a share in the heavenly condition) it will prove that they have received the "gift of God in vain. Because of this relationship to the Lord, they are in the furnace of trial at the present time. If they submit themselves willingly to the Lord, proportionately less of the fiery trials will be necessary to separate their dross; but if unfaithful to the covenant of sacrifice they cling to their sins and weaknesses and imperfections and fail to develop character it will require the stronger heat to release these impurities and if still they are recalcitrant the still greater heat of the furnace will be applied which, as the Apostle explains, would consume them as adversaries of God, adversaries of righteousness, adversaries of the principle

which God stands for and which they had agreed to stand for as his children and followers of his dear Son, their Lord and Redeemer.

“THINK IT NOT STRANGE”

Those who have become the Lord's "peculiar people" by making a "covenant of sacrifice" —surrendering earthly interests and prospects for the heavenly—are admonished by the Apostle that they are specially in the school of Christ for the development of character, so as to constitute them "copies of God's dear Son" in their hearts, though they cannot come up to his likeness in the flesh because of their imperfections. Writing to such the Apostle Peter says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that when his glory shall be revealed ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Pet. 4:12) All of the "beloved" must have just such experiences of fiery trials. Indeed these trials are a mark or sign to them that they are the Lord's beloved. As the Apostle Paul declares the heavenly Father scourges every son whom he receiveth, all need such scourging or chastening for the development of their characters. All need thus to be tried with fiery trials so as to purge from them the dross of this world—self reliance, worldly wisdom, earthly ambition, etc., to purify their faith in the Lord, his promises, his power, his grace all

sufficient. Instead of thinking these fiery trials strange we learn to consider them most reasonable and indispensable.

What Christian of experience has not found that some of the very best developments of his character have come through fiery trials; how else would he learn to exercise heavenly patience, forbearance, sympathy for others, love for the brethren, compassion for the

2H448

world in its troubles and trials? How else than in the furnace of affliction have the Lord's people learned the great lesson of faith, humility and love? Nor is it for us to say when we have had a sufficiency of trial, when the fiery trials shall cease. It is for our faith to accept the divine assurance that our Lord cares for our interests and will not suffer us to be tempted, tried, above that we are able, but will in every trial provide a way of escape from whatever portion of it would be too severe. We may be sure that when we come into touch with some Christian brother who manifests great faith in the Lord and in his Word, and great love for his cause and for the brethren that we have come in contact with one who has been in the fiery furnace, who has learned there of the Lord these valuable lessons and that because of these experiences he has been able to "put on Christ"—to put on the spirit or disposition of the Master and to be more and more conformed to his likeness.

In view of these things we do well at the opening of a New Year to afresh set our affections on things above and not on things of the earth, and to expect in connection with this our proper course that we will have trials which must not have the effect of discouraging us or weakening our faith, but contrariwise must increase our love, our trust, our devotion, our zeal, our conformity to the image of God's dear Son. The New Year thus entered upon by the Lord's people with guidance of the great Teacher, will form character pleasing in the Master's sight and will be an encouragement and strength for the coming days — an assistance to the end of the year and will guarantee us under the Lord's supervision a year's march nearer to the Kingdom and to all the glorious things which God has in reservation for them that love Him.

We see the reasonableness of the divine arrangement and that it is not an arbitrary matter on the Lord's part, but a necessary arrangement for our benefit to assist in making our calling and election sure. When we hear the Master's voice saying:—"Through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom"—it would cause us terror did we not know him and did we not remember his assurance of his loving protection of our welfare—that he is the great Refiner who looks for his image

in the molten metal and who skillfully withdraws it from the fire ere it be consumed just in time to fully separate it from the dross.

FAITHFULNESS CHARACTERISTICS

Let us then begin this new year with the expectation, with the determination that it shall be marked by great increase in our character's formation—that we will be faithful to our natural duties and responsibilities and also to our obligations and vows. Seeing that faithfulness is the character approved by God let us receive of its increase — that we will be more faithful as parents to our children and as children to our parents, as husbands to our wives and as wives to our husbands, as employers to our employees and as employees to our employers. Above all let us remember that the center of faithfulness is toward God—that we have natural obligations toward him as our Creator to obey his laws, to seek to know and to do his will.

And as for those who have consecrated their all upon the Lord's altar in harmony with the Apostles injunction, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice holy, acceptable to God and your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) Let us remember that we have an additional obligation to faithfulness—that our covenant of sacrifice implies still more than an avoidance of sin, that it means that we will seek opportunity to use our little all in the service of him who has redeemed us and adopted us into his family and given us the prospect of becoming joint heirs with his Son in the heavenly kingdom. Faithful is he who has called us, who also will do it, writes the Apostle, and the conditions are that we shall fulfil our covenant and be not only called and chosen but also faithful. Let us not forget either the Master's words that he that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in the thing which is great, that he who is unjust, in that which is least will be unjust, unfaithful in that which is greater. With this in view let us not forget the little things in life and that the Lord is specially judging of our professions and heart desires by these rather than by the greater things.

[The Greensburg Daily Tribune, January 14, 1907](#)

GOD'S GLORY IN OUR MINDS AND BODIES

Lynn, Mass., Jan. 13—Pastor Russell, of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today. His topic in the afternoon at Lynn Theater was the "Overthrow of Satan's Empire." His morning discourse, which we report, was based upon the words, "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's." (1 Cor. 6:20) He said:

When we consider the greatness, majesty and glory that must necessarily appertain to our Creator, and when we consider further the insignificance of humanity

2H449

even at its best even when perfect, and the fact that there is none righteous, no not one, because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, the proposition of our text seems an astounding one when applied to any member of the human race. In what way is it possible for any of our race to add to the honor and dignity and glory of the Heavenly Creator? Instinctively all would agree that if we possessed the power to glorify the Creator, the duty to do so would be incumbent upon us. By his grace we live, hence all the pleasures which have come to us or may yet come to us are reckoned as amongst the blessings that come down from above—all that we enjoy of food and raiment and appreciate of the beauties of nature and the fellowship of friends are ours by virtue of our existence and the provision which our Creator has made therefore. As the Apostle declares, “every good and every perfect gift cometh from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is no changeableness neither shadow of turning.” (Jas. 1:17) Very properly, then, all should feel the responsibility of making some return to the one who has made so bountiful provision for our needs—even though the conditions of this present time were far from perfect—far from satisfactory to the Lord himself, since he has promised us new conditions, a new heavens and a new earth, new arrangements both of government and society.

Our text, in common with all the Scriptures, is addressed not to the world in general but to the Church— to the household of faith. Nevertheless it may prove advantageous to us to consider its admonitions first from the standpoint of the world, and afterwards from the standpoint of those to whom it was most particularly addressed. We inquire, then, how could the natural man glorify God in his body? We must assume him to start with a measure of faith. He must believe that God is, and that he is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him, else he would have no incentive to worship or glorify God. This degree of knowledge and faith, acting properly upon the individual, would have an influence upon all of his conduct of life, though not necessarily the same influence that it would have upon others still more enlightened—the saints or himself if later he became one of the saints. Such a “natural man” under favorable influences ought to desire to glorify his Creator in his body, and properly enough would come the question: In what way could he accomplish this? We reply by that reasonable and proper use of it which would develop and preserve its powers, mental and physical. This would

mean that he should take heed to his eating and drinking, his use of his time and talents, that all of these might serve their very best and noblest purposes in his own interest and in the interests of others with whom he comes in contact.

Such a use of the human body would be to the glory of God, tending to demonstrate the divine wisdom originally exhibited in man's creation. The Lord declares that his work is perfect—that he made man in his own image and likeness and that our present condition as a race, some more and some less fallen, are all the results of the impairment of the human organization through sin and disobedience. The spirit of a sound mind teaches that this impairment is not only derogatory to the glory of God but injurious to ourselves, that we should do all in our power to counteract these disadvantages—to restore the equilibrium of our being and thus recover so far as possible our original condition in human perfection, in which condition the Lord declares he was glorified and honored. In our present condition our race is a dishonor to the Creator. Any noble-minded man would be ashamed to be known as the maker of the vast majority of our poor race. Even the noblest of men come short of the original perfection, or, as the Apostle declares, "We have all sinned and as a consequence come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23)—come short of that perfection or likeness of God which really honor and glorify him as the Creator.

"WE CANNOT DO THE THINGS WE SHOULD"

Here the "natural man" finds his insuperable barrier. He can will to be perfect, but he cannot accomplish that will; he can resolve that the words of his mouth and the meditations of his heart shall be acceptable to God, but he cannot make them so. He finds that he has inherited a downward tendency which he cannot fully overcome. He may resolve that he will glorify God in his body, so that whether he eats or drinks or whatsoever he does shall be done to the glory of God, but he finds a power of appetite with cravings of a fallen nature which occasionally, in spite of all his resolutions, swerve him from the path of propriety. He cannot do the things that he would. He feels his helplessness—what must he do? He should cry to the Lord in prayer, telling him of his desires to glorify him and of his realization of his own weaknesses, imperfections and general undone condition.

To such as take this course, to such as hunger and thirst after righteousness and the glory of God, to such as desire to do the divine will, seeking, knocking, the way shall be opened, as the Scriptures have promised. To

such the Lord will point out the great Redeemer, who is the Way, the Truth, the Life. Ere long to that “natural man” will come the knowledge of the fact that God, taking cognizance of our fallen state and knowing that we could not recover ourselves, has provided a Savior and a great one, able to save to the uttermost all who come unto the Father through him. To the seeking

2H450

one the revelation is opened that Jesus left the heavenly glory, was made flesh and gave himself a ransom for Adam and incidentally for his race. That thus a redemption price for Adam’s sin having been provided God can be just and yet cover the unintentional blemishes of all that come unto him through the merit of this sacrifice; he can count them as though they were perfect, reckoning according to their intentions and not according to their actual performances. How wonderful, how gracious an arrangement is this, which the Scriptures designate the justification through faith. Would that all could grasp even this primary feature of the divine plan and receive the great blessing which accompanies it.

THE PATH OF THE JUSTIFIED

The “natural man” of our illustration, now justified, has peace with God as the Apostle declares. (Rom. 8:1) Afresh he determines that he will glorify God in his body, afresh he strives to live a godly life, rejoicing that the Lord is willing through Christ to accept good intentions with best endeavors as instead of perfection. Nevertheless he does not go far until he meets with serious difficulty. He cannot still do things that he would; to will is present with him, but how to perform is the difficulty. (Rom. 7:18) He finds such a tide of indifference, carelessness, superstition, folly, sin, injustice, etc., all around him, that he feels appalled at the situation. Why did he ever undertake to walk in the ways of righteousness and to glorify God? His stand in this matter has put him in opposition to almost everybody and to almost all the arrangements of the present time. Heart sick he stops to survey the situation, to determine whether he will go on or whether he will swerve and bend to some extent to keep himself more in touch with his fellow creatures, who have a less noble standard and ambition. It is a query whether he will go on in his endeavor to glorify God in his body or will turn aside and yield to sin in greater or lesser degree. He is at the parting of the ways; he needs counsel, he needs assistance, and it is the Lord’s time to bring it to him.

At this very juncture the Lord shows this “natural man,” “justified through faith,” that it is impossible for him to go on of himself, in his own strength—that it will surely mean

failure. At the same time the Lord proffers him divine aid and assistance, but with one condition, namely, a full self-surrender—a full consecration of mind and body, time, talent, influence, everything, to the Lord's care. Here is his great struggle. Will he become a disciple of Christ, a follower of the Lamb, or will he maintain his self-control? If he decides upon the latter course, such decision, is a great mistake. The Lord gave a parable which will illustrate what results might be expected. He is like the man who, in the parable, had a demon cast out of him and his heart swept and garnished, and to whom subsequently the same demon returned, accompanied by several other demons more wicked, and entered into him, and the last end of that man was worse than the first. His only hope of going onward, in harmony with his good intention of glorifying God, lies in his acceptance of the proffered assistance of the great Redeemer.

But the latter does not force nor even urge the matter, but in his own language says "Let him sit down first and count the cost." (Luke 14:28) If he have a sufficient love for righteousness, love for truth, honorable and noble principles of life, to desire to glorify his Creator by following the paths of righteousness, he will after complete consideration determine that duty calls him to a full self-surrender. Additionally, by this time love for the Redeemer should be a powerful factor in his mind, and, as the Apostle suggests in our text, he should realize that he is not his own, that he is bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ. These considerations of duty and of love decide the matter if the man has the proper character, of the kind the Lord has been seeking during this Gospel age. If he has no such character he cannot be one of the Kingdom class now being sought.

THE STEP OF SELF SURRENDER

Let us assume that he takes this step of consecration—willingly laying his all of time, talent, influence, property, etc., at the feet of the Lord, with a desire to use all of these in glorifying God—what could be more rational than that we should use our bodies in the service of our Creator? What would be more reasonable than that the first step of such a consecration should be the giving up of the will by which our lives and bodies are controlled? Who can doubt, after coming to a knowledge of the grace of God in Christ, his loving kindness, his tender mercies—who could doubt that he would abundantly reward such an one, granting him, according to the Savior's promise, a hundred fold more in this present time and in the world to come everlasting life. In this suppositious case we shall assume that, when the consecration was made the heart, the will, all given up to the Lord even unto death, the Heavenly Father accepted the sacrifice and granted the blessing of a share in the holy Spirit. The result would be the gradual opening of

the eyes of understanding, the gradual attainment of the spirit of a sound mind in respect to all the affairs of life, the gradual transformation of the character in its every particular, especially noticeable in those features which were most defective.

This one, desirous of glorifying God, is no longer a

2H451

“natural man.” He is what the Scriptures designate a “new creature in Christ.” His change came as a result of his consecration of his all to the Lord—at the moment of his divine acceptance—at the instant when he received the begetting of the holy Spirit. This New Creature finds his enlightenment increasing through the instruction of the divine Word. To him old things have passed away and all things have become new in the sense that the instructions of the Word under the enlightenment of the holy Spirit give him clearer views of the sinful and fallen condition of mankind in general, and of the necessity for a thorough regeneration. They also inform him of the fact that God has provided for these in his own due time, during the Millennial age, and that those who are now properly exercised by the desire to glorify God and by the enlightenment of the holy Spirit, if faithful to the end, will be made associates with the Redeemer in that glorious Kingdom for which he taught us to pray “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

“AFFECTIONS SET ABOVE”

Now he begins to understand what the Apostle meant when he wrote, “Set your affections on things above and not on things of the earth.” Ah, yes; no wonder! The things of earth are all blemished, and, like a faded flower, they have lost their beauty and attractiveness to those who have a knowledge and appreciation of the fresher and better glories that are beyond. He now has the eye of faith, enlightened by the Word, illumined by the holy Spirit, and can see things that before were not discernible. Now all of the divine promises from the lips of Jesus, the Apostles and the prophets are luminous, giving light upon the pathway and enabling the eye of faith to see the heavenly glories even as we may see the sun thru an obscure or smoked lens. Now he is not alone, for he has the companionship of him who promised, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;” and again, “Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age;” and again, “I will come and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.” (Heb. 13:5; Matt. 28:20; John 14:3) The presence and providential care of the Lord in his affairs, all consecrated to the divine will, bring a peace and joy which the world knows not of—which the natural man, even though justified by faith,

cannot appreciate, because “the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:14) Only those begotten of the Spirit, therefore, may appreciate these deeper things and have a reverent joy and peace and blessing.

HOW THE CHURCH GLORIFIES GOD

The consecrated one of our illustration, having by his consecration a begetting of the holy Spirit, becomes a member of the Church whose names are written in heaven; and he may now properly lose his individuality and consider the Church as a whole, and ask, What is the force of this text and its application to the Church, the saints of God, who have made full surrender to him and his service of all that they have and are? The Apostle urges that such should remember that “Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price.” The more of the new mind these enjoy, the more they are taught of God by his Spirit through his Word, the better will they comprehend the fact that they not only owe the Lord a debt of gratitude for their natural life and earthly blessings, but additionally, they now owe him a still greater debt on account of their redemption through the precious blood; and even this indebtedness was greatly increased when, after their consecration and begetting of the Spirit, they realized that God had accepted them as “new creatures in Christ.” And his promise to them is that if they are faithful unto death they shall have the crown of life and joint-heirship with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom, with the glory, honor and immortality attaching.

If the natural man might reasonably look to God and desire to glorify him in his body—if still more the justified natural man should appreciate this privilege, then assuredly these New Creatures should far more esteem the privileges of using their mortal bodies to glorify their Father in heaven. But how shall they use them? What say the Scriptures? The words of the Lord and the apostles indicate clearly that these should have a different view from that which they formerly had in respect to their bodies. They should still consider it proper that whatever they eat or drink or whatsoever they do may be done to the Lord’s glory; they should still consider it proper to use their bodies as not abusing them realizing that their consecration to the Lord meant something—meant much. It meant that their mortal bodies were to be surrendered unto death as “living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, and their reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1)

The central thought of sacrifice is the free surrender or giving up of the sacrificed thing, and it here implies that while the “natural man” might not improperly think of preserving his life and earthly interests, these New Creatures—by reason of their full consecration to walk

in the Master's footsteps as living sacrifices—had put themselves under new conditions, which would hinder them from merely preserving their mortal bodies and conserving their best protective interests.

They are to esteem that their time, their talents, their influence, their wealth, are not their own, but consecrated, given over, devoted to the Lord and to his service. The sacrifice of these things means their spending,

2H452

not their hoarding; whoever therefore has taken this position and rightly understands what he has done should see clearly that it is his business according to his vows to the Lord, as a member of the body of Christ, to lay down his life in the service of the Lord, in the service of the truth, in the service of the brethren, by great deeds or by little deeds as the Lord may grant opportunity. His influence as a man attaches to his body, his person, and it also must be used in the Lord's service.

We might surmise that this would mean great honor, as the world would recognize these consecrated ones and their devotion to the Lord; but not so. They knew not the Master, they discerned not his spirit, they appreciated not his sacrifice when it was being made; neither can they for the same reasons appreciate the motives and devotion of those who follow in his footsteps. Hence to take this step of sacrifice will in the estimation of the world deserve and bring opprobrium, disdain and such will be "counted fools all the day long." It includes the money, because it appertains to the flesh, which is consecrated. The property of such is no longer theirs, but the Lord's, not to be foolishly wasted or thrown away, but not to be hoarded either. Their duty is to sacrifice it, use it, to spend it according to their best judgment as New Creatures as to what would be pleasing to the Lord and honoring to His name.

GLORIFYING GOD IN THE MILLENNIUM

As the facts as well as the declarations of Scripture show that God is not glorified in our depraved race, but the very reverse—that he is dishonored—the picture presented to us of the future is a grandly inspiring one; for God's declaration through the prophet 4s that the earth shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the great deep. (Isa. 11:9) This will not be, of course, at the beginning of the Millennium, but at its close. During that glorious reign of the glorified Jesus and his glorified Bride, the Church his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, the work of restitution will go grandly forward, with naught to oppose. The power of Jehovah's arm will there be manifested throughout the great Mediator's Kingdom, putting down all insubordination and every enemy to righteousness, and lifting up all who will accept the divine

favor from the tomb and from the weakness, sickness and frailty of our present fallen condition—lifting them back to that perfect estate from which all fell in the person of father Adam, in whose loins the entire race then were. It is for this reason that the Millennial reign of Christ is spoken of by the Apostle Peter as the time of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21) No wonder our Lord taught us to pray for “that glorious coming day whose Sun of Righteousness will dispel all the darkness of the present night time of sin.”

While the Scriptures distinctly assure us that none will gain perfection and eternal life contrary to their wills and that God seeketh only such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth, nevertheless the assurance that Satan will be bound during that thousand years that he shall deceive the nations no more until it is finished, and the assurance that the Christ in glory will be the great Physician to heal the wounds caused by sin and death, the great Redeemer is to bring back not only those from the tomb but from every phase of imperfection and death, so many as will obey him. This, coupled with the Apostle’s declaration that God will have all men to come to a knowledge of the truth, is the guarantee that the prophetic picture of the Millennial day is not overdrawn, not exaggerated. Another similar picture is given us in the Lord’s last message to the Church, in which we read respecting the conditions of the world at the close of the Millennial age, in the “song of Moses and the Lamb,” “Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy righteous dealings have been made manifest.” (Rev. 15:3, 4)

As yet the ways of the Lord are in darkness, except to the few who are enlightened by the holy Spirit, taught of God, granted an appreciation of the deep things of God. But by and by his righteous dealings, the righteousness of the entire plan of God, will be manifested to all. Who then will not glorify God in that day when restitution shall have brought them back from the influence of the curse, the sentence of death, restored them to the image and likeness of God? Surely, as is here declared, all nations shall come and worship before the Lord. That is a happy day coming for the world in general, but already those who are the Lord’s, in the highest sense of the word his “very elect” by faith, may see, understand and appreciate not only these things yet to come, but themselves now have a share by faith in the glories of that coming Kingdom and at present in the appreciation of the Father’s love ‘and are enabled to glorify God in their bodies by using them to his glory and praise,

whither all the blind eyes shall be opened, and when the ways of the Lord and of those who are walking with him shall be manifested to the glory of his praise.

2H453

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, February 25, 1907](#)

THE PURPORT OF FASTING

Cedar Rapids, Ia., Feb. 24. Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today to very attentive audiences. The Opera House was crowded at 3 p.m. to hear him talk on his cure for infidelity, entitled "To Hell and Back." The large audiences gave closest attention for nearly two hours. The morning discourse, on "The Purport of Fasting," is reported herewith. It was from the text, "Then came to Jesus the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not?" (Matt. 9:14) He said:

From earliest times fasting has been recognized as a valuable adjunct to piety. Many of the heathen even have their fast days as well as their feast days. Our text tells us that the custom was prevalent among the most religious in our Lord's day, and expresses surprise that it was not enjoined by our Master's teachings as a law, and at that time was not practiced by His followers. Jesus in reply explained the situation, indicating that His message was such a feast to His disciples and His presence among them such a cheer that practically they could lack for nothing and would have little reason for fasting until after His return to the Father. He says, "Yea, I say unto you, in those days they shall fast."

It is one of the peculiarities of our Lord's teachings and the teachings of His apostles that they bound the believers with no fetters, but after setting forth doctrines and principles for holiness of heart, they left the outward conduct to be regulated by the heart. Thus the disciples of Jesus were never commanded not to murder, not to steal. The command was on a much higher plane than this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Love for the neighbor would neither covet his goods nor sanction injury of any kind, but the very reverse—would seek to assist him as might be needed. Whoever voluntarily comes under the Lord's Golden Rule finds that it regulates all the affairs of life. To do to others as we would have them do to us signifies that we would do them good in every reasonable and possible manner, but do them injury, never!

THE VALUE OF FASTINGS

All close observers of human nature, and particularly all who are critical observers of their own lives, realize that there is a blessing in abstemiousness—self-denial—self-restraint—fasting. The Apostle speaks of some whose chief pleasure seems to be self-gratification, saying of them, “Whose god is their belly, who mind earthly things.” (Phil. 3:19) Persons of experience will be ready to admit that the gourmand satisfies his appetite at the expense of his higher intellectual qualities, without any reference whatever to religious matters. Hence we find that the more intelligent people of the world practice a kind of fasting or self-denial every day they live. They have an aim, an object, before them in life, and strive to eat and drink in harmony therewith. They realize that with all their energies absorbed in the digesting of food and the making of flesh, their intellects and all their higher functions are stupefied and in the interest of their own welfare, therefore, they bring voluntarily their appetites under a measure of restraint that they may prosper along preferred lines.

Many Christian professors observe a Lenten season in the spring of every year and establish the same as a law. While disclaiming that the Lord and the apostles, and the authorities in the Church, ever made such a law, and while correspondingly disapproving of laws made by those who have not the authority, we nevertheless recognize that the custom has probably been a beneficial one physically—sometimes spiritually. The cold of winter, stimulating the appetite, very frequently results in overfeeding, especially among the wealthy and fashionable, and to these surfeited ones the fastings enjoined by their Lenten laws are undoubtedly safety-valves of health which measurably prepare the system for the changing conditions of springtime and doubtless to some extent avert sickness, especially in the case of those whose main meat diet is fatty pork. To such the Lenten law is a real blessing.

FASTING ON A HIGHER PLANE

Recognizing that fasting signifies self-denial—the denial of the flesh—we perceive that He has invited those who would walk with Him in the narrow way to join with Him in this fasting, and that when they make a full consecration of their all to the Lord this signifies self-denial—the renunciation of the world, the flesh and the devil, with whatever this may have of charm or enticement for their flesh. I have already noted as beneficial, healthful, a restraint upon the appetite, and particularly at the spring of the year. I have also commended a general restraint of the appetite every day in the avoidance of foods and drinks recognized as in any degree injurious. I have shown that this is the course of wisdom and in line with the spirit of a sound mind. This commends itself, not to the worldly prudent, but

especially to the Lord's consecrated people, who recognize

2H454

that they were bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, and that they should therefore glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are His. None of us has great talents or powers by nature, and all the more it behooves us to make the most of what we have in the service of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, with a high appreciation of the privilege of being His representatives and ambassadors.

We come now to a consideration of the highest forms of self-denial, called in the Scriptures self-sacrifice, because they are not demanded of us by justice nor by considerations of health, but constitute our sacrifices of earthly riches in the interest of righteousness and in our service of the Lord's cause.

This highest form of fasting—self-denial, self-sacrifice—is represented in our Lord; but since He was so far above us, being perfect, we may perhaps use the Apostle Paul's case as a still better illustration of this kind of fasting—self-sacrifice. We see how he, by birth a Roman citizen and by education a lawyer, was well prepared to make his mark in the world as a prominent member of the Jewish Sanhedrin and doctor of the law, honorable, esteemed among his fellow men. We see how he devoted all these opportunities and talents, to the cause of the Lord—to the cause of the truth. We see how he became an ambassador for the King of Kings to those whom he well knew in advance would not generally recognize his embassy, but who, on the contrary, would count him a fool or a knave—totally misunderstand his motives. The apostle's abandonment of earthly station and honors to receive instead the disfavor of his fellows and to be counted as a part of the filth and offscourings of the earth was an heroic self-sacrifice. It means fasting on the very highest plane, so that had we no record that the apostle ever fasted in a literal sense—no record that he ever denied himself dainty food—we would, nevertheless, see that his entire life was a season of fasting on a plane that must be the most acceptable of any imaginable in the sight of the Lord.

THE APOSTLE PAUL'S FASTINGS

Hearken to the apostle's enumeration of some of the self-denials endured by himself and others of the household of faith who loyally stood with him. He says, "In all things approving ourselves as ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings. . . As deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, yet well known; as

dying, and behold, we live; as chastened and not killed.” (2 Cor. 6:4, 5; 8, 9) Mark again the apostle’s appeal to the church in favor of this higher form of fasting practiced by the Lord and himself. He prefaces it by suggesting that the time is short—the opportunity for such self-sacrifice on the part of any person is very limited. At most we have but a few years to live—a few years only, therefore, to sacrifice. At best we have very little talent and opportunity to lay at the Lord’s feet: hence the importance of doing so in a wholehearted manner. A few more days or months or years and the trial time of the church will be at an end, and the time will have come when the Master shall declare who have been the overcomers and who have failed to overcome—who have faithfully walked in the narrow way, copying the example of their Redeemer, and who have not done so and have not manifested a sufficiency of zeal for righteousness and their covenant.

The apostle’s words are: “This I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had them not; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possess not; and they that use this world as not abusing it.” (1 Cor. 7:29-31) The apostle thus urges upon all who like himself are seeking to make their calling and election sure as members of the elect class, the Bride class, which will share with Christ the throne of the millennial kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth, that in harmony with their consecration they should continually seek to live abstemious lives in respect to all the affairs of life. We do not understand the apostle to mean that wife or property or the pleasures of life should be entirely ignored. There are duties and responsibilities in all these directions, incumbent upon all, but, as he intimates in the context, he would have you without carefulness—his thought being that in none of these respects should the Lord’s consecrated people be overcharged; that none of these things should so absorb our attention, our time, our energy, our strength along earthly lines as to hinder us from the great privilege of being servants and ambassadors of the Lord and His cause.

It is just so in the matter of fasting, which does not signify total abstinence from food, but a measure of abstinence and self-restraint as respects the condiments and delicacies. As the absolute necessities may be eaten, should be eaten, so there are absolute necessities in life which should not be ignored—duties which we owe to ourselves and to others. But outside that limitation there is a vast range of possibility in the matter of self-denial, self-sacrifice, as every Christian should realize. The apostle urges a realization of the privilege and the opportunity for such self-denials, such fastings, and it will be profitable for all of the Lord’s people to contin-

ually keep this in mind—to remember that they are different from the world, that in accepting the Lord and in consecrating themselves to Him and His service,

2H455

and being accepted by Him as His servants and begotten of His spirit, they have entered upon new conditions and have new responsibilities, and that among these is their engagement that they will show their love for the Lord by their fastings, by their self-denials on His behalf—on behalf of the service of His word of truth.

ENDURE HARDNESS AS GOOD SOLDIERS

In illustrating the Christian's consecration to sacrifice, self-denial, fasting, that he may give himself the more thoroughly to the Lord's service in word, thought and deed, the Apostle uses the illustration of a Roman soldier. He points out that those who will be faithful soldiers must disentangle themselves from earthly obligations to a large degree, ignoring, sacrificing, enduring a fast of self-denial for patriotic reasons. Using this as an illustration the Apostle urges that we should endure hardness as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who assures us that faithful is He who has called us to this service, and that He will do exceedingly, abundantly better for us than we could ask or expect. Then we are invited to consider the difference of reward. These earthly soldiers endure great hardships and practice great self-denials that they may have the approval of their superior officers and their Nation. We as a reward for our faithfulness and self-denial, fasting, are exhorted to look forward to and have confidence in the approval of the great King of Kings and Lord of Lords when He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe in that day—the dawning of the millennial day.

More than this, the soldiers of the cross who demonstrate their loyalty to their Master by sacrifice even unto death are assured that they shall be very highly exalted by Him in due time—when His kingdom comes. This He assures them, saying, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I overcame and am set down with My Father in His throne.” (Rev. 3:21) He calls these by the precious name of brethren, and again by the still more precious name of Bride, assuring us that as all things have been given to Him by the Father since His exaltation, since His overcoming victory, so we shall be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord in the “inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:4) The Apostle Peter, speaking of these faithful soldiers of the cross, declares their prospects thus, “To us are given exceeding great and precious

promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature.” (2 Peter 1:4) The divine nature is the highest of all, far above that of men, angels, principalities and powers—the Father’s nature, incorruptible. The Apostle’s question is pertinent: if our fellowmen are willing to endure great hardships for the trivial rewards that are theirs what should we be willing to endure who thoroughly believe in these exceeding great and precious things which God has in reservation for the faithful? What manner of persons ought we to be in all manner of holy conversation and godliness? 2 Peter 3:11

ONLY FASTERS IN THE KINGDOM

It may seem to be stating the matter strongly to say that none will be admitted to the Kingdom glories and honors and association with the Redeemer in His Millennial work except those who practice fasting—self-denial. These are the overcomers, to whom everything is promised, and outside of whom nothing is promised as respects the Kingdom. Does this seem at first to us to be unreasonable? If so, it requires but a little reflection to see that it is really most consistent, most reasonable. An overcomer is one who has gained an established, a fixed character as respects his will in all matters pertaining to godliness. The divine arrangement guarantees us that the overcomers will love righteousness and hate iniquity in their hearts, and exemplify this as much as possible in their words and deeds. But, further, the fact that all the overcomers are now required to war a good warfare against their own natural appetites and desires to the extent of self-denial, fasting, guarantees us that those who will be associated with the Redeemer in His Kingdom work will be all above reproach, above temptation, above disloyalty in every sense. And the fact that these are to be the Kings and Priests, the rulers and judges for the uplifting of the world of mankind during the Millennium, is the best possible guarantee we could have of the justice, mercy and love which God will exemplify through their ministrations and that of their Redeemer.

Let us go then a step further; let us point out that without self-denial no one will ever attain to eternal life, neither in the present age nor the age to come—the Millennial age. We have already shown that this is true of the Church which is being called and tested and developed during this age. As for the world in its trial in the next age, the Scriptures everywhere indicate that nothing short of absolute perfection must be attained by them before the end of the Millennium if they would have the reward of eternal life. And the attainment of perfection such as God requires signifies more than the attainment of innocency such as father and mother Adam and Eve enjoyed in Eden. They were not only created thus with

good character, but were required to exercise it—to bring it to a fixed state or condition by being tested, proven, disciplined. It was early

2H456

in their career of disciplining and testing that they proved disobedient, and their trial terminated in their sentence to death. During the Millennial age mankind, brought back from sin-and-death conditions, gradually nearer and nearer toward perfection, will be required also to stand these tests, to demonstrate their loyalty to principle. This will mean that they must learn to deny themselves, must learn to control their fallen appetites and instincts, and to triumph over these, and ultimately to attain a fixity of purpose and character in harmony with righteousness. Whoever shall not thus avail themselves of the privileges of the Millennial Kingdom, the Apostle assures us, will die the Second Death, and this is corroborated by all the testimonies of the Scriptures. Acts 3:23

0, that all mankind might be able to realize how much the present life has to do with their future interests! We are not holding up the unscriptural bogy of an eternity of torture for all those who do not attain to saintliness, to perfection, by walking in the narrow way. But we are pointing out that none can be of the elect class, the overcomers, but those who do walk in this narrow way of self-denial, self-sacrifice, fasting: that to them will be granted of the Lord the exceeding great and precious things of joint-heirship with His Son in glory, honor and immortality. And as for those who reject the narrow way, we would have them scripturally see that they lose the great prize of the present high-calling in Christ Jesus; they lose the glory, honor and immortality promised the overcoming little flock, and that in proportion as they neglect the development of fixed, solid characters—in proportion as they neglect to overcome the evil propensities of their flesh and yielding to these become more strongly bound to them—in the same proportion they will have steps to retrace during the millennial reign: for every downward step of self-gratification in sin means a step to be retraced by and by in order to become an heir of eternal life, even on the human plane. If all could see this what an incentive it would be to the world to abstinence of life, self-denial and all the other good qualities which are appropriate both to the Church and to the world, and which briefly might be denominated, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. Let none think, however, that he can attain to all these graces of God's Spirit in the present time without the divine assistance. Let none think either that he can have divine assistance except as he comes to the Lord for it in the appointed

way—through faith in the blood, and through consecration to follow in the steps of the Master.

[The Pittsburgh Dispatch, April 29, 1907](#)

“GOD’S LITTLE WHILES”

Baltimore, April 28.—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached here today in Ford’s Opera House to a large audience. His topic was, “The Bible Defended—To Hell and Back. Who Are There? Hope for the Recovery of Many of Them.” His evening discourse, on “God’s Little Whiles,” from the text, “A little while and ye shall not see Me; and again a little while ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father” (John 16: 16) follows:

In the discourse of this afternoon we showed that our race is resting under a sentence of death, under a curse, as the result of the disobedience of our first parents, who, being created in the image of God and under favorable conditions, disobeyed, forfeited their blessing of life everlasting and were sentenced in the words, “Dying thou shalt die.” We saw that this penalty extended in a natural way from parent to child, the momentum of death increasing as centuries rolled by, until the vigor which enabled Father Adam to live 930 years had deteriorated so that the average of life today is about 35 years. We saw there was no injustice done to our race in this, because remarkably few even under adverse conditions wish they had never been born. The vast majority, practically all, can therefore feel that whatever measure of life under any conditions they have received calls for gratitude, thankfulness. We saw that the teaching that the penalty for Father Adam’s sin inherited by his posterity is eternal torment is false, unscriptural as well as unreasonable, unjust. We saw that this false doctrine came from the “dark ages,” and was formulated by those who were so much in the dark themselves respecting the divine character that they had pleasure in tormenting one another with the rack and thumbscrew, and even in burning one another at the stake in the name of God, but contrary to His word and Spirit. We saw that the word “hell” in the Old Testament Hebrew is sheol, and that its corresponding word in the New Testament is hades, and that these words never signify a place of torment or suffering, but, on the contrary, the grave, the tomb, the state of death, and that the original words are more times translated grave than

2H457

hell in our common version.

We also saw that by the divine provision of mercy our Lord Jesus left the glory which He had with the Father as a spirit being and humbled Himself to become a human being, in order that He might redeem Father Adam, and thus incidentally redeem his race condemned in him. We saw that the Scriptures clearly present this

fact, that the man Christ Jesus went into sheol, went into hades, went into death, as the Ransomer, the Redeemer of the world, in order that it might be freed from the death sentence, and that it might be possible in due time to raise all from death and bring them up, up, up to a perfection of being—to all that was lost in Adam, plus a knowledge of good and evil which Adam did not possess. We saw that while the man Christ Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for the man Adam, God raised Him from the dead not as a man but as a New Creature, a spirit being, as a partaker of the divine nature, higher than angels, principalities, etc., as the apostle declares. We further noted that the reason why the glorified Christ did not at once begin His reign of righteousness for the blessing and uplifting of mankind from sin and death conditions, but deferred it until the Millennial age, was for the purpose of permitting in the interim, during this Gospel age, the gathering of a little flock out of every nation, kindred and tongue, to constitute the Bride of Christ and His joint-heir in the Kingdom glories and works for mankind.

THE HOPE LONG DEFERRED

This evening we call your attention to the fact that although this reign of sin and death, with its terrible havoc of sorrow and pain and trouble, which has involved what the apostle terms the “groaning creation,” and which has seemed to us so long a time, is not really a long while from the right standpoint — God’s standpoint. The prophet declares, “From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. (Psalm 90: 2) And as we attempt to grasp the thought of eternity past and to come we find it beyond our powers—theoretically we may assent, but we cannot truly comprehend it. We must have the Lord Himself explain to us what eternity means, and this He does, bringing the matter down to our comprehension when He declares of Himself that a thousand years with us are in His own sight but as yesterday—but as a watch in the night when it is past. Again He tells His people through the apostle the same thing, saying, “Brethren, be not ignorant of this one thing, that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years with us.” (II Peter 3:8) The world, ignorant of God, have not this new measurement of time before their minds, and are not therefore able to enter into the declaration of our text and other Scriptures which speak of great events and (from the earthly standpoint) of long periods as but a “little while.”

From God’s standpoint, then, we see that only six great days of a thousand years each have elapsed since Father Adam’s creation in Eden, and that the seventh great day is now being ushered in, and is to be the great Sabbath of rest, of blessing, of restitution, of comfort, of encouragement, of divine favor for all the families of the earth. How such a view cheers our hearts, how it makes real the gracious promises of God, which we had thought so old and stale that they had become lifeless! For

instance, the intimation of hope which God gave to our first parents in the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. How long it seemed since the promise was given, and yet no sign of the serpent's power being in any measure or degree curtailed; how hope vanished from our hearts, if not already dead, when we learned from the Scriptures the proper estimate to place upon time—when we learned that from the divine standpoint that promise was only six days old!. Similarly the promise made to Father Abraham, and which seemed to be so firmly established by the divine oath that it could not fail. Nevertheless, when we read that promise, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," and then perceived that the heathen of our day—numbering according to the most liberal estimates twelve hundred millions—have no knowledge of God or of the only name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved, we were disposed to say to ourselves, "The promise has not yet been fulfilled—all the families of the earth have not yet been blessed by the seed of Abraham."

Worse than this, even—when we look into statistics and find that a century ago there were only one-half as many heathen, we are appalled, and ask ourselves, "What prospect is there that this promise and oath of God to Abraham could ever be fulfilled?" When we consider that it is more than 3,700 years since that promise was made, and that the heathen are twice as numerous as they were a century ago, it would make us sick at heart and our faith would grow faint and weak and almost expire were it not that we hear the Lord's message, through the Prophet, "A thousand years in thy sight are but as Yesterday," a "little while." (Psalm 90:4) When we get the thought that it is less than four days from God's standpoint since He made the promise and gave His oath, our hearts revive with courage and

2H458

with faith, and we say in the language of the Prophet, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are Thy ways higher than our ways and Thy plans higher than our plans." Isa. 55:9

"IN DUE TIME CHRIST DIED"

Coming down the stream of time we find that it was more than four thousand years after sin entered into the world before God sent His Son to redeem the world. Until we heard the Lord's voice telling us of His standpoint of reckoning time we were disposed to say, "O what a long time for a reign of sin and death over Adam and his race before the Savior was even sent to pay the ransom price—to succor us!" O what a long time thus elapsed before the message of salvation was

proclaimed, before Christ “brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” (2 Timothy 1:10) Yes, we hear the apostle concerning this saying, “So great salvation—which began to be preached by our Lord.” (Hebrews 2:3) How strange it seems that the greatness of the salvation was not even made known to the world nor even to a saintly few for four thousand years after the death sentence had been pronounced! But when we learn to view matters from the standpoint of God’s “little whiles” all is plain—but four days of man’s greater week had elapsed.

In full accord with this is the Scriptural declaration that it was in due time that “Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6)—not too soon nor too late, just at the proper time, according to the wisdom of Him who is too wise to err. Similarly the Scriptures tell us of another due time in the future, saying that the message respecting Christ’s work as a Mediator between God and man shall be testified “in due time.” (1 Timothy 2:6) Ah, how much this explains! God’s due time is not so long from the divine standpoint, and the matter is sure, the people may have faith in His promise—in due time Christ shall indeed be that true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. What matters it to those who have gone down into sheol, into hades, into the tomb, into the state of death, and of whom the Scriptures declare that they “know not anything,” that they are unconscious, that they will know nothing until they are called forth from the tomb, called forth from sheol, hades, by the Son of man in due time, when He shall have set up His Kingdom, and when all things shall be ready for the bringing of them back during the “times of restitution of all things.” (Acts 3:19-21) Ah, yes, we can see then that God has a due time for every feature of His plan, that nothing is gone astray, that “known unto the Lord are all His works from the foundation of the world,” that the whole creation is His charge, while saints are His peculiar care.

“BECAUSE I GO TO THE FATHER”

Coming now more particularly to the “little whiles” of our text: Notice that our Lord refers to the nearly nineteen hundred years of this Gospel age as a “little while” —“A little while and ye shall not see me, because I go to the Father.” But on the other hand it will be but a little while until you shall see me, because I go to the Father. The matter may be viewed from two standpoints: The Lord is invisible to us, because in His resurrection He was changed, and instead of being, as before His death, the “Man Christ Jesus,” He is now the heavenly Lord—“Now the Lord is that spirit.” (2 Cor 3: 17) But He has gone to the Father, we are still in the flesh. It will be but a little while, however, until the close of this age, and the faithful, according to His promise, shall experience the glorious change of the first resurrection—from mortal to immortal, from earthly to heavenly, from weakness to power, from an animal condition to a spirit condition. As we have borne the image of the earthly Adam we shall also bear the

image of the heavenly one; but, as the Apostle says it is necessary that we also pass through His resurrection “change,” because, as He declares, flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom. (1 Cor. 15:50)

Our Lord left His flesh and blood nature in His resurrection; we must be similarly changed that we may be like Him. (1 Cor. 15:51) We remember also the words from the Apostle John: “Beloved now are we, the sons of God [begotten of His holy Spirit to a new nature], and it doth not yet appear what we shall be [we do not know experimentally respecting the glorious conditions of the new nature promised us in the resurrection], but we do know that when He shall appear we shall be like him.” (1 Jno. 3: 2) This is the Lord’s promise—”A little while and ye shall see Me”—you shall be changed from human nature to divine nature in the resurrection and see Me and behold My glory.

ONLY THE CHURCH SHALL SEE HIM

It will be remembered that a little before the address of our text to the disciples the Lord had said (John 14:19): “Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more; but ye shall see Me.” Here, as everywhere, we have a clearly drawn line of distinction as between the Church and the world. The world is to see Christ no more; He will never again appear in the flesh. As the Apostle explains,

2H459

He humbled Himself and took our nature, was made flesh in order that He might suffer death as our Redeemer, and having accomplished this He will never take our nature again, for “Christ dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.” (Rom. 6:9) He has done with the flesh forever. And as the world will not see him in the flesh, neither will the Church ever see Him in the flesh. On the contrary, “we shall see him as He is” —not as He was in the flesh. We shall see Him at the close of a little while, in the close of this Gospel age, because of our change to His likeness. The world will not see Him thus, because it is not the divine provision that the world in its salvation shall be changed from earthly to heavenly nature. How consistent, how harmless are all the presentations of God’s word! What proof we have in these that the wisdom of the Bible is not earthly but heavenly!

We were not forgetful of the Scriptures which declare that “every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him,” when we corroborated our Lord’s words—”Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more.” They will see Him no more in the flesh and with the natural eyesight. The seeing that is promised in the Millennial age will be the result of the opening of the blind eyes of

understanding. Israel and the world will, with the eyes of their understanding, look upon Him whom they have pierced when in God's due time the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the great deep, and when none shall need to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least unto the greatest of them. (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34) Nor should we think of this as being any disadvantage to the world. Indeed, as the world could not see the Father because He is a spirit being, because no man could see His face and live, and because "no man hath seen God at any time," —for the same reasons the world could not see the Lord Jesus in His present highly exalted position of the divine nature, most glorious. We remember the experience of the Apostle Paul as Saul of Tarsus, who was granted a mere glimpse of the glorious Christ, "shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday," and the effect was the destruction of his sight. Would it be a blessing to the world to thus see the Father or the Son in the future? By no means. And hence the Lord's provision is a most gracious one. "Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more.

"GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH"

The Bible shows us, however, that God has made a glorious provision for the world in the future, and that during the "times of restitution of all things," while Christ Himself will be invisible to the world as a spirit being, and while the Bride of Christ will similarly be for the same reason invisible to mankind, because changed and like her Lord, nevertheless there will be amongst men representatives of God to whom men may look for instruction, for guidance, and in whose perfection they may see their own possibilities if they are obedient to the rules and regulations of that Millennial Kingdom. The Scriptures clearly show that the company of faithful ones known as the Ancient Worthies—including Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and all the holy prophets—the faithful of the past, will come forth from death, not perfect as spirit beings, but perfect as human beings. Thus they will be as Adam was before his fall, plus the knowledge gained through experience.

They will be as Christ was in the flesh, before His anointing with the holy Spirit at baptism. As perfect men they will be thus perfect representatives of God—God manifest in the flesh—the best examples of God-likeness, the best examples of the perfection God desires men to have as His image that could possibly be set before mankind. These, under the superior direction of the spiritual Christ, head and body, will be the "princes in all the earth," through whom the messages of the heavenly will be made known to mankind for their blessings, encouragement, reproof and uplifting from the conditions of sin and death. Then whosoever wills may

come and take of the water of life freely, while those who refuse under all the blessed opportunities of that time, let them die the death—the Second Death—from which there will be no hope of recovery, no hope of redemption.

“YE SHALL BE SORROWFUL”

The context tells us that when Jesus had uttered the words of our text the disciples were perplexed as to what He meant by the “little while.” Jesus explained that in one sense it meant a little while of trouble and trial and vexation to His disciples and a little while of rejoicing on the world’s part, but that the sorrows of His disciples would be turned into joy eventually; and His intimation is that the sooner they are able to accept the situation by faith the sooner may they with joy anticipate the coming blessings, so as to have that joy and peace which the world can neither give nor take away. He tells them plainly that His words signify that as He came forth from the Father and came into the world so again He would leave the world and go to the Father. He had been with them a little while, He would be gone

2H460

from them a little while, and the more they could enter into His spirit and become associates with Him the shorter would that little while of His absence be until His return to accept them as His Bride—to make up His “jewels.” (Mal. 3:17)

The sufferings and self-denials of the narrow way are intimated by our Lord’s words, and the world’s hilarity in the broad road is also intimated. But His followers—while suffering, enduring hardness, and through such developing being prepared for the Kingdom—are to have such an appreciation of the situation, such a well-founded and glorious hope respecting the future, such a knowledge of the divine arrangement in respect to God’s “little whiles,” that not only will their sorrows eventually be changed into joy and blessing in the resurrection, but even now—anticipating that resurrection in their faith, in their hope, and passing from death unto life as risen with Christ and walking in newness of life—they already may have many of the joys that belong to the future as blessings and refreshments, so that they may be enabled thus to rejoice even in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and that thus ultimately they shall not be ashamed as a result.

The sufferings of the Church have been along various lines, some including physical persecution and pain, others less direct persecution, ostracism, boycotting, mental pain—and the latter is perhaps more especially

the portion of the Lord's people at the present time than the former. Nevertheless, we know not how soon may come open persecution, sufferings, and it behooves every soldier of the Cross therefore to be faithful at heart and to keep close to the Captain of our Salvation and His glorious standard, the Word of God, and to put on the whole armor of God, that He may be able to stand in the evil day which is upon us and increasing in its severity daily, hourly.

“NOW IS OUR SALVATION NEARER”

As faith perceives God's "little whiles" and takes the Divine standpoint, hope reigns and counts the years that remain until the full completion of the times of the Gentiles and the inauguration of the great time of trouble, in which will fall all present institutions, because all are more or less imperfect, and because nothing will be permitted to remain that is shakeable—that is not in accord with the absolute righteousness of the Divine law of love. The signs multiply about us daily, indicating that the new dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom is just at the door, that the dark night of sin and death and sorrow and pain and trouble under the prince of this world, Satan, is about to terminate in the glorious dawn of the Millennial Day, ushered in by the great Prince of Light—the Christ. Oh, how our hearts do uplift with gratitude to God! how we are enabled to rejoice, notwithstanding the trouble that is coming, and notwithstanding the share that we may have in it, as we think of the glorious blessings that great trouble time will usher in. As for the Lord's saints, we have the assurance that although it will be through great tribulation we shall enter the Kingdom, nevertheless also they shall have deliverance—they shall have succor; in their hearts they shall be enabled to rejoice even in tribulation, and to glorify God in their bodies and spirits which are His. As for the world, the plowshare of trouble and sorrow and pain will go deeply into their hearts; nevertheless even these, under Divine Providence, will work a great blessing, preparing them to hear the voice of Him that speaketh from heaven, and to bring forth in obedience to His direction the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Surely all who are the Lord's people can agree to the Apostle's declaration — "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed." (Romans 13:11) The "little while" is eighteen centuries further gone than it was when St. Paul wrote. The glorious salvation is now nigh, even at the doors. Our Lord explains that this will be for us, "the salvation that will be brought unto you" —unto the Church, unto the little flock, unto the elect. Subsequently it will mean through you, through the elect, the blessing of Natural Israel and all the families of the earth according to the original promise, in harmony with the Oathbound Covenant, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the

promise,” and all who can thus reckon themselves can rest assured that if faithful they will soon be fulfilling the terms of that Oathbound Covenant in scattering the blessings of God’s favor to every creature.

*“A little while; now he has come; the hour draws on apace—
The blessed hour, the glorious morn, when we shall see His face.
How light our trials then will seem! how short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream, dispelled by dawning day!”*

2H461

[The Pittsburgh Dispatch, May 13, 1907](#)

EARTH TO BE FILLED WITH GOD’S GLORY

LOUISVILLE, Ky., May 12. Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., gave two interesting addresses here today to large and intelligent audiences. His afternoon topic was “A Cure for Infidelity.” His evening discourse was from the text, “The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Isaiah 40:5. He said:

While it is quite true that the heavens declare the glory of God and the earth showeth His handiwork it is also true that but few appreciate these facts, but few see the glory of the Lord. Those who do see the Lord’s glory in the sun and moon and stars, and their glorious harmonies of movement and relationship, are but few; and while the earth shows God’s handiwork, His provision for the necessities of all His creatures in hill and valley and plain, grain, fruit and flower, beast, bird and man, the great majority of the race accept divine blessings daily with but little appreciation, with but little thankfulness. The majority, as the Apostle declares, “are blind and cannot see afar off.” (2 Peter 1:9) Nor need we wonder that it is only those who have the eye of faith, only those whose eyes of understanding have been opened, who can appreciate the divine glories and benefits at the present time. When we look around us and see that sin and death are reigning, that their sting has blemished every pleasure, every joy, every beauty, the natural inquiry is, why does not the Creator of the Universe rule among the children of men, overthrow Satan and sin and death and all their train of evils, and give to God’s creatures such blessings as might naturally be expected from such a beneficent Creator and Father?

A satisfactory answer comes to us from but one direction—the Bible. True, infidels and higher critics generally tell us that nature is our God and Creator and is without sentiment, merely an operation of laws which ignore man’s noblest sentiments of justice, love, mercy, etc. But this answer is not

satisfactory to the reasoning mind, which feels assured that the Creator cannot be inferior to but must be the superior of the created being. Hence reason tells us that He who formed the eye sees even better than we; He who formed the ear hears better than do we, and He who gave us qualities of heart and mind has the same on a higher and more complete plane, that at very most we were merely made in His image; and here the Scripture steps in and assures us that all this is true, but that we have lost much, some more and some less, of the divine likeness through the fall, through sin and its penalty—"dying thou shalt die."

WEEPING ENDURES FOR THE NIGHT

The Lord, speaking to us through the Prophet, comforts us with the thought that "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalm 30:5) The era of the reign of sin and death is thus figuratively spoken of as a night time, a dark time, when the sun of divine righteousness and glory does not shine upon the human family—when only the reflection of His glory may be seen in the stars of hope and the moon of the Mosaic Law. It is in harmony with this that other Scriptures assure us that darkness covers the earth—the most enlightened of the human family—and gross darkness covers the people, the heathen. (Isaiah 60:2) As the poet has expressed it, the human family are like children crying in the night. With the morning sun will come the termination of all our troubles, our sorrows, our crying and our dying, "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." The morning of the new dispensation, the millennial morning, will be ushered in, the Bible assures us, by a great time of trouble, a great thunderstorm, from behind which the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in its beams to flood the whole earth with a knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9)

All these various Scriptures indicate that the knowledge of the Lord is to come in the Millennial age, that then the tears will be wiped off all faces, that then the Lord's blessing, an uplifting influence will be with every creature, that then the darkness will be over and the true light will shine, the Sun of Righteousness. All these and many more Scriptures imply what we know to be the case, that the knowledge of the Lord does not prevail now, that the glory of the Lord is not now seen, that the tears of humanity are not now wiped away. Whoever believes this Scripture looks forward to a glorious coming day, the Golden Age. Whoever doubts this testimony, viewing it from the standpoint of the Higher Critics, loses the power, strength and help which he might have through its acceptance. Let us learn more and more to take the Lord at His word and thus have more and more of His joy, His peace and His love shed abroad

in our hearts, because of having the true hope built upon
the sure foundation of divine testimony.

GOD BLESS THE MISSIONARIES

Our hearts go out toward those who have consecrated

2H462

their lives as missionaries to carry the message of divine truth and grace to the twelve hundred millions of heathendom. We are glad to know through missionary reports that a few here and there become nominal Christians, and that many children are gathered into schools where they are taught various branches of useful knowledge. But no reasonable mind can hope that all the efforts—if doubled, if trebled, if multiplied ten times—would accomplish the desired results and blot out the darkness and fill the earth with the knowledge of God. On the contrary, we see that the number of heathen is today twice as great as it was a century ago—six hundred millions then, twelve hundred millions now. We see further that the four hundred millions accredited as Christians in such statistics include so many goats, so many wolves in sheep's clothing, and so many ring-streaked and speckled sheep as to contradict the thought that Christendom is the ideal to which the Lord intends to bring humanity. Indeed, we may feel sure that if all the missionaries were to be called home and a thorough-going work attempted among the four hundred million professed Christians the results would still be unsatisfactory.

The Church does not possess the power to more than gloss the fallen human nature—to more than partially civilize the masses of the people. The great and deep truths which the Redeemer taught respecting the narrow way and self-sacrificing conditions arranged for His followers in the present time are now appreciated only by a mere handful of the race. These alone see the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, in the Word, by faith—they “walk by faith and not by sight.” To these alone, therefore, comes any measure of appreciation of the divine glories and blessings. Of these alone the Lord speaks, saying, “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear (reverence) Him, and He will make them to understand His covenant (promise).” (Psalm 25:14) To these alone, therefore, is displayed even the reflection of the coming glories in the promises of the Scriptures, which they see and appreciate with the eye of faith. Actually, the glories of the Lord are not revealed to mankind.

THE PROMISE OF OUR TEXT

Our text declares that “the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.” Here is an admission that the glories are not yet revealed as well as a promise for the future revelation, and that future revelation is not merely to be for the Church in glory, but for the world—for all. Neither will it be, as some of our premillenarian brethren think, merely for those who shall be so fortunate as to live when the glorious millennial epoch shall be ushered in. On the contrary, it shall be unto all flesh, which will include those who have gone down into the prison-house of death, the tomb, sheol, hades, during the past, and of whom the Lord declares, “All who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth.” (John 5:28, 29) Of course it was possible for the Lord to have revealed his glory at any time in the past, but the Scriptures inform us that this was not the divine purpose; that God chose rather to allow the night of weeping and sin and death to give to the world of mankind an experimental lesson on the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as well as to give to the holy angels an object lesson along the same lines, without prejudice to any, but in the interest of all, to cause the light of the knowledge of his glory to fill the whole earth.

A question arises—What will constitute the glory of the Lord in the earth? We answer that God is glorified through the exercise of His attributes and in their harmonious operation, His justice co-operating with His love, His wisdom and His power. But have not these qualities of the Creator been in operation and manifested in the past? We answer No! Justice alone reigned for over 4,000 years. There was no manifestation even of divine love during all that period. Then came the due time for God to manifest His love, as we read, “Herein 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.” (1 John 4:9) This manifestation of God’s love, however, is as yet revealed only to those who have the seeing eye and the hearing ear. “Blessed are your eyes, for they see, blessed are your ears, for they hear.” (Matt. 13:16) Thus the world in general has seen only the display of divine justice in permitting the wages of sin to bring calamities and troubles, sorrow and sighing and groans and tears and suffering and death as the penalty for original sin, and even then the Adversary has taken advantage of man’s confused and degraded condition to misrepresent the significance of all these things, and to torture him with fears of an eternity of suffering after passing through the present vale of disappointments and sorrows.

The glory of the Lord will not be seen by all flesh during the present age—not until the new dispensation shall remove present blindness and display to the world the love which God bore for us all as exemplified in His

great gift, His Son, and the provision made for our recovery from sin and death through Him and His resurrecting power. By and by, when not merely the justice of God but also His love have been manifested, His power will also be manifest in the overthrow of Satan and in the arrangement of all the affairs of the new dispensation in favor of Adam and his race, in assisting them up out of their degradation and death back to all

2H463

that was lost in Eden. Finally, the wisdom of God will be seen in permitting sin, in permitting evil, in permitting death and all the train of connected evils. It will be seen that it was wise to do so as a great lesson for man and for all creation. Thus will the glory of the Lord be revealed and all flesh shall see it.

“HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD!”

Isaiah the Prophet was granted a symbolical vision of the coming glory of the Lord. He wrote of it as though it were present in his time, just as in various other of the prophecies. For instance, when speaking of the birth of Jesus he said, “Unto us a child is born,” taking his standpoint of utterance, as it were, beside the manger-cradle of the Redeemer. So in his vision of the coming glory he heard one cherub cry to another, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.” (Isa. 6:3) Thus it will be when the night of sin and death are past and the glorious Millennial morning shall have ushered into the world the light of the Sun of Righteousness—the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. Ignorance and sin and the works of darkness can have no place under those glorious conditions, and the human family, favored with this glorious view of the divine character, will be on trial as to whether or not they will appreciate and avail themselves of the assistance of the great Mediator, the glorified Christ (Jesus and His Bride), to escape from their sins and weaknesses and to come back, back, up, up to the full perfection of human nature. Whosoever, when this glory is seen, shall fail to come into harmony with it in his heart shall be utterly condemned, destroyed in the Second Death.

GOD’S FOOTSTOOL TO BE GLORIOUS

The Lord declares heaven to be His throne and the earth His footstool. He has informed us respecting the glory of heaven, and we know of the disorder, darkness, trouble and sin in the earth—prevailing throughout God’s footstool. Do we wonder that He allows His footstool to be thus out of accord with Himself, His righteousness, His power, His wisdom, His love, His justice? If so, He gives us the assurance that at the second Coming of

Christ “He will make the place of his feet glorious.” (Isaiah 60:13) This is in full accord with all the other testimonies on the subject, the great work of the Lord Jesus in the earth—the restitution promises to begin at the second coming. (Acts 3:19) All are to lead up to and finally accomplish the renovation of the earth, of God’s footstool, to make of it a paradise of God as promised, restore mankind once more to his original position of king of earth, subject to his heavenly King.

Let us not forget that while divine glory will be manifested in the perfections of earth, its fruits, its flowers, the beauties of nature, etc., yet the grandest exhibition of divine glory will be in mankind himself. To appreciate this we must remember that God created man in His image and likeness and for His glory. We must remember also that it is written of our race, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” God’s glory in us as a race has been blemished: we no longer as a race properly reflect the divine image and likeness. In harmony with this we can see that all the work of restitution, all the blessings coming to the earth in material ways, would not fully show forth the glory of the great Creator so long as man, His chief handiwork, would be imperfect, blemished. Hence the grandest feature of restitution held out before us pertains to mankind himself. The return of humanity to its former estate of the divine likeness will be the crowning climax of the divine plan, set in operation when man was created by the Creator, who, we are assured, is working all things according to the counsel of His own will. Eph. 1:11

THE KING OF GLORY

When we hear of great projects we naturally and properly inquire, By whom are they to be executed? And our confidence in the results is necessarily measured by our knowledge of and faith in the contractor. The Almighty has stooped to our inquiry and informs us that it is the One who redeemed Adam and his race with his own precious blood who has been appointed the divine Agent for the subjugation of all evil and sin, the wiping away of all tears from off all faces, and the establishment of righteousness in the earth on so permanent a basis as to insure us that the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God, and that on so thorough and permanent a basis that it can be guaranteed in advance that sin and death and sorrow, sighing, tears and dying, shall be things of the past, never again to mar man’s heritage.

The titles of this great King of Glory who is to accomplish so great a work are full of satisfaction: He is to be the “Prince of Peace,” the “King of Righteousness,” the “Judge,” the “Everlasting Father” to the race, and his obedience to righteousness, to the Father’s will, and His love for humanity, exemplified in His sacrifice as our ransom price—all these assure us that the wonderful powers committed to His care and exercised by Him

during the Millennial age to effect this return of divine glory to the earth, will be exercised in full harmony with all the principles of love which He has already so richly manifested in His dealings with our race. We cannot fear this great King of Glory. All who

2H464

are of reverent heart and who love righteousness either now or in the future will assuredly love Him and delight to co-operate with Him in the execution of the divine will.

“HE SHALL NOT FAIL”

Through the Prophet the Lord gives us the message respecting Messiah and His work—“He shall not fail nor be discouraged until He shall have established righteousness in the earth.” (Isa. 42:4) Our Redeemer’s sojourn with our race in the valley of the shadow of death and His sufferings demonstrated His faithfulness. He did not fail, He was not discouraged. In harmony with the divine will, the Church, His espoused Bride, continually under His guidance, when called to walk in His steps and to suffer for their loyalty to the Truth, by His grace neither shall they fail nor be discouraged—an elect company of them, all overcomers, more than “conquerors,” will eventually be found. Then these all together, the jewels of the Lord gathered to Himself, will shine forth in the Kingdom as the glorious Sun of Righteousness for the healing and restoring of all the families of the earth. (Matt. 13:43) A picture of this future work of establishing righteousness in the earth—abolishing sin and death by the uplift of the human family out of these—is given us in the symbols of Revelation. There the glorified elect Church, changed to spirit conditions, is pictured as the heavenly Jerusalem, in the midst of which is the throne of God’s glory—“God is in the midst of her.” (Psa. 46:5; Rev. 21:2,3)

The symbolical picture shows a river of life flowing from the throne, and on its either bank grew trees whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, while the Spirit and the Bride glorified say to all the families of the earth, “Come and take of the water of life freely,” and “Whosoever will may come.” (Rev. 22:1, 2, 17) In proportion as any will fall into line with the righteous laws of the kingdom and into loving obedience to the great King, in that same proportion will he be drinking of the water of life provided by the great Life Giver—in that same proportion will he be rising out of his condition of sin, imperfection and dying up and back to all that was lost by father Adam.

MAY SIN AGAIN INVADE?

Will there be any danger that at some future time sin may again invade the world, again degrade God's human representative and obscure the glory of the divine creation? We answer no, never. The guarantee of this is in the Lord's words that there shall be no more death. So surely as there will be sin, the penalty of sin must follow it; hence the guarantee that there will be no more sin. But how can this be guaranteed and at the same time man's free moral agency be guaranteed? The Scriptures give the explanation, telling us that at the close of the Millennial Age, when Messiah shall have accomplished His work of putting down all opposition and bringing all the willing and obedient up to perfection of human nature, then He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. The next step in the divine progress as outlined in the Revelation is that the world, no longer under the mediatorial covering of the Redeemer and no longer needing such a covering because perfect, will be subjected by the Father to severe tests of their love and loyalty, their obedience, similar to the test which came upon father Adam in Eden when he was perfect.

The symbolical description is that Satan will be loosed to tempt and deceive all the people, whose number will then be as the sands of the seashore. What proportion he will succeed in deceiving is not intimated, but the general statement is made that all those who are deceived by him in that crucial test will be utterly destroyed with Satan in the second death, which, symbolically, is represented by the lake of fire. This will leave a clean universe as represented in the Scriptures, and every voice in heaven and in earth and under the earth will be proclaiming praise, honor, dominion, might and power to Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb. Blessed are our eyes and our ears and our understanding hearts, which are already enlightened in advance of the world, that have already learned of the glory of God. We, with the Seraphim, proclaim, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, and we rejoice that the time is near at hand when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory.

June 17, 1907

**Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
July 31, 1917**

THE VALUE OF TIME TO A CHRISTIAN

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., June 16—The Convention of Believers in the Precious Blood, which opened here Friday

last, has had a large attendance and been addressed by numerous speakers. Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny spoke twice today, his evening discourse being from the text, "We are Ambassadors, therefore

2H465

on behalf of Christ." (2 Cor. 5:20) He said:

Phrenology tells us that while the majority of mankind has large approbateness—that is, the desire to be thought well of by others—comparatively few have large esteem, large appreciation of themselves and their abilities. This lack of self-esteem is a hindrance to many people of the world as respects their progress in life; undervaluing their mental and physical qualities and powers they never aim high enough; consequently never attain to their grandest possibilities. But for the Christian a deficiency of self-esteem is a very valuable trait. It restrains him from pride and worldly ambition and too great self-consciousness, all of which qualities would be serious hindrances to him as a child of God under present conditions. It is to his own advantage to feel his own littleness, his own unworthiness. This helps him with veneration to look up to God, the great Giver of all good, and to feel his need of and to accept the mercy of God, so freely provided in Christ Jesus. More than this, the assurance of God's word that the follower of Jesus is accepted as a child of God, an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ his Lord, is so astounding a proposition and implies so great honor now, and especially by and by, that anyone possessed with large self-esteem would be very apt to become proud and boastful under such favors, such honors, such testimonies of divine favor as are promised to the called, chosen, faithful. The Scriptures abound with admonitions along these lines; that the Lord's people must be very humble, must feel their constant dependence upon the Lord and their own insufficiency, so that they will look to him in every matter, in every interest, in every affair for guidance, realizing their own insufficiency, their own imperfection. On all such the Apostle urges, "Humble yourselves, therefore, brethren, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. For the Lord resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:6

ANOTHER SIDE TO THE QUESTION

We have often considered this side of the question and wish always to keep it before our minds; but at this time let us examine the other side of the question, and note that many of the Lord's people are hindered from making the best use of their consecrated time because they have not fully appreciated the possibilities before them, and because they have not rightly estimated their own value as servants of the Lord, or,

as the text states the matter, as the “Ambassadors for Christ.” We are not desirous of raising any in their self-esteem, but we are desirous of placing before the minds of all the Lord’s people the fact that, however lacking they may be in those qualities which would be highly esteemed amongst men, nevertheless through Christ they have been accepted into God’s family, and have been commissioned by the Lord to serve him as His ambassadors before the world for the remainder of their present lives. From this standpoint the very humblest of the Lord’s people, however insignificant of themselves and however willing to admit their own littleness, should consider the honor, the dignity, the responsibility of being the representatives of the King of glory—the King of the universe. What higher honor or station could be imagined, and how surely a proper appreciation of this honor conferred upon us by the Lord will tend to lift us to new conditions—new thoughts, new aims, new endeavors—all in line with our ambassadorship.

At Washington, the Capitol of our nation, reside representatives of all the civilized Governments of earth, some ranking higher and some lower, according to the dignity, greatness, civilization and power of the country they represent. Thus the Ambassadors representing Great Britain, France, Germany and Russia rank higher than those representing Persia, Spain, Holland, etc. Each of these representatives has a manhood of his own to be appreciated, but his personal qualities and powers individually are all insignificant, swallowed up by his official standing by the value, the greatness, the honorableness of the nation which he represents. And this is the illustration which the Lord, through the prophet, gives us: The world through original sin has fallen into a terrible condition of distress, mental, moral and physical, the prince of this world has taken captive many through ignorance, superstition and weakness; the Great King Almighty has arranged to have mercy upon mankind—has provided a Redeemer who shortly, with His glorious Bride, the Church, is to usher in the glorious Kingdom, for which we are taught to pray, “Our Father who art in heaven... Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.”

Meantime the great King is selecting the Bride class, to be joint-heirs with His Son in that Kingdom; and, instead of using forced judgments in order to test mankind, He is using what to humanity may seem to be the foolish method of preaching, telling, inviting. And He assures us that His message is so wisely arranged that it will secure the proper number suitable to be His very elect, and that “none of the wicked shall understand.” (Daniel 12:10) It is under these conditions that we have been called and that we are authorized to make known to whomsoever has ears to hear that Jehovah God is now electing the little flock to be the Bride of Christ. While informed that not many wise, noble, learned, great or mighty are

chosen to be God's mouthpieces in this matter and His ambassadors, we are thus privileged—so many as themselves have heard and accepted

2H466

Divine Grace and come into consecrated relationship to the Lord. Oh, how wonderful this privilege of being ambassadors for Christ!—speaking in His name, representing Him and the Heavenly Father and the great plan of God now only in its incipiency, but shortly to be thoroughly outworked during the millennial age for the blessing of all the families of the earth who have a will to know and do the Lord's will.

“THE WORLD KNOWETH US NOT”

Referring to these ambassadors the Apostle says, “The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not.” (1 John 3:1) Nor are we authorized to parade our ambassadorship before the world; rather we are to remember the Master's words, “Cast not your pearls before swine,” and to remember that few will be able to comprehend our message in the full, and that it is the Lord's will that we should be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, as His representatives in the world, giving no offense either to those who have the hearing ear or to those who lack that ear and whose eyes are blinded by the errors and delusions which the adversary has so freely introduced among men that the whole world is said to be deceived by him. When the Kingdom shall have come we are assured of the Lord that Satan shall be bound a thousand years and deceive the nations no more until that period be finished.

It is among themselves, therefore, that the Lord's ambassadors are recognized—yea, all who have the ear to hear or the eye to see should be able to recognize these ambassadors from the heavenly King. They should be able to discern the difference between these and mankind in general, and, as the Apostle says, they should so behold our proper living as to glorify God on our behalf—to recognize that we are actuated by a different spirit from that which operates in the world in general; that instead of loving sin we hate it; instead of being moved in all our affairs by selfishness we are striving against such tendencies, moved by the spirit of love, generosity and kindness—the spirit of our master, the spirit of our King, whom we represent as ambassadors. Not only should our message be recognized as good tidings of great joy ultimately for all people, but, as the Apostle declares, we who bear the messages should be recognized as God's peculiar people, zealous of good works, or, as he again says, we are to be living epistles, known and read of all with whom we come in contact. And the intimation is that these epistles of our daily lives

should so corroborate the good tidings which we declare, that the world would take knowledge of us as God's ambassadors, that all having an ear to hear would be influenced to give heed to our message.

BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S SALARY \$60,000

It is said that the present representative of the British people at Washington receives a yearly salary of \$60,000. Assuming that he is not expected to labor more than eight hours a day this would mean more than \$20.00 per hour as his government's valuation of his time, more than \$5.00 for every 15 minutes. We do not know the value the gentleman places upon his own abilities—whether he has large self-esteem and thinks he is not sufficiently paid and that his services are worth more or whether he has small self-esteem and feels that he is being paid more than his services are really worth. No matter—we have his Government's estimation of the value upon his time, and it becomes his duty to seek to measure up to this estimate, to use his time to the very best of his ability in the interest of his name and his kingdom. We as ambassadors for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords hold still more responsibility and a still more dignified position, and well does the Apostle say, “what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness. 2 Peter 3:11

Neither is our pay inferior, rather it is superior. Our King has not fixed for us an annual or quarterly stipend—He has merely promised to the faithful ambassadors that in the present time their “bread and water shall be sure,” that “no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly,” and that “your Father knoweth what things ye have need of.” (Isa. 33:16; Psa. 84:11; Matt. 6:8) We are even distinctly told that in the present time our supplies and rations may, according to a worldly standpoint, be small, and that therefore we must mainly glory in the things that we hope for, the things to be attained at the close of our service. But, oh, what riches of grace are in reservation for them that love God!—things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man: honors and dignities which at present we can but imperfectly imagine—that we shall be like our Lord, spirit beings, sharing His glory; that we shall sit with Him upon His throne; that we shall be associated with Him in His great work of the Millennial age in blessing, judging, correcting in righteousness, disciplining and uplifting the world of mankind, bringing them back to God, blessing them thus with the great promise made to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” To set at rest every doubt or question respecting God's rewards—which at present we could not grasp—the Lord has declared through the Apostle that while it doth not yet appear

what we shall be, we may know that we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And again the Apostle declares— “All things are yours, for ye are Christ’s and Christ is

2H467

God’s.” (1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 3:2 1) So, then, the British ambassador’s reward is very insignificant in comparison to ours, even as his king and the Government which he represents are inferior to those for which we are ambassadors.

“REDEEMING THE TIME”

Our King has placed us here as His ambassadors under peculiar conditions: (1) “We must provide things honest in the sight of all men;” we must provide for our earthly needs under our Lord’s supervision, and must do it in an honorable, upright manner, that all might be able to approve as just and right. (2) We “must provide things decent”—not elaborate, not showy, not expensive, but decent, is the command from the King. (3) We must provide for our own; those dependent upon us for life’s necessities must not be neglected, must have also things decent, honorable, things honest; but not things expensive or costly or foolish.

Under these limitations the ambassadors find that a considerable proportion of their available time is consumed necessarily upon earthly things; every ambassador who feels the dignity of his call, his relationship to his king and Government and the responsibilities of his appointment, and who has hopes respecting the future rewards, must feel that his main business in life is his ambassadorship. And many of these ambassadors would feel distressed to lose from their work as ambassadors the time necessarily devoted to fulfilling these commands of our King respecting our earthly interests were it not that He has put these matters upon us as a command, and assured us that, done as unto Him, these things necessary for our earthly comfort and sustenance will be counted in as a part of our stewardship and ambassadorship. Nevertheless, our King indicates to us most clearly that in making this arrangement, by which we shall care for earthly interests and devote the surpluse of time to the kingdom interests, He is putting a test upon us which He intends shall demonstrate whether we love the earthly things or whether our hearts are mainly centered in our office as ambassadors of our King—putting the King’s business first.

Those who waste time and energy in earthly show and foolishness, and give merely the tag ends of time, influence, strength, etc., to the work of the embassy, show that they

have not the interests of the kingdom properly at heart; and the King has intimated that with such He will not be well pleased, and that they shall not sit upon the throne, even though finding them loyal at heart by certain tests, and He will ultimately give them some place in His future service. The conditions which He has arranged, He informs us, are specially adapted to the testing of the hearts, the intentions, of these ambassadors.

Among them was a great example; the King's Son, and following Him were other noble examples, the apostles, etc. These all—estimating the things of this present life as but loss and dross, unworthy of comparison to the things of the kingdom—were willing to take joyfully, gladly, the incidental sacrifice of many earthly conveniences and comforts that they might have a share in the great work of proclaiming the message of the King to all who have ears to hear and hearts to appreciate. With these the sentiment is not, how much can I shirk my privileges and obligations as an ambassador, how much can I have and enjoy and hold of the things of this present life, how much dare I use upon myself and family without offending the King and risking too greatly His displeasure and the loss of the crown—but, on the contrary, with these the question is, how can I best arrange all my affairs as to be able to give to the Lord and His cause the most and the best of all I possess of time, influence and talent? Speaking of this class the apostle says, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel."—My ambassadorship is my chiefest joy every day, and everything which would hinder it would be far from pleasurable.

This same Apostle assures us that he counted all earthly things as loss and dross in comparison to the heavenly things, and God's rich promises point out to us that we should be continually, every day, striving to redeem the time. To redeem is to purchase back, and we get the thought that the world and its affairs, ourselves, our families, and our real or fancied needs and cravings, appetites and desires would really take up all there is of time and more, too. But, says the Apostle, we who are ambassadors for God should seek to redeem the time, to buy it back—to give up something else in exchange for it. We should be willing to give up certain luxuries or cravings of appetite or pleasures of the eye and pride of life and everything, not only those things displeasing to God, but give up things that are right enough in themselves, but which are now hindrances to our ambassadorship, hindrances to our fulfilment of our covenant with the Lord. Our real necessities are comparatively few. How simply we could live, how simply many of the world do live under stress of their conditions. How much of our time could we redeem or purchase back if we were willing to sacrifice some of the luxuries, comforts, social amenities, etc.?

We are not seeking to lay down any fixed rule—no one has a right to do that but the King, and He has not done it, and has not authorized others to do it. All of His

ambassadors are free to use their consecrated time according to their consecrated judgment of what would be pleasing to the Lord and honoring to His

2H468

name. We are only pointing out what would be the extreme possibilities—how simply we might live, how little time our arrangements might require, and how much time would remain for our work as ambassadors. But our moderation must come in as our Lord directs, through the Apostle. We must remember our covenant in respect to our dress, in respect to our food, lodgings, etc., and must strive to have these things so decent and so moderate that the world will have no proper cause for shaming us and our King. Then, too, we must remember that all that we might do as respects ourselves alone may not be done when others are concerned with us who do not view the matter in quite the same light. The ambassadors of the Lord, therefore, must take as wise and moderate a course as they can, continually seeking wisdom from on high, but continually remembering also the general tendency of the world, the flesh and the adversary to consume all of their time and their energy and talents upon earthly things. Opposing these in a measure is a large part of the overcoming which these ambassadors must accomplish in order to make sure a place in the high calling, the Kingdom.

“KNOWING THAT THE DAYS ARE EVIL”

The Apostle refers to this very tendency of our times. The pride of life and desires of the flesh never had so deep and broad an influence over the minds of the majority of mankind as they have at present. The increase of wealth, the comparative cheapening of luxuries and the fact that these are becoming almost necessities, together with the growing ambition of our neighbors and friends—all these things appeal to us and strive to get from us precious moments and talents, opportunities and influence, which as ambassadors for the great King we feel we ought to be rendering to Him and to His service. The test is upon us; if we yield to the spirit of the world it means a corresponding loss of favor with our King, and if loyal to our King and our ambassadorship it means that the world will think of us as foolish. As the Apostle says of himself, “We are counted fools all the day long,” and as our Lord said, “The world will cast out your name as evil” and “all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,” if not physical persecution, then a persecution of a more refined character, ostracism and sometimes boycott. He that endureth to the end faithful the same is to receive the crown of life.

PROPERLY VALUING OUR TIME

Assuming that 8 hours out of every 24 are necessary for sleep, that 2 hours are necessary for eating and that 1 hour more is necessary for the care of our person, washing, dressing, etc., we have left 13 hours out of which the demands for daily labor for things needful varies from 8 hours to 12. As a matter of fact, the time we have to render to the Lord our God as His ambassadors and representatives before men is very limited—with some more, with others less—and this limited time is usually scattered throughout the day, some of it consumed in going to work and returning, some of it in other ways. When we look at the matter from this standpoint we see the reasonableness of the Apostle's exhortation that we should redeem the time—that we should buy it back, that we should value every spare moment possible to be used in our higher work, the spiritual work, as ambassadors for our Lord and King.

If the time of the British Ambassador is worth \$20.00 per hour, is not our time spent as ambassadors for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords worth at least as much? Yea, it is worth far more, but let us reckon it on this basis. If we do—if we recognize every 15 minutes as worth \$5.00 in connection with our heavenly ambassadorship we may be sure that little of our time would be spent foolishly, in foolish talking and jesting, in foolish acts or foolish thoughts or foolish reading. Such an estimate of the value of our consecrated time will mean a careful husbanding of every moment, every opportunity to do and to be, and as ambassadors to speak, for our King.

“LAY UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN”

After this manner we shall be laying up treasure in heaven and feel that in buying back moments and hours from worldly matters, social frivolities and various time-killing devices we are getting an excellent bargain. Can we not all grow rich in these heavenly treasures much more rapidly in the days to come than in the days that are past? Will not this thought be with us to the end of life's journey—that we are ambassadors of God and that our time is valuable, that he is proposing to pay the faithful exceedingly and abundantly more than we could have asked or thought and that even aside from the pay, ours is a most pleasurable privilege—to testify on behalf of Him who loved us and who bought us with His precious blood and who has adopted us into his family of God and made us heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ in the glorious Kingdom?

* * * *

‘No evil shall come nigh thee.’

[The Pittsburgh Dispatch, July 1, 1907](#)

GATHERING THE SAINTS

CHICAGO, June 30—Pastor Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached here today at 3 p.m. from the text:

“Gather My saints together unto Me; those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.” (Psalms 50:5)
The speaker said:

As is generally known, the word saint signifies a sanctified or holy person—one whose will is entirely converted to the Lord, to the extent of his ability to do things which would be pleasing to the Lord. The term saints is freely used throughout the Scriptures, and in the days of the apostles had a general significance, much more so than today. With many in our time the term is applied only to certain persons long passed away, supposed to have been particularly devout. These in the Roman Catholic Church are assumed to have gone to heaven direct, without being obliged to pass through purgatory or preparation, purification. They are even supposed to have a fund of merit, through good works and sacrifices, laid up to their credit in heaven, from which they are permitted to give portions to the devout who may request these favors in prayer. Like all Protestants we repudiate the thought that there is any merit, any worthiness in any member of our race that could be possibly made applicable to another. We hold, on the contrary, that there is none righteous, no not one, and that if God should be strict to mark iniquity against us none would stand the inspection. We hold that it is only by the imputation of the merit of our Lord Jesus to us that any of us are enabled to stand muster at all in the presence of the Lord our God. We recognize His merit as a robe of righteousness granted to us through the exercise of our faith and obedience to the best of our ability, and that we are complete in Him and very incomplete without Him.

There are people today who style themselves “holiness people” who seem to totally misapprehend the Scriptural teaching on the subject of holiness. These boast that for so many years they have lived perfectly, without sin. In our estimation these poor creatures are horribly mistaken. Their difficulty seems to be that they have not recognized the divine standard of holiness, which is absolute perfection. The human being who considers himself absolutely perfect in thought, word and deed is sadly deceived; his neighbors can see his imperfections if he cannot see them himself. The Scriptures declare this to be a mistaken view, saying, “If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:8-9) Nevertheless the Scriptures do recognize saints. The apostles addressed the Christians of their day as saints—not exceptional ones of them, but all the consecrated; as, for instance, St. Paul’s introduction of his epistle to the Romans

declares that it is “to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints.” To the Corinthians he writes, “To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints.” In his two epistles to the Corinthians he writes, “Unto the Church which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in Achaia.” His epistle to the Ephesians he addressed “to the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus.” Writing to the Colossians he addresses “the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse.”

WHERE NOW ARE THE SAINTS?

According to the Scriptures the saints of the apostolic time were not perfect men and women as respects the flesh; they were such as were by nature imperfect, fallen, but who by grace had been redeemed and who by faith had accepted that redemption and fled away from sin, and additionally have responded to the Lord’s invitation to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, their reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1) These were reckoned saints because of their changed attitude of mind, of heart, of will, of purpose, because fully surrendered to the Lord without any reservation. They were wholly His, holy ones, sanctified or set apart, separate from sin and selfishness and the world, to the Lord and to holy things. Nevertheless, the apostle, speaking for himself and others, declares: “We have this treasure of a new mind, new nature, new heart and new will in earthen vessels.” In other words, the will was holy and perfect, though the flesh was still imperfect and warred against it. The imperfections of the old nature, covered by the merits of Christ’s sacrifice, were no longer imputed, but the righteousness of Christ was imputed instead as a robe to cover every blemish and to constitute the sacrificers holy and acceptable to God.

According to this divine standard or pattern there ought to be holiness people everywhere throughout the world now as well as then. Surely there are such, and surely they are not confined to any one denomination or credal profession. Today as in the apostle’s day the Church of Christ should be recognized as one, and it should be further recognized as being composed exclusively of these sanctified ones—that others who have not yet reached the station here taken, the stand of a

2H470

full consecration of themselves to the Lord, have not become members of the Church in the true, real, scriptural sense, but at very most have believed in Christ as their Redeemer, and having turned from sin, but not having yet made a full surrender of their wills to the Lord, could be counted only as prospective members of the Church, in a waiting attitude, to see whether or not they would take the proper step which would transfer them from the justified plane to the plane of new creatures in Christ, begotten by the holy Spirit. But while we may hope that such a class is to be found in various

quarters and in various denominations of Christendom throughout the world, we have no reason whatever to suppose that there are many of them. Our own experiences teach us that not many even profess to be living a sanctified or set-apart life, whose chief ambition is to know and to do the will of our Father in heaven, to let their light shine and to render all the assistance in their power to the household of faith, even to the extent of laying down their lives on their behalf. Furthermore, the Scriptures quite agree with our observations, and assure us that not many wise, not many great, learned, rich, has God called and chosen, but that His call appeals chiefly to the poor of this world, rich in faith, who may thus become heirs of the Kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:26-28; James 2:5) Our Lord called these saints a “little flock,” saying, “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom”—the millennial kingdom—joint-heirs with Christ in the work of blessing and uplifting mankind.

THE GATHERING OF THE SAINTS

There is a peculiar adage that “Birds of a feather flock together,” and so it is with these saints of the Lord. They love to meet one another and enjoy each other’s fellowship next to that of the Lord. All saints who are in the right attitude of heart delight to respond to the Apostle’s exhortation that they forget not the assembling of themselves, as the manner of some is, but to do it so much the more as they see the day (the Millennial day) draw nigh. (Heb. 10:25) But our Lord purposes a still grander gathering together of His saints, the members of the Bride class, the members of His Body, the Church. In many Scriptures He tells us that in the end of this age He will send forth His messengers and gather together His elect from every quarter. In the parable of the net cast into the sea, which gathered fish of every kind and finally was drawn to the shore the good or suitable fish being gathered into baskets and the others cast away, this matter is illustrated. The good fish will ultimately be gathered together and completely separated from all others.

The same thought is presented to us in the parable of the wheat and tares, where our Lord foretold the bringing in of much corruption into the Church through the sowing of the tare seed, and tells us that the tares should not be uprooted until the end of the age, and that then He would direct the harvest work, so that all the tares would be gathered into bundles and all the wheat be gathered into the barn together and separated. There is no intimation anywhere in the Scriptures in accord with what so many Christian people believe, namely, that at death the Lord’s holy ones are gathered. No, the Scriptures are plain upon this point, that all the race of Adam came under the sentence of death, “Dying, thou shalt

die,” and that the hope of their return to life is in the Lord’s promise of a resurrection, and He has promised that in the resurrection every man shall come forth in his own order, in his own class, in his own rank, and that the saints, the Bride class, shall constitute the first rank, or first resurrection, which shall be composed exclusively of the blessed and the holy, on whom the second death hath no power, but who shall be kings and priests unto God and reign on the earth.

HARVESTING NOW IN PROGRESS

As already intimated, the nominal Church systems contain remarkably few saints—according to their own confession—remarkably few who claim to be fully, completely set apart to know and to do the will of the Lord. If you doubt this, ask them. The saints are scattered here and there apparently in all denominations, and to our understanding the harvest time has come—the time for the gathering of the saints—the time referred to in the various Scriptures and parables already quoted, and in our text, “Gather together my saints unto me, saith the Lord, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” Those who have not sacrificed themselves are not saints from the Lord’s standpoint, however moral and well-intentioned they may be. To our understanding also it will soon be too late for any to make the sacrifice and to hope to be counted in among the saints. We do not mean by this that a time is nearing when there will be no hope of forgiveness of sins and harmony with God. Oh, no, thank God! We read in His precious Word that there will be grand opportunities for forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with the Father during the millennial age, but we read there also that there is an acceptable time—a time when God will accept our little sacrifices and count them in with the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, that thus we may be sharers in the sufferings of Christ, to the intent that by and by we may be sharers in His glory—in His millennial kingdom.

We do not intend on this occasion to refresh your memories respecting what we have already presented from the Scriptures, proving that we have been in this

2H471

harvest time, this time of the gathering the saints, since 1878, and it will continue yet a few years more until the last member of the elect number has been found and tested and proven faithful. In our view the first resurrection gathering of the saints is already in progress, and these may be considered as referred to in our text as part of the gathering to the Lord. However, we understand our text to have still wider signification—that it especially refers to a gathering together of all the Lord’s people from all denominations and creeds and systems of men. We are aware that this will seem to be

impossible from the human standpoint, that many will be inclined to say that it would require a miracle to bring into heart harmony the Lord's faithful ones in all denominations, seeing that they are separated by such formidable creeds and by prejudices of such long standing. We reply that with God all things are possible, and that when He declares that in this harvest time He will gather together His elect we prefer to believe that He will do so, and our faith is being rewarded by sight continually, for day by day, month by month, year by year, the work of gathering the saints together is progressing more and more rapidly.

NOT GATHERED INTO A NEW SECT

Is it suggested that each sect as it was formed attempted to gather the saints? We answer, No! Each sect as it is formed attempts to gather the worldly wise, the great, the rich, and but little attention is paid to the saints. Indeed, scriptural saintship has never been made a very prominent topic in any denomination. Our Lord says, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free;" and again He prayed for His people, "Father sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth." (John 8:32; John 17:17) But where have we found any sect or party which has given special attention to scriptural study, to an understanding of the Word of God, to an application of it to the heart and life, with the desire for sanctification! On the contrary, do we not find, not only among Roman Catholics but also among Protestants, a desire to keep the people from studying the Scriptures—from asking questions about them—from growing in knowledge respecting the Word of God as a whole? True, a certain kind of scriptural teaching is maintained, the Bible is still recognized to be the keystone in the Christian arch, but is there not a form of teaching and a form of study rather than the real thing, just as there is a form of godliness rather than the power and sanctification thereof? The chief endeavor among all sects and parties seems thus far to have been to rally around a name, a sect, a party, a theory; and while good people have been drawn to every such standard the saintly class have never found satisfaction.

Now, however, we see a movement in progress among Christian people in every nation, on every continent, that is in harmony with what we should expect in this harvest time, in harmony with the call of our text, "Gather together my saints unto me"—not into a new sect or party, not under a new name, not under new doctrines. Evidently it is one thing to be gathered to the Lord Himself and another thing to be gathered to a human system and organization. We have the great pleasure, dear friends, of standing today upon an impregnable rock of truth, that is high enough, wide enough, broad

enough, to accommodate all who are of the class designated—the saints who have made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice. It is not broad enough for others, and the Lord does not intend it to be— He desires a separate, a peculiar people, whom He elsewhere designates as His jewels, whom He is now gathering.

We by the grace of God have realized the mistakes of sectarianism and want no more of it; we have realized the mistakes of credal chains and wish to be no longer bound. We find that the true liberty is in Christ, and that to maintain it, as the Apostle says, we must no longer be under any yoke of bondage. While, therefore, we welcome and gladly fellowship all who love the Lord in truth and sincerity, all who are trusting in the precious blood for the forgiveness of their sins, and who are seeking to walk no longer after the flesh, but after the Spirit, all whose lives are devoted or sacrificed to the Lord, we do not wish them to put any bondage upon us, nor do we wish to put bondage upon them; it is ours to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free and to be joined to Him. We need no credal chains to bind us together, for he that is joined to the Lord is one in spirit with Him, and whoever is in spiritual relationship with the Lord must of necessity be in spiritual relationship with all who are the Lord's everywhere. These have the best of bonds, the bonds of love, the bonds of fellowship, the bonds of truth. These bonds the Apostle refers to, saying, that as the various members of the human body are joined together by ligaments and cords, so also is the Body of Christ joined by the Spirit of the Master, His precepts, His injunctions, His love.

How thankful we are and should be that we live in this blessed day when the great Shepherd is gathering His sheep. He designates it as a cloudy day and refers to the true sheep as being scattered and greatly hindered from hearing His voice and assembling themselves by the words and conduct of the false shepherds. In harmony with our text and other quotations respecting this gathering of the Lord's people in the harvest time of this age we read, "Thus saith the Lord God: Behold,

2H472

I Myself, even I, will search for My sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out My sheep, and I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." Ezek. 34:11,12

GATHERING BOTH ISRAELS AT ONE TIME

Natural Israel and spiritual Israel are closely interwoven in the divine plan and Word; hence it does not surprise us to find that this gathering of spiritual Israel, the saints, the very elect, will be simultaneous with the gathering of natural Israel. The gathering of the former means ultimately their exaltation and glorification as spirit beings in the kingdom; the gathering of the latter means their restoration to divine favor, and that they will be the first to be blessed on the earthly plane under the favors of the millennial kingdom. How glad we are to note the evidence of the fulfillment of the Lord's Word in both directions! Do we not see the greatest movement among fleshly Israel that has ever been known, the Zionist movement? And some of you well remember that we foretold this movement from the Scriptures 15 years before any of the Jews seemed to think of it. Yes! We are glad to see evidences of the fulfillment of the apostle's words that God concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon them all, and that very shortly they shall obtain mercy through your mercy. Rom. 11:25-32

If we believe that we are in the day of the presence of the Son of Man; that He is now gathering His elect; that He is now making up His jewels; that He is now collecting His sheep; that He is now, in the language of our text, gathering together unto Himself those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice—if we believe these things, what influence should they have upon our general course in life? Such a faith should make us calm, zealous, patient, faithful to the Lord and to our covenant of sacrifice. And indeed all of this is necessary, for, as the Apostle points out, this gathering time is to be a time of special trial and testing and severity upon the Church—not upon the world. This is the day mentioned by the Apostle, in which the fiery trials shall try every man's work—in which some will be approved and some disapproved—in which the approved ones will be gathered to the Lord and the disapproved ones suffer loss. The Apostle declares that while the fiery trials will try all, they will consume the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition and false living and false faith, and will only purify and refine the precious characters, true faith, etc., as gold and silver and precious stones.

What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? asks the Apostle Peter. Surely we all reply that in view of the tests now going on we should be saints indeed, patient, careful, zealous, that in our testing we may be found of the Master in peace—that each one of us may receive His blessing and hear His welcome voice saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things."

[The National Labor Tribune, July 14, 1907](#)

JESUS THE WORLD'S GREAT SIN BEARER

Our text refers not to the sins of the world, in the plural; but to the sin of the world, in the singular. From the divine standpoint sin had its beginning in one act of disobedience on the part of our first parents; but the sentence, has gradually affected and undermined their powers, mental, moral and physical, until as a result imperfection, weakness, depravity, sin, is somehow associated with almost every word and deed of the children of men. In some measure the world is responsible for this general depravity, but in the general sense it is not responsible, because these tendencies toward sin were inherited.

Mark the Apostle's words on the subject—"By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin; and thus death has passed upon all men, because all are sinners." (Rom. 5:12) Note again the statement of Scripture that we are "born in sin and shapen in iniquity; and in sin did our mothers conceive-us." (Psa. 51:5) We are not responsible, therefore, for the general fact that we have inherited these blemishes, but we are responsible to the extent we may have co-operated with sin, and intensified its blight in our own persons and in our children. Looking over the world we see that the mental, moral and physical degeneracy has not been equal in all parts.

If we would imagine a map of the world shaded from white to black, the white representing purity and the black representing grossness of degeneracy, we would find no community on earth that could be represented by white. The very best city or country or state would be a drab color, while some sections of the world would be nearly jet black, representing almost a total depravity. Thank God that the light of divine truth,

2H473

which came into the world with the presence of our Saviour, and which set up a standard amongst the people, has had the effect of blessing in proportion as its influence has been accepted, and these lighter portions of the earth we call civilization. But, alas, how unsatisfactory our civilization is! How far from purity our types of Christianization! How few there are today who could say with the Apostle, Brethren, be ye followers of us, even as we are followers of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. 11:1) How few there are even reckonedly, in the spirit of their minds, in their daily life, in their daily course, walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit!

GENERAL SIN AND PERSONAL SINS

Thus we discern that there is a general sin in the world, that it is in our blood, in our organization from birth, and the child of but a day is a participant in this sin, in this sinful condition that God disapproves and has declared to be unworthy of eternal life—worthy of death. In other words, our race is not worthy of perpetuation, is the divine decree. The general penalty against this universal condition of sin is the one originally pronounced against father Adam, and is still resting upon the world of mankind in general—“Dying thou shalt die.” Death is upon all, because all are sinners under this general sentence pronounced in Eden.

As already intimated, it is possible for the individuals of the race to either strive against this downward tendency in which they were born or to fall in line with it, and hurry down the broad road of destruction more rapidly. For such as run in the way of sin, practicing iniquity, the Lord declares there is additional responsibility—they are worthy of stripes. Some evil doers get these stripes, chastisement, in the present life through the natural course of affairs. Sowing to the flesh they reap the rewards of their wrong course under what we sometimes term natural laws. As, for instance, the libertine in many instances brings upon himself temporal and distressing sickness, which hasten his death and increase his sorrows and troubles.

In many other instances, however, the innocent suffer through laws of heredity as much as do the wilful transgressors, and hence there could be no evening up of matters to an exact point on justice were there no provision for a future life, a future probation. The infant of a day suffering from some loathsome disease unjustly shares with its parents the penalty upon wrong doing. The divine law might have left us in this position as a race and have done nothing for us. Justice could offer no plea on behalf of the suffering infant or other innocents, because the decree of Justice against Adam and all of his posterity is that by disobedience and by inherited blemishes they are found unworthy of everlasting life — worthy of death. Hence Justice decrees that any and everything which tends to hasten death amongst mankind is working out the sentence of Justice— “Dying thou shalt die.”

REDEMPTION AND REGENERATION

We will notice presently in what way the Lord takes away the sin of the Church—the sins of believers in Jesus; but now we call attention to the fact that our text does not discuss this matter, but, on the contrary, deals with sin as a whole and the world of sinners as a whole. It points us to the fact that our Lord’s mission is to take away the sin of the world—to take away the general blight and curse of death which came upon all mankind

through father Adam's disobedience. To accomplish this work two steps were necessary: (1) Justice must be satisfied; a legal redemption must be effected. When we look out over the world and note the 1,600,000,000 living today, and reckon up the thousands of million who have died, our hearts would fail us as we attempted to think of how a recompense could be made to Justice which would offset the obligation, the sins of all these.

But man's extremity is God's opportunity! As we look into the Word of God we find that divine wisdom had foreseen the entire matter and had arranged for it in advance. If each individual of our race had been personally sentenced for his own misdeeds, his own shortcomings, then indeed it would have required as a corresponding price that some one should die for each individual - in order to release that one from death. This would be an awful proposition — that twenty thousand millions of perfect men must die as redeemers for 20,000,000,000 of sinners. Where would such redeemers be found? Nowhere. Not a man on earth was found perfect, or capable of being his brother's redeemer. As we read, "There is none righteous, no, not one;" and again, "All have sinned and come short;" "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Rom. 3:10, 23; Psalm 49:7) Where, we ask, is the remedy, the hope?

Ah, we must look to God! Divine wisdom only could solve such a problem. Harkening to the divine message we hear its statement that all mankind were tried and condemned with father Adam, and not individually; and hence the assurance that the redemption of father Adam, the payment of his death sentence, would redeem not only him from the curse, but likewise redeem all who were in him when he came under that death sentence. How amazing the divine wisdom! These very facts that once in our blindness we suppose were an injustice toward us, are really evidences of divine foreknowledge and divine mercy. God condemned the race as a whole that he might have mercy

2H474

upon the race as a whole. This, then, is the meaning of the Scriptural declaration, "As by man came death, so also by man came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:21, 22

The meaning is very plain, very simple. We know how we all inherit sin and death conditions through father Adam. We see the imperfections all about us; we feel many of them in us; and now we learn that as we have thus inherited blemishes and sins and imperfection and death, another one has acted on our behalf, has paid the

penalty; and that by coming into relationship with him, by being regenerated, begotten again, born again, we may inherit eternal life through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

TAKING AWAY THE SIN

From the foregoing we perceive that there are two steps necessary to the release of humanity from its present thralldom to sin and death: (1) It was necessary that the penalty against father Adam should be paid to Justice. (2) It is necessary that Adam and all of his posterity in order to be blessed must come into relationship to the Redeemer—must be regenerated, obtain a new life. The first father or lifegiver, Adam, failed not only to keep the life bestowed upon him in his creation, but failed to hand it down to his posterity. His children have been produced under sin-and-death conditions, suffering and dying. Thank God for the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan of salvation, under which we were loved while we were yet sinners, and a full, complete preparation made for our individual release from our sin-and-death conditions.

The Scriptures tell us that this satisfaction of Justice for the sin of the world was somehow connected with the death of our Lord Jesus Christ—that “he died the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.” (1 Pet. 3:18) He has died, yet the world has not yet been brought to God. Indeed, amazing as the proposition may seem, the world as a whole gets farther away from God day by day. Counting all the population of civilized lands as though they were Christians—though many of them are really as much without God as the poor, ignorant ones whom we designate heathen—we find that those who are put down in statistics as the heathen people of the world are twice as many as they were a century ago, although the past century has been the most remarkable of all the world’s history in the endeavor to carry the name of Jesus to the ends of the earth. How shall we understand this matter? Is the divine plan miscarrying?

No, we answer. Other Scriptures must be allowed to assist in clarifying our views of how the great plan of God is outworking. Other Scriptures assure us that before the times of Restitution of all things, before the time of the blotting out of the curse, when “there shall be no more curse,” no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying—before that time shall come, God proposes the election or selection of a Little Flock, a Kingly Class, a Royal Priesthood, to be associated with the Redeemer in his work of glory during the Millennial Age. These Scriptures assure us that the Gospel now being proclaimed is not intended for all the ears of mankind, but merely for a certain class—“He that hath an ear, let him hear.” Amongst those who hear and are thus called, only a few will be chosen, namely, those who will be found so loyal to the

Lord and to righteousness that they will take pleasure in walking in the footsteps of Jesus—in suffering with him, in being despised and rejected of men for his sake, in being separated from the company of the world for his sake, in having all manner of evil spoken against them falsely for his sake, in taking up their cross to follow him. These very properly in the Scriptures are called both a “peculiar people” and a “Little Flock.” (Titus 2:14; Luke 12:32) The work of their selection began with our Lord’s ministry, and especially at Pentecost.

LONG AND CAREFUL CHOOSING

The selecting work has since progressed, and we have reason for believing that the number of the Elect is almost complete, that the time of the permission of evil for their testing in faith and obedience is nearly at an end. When completed the Church as the Bride of Christ will be glorified with him, to sit upon his throne, to be associated as the Royal Priesthood under him who is the great High Priest in communicating the blessing of God to all the families of the earth, in introducing the reign of righteousness under the Kingdom of God’s dear Son, and in judging the world in righteousness, rewarding well doing and correcting and punishing misdeeds; so that thus in due time all the families of the earth will have the glorious opportunity of being uplifted out of present sin-and-death conditions to the grand perfection that was lost in Eden, plus an increased knowledge and profitable experiences relating to the exceeding sinfulness of sin and blessedness and rewards of righteousness.

We see, then, that it is the divine purpose that this Elect class, now being selected from amongst the world, shall have the spirit of Christ—the spirit of self-sacrifice, the spirit of love for righteousness, the spirit of hatred for sin—to such an extent that they will rejoice to lay down their lives with their Master, in his cause, in co-operating with him, under his direction and guidance. Thus we see that while the merit was in our Lord and in his sacrifice for sins, nevertheless the world is waiting for the finding of the Elect and for their glorification

2H475

as the sons of God. Before they can be glorified they must be proven, they must be tested, they must be sacrificers.

In harmony with this is the Scriptural exhortation, “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God (in providing the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, including your sins, and in giving you a knowledge of his grace in advance of the world), that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God and your reasonable service.” Thus also the Apostle declares that the faithful of the Lord’s people “fill up

that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1:24) From this standpoint the entire Gospel Age, from the time of our Lord’s baptism to the present moment, has been the period of sacrificing. Our Lord sacrificed his life, and we who believe—specially blessed and informed in advance respecting the matter—have cast in our lot with him, to be with him, to suffer with him, to live with him, to reign with him. The work for the world—the taking away of the sin of the world, the opening up of the new dispensation in which all things will be made new—necessarily waits until the last member of the Church shall have finished his share in the sacrificing.

WIPING AWAY SINS AND TEARS

While the sin of the world will be legally cancelled as soon as the great Redeemer shall make the application of his sacrifice to that end, and while this will be an instantaneous work, nevertheless the applying of the benefits of that work to mankind will be gradual, and will require all of the thousand years of the Millennial reign of Christ and his Church. Some grasp the one part of this work, some grasp the other feature, but few seem to see the absolute necessity of both features—the redemption of the world by the payment of the price, the death of Jesus, and the restoration of the world, its uplifting. Respecting the first of these many Scriptures could be cited, but we merely quote you one: The Apostle says, speaking of our Lord and his sacrifice, “Now once in the end of this age hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” (Heb. 9:26) This appearance, this sacrificing, was done in the end of the Jewish Age, and it was done with a view to the putting away of sin. The sin of the world is not yet put away, but we are nearing the time for its cancellation and elimination, under the New Covenant, during the Millennium. The Apostle tells us that in the end of this age our Lord will appear a second time, not as a sin-offering, but unto salvation—first for the salvation of the Church, the Bride, to glorify her with himself, and secondly for the salvation of the world. As the sacrifice for sins was made at the first advent, it will be at the second advent that the putting away as we have already seen, is first a judicial putting away, or a divine acceptance of Christ’s sacrifice and the approval of the introduction of the Millennial reign of Christ for the world’s uplift out of sin and death.

Notice that the Apostle describes this and tells of the time when sins will be blotted out—that it will be at the second coming of Christ—that it will be during the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began—that it will be a time of refreshing from God’s presence. (Acts 3:19-23) Not even the Church’s sins are blotted out now; as the Apostle declares, the sins of believers are merely covered. The merit of Christ’s righteousness imputed to them, as a robe of righteousness, a wedding

garment, covers the blemishes of their flesh, their hearts being true and loyal to the Lord. But when that which is perfect is come there will be no need of such a covering; and the perfection will come at the second coming of our Lord, when, in the First Resurrection, the Father shall by his power raise us to glory, honor, immortality, in association with our Redeemer. Then, being actually perfect, we shall see as we are seen, know as we are known, and have no need to be covered by our dear Saviour's robe, so essential now to our joy and peace and standing with the Father.

AWAKED, THEN SLOWLY RESTORED

But the instantaneous work of the First Resurrection, by which the Church will be made like her Lord in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, does not appertain to the world in general nor to the sins of the world. The sins of the world are not now covered by Christ's robe, for to those whom he accepts as his faithful he declares, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," "for I have chosen you out of the world." (John 17:16; 15:19) The world is still in its sins, but as soon as the Church shall have been glorified the great Redeemer will make general application of the merit of his sacrifice for the whole world, and the sins of the world will be judicially cancelled in that moment, in that instant. Thereafter there will be nothing to hinder the restitution of any who will to all the perfections and blessings which God shall be pleased to bestow upon those who are in his favor. Then will begin the work of Christ with humanity; for although the sentence of death shall have been lifted from them, they will still be in their blemished, depraved, fallen condition, and will need then to be lifted up out of it; and the divine provision of a thousand years for this restitution work must evidently be exactly the proper length of time in which fully to accomplish it for all the willing and obedient.

What beautiful pictures are used to represent the

2H476

Millennial work of Christ and the Church in taking away from the world their sinful conditions! First of all we have the binding of Satan; second, the shining forth of the Sun of Righteousness, to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of God; third, the water of life then freely flowing, with the invitation to all from the Spirit and the glorified Bride to take of the water of life freely; then, too, the leaves of the trees for the healing of the nations. The marks of sin which now are everywhere in evidence throughout the world, not only in the deeds of mankind but in the very facial expression of all, will then be wiped out—not instantaneously but gradually. Wiping represents a gradual process, and sins and sorrows, pains and tears, are incidentals and concomitants of the death sentence.

It is in perfect accord with this that we read that the Lord will wipe away all tears from off all faces in that day, and that there shall be no more sorrow and crying and dying, because all the former things have passed away. Rev. 21:4

GOD'S WAY IS PERFECT

A few moments ago we noticed that had not the divine plan made provision for a resurrection of the dead, there would be no evening up of accounts as between those who in the present life have sought to live justly and honorably and those who, on the contrary, have deliberately violated right principles. But in the arrangement which we find Scripturally set forth there is a provision whereby those who now seek to walk in the ways of righteousness will then find their blessing for having so done, while those who have wilfully transgressed will then find a retribution. Not merely believers in Christ and consecrated followers in his footsteps have sought to stem the downward tendencies of the fallen flesh and to rise to higher and nobler conditions of mind and deed; yet only the Church, the sanctified believers, get the blessing for which the Lord is now calling the "Little Flock," the "peculiar people."

Even amongst the heathen there have been some wonderfully noble characters—Confucius, for instance, as an illustration, an example. Likewise in civilized lands today many noble people have never seen with clearness the reasonableness of a full faith in and a full consecration to the service of the Lord Jesus. Such, having sought to live justly and honorably in the world, will be advantaged in the coming age; they will come forth on a proportionately higher plane mentally, morally, every way; they will be superior to what they would have been had they not put forth efforts for righteousness. It will, however, be still required of them to go on to perfection; but they will have fewer rungs of the ladder to climb than if they had misused their opportunities and privileges. Similarly those in the present life who have misused their opportunities, and thus degraded themselves and brought degradation upon others, in proportion as they knew better will undoubtedly, as the Master declared, receive stripes or punishments. That is to say, they will find themselves that much nearer the foot of the ladder, and with that many more efforts necessary to be put forth to gain its topmost round, eternal life, perfection. In this way the Lord has arranged that each one, according to his honesty of heart, degree of knowledge and obedience or disobedience to the knowledge, shall have proportionate rewards or punishments.

How much more reasonable is this Scriptural view than would be any of the usual thoughts on this subject amongst Christians! Roman Catholics, with their view of Purgatory and varying terms of incarceration and varying degrees of suffering, have gone outside of anything that is set forth as a basis of faith in God's

Word. Besides, their thought that the saying of prayers will bring relief from these stripes and cancel years of suffering is inconsistent with anything found in the Scriptures. Protestant views, that only those fit for heaven go to heaven and that all others go to an eternity of woe, is thoroughly inconsistent, especially when they claim that there is no hope of relief, no hope of mitigation. If only those who are fit for heaven are received there, how few will enter in! It will be a little flock indeed.

Contrast such unreasonable propositions with the simplicity of the divine plan: the Church, the sacrificers, the Bride of Christ, glorified with him in his Kingdom, rewarded for all their sufferings and self-denials exceedingly and abundantly more than they could have asked or thought. The world, coming forth to a fair and equitable trial, in which the conduct of the present life will have its weight and bearing on the advantages of the future life, and all with the prospect, if they will, of reaching life eternal through the merit of him who, as the Lamb of God, died for the cancellation of their guilt, and at his second coming shall, under the blessed influences of his Kingdom, lift them out of sin and degradation and death conditions up to full human perfection, restoring to them the Edenic home and utterly destroying in the Second Death such as will not hear and obey the laws of his Kingdom.

“THE LAMB OF GOD”

It is not the sacrificing of the Church that takes away the sin of the world. We have nothing to sacrifice that would be acceptable at the bar of Justice except those blessings which are counted ours through faith in Christ. Our sacrificing, therefore, is merely a test of our loyalty and devotion; the merit of the sacrifice for sins is all in the Lamb of God—all in our Lord Jesus. And so

2H477

the Scriptures everywhere differentiate between the Lord and his perfection and the Church, which comes into divine favor through Christ's robe of righteousness, under his merit. The highest honor declared respecting the Church is that she shall occupy a position which, figuratively, is described as that of a Bride and joint-heir. She is to be “the Bride, the Lamb's wife.” Having attested her loyalty to principles of righteousness by suffering with her Master in the present time, she shall be counted worthy to share with him the honors of his throne; as he declared, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.” Rev. 3:21

The expression, “Lamb of God,” is a very forceful one. Man would not choose such a symbol as divine inspiration has

chosen. Look at all the emblems of heraldry and note how various ferocious beasts and birds are used as symbols of the earthly great: Some have the lion, some the unicorn, some have dragons, others eagles, others foxes, others wolves, tigers' heads, etc., emblems indicating the ferocity and rapacity of the character behind, when they did not even intend to tell of their ungainly qualities, but sought rather to glorify themselves. But look at our Lord's emblem— a meek, innocent, gentle lamb. At another time we hope to discuss this matter from the standpoint of the Passover, and to consider how our Lord Jesus was the Passover Lamb, and the general bearing of that type of Christ and his work of blessing upon the interests of the whole world. Today we content ourselves with noticing the general fact that the lamb was used in the Jewish symbolism and sacrifices as representing our redeemer, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, tells us that he was specially commissioned of God to bear this witness at the beginning of Jesus' ministry—that Jesus was the "Lamb of God;" that he was the gentle, patient, uncomplaining one who would die on our behalf, that we by his stripes might be healed, that through his paying for us the death penalty, ultimately the whole world of mankind should be released from death, and so many of them as would might be brought up out of sin-and-death conditions to the full perfection of life everlasting.

"TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR"

John cried, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Let us behold him—not as the Pharisees and Scribes did, with eyes of malice and envy and hatred. Let us look at him in the light of the divine revelation, and perceive that he was without spot or blemish—that "in him was no sin"—that "he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." We wonder how he could be of the Seed of Abraham and of the Seed of David according to the flesh, and yet not be a partaker or a sharer in the sin of the world—not be, therefore, under condemnation of death with the remainder, but contrariwise be holy, harmless, undefiled, able to give to God a ransom price for the world, able to pay the penalty of the perfect man Adam at the sacrifice of himself! How came it that all this perfection should be found in Jesus?

The Scriptures answer our query, assuring us that he was not born like others of the race—that while he received his human organization from his mother, the life principle therein was from above, and that by the selective processes of perfection even in his embryo condition he perfectly maintained himself in mind and in every attribute. The Scriptures further tell us that he was thus born of a woman, separate from sinners, was previously with the Father; yea, from before the foundation of the world—indeed, that he had been the Father's special representative in the creative work, as it is

written, “All things were made by him, and without him was not one thing made that was made.”

July 28, 1907

**Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
May 1, 1917**

WHY THE PATH OF LIFE IS NARROW NOW

Easton, Pa., July 28—One of our largest theaters was unable to accommodate the crowds that sought to hear Pastor Russell’s discourse on “The Overthrow of Satan’s Empire and the Inauguration of the Kingdom of God’s Dear Son.” His afternoon discourse was from the text, “Thou wilt show me the path of life. In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.” Psa. 16:11. The speaker said:

These words of prophecy primarily related to our Lord Jesus, and in a secondary sense apply to all those who through faith and consecration to death become accepted members of His church—the Body of Christ. Of their applicability to our Lord Jesus we have evidence in the context which reads, “I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; my flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol); neither wilt Thou

2H478

suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.” It will be remembered that the Apostle Peter by inspiration applied these words to our Lord Jesus, assuring us that they were not applicable to David himself, whose flesh did see corruption, and whose soul was left in sheol, and who did not pass into the heavens, but “he being a prophet spoke beforehand of Christ.” Acts 2:25-31

We inquire then the meaning of this expression, “Thou wilt show me the path of life.” What path of life was Jesus seeking? What path of life did the Heavenly Father show Him? Did He not have life? Is it not assuredly stated that He was exempt from the power of death which was the wage of sin, for in Him was no sin neither was guile found in His mouth. (1 Peter 2:22) Yes, we reply, holy, harmless, separate from sinners, He had an unimpaired life originally received from the Father, and subsequently transferred from the spirit condition to His mother’s womb, so that He was born, not as other men, of the will of the flesh, nor subject to their weakness and frailties and imperfections resulting from their share in the Adamic condemnation. But then if He had life and unimpaired life, a life transferred from the higher plane

of existence to the human, why should He seek life and seek the path of life? Had the Lord lost the path of life? What is the meaning of our text? “Thou wilt

SHOW ME THE PATH OF LIFE”

Ah! Here we have connected with our text the key to the entire plan of salvation. Our Lord’s unimpaired life, transferred from the higher spirit plane to the human when he was born of a virgin—that life He laid down; He sacrificed; He surrendered. But Why? Did He commit sin that His life was forfeited? No, verily, in Him was no sin, for He suffered on our behalf, “He tasted death for every man, ““He poured out His soul unto death.”

“He made His soul an offering for sin.” As the prophet declares, “He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.” (Heb. 2:9; Isa. 53:12,13) The price of our release from the divine sentence of death, the price of our resurrection hope, was what He paid when He laid down His life and “died the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God.” (1 Pet. 3:18) So then our Lord’s earthly ministry, beginning when He was 30 years old, was one of self-sacrifice—the laying down of His life on behalf of sinners. His baptism itself was a picture of all this. His immersion in water symbolized His passing into the state of death, His raising from the water symbolized His resurrection from the dead. From that moment of His consecration, the three and a half years of His earthly ministry were years of self-sacrifice—the laying down of His life on behalf of His followers and indirectly on behalf of all the families of the earth, and this sacrifice was finished at Calvary when with His dying breath He cried, “It is finished.” The sacrifice was finished, the life was gone. The Scriptures point out that having humbled Himself in obedience to the Father’s will in the taking of the human nature, in being “made flesh” (John 1:14), and then sacrificing that flesh, He gave His all on our behalf.

Our Lord illustrated this matter in one of His parables, when He told of treasures hid in the field and how the finder went and sold all that he had and bought that field with its treasure. The field was the world; and the treasure consisted of those who have accepted Him and those who will yet accept Him under all the favorable conditions which shall yet be brought to bear upon them for their enlightenment and assistance out of the conditions of sin and death and back into harmony with God. But the point we are here noting is that “He gave all He had” for the purchase of that field. Nothing was held back in reserve. He did not appear to die—appear to resign His life; He actually “gave Himself a ransom for all.” (1 Tim. 2:6) And this word ransom has a peculiar force, for it signifies a price to correspond. In other words, as father Adam’s life was forfeited because of

sin, and our Lord Jesus' life was not forfeited because He was not a sinner, this unforfeited life in the divine arrangement was exchanged for the forfeited one and thus Adam was purchased, redeemed, bought, ransomed from the power of sin and death—and with Him all who were sharers of His life, all of His posterity. Thus to each and to all is guaranteed by this arrangement a full opportunity of our return to the life and perfection lost, and to this agree the Lord's words—"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10

But let us not lose the point of our argument. It is this, that our Lord's life given for Adam was given forever. He could no more purchase Adam and his race and yet keep his life than we could purchase a loaf of bread and yet keep the money. If the money were not put down the bread would not be ours—there would be no purchase. Similarly, unless Christ's life were given up completely, totally, forever, there would not be any purchase of Adam and his race. But Jesus lives, the Father raised Him from the dead. What life is this which he now has? We answer, not the life which he had then and which He surrendered as our ransom price. Thank God, no! Otherwise our redemption would be entirely undone. He has a new life, a special gift, a reward of the Father to him—a reward for his obedience even unto death, even the death of the cross. The Scriptures tell us that the life which our Lord now has is not only higher than the human life which He laid down, but still

2H479

higher than the life which He had before He became a man. They declare of His resurrection: "Him hath God highly exalted and given a name above every name." (Phil. 2:9) He has been exalted far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. He is now, by virtue of His resurrection to this highest plane of life, a partaker of the divine nature. Eph. 1:21; 2Pet. 1:4

THE NARROW WAY TO LIFE

We have seen that the life granted to our Lord Jesus in His resurrection was a gift from the Father, and now we inquire: Were there conditions connected with this gift? and did our Lord Jesus know of these conditions while He was fulfilling them? We answer, Yes!—in harmony with the prophecy of our text, "Thou wilt show me the path of life." The Father made known to His Son His will respecting the redemption of mankind, and without compulsion gave Him the opportunity of becoming the agency or channel through whom this redemptive work would be accomplished. The Son, full of loyalty to the Father, replied: "I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy

law is written in my heart.” (Psa. 40:8) We are informed also that the Father set before the Son certain joys, and that this included not only the redemption of the world and the blessed privilege of by and by, during the Millennial age, making that redemption effective to mankind by bringing all to a knowledge of the truth and to opportunities for everlasting salvation by restitution, but that additionally it included our Lord’s own resurrection to life, if obedient, on the highest of all planes of being. Our Lord, adverting to this matter in one of His recorded prayers, requested not the additional glory and honor, but merely that He be reinstated in His former position after He should have finished His course of obedience. He said: “Father, glorify Thou me with the glory I had with Thee before the world was”—I ask not greater honor than to be privileged thus to serve You and to be the channel of your blessings to others, but I am trusting and hoping for my own restoration to the glorious plane of being which for so long I enjoyed.

The Father in His love and wisdom saw fit to test His Son’s loyalty and devotion even unto death, even the death of the cross, that He might be demonstrated to be worthy of the exceeding glory He had designed for Him. Hence there were terms and conditions attaching to the entire arrangement—a certain path or course of life must be pursued by the Redeemer in order to permit Him to accomplish the redemptive work, and accomplishing that, to have the reward of the high exaltation. It is this path of life which is referred to in our text. Let us examine it.

“HE SUFFERED, BEING TEMPTED”

Our Lord’s trying experiences immediately followed His consecration and baptism. We read that He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness, there to be tempted of the adversary. It was His own Spirit that led Him into the wilderness, the Holy Spirit with which He had just been anointed—the holy mind or will. He turned aside from the busy course of life to fast and pray and study in the wilderness for 40 days. He desired to know the Father’s will and to do it promptly and efficiently and this was His opportunity for determining the path of life—the path which would mean His own resurrection from death, and which would mean also life for the world through Him. Is it asked why the Lord had not thought out this matter before His consecration? We answer that He did consider the subject faithfully and carefully. As a boy of 12 we find Him eagerly asking questions of the doctors of the law, and striving to know, to understand, the deep meaning of the types as well as of the prophecies, that He might know the will of the Father and be as soon as possible about His Father’s business. He had learned, evidently there, that, according to the

law and its types He could not enter upon His sacrificial duties, the laying down of His life, until He had reached the appointed age of 30 years. We remember the promptness with which, as soon as He began to be about 30, He repaired to John at Jordan, there to make and symbolize His full devotion, His sacrifice of His self to do the Father's will. We may reasonably suppose that He made use of every opportunity in all the intervening years for the study of the Word of God, the law and the prophets, and we may judge that His abilities in connection with the understanding of the prophecies were far greater than those of others, because He was perfect, while other men were imperfect. But as the Apostle points out, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) So our Lord Jesus, although perfect, could not understand the things of the Spirit of God—the deep undermeaning of these prophecies and symbols until He received His anointing of the holy Spirit at Jordan. Then came to Him the liberty, the power to understand, to comprehend, the deep things of God, the things not disclosed upon the surface of the types and prophecies.

It was as soon as He received this anointing that our Lord desired to go at once into seclusion for the proper study and assimilation of all that He had learned in the law and the prophets in the light of the illumination of the holy Spirit which had now come upon Him. That anointing of the holy Spirit is also styled the begetting of the holy Spirit. The new life had then begun; the

2H480

spiritual life, the new nature there had its start. During the three and a half years of His ministry He, as a new creature, was growing, learning, being tested and proven. As the man Christ Jesus He was laying down His life so that when the moment of the end was reached, He, as a New Creature, had stood all the tests and proofs which the Father saw expedient to bring to Him. And as the new Spirit Begotten Creature He was raised from the dead on the third day and given a spiritual body, a life-giving spirit, and became a partaker of the divine nature.

LED OF THE SPIRIT

But now coming back we notice the procedure of the New Creature just as soon as begotten of the holy Spirit. Jesus the New Creature was led of the Spirit, led by this New Mind, apart into the wilderness—there to be tempted. Did He go for temptation? Surely not! None should pray "Lead us not into temptation" and yet go into temptation. What then? How was He led into the wilderness to be tempted? We answer that He was led into the wilderness by His spirit of devotion to the Lord

and His desire to do the Father's will. He was led there in the spirit of our text, inquiring of the Father for the path of life and full assurance that the Father would show it to Him. "Thou wilt show Me the path of life." During those 40 days our Lord's studies brought clearly before Him the various steps of the divine plan and showed Him that these would lead Him, if faithful, to be misunderstood and despised of men; showed Him the meaning of the prophecies, which told of the ignominy and suffering and that this was the death which the Father had marked out, by obedience to which He would gain the new life on the higher plane in His resurrection. The temptations came in conjunction with it, after He had the full view of the cost of obedience—the trials and difficulties and narrowness of the way of life. The adversary came at the moment of greatest weakness, after He had fasted, and when the full cost of His consecration was before His mind's eye in all its magnitude.

Then came the temptation of the adversary—the suggestion that He take another way; that He take an easier way; that the Father's way was not only difficult but impracticable. The first temptation was a suggestion of the adversary's sympathy and his appreciation of the fact that Jesus in His baptism of the holy Spirit had received a great power. He was urged to use this power for Himself, to turn stones to bread to satisfy His hunger. How subtle a temptation! How the adversary posed as His real friend, only to seek to ensnare Him, however. Our Lord answered that this holy power was not given Him to use in any selfish way; He had other means of providing bread, and hence was not to call upon this holy power for the relief of His hunger. He silenced the adversary by quoting from the Word of God that men should not seek to live by bread alone, but by every word of God. He would continue faithful to the Word of God, and thus be assured of the life which God has promised to His faithful.

Another of these temptations was the suggestion to use His miraculous power in a boastful and foolhardy manner by going to the highest point of the temple and hurling Himself from thence in the sight of all the people, and then arising and demonstrating to them He was uninjured, thus bringing Himself quickly to the notice of all. But our Lord saw that this was not the Father's will; that this would be contrary to the path of life; that the holy power was not to be used in foolish ways, but that instead He was to preach, proclaim, to all, the good tidings, so that those who have an ear might hear, and that He was not to make mountebank displays to entice the curious—rather, that He was to expect only the Israelites indeed, having no guile, to have any ear for His message, and was to expect that the multitudes who would appreciate such a sensational demonstration were not intended to be aroused and drawn to Him, but rather were ultimately to crucify Him. Besides, such an

unwarranted use of the divine power would have made Him a sinner and would have forfeited His claim upon divine protection, such a leap might have meant to Him everlasting destruction. The path of life which the Father showed led not in that direction—such an unauthorized course would have led in the direction of death.

Again the tempter assailed Him with the offer of partnership, expressing sympathy with His program and a desire to co-operate; he assured Him that he had the control of the world, and that he would willingly take Him as a partner, and have this control turned from an evil rule to a rule of righteousness and life and blessing. He assured Him that this could be accomplished speedily, quickly, without ignominy and shame and the self-sacrifice which He was purposing, and he urged Him to accept the proposition: Merely acknowledge me, and I will turn over to you all the kingdoms, and the rule and dominion of the world, and then with my co-operation the conquest of the world would be an easy matter. Our Lord properly resented this, and declared that His loyalty must be to the Father alone, that He was not at liberty to compromise with sin nor to become co-worker in any degree with sin and the opponents of God. If Satan had really desired to turn over a new leaf, and to see the world blessed and uplifted from the ignorance and superstition which he had helped to bring upon it, he should have gladly entered into the plan of the

2H481

Redeemer, to do the Father's will and to have His results. But, no! there is no sympathy between the divine plan and that of the adversary, whose end will be first to be bound for a thousand years, and then ultimately to be completely destroyed in the Second Death. Our Lord was right in rejecting all counsel of evil-doers and foregoing all assistance that they would be ready or able or willing to render.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Our Lord's heart was so fully loyal to the Father that none of these temptations moved Him. He preferred to walk the narrow path of self-denial, self-sacrifice even unto death in the favor of God, than to enjoy all that others could give or that could be imagined under other conditions. And this decision being fully and thoroughly reached His temptation along these lines was ended—the adversary left Him for good, never again to return with temptations, but merely to seek to thwart Him and all the divine purposes being accomplished through Him. Thus the Lord chose the path of life even though He saw it to be the way of the cross, the narrow way, the way of self-sacrifice, of humiliation, of suffering, of sorrow, of death.

The Master's test thus having been accomplished, another feature of the divine plan immediately began. While the Redeemer went on in His chosen course of self-renouncement unto death, He began the selection of the Church, the little flock, the bride class, the members of His body. The calling of these was due now to begin: First would be the twelve Apostles, and secondarily as many of the Jewish nation, God's covenant people, as were faithful, "Israelites indeed," and subsequently enough out of all other nations to make up the predetermined, foreordained number who should constitute the "very elect." These called ones, unlike Himself, were members of the Adamic race, and hence, sharers of the Adamic curse or sentence of death, but in harmony with the Father's plan their faith in God, as expressed in their acceptance of Jesus as their Redeemer, was counted to them for righteousness—justification. In the divine arrangement the merit of Christ's sacrifice was counted or imputed to these, so that reckonedly they would be esteemed and might be dealt with along the same lines exactly as their Lord; so that they might be invited to walk in His footsteps in the same path of life, in the narrow way, toward the same goal of glory, honor and immortality and the divine nature. (1 Peter 2:21; 2 Peter 1:4) However, their acceptance to this narrow way could not take place until after our Lord had finished His work and come off conqueror by His faithfulness, and then ascending up on high, have made atonement for their sins—for the sins of all those who believe in Him and who desire to follow in His steps in the narrow way.

In a word, it was not until Pentecost that even the Apostles were able. to come under the anointing of the Spirit—the begetting of the holy Spirit—and thus as new creatures, to start in the narrow way of self-sacrificing their justified flesh, earthly interests, etc., in the service of the Lord. It is therefore by the holy Spirit given unto us, the Church, as he did to the Lord, the Head of the Church, the promise of our text, "Thou wilt show me the path of life." Day by day, step by step, victory by victory, trial after trial, the Lord is guiding the steps of His faithful, and showing them a step at a time in this narrow way, the path of life. How the Apostle Peter emphasizes this saying, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts. (2 Peter 1:19) Thank God that after more than eighteen centuries the Church of Christ, under the guidance of the Father through the holy Spirit, has been walking in this path of the Just (Prov. 4:18), this narrow way, this path of life, and has had the light necessary at every step of the journey, until now the glorious morning of the new dispensation is breaking and for all those in the right attitude of heart the day star is manifested, and soon all the members shall have passed "beyond the wall" of death, and the Master's words, "It is finished," will be

fulfilled on a larger scale as respects those whom he has accepted and adopted as members of the Church, which is the Body of Christ.

O, what confidence it gives to this class when they realize that known unto the Lord are all his ways and works from the foundation of the world, when they realize that all the steps of an anointed one are ordered by the Lord, and that He directs his paths; and that as He directed the Lord Jesus through His Word and Spirit so He still directs the church, the Body of Christ, through the same Word and through the same spirit, and that He will thus continue to lead until He shall have brought us to the glorious kingdom and to all the blessings promised. The question for us to consider is the temptation, the trials. We are not so strong as the Master was, and it is well for us that the adversary is not allowed to bring against us all of his powers at the very beginning of our Christian way, but we have our testings, and in many respects they are like those of our Lord, who was tempted in all points like as we are. Our temptations, however, are spread out over the days and weeks and years of our pilgrimage of the narrow way, while our Lord's were condensed. Additionally, of the people, there were none with Him; it was a personal struggle with the adversary. But it is different with us—He considereth our frame, He remembereth we are

2H482

dust, and He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but with every temptation provide a way of escape; and He assures us that all things, all our experiences, shall work together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to His purpose. Psalm 103:14, 1 Cor. 10:13; Rom. 8:28

THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS

The present narrow way will soon close, and the opportunities for membership in the Body of Christ will soon be at an end. Hence the called ones should be zealous in making their calling and election sure; as our Lord says, "Take heed that no man take thy crown." (Rev. 3:11)

The crowns are limited, and if we are unappreciative of those assigned to us they will be reassigned to others who will appreciate them, that the elect number may be complete and its work of blessing the world progress. While we thank God for the narrow way and the special life to which it leads, we thank Him also that it is not the only way He has provided; and that it will terminate with the class of this age. For we see most clearly that only a very few of humanity are of the condition of heart to

appreciate so great a privilege as that of sacrificing themselves in the service of God and His cause.

We are glad then to find the clear record in the word of God that following this age will come the new dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom, in which there will be opened up a grand, broad highway of holiness, large enough for all the world of mankind, with opportunities for all to go up thereon to full perfection of human nature, through processes of restitution which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21) We are glad that the world will have such a glorious opportunity, and glad, too, that in the divine program it will be the work of Christ, the Lord, and His church, His body, to help the world on this grand highway and to assist them in faithfully walking thereon to the further end and the earthly life, restitution life in the glorious Eden Paradise of God restored, which He has promised. We are glad, too, that the Lord has declared most positively that any 'who refuse to walk on that highway of holiness when it is opened up, when everything shall be made so plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein—whoever then refuses and loves sin shall be ultimately destroyed from amongst the people in the second death, and shall not remain to be an injury and menace to the glorious order of things then established.

“AT GOD’S RIGHT HAND”

The right hand of God signifies divine favor or esteem. We are told that our Lord Jesus, by reason of His faithfulness unto death, has been exalted to the right hand of the majesty of God—in other words, He occupies the highest, the chiefest, most glorious position in relationship to the Heavenly Father; His loyalty and faithfulness have received their reward. The Apostle says that our Lord has forever set down at God’s right hand—that is to say, that His position of glory and honor is an unalterable one. Even when at His second advent He shall come to earth a second time and establish His Kingdom under the whole heavens, He will still be in one sense of the word at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Matt. 24:30

In His parable of the sheep and the goats our Lord points out (Matt. 25:31) that when at His second advent He shall sit upon the throne of His glory He will judge, try, test, prove all the families of the earth during that Millennial Age, and as a result will gather to His right hand, or to His favor, all who are truly sheep class, while to His left hand of disfavor He will gather the goats, the wayward, those unfit for eternal life, who will be destroyed in the second death. But those at His right hand at the close of the Millennial Age will be invited to receive the earthly kingdom under the whole heavens. Eden restored, the kingdom which was prepared for man from the foundation of the race—not the kingdom

prepared for Christ and the church, the Heavenly Kingdom, but the earthly kingdom of which Adam was the first king, whose dominion was lost through disobedience, but redeemed by the Savior, and to be restored to Adam and his children, so many as will receive it on God's terms and after sufficient testings.

“HONORS FOREVERMORE”

Our text tells that at the end of the way of life, at the end of the narrow way that leads to life, will be the glory, honor and immortality which God has promised. As our text expresses it, “At thy right hand are pleasures (honors) forevermore.” Surely indeed the honors, the blessings of God promised us in His Word are to be everlasting—they will not only be the honors of the Millennial Kingdom, which we shall share with our dear Redeemer for a thousand years, but throughout eternity He is to be at the Father's right hand, and we as His Bride with Him, like Him, seeing Him as He is and sharing His glory. Such thoughts are too wonderful for us; eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things God hath in reservation for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:10) And in proportion as we are able to receive of this spiritual blessing and instruction we are able to gain some

2H483

faint comprehension of the glory that shall be revealed in us. Still, as the apostle declares, we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come everything that is in part imperfect shall have passed away. We are hoping, waiting, praying for the glorious change, and meantime let us strive to be ready for it, that the Lord may be able to say to us: “Well done, good and faithful servant. . . . Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.” This pronouncement of worthiness can only come under the covenant of this gospel age to those who, like our dear Redeemer, see and gladly walk in the path of life, having respect to the pleasures, the honors forevermore at God's right hand.

“IN THY PRESENCE IS FULNESS OF JOY”

These words from our text remind us of the apostle's statement that our Lord will present His Church blameless, irreprovable, in His presence. (Eph. 5:2 7) O what joy! O what pleasure! “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;” and again, as respects our dear Redeemer, we shall be like Him and see Him as He is and share His glory. (1 John 3:2) Unquestionably there we will have a fulness of joy beyond everything that it is not possible for us to conceive.

But there is another thought connected with this, and one that in some respects is still more important; namely, that the Lord's people in the present life are to have His presence with them continually and to have a fulness of joy which no man can take away, which earthly trials and difficulties and disappointments cannot drown. This joy is to come as a result of the Lord's presence, with His people—not a personal presence, but His spiritual presence, elsewhere described as the “light of His countenance,” the smile of His face. Let us not forget this presence of the Lord and the fulness of joy; it may bring us even now a foretaste of that which is to come. This thought is beautifully expressed by the poet in the words:

*“Son of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when Thou art near,
O! may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.”*

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, August 19, 1907](#)

“THE SEA AND THE WAVES ROARING”

ATLANTIC CITY, Aug. 18—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny preached twice here today. His afternoon topic was “The Bible Defended—To Hell and Back.” We report his second discourse from the text, “Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity for the roaring of the sea and billows; men’s hearts failing them for fear and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.” (Luke 21:25, 26) The address follows:

The Bible abounds with similes and word pictures, perhaps in excess of any other writings. Our text, in harmony with our surroundings, draws attention to the sea, and pictures it lashed by the winds of storm into great roaring billows, awfully majestic. Those who have seen the mighty deep thoroughly aroused and have witnessed its terrific power and the destruction sometimes wrought, have a wholesome dread of it. And when, in cooperation with the surface storms, there have been earthquakes, causing great tidal waves, the terrors of the sea have been accentuated. We all remember the Galveston disaster as an exhibition of the power of the winds alone, sweeping the waters of the gulf to the destruction of almost the entire city. More remotely we remember the tidal wave at Lisbon, and recently a similar disaster at Kingston. We faintly realize the great power of these great tons of water as they rushed inland and licked up, as it were, the people and their belongings throughout the vast areas, and carried them into the sea. We also know something about the literal sea, but on this occasion let us inquire respecting the lesson taught when the sea in the Scriptures is used symbolically as in our text.

THE SYMBOLICAL SEA OF THE BIBLE

As we come to understand the Bible we find that although its various books were written centuries apart, there is a harmony and oneness, a consistency, prevalent through them all, so that the interpretation of our text as a symbol is found to concur thoroughly with the uses of the same symbolical illustration elsewhere in the Bible. In the Psalmist’s description of the trouble time which he pictures, the dry land stands for, or represents, the social structure of the present time, the mountain represents the kingdoms, the rivers of water represent truth and grace. The heavens represent the spiritual powers and influences, and the sea symbolizes the restless and dissatisfied of mankind. A very condensed picture of the time of trouble—not far distant, we believe—the same time of trouble mentioned in our text—is symbolically stated in Psalms 46:2-3. Speaking

for the Church the Prophet declares, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

2H484

Therefore will we not fear though the earth (society) be removed and though the mountains (kingdoms) be carried into the midst of the sea (overturned by anarchy, thrown into confusion and under the control of the restless and dissatisfied). Though the waters of the sea roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.”

Such a dire calamity as that here pictured—of kingdoms thrown into anarchy and society entirely swallowed up in the seas—would be enough to make all hearts faint, even in contemplation, even before such realities could be accomplished. But the Prophet declares that a certain class of the Lord’s favored ones will not quail before such anticipations or in the presence of such commotions. They have a river, the stream of truth and grace, which refreshes them and gives them knowledge in advance concerning the objects and results of all that will be permitted of the Lord—that all the terrible experiences coming to the world will eventuate in a blessing.

In this same Psalm the symbols already referred to—mountains, earth, sea—are interpreted, the Psalmist saying: “The nations raged, the kingdoms were removed, God uttered his voice and the earth melted.” The figure is changed slightly, but the chief characteristics remain the same, namely, that the great trouble here pictured is one of anarchy, that in it earth (society) will melt or disintegrate, lose its strength, become like the sea itself; the mountains or kingdoms will be removed, and all this will be the result of two things: (1) The uttering of God’s voice—his decision, his message against sin and selfishness as represented in the present order of things, social, political, financial and religious; and (2) the raging of the nations, the peoples of the world. Moved by selfishness themselves they will rage against selfishness and power exercised against them, until the entire social structure will succumb to the power of this great flood, these mighty popular waves, which will sweep away every barrier and opposition in “the time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation,” as the Prophet Daniel describes. Dan. 12:1

ONE-THIRD LAND, TWO-THIRDS SEA

Geographers tell us that at least two-thirds of the earth's surface is covered by the sea, and one proportion represents very well the conditions of humanity. Sea level would represent the meeting place of those contented with the present construction of society, with the more numerous class discontented with the present order of things. From this meeting place there are extremes both ways. In the ocean we find unfathomable depths; and so amongst mankind we find some so utterly discontented and out of accord with present institutions that they are unable to find any basis whatever for sympathy with present institutions. Likewise on the land we find the elevated plateaus and mountain peaks of those favored by wealth and rank, whose station is so far above the sea level—so far that they can scarcely sympathize with the lowest forms of degradation and the most abject conditions of the discontented. The question naturally arises: Is God responsible for these differences amongst men measured symbolically by the height of the mountains and the depth of the sea?

We reply that geologists tell us respecting the physical earth and seas very much the same things that the Bible tells us respecting the class differences amongst men at the present time. Geologists say that at one time the earth's surface was without the mountain divisions of the present time and without the corresponding sea depressions. They tell us that from time to time various mountain ranges were pressed up and various depressions in the seas took the waters still lower. So the Bible tells us, and history corroborates, that originally mankind were created on a parity, on a general level as respects abilities, talents, opportunities, privileges, but that gradually great depressions were made in some parts of the world through sin and ignorance and superstition, and that from time to time revolutions developed great kingdoms and with them preferred classes, which for centuries have safeguarded to a considerable degree the social structure. These revolutions and mountain chains have been in part political and in part financial, and these mountain peaks reach up into the heavens and are very closely identified with the nominal religious systems of every land. The moving power in these various depressions of the seas and elevations of the dry land has been selfishness, not love. Selfishness has had much to do with the deepest degradation we have known in the world and with the bitter discontent which prevails amongst the masses. Selfishness also has had much to do with the exaltation of the upper classes, represented in the mountains, the kingly powers, financial and political.

The Bible is witness that, so far as this condition of society is concerned, it is considerably out of harmony with the divine will, and although permitted for a time

will not continue forever. In the past, no doubt, it has served useful purposes. Mankind, through disobedience to the divine law on the part of our first parents, came under the sentence of death and divine disfavor. As a portion of God's holy Spirit of love was lost the spirit of unrighteousness and selfishness came in. The Lord for six thousand years has permitted unrighteousness and sin to reign amongst men, merely overruling in a general way to prevent the coming of the great time of trouble, the great calamity of anarchy,

2H485

before the appointed time for the setting up of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. Meantime this reign of sin and selfishness has been teaching humanity a wonderful lesson respecting the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the undesirableness of its fruitage. These great lessons learned by those who are now alive and by those who have already gone down into the great prison-house of death will be valuable to all of them in God's due time, when the Redeemer will command all who are in their graves to come forth, that they may be brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth, and that they may be able thus to contrast it with the falsehood, the error, the sin, the selfishness with which all are now being made acquainted. We can see, indeed, that since the world could not be influenced or ruled by love the next best thing for it was to permit it to be ruled by selfishness. This rule has had the effect of keeping the world busy; the power and scope it has given to ambition in every direction has been wonderful and has worked a blessing to all humanity. Men whose strength of character and mind have gone into vast enterprises, political or financial, might otherwise have used those powers in some way injurious to their fellow creatures; whereas, instead, through their push and enterprise, and even through their exceeding selfishness, they have helped to pull the world along instead of allowing it to rot, to sink and stink through idleness.

THE SIN OF THE WORLD

The Scriptures show us human responsibility and sin from two standpoints. First, we have original sin, which, by heredity, has come to us from our first parents. We of today are sharers of their weaknesses and imperfections through their fall, the evil of which has come down the ages with increasing momentum. The divine proposition is that the redemptive work of Christ shall fully offset original sin, including all the imperfections and blemishes which have come to us through heredity. All this God proposes to do for us as a race, of His own free grace. He tells us frankly and distinctly that we could do nothing whatever for our own recovery from this

original penalty, and that He has provided a full, complete redemption and forgiveness for all as respects this original sin through the merit of the Redeemer, who, on Calvary, with His latest breath cried, "It is finished." The forgiveness of this original sin is already imputed or accounted to those who now believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are seeking to walk in His steps—but to none others. The remainder of the world, not knowing and not believing, are "yet in their sins, still "children of wrath," still under the "condemnation" which is on the world.

But, as respects the world, God has provided that by the close of this age the sins of the whole world shall be forgiven through the merit of the same great sacrifice. His provision is that He will then put into operation the New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Jesus, which will speak peace to all humanity, even the forgiveness of their sins. He declares that their sins and iniquities He will remember no more, and that He will give them hearts of flesh, taking away the hardened, selfish, sinful condition represented by the words "stony heart." This is what the Scriptures designate "the sin of the world," as when we read that the Lord Jesus was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"—the Adamic sin, including all the imperfections traceable thereto.

But there are other sins and blemishes for which mankind are held responsible by the Lord—sins against light, sins against knowledge, in whole or in part willful sins. These sins have accentuated the difficulties introduced by the original disobedience. But while such increase will be covered, so far as the children will be concerned who inherited these weaknesses, responsibility attaches to those who do evil. These sins the Lord **in** some respects ignores and in other respects does not ignore. Mankind in the awakening in the morning of the resurrection will find themselves degraded in proportion to their willfulness in opposition to righteousness in the present life, and they will have that many more steps to take under the Redeemer's guidance and assistance during the Millennial age in order to attain again the position of divine favor and worth-mess of eternal life. But there is still another way in which God deals with and punishes sin—in what might be termed a national or general way. For instance, we read respecting the Amalekites, who at one time inherited the land of Palestine, that not until their iniquity had come to the full did the Lord allow them to be swept away by the Israelites. Again, we read the words of our Lord respecting the troubles which came upon the Jewish nation in the end of the Jewish age, that God there in that awful trouble required at the hand of that generation a measure of punishment or satisfaction of the counts of justice in respect to sins and transgressions that had been accumulating for centuries. Our Lord's words are, "That the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the

foundation of the world may be required of this generation.” (Luke 11:50) Similarly the Lord indicates to us that at the close of this Gospel age, just prior to the inauguration of the Millennium, there will be a score to be settled with the world of mankind, especially with the civilized nations, Christendom, which will bring to that generation then living the most awful time of trouble ever experienced in the world—”a time of trouble such as was not since

2H486

there was a nation.”

The present generation is the one that will experience these things, and the time of trouble which will involve them all is nigh, even at the door. The Scriptures give us to understand that the reckoning that is now due to Christendom and coming upon her takes into account the unrighteousness, especially against the Lord and His elect, which has prevailed in the world since the first advent of our Lord, nearly nineteen centuries. This includes, it will be remembered, the suffering of the saints in the “Dark Ages,” respecting which we read: “And I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held, and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth.” (Rev. 6:9-10)

The answer was not that their blood should never be avenged, but that a time would intervene because others, their brethren, would suffer in like manner. The intimation is that such a judgment upon the world will ultimately come, and that it will be a squaring of accounts between justice and the world that will be final. The world has benefited greatly by the Gospel light, and has a corresponding responsibility to the principles of righteousness, and in proportion as these have been wilfully and intelligently violated a heavy weight of penalty is due. There was more excuse for those of the “dark ages,” of whom it might be said, as of the Jews who crucified our Lord, “I wot that in ignorance ye did it as did also your rulers.” (Acts 3:17) But in the light of knowledge, civilization, etc., now shining upon the world, there is a greater responsibility, and the following of the methods of the past will be an endorsement of the past, by which the living generation will in a measure become responsible for the transgressions of the past as well as for their own, and correspondingly be permitted to fill up a measure of the retribution represented in this time of trouble and its seven last plagues.

“AND THERE WAS NO MORE SEA”

The Scriptures assure us that in the passing away of the symbolical heavens and symbolical earth of the present time, there will be ushered in a symbolical new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and the declaration is then made that there shall be no more sea. (Rev. 21: 1) This has no reference whatever to the natural earth, the natural heavens or the natural sea, but wholly to the symbolical, the new heavens, the new spiritual ruling powers, the Church in glory with her Head, the New Jerusalem, the Sun of Righteousness, whose beams are to carry blessing to all the families of the earth (Matt. 13:43; Mal. 4:2), and to the new earth, society reorganized upon the basis of love instead of selfishness, and directly under the guidance of the King of kings and Lord of lords. The sea that shall be no more will be the restless, dissatisfied masses of mankind in degradation. The Millennial Kingdom will gradually lift these up from their degradation and ignorance and superstition, bringing them back, back, back to the original estate of harmony with God in full human perfection. The new order of things will bring about such an equality amongst men that present distinctions will be at an end and each will recognize his possession of all the privileges and opportunities for personal advancement to the attaining of perfection.

It is beyond the power of human ability to change the condition of affairs at the present time. Quite a good many are aware that under present conditions absolute justice and equality between men are sadly deficient—that the chief blessings and privileges and advantages of the present life go to the few, while the majority correspondingly lack their proportion of these. Among the “upper classes” are men of heart and morals who would be glad to see a more nearly even distribution of wealth, privileges and advantages among men, but who are unwilling to sacrifice their own interests—particularly when they realize that such a sacrifice would accomplish, under present conditions, but meager results. Besides, many realize that under present conditions a life of toil is almost necessary for the majority of men in order to keep them out of mischief injurious to themselves or their neighbors. Thus all the intelligent people of the world are practically agreed as to the impossibility of bringing about the great changes, social, political and religious, that would equalize the joys and blessings and privileges of all mankind. A growing class, however, see in Socialism their great hope. Theoretically Socialism would bring full equitable opportunities and privileges to the entire race. Many, longing for the glorious conditions promised in the millennial kingdom, see not that these things are of divine provision and coming to them and to all the world in God’s due time, and that they cannot hasten that time.

But failing to see the teaching of the Word of God on this subject and leaning merely to their own understanding, Socialists hope against hope for the carrying out of their well-meant schemes through the pulpit, etc. They are enthusiastic Socialists because Socialism offers the ideal, and because they see no other prospect of it. Becoming infatuated with their hope they grasp at a straw when they expect to be able to turn the world upside down and to bring in a reign of brotherly kindness, sympathy, love and equality among unregenerate

2H487

hearts and without the intervention of divine wisdom and power. As well might a man try to lift himself over the fence by his bootstraps as to endeavor to attain the golden age of social equity by means at human command. The whole course of nature is against it, because the course of nature is selfishness. Those who reason deeply will see that so long as selfishness is the motive power, is the ruling principle, it will only lack opportunity to again grasp the throttle of advantage and run the world's affairs in the interests of the few rather than equitably. What our dear Socialist friends fail to see is that there can be no perfect government by imperfect beings—that the government itself cannot be superior to its constituent elements. Furthermore, they fail to realize that the power that is in the hands of the upper classes and controlled by their intelligence and wealth and opportunities would never surrender to the demands of Socialism; for as soon as complete Socialism would be the only alternative the streets would run with blood rather than that it should be successful. Undoubtedly this will be the case, and undoubtedly Socialists, having worked their minds to the pitch of expectancy, will become anarchistic in their endeavor to carry their point. All this it is which will constitute the epoch which is now nigh at the door, "A time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation."

“MEN’S HEARTS FAILING THEM”

Notice again the words of our text, that the roaring of the waves, the billows—the clamoring of restless masses through unions, strikes, etc., will cause distress to the nations of the earth, with perplexity. They will face a condition of things never before known in the world; for, although there have been revolutions in the past, never before have the people, the masses, been so generally intelligent, so educated, so capable of the initiative, so trained in military skill, so able to assert and to fight for their conceptions of their rights. The text tells that this fear and trepidation will come in advance of the trouble itself—the powers that be perceive the trend of affairs, the progress of Socialism, and are doing all in their power to head it off, hoping against hope that something fortunate will occur to divert the public mind.

And one of the peculiar elements of their fear is stated to be that the “powers of the heavens shall be shaken”—the influence of the religious element, of religious doctrine, is seen to be shaken. The public are losing their superstition, theologians are admitting that their doctrines of the past are untenable in the light of the present, and many are leading the public into infidelity, called “higher criticism.” More and more this shaking of the heavens will affect, influence, the lower classes of the earth, society, and thus indirectly affect the status of earthly government, etc., which has all along been held to be divine government, the kings and emperors of earth claiming that they rule the people by the grace of God—by the sanction, permission, authority of God. The intelligence of our day is breaking loose from these superstitions, and those who are not properly in accord with the Word of God are liable to be entirely overthrown as respects their faith. Indeed, we do not put it too strongly to say that a majority of the church members of all denominations know, not what they believe. It is this unsettled state, this lack of anchorage, that will prove to be so important a factor in the great trouble that is nearing.

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, September 2, 1907](#)

LABOR DAY! REST DAY! THE LABORER AND HIS HIRE

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y., Sept. 1—The Bible Students’ Convention began very interesting sessions here on Friday last, and expect to conclude them on next Thursday. Many prominent speakers were in attendance. Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., delivered an address today on “Labor Day versus Rest Day,” from the text, “the laborer is worthy of his hire” (Luke 10:17) The speaker said:

While the Scriptures do not lay down a fixed rate of compensation for labor, they do indicate both in the Old Testament and in the New, as in our text, that labor should have its reward. And the word “hire” in our text seems to carry with it the thought of a bargain or contract between the laborer and the employer, which should be lived up to on both sides. From this point of view all that anybody gets for his laboring is his food, and raiment and shelter, luxurious or otherwise. But from another standpoint none should labor for these things alone. In order to receive happiness there must additionally be a hope of improvement, of betterment.

It may safely be set down that the hopeless life is a joyless life. It may also be safely concluded that the

hopeful are the ambitious, and that the ambitious are the progressive workers of the world in all departments of industry. Here then lies the difficulty with the vast majority of the race—hopelessness, stupidity, ignorance,

2H488

blind them to any better prospects, and their toil therefore is doubly weighty upon them, and the supply of their daily needs is proportionately disesteemed as an unsatisfactory wage for their labor. It is the hopeful and ambitious that are courageous and successful—and they are a small minority of the whole.

Since, then, the hopeful are the happy, all true philanthropists will be glad to encourage hopefulness in all of their fellow creatures.

THE LABORING AND HEAVY LADEN

Of all the books in the world the Bible is the one which enters sympathetically into the conditions of the race and offers cheer and comfort to the hopeless classes we have already described. It addresses itself primarily, not to the ambitious and hopeful, but to the laboring and heavy laden and despairing. And to as many as hear and hearken to its voice it brings rest, peace, a new hope. But why does not the Bible specially address the hopeful, the ambitious, the progressive? Ah! It is because these have little or no ear to hear the divine message until after their earthly hopes become blighted; that they get the ear to hear the message from “Him that speaketh from heaven,” saying, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden (despised and grief-stricken), and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” (Matt. 11:28-29) Thus it is that the Scriptures everywhere declare that amongst those responding to the Lord’s call in this present time not many wise, not many great, not many learned, not many rich are called, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. The rich, learned, wise are the hopeful, the ambitious, the progressive of the present time, who feel not their need of sympathy and direction and aid. They see their own way or think that they do, and are following that which they believe will bring them the greatest joy—the prosperity which they covet, name, fame, earthly ease, luxury, etc.

When our Lord declares that the laborer is worthy of his hire He expresses a general principle of justice. There are two great hirers or employers in whose service mankind may go—God and Mammon—and each one who hires out should properly consider the wages offered. Mammon makes great professions of what it will give, honor, dignity, wealth, etc—all things of the

present life; it has nothing to promise as respects the future. On the other hand, God is now inviting some to become His servants and He makes very plain the terms and conditions, present and future, of those who shall accept His service. He tells them that to be His servants will cost them the renouncement of the pleasures of sin. More than this, it will cost self-denial even in respect to things not sinful.

“PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE”

It is when the Lord's servants begin to get a glimpse of these exceeding great and precious promises that have to do with the coming eternity that they begin to realize in true measure the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. Henceforth, so long as they maintain this attitude of heart, old things are passed away and all things become new—they care comparatively little for the things of this present life, since their aims and objects now are centered in the glorious things of the heavenly kingdom. Instead of laboring for some petty office of an earthly kind they now perceive that in accepting the captaincy of the Lord Jesus they have become heirs with Him in His glory, honor and immortality, and associates with Him in His throne, His kingdom, when it shall have been established. Instead of laboring for riches of an earthly kind, that would so likely take wings and fly away, they have now learned of the true riches of character and of the divine blessing which are, as the apostle explains, an anchor to their souls, sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the vail. Heb. 6:19

It will be seen, then, that there are two general classes of laborers—the world in general laboring for the things of the present life and having little knowledge and almost no faith in respect to the things of the world to come. Of these we have seen that the vast majority are in a comparatively hopeless and despondent condition. On the other hand we find a new set of laborers in the world, the followers of the Lord Jesus, composed of those drawn from the ranks of the broken-hearted and discouraged children of this world, servants of Mammon. These have received new hopes, new ambitions, new peace, new joys, which far transcend any that they ever previously had, and all that Mammon has to offer to its most successful votaries. They are still laborers, and indeed, in some respects, their labors may be as difficult as at any time in the past; but they have found the great Helper and have realized the meaning of His words, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest.” Their coming to the Master meant a great transformation of heart and of ambition, of motive, and they are continually being more and more blessed as they hearken to His voice and learn

the good lessons whereby He prepares them for future glories, honors, immortality.

“THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD”

But there is a great difference between being truly the Lord’s servants and being such merely in an outward, superficial way. It is necessary to point out that while Christians are numbered according to the census at a total of 400,000,000 the real genuine followers of the Lord are represented in the Scriptures as being only

2H489

a “little flock”—not many. And with this Scriptural delineation our judgments and experiences are in harmony, for truly we know of but few who are even seeking to “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”—to be “not conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds”—walking in the footsteps of Jesus, gladly sharing in the sufferings of Christ for the prospect of having ultimately a share with Him in His glorious kingdom. There have been true and false in every age, and hence what we are saying is not a reflection merely against our own conditions. In our Lord’s day he called attention to the fact that some very prominent among those professing to be God’s servants were some who made long prayers for a pretense, who gave alms with a similar purpose in view—of having honor of men, of being thought holy. Our Lord declared of them, “They have their reward”—they get the reward which they were seeking, namely, the praise and approval of their fellow creatures. They were not really God’s servants, but servants of Mammon, servants of selfishness, who had put on the livery of the Lord and were pretending to be His.

Whatever we are, let us not be hypocritical; let us not think to deceive the Lord, who knoweth and readeth the heart, and who tells us through the Apostle, “His servants ye are to whom ye render service”—Romans 6:16. If we are really living for the present life alone let us not pretend otherwise, but remember that an honest servant of Mammon is much more respectable from the Lord’s standpoint than one who dishonestly professes to be a servant of the great King. Whatever we are let us be truthful—we cannot deceive God; let us not deceive our own hearts. Let us be content then to be misunderstood by the world, misrepresented by the hypocrite class, if thereby we have fellowship with the Lord and have the privilege of walking in His steps and the glorious promise of by and by sharing His likeness as members of His Bride and sharers with Him in His millennial kingdom.

Our text applies to this feature of the subject, too— the laborer is worthy of his hire. The hypocritical desiring the approval and smile of the world and the prosperity of this present time gets the reward sought in some measure at least, though not always. The god of this world cannot be relied upon thoroughly in regard to any promises. As respects the servants of God all of these who will prove worthy by their faithfulness will find their God faithful and His word of promise sure. Faithful is he who has called us, who also will do for us exceedingly and abundantly more than we could have asked or thought. Our hire, then, we are to remember, is in this present life trials, difficulties, sacrifices as respects earthly things; but the divine favor and blessing upon our hearts, upon us as new creatures, and our faith and hope beyond the veil, constitute the chief elements of our wage. Could all the servants of God, from the humblest members of the Church of Christ, up to and including the most honorably engaged in the public ministries of the Lord's Word—if all these could but have in mind that constituted the wage, the hire that the Lord has promised them, there would be but comparatively little expectancy of great favors or strife therefore, but a contentment with the Lord's provision—with a realization that He knows the things we have need of before we ask Him, and that He is both able and willing to give us the things most expedient for our welfare, the things which will help us best in the attainment of the exceeding great and precious promises which are the main part of our wage—the portion most encouraging to us, most stimulating—for which we really live and on account of which all other things are to be counted as but loss and dross.

LABOR TO ENTER REST

The apostle calls attention to the fact that those who have become the Lord's consecrated followers have by faith already entered into rest by trusting in the finished work of the Lord Jesus on our behalf—by realizing that through His sacrifice God has made provision for the forgiveness of our sins and our acceptance by Himself. This indeed gives a rest and a peace and a joy which the world could not appreciate—which the world can neither give nor take away.

In one sense the Christian ceases from labor when he by faith accepts the Lord Jesus. In a word, he accepts the fact that he was not worthy of eternal life, but that the merit of Christ has made up for his deficiency. No longer need he labor to do the impossible thing, for all that was on our part impossible has been done for us by the Redeemer, and is imputed to us who believe. The believer's reconciliation to the Father is effected through faith, by which he lays hold upon the work already accomplished on his behalf. But therewith the consecration of himself to the Lord begins a new work—not a work of justification, but a work of development of heart and of head and of talents in the service of the One who redeemed him and set him free from the slavery of

sin and death. He has entered into a contract to serve the Heavenly Father with all his powers, and so surely as he remains loyal to the Father and His covenant he is guaranteed grace to help in every time of need. (Heb. 4:16) It is for the consecrated believer, however, to demonstrate his loyalty by his works, by his endeavors to do his Father's will, and different degrees of blessings have been promised to the faithful overcomers and also special blessings to the still more

2H490

self-sacrificing, styled the "more than conquerors." (Rom. 8:37) Both are to get eternal life, but the latter are to have it in association with the Redeemer as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and joint-heir in the Kingdom. Thus the apostle says that by our labors in the Lord's service we are to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling." Our labors will have to do with the grandeur of the salvation which will be bestowed upon us, for, as the apostle again declares, the saved will differ as stars differeth from star in glory.

Both of the classes of saved ones just mentioned must labor, must demonstrate their loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness, by fighting a good fight of faith, striving against sin and laying down their lives for the brethren—for the Lord's cause.

"GOD WILL NOT FORGET YOUR LABOR"

Many of the Lord's children, realizing their own insufficiency and the Lord's greatness, realizing the small value of anything they can do to directly glorify the Lord or to promote the interests of His cause, are inclined to feel discouraged, and to say within themselves, if not to others, When the Lord shall decide my case I fear that He will find no labor in service accomplished for His cause—no ground for saying to me, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." But we remind such that if they are doing with their might what their hands find to do they could not do more, and the Lord is not asking more than they are able to do. He is quite able to do the entire work Himself. But what He does seek in us is loyalty of heart, the desire, the effort to serve Him and His cause of righteousness. We remind them that in connection with the very Scripture quoted the Lord not only declares that He will reward the good and faithful servant, but He adds, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things." The intimation is that none of the Lord's people have been or could be faithful over many things—that only a few things are committed to any of us, and that the Lord is seeking merely to note our disposition and to reward us accordingly.

We remind these faithful but timid ones again of the Lord's message through the apostle, saying, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have served the saints and still do serve them." (Heb. 6:10) And again He still more particularly shows that there are two classes of labor to be rewarded, an active and a passive. He says: "Call to remembrance the former days, in the which, after ye were illumined, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; some being made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and some becoming partakers with them who were so used." (Heb. 10:32-33) Here we note the Lord's benevolence, in that He is willing to count as His servants and laborers to whom He will give a reward not only those who were actively in the conflict, sufferers for righteousness' sake, but also to count in with them and to reward with them others who, themselves suffering nothing, were loyal to the principles of righteousness to the extent that they stood with and acknowledged and upheld the cause of the Lord and those who were His, and who suffered for righteousness' sake. What a gracious arrangement we have here! It shows us that the slightest labor that we can perform in the cause of our Master will be accepted of Him and bring us a share of His ultimate blessing. With such inducements who that has a proper appreciation of the Lord and His goodness would not desire to lay down his life in His service?

The intimation of the Scriptures everywhere is that the Lord's people are to be active. "Instant in season and out of season," using time and talents in the Lord's service and to the Master's praise. They show us that the present life is all one of activity and labor, looking for the rest of the people of God in the future—except that measure of rest which we have faith, and which enables us to rejoice even in the trials and difficulties of life, and to even count afflictions as unworthy of consideration because of the joys of our faith. I exhort you, then, that we rest from all sin and from all attempts to justify ourselves, and that as we have accepted Christ Jesus our Lord, so we continue to rest in Him, the rest of faith, and that we continue to labor to the extent of laying down our lives for the Lord and His cause, and that thus being found faithful as laborers we shall ultimately be granted a participation in the glorious honors of the kingdom.

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, September 16, 1907](#)

“JEWISH ATONEMENT DAY-- TYPE AND ANTITYPE”

MORGANTOWN, W. Va., Sept. 15—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny preached here twice today to very intelligent audiences in the Opera House. One of his discourses was from the text, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Heb. 9:22. The speaker said:

2H491

During this week our Jewish friends throughout the world will again celebrate their “Atonement Day,” commanded by the law on the tenth day of their new year. As originally arranged for them under the Mosaic Covenant they spend the day in solemn fasting and prayer, while their priests performed various sacrifices for their sins. At the conclusion of these offerings their High Priest came forth to them with Jehovah’s blessing for the ensuing year, during which they were reckoned as clean, purged, forgiven the sins of the past, the condemnation inherited from father Adam. With the pronouncement of the blessing of God in the evening of the Atonement Day the people arose and rejoiced because of the divine favor thus manifested toward them.

From the standpoint of unbelief, higher criticism, and evolution all of those procedures were merely forms and ceremonies utterly meaningless or worse. Higher critics would have us understand that the Mosaic arrangement was a human device entirely and not of divine inspiration. Evolutionists would tell us that Adam was almost a monkey and therefore almost wholly devoid of moral responsibility, and that he could not have committed a sin which would involve his future interests and that of his posterity as the Bible declares. They tell us that our race, so far from being under any just condemnation and experiencing a fall from the divine likeness and favor, has on the contrary every reason to congratulate itself and to expect divine congratulations for the forward course it is taking—rising from monkeyhood to our present degree of human intelligence.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THIS MATTER

But what is the Christian view? We answer it is not the view most commonly held today among people nominally called Christian and which coincides very generally with the foregoing views of agnostics; but it is the view presented to us in the New Testament records of the teachings of our Lord and His apostles. The old theology and not the new theology properly interprets Christian doctrine on this subject. Did Jesus, or any of His specially appointed mouthpieces—twelve apostles—ever utter anything in line with higher criticism, agnosticism? Did they ever make any reference to an evolution theory? Surely not—not one expression of such implication is to be found. Quite to the contrary, their teachings were in full accord with the Jewish Scriptures, from which they quoted liberally. As in Genesis it is recorded that Adam was created in the image of God and that by his sin he fell from that glorious position under sentence of death involving also all of his posterity, so in the New Testament we find the very same teaching set forth, manifested, explained, connected up with the work of Christ and the salvation which He came to accomplish.

MESSIAH WAS TO BE A SAVIOUR

The Jews were taught in the law and by the prophets that they could not reconcile themselves to God—that they could not pay their own penalty for sin—that they could not secure a resurrection or eternal life by anything they could do. The promise held out to them was that a Messiah and great prophet, priest and king like unto Moses should be sent them. He would be a saviour and a great one—the deliverer from sin and death, including sickness, pain, etc. The New Testament steps forward and, accepting all of the foregoing of the Old, points us to the fulfillment of those promises in Jesus. That He was the one appointed of God to be the Messiah, the Saviour. It points to Him now as filling the two-fold picture of priest and sacrifice and tells us that our Lord “offered up Himself”—“the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” It applies to Him the various prophecies and types of the Old Testament, assuring us that by His stripes we are healed. It tells us that the other features of Messiah’s work are yet future, that ultimately He shall be the great King or Ruler of all the earth, exercising omnipotent power for the control and uplifting of all who are willing out of the present condition of sin and weakness. It tells us that He will be the great prophet or teacher of the people to show them the way of the Lord and to assist them out of their difficulties.

The Jews expected Messiah’s favor to be to them alone and that subsequently God’s favor and rule would be extended through them to all nations. And in this they were right, and the Scriptures assure us that our Lord offered Himself first of all exclusively to the Jews and that but a remnant of the people accepted Him, and that that remnant received special divine *favor* and became the nucleus of the elect Bride class, to which the Lord has since been adding, called, chosen and faithful saints whom He is gathering out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue. During this time the Jews are no longer God’s favored nation. Because of their unbelief and rejection of Messiah they have been rejected for a time. But the New Testament tells us that as soon as the elect Church, called also “A Little Flock,” shall have been gathered and taught and prepared in the school of Christ, then the marriage or union of this elect Church with Christ shall constitute her the “Bride, the Lamb’s wife” and joint heir with Him in His Kingdom.

THY KINGDOM COME

This is where we are now in the development of the divine plan for the elect Church is not yet complete, hence is not yet glorified or united to Christ in the “first resurrection.” Hence believers are still looking forward

to that glorious consummation, and praying, as the Master directed, “thy Kingdom come.” As soon as the marriage of Christ and the Bride shall have been accomplished nothing will intervene, but the Kingdom of God will at once be established amongst men. And then, as the Apostle Paul declares, divine favor will come to fleshly Israel first amongst the nations. He says “They shall obtain mercy through your (the Church’s) mercy.” Explaining God’s grace in this matter the Apostle says “for this is (God’s) covenant unto them when he shall take away their sins.” He adds: “As ye (Christians) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all.” (Rom. 11:25-33) Thus the Apostle assures us that the great plan of God substantially as the Jews had understood it will be accomplished through the Messianic Kingdom—spiritual, unseen of men. What the Jewish nation lost was the privilege of being exclusively that spiritual Church or Kingdom. The Kingdom will come and will exercise all power and will bless Israel, and through Israel all nations.

TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS

Notice the apostle’s statement that this blessing is to come to Israel when God “shall take away their sins.” He is not referring to their typical atonement days, which merely affected a covering of their sins for a year, but he does speak of an absolute blotting out or taking away of their sins. Familiar with the Jewish law he reminds us that Israel offered sacrifices for sins year by year continually, but that those sacrifices could not take away sins because they were merely typical and not the real sin atonement. The death of bulls and of goats could not take away men’s sins. It was man that was condemned to death, and could the death of a bullock pay the price? Surely not! The apostle points out that to accomplish the real cancellation of sins it was necessary that there be a substitute found for the first sinner—a substitute for Adam, sinless, perfect, in God’s favor, yet willing to give His life for the redemption of Adam and all those involved with him. The apostle points out that no such man could be found anywhere in the world, because all are sinners, and that none could give ransom to God for His brother. (Psalm 49:7) He then points to Jesus as the antitypical spotless lamb. It is explained to us further that He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and therefore fit to be the redeemer of Adam.

When we query how He could be a man and yet different from other men and free from the taint of heredity, the answer is given that “He came down from above”—that it was the transferred life of the Son of God that became identified with our race through His virgin mother, and that thus He was born free from Adamic imperfections and taints in order that He might give Himself a “ransom for all.” (1 Tim. 2:6) The apostle explains how our Lord humbled Himself to leave the glorious condition as a spirit being and to become a man, and that then being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself yet further even unto death—yet further even unto the death of the cross. The apostle’s language shows that while His death was necessary as the offset to the first Adam’s sentence, the ignominy and humiliation were tests of His own loyalty to God the Father as proving his worthiness to the very high exaltation which the Father had purposed for Him—the divine nature.

The apostle assures us that the death of “the man Christ Jesus”—“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners”—was the ransom price—the offset price— of the sentence of death against our race through Father Adam. He assures us that this great sin offering will not need repetition, that it is “once for all” and forever. He explains to us that the delay between the time when Christ thus purchased Adam and all his race through the sacrifice of Himself, and the time when at His second coming He will establish His kingdom and bless all the race of Adam of every nation with knowledge and opportunity, and that this blessing will again begin with the Jews. Hearken to his words, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together ... waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God”—the glorified Christ, Messiah, Jesus, the head and the church reckoned in with Him as His body, or under another figure, His bride. (Rom. 8:19-22) He explains, “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world and death (not eternal torment) the result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because that all have sinned. He proceeds to show that as condemnation came upon all through the first man Adam so justification must come to Adam and all of his race as a result of Christ’s death. As this knowledge and opportunity reaches the various members of Adam’s race their responsibility begins and will end either in life eternal or in death eternal, from which there will be no further resurrection.

UNDER THE ORIGINAL COVENANT

This grand plan under which Christ and His followers of the present time become living sacrifices and under which by and by all mankind will be blessed with glorious opportunities for eternal life, at first may seem “too good to be true.” Why? Because the real character

of our God was lost sight of during the “dark ages,” when traditions of men were accepted instead of the

2H493

Word of God, and when the general teaching was that God would take delight in eternally torturing the great mass of the human family, the non-elect. Now as we get to see God’s Word in its own true light it reveals to us the fact that “as heavens are higher than the earth so are God’s ways higher than man’s ways and His plans higher than our plans.” It shows Him to be a God of love, merciful and gracious, who has made so abundant provision, applicable to every member of Adam’s race.

Nor should this surprise us. Looking back to Abraham’s day we find that just such was the divine promise, viz: “In thy seed shall all the families of the world be blessed.” (Gen. 12:3) Abraham believed this, that a seed would be born from his posterity and would bring blessing to every member of the race. True, when the Law Covenant was made with Israel through Moses it seemed to shut off and to deny the all-abounding grace that had been suggested to Abraham. But this was not really the case. The time had not yet come for the blessing of the world by the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom, and meantime the Lord introduced that Law Covenant that it might set before Israel high ideals and show them their own imperfection and their own inability to comply with the commandments of the Law. When the Millennial Age of Messiah’s reign begins not only will he and the elect Church with him as the antitypical seed of Abraham bless the world with forgiveness and general aid, but as the antitypical Moses, Messiah will then promulgate the law to the world up to the demands of which every human being will be required to come if he would have eternal life. But being greater than Moses in every way Messiah, through the merit of His own sacrifice, will be able to remit the due to those who will be under His government and to uplift them out of their degradation and sin and back into harmony with God and righteousness.

To those who can see Christ as the antitypical priest and the gospel Church as the antitypical under priesthood or “royal priesthood” and who can see the sacrificing of these which began with our Lord and has continued with the various members of His body since— such can see that this entire gospel age is the antitypical “day of atonement” and that at its close the great high priest Messiah will come forth at his second advent with a blessing for the whole world—not for a year only, but a perpetual blessing to as many as will accept it and come into harmony therewith.

THE VEIL ON THE FACE OF ISRAEL

The Apostle calls our attention to the fact that as Moses put a veil over his shining face when giving the Law so a veil seems to hide from Israel (and from the remainder of the world also) some of the glorious beauties of the divine program. How glad we would be to help any of them to see beyond the veil, beyond the type—to see the antitype. Our Jewish friends, with a faithfulness which is most inspiring, have maintained their hold upon the various features of their Law for centuries even after they have ceased to be properly possible of observance. For instance, they have not been able to keep the atonement day according to the Law for 1800 years. The Law prescribes that they must have a high priest, but they have none. Not a Jew in the world today could claim the right to that office if they were back in their own land and had everything else requisite, because this function of office belonged to the one tribe or family and could not be exercised except by the one who could show his genealogical right to it. Moreover, if they had a priest they have no altar upon which they could offer the atonement day sacrifices— for they were required to be offered in the holy land.

But if they had a priest and an altar, they have no tabernacle or temple with holy and most holy and above all they have no ark of the covenant and no shekinah glory resting upon it. The spectacle of that faithful people remembering the institutions of 3,000 years ago, not realizing that these are meaningless, that they have no forgiveness of sins, touches our hearts with sympathy. Fain would we show them what they for the present cannot see, but what they will see, now, shortly, that the antitypical priest, the antitypical sacrifices, the antitypical Holy and Most Holy and the antitypical actual forgiveness of sins, take the place of the type. It is written in the prophecies and shall surely be fulfilled that in His due time, after the elect of this Gospel Church is glorified, God will pour out upon Israel the spirit of prayer and of supplication, and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born. (Zech. 12:10) Then shall they turn to the Lord and he will abundantly pardon. Not only the living, but those who have gone down into the tomb shall come forth and have a share in the blessings which will be introduced by Messiah, the great anti-typical Moses. (Acts 3:23)

“TO US BELIEVERS HE IS PRECIOUS”

So then while many disbelieve in Adam and his fall and the condemnation which came upon the race, while many dispute the Bible record and deny the fall and deny the atonement, and teach instead evolution, we are not of those. We realize that there is such a thing as sin, that it is ingrained in our natures, that we are born with it, that

the Bible alone explains the origin and explains also our hope of relief through the Savior.

2H494

Neither can we join with the Jews in acknowledging sin and the fall and trying to proffer typical sin atonement while knowing that the means for even typical observance is denied them by the Lord. But we can rejoice that seeing the fall and realizing our own share in it we have forgiveness of sins through faith in the precious blood of Christ—through a realization that healing has been provided for us and for all who will ultimately receive it on the basis of redemption; the Just One having died for the unjust.

We rejoice that we have not only been brought back into harmony with God but we have heard the invitation to present ourselves living sacrifices and that we have joined the noble company of the royal priesthood who delight in the privilege they have of sacrificing present interests for the privilege of co-operating with the Redeemer now and throughout the millennial age. We rejoice that while a blessing of restitution to human nature and all that was lost is thus secured for the world in general a still higher blessing is our portion if we are faithful and accounted worthy to become members of the bride class, whose blessing is to be heavenly and not earthly, whose resurrection is to be a change.” We rejoice still further that, becoming members of that glorious bride class it will be a part of our privilege to join with our Redeemer during His kingdom reign in the blessing and uplifting of whosoever will of mankind. Truly did the apostle say, “to us who believe he is precious.” The Redeemer indeed has a value to others who now know Him not because their eyes are blinded and their ears stopped by the adversary’s errors, but “blessed are your eyes, for they see and your ears, for they hear,” said our Master, and we indeed agree that His words were true. We have the blessing through faith in the blood.

September 23, 1907

**Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
August 14, 1917**

GARMENTS OF PRAISE IN EXCHANGE FOR SADNESS

Newark, N.J., Sept. 22—Large gatherings greeted Pastor C. T. Russell, of Allegheny, Pa., here today. He preached twice. His discourse on the “Overthrow of Satan’s Empire” was especially well attended. We report his second discourse from the text, “To comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland in exchange for ashes, the oil of joy in exchange for mourning, the garments of praise in

exchange for the spirit of heaviness.” (Isa. 61:2, 3) The speaker said:

Explain the matter how we will, the world is very unhappy—not only dissatisfied, discontented, but much more than this—sad, sorrowful. Even amongst the world’s merry-makers, who at times have the appearance of never a sorrow, never a care, we know that there are sorrows which, hidden from the surface of life, are gnawing and consuming the very vitals of many of these. Not infrequently the newspapers tell us of the suicide of some who, but a few hours ago in various ways gave the impression that their hearts were light and joyous—generously covering their wounds and difficulties from those who they realized had plenty of their own. Our question this time is, Why this sadness which more and more seems to prevail throughout the world, as indicated by the increasing number of suicides, suicide clubs, etc.; bringing into existence societies for the prevention of suicide, etc.? What is the philosophy of this condition of things? Is it natural, normal, proper? Is it so in heaven, and will it be so on earth when God’s will is done in earth as it is done in heaven?

We speak of the sunny time of youth, the joyous days of childhood, and we do well; for the majority of our race the earlier years are the only ones of joy and happiness. The average child of civilized lands—well fed, comfortably housed, its future protected either by generous parents or by the law of the land—looks out upon the future with hope and joy.

To such a child the coming years of manhood and womanhood with personal anticipations, is often a picture full of enchantment and fascination. Free from the cares and worries of life, and full of hope, why should they not be happy? And who that has passed from childhood’s estate into the stern realities of life, with its trials and difficulties and disappointments within and without, is not glad that childhood has these very joys? Who of experience does not wish them to have a good time, a happy time, while yet they may, before the evil days draw on and those in which they shall say, “I have no pleasure in them?” (Eccl. 12:1) We are glad, therefore, that some from philanthropic motives and others from self-interest are moving for the prevention of a too early entrance of children into the arena of strife and business and labor for bread. Surely all should be glad to cooperate for the maintenance of the joys of childhood.

WHENCE THE MOURNING IN ASHES?

If we inquire for an answer for this question we get replies from various quarters: The Evolutionists and Higher Critics tell us that the sorrows are incidental to

the development of Nature, the battling of life necessary to the survival of the fittest. Their Nature-god has no feeling, but operates through an inexorable law of development. They cannot even assure us that there will ever be joy and peace, but on the contrary tell us that all their experiences show that the greater amount of knowledge the greater will be the amount of pain and disappointment and sorrow, and that what has thus far worked out in nature they suppose will be the inexorable rule of the future. There is not much comfort or consolation in such a view. We repudiate it and choose to continue to hold on to the God of the Bible, the God of justice, wisdom, love and power.

Heathendom answers our query by telling us that life is a calamity from which we all find it difficult to escape. It tells us that we were born to sorrow, and claim that death is merely a transmigration, and that our future state may be one of more or less sadness and trouble, and so with each succeeding one until finally we should reach that degree of experience where we would need no further tribulations and pass into a condition analogous to nonentity—a condition where nothing would have any appreciable influence over us to do us harm. The thought of joy and of everlasting happiness to all eternity are utterly incongruous with the ideals of heathenism, as they are utterly impossible to those who call themselves Christians but are none, as Evolutionists and Higher Critics.

We are reminded here of the words of the disciples to Jesus, when He asked them, “Will ye also go away?” They answered, “Lord, to whom should we go; Thou hast the words of eternal life?” (John 6:67, 68) And so it has been since, from that day unto this, amongst those who have really heard and truly appreciated God’s message through His Son and through the apostles. These have found in the Gospel message the only balm for the sorrows, pains, troubles and difficulties of this present life, the only explanation, logical and rational, of why matters are in their present unhappy condition. From their words we learn certain great facts respecting the entrance of sin into the world, and because of sin all of this unhappiness and misery has been entailed upon our race. How plain is the statement, “lay one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world—and death as the result of sin.” (Rom. 5:12) On apostolic authority, therefore, we say that sin and death are the sources of all the sorrow, disappointment and anguish which the poor world has experienced from the beginning until now. No wonder the poet has sung:

*“Now the world is full of suffering,
Sounds of woe fall on mine ears;*

*Sights of wretchedness and sorrow
Fill my eyes with pitying tears."*

Sin and death have worked havoc with the human mind, distorting its mental and moral qualities. The equilibrium of judgment is upset, the mental poise is considerably lost on many subjects, the world mentally is upside down, and the twists and turns and crooks of each individual mind is more or less peculiar to itself and different from those of each other. No wonder, then, that few can agree, few can find harmony, few can sympathize with each other, few know the right from the wrong, clearly and distinctly, while many have perverted tastes and appetites, and good intentions swallowed up in misconceptions and misunderstandings and perverted judgments. Alas! now we see that sin, and the mental, moral and physical corruption and death which follow in its wake, has poisoned our race, has set on fire the courses of nature, and generally so unbalances the individual that he is unhappy and discontented and disappointed with everybody else. Poor world! No wonder the apostle wrote, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now" —"waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:19, 22)

THE REMEDY FOR EARTH'S SORROWS

The same book that tells us of the malady—that tells us the cause of the trouble in the world—thank God!— tells us of the Divine provision for our aid. The heathen have a merciless, angry god, needing to be propitiated, and indeed, as the apostle declares, they worship devils and not God. (1 Cor. 10:20) The Higher Critics and Evolutionists have an impersonal god of nature, without moral qualities or attributes, and they, therefore, are as much without hope as are the heathen, except as by the exercise of large self-esteem they are able to attribute to themselves noble attributes and powers and to hope against hope for the future. But the people who do know their God—the people who are able, as the apostle says, to give a reason for the hope that is in them with meekness and reverence, (1 Pet. 3:15) are the ones who alone have reliable information on this subject, as they have hearkened to the Word of God speaking to them in the Bible the message of Jesus and the apostles and the prophets; and as they have heard from these the true declaration, the philosophy, the explanation of the cause of present misery in the world, they have confidence that the same wise teachers are able to instruct them respecting a way of escape from earthly sorrows and difficulties. Nor do they expect in vain, for he that seeketh findeth and to him that knocketh is opened the way, the truth, the life, by which alone misery and sorrow may be escaped from and comfort and joys and blessings be entered into.

Our text is the explanation of the matter. In it through the prophet God has foretold His willingness

2H496

at the proper time and through His appointed agency, the Christ, to grant the very blessings for which the hearts of men long cry out. He proposes to ultimately give comfort to all that mourn. But He has not yet done this—many, many are the mourners throughout the world, few, very few, have received Divine comfort. Creation as a whole groans and mourns; only a comparative handful of humanity has received the consolation of the Lord. Why is it that this Divine promise has not reached a fulfilment? Why is it that the groaning creation is not blessed? Why is it that Satan is permitted still to reign and rule in the hearts of the children of disobedience? Why is it that sin and death still reign, when it is in the power of our Creator to abolish these and to bring instead the reign of righteousness and truth under the law of love? We answer that the Lord has a due time, and that when that due time shall have arrived there will be no further delay, but that this promise and many others will have abundant fulfilment in the blessings upon the world through Christ's Millennial Kingdom. Then "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" in the glorified Christ, Jesus the Head and the Church His body. This is the same thought that the apostle sets before us, saying, that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now—waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. So soon as the sons of God shall all have been selected and elected, polished, fitted, prepared and glorified with their Redeemer, then the time for the comforting of all that mourn everywhere, of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, shall have come—but not before.

THE "FIRST FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT"

Before this great blessing shall come to all that mourn a special class of mourners will be dealt with, as our text declares, "them that mourn in Zion." Zion is the general name for the Lord's covenant people. At one time the name belonged to Israel according to the flesh, but now it pertains to antitypical Israel according to the Spirit. They that mourn in Zion mourn in a rather different manner from those who mourn in the world. The apostle intimates this in connection with his remarks on the groaning creation, saying, "And we ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of the body"—the church, which is the Body of Christ. Again, he says, "We who are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened." (2 Cor. 5:4) Our groaning, however, is different from that of the world, because we by virtue of our covenant with the Lord, His Zion, have much advantage every way over the majority of mankind in that to us belong the covenants and the promises, and with them the hopes and the joys of the Lord

according to the measure of our faith and the measure of our consecration zeal. It is because we have this counteracting influence, this inner joy of heart and mind, that the apostle declares that “We groan within ourselves”—not outwardly and not violently, as in the world. Ours is largely a groaning of sympathy for the world, including a sympathy also for ourselves because of the weaknesses of the flesh. But our joy no man taketh from us, as the Savior declared. Our God, our Redeemer, has appointed certain blessings and favors for us in the present time in proportion as we shall be able to exercise faith in Him and obedience to His will.

“A GARLAND FOR ASHES”

The Lord promises now to those who can exercise faith in Him that He will give them a garland, a crown of life, in exchange for the ashes of their expired hopes. But only those who realize that all the earthly hopes and aims and ambitions turn to ashes—only those who realize that there is no real joy under present conditions—only these have any inclination to heed the Word of the Lord offering Him the crown of life, the garland. The majority of mankind, hoping against hope, striving to get something out of the ashes, striving for glory and honor of men and riches of an earthly kind—hopes that through these honors and riches they will have peace and joy, comfort and blessing. Some try one and some another; some turn from one direction to another direction in quest of this source of blessing and joy, only to find in the end that there is no real joy, no real pleasure, no real comfort, except in the Divinely appointed way—in fellowship with God and the principles of His righteousness, and in line with the promises of His Word.

Those who do hear the message of the Lord, who do hear about the garland, the crown of life which He has promised to them that love Him, and who are sick and tired and weary with their own futile efforts—these only have received the blessings mentioned in our text, and they, as the Scriptures everywhere declare, are merely a “little flock,” a “peculiar people,” zealous for righteousness, a “royal priesthood,” whose sacrifices may indeed be seen in the present time to some extent, but whose royalty belongs to the future, when their reward shall be given them and they shall be joint heirs with their Redeemer and sit with Him in His throne for the blessing of all the families of the earth—the comforting of all that mourn, of every nation, people, kindred and tongue—for the wiping away of all tears from all faces, as the representatives of Jehovah. Not until these learned that earthly hopes and ambitions were ashes were they prepared to enter into their covenant with the Lord and to present to Him their bodies as liv-

ing sacrifices, holy, acceptable, and their reasonable service, and only when they did this were they entitled

2H497

to consider the garland of eternal life as theirs. Even then it was not theirs in possession, but theirs in hope, as the apostle declares, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day”—the day of His appearing—the day of the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom. (2 Tim. 4:8)

“THE OIL OF JOY FOR MOURNING”

While the entire creation is groaning and mourning, in a certain sense, those whom the Lord addresses as in Zion mourn in a different manner from others. They mourn less for the sorrows of life and more for the causes of these sorrows—they mourn for sin, they mourn because of the penalty of death, they mourn in sympathy for others as well as for themselves. None except those who have learned this kind of mourning are in the condition in which the Lord is pleased to consider them as in and members of His Zion, to whom belong the comforts with which He is now comforting us and the oil of joy with which He is now anointing us. Highly perfumed oils in ancient times were used to symbolize God’s holy Spirit and the joy which comes with it. Such oil was poured upon the king at his anointing, and also upon the priest at his anointing for his office, and occasionally upon a distinguished guest, as in the case of our Lord when Mary anointed Him with the spikenard ointment. In every case it signifies favor, blessing, joy, unction. The Scriptures instruct us that we are to recognize the church as the Body of Christ and Jesus as its Head. They tell us that He was anointed with the Holy Spirit for His double office in the future—as King of kings and Priests of priests. They tell us also that we as members of His Body come under the same anointing, the same Holy Spirit’s influence. The same oil of joy with its refreshing perfume, is our portion as members of the Body of Christ. This is granted to us to replace the mourning—to enable us to see in God’s great, glorious plan lengths and breadths and heights and depths that we never before realized, and assuring us of the Father’s love and of the bountiful provision He has made not only for the Church of the firstborn, but also for all the families of the earth in His due time. Surely with the anointing of this oil of joy our mourning has largely passed away.

*“Why should the children of the King
Go mourning all their days?
The oil of gladness He pours forth
And wakes our songs to praise.”*

OUR “GARMENTS OF PRAISE”

Our rejoicing in the garland of eternal life promised us and our joy in the Lord under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, priceless treasures though these be, would be insufficient to maintain us in the spirit of praise continually. The difficulty is that we have these treasures in earthen vessels—in an imperfect body. When we see that the attainment of these great blessings is made dependent upon our becoming copies of the Lord’s dear Son, and when we realize more and more our own weaknesses and insufficiency, the effect is discouragement, the “spirit of heaviness.” Fear comes in to suggest that it is impossible for us to gain the great prize for which the Lord has invited us. Our imperfection stands out before us more glaringly as we come to a still closer and more intimate acquaintance with the perfections of our God. What shall we do? Our text informs us that God has made provision for this very condition of things. He wishes us to realize our own insufficiency; He wishes us to be dissatisfied with the very best attainments we could have in our imperfect flesh; He wishes us as New Creatures to long for the glorious change which He has promised to the faithful in the First Resurrection, when we would be granted perfect spiritual bodies, in which we may do perfectly the will of God in harmony with our perfect desires. But while telling us that that is the only time when we will be satisfied, when we will awake in His likeness (Psa. 17:15), the Lord provides us something to lift from us the spirit of heaviness, and this our text terms the “garments of praise.”

What garment is this except the wedding-garment which the Lord has promised to His espoused virgin Bride, His consecrated, elect Church? This is the robe of Christ’s righteousness imputed to those who have accepted Him with full sincerity of heart. When once the value of this robe is appreciated by the wearer it will be understood that it covers all the unwilling blemishes of the flesh and the shortcomings that are of heredity or otherwise unavoidable. What wonder that this garment of justification is called the garment of praise! What wonder that everywhere in the Scriptures it is indicated to be indispensable to those who are now being called to be the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife. What wonder that in one of His parables the Lord indicated that everyone who entered into covenant relationship with Him received such a wedding-garment, a garment of praise, and that anyone having thus received and put on and then discarded the wedding-garment would be utterly rejected from all further favors. The Bride of Christ, completed at the end of this gospel age, is pictured in the forty-fifth Psalm as clothed with this wedding-garment, and it is declared that at such a time the garment will be embroidered with fine needlework. The lesson seems to be that the Lord’s people should greatly appreciate this garment of praise—Christ’s imputed

2H498

righteousness—and that, appreciating it, each should seek to embroider it painstakingly with the fruits and graces of the Lord’s Spirit according to the glorious pattern which He has set us in His own character and life. Thus, as the prophet declares, the King shall greatly desire the Bride’s beauty, and He is her Lord, she shall worship Him. Very soon, thank God, this elect Bride class will have been finished—the last member will have put the finishing touches upon the glorious wedding-garment, and the Bride company as a whole shall be ushered into the presence of the great King—the marriage supper, the glorious feast of heavenly blessing will be entered upon by both Bridegroom and Bride when the Bride shall have made herself ready and be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing upon her wedding-garment, her “garment of praise.”

We exhort, then, that all who are members of the Lord’s Zion, all who have made covenant with the Lord by sacrifice in the name of the Redeemer, shall put on this garment of praise, and shall maintain it spotless, seeing to it that they will hasten to the Lord for the removal of the stains through the merit of the precious blood, that thus their relationship to the Lord may be continually retained; that the oil of joy and gladness may be continually upon them, and that the garland of life eternal may be fully and everlastingly theirs, and that they may hear the Master’s voice eventually saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, October 21,1907](#)

“NOW IS THE ACCEPTABLE TIME”

Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Oct. 20.—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny preached this morning in Scranton and this afternoon in Wilkes-Barre. Large crowds of people heard him with earnest attention, speaking from the text, “We beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee. Behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor. 6:1,2) He said:

Our text is generally interpreted very differently from what we consider to be its correct, its true meaning. It is generally quoted as a threat over the heads of those who have not given their hearts to God. It is taken as a warning that should they die without having made a consecration, and without having developed a proper character in the school of Christ, there would be no further opportunity for them under any condition, but on the contrary, everlasting woe in indescribable torture at

the hands of an angry God, supported by myriads of fireproof demons. Such a misrepresentation of this portion of the Word of God is only measurable excusable on the ground that very few Christian people are Bible students in the true sense of the Word, because they accept interpretations of Scripture aside from the testimony of the context.

Additionally such a view is accepted thoughtlessly because the doctrine of eternal torment, handed down from the “dark ages,” has so long been accepted as Scriptural that it is difficult for people to get their minds out of that rut and to think on the subject of the future unbiasedly, sanely, as they would think on any other subject. Indeed, we have known some good Christian people, who otherwise seem to have a measure of good common sense, who on hearing any interpretation of the Scriptures which would imply that God is good, generous, loving, kind, would straightway be inclined to say that doctrine must be of the devil. In other words, the great adversary has so turned and twisted their reasoning faculties that they put light for darkness and darkness for light, to the extent of describing the Almighty God as the worst enemy of our race, who, before He created the race, planned the eternal torture of all but a few, the saints, the elect; and He since has been carefully working out that plan. How thankful we should be that the gross ignorance and superstition of the “dark ages” is gradually giving place to the dawn of the millennial morning, which is shedding light upon the divine word and the pathway of the Lord’s faithful. We are reminded of the Apostle Peter’s words, “We have a more sure word of prophecy, to which we do well to take heed as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn and the Day Star arises in our hearts.” (2 Peter 1:19) Thank God that the darkest features of the night are past; and the errors which impelled our forefathers to burn one another at the stake no longer fetter, bind our hearts and minds, but that instead we are receiving more of the spirit of the truth — the spirit of love — the Spirit of God — and that proportionately the shadows, weary shadows of the earth, are fleeing away.

A VOICE BEHIND — “THIS IS THE WAY”

Notwithstanding the brightness of the morning star and the influence which it sheds upon our pathway we are still guided by a voice behind us — the voice of Jesus

2H499

and His inspired apostles and the Lord’s faith of old. Let us listen to this voice of the good Shepherd, which is now directing us that we should no longer walk in the ways of the “dark ages” and no longer give heed to their doctrines of devils (1 Tim. 4:1), but should give heed to and proclaim the message pure and simple as it was announced at our Savior’s birth — “Behold we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people — because to you is born this day a Savior,

which is Christ the Lord.” This message is broader and deeper and higher by far than all the babble of confessed traditions and theories of men which for so long have disquieted our hearts and caused the best of God’s people, the most faithful, to mourn. Now we perceive that while it is true that there is a selection of a “little flock,” it is not true that the non-elect are all to be eternally tormented; it is not true that any of them are to be tormented eternally. On the contrary the election of the Church, the Spiritual seed of Abraham, is in fulfilment of the promise of God, which reads, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 22:18) Hence the blessing of the world in general cannot be accomplished until the elect spiritual seed of Abraham shall all have been completed. To this agree the words of the apostle addressed to the Church, If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise” — to bless all the families of the earth. (Gal. 3:29)

So says the voice behind us —the voice of Jesus speaking personally and through His apostles. So we are assured that the Church is a Kingdom class —that with the completion of the Church this class will be complete, and that then the Kingdom power will be granted, and that forthwith the millennial kingdom of Christ and His Bride will spread over all the earth as the sun of righteousness, with healing in his beams. (Mal. 4:2) The same great Teacher who told us that now we should not put our candles under the bushel but should set them upon candlesticks and allow the enlightening influence to extend as far as possible has assured us that by and by all the faithful of this class who have let their lights shine through evil report and through good report at the cost of self-sacrifice, self-denial and worldly opposition—all such united with Himself shall constitute the great sun of righteousness through which all the clouds and shadows and darkness and superstition shall be made to flee away. The Apostle declared this in his statement, “This is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” We see distinctly enough that thus far only a small fragment of the world’s population has ever seen the true light. We agree with the prophet that “Darkness covers the earth [society] and gross darkness the heathen.” We agree with the apostle that “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of those who believe not,” and that thus the whole world not only lieth in darkness, but lieth in the wicked one, under his power.

Again, we rejoice to hear the testimony of God’s Word that the true knowledge of God, which has thus far reached but a fragment, shall ultimately reach all; that to Him “every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God.” when we remember that thus far the knowledge of Christ has reached but a few of any generation since our Lord’s first advent, and that for 4,000 years before that there was no such message to anybody, then we are assured that the blessing God has

promised signifies not only a widespread knowledge of the grace of God to all who should be living at the time of the establishment of His Kingdom, but that it means also the awakening of the dead, that all “may come to a knowledge of the Truth” and to an opportunity of salvation through “Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.”

“NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION”

Let us examine our text that we may note whether it has been misunderstood and misrepresented among the people of God. First of all we notice that it is a quotation from prophecy. Turning to the words of Isaiah 49:8, 9, we find that the Apostle has quoted but a portion of the statement — the only portion that was necessary or pertained to his argument. The Jews for centuries had been waiting for the Messiah and the salvation which He was to bring. Not for one moment did they suppose that they had the salvation when they were still under imperfect, sinful, dying conditions. In this respect they seemed to have superior judgment to that manifested by many Spiritual Israelites, who today are inclined to think that we now have salvation and overlook the statement of the Apostle to the effect that this “salvation shall be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” at His second advent. (1 Peter 1:13) The Apostle was addressing the Jews, who realized that salvation would mean not only the deliverance from the power of evil, but a resurrection to a better condition.

The New Testament points out that the salvation we are looking for will be brought to us at the end of this age, after the work of selecting, chiseling, polishing and making ready the very elect of God shall have been accomplished. The salvation by and the share in the First Resurrection will be the consummation of that blessed salvation work for the

2H500

Church. But they show us also that this salvation already has its commencement in our hearts, in that a transforming work has begun, which, if carried out to its completion, will prepare us for the full, the actual salvation in the First Resurrection. Thus this entire Gospel age is the day of salvation — the day, the epoch, in which God is making known to His people the riches of His grace and loving kindness in the forgiveness of our sins and in our acceptance through the holy Spirit and in our disciplining for the heavenly kingdom. This Gospel age is the day of salvation in the special sense that the salvation that is now offered is a special one, such as will never again be offered to mankind—a salvation not only from sin to life everlasting, but to a plane of glory, honor and immortality and joint-heirship

with the Lord Jesus as His Bride. So great a salvation will never again be proffered to any, so far as the Scriptures teach: Its promulgation is limited to the present Gospel age in the most strict, the most absolute sense. Now is the day of this salvation.

The announcement implies that the class now being saved is one that is desiring salvation, “feeling after God” — specially drawn to God and anxious to be in harmony with Him and to be associated in His service. This description fits well to all those who are truly saints, but it does not fit at all to the world of mankind in general, described by the apostle as unwilling to retain God in their minds and whom he has given over to a reprobate mind. (Rom. 1:28) These, who are the subjects of the present salvation, are such then as are looking to the Lord through faith for His blessing, as we read, “I have heard thee in a time accepted,” or, R.V., “At an acceptable time I hearkened unto thee.” During this Gospel age the Lord invites all that are weary and heavy laden to come unto Him, all that have broken hearts. Others whose hearts are not broken, who are not weary nor heavy laden with sin, are not invited now—they do not come in under this call at this present time—they all need and will receive certain chastisements which will favorably affect them in due time. But the favored class now are those who are seeking the Lord, and who have been promised that they shall find Him; those who are knocking, to whom He is pleased to open; those who are feeling, to whom He is pleased to be found through Christ.

“AND I WILL PRESERVE THEE”

Whoever will look back to the prophecy can have no doubt that it applies to Christ and not to the world to Jesus the Head of the Church and the Church His body. “Thus saith Jehovah, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation I have helped thee, and I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to be inherited the desolate heritages. That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth — to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves.” We need not point out to Bible students that the Father head our Lord Jesus and blessed His experiences to Him, and finally rewarded Him with exaltation in the resurrection far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. Nor need we remind the Bible student of the assurances of the apostle that all the Lord’s true disciples who walk in His footsteps are reckoned as members of His body—members of His bride to be. We can apply the text then to these also, and see that this acceptable time has thus been all through this Gospel age from Pentecost to the present time, and that the Church has been helped all the way down and will be especially helped of the Lord in the First Resurrection. As the apostle declares, “He

that brought again our Lord Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by Jesus. (2 Cor. 4:14)

The statement, "I will preserve thee," is a significant one, following as it does the declaration of the hearing of our prayer and the helping of the Church. The three expressions signify our acceptance by God, our help by Him in the present life in overcoming the world and in developing the character-likeness of His dear Son, and our ultimate preservation through death and through the First Resurrection to the glory, honor, immortality promised to the faithful.

"FOR A COVENANT OF THE PEOPLE."

Note that these who are succored during this gospel age, these to whom the present is the acceptable time, are to be the instruments in the Lord's hands of blessing all the people in general—the world of mankind. The covenant here mentioned is evidently the new covenant, through which all the families of the earth are to be blessed. But before that new covenant can come into effect it must be sealed, ratified, made applicable to the world by the precious blood of Christ. Tine, our Lord Jesus poured out His soul unto death, He gave His life a ransom for all, but we find that when He ascended on high He did not appropriate His sacrifice to the benefit of all, but merely to the benefit of such as would believe, to such as would become children of God through faith. If any did not hear or for any cause did not have the faith, they did not come under the provisions of that arrangement, for our Lord, we are distinctly told, appeared in the presence of God on "our behalf"—on behalf of believers. The same is pictured to us in the day of atonement sacrifice, when the

2H501

blood of the bullock was sprinkled on behalf of the high priest's body, and on behalf of the tribe of Levi which typified the household of faith.

However, that application of the first sacrifice was the channel through which the later application of the second sacrifice for sins was made. It opened up the way and made the second sacrifice acceptable. In the type the second sacrifice was the goat, whose blood, afterwards brought into the holiest, was applied on behalf of "all the people," and effected for them the cancellation of all their sins, just as the blood of the bullock had previously effected the cancellation of the sins of the tribe of Levi. Looking further we perceive that as the sacrifice of the bullock represented that of our Lord, so the sacrifice of the goat, poor and lean, represented the sacrifice of the church of Christ, the Bride class, who are now invited to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable

to God their reasonable service — to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. Rom. 12:1; Col. 1:24

Now note the harmony of this with our Redeemer's words on the night of His betrayal, when instituting the memorial supper. He said, "This is the blood of the new covenant shed for many, for the remission of sins—drink ye all of it." The symbolic cup represented the sacrifice of our Lord's life. It was by that eventually the new covenant would be sealed or ratified; the merit for the sealing was in that sacrifice. It was not for the few, not for the elect merely, but "shed for the many," for the whole world. But before it could be applied to the world the opportunity was granted for the few, for the elect, to drink of that cup—to share in that sacrifice. Hence the whole work of this gospel age has been our participation with our Lord in the sufferings of this present time that we may also be sharers in the glory to follow—the millennial glory, the kingdom glory—the work of blessing all the families of the earth.

“TO ESTABLISH THE EARTH”

The prophet declares that under this covenant of the people the great Messiah, Jesus the Head, the church, His Body, now being selected, will establish the earth and re-establish the desolate heritages. What does this signify? Ah! the Scriptures tell us that the heavens and earth of this present time are to give place to the new heavens and the new earth. The new heavens will be the church in glory, in spiritual rule or dominion over the world. The new earth will be society reorganized under the rule of the kingdom of God, under the law of love. In that blessed time the heritage of mankind will be rescued from its present disorder, and this is what the apostle refers to as the refreshing that shall come to mankind at the second advent of Christ. He says, "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive (retain) until the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21)

Adam, as God's son of a human kind, an image of God in the flesh, possessed a wonderful heritage. Not only was he the king of earth, with dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea, in likeness to God's dominion over the universe, but additionally he had a heritage of mind, of heart—possibilities that were wonderful. All of these were lost through the fall and the sentence which it brought upon our race, "Dying thou shalt die." Alas! how the mental heritage is gone, as illustrated by the fact that in New York, one of the most enlightened states in the world, one person out of each one hundred and fifty adult population is in the insane asylum, and the remainder must, alas, confess that their judgments are imperfect,

their minds unsound. How a man's heritage of good morals has been lost, so that today, "born in sin, shapen in iniquity" "there is none righteous, no not one." (Psa. 51:5; Rom. 3:10) And as for his physical inheritance it is, alas, sadly demoralized; aches and pains and brevity of life attest the operation of the divine sentence—"Dying thou shalt die." Now look at the prophecy: this Great One whose acceptable time is the present and whose day of salvation is now—this one is to bring to pass under the divine covenant with the world a restoration to man of his lost heritage. No wonder the apostle calls this message one of "restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."

"SAY TO THE PRISONERS, GO FORTH!"

But we hearken further to this great commission given to this elect church of which Jesus is the head. It reads: "That thou mayest say to the prisoners, go forth; to them that are in darkness, show yourselves." How comprehensive is the divine statement: how much is declared in a few words! The Lord was not content with giving us the declaration that the covenant with the people would mean the blessing of them, the restoration to their lost heritages; but realizing the tendency there would be in humanity to disbelieve in divine goodness and to belittle the divine promises, the Lord through the prophet here points out that this blessing of restitution and refreshing will not only be for the people who shall be living at that time that they may have back by restitution all their lost heritages under "the mediator of the new covenant, ' but, proceeding, clearly teaches us that the blessing of the Lord is intended for all the families of the earth—for all those who have lived from Adam's day down to the present

2H502

time—for all those who lived and died before Jesus was born, and for all those who have died without a true knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ since. These are styled prisoners in harmony with the scriptural figure, and the tomb is represented as being the great prison house, which now is estimated to contain twenty thousand millions of our race. The Lord shows through the prophet that all of these prisoners will come forth from the tomb, or as our dear Redeemer expressed it, "The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth." In the figurative language of the prophet these prisoners will be called upon to come forth, to "show themselves." They will not come forth to a time of ignorance and superstition and anarchy, the reign of sin and death, with Satan as the master deceiver in power, but under the new

dispensation, under the millennial reign of Christ, they shall come forth to have testified to them in due time that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man and that all who are to come into harmony with Him may have eternal life. Then the responsibility will rest upon them and “it shall come to pass that the soul that will not hear (obey) that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people.” Acts 3:23

It is “that prophet,” who shall then judge the world, that God is now selecting from amongst men and whom he calls his “little flock,” his very elect, the Christ, the great Prophet, Priest and King and Judge of divine appointment and development. In every sense of the word Christ Jesus is the Head of this great one, and our part as the members of his body is only by the grace of God through our redemption by the precious blood and our adoption and instruction in the school of Christ, who has assured us that without Him we can do nothing, but in Him as branches in the vine, as members in the Body, we become eventually mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of error and to the setting up of the kingdom of God under the whole heavens. 2 Cor. 10:4

“NOW IS THE ACCEPTABLE TIME”

Finally, brethren, this portion of our text has a deep significance when viewed from this standpoint, “Now is the accepted time.” What does this signify? What is God willing to accept of now? Ah, a great mistake has been made. We once supposed that these words meant, Now is the acceptable time, the time to escape eternal torment. Harken to the apostle’s explanation of this matter. In his letter to the Romans (12:1) he says, “I beseech you, brethren, present your bodies a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God!” The thought is unmistakable, it is the sacrifice that is “acceptable” to God and all who have heard of God’s grace are invited to present this “acceptable” offering—themselves. They are told that it is a reasonable service, they are told that the mercy of God prompts it, they are informed that the mercy of God is manifested toward us as a race in the gift of his Son and that believers now obtain their share in that forgiveness imputed to them on account of faith and that it is on this account that they may consider their bodies holy and acceptable to God. They are not left in any doubt on this matter but are assured that by nature we were children of wrath even as others, but that God’s grace and mercy have been manifested toward them and that the righteousness of Christ has been imputed to them because of their faith in him and that on this account God would esteem them holy and acceptable if they present themselves to him living sacrifices by a full consecration of thought and word and deed, time, talent and influence, even unto death.

Here we have the same thought that we glean from other Scriptures, namely, that the present day of salvation, the present “acceptable time” is specially for the Christ—Jesus the Head and the Church his body. In a word this “acceptable time” is this gospel age during which God is willing to accept, as members of the body of Christ, all those who, renouncing sin, come unto the Father through him, and taking up their cross seek to follow him through evil report and through good report; walking in the narrow way of self-sacrifice even unto death. As this “acceptable time” did not begin until Christ came at his first advent, so it will not continue after the last member of the mystical body shall have been gathered at his second advent. There would be no opportunity of entering into this salvation later on. After the “little flock,” the “bride” class, the “saints” shall have gone into the marriage and the door shall have been “shut” no more will be permitted to enter into that class; because the “acceptable time” will have come to an end, the day of special salvation will be ended.

THE WORLD’S BLESSING

But, thank God, that the ending of this special salvation and this “acceptable time” of sacrifice will not hinder the grace of God from proceeding to bless the world of mankind in general—not with the same blessing of a change of nature from earthly to heavenly conditions, but with a blessing of restitution to all that was lost in Adam -- an earthly paradise which shall ultimately be world-wide and with glorious opportunities for life eternal for all those who will then “hear” in the sense of obeying the great Mediator, the great High Priest, the great Prophet, the great Judge—Christ, Head and body, Bridegroom and Bride. Let us, dear brethren and sisters, be faithful to our calling, to our privileges.

2H503

Let us seek diligently to “make our calling and election sure” to this grand inheritance. Let us remember that “Now is the acceptable time,” that if we wish to bring our sacrifices to the Lord through the merit of Jesus now is the time and the only time. To offer it and not only to offer (to engage, to agree) but also to, as the apostle urges, lay down our lives in the service of the Lord, in the service of the brethren and in “doing good to all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.”

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, November 4, 1907](#)

THE LOST KEY OF KNOWLEDGE

Pastor C. T. Russell preached yesterday in Carnegie Hall, Allegheny, to an audience that nearly filled the house. His text was, "Woe unto you, doctors of the law, because ye have taken away the key of knowledge; you entered not yourselves, and those approaching you hindered." (Luke 11:52) He said: We are living in a preeminently practical day, when results are sought rather than doctrines. Indeed, in but few Christian pulpits are doctrines ever considered in these later years. Doctrinal preaching is considered obsolete, and has been replaced largely by what is termed practical preaching. In other words, the preaching of good works has taken the place of the doctrines preached by Jesus and the apostles. The reason of this is not far to seek. Talented men, able ones of all denominations in the pulpit and in the pew, are heartily ashamed of the doctrines confessed in their creeds. The preachers, therefore, are glad enough to let these alone, hoping that their congregations will forget them, and especially that they will not ask them any troublesome questions respecting them.

As a result we have throughout the civilized world today just what the Jews had at the first advent of our Lord, namely, a form of godliness without the power. Our Lord's discourses and parables continually bore witness to the fact that the Jew of His day, especially the prominent ones, were outwardly pious, zealous for God's law, but inwardly ravenous wolves and full of all manner of corruption. Our Lord upbraided the leaders for their long prayers and affectations of piety, which were entirely contradicted by their conduct in daily life—their selfishness, which would lead them to take advantage of the widow, to grasp for property, and which would bind heavy burdens of law observance upon the weak and the poor to their discouragement. Our Lord declared to them how they had made the divine law of no effect through their traditions—more than this, had made God and His law abhorrent to the poor and the ignorant by exaggeration. For instance, the law of the Sabbath was and is still exaggerated in the Talmud, which teaches that to rub wheat between the hands and to blow away the chaff in order to eat the kernels would be unlawful, a violation of the Sabbath day, because it would be threshing and winnowing on a small scale. Similarly that to hunt a flea would be a violation of the Sabbath law because it would be hunting on a small scale.

TAKING AWAY THE KEY

Thus did the doctors of the law in Jesus' day, by the substitution of traditions instead of the divine Word, misrepresent the character of God and turn the attention of the

people from him. Thus did they take away the “key of knowledge,” for the “reverence of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” Note our Lord’s words, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) In a word, God’s creatures need to know Him well and truly in order to appreciate Him and in order to have confidence in His gracious promises. Such a knowledge is necessary to a true worship such as the Lord appreciates, for, as the Master said, the Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:22-23) Whoever, therefore, misrepresents the divine character and the divine plan is taking away the “key of knowledge” of God. This was the crime of the doctors of the law, which their hypocritical professions and prayers only helped to aggravate. For the common people, relying largely upon the holy professions and teachings of these leaders, were the more thoroughly deluded and the more thoroughly alienated from God by reason of their professions of sanctity.

Our Lord’s words, “Woe unto you, doctors of the law,” had a fulfilment, too. Certain woes fell with special weight upon this very class but shortly after our Lord’s prediction. Very soon a period of disintegration set in, which affected everything and every prospect of the wealthy and professedly religious class of the Jews, especially the doctors of law. This led up to anarchy and ultimately the destruction of their national polity, A. D. 70. True, it meant dire tribulation to all the people, but, as always, those most intelligent and in the high stations of life must have suffered proportionately more in the stress which came upon all the people

2H504

in fulfilment of the prophecy, “Wrath is come upon this people to the uttermost.”

THE GOSPEL AGE PARALLEL

On previous occasions and in Volumes 2 and 3 of Scripture Studies we have shown from the Scriptures that the Jewish age and people represented typically Spiritual Israel and this Gospel age; that the Jewish age began with the death of Jacob, the Gospel age with the death of Christ; that the former was established in the 12 sons of Jacob and the latter in the 12 apostles of the Lamb. That the former had typical sacrifices and sin offerings while the latter has antitypical or “better sacrifices than those.” That the former had a typical priesthood in Aaron and his sons while the latter has an antitypical priesthood, called by the Apostle a “Royal Priesthood,” of which Christ is the Chief Priest and his faithful followers the under priesthood. We have shown, too, that these ages are of the same length, and that as the Jewish age ended with the harvest in which our Lord was present in the flesh as the chief reaper, so this

Gospel age will end with a harvest in which our Lord as a spirit being will be present as the chief reaper gathering the wheat into his garner before the great time of trouble, the figurative burning day coming upon the world in general—"a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1) We have seen that the trouble day with which the Jewish age ended is paralleled exactly in time and in character by the period of trouble which will consummate this age.

In harmony with these parallels, is it not wonderful that we find today among nominal Christian people—Churchianity—conditions in many respects corresponding to the conditions described by our Lord among the Jews in their harvest time. Today also we find an outward respect for God and for religion—a drawing nigh unto the Lord with the lips while the hearts are far from him—busied with fashion, pleasure and money seeking. Now also we find that the people look to doctors of divinity for guidance and instruction; that they greatly reverence them, and that the latter could have great power if they were in harmony with God—if behind the profession there was a knowledge of God's character and plan, and if this were imparted to the people who, according to the Scriptures, are now famishing—a famine not for bread nor for water, but for the hearing of the message of the Lord. (Amos 8:11) This sad arraignment of the pulpiteers of our day is a thankless and unpleasant task, but it is proper today, as it was nineteen centuries ago, to show those hungering and thirsting for the Word of the Lord the real cause of their difficulty—that the clergy have taken away the "key of knowledge" and are keeping it hid, neither entering into the knowledge themselves nor favoring any others entering in. On the contrary, they hinder in a hundred ways the spread among the people of a true knowledge of God and His Word.

WHEN THE KEY WAS LOST

We should not be understood as teaching that all the responsibility of the loss of the key of knowledge belongs to the Christian ministers of today, neither did our Lord charge the doctors of the law of His day with the full responsibility. He pointed back of them to the same class in earlier days, saying, "Woe unto you! for you build the sepulchers of the prophets and your fathers killed them." Our Lord seems to have arraigned the clergy as a class, and to have held the modern representatives responsible, because they gave evidence of having the same spirit that their predecessors had, even though they condemned some of their practices. Thus their fathers killed the prophets, while they killed the Lord Himself and persecuted His followers. Neither should we understand our Lord's words to apply to every individual of the Jewish clergy, the doctors of the law, but rather that He spoke of them as a class, ignoring the few exceptions. Similarly we hold that among the teachers of today there are exceptions to the general

rule—God-fearing men, God-loving and striving to enter into the knowledge of God themselves and to assist others to enter it. But surely these are a very small minority, and they are rarely heard from.

The key of knowledge of God's true character was lost long ago. It was lost during the "dark ages." Luther and some of his coadjutors did valiantly in striving to recover the key, and at least got hold of the handle. But, alas! little progress has since been made. The key, while recovered, is still hidden by a veil, a mist of superstition and false doctrine. Shall we illustrate this? How, we ask, could anyone come to a knowledge of God — a true knowledge, an appreciative knowledge, a heart sympathy, a true devotion—while still thinking of God as the all-powerful Creator, who made mankind for his own pleasure, yet before his creation prepared for the vast majority a place of eternal torment, manned with fire-proof devils and supplied with fuel enough for all eternity? Who that has that thought before his mind, who that believes that unscriptural teaching, could rightly reverence his Creator as a God of justice and of love? In proportion as this cloud of error, this "doctrine of devils," comes between an intelligent mind and its Creator, in that same proportion it will be impossible for him to really know God, whom to rightly know would imply eternal life. Before the key of knowledge can be found and used, and grant access to a right appreciation and worship of God, this doctrine and other similar superstitions of the "dark ages" must be got rid of. We thank God that in His providence

2H505

some today, Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile, are being helped to a knowledge by a message of the Great Teacher, even as a little flock of Israelites indeed were taught of God and inducted into a knowledge and love of God, despite the conduct and false teachings and wrong attitude of the doctor of the law at the first advent.

It should be noted that our Lord does not intimate that the doctors of the law themselves had entered into the knowledge and were keeping others out of it; but, on the contrary, that while they were in a favored condition to supply the key and to enter in and to enjoy the knowledge, they were not only not doing so, but in avoiding the knowledge they were hindering others who were in quest of it. So today we are not to be understood as intimating that the preachers of Christendom have the true knowledge and are withholding it from the people, but the contrary—that they are confused, that they know not God, and that therefore the divine plan of boundless mercy for the sins of the whole world is hidden from their view. As a class they know not God — they misunderstand him. But instead of seeking for the key

and entering in, and seeking to assist others to enter in, have they not abandoned the Word of God and taken up with Higher Criticism and Evolution, and are they not guiding those who look up to them for counsel in the same direction? Why do not these educated men of great opportunity awake to the privileges of their position and search the Scriptures, and by full consecration of their all to the Lord enter into the school of Christ, that they may be taught of Him, that they may find the key of knowledge and assist in putting it into the hands of those who are seeking God, “feeling after Him if haply they might find Him,” but who are now, being misled and misdirected? As our Lord said, the blind are leading the blind, and surely all will fall into the ditch. The ditch of that day was the time of trouble which wrecked the Jewish nation. The ditch of our day is the approaching day of trouble, in which Christendom will be wrecked in a cataclysm of anarchy, according to the Scriptures.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

In worldly matters the word knowledge is applicable to any subject which we know and can demonstrate; but in religious matters the word has a still broader meaning, and applies to things that we cannot actually prove, but which we believe on satisfactory evidence, as, for instance, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” Faith is the basis of this knowledge—faith in what we believe to be a God-inspired revelation of things past, and to come. This we may call faith-knowledge, and to this the Scriptures everywhere continually appeal, assuring us that “without faith it is impossible to please God,” that such faith is the foundation of all our hopes, the mainspring of all our best endeavors, and that according to our faith will be the results as respects our present development of character along the lines of righteousness and our future attainment of the heavenly reward. It is for this reason that we are urged to search the Scriptures and to study to show ourselves approved workmen, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, and again that we may be ready, able at all times, to give to him that asketh us a reason for the hope within us. (John 5:39; 2Tim. 2:15; 1 Peter 3:15) He who has not a knowledge of the divine revelation, the divine plan, cannot have a Scriptural hope, cannot have the legitimate results of such a hope, namely, the anchorage of the soul, sure and steadfast. (Heb. 6:19) In harmony with this the Apostle points out the fact that the heathen cannot be saved under the call of this Gospel age. Whatever salvation there may be for them will come later under the Millennial Kingdom arrangements; for how could they believe on Him of whom they have not heard; and now, it has pleased God to save them that believe, and whose faith leads to the appropriate conduct outlined in the Scriptures. The more of this faith and knowledge the Lord’s people possess the stronger should be their confidence and the nobler should be their lives. This faith-knowledge is referred to in the Scriptures as the truth, as, for instance, when our Lord said,

“Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth.” (John 17:17) The message of God received by faith is accepted to be the truth, to be true knowledge, and wherever it goes there must be a sanctifying, separating power.

How forceful then is this injunction, “My people perish for lack of knowledge.” (Hosea 4:6) Not that we put knowledge as superior to love—quite the contrary; knowledge is the foundation, love is the superstructure, the character development; but no one can rear a proper superstructure without a proper foundation. The measure of the foundation must of necessity mark the limitations of the building upon it. Whoever has little knowledge of God and His character and His Word has proportionately little of the sanctifying power of the truth. If the knowledge does not produce this fruitage the results are even as the apostle points out in the words, “If I had all knowledge and had not love I should be as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, it would profit me nothing.” (1 Cor. 13:1) On the contrary, whoever thinks to build up a proper character without knowledge errs egregiously. The apostle seems to point to this fact when he refers to some as building upon the one sure foundation, Christ Jesus,

2H506

with wood, hay, stubble, erroneous teachings; and others as building upon the good foundation with gold, silver and precious stones, representative of the divine truth. The apostle assures us that the testing time will come and that only the latter class will stand the test, while the former will suffer loss, though themselves will be saved so as by fire.” (1 Cor. 3:13-15) Thus does he point out the two distinct classes of the saved ones of this Gospel age, known in the Scriptures as the “Little Flock” and the “Great Company.” It is proper that every child of God should look to it “that he receive a full reward” (2 John 8), that he win the great prize, that he be not one of those merely “saved so as by fire,” and who must “come up out of great tribulation.” (Rev. 7:14)

OUR LORD’S KNOWLEDGE ATTESTED

An illustration of the value of knowledge is set forth in the Scripture in the words: “By his knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many when he shall bear their iniquities.” (Isa. 53:11) And this surely illustrates well the principle we have applied in the Scriptures to all the members of the Church, the body of Christ, who are required to be copies of God’s dear Son. Note the following references to the value of knowledge to the Church, the elect of this present age. The apostle speaks of some who “have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge,” and distinctly intimates their disadvantage in the race on this account. (Romans 10:2) The apostle commends those who are “full of goodness, and filled

with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another.” (Romans 15:14) And again he speaks of the advantage secured to those “enriched in Christ with all knowledge.” (1 Cor. 1:5) And again he speaks of knowledge coming through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:8), and again he reproves some who “have not the knowledge of God.” 1 Cor. 15:34

Again he points out that God’s grace has shined into our hearts to give the “light of knowledge of the glory of God.” (2 Cor. 4:6) And again he exhorts to faithfulness “by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering” (2 Cor. 6:6); and, again in faith and utterance and knowledge; and again he refers to the necessity of casting down all imaginings that would tend to exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. (2 Cor. 10:5) In his epistle to the Ephesians he speaks of his own favor from God in respect to the knowledge of Christ, the knowledge of the mystery and of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. (1: 17; 3:4-19) To the Philippians he writes (1:9) and urges that they abound more and more in knowledge and speaks of the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus (3:8) To the Colossians he writes urging that they be filled with the knowledge of God’s will and make increase in the knowledge of God. (Col. 1:9- 10) He refers to the treasures of wisdom and knowledge divine which are hidden in Christ and intended for those who come unto the Father through Him. The Apostle Peter also teaches that the Lord’s grace comes unto us through the knowledge of God, who hath called us, and he exhorts that we add to our faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; that we may not be barren in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:2-8

KNOWLEDGE DURING THE MILLENNIUM

As the knowledge of God reaches but comparatively few of the human family during this Gospel age, and few therefore gain the eternal life, it is of deep interest to all that the Lord’s Word enunciates that it is His will that all men should be saved (recovered from the tomb), and come to a knowledge of the truth that they may be saved. (1 Tim. 2:4) If the knowledge of the Lord is a blessing to us now, and brings with it responsibility and great opportunity and blessings, present and prospective, it is in full accord with this that the Lord here promises that ultimately all shall know Him, and all therefore have a full opportunity of attaining the blessings He is so willing to bestow upon those who seek Him in sincerity. Let us hearken to some of the promises to these given through the prophets. Isaiah tells us that the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (11:9). Habbakuk gives a very similar statement of the matter, and assures us that the earth will be filled with a knowledge of the glory, the greatness, the grandeur of the Lord. (Hab. 2:14) And again the prophet Jeremiah declares that there shall be no longer need for every man to say to his neighbor and to his brother, Know thou the

Lord, for all shall know Him from the least even unto the greatest. (Jer. 31:34) How glad we are that ultimately God's glorious character shall be clearly seen by all mankind—when the blindness of superstition, ignorance, bigotry and Satanic deceit and doctrines of devils shall have given way to the glorious light of the sun of righteousness, with healing, restitution, in its beams.

“WHOM SHALL HE TEACH KNOWLEDGE”

Isaiah, the Prophet, is caused to give a picture of our day in which is pointed out the stumbling of the teachers of our time. Symbolically, they are represented as drunken with the wine of false doctrine, so that they err in vision, they stumble in judgment,” because Babylon hath made all nations drunk. (Rev. 17:2; 18:3) These, the creeds of the different denominations, are represented as their table, at which they feed. Then, still referring to our day, the Lord, through the Prophet, inquires (Isa. 28:9), “Whom shall he teach knowledge and whom shall he make to understand

2H507

doctrine?” The question implies that few will be in a condition to understand the truth in this day, and then the answer is given—”Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts.” This symbolical picture represents the Lord's faithful people as merely babes in Christ, and informs us that even these must be weaned from their infantile condition, that, as the Apostle suggests, they may appreciate the strong meat of divine revelation, and thus grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, advancing from the infantile condition to full manhood in Christ. (Heb. 5:12)

While the intimation is that the doctors of the law at the first advent and the doctors of divinity at the present time will wield so strong an influence as to hinder the majority of those who are trusting them from entering into the riches of God's grace which were properly their portion, we have various intimations that the Lord will not permit this to be the case with those who are at heart loyal to Him. These will be drawn from the priests of sectarianism and from the creeds of the “dark ages;” they will be weaned; they will find the sectarian bed too short and the sectarian covers too narrow, and will get out from these conditions into the full liberty of the children of God. Not into that bold agnostic condition known as the new theology, but to the liberty of the sons of God under the limitations of the divine word of revelation, which to them will be line upon line, here a little and there a little. As at the first advent the Lord found such a class and fed them, strengthened them, so—although they were recognized as ignorant and unlearned men—they soon were known as talented, and their neighbors and enemies took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him—learned of the true God, and his true character and of the true hope set before them in the gospel, so we have the Lord's

promise that in the end of this age—notwithstanding the fact that the key of knowledge is lost to the majority, and that those who should have it and should be leading the way into it have it not and are turning the people aside from looking in the right direction—nevertheless our Lord Jesus, whom the apostle styles the great Shepherd of the sheep, promises that at His second advent He will gather His sheep in that dark and stormy day. (Ezek. 34:11-12)

He promises also that in this day He will cause His faithful ones, weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, to sit down to a table of His own furnishing. He promises that He will come forth and serve His people meat in due season, things new and old. Let us not only take this attitude of readiness to enter into the light of the knowledge of God and to be fed thereby, but additionally let us see to it that the strength which we derive from this strong meat of Present Truth shall be such as will build us up, sanctify us, that we may attain to that full knowledge of God which can be attained only by those who will come into heart fellowship with Him through Christ, and which will constitute to them an evidence that they are sons of God, taught of God, for to such is the message of the Savior, “The Father Himself loveth you.” (John 16:27) And if there be any in this audience who have hitherto been careless as respects this key of knowledge and the blessings that are to be unlocked thereby, we urge that it is high time for them to awake out of sleep and out of darkness and to search the Scriptures and to enter into the blessed joys of the Lord now through faith in His Word, and to be prepared to enter into the joys of the Lord actually very soon.

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, November 25, 1907](#)

CAUSES FOR THANKSGIVING

BROCKTON, Mass., Nov. 24—Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today. We report one of his discourses, from the text, “O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.” (Psa. 136:1) He said:

The reverence for the Creator which led the Pilgrim Fathers to establish an annual day of thanksgiving for divine mercies calls forth our appreciation, and we note that to a considerable extent their example has prevailed throughout the length and breadth of this favored land, as represented in our national Thanksgiving Day. But while we note this outward recognition of the Creator with pleasure, the fact is borne in upon us that with many the thanksgiving is merely perfunctory—that the occasion has lost its old-time significance. The fact is that we are living in a less reverential period,

assisted and to some extent caused by our freer thinking and reasoning.

Our forefathers, with too large a reverence for earthly kings, imagined that these rulers could do no wrong, because they governed by divine appointment. Looking beyond these, they revered God, the great King, to such an extent and with such blind devotion that it seems not so much to have occurred to them to

2H508

critically consider divine providences and plans. They were content to say, "It is of God; it must be right." But today matters are different. Kings are recognized as ruling on the strength of heredity, and as being maintained in power by cannons and bayonets and the various contrivances of the prince of this world. They are no longer regarded by the public as kingdoms of God, but as scripturally described "kingdoms of the world," which must pass away before the new dispensation be inaugurated.

And looking beyond this, mankind is inquiring respecting the character of God and His providences. Many are judging the Lord by feeble sense and condemning Him and His general providences, because they know not, neither do they understand—because they have not been instructed in the divine Word and its revelation of the divine plan, past and future. Hence it is that—

MEN REASON LIKE CHILDREN

If they have had prosperity or "good luck" they praise God; if they have had adversity they grumble, repine and are anything but thankful. They "know not, neither do they understand," how God is abundant in mercy, love and kindness. Looking about them and within themselves they see depravity, weakness and temptation to evil. They wonder why they were so born—why a good, benevolent God of love should have so arranged that all humanity are born in sin, shapen in iniquity. (Psa. 51:5) Realizing their own physical, mental and moral taints, blemishes, weaknesses and sorrows, they are inclined to ask, "Why should I be thankful for these things?"

Looking upon the blessings of this land as superior to those of all other lands, they are inclined to say, "Why should we give special thanks that our lot is more favorable than that of others? Why should not we rather think it strange that a loving and benevolent Creator allowed pests, famines, pestilences and drouth to mar the happiness of His creatures in any part of the world?"

If it be accepted as true that the heavenly conditions are all blissful and happifying why should it not also be true that the same Creator would arrange all the affairs of the earth

similarly for the benefit of His human creation? Why should we give thanks that we have only so much of the aches, the pains, the sorrows, the trials common to the world of mankind; that only so many of our dear ones have gone down into the tomb? Why should we not, on the contrary, wonder that any aches or pains are permitted, any sighing, or crying or dying? We believe that none of the holy angels are subject to these dreadful experiences; why should we be? and why should we give thanks for our share of them? With many minds the answer to these queries would doubtless be, "We give thanks for fear we should offend an all-powerful and not very merciful God, and lest, as a consequence of failure to thank Him for these conditions, He should thrust us eventually into a hell of eternal torment. We therefore give Him thanks in fear, and not from real love or appreciation, or from the true spirit of thankfulness. Alas! poor world! Undoubtedly this is the attitude of many, induced by their ignorance of the true God and of the teachings of His Word, the Bible.

"HIS MERCY ENDURETH EVER"

With our minds filled with the horrible theories taught during the "dark ages," and which still fetter many of the Lord's noblest children, it is difficult to realize and get rid of the error and to replace it with the truth. So thoroughly have the minds of Christendom been poisoned by the "doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1) that it is almost impossible for the majority to think of God as the Scriptures represent Him — as a God of justice, love and mercy. Indeed, so firmly entrenched is the error with many that if any attempt is made to explain the Scriptures in harmony with divine justice and love, they forthwith concluded that such an attempt is the work of the adversary, of Satan. Alas, how thoroughly Satan has blinded their eyes and hindered them from seeing the glorious character of God! Well did the Apostle say, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious sight of God's goodness as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, should shine in their hearts." (2 Cor. 4:4) They have so long put darkness for light and light for darkness that the very terms, justice and love, are confused in their minds and misunderstood. They will even tell us that it would be just for God to torment all of His creatures to all eternity — and more, that this would be a manifestation of divine love! Alas! that such confusion should in any sense of the word be dignified with the name of reason.

There is a solution to the whole matter, and but one solution. It is God-given, and is presented to him that "hath an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches"—and what ultimately shall be known to every creature. But though hearing ears are scarce at the present time there is a special blessing to those who have them—"Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your

ears , for they hear,” said the Master, and we are glad that the promise is that by and by “all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped.” (Isa. 35:5) The right understanding of the divine Word shows the heavenly Father to be the very personification of love, as well as of justice and wisdom and power. His love, and our necessity, are at the

2H509

bottom of the Scriptural declaration that God is very merciful and of tender compassion —the very reverse of all that the theology of the “dark ages” has misrepresented Him to be.

TWENTY-SIX TIMES IN ONE PSALM

Look at our text. It calls for thanksgiving because of divine mercy, and declares that mercy to be complete, lasting forever. And this declaration is repeated in every one of the twenty-six verses of this psalm, “For his mercy endureth forever.” Is this the picture of a fierce, implacable God, who has decreed that the torture of His creatures shall endure forever and that without mercy, without mitigation, without hope of relief—to all eternity? What is the value of language and what the value of a revelation from God if we thus misuse it? Practically all Christendom with one voice declares to all men that this Psalm is not true, that God is not merciful, or that if He is at all merciful His mercy is eccentric and granted to some and not others; that some are born in heathen lands, where they have no knowledge of God and no opportunity for coming under the terms of His mercy, which are limited by the declarations that there is no other name under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved but the name of Jesus.

And since these heathen have never heard of this only name, this precious name, they are outside of divine mercy, and these represent, according to Christian statistics, 1,200,000,000 of the total of 1,600,000,000 population. And a large proportion in the past is similarly accredited with having had no knowledge of the only name, they also must be outside of any manifestation of divine mercy. And of the 400,000,000 styled nominal Christians it is admitted that the vast majority have practically no knowledge of God or of His Son Jesus Christ. They are counted in as Christians merely because they live in civilized lands; admittedly very few of these have the Spirit of Christ, without which they are “none of His;” admittedly few of them have been begotten again by the Holy Spirit, or, as some would say, “Born again;” admittedly few of them are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; admittedly the vast majority of them are “children of this world,” “children of Belial,” “of their father the devil,” and not children of God. We ask Christendom for an explanation of the situation and they have no answer.

We inquire if there is hope for any of these in the future. Roman Catholics answer, Yes! after hundreds of thousand of years they may purge themselves of their guilt in the flames of Purgatory and be received into heaven. But Protestants answer, No! there is no hope for them, neither in the mercy of God nor by any purification through their own sufferings—they must be tormented to all eternity. Let us look into the Word of God on this subject. Let us neither be content to take the hopeless view of Protestantism, nor the merciless view of Catholicism. Let us believe the words of Scripture, the words of our text, “His mercy endureth forever” — to a completion.

For be it observed that the Catholic view of Purgatory is as merciless as the Protestant view of eternal torment. They do not claim that it is of God's mercy that any will be released from Purgatory, but as a result of their own sufferings and the self-purification thus accomplished.

“LET GOD BE TRUE”

The apostle wrote, arguing against false teaching in his day—“Let God be true and every man a liar”—who opposes the divine word. (Rom. 3:4) Let the issue be squarely drawn as between the words of God and the words of men. Let us see who it is that has falsified. Our claim is that God is true; that His declaration that “His mercy endureth forever” is fully borne out by the testimony of Scripture; that there is not one single Scripture which declares that death ends all hope, but that many Scriptures rightly understood most positively show that the hope of the vast majority of mankind is a hope beyond the grave.

We deny further that a single Scripture text teaches that there is such a place as Purgatory. We challenge proof to the contrary. We hold and will show that God has made merciful provision for Adam and every member of his race—that the blessings of this provision have only come as yet to a very small minority of the race, “even as many as the Lord your God shall call.” (Acts 2:39) We hold that those who are now “called,” now “drawn,” now “elected,” are, according to the Scriptures, merely “first-fruits unto God of His creatures,” and not the sum total. We hold that the blessings that now reach even these are merely by faith, and will not be attained by them actually until they share in the first resurrection, and that meantime only those who can and will walk by faith and not by sight can maintain their standing in His class, and make their calling and election sure to a place in the kingdom as associates with their Lord and Redeemer Jesus in His great work of the future. We hold that the work of Christ and the Church, as the millennial kingdom of God, will be the scattering of divine mercy in its most helpful and potent forms to every member of Adam's race, and that as a result of it every knee will bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God, while the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth.

THE NEED OF MERCY?

Of course, there is a reason. The word mercy implies that there was sin and condemnation, and the character

2H510

of God for justice implies that the condemnation was a just one. The word redemption similarly implies a sin and need for forgiveness, and a divine interposition in favor of the sinner to recover him legally and justly from his fallen and condemned condition, and the promised times of restitution (Acts 3:21), the Millennium, implies most distinctly that there was a fall from the original perfection which makes a restoration to that original condition desirable.

The more deeply we look into the word of God the more distinctly do we find its utterances upon these subjects. Genesis tells us of the creation of Adam in the image and likeness of his Creator—on an earthly plane—“a little lower than the angels.” It tells us of the favorable conditions under which God placed His sinless son, Adam, and his wife. It assures us that everything was favorable to them even as the heavenly arrangements are favorable to the sinless angels. We have the record of Adam’s testing on the point of obedience to his Creator—that he was forewarned of the fearful results of disobedience, that, nevertheless, he disobeyed, he sinned, he fell from divine favor under divine sentence, “Dying thou shalt die,” “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou return to the dust from whence thou wast taken; for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.” (Gen. 3:19) A just sentence even though it has resulted in so much pain and suffering, mental, moral and physical. None could claim the right to live eternally out of harmony with the wise and loving provisions of their Creator. This statement of the introduction of sin and death among mankind is fully corroborated by our Lord, who declared that He came into the world to “seek and save (recover) that which was lost.” The Apostle Paul emphasizes the same, saying, “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world and death as the result of sin—and thus death passed upon all men, because all are sinners.” Matt. 18:11; Rom. 5:12

We must hold ourselves to the Scriptures and not allow the intrusions of the “dark ages” to lead us to infer a different penalty from that which God declared in Genesis, which the Apostle repeated and emphasized, and which we see in process all about us—the whole world in a dying condition mentally, morally and physically. We must not allow ourselves to read into the plain statement of the Scriptures the “doctrines of devils” to the effect that God condemned our first parents to an eternity of torture on account of that original

sin, and that, therefore, the whole race is to be delivered over to the demons and to eternal torment or to Purgatory, except a few who happen to have the ears to hear and accept Christ. We must rid ourselves of this blasphemous error, and judge of our God by His testimony and the facts of the case as we know them. We must not allow those who were so full of an evil spirit that they burned one another at the stake for difference of opinion—we must not allow these to make our theology for us and to introduce into our minds poisonous thoughts and evil surmisings respecting our Creator quite contrary to His word.

The Scriptures show us that for centuries God allowed the world to go in its own way, and that man's course was rapidly downward; and because they were not willing to retain God in their thought He gave them over to a reprobate mind, with the result that the race rapidly deteriorated everyway. (Romans 1) Our Lord's first advent marked the beginning of God's activity in the salvation of mankind from the degradation their transgression had brought upon them. The sending of our Lord Jesus to be our Redeemer was a manifestation of divine love, as we read, "Herein 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. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:9, 10

Previously there had been intimations of coming blessings and promises, but nothing practically had been done. The one little nation of Israel had indeed been given a law, but the Apostle assures us that the law made nothing perfect, and that salvation could not come by the law nor by works—that it could come only through a redemption-sacrifice, the just one dying for the unjust one, Adam, and his multitudinous progeny involved with him in the penalty of his disobedience.

The fact that God has allowed the world to go down in sin and death for over four thousand years before sending His Son must not be understood to mean that He had no interest in them, but merely that His time for manifesting His interest and His plan for their recovery only then reached the proper point for manifestation.

“SHALL BE UNTO ALL PEOPLE”

Nearly two thousand years have elapsed since our Lord's death, but the blessings of divine favor through Him have reached only a small percentage of humanity during this Gospel age. Only believers were promised a blessing, only those have received it, and they have been but a few. Their blessing had been the privileges of a special high calling of joint-heirship with Jesus in the Millennial Kingdom which is to bless the world in general. The others, who have not heard in the sense of

understanding and appreciating the grace of God in Christ, have had proportionately little responsibility. Shall we say that their case is hopeless? By no means! On the contrary, they are included in the gracious promise that God sent to humanity through those angels who notified the shepherds of our Savior's

2H511

birth.

They declared, "Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people." Since blessing comes through the knowledge, the hearing of God's grace, it follows that all people have not yet received this blessing. But God's Word assures us that in due time the fact shall be made known, testified to all.

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, December 16, 1907](#)

THE "PEARL OF GREAT PRICE"

CUMBERLAND, Md. Dec. 15—Pastor C. T. Russell of the Northside, Pittsburg, preached twice here today. He had close attention from large concourses of very intelligent Christian people. His afternoon topic was "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire." We report his evening discourse on "The Pearl of Great Value." (Matt. 13:45) He said:

In ancient times the pearl occupied the chief place among the jewels of personal adornment, probably because the art of cutting the diamond and other precious stones had not advanced to its present high degree and because the pearl is more easily prepared for use. It is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures in such a manner as to indicate that it had first rank among the valuables of our Lord's time. For instance, our Lord compared the elements of divine truth to pearls, saying, "Cast not your pearls before swine." The apostle, in speaking of the outward adornment of many in his day, mentions gold, pearls and costly array, and in the picturing of the New Jerusalem the highest prominence is given to the pearl in that it is pictured as having 12 gates of pearl.

Our Lord's reference to a pearl merchant calls our attention to the fact that in olden times the methods and opportunities for barter and trade being inferior to those of today, it was the custom of pearl dealers to go here and there throughout the districts where pearls would likely be found, inquiring for choice pearls and buying them. Our Lord uses such a pearl dealer as the basis of one of His parables representing the value of the kingdom. He said: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a

merchant seeking goodly pearls, who, when he Found one of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.” Let us examine this parable to learn the particular lesson which the Lord wished to inculcate.

“THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN”

Like the majority of our Lord’s parables, this one relates to the “kingdom of heaven.” From the frequency with which this phrase is used in the Scriptures it would appear that all should understand just what is meant by the expression “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God,” but, apparently, the majority of Christian people are in sad ignorance on this subject. Many are thrown off the proper track by a misrepresentation of our Lord’s words in answer to a question of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God would appear. Jesus answered and said unto them, “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (outward display); neither shall ye say, lo, here! or lo, there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:20)

That this is a mistranslation of our Lord’s words is evident because He had already said respecting the Scribes and Pharisees that they were hypocrites, whited sepulchers full of all manner of corruption. Evidently he could not mean that the kingdom of God was within them! The proper translation of the passage will be found very helpful, not only in understanding it, but in various references to the kingdom found in the Scriptures.

Our Lord’s ministry began with the declaration that “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” It was this message that the twelve apostles bore when He sent them forth, and the same was subsequently given to the seventy who also went forth. In a word, not only our Lord’s parables related to the kingdom, but it was almost the sole topic of His discourses. The Jews for centuries had been expecting that the time would come when all iniquity would have an end, by reason of God’s taking control of the world’s government. They understood the divine promise to be that Israel as a nation would be the divine channel for communicating blessings and instruction and corrections in righteousness to all the kingdoms of the world.

They were waiting for Messiah to come to establish this kingdom, hence, when Jesus declared the kingdom at hand it was a modest way of stating that He was Messiah, ready to establish that kingdom; and to this the apostles bore witness, and many of the common people later gave adherence, to the extent that we read that some of them were ready at the close of our Lord’s ministry to take Him by force and make Him a king— believing Him to be the Messiah through whom God would accomplish the uplifting of Israel and the overthrow of all other empires, and establish the reign of

righteousness and knowledge of God among all people, kindreds and tongues.

2H512

“COMETH NOT WITH OBSERVATION”

The Scribes and Pharisees who asked our Lord the question, “When will the kingdom of God appear?” did so because they had no sympathy with Him nor faith in His proclamation. They considered His claims fraudulent, and that the common people were being deceived. They asked the question for the purpose of exposing the weakness of our Lord’s claims. They thought that if they could get Him to commit Himself to a certain time, so as to say, My kingdom will appear at such and such a time and all will see its glory, then they could at that date point out the falsity of His claims and show that nothing was manifested. Besides, their question was evidently the forerunner of other questions. If Jesus had answered, “In one year My kingdom will be manifested in power and great glory,” they probably then would have asked, “Where will you get your soldiers?” and then, “Where will you get the money to equip them?” and then, “How could you expect, with all the army and raw recruits you could raise, to meet the Roman veterans?” Their thought was that by these questions they could show the people the fallacy of the Lord’s claims to be a king—and that the kingdom was not at hand.

But our Lord’s answer entirely disarmed them; He told them that His kingdom would not come with outward show; that they would never be able to point to a certain locality and say, “There is the capital of the kingdom.” “Neither shall ye say, lo, here! or, lo there!” The reason for this inability to point out the center of Messiah’s kingdom is that it is a spiritual kingdom, invisible to men. It will be in their midst, but they will see nothing. Its power will be exercised, but of outward display there will be none. No wonder such an answer silenced our Lord’s opponents. He was referring to a different kingdom from that they had in mind.

Many dear Christian people are in great confusion of mind on the subject of Christ’s Kingdom, because they have in mind gross misconceptions of God’s Kingdom. They say to themselves—”the Jews made a mistake in expecting an earthly empire, with an earthly, fleshly King with an earthly army. We will not make such a mistake, we will go to the other extreme, and imagine that our Lord meant that the Kingdom of God would come into our hearts and that this reign of righteousness thus begun in our hearts when we accepted Christ as King is all that there is of the Kingdom, and there never will be more of it.”

It is quite true that those who accept Jesus as their Redeemer and come into relationship with the Father through Him, and make a full consecration of themselves to the Father's will, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus—these indeed have the reign or dominion of Christ in the control of their hearts forthwith. We are glad that this is so; we are glad to be able to agree thus far. But it is a great mistake to suppose that this is the Kingdom mentioned by our Lord and the Apostles, and previously prophesied of and symbolized.

“THY KINGDOM COME”

Oh, no! Something much better is yet to come? The few fully consecrated saints of God not only would be a very small empire for our Lord to rule over, but additionally it would never fulfil the many glorious promises of the Scriptures. For instance, our Lord declares that the faithful amongst His followers shall sit with Him in His throne and have power over the nations and dash them into pieces as a potter's vessel, etc. How could these things ever be if the Kingdom of God consists merely of those comparatively few saints with whom the Lord's will is the ruling law, in whose hearts He is now the King.

Notice in the passage we have quoted that our Lord speaks of the matter as future, not present, “The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation” —will not come with observation or outward display. And again, that the Kingdom our Lord referred to is a future one is evidenced by the fact that He taught His followers to pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven.” If the rule of Christ in the hearts of His saints be all there is of the Kingdom, why should our Lord ignore this and refer merely to a future Kingdom? The proposition is inconsistent. Unquestionably the Lord's word teaches that a rule or reign of righteousness is to be established world-wide for the blessing of all the race of Adam—for the uplifting of our race purchased with a view to the eternal blessing of all those who will come into harmony with the Kingdom and the everlasting destruction of those who will refuse obedience to its mandates.

Realizing the logic of the foregoing facts, quite a large proportion of Christendom has accepted the thought that the work begun in the hearts of the Church is to spread into other hearts, so that ultimately all mankind will be brought into the Church and God's Kingdom thus come and His will ultimately be done on earth as in heaven. But the more critically this proposition is examined the more thoroughly it disproves itself, because:

First—Even if the whole world were brought to a condition of saintship God's will would still not be done on earth as in heaven, because the apostle declares of the

saints, “Ye cannot do the things that ye would.” A great change would be necessary, a change beyond everything that has ever occurred yet or that we have power to effect.

Second—After 18 centuries we find that, while nominal Christendom is rated at 400,000,000, only a very

2H513

few of these would claim to be saints. On the contrary, counted among this number are the inmates of the prisons of Christendom, far more in number than all the culprits of heathendom. What hope is there for turning Christendom into saints? None. The latter, as in our Lord’s day and in harmony with His word, we discern to be but a “little flock.”

Third—The heathens are far more numerous today than ever before, notwithstanding all the efforts made on their behalf, so rapid is the propagation of the species. A century ago the census reports showed 600,000,000 heathens; today they report 1,200,000,000. Surely, no sane person, considering these facts, feels justified in supposing that our Lord’s kingdom is to come by any such process of conversion under present conditions. Furthermore, the Master Himself declared to the contrary, saying: “Fear not, little flock; it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32) And, besides, the kingdom is specifically declared to be established for the purpose of blessing all the families of the earth, whereas, if the coming of the kingdom meant the conversion of all the heathens, there would be no families of the earth to enter into the blessings of the kingdom if it had come.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

Having thus proved that our Lord did not mean that His kingdom would be one that ever would be in the hearts of the Pharisees and that He referred to it not as a kingdom already present, but as one that cometh, we are prepared to view this text in harmony with all the teachings of Scripture on the subject, and to see that it signifies that when the kingdom of Christ shall have come it will be invisible to men, but a mighty power in their midst. With no outward show, ostentation or display, it will be in the midst of mankind, a reign of righteousness, spiritual power, restraining and controlling, punishing sin and rewarding every endeavor toward righteousness, and thus effecting a resurrection, a raising up by judgments, by stripes, by disciplines, by rewards. (John 5:28-29) But before the kingdom can be established and do this work of the world its members must be found, and they must be glorified, changed in the first resurrection, to qualify them for this ministry.

The change for them will be from human to divine, spirit conditions, when they shall be like unto the angels and like unto their glorified Lord, and sharers with Him in that dominion or “kingdom of God under the whole heavens.

Thus the coming Kingdom will be like Satan’s empire of the present time, so far as invisibility is concerned. But as Satan’s empire works for evil and darkness, ignorance and superstitions the Kingdom of Christ will, to the contrary, work for righteousness and truth and blessing and uplifting and enlightenment. As Satan and the demons, his associates, work in and through human agencies, so Christ and the Church, his glorified Kingdom class, spirit beings, will operate through human channels and agencies. Neither will the two kingdoms clash, for the distinct statement of Scripture is that the dominion of Christ shall be all powerful, that Satan shall be bound, and every influence of evil brought under restraint, so that nothing shall hurt, injure or destroy in all God’s holy Kingdom, but the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth.

‘HEIRS OF THE KINGDOM’

Our Lord’s announcement to the Jews in the harvest time of their age that “the Kingdom of God is at hand” implied that the time had come for those of that favored Nation who would be counted worthy to be associated with Messiah in the Kingdom should be received by Him and be exalted by their change, so that they would be qualified for the work of blessing the remainder of their Nation and all nations. But God fore-knew that only a small remnant of the Jewish people were in a condition of heart to make them worthy of membership in this spiritual Kingdom. Hence our Lord declared to them, “The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a Nation which shall bring forth fruit meet for the Kingdom.” (Matt. 21:43)

What did he mean by this? He meant that the proffer of a share in God’s great work of blessing the world, which had been granted to that Nation as the offspring of Abraham, would be taken from them as a Nation. Those who heard him supposed that he meant that God would offer the privilege to some other Nation then living, but the Apostle explains differently—that God proposed to organize a holy Nation composed of the holy Jews and others of a similar class among all nations whom He would seek out and instruct as His peculiar people. It has been the work of this Gospel age to find the holy Nation, Spiritual Israel, and this work, we believe, is almost finished, and the entire company of this holy Nation class is but a “little flock.” The Apostle Peter shows this when he says to the consecrated believers, ye are a holy Nation, a royal priesthood, prepared for a purpose. (1 Pet. 2:9) God’s purpose with this holy Nation is that,

after their development through trials and disciplines, they shall be changed to be like their Lord and to share His glory, honor and work as the members of the Body of the great Messiah, to carry out the work of blessing Israel and all the nations of the world.

This, then, is the Kingdom of God's dear Son, of which the Apostle speaks particularly, saying, "He shall reign until he shall have put all enemies under his

2H514

feet." (1 Cor. 15:25) Again He speaks of the Church as associated with her Lord. He says: "The very God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. (Rom. 16:20) The entire Gospel age is only a "little season" from God's standpoint, for a day with the Lord is as a thousand years. (Psa. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8)

"SEEKING GOODLY PEARLS"

Some of our Lord's parables related to this Spiritual Kingdom in its future work of blessing the world with an opportunity for knowledge of God and reconciliation to Him, and their testing in relation to this matter. Of such is the parable of the sheep and the goats, which is distinctly stated to begin to apply "when the Son of Man shall come in the glory of the Father"—at the second advent. Others of the parables of the Kingdom relate to various experiences of the church, the Kingdom class, during this Gospel age. The parable now under consideration points out to us the class of persons who will succeed in getting the high honor of a place in this Kingdom as joint-heirs with Christ. These are like pearl merchants—they are seeking imperishable valuables, and not frittering away life and its opportunities. There are not many such in the world—not many pearl merchants seeking for the best things, the most valuable things, temporal or spiritual. The majority, alas, are prodigal sons, spending all that they have, wasting their substances in riotous living, seeking after pleasure, and, like the prodigal of old, finding little of it. There are in the world, however, some of noble sentiment of heart, anxious to spend their lives in the accomplishment of some noble purpose that will be to the advantage of their fellow men, and making the world brighter and better for their having lived in it.

Some of these are to be found among the merchants of the world, who realize that the increment of wealth which comes to them is properly to be esteemed a stewardship, and who seek in various ways for the establishment of schools, libraries, colleges, etc., and to have before their fellow men a noble name as noble characters.

Others give their lives as teachers, college professors, etc., others as physicians and surgeons; others seek to make their lives useful to their country and to their fellow men as statesmen. All of these are noble seekers af-

ter noble pearls of value, seekers of those qualities and rewards even of an earthly kind which would be enduring. And we should not forget to include in this list many in the humbler walks of life, who in their own families, their own neighborhoods, seek to do good to all men as they have opportunity, and thus to prove themselves blessings indeed to their fellow creatures.

[The Greensburg Daily Tribune, December 24, 1907](#)

GOD'S UNSPEAKABLE GIFT

Lancaster, Pa., Dec. 23—Pastor Russell, of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today to large audiences. His afternoon topic was “A Sure Cure for Infidelity.” His evening topic was “God’s Unspeakable Gift,” from the text, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” (2 Cor. 9:15) He said:

In proportion as we attain God-likeness, in proportion as the spirit of Christ dwells in us richly and abounds, in proportion as we possess the holy spirit, the mind of the Lord, in that same proportion will we be able to appreciate increasingly the testimony of the Scriptures that “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” In our dealings with God it is proper, yea, it is necessary, that we realize our dependence, our own insufficiency, and his greatness and bountifulness and that we learn to go to God as his “dear children,” to whom he delights to give his favors, and who delight to receive these and to appreciate them with grateful hearts. We are debtors to God in every sense of the word, and always will be his debtors—we can never dispute the obligation under which his mercy and loving kindness have placed us. The sooner we realize this the better it will be for us. Some there are, who possessed with a false pride, feel and declare that they ask no favors from either God or man—that they pay their way and wish always to do so. Something of this spirit is praiseworthy as respects our dealings with our fellows, but the entire proposition is inconsistent with our relationship to the Almighty.

As we did not create ourselves neither can we maintain our being, as the Scriptures assert, “In him we live and move and have our being.” This would have been true of us, whether born on an angelic plane or as perfect human beings—we could not have created ourselves, directly or indirectly—God was responsible for our birth through the arrangements of his providences in nature, and he is the provider for his creatures on every plane. The fact that he causes the sun to shine upon the just and the unjust and gives rain upon the evil as well as upon the good, and thus provides for the world of mankind that as a whole is in rebellion against him and his authority, does not prove that the laws of nature are autocratic and that the results could not be otherwise. Rather, as the Scriptures show, these mercies

of God scattered, broadcast to all, tell of a provision on God's part for the necessities of his creatures. That he allows these laws to be interfered with at the present time and permits adverse conditions upon our race he fully explains to be because of our sinful, rebellious attitude, because the sentence, the curse of death, has been justly pronounced against us, and because he sees a way by which present lessons of adversity and tribulation may be made instructive to us as respects the "exceeding sinfulness of sin."

"ALL TAUGHT OF GOD"

Two of the great lessons for us to learn are our complete dependence on God and his loving kindness and tender mercies over all his works. But these things can only be learned truly from one standpoint and by one class. Those who view matters from the outside will surely misunderstand, misinterpret many of the operations of divine providence, as the poet has declared,

*"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan God's work in vain;
He is his own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."*

"The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant"—his agreement, his future plans. In order to see, to understand, to appreciate them we must accept certain matters by faith: (1) "That He is"—that there is an Almighty Creator; (2) "That He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Seeking the Lord diligently we find in the Bible that which commends it to our hearts as well as to our heads; but here we are beset by a danger and a difficulty for while it is possible to have great assistance from our fellow-believers in the study and understanding of the Divine Word, there is much danger of our becoming even more confused by such assistances—by the creeds and theories of man, particularly those handed down from the "dark ages." Whatever, therefore, we receive from men we must accept tentatively—for examination, for proving and testing by the Word of God. Thus we try the spirits or doctrines, as the Apostle admonishes; thus, as the poet has expressed it, we allow God to be his own interpreter and to make the matter plain to us. Teachers who refer us to the Word of God, pointing out its harmony with itself and with reason, giving the chapters and verses and showing the relationship between text and text—these are the teachers who are really helpful; all others are apt to be injurious, whether they address us orally or in print.

“EVERY GOOD AND PERFECT GIFT”

Only after we have been for a time in the school of Christ can we comprehend the force of the Apostle’s words that “every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning.” (Jas. 1:17) Then we begin to look about to find some of these good and perfect gifts. We do find many gifts and blessings, but very few of them purely good, very few of them perfect. Everything connected with our present condition is imperfect; even the sunshine and the rain which are common to all God’s creatures are evidently not furnished us under perfect conditions. Imperfection seems to be written upon everything that we have as well as upon ourselves. The Bible explanation of all this is that, while God’s work is perfect, we are not really samples of his workmanship, but depraved, fallen, imperfect through the original sin of Father Adam and its entailed weaknesses and blemishes upon his posterity. The good and perfect gifts of God are only seen by the eye of faith—only seen by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened to see by faith Jesus, the great Redeemer—to see in God’s due time his great work of redemption accomplished, the wiping away of all tears from off all faces, and the re-establishment of everything on the plane of perfection—the destruction of death and everything connected therewith, and the establishment of perfect life condition such as God has promised.

What is then seen by the eye of faith, by those whose eyes of understanding have to some extent been opened? We answer that they are seeing more and more of the riches of God’s grace, and appreciating more and more all of his gifts and favors, and especially the great gift, the unspeakable gift, mentioned in our text. What this gift is, is the entire Scripture set forth in various presentations. One of the most forceful of these statements is by the Apostle who declares that the “wages of sin is death, but—

“THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE”

What is there in the gift of eternal life that makes it so wonderful—that leads the Apostle to describe it as God’s unspeakable gift? Ah, everything is in that gift! For without it, without eternal life, there is no eternal blessing. False theologies have diverted or taken away from this Bible statement that eternal life is God’s gift, and that he will supply it only to those in fullest harmony with himself. False theologies have taught us that eternal life is a natural quality—yea, more, that it is a persistent one, so that even God himself could not destroy our lives or being. This erroneous thought has distorted all our reasonings and left the issue as between an eternal life in torture or an eternal life of bliss; whereas the Scriptures clearly define a different issue, namely, as between extinction, destruction, and a life in

harmony with God, a life which divine love and mercy has provided for those in accord with the Almighty.

2H516

Let us hearken back to the testimony of the Lord and the apostles and the prophets on this subject, and see that God is now proffering the Church a gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us note the Scriptural proposition that if we are wilfully and deliberately and intelligently rejecting this gift it will be withdrawn, and the effect upon us will be Second Death, everlasting oblivion—from which God offers no hope of recovery. Let us note that this is the general dealing of God and hence that when his time shall come for dealing with the world of mankind in general, during the Millennial Age, the offer then to be made to them, when their eyes of understanding shall be opened and their deaf ears shall be unstopped, will be a similar proposition of life or death everlasting. Those who will accept God's gift on God's terms are welcome to it—he is pleased to give it to them; those who will reject it shall die the Second Death, extinction. “Through Jesus Christ, our Lord,” is the Apostle's statement. The gift is not offered to us by the Father directly, but indirectly through the Son. The Apostle writes to those whose eyes of understanding have been opened, who he declares are all with open face looking into the mirror of God's word and seeing there his glorious character and purposes—to these the Apostle says, “This is the record, that God has given unto us eternal life; and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life.” Again the Scriptures inform us that this life is merely reckoned to us now, and that we will not get it until we experience the change of the first resurrection at the second coming of our Lord, as it is written, “Your life is hid with Christ in God.” (Col. 3:3) Thus every suggestion of God's gift is bound up similarly in Christ; only as we welcome, united to him, related to him, can we have this gift of God, this unspeakable gift. Hence it is not improper that we should sometimes both think and speak of Jesus himself as being,

THE GIFT UNSPEAKABLE

Both Jesus and the eternal life which the Father has provided through him are unspeakable in the sense that it is impossible for us to fully present to others the rich fulness and glory which inheres in both. Who can describe life eternal either on a spirit plane or as restored and perfect humanity? It is unthinkable—beyond all the powers of our mental comprehension; the thought can only be imperfectly communicated, only be imperfectly grasped, and must gradually dawn upon us, grow upon us in appreciation and comprehension. Similarly the wealth of riches of divine grace represented in our Lord Jesus is unspeakable; we cannot tell it—the natural man cannot receive of the things of the Spirit of God, neither know them. 1 Cor. 2:14

Only those who are specially favored of God can get even the first glance of the riches of God's grace in Christ. If this glance be received and appreciated it leads to clearer and still clearer views, for all who will appreciate either Jesus or the gift of life must be "taught of God." (John 6:45) As our Redeemer said to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood have not revealed this unto thee, but my Father in heaven." So all our teaching and preaching cannot overcome the blindness of the natural fallen mind in respect to God's gift and the channel through which it comes; only as the Father shall grant his blessing may fruits to our labors be expected. As it is written, "As many as the Lord your God shall call," and again, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him." Hence we see that our present appreciation of divine goodness implies three gifts—(1) the divine provision of eternal life; (2) Christ the channel, and (3) the knowledge by which we are enabled to appreciate both the gift and the channel.

The Evening News, January 11, 1908

“DEFILE NOT THE TEMPLE OF GOD”

Providence, R. I., Jan. 11. Pastor Russell preached here today. The text for the occasion was, “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” 1 Corinthians 3:17

The Pastor declared that this Scripture could not be applied indiscriminately to all men. While the body might be described as the temple or tabernacle of the soul, and therefore worthy of care, and neglect of the body worthy of punishment, nevertheless the text is restricted to the church. Only the church is the temple of God in the sense the apostle here mentions; for only such as have been regenerated, begotten again of the holy Spirit as the sons of God.

These, the pastor declared, have received a new life, and are Scripturally described as “New Creatures in Christ.” These, he claimed, have entered into a covenant with God through the merit of Jesus, who serves them as advocate, imputing His righteousness to them, justifying them freely from their unintentional imperfections and weaknesses. Because they are thus justified by faith, God has accepted their sacrifice of earthly

2H517

hopes and interests, and has made them New Creatures by begetting them with the holy Spirit.

The speaker then pointed out the distinction between these spirit-begotten New Creatures and the remainder of mankind, however just and well-intentioned. He showed that ordinarily we do not speak of humanity apart from their bodies, for cut off from the body, they would be dead. We speak of such separation as dissolution. As the union of life (vitality) with organism (body) forms the soul, or sentient being, so the separation of these two components causes the soul to cease. Death would be the end of humanity, had not God provided for the redemption of the race, in its restitution by resurrection. Its restitution will be merely a bringing back of that which death is now destroying; namely, human, or earthly being.

Next the Pastor showed that anything done, either deliberately or carelessly, to injure God’s workmanship would be sin. There is a Divine Law to the effect that whoever sins shall suffer. Whoever defiles his body, either by impure thoughts, angry thoughts, malicious thoughts or by misusing it contrary to Divine arrangement by drinking or by gluttony, is defiling himself, the temple of his own soul, or being—the work of God. Every vile thought or act, every pandering to appetite, is

sure to bring depravity on body or mind or both; and depravity, he claimed, is the death process at work. Unless such depravity be overcome through Christ, the end will be everlasting death, in harmony with the Scripture, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

The same Principle, said the Pastor, applies to all who would do evil to others, either by poisoning their minds or their morals, or by injuring their physical systems. Such do violence to God's work and degrade their own manhood. The operation of divine law will surely bring punishments, which unheeded would ultimately bring death—"everlasting destruction."

We may warn every man along the broad Biblical line, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," continued the speaker. He that sows to the flesh—to sin, selfishness, meanness—to the fallen propensities—anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife, evil speaking, etc—will be sure to reap correspondingly bitter experiences. This way, persisted in, will finally bring him to the Second Death. God has no gift of eternal life or other eternal favors for those who love sin.

GOD'S TEMPLE THE CHURCH

The Pastor then briefly reviewed Israel's experience in drawing near to God. When God entered into covenant relationship with the Israelites in the wilderness, He manifested Himself in the Most Holy of their Tabernacle. The Divine presence was indicated by the Shekinah Glory, which shone out from between the Cherubim covering the Mercy Seat.

The Israelites drew near to God through his appointed servants. Aaron and his sons, who had access to God's presence. The Tabernacle was therefore the temple of God, because God was represented by His Spirit, of Power, there. But it was called the Tabernacle because it was merely a tent, in contrast with the permanent building erected by King Solomon. After the dedication of that temple, God appeared there instead of in the Tabernacle, and manifested His presence in the same manner.

Then the Pastor showed that the church is God's antitypical Temple; but as St. Peter points out, it is not yet constructed as a Temple. Each consecrated child of God, begotten of the holy Spirit, is a living stone in preparation for a place in the glorious Temple of God, soon to be constructed. These living stones are God's workmanship. He works in them by the Spirit of Truth; and by His providences He shapes them, polishes them, develops their characters, and makes them ready for the coming building.

Nevertheless, said the Pastor, this Master-workman always recognizes the free will of His people. He works in them only as much as they are willing to let Him work, only in harmony with their prayers to be filled with His Spirit and to have His will done in them.

Some indeed draw back, he continued. These are at liberty to “draw back into perdition,” or to draw back from the full preparation for the Temple. Many hold back from the full preparation for the Temple. Many hold back from the chiselings and polishings, and so are unfit for a place in the Temple of God. But so long as they do not draw back in heart, however, but remain loyal to the Lord, they will get a blessing, even though they miss the chief blessing. This the Apostle shows in the preceding context.

THE TEMPLE NOT YET BUILT

According to St. Peter’s picture, the living stones for the Temple are merely chiseled and polished during the earthly life; and not until the resurrection will these living stones come together as the Temple of God, to be fully indwelt by His holy Spirit. Hence St. Paul was merely speaking of our earthly bodies as temples of the holy Spirit. In other words, he was calling our tabernacles temples.

The Pastor then declared that St. Paul’s thought seems to be that wherever God may dwell is necessarily holy — His Temple or His Tabernacle; and that any wilful or intentional deliberateness is sin, depraving that temple or tabernacle, would be an offence against God. If Christians who have received the begetting of the holy Spirit could but comprehend this lesson, it would have a powerful influence upon their lives.

2H518

[The Pittsburgh Dispatch, January 13, 1908](#)

“SOME BETTER THING FOR US”

St. Johns, N. B., Jan. 12. Pastor C. T. Russell delivered two discourses here today to splendid audiences. We report one of those from the text, “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” (Heb. 11:40) He said:

From childhood we have been taught, as Protestants, that if we would be good we would go to heaven, if bad to eternal torment. Those of us who were reared Catholics had a little different version, namely, if you are a heretic you will go to eternal torment, if a Catholic to Purgatory,

from which you will be liberated into heaven after scores or hundreds of years—the time depending upon your sinfulness and in the generosity of your friends in paying masses on your behalf. These perversions of the Gospel word came probably to everyone of us here present, and we are very fortunate if by now we have escaped from them to a more Scriptural and more rational conception of the divine plan. All fairly balanced minds recognized their own imperfection, and the best of us, with the Apostle, must declare that some of the good we would do we do not, and some of the evil that we would not do we cannot avoid, because of the blemishes we have inherited, mentally, morally and physically. (Rom. 7:15) Hence even those who claim to believe that they are especially elected and predestinated of God unto salvation are inclined to feel and to say with the poet, “This a point I long to know.” As we begin to use our God-given reasoning faculties, and note that the word Gospel signifies good tidings, some of us, at least, begin to wonder how that term would be applicable to the divine plan, which, as we were taught it, included the torture for years if not for eternity of nearly every member of our race. When we asked the question, learned theologians explained that the good tidings consisted in the fact that the torture would not be eternal for those who accept Christ. With full desire to be thankful and appreciative, we found it difficult to enjoy the prospect of so great a risk of eternal torment or so sure a matter as Purgatory.

“GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD”

Evidently our eyes the while were blinded. We were looking at the picture of a demon, and no wonder we found it difficult to honor, love and worship before him, and were only constrained by fear. But as the eyes of our understanding became opened we began to see our Creator in His true light, and correspondingly the horrible nightmare began to dissolve. We began to see more and more in the Word of God, declarations of His love, His grace, His mercy; and even though our early misconceptions and imperfect translations still distorted some of the parables and symbols of the Word of God, we gradually began to overlook those and to consider the many statements which our judgments told us corresponded to a God and not to a demon. We cannot read, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence Him,” and draw from it the horrible thought of a bad father who had brought forth hundreds of millions of humanity, foreordaining and forearranging the eternal torture of the vast majority of them; for, if we felt that, we would conclude, as earthly parents, we are already far greater and far better than he, and upon consideration, these thoughts would dissolve gradually and give place, as we forget the cruel features of the false teachings and begin to get the spirit of the Word, which shows us God as more pitiful, more merciful,

more loving and kind than earthly parents. And when we remember that we are taught to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we perceived that our God was far greater and more forgiving and generous than ourselves. Then our trust in Him and our love for Him begin to develop and progress proportionately with our study of the Word and our renouncement of the horrible nightmare of the "dark ages" and the creeds formulated therein.

As we get back to the Word of God, ignoring human traditions and hymn-book theology—as we take the words of Jesus and his apostles and the prophets of old—we find in their teachings a beautiful harmony respecting the glorious plan of God, which proffers salvation through Christ to Adam and every member of his race. Not the same salvation to all, as we shall show, but a great salvation, nevertheless, from sin, from degradation, from death, to life and everlasting blessedness, in harmony with God and His gracious arrangements. We are not advocating Universalism, dear friends, because we do not find that taught in the Bible. We are advocating what is abundantly taught, namely, that every member of Adam's race shall have a full, fair, complete opportunity for accepting or rejecting divine mercy and forgiveness in Christ. We are teaching that none of the human family is now being tortured by demons anywhere; that the greatest sufferings in the universe are being experienced in this world, where "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn." As for the dead, we hold with the Scriptures, as we have heretofore shown, that those who have passed into the tomb are neither in pleasure

2H519

nor in pain, neither in joy nor in sorrow. They are dead, and await the Lord's time for the "resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Acts 24:15

The moment of their awakening will be their next moment of consciousness following their decease. The interim of time will be as nothing, for, as the Scriptures declare, "The dead know not anything." "Their sons come to honor, they know it not, to dishonor and they perceive it not of them." (Eccl. 9:5; Job 14:21) Why? Because "there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave [in sheol, in hades, in the state of death] whither all go." (Eccl. 9:10) The sufferings of this present time from the cradle to the tomb and the deprivation of life are the great penalties which God has laid upon our race because of sin—under the decree, "Dying thou shalt die." "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 2:17; 3:19) This penalty is terrible enough—thank God it is no worse! Thank God it is not torture either for years or for eternity! Thanks be

unto God that lie has provided a redemption in the sacrifice of His Son, who paid the death penalty for us, and that on this account our death will not be eternal destruction, but merely a temporary one, spoken of in the Scriptures as a sleep. Thank God for the promised awakening of the resurrection morning, when the Church, now being selected, will be awakened, changed to glory instantly, and when the world will come forth to gracious opportunities of divine direction and correction, to the intent that they may learn righteousness and be recovered from their fallen conditions and secure through the great Life Giver, their Redeemer and King, eternal life.

HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY BLESSINGS

As children, when our minds were filled with the erroneous thought respecting eternal torment, we used to wonder how there could be any gradations of torture in hell as it was described to us, and why those who fell short of pleasing God only a little, would receive the same torture and for the same length of time as those who were vilest and most intelligibly wicked. Similarly we wondered about heaven, if some like the apostles would not have a glorious place in the presence of God, while others of us, insignificant, would creep into some little corner. But so far as theologians were concerned, they did not deign to offer any explanation to such questions, but discouraged them, for the very simple reason that they could not answer them, their entire proposition being built on the creeds of the “dark ages” and not on the Word of God, which, alas, has been so greatly and so long neglected. We may well compassionate those who lived during the long centuries before printing was invented, before education was general and while the Bible was published only in dead languages. But what shall we say of ourselves and others who in the twentieth century, with Bibles in every home, neglect the Word of God, and are content with the creeds handed down to us by the well-intentioned, but deluded ones of the past, who showed their lack of grace and their ignorance of the will of God by their persecution of one another, even to the stake. We blush for our own backwardness and for that of our fellow-Christians of today. But not content with blushing, let us resolve that by the grace of God we will know the teachings of that blessed book, which we have ignorantly revered in the past; the Bible.

The Bible teaches that there are various grades of suffering and rejoicing in this present time, and that there will be various grades of suffering and rejoicing during the Millennial Age, but that eventually, by the close of the Millennium, when the full testing of the race shall have been accomplished, and when all who intelligently and wilfully love unrighteousness will have been destroyed in the Second Death—then “every tongue in heaven and in earth shall be heard praising God, who sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb.” By

that time, through Christ and the glorified Church, God will have wiped away all tears from off all faces, and this will signify what is elsewhere explained in the Scriptures, namely, that there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things shall have passed away—the things of sin and of its sentence, death. Rev. 5:13; 21:4

“NO MAN HATH ASCENDED TO HEAVEN”

We might multiply the Scriptural proofs that when a man is dead he is not alive anywhere—that death is the absence or negation of life. We might point out various Scriptures in support of this, among them those that speak of the resurrection of the dead. We might show in detail that there could be no resurrection of the dead if there were no dead—if the dead were really more alive than they ever were. We cannot discuss all phases of the subject at this time; we content ourselves with reminding you of the Master’s words, “No man hath ascended up to heaven save he who had come down from heaven, even the Son of Man.” (John 3:13) We remind you also of the Apostle Peter’s words on the day of Pentecost, when, proving the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, he quoted from the Psalms of David, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades, neither suffer thine holy one to see corruption.” (Acts 2:27-31) Saint Peter declares that these words were not true of the Prophet David—that he did see corruption, that his soul was left in sheol, in hades, in the grave. The Apostle says, “David is not ascended to the heavens; his sepulcher is with us until this day.” But he, being a prophet,

2H520

spoke beforehand of Christ, that His soul was not left in hades. We remind you also of our Lord’s general statement respecting all the dead, “Marvel not, the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth. Those who have done good [who have the divine approval] unto the resurrection of life; those who have done evil [who have not had the divine sanction] unto a resurrection of judgment”—discipline, trial—during the great Millennial day of judgment or trial, a thousand years long. We must ask you to accept these general statements tentatively and to search your Bibles further along these lines, accepting meantime our assurances that not one solitary statement from Genesis to Revelation contradicts the Scriptural declaration we have set forth. With this promise we proceed to note the various rewards promised in the Scriptures to various classes.

First of all, remember the list of ancient worthies enumerated by Saint Peter in the chapter which con-

cludes with the words of our text. He begins with Abel, and notes the more prominent of the race who had been faithful to God according to their light down to the time of Christ. He says that some attested their faith in one way and some in another; some for faithfulness were persecuted and had to flee from their homes and to dwell in caves and dens of the earth, some were stoned, some sawn asunder, etc. After commenting on these as noble heroes and telling us that they had this testimony that they pleased God he adds in the words of our text that, nevertheless, God has a still greater blessing for us of this Gospel Church than that which He provided for them and that they cannot get the blessings promised them until first we get our reward, because, “they without us shall not be made perfect” —the greatest blessing will be given first to the Church of this Gospel age, under Christ their Head, and then through them divine blessing will be extended to the Ancient Worthies, and then through both God’s blessings will continue and especially reach fleshly Israel, recovering them from their blindness and taking away the stony heart out of their flesh and through all of these agencies it will ultimately extend to all the families on the earth. Thus eventually the promise of God made to Abraham may have its fulfillment. “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

The principal “seed” is Christ, as the Apostle points out, and secondarily as members of Christ, or the Church, otherwise called His body, His Bride. These belong to the Spiritual Seed, with their Lord and Head and Bridegroom. It is to these that the Apostle refers when he says, “If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29) After this Spiritual Seed shall have been developed and glorified in the First Resurrection, then the blessing of the Lord will begin to extend to the earthly seed. First in order among the earthly class will be the Ancient Worthies who attested their faith, manifested their loyalty to God and to righteousness and gained the divine approval. These will come forth perfect men—not spirit beings like the Church, for they never were begotten of the Spirit and hence could not be perfected thus. But as perfect men they, like Adam in his perfection before he sinned, will be in the image and likeness of God, and crowned with glory and honor be a little lower than the angels. These will be the first to experience the restitution blessing, which the Apostle Peter tells us was “spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, and which is to begin at the second coming of our Lord.” (Acts 3:19-21) What grand, noble personages they will be! How great will be their reward! As the Apostle says of some of them, they endured their trying experiences that they might obtain a “better resurrection,” and they will attain it in that they will come forth perfect in the flesh, while the remainder of mankind will come forth in all the weaknesses and imperfections of mind and character with which they died—

come forth to a restitution by judgments, by disciplines, and to be gradually attained during the Millennial age by the willing and obedient, who will then be privileged to go up on the highway of holiness.

But grand and kingly as they will be in their resurrection perfection and with the mental ability to speedily grasp the inventions of our day and others, and however highly qualified they will be to act as God's representatives among men and as examples of what the whole human family may attain to if they will during the Millennial age, they will not equal the Bride class of this Gospel age. But does someone ask, "How could anyone be greater or more glorious than these?" We answer that such is God's promise to the faithful little flock of this Gospel age, the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ. The reward promised them is still higher—spiritual, heavenly, and their exaltation will be still higher than that of the angels—like their Lord, "far above angels, principalities and powers." (Eph. 1:21) As the Apostle Peter declares, the divine provision for these is not the human nature, restored, perfected, but a change of nature to the highest of all natures—the divine. Harken to the Apostle's very words, God hath "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these (the operation of those promises in our hearts, sanctifying us to His service) we might become partakers of the divine nature." 2 Peter 1:4

So then, dear brethren, in the words of the Apostle I
2H521

exhort you, "Ye know your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called"—not many of this class have hearing appreciative ears, but happy are ye if you are of the humble, poor in spirit, who have heard the message of God's great grace, and if you realize to some extent your privilege of making your calling and election sure to a share with the Redeemer in the glorious Kingdom of God, which so soon will banish sin and sorrow, pain and trouble, and usher in correspondingly the glorious light of the goodness of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

[The Fort Wayne Daily News,, January27, 1908](#)

"THE PEACE OF GOD"

ALLIANCE, Ohio, Jan. 26—Pastor C. T. Russell, of Allegheny, Pa., preached twice here today to large and earnest audiences. The opera house was packed to overflowing to hear his anti-infidel discourse, "To Hell and Back. Who Are There? Hope For the Recovery of Many of Them." We report his evening discourse from the text, "The Peace of God Which Passeth All Understanding Shall Guard Your Hearts and Your Thoughts in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:7) The speaker said:

The increase of learning, the increase of wealth, the increase of the conveniences of life, the increase of medical skill and dietetic knowledge, which the world has experienced within the last few years have not been increasing its peace. Quite to the contrary; its restlessness has been increasing. This is shown in the increase of nervous diseases of which all physicians tell us, it is shown also in the great increase of insane patients in asylums. It is reflected in the divorce courts and in the increasing number of suicides. Why are these things so? Why do not the blessings of our day bring an increase of peace, joy, rest, contentment, happiness, as we should all naturally be inclined to expect? Why is the man who works nine hours a day overburdened and more dissatisfied than his grandfather, who was accustomed to work from fourteen to sixteen hours a day? Why is the family which is possessed of a comfortable home with every convenience and an abundance of life's necessities, often wretchedly unhappy, discontented, enviously so, while their forefathers in humble cottages with few advantages and conveniences, were comparatively contented and happy. Why is it that with everybody able to read, with everybody fairly well educated, with free libraries accessible and apparently everything to contribute to their rest and well being—why is it, that they are less contented than their forefathers, whose libraries consisted of a bible and an almanac? The reason is briefly summed up by our Master's words to the adversary: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. 4:4

There is a soul-hunger which cannot be satisfied by the luxuries of life, nor by all the education of the schools, nor by the most artistic surrounding and conveniences. Created in the image of his Maker, man still possesses some faint outlines of that character whose center of happiness was intended to consist in his harmonious relationship with his God. True, the six thousand years of the fall have very largely erased and eroded this image of God from the human mind, the human heart, but enough of it still persists to occasionally lead the most worldly to longings infinite and anyway, man, having been so created, finds an aching void in all of his pleasures to the extent that this divinely arranged center of his being is ignored, undiscerned—not satisfied.

“AN ENEMY HATH DONE THIS”

Some may perhaps say that our premise is disproved by the facts and circumstances of the case. They may point us to the fact that Bibles are in every home throughout the civilized world; that chapels and cathedrals are multiplied in number; that the message of God is carried to the people—even pressed upon them; that if it were true that there is a natural longing for fellowship with

God, this fact would assert itself, would be quickly manifested by the numbers who would come to the Lord, and that the Scriptures declare that the majority of those who draw nigh to the Lord do so with their lips only and not with their hearts. Is not this a refutation of our premise that man, by virtue of his very constitution, inclines to feel after, to reverence, to worship, to adore his Creator? We answer, No! and the Scriptures support our contention. The apostle points to the fact that the heathen in their ignorance of the true God and His true worship set up idolatrous worship and images and, as the apostle declares, manifest that they are feeling after God, if happily they might find Him. (Acts 17:27) Why, then, is He not found in our land of enlightenment and preaching and Bibles? Why are they seemingly repelled? We answer that this is because of a deceptive work accomplished by the great adversary for this very purpose. The apostle declares this, saying, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." (2 Cor. 4:4) He tells us how and why Satan would alienate the hearts of men and hinder them from a proper approach to their

2H522

true Sovereign. Hence we read that he puts darkness for light and light for darkness; he makes the good appear to be bad and the bad appear to be desirable. Thus we read in the Scriptures that Satan is the great deceiver, who is deceiving the whole world. Thank God for the glorious promise that during the Millennial Age, which we trust is very near at hand, Satan shall be bound a thousand years and shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished. Rev. 20:3

Our great Adversary is too wise, too cunning to attempt to deceive the majority of men into atheism, into disbelief in their Creator and hence he has adopted the more feasible plan of deceiving them by introducing a false theology which, while ascribing to the Almighty power and wisdom and justice and love, neutralizes the whole by telling us that this great God or Creator, before He made us, prepared for our eternal torment unless we would become members of His Elect class by walking in the narrow way of self-denial, self-sacrifice. To the theologians in the "dark ages" he painted the flames and tortures of the millions of humanity—all except the "Little Flock," the "saints." The Adversary entrapped for his service and for the publication of these monstrous misrepresentations of the divine character some of the noblest members of the human family—men who would have scorned to injure their enemies, men who were ready to pray for those who despitefully used and persecuted them and who were ready to lay down their lives for the help of their fellow-creatures. Such men,

bound hand and foot by the shackles of these awful, blasphemous errors, were led to serve the Adversary's purpose and to proclaim a gospel of which they certainly were ashamed and to picture a God most devilish in comparison with themselves. No wonder that under such circumstances the world in general has come to fear God, and in some instances to hate Him! No wonder, too, that their reverence for the Bible is largely a reverence of fear and not of true appreciation of it as the message of God's love and gracious plan for His creatures!

It is by this means, it is for these reasons, that we find the world today possessed of millions of bibles, but a very little interest therein, drawing nigh to God with their lips and in gorgeous temples, but without heart-reverence which alone is pleasing and acceptable to the Lord. Hence it is that with all our religious profession the world is so hungry for the true God and for the nourishment which He has provided for in the exceeding great and precious promise of His Word. In the midst of plenty they are starving; as the scriptures declare it is not a famine for bread, nor for water, but a famine for the hearing of the word of the Lord. (Amos 8:11) The true word of the Lord is not heard, is not preached. Refined and educated preachers to esthetic congregations do not urge the eternal torment of nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of their fellow-creatures because their congregations are unwilling longer to hear along those objectionable lines. Hence they urge vain formalities, which no more can satisfy the heart of man than chaff could satisfy the cravings of the stomach. Consequently, we find that Christendom today is worried, nervous, dissatisfied, discontented; it is longing it knows not for what. We know its needs because our own hearts had a similar experience with this soul hunger. Similarly we thirsted for the water-brooks of divine truth; as the prophet David declares, "As the heart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O, God." Psalm 42:1

HE SATISFIETH THE LONGING SOUL

How I long for a trumpet-voice, clear and sweet, to sound out above the din of Babel confusion the message of the truth, the message of the love of God, the message of the word of God—the true message, not the false one, which has drawn us away from our God, the true sound for which the souls of men are so longing; that will tell them of the Father's love and of His gracious provision, and that this provision is not merely for the Elect, but, as the scriptures declare, for all mankind! Oh, for the power to snatch away from before the eyes of the bewildered world the vail of ignorance, superstition, priestcraft, blasphemous error by which the great Adversary has for centuries beclouded our vision of the Lord! As the Apostle says, the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not lest the glorious light of

God's goodness as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord should shine into their hearts. (2 Cor. 4:6) How we long for the ability to remove this blinding influence and to let the glorious sunlight of divine love shine into the hearts of the world of mankind! How we long for the opportunity, the ability of showing to mankind that the word of God, instead of being a message of eternal torture for the race, is a message of love and benevolence! How we long to show them what the real message of God is and where in their ignorance under the Adversary's deceptions they have in the past added to the word of God the hobgoblins and wretched delusions which now alarm them and drive them from the throne of grace!

In this afternoon's discourse, which many of you have in print form, we endeavored to show that the real penalty for sin is not eternal torment, but a death penalty. We showed also how that death penalty had been paid by our dear Redeemer, who died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us back to God. We showed

2H523

that while a few of us now, despite the Adversary's misrepresentation, get the eyes of our understanding open to see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, nevertheless the time is near at hand when the great Adversary shall be bound and when the glorified Jesus and His glorified Elect Church shall assume the government of the world and banish its darkness and sin and flood the world with the glorious light of the true message of the knowledge of God and that then every eye shall see and every ear shall hear and our God shall be gloriously vindicated from all the blasphemies which we and others unwittingly, at the Adversary's instigation, have committed against His holy name.

“BEHIND A FROWNING PROVIDENCE HIDES A SMILING FACE”

Undoubtedly in the end we shall see that God was not unwise in permitting the Adversary to misrepresent His character and His plan for time. Undoubtedly the great lesson of the goodness of God, the justice of God, the wisdom of God, and the power of God on behalf of His creatures will be all the more effective toward the hearts of men because of their misapprehension of His character and plan in the present time under the delusions of Satan. What a burst of joyful praise to God will go up from the world of mankind when during the millennial age they will find what the Lord has already told us through His words—that their fear toward Him is not of Him, but taught by the precepts of men, and that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than man's ways and God's plans than man's

plans. (Isa. 29:13; 55:9) No wonder that the Lord prophetically portrays the fact that the whole world shall come to recognize His justice and His righteous dealings in every particular, saying, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and sure are thy ways, Thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O, Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy dealings are made manifest." (Rev. 15:3,4) Ah! that will be a happy day for the poor world as their hearts will again come into accord with the Lord, as they shall begin to feel the centering of their minds, their affections, their obligations in Him who created them and in His appointed representative our Lord Jesus, who then shall be prophet, priest and king over all the earth for the ruling, instruction and uplifting out of sin and death conditions of all the poor human race of Adam.

No wonder the apostle, pointing forward to that time, exultingly declared that "times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21) It will be a thousand years of restitution, bringing back, uplifting from the fallen condition; thousand years reign of righteousness unto life, offsetting and antidoting the reign of sin and death which has made miserable the entire race of Adam for now six thousand years. Surely that one thousand year reign of Messiah and its multitudinous blessings of divine provision will abundantly undo all the disaster of the fall and bring to the hearts of men the peace that passeth understanding. It will come to them gradually, as they return to their former estate. (Ezek. 16:55) It will come to them gradually, as they hear that great teacher and obey Him, until finally every voice in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard saying, "Blessing and honor and glory and power and dominion, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the lamb for ever and ever. (Rev. 5:13) Will this be universal? Nay! verily; because again it is written as explaining why all voices will be in accord, that all those who will not obey that great teacher shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people. (Acts 3:23) Any who by reason of wilful opposition to the divine arrangement of justice and love shall have no further consideration at the hands of the Almighty nor in the hearts of those who are in sympathy with Him and His righteousness. But they shall not be tormented; on the contrary they shall die the second death, they "shall be as though they had not been," they shall be treated as brute beasts, utterly destroyed. (Obah. 16; 1 Thess. 1:9) And then what? There shall be no more crying, no more

sighing, no more dying, because all the former things shall have passed away. (Rev. 21:4) There shall be no more discontent, no more unhappiness and God's will shall be done in the paradise of earth even as it is done in heaven itself.

“HAVE PATIENCE, BRETHREN”

Everywhere the scriptures declare that God's great plan is to the world a hidden mystery; that only those who draw near to God through faith and consecration may know now respecting the divine solution, the divine plan; that these only may now read the word of God so as to discern its real sentiments, its real teachings. Of these the scriptures say, “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant.” (Psa. 25:14) And to such the apostle urges patience, patience while Satan is the prince of this world and while he still keeps the masses of mankind under the gross darkness of superstition; patience while our God is still blasphemed, patience while His glorious character is still under the cloud of misrepresentation, patience while the word of God is still seriously misrepresented

2H524

and while the majority are unable to understand it even when its true interpretation is clearly presented. “Have patience, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” He shall bring to light the hidden things, He shall make manifest the darkness, He shall make manifest the true light and that true light shall lighten every man who has come into the world. Oh, thank God, for so abundant provision in the divine plan; that we were not left as a race completely to the power of the Adversary, and that deliverance has been found through God's abounding grace, deliverance through Him who bought us with His precious blood at Calvary and through Him who at his second advent is to banish the powers of darkness and sin and to unfurl the banner of truth and right! Meantime it is only the class which the scriptures continually address as the “Little Flock,” the “faithful,” the “saints,” who can have this patience, because they have the inside information, the true understanding of the divine word, which is hidden from others because they are not in the right attitude of heart to properly profit by the knowledge. As our Lord said to His faithful at His first advent, “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.” Luke 8:10

This is the class addressed by our text, these may have peace, whereas others cannot have peace, “There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked,” “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters

cast up mire and dirt.” (Isa. 48:22; 57:20) Neither can those who are ignorant have the peace of God, they must wait if they have not the hearing ear now, they must wait until God’s great time shall come, when the hearing ear shall be granted to all. But oh, what a blessing those enjoy who have any measure of the hearing ear, who have any sight with the eyes of understanding, any appreciation, any desire or feeling after God! When these commit their way unto the Lord instead of unto man and to creeds and parties, when they join the Lord instead of joining Churchianity, then they are taught of God instead of being taught of Churchianity and then they obtain the heavenly wisdom that cometh from above, and it is to such that the peace of God comes as a result. There is a peace which comes from an acquaintance with God. As our Master declared, “This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,” and only these, therefore, who are rightly acquainted with God could thoroughly trust Him. John 17:3

The man who believes that God premeditated from the foundation of the world the creation of a race in Adam with the foreknowledge and intention that he would torture the vast majority of those at the hands of fire-proof devils, the man who believes that his escape from such an eternity of torture is the result of some good luck by which he was elected while the majority were passed by—that man cannot trust such a God, he must feel a fear of Him, he must dread lest sometime his lucky favor should pass from him to another. He cannot have peace, he must always watch, must always fear; he is in the hands of an all-powerful being, one who according to his theory is at heart most atrociously bad. But when we come to really know the God of the Bible we find Him the very personification of love itself, that his anger against us was not assuaged by our dear Redeemer’s sufferings, but that on the contrary God so loved mankind before Jesus came into the world that He sent His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16) From this standpoint we begin to have peace, for we discern as the Master declared, “The Father himself loveth you,” the Father himself is love. (John 16:27; 1 John 4:8) And while he has been just to punish the sins of mankind it has been a reasonable punishment, though severe, and he has made provision for recovery from it eventually for all the members of our race who may if they will come back to his Father’s favor and mercy and to life everlasting. Those who thus see have the foundation for love to God and appreciation of his true character and thus have the foundation for the peace of God, the peace which He gives, the peace which a true knowledge of God affords and which cannot be secured from any other quarter.

LET IT RULE IN YOUR HEARTS

The apostle, addressing the “brethren,” the “saints,” those who know their God and recognize Him as a God of love, urges upon them the course they should pursue in order to have the largest amount of the divine blessing of peace. They should rejoice, they should let their moderation be made known unto all men, they should recognize the soon coming of their Lord to right all the wrongs of the present time, they should not be anxious or worried about anything, they should realize God’s goodness and the sufficiency of His plan as exceedingly abundantly more than they could have asked or wished, they should take all their trials and difficulties to the Lord in prayer and see that all of their desires and requests are such as would be in harmony with His will. It is to such as take this course that the apostle gives the assurance that they may have the peace of God which passeth understanding. It not only passeth all description but it passeth all understanding. We cannot ourselves understand how we can have such a peace of God under trials, under difficulties which at

2H525

other times and under other conditions would have perplexed and worried and harassed us beyond measure; but now, because we are His and He is ours and because He has shown us His covenant and because we see that the outworking of the divine plan will be glorious beyond compare, therefore peace reigns in our hearts. We leave all to the Master, we leave all to the outworkings of divine providence, not being careless ourselves we will do with our might what our hands find to do; but we will trust results with our glorious Lord, who is able always to do for us abundantly, exceedingly more than we could think.

The apostle suggests that this peace will rule in our hearts, it will not be merely transitory; it will not be merely a guest; it will become the ruler of our hearts, it will be our normal condition to be in peace; not that we will be oblivious of the surroundings of the world, not that we will have less sympathy with the groaning creation, which is groaning and travailing in pain together and waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God. (Rom. 8:1, 22) No, we will have the more sympathy and the more appreciation of their conditions as our hearts expand and as the eyes of our understanding open wider. But we will have peace because we will have the Lord’s explanation of how the blessing of the Lord shall ultimately rest upon the whole human family and how we will uplift the poor, dying, the sinful and the depraved and the weak from their fallen condition and how if they will be bringing them back again into the glorious likeness of their Creator, from which they fell through Adam’s disobedience. Oh, the blessedness of those who have this peace of God in their hearts! And they must

needs cultivate it. If they have little they may have more; if some knowledge of God has brought some measure of peace and rest and trust, more knowledge rightly appreciated and applied will bring more peace. And if the peace has already come and is not yet ruling in our hearts, it is a matter for prayer and for faith that it may take its proper place and be the guide and the ruler of all of our thoughts in Christ Jesus.

And what shall we say to the poor, restless world who have not this peace? We can only assure them that there is such a peace, and that it can be had in the one way; that Jesus is the way, that He is the one who invites all the burdened ones to come to Him, all that labor and are heavy laden and He will give them rest: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." All those who can hear this voice and who will follow on may have this blessing. Others cannot have it now, they must wait until the millennial day shall dawn and the blessing of the Lord shall fill the whole earth. But we are glad that that glorious day is coming; yea, that it is near at hand, and even though it shall be introduced by the most awful trouble that the world has ever known, we rejoice that that trouble will be but the plowshare which the Lord will use to break up the fallow ground of the hearts of men and to prepare them for the great blessing which He is so willing to give and which He has provided for every creature in Christ the Lord. "He that hath an ear let him hear," and let him have a measure of this blessing in proportion to his obedience in the present time.

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, February 3, 1908](#)

"BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW!"

Pastor C. T. Russell preached yesterday to a large audience in Allegheny Carnegie Hall from the text:

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death; neither shall there be sorrow nor crying nor pain any more; for the former things are passed away. And He who sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." (Rev. 21:4, 5) The speaker said:

Used as we are to sights of wretchedness and woe, experiences of sorrow, pain and death, the promise of our text seems to many a vain one and those who believe it and trust it implicitly are esteemed visionary, illogical, credulous. The wise men of the world tell us that what has been and is shall be, and that while we might hope for some prolongation of human life and some assuagement of human miseries, to expect that death and pain and sorrow will be abolished is absurd and indicates an illogical mind. Our reply is in the words of the Apostle, "Let God be true and every man a liar." Romans 3:4

Custom, indeed, is a forceful precedent and difficult to set aside. For more than six thousand years our race has been dying, and, as the Apostle declares, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." (Rom. 8:22) It requires faith to believe that this order of things, which has prevailed so long, is to be set aside and a new order introduced. It requires not only faith to believe this, but we must needs have a foundation for our faith. It is not sufficient for us that someone might speculate that an evolutionary process would bring the race out of degradation and sin and sorrow, pain and death, to perfection, because we perceive from history that so far from such evolution being

2H526

in progress the aches and pains with which our race has been afflicted have been increasing for centuries, so that today we are weaker than our forefathers and the average of human life is but 35 years, with all the advantages of science combating the encroachments of disease and death. According to Bible records, which many of us accept fully, the time was when our forefathers lived for centuries. We need, therefore, just the kind of testimony which our text affords as foundation for our faith in such a wonderful change. It declares that He that sat upon the throne arranged a great change of dispensation to be accompanied by the release of mankind from sorrow, pain and death. All who have faith in the authority may well rejoice and give glory to God in anticipation of this wonderful blessing which He has in store for our race.

ON EARTH EVEN AS IN HEAVEN

This promise is in full accord with the prayer which our Lord taught us as His followers—"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth even as in heaven." Surely none will dispute that God's will done in heaven means the perfect happiness of all of His faithful. Surely none will doubt that there is no death in heaven, no cemeteries, no funerals. Surely none will doubt that there is no sickness there, no tears or plasters or physicians. Surely none will doubt that there is no sorrow in heaven nor cause for any. Why, then, should it seem to us incredible that the same Heavenly Father, who thus arranged for His sons on the spirit plane, should similarly arrange for His human sons? Why should we doubt that the love which has provided for the eternal happiness of the angelic hosts would be equally willing to provide for the eternal happiness of humanity? Why, then should we hesitate for a moment to accept the explicit declaration of the Scriptures that a great change of dispensation is coming, when, instead of the world being subject to the prince of this world who now worketh in the Children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2) it

shall, instead, be under the dominion, the rulership of the Prince of Glory, who redeemed Adam and his race from the curse of death by the sacrifice of Himself?

Instead of doubting the plain statement of our text we should have been inclined to surmise it, even without a statement, had it not been that our minds have been poisoned by the great adversary's substitution of darkness for light, misrepresenting the love of God and His glorious plan of salvation, substituting therefore what the Apostle designates "doctrines of devils"—devilish doctrines. It is by these false doctrines that the adversary has, as the Apostle declares, "blinded the minds of them that believe not, so that the glorious light of God's goodness does not shine into their hearts." (2 Corinthians 4:4) It is time that we should awaken from the horrible nightmare which has afflicted us during the night time of the "dark ages." It is time that we should recognize the great Scriptural truth that God is love, that He created us with a glorious purpose in view and that our affliction as a race through Father Adam's disobedience has not changed the divine character nor the divine sentiment toward us.

It is time that we should learn afresh that our loving Creator changes not; that all of His glorious purposes shall be accomplished and that the word that has gone forth out of His mouth shall not return unto Him void, but shall prosper in the thing whereto He sent it. It is time for us to learn that His permission of sin and sorrow, pain and dying has been but temporary, with a view to our instruction as respects the exceeding sinfulness of sin and with a view to the ultimate blessing of all those who will be taught of God and ultimately learn the lessons He will give through His representative, our Redeemer, who shortly will be the great Prophet, Priest and King to the world of mankind for their instruction and uplifting out of sin and death conditions back to perfection. How glorious it will be when He shall have accomplished His work, for as the Apostle declares, "He must reign until He has put all enemies under his feet—the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Corinthians 15:25-26) We may well long for His second coming in power and great glory to bind Satan and to accomplish these glorious results. Should it not be wonderful to us that the Apostle, who saw clearly and explained definitely these things to be accomplished in the new dispensation, held out that the glorious Messiah is the hope of the world.

Most beautifully does the Apostle picture the present condition of the world with its longing for something better, which it does not clearly appreciate, but which we who are guided by the Word of God do understand. He says, "The whole creation groans and travails in pain together;" and again he tells us that they are "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:22, 19)

The groaning, the travailing, the pain, the death are literal enough, sure enough, manifest enough.

The difficulty with the majority who attempt to study the Bible is that they fail to get this proper standpoint of view; they think of the Bible as addressed to the world, they think of God as dealing with the world, whereas the Scriptures clearly teach that the time for divine dealing with the world is not yet come; that in the interim God is merely dealing with special classes; as, for instance, in the past he dealt with the patriarchs and not with the world in general; from Sinai to Calvary he dealt with the Jewish nation only but not with

2H527

the world; and since Calvary to the second advent of our Lord and the completion of the church, he deals not with the world but with the special class who he calls out of the world — the household of faiths from amongst whom he selects the “very elect” to be the bride and joint-heir with their Redeemer, and to be associated with Him in His millennial kingdom glory. The Apostle declares this to be the mystery, the secret of the divine plan which obscures the same from the minds of men in general. Our Lord Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, the King of Israel, of whom it had been written that he should bless all the families of the earth through His glorious kingdom reign. But, instead of beginning that reign, that kingdom, that blessing of the world, that scattering of darkness and binding of Satan as soon as he had paid the ransom price, He instead began another feature of the divine plan, namely, the selection of the kingdom class and company of joint-heirs, a “little flock” to be the bride of Christ, otherwise styled “members of His body.” This has been the work of the entire Gospel age, anything else being merely incidental thereto, and as soon as this selection of the church and the polishing and preparation of the individuals thereof is completed, the next work will be in order—the pouring out of a blessing through these upon humanity in general.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is.” (1 John 3:2) The Lord’s faithful, consecrated ones are His sons even now, though hampered with unfavorable surroundings and imperfect conditions. They are waiting for their “change,” which shall be accomplished in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and which will constitute their resurrection from human to spirit conditions.

This is the same epoch, this is the same glorious refreshment coming to the world at our Lord’s second

advent and the glorification of the Church which the Apostle Peter so graphically portrays, saying, “Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” Acts 3:19-21

THE WAGES OF SIN vs. THE GIFT OF GOD

The Scriptures fully account to us for the present terrible condition in which, as a race, we find ourselves—imperfect mentally, morally and physically. They explain that man was not created thus, but perfect, upright, in God’s likeness. They explain that while death is a curse or blight upon our race, and while it came from God Himself, nevertheless, there was a justifiable reason for it. Sin had entered into the world, and it was not God’s purpose to perpetuate sin eternally; hence He had already decreed that the wilful sinner must die, and so the Scriptures declare: “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as a result of sin; and thus death passed upon all men, because all are sinners.” Rom. 5:12

We see then, that our sorrows, pain and dying are all the legitimate wages of sin—of our own fallen condition. We see that God is not to be blamed in any sense of the word, that His work is perfect and His dealings just. Moreover, we have no claim upon Him as respects a restitution or a millennial favor or blessing—all that is a free gift. His provision has included, first, a satisfaction of His own justice, the sentence against us, “Dying, thou shalt die.” This redemptive work costs us nothing so far as we are concerned; everything that God provides for us is a gift full and free.

But as for His own government and laws, He maintains them—will not permit them to be violated. He persists in regarding sin as criminal and worthy of death; He continues to maintain a separation between sinners and Himself. But He has made abundant provision for mankind, as though He had no such law and was bound by no such justice. More than this, His giving us His Son as our redemption price attests to us His sympathy, His love, His willingness to assist us. Nor does this signify a carelessness as respects the interests of His Son, our Lord Jesus, for we are assured that for the joy that was set before Him He gladly endured the cross and despised the shame and has now been abundantly rewarded by His high exaltation to the divine nature and heavenly throne.

But even yet, notwithstanding the death of Christ, the Creator does not propose to infract His law nor to permit a sinner to have eternal life. Hence, instead of granting eternal life to sinners, He has turned them over to their

Redeemer to be instructed and assisted and chastened, uplifted and rewarded during the Millennial Age—so many as will, to the intent that by the close of that age all the willing and obedient shall have reached full perfection and be fully able thereafter to thoroughly obey every divine requirement; because no longer sinners, no longer weak, no longer degraded or impaired, they shall be absolutely perfect through the uplifting influences of their Redeemer. All who will not avail themselves of this privilege will still abide under divine wrath and be destroyed in the Second Death; but all the willing and obedient will be granted the gift of God, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In harmony with this there is to be a great testing time after the Millennial Age closes. The world of mankind, except the incorrigible, will be then transferred

2H528

from the Mediatorial Kingdom, the Millennial Kingdom, to the Father's jurisdiction. The first work of the Father in dealing with the world will be to apply a test, even as He did to Father Adam when he was perfect. The conditions, however, will be different: in the judgment or test in the end of the Millennial Age each individual will be on trial for himself alone and no race will be involved with him. Again, there will be the difference that Father Adam was entirely without experience, whereas all that wonderful race of perfect, restored human beings at the close of the Millennium will have had a large experience: first in the present life an experience with sin and death conditions, sighing, and crying and dying; and secondarily during the Millennium they will have had an experience of restitution, uplifting from the fallen conditions, and incidentally they will have had full instruction at the hands of the great Teacher respecting the love of God, the wisdom of God, the justice of God and the power of God, and they will be without excuse as respects obedience.

The record shows that the test which will come upon all that will dwell upon the face of the whole earth at that time will be a subtle one, which will try or tempt all mankind whose total number will be as the sand of the seashore. What proportion of these will succumb to the temptation we are not informed, but we are given distinctly to understand that there will be a considerable number found not fully loyal at heart, to the principles of righteousness. These will be esteemed messengers and tools of Satan and, with him, they will be destroyed in the Second Death, from which there will be no redemption, no recovery of any kind.

“EVERY CREATURE PRAISING”

The Scriptures represent that when the glorious epoch will have come, every voice in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard praising God, giving thanks to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever. (Revelation 5:13) How glorious this picture! How much more God-like than the one so long presented to us from the “dark ages” to the effect that, to all eternity there would be howlings and blasphemings; poor creatures suffering in terrible torment, anguish, pain and sorrow, but without the privilege of dying! Thank God that the eyes of our understanding are opening more widely and that now His wonderful book, the Bible, is indeed a new book to us, telling of His wisdom, love and power!

It is appropriate that those of us who have been blessed with the opening of the eyes of our understanding should begin our rejoicing and praising God at once. He has brought us out of darkness into His marvelous light and put a new song into our mouths, even the loving kindness of our God. Let us praise Him not only with our lips but with our entire beings, let us show forth His praises that, perchance, others, too, may be granted the privilege of hearing and rejoicing. Let us remember not only that our own sins have been forgiven through faith in the precious blood, and that we have been brought into fellowship with the Lord Father, but let us remember also that the very purpose, the very object of these favors to us was to prepare us for our high calling—the invitation of our Creator that we should become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together. Romans 8:17

Let us be more attentive to this great calling, this wonderful privilege, the like of which never was before and never will be again. It will be one thing to be blessed during the Millennial Age by restitution processes and uplifting to human perfection; it is quite another thing that now we should be begotten again, new creatures in Christ, partakers of the Divine nature and have a share with our Master in the glorious work during the Millennium. No wonder the call has attached to its conditions that those who would reign with Christ must suffer with Him in this present time. The Lord seeks a peculiar people. Those who love sin, or those who do not so love righteousness that they are willing to sacrifice on its behalf, are not of the kind whom He is now seeking, now calling, now preparing for the glories to follow. Let us who have received this grace and who appreciate it so run that we may obtain the glorious prize, not trusting in our own strength and righteousness, but looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, until He shall become the finisher of it.

[The National Labor Tribune, March 1, 1908](#)

GOD'S OATH-BOUND PROMISE

Cincinnati, O., March 1. The Bible students closed their eight-days convention at Music Hall tonight with a "Love Feast." Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., delivered the closing sermon this afternoon to an immense audience in our finest auditorium which seats 3,600. He had profound attention for nearly two hours. The speaker's text was Hebrews 6:17-19. "God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the

immutability of his counsel confirmed it with an oath: that ... we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us ... which hope we have as an anchor to our souls both sure and steadfast.” He said:

Only those who have strong living faith in the Almighty God and in his Son Jesus could have much interest in the words of our text. To the evolutionist these words have little meaning, as he is looking to a natural development rather than to any supervising power of God to bring the blessing which the world so greatly needs.

To the higher critic, the apostle’s reference to God’s dealings with Abraham are nonsensical, believing as he does that the statements of Genesis are without authority and were written many hundreds of years after the death of Moses.

However, some of God’s true children whose eyes of understanding have not yet been opened to a clear apprehension of the divine plan of the ages, may be inclined to question what interest we could possibly have in God’s oath to Abraham—given more than 3,000 years ago. Such are inclined to say to themselves, That event was helpful to Abraham, but has nothing whatever to do with us or our day. It is our hope that an examination of this covenant, which God attested with His oath, as stated in our text, may be helpful to many of the Lord’s people present, enabling them to see that God had a plan in Abraham’s day; that he is still working according to that plan and that its completion will be glorious--a blessing to His creatures and an honor to Himself.

The context shows distinctly that the apostles and the early church drew comfort from the oathbound covenant, and clearly implies that this same comfort belongs to every true Christian down to the end of this age—to every member of the body of Christ. The apostle’s words imply that God’s promise and oath were intended more for us than for Abraham—more for our comfort than for his.

Note the apostle’s words: “That by two immutable things (two unalterable things) in which it was impossible for God to lie, we (the gospel church) might have a strong consolation; (we) who have fled for refuge (to Christ) to lay hold upon the hope set before us.”

ASSURANCE OF ALMIGHTY’S OATH

Doubtless Abraham and all of his family, Israel after the flesh, drew a certain amount of blessing and encouragement from this covenant or promise, and the oath of the Almighty—which doubly sealed it—gave double assurance of its certainty of accomplishment, but the apostle intimates in the words quoted that God’s special design in giving that covenant, and

in the binding it solemnly with an oath, was to encourage spiritual Israel—to give us a firm foundation for faith.

God well knew that, although 3,000 years from His own standpoint would be but a brief space, “as a watch in the night,” nevertheless to us the time would appear long, and the strain upon faith would be severe; hence the positive statement, and the still more deliberate oath that bound it. We cannot but wonder at such descension upon the part of the great Creator—that he would stoop to His fallen creatures, and above all, that He should condescend to give His oath on the subject.

An upright man feels that his word should be sufficient in any matter, and, therefore, would hesitate under special conditions to confirm his word with an oath. How much more might the Heavenly Father have so regarded the matter. But our text explains the reason for such condescension. He was willing more abundantly to show the unchangeableness of His plan, to the “heirs of the promise”—not to the world.

JOINT HEIRS WITH JESUS

Our Lord Jesus was the great heir of the Abrahamic promise, and the faithful of His consecrated people of this gospel age are declared to be His joint-heirs in that promise, which is not yet fulfilled. For its fulfillment not only the church is waiting, as the bride or fellow members of the body of Christ, to be participants with the Lord in the glories implied in the promise, but additionally the whole creation (the entire human family) is groaning and travailing in pain together waiting for the great fulfillment of that oathbound promise or covenant. (Rom. 8:22)

Those who follow the apostle’s argument and realize that we as Christians are still waiting for the fulfillment of this promise, will be anxious to know what are the terms of this covenant which is the hope of the world, the hope of the church, and the object of so much solicitude and care on the part of God, in that He could promise and then back His word with His oath. We answer that every Christian should know what this promise is, since it lies at the very foundation of every Christian hope.

How can this hope be an anchor to our souls in all the storms and trials and difficulties of life, in all the opposition of the world, the flesh and the adversary, if we do not know what the hope is, if we have not even recognized the promise upon which this hope is based?

GOD FORESAW THE PRESENT

This is the pitiable condition of many of God’s true children; for they are merely babes in Christ, using the

milk of the word. They have need of the strong meat of God's promise, as the apostle speaks of it, that they may be "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might;"

2H530

that they might have on the whole armor of God, helmet, breast plate, sandals, sword and shield, and be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one—able also to help the weaker ones in this the truth, with various infidel arguments in the hands and mouths of those who profess to be ministers of the word.

Need I quote the promise—the one so repeatedly referred to in the apostolic writings—the one which is the basis or anchorage of our souls? It was made to Abraham and reads thus: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." It was a promise for the future and not for Abraham's own time. The world was not blessed in Abraham's day, nor did he even have a child at the time this promise was given. Isaac did not fulfill the promise! he was merely a type of the greater seed of Abraham who in due time would fulfill it. Jacob and his twelve tribes, fleshly Israel, did not fulfill the promise, but still looked for a greater Messiah to fulfill it, to bless them and through them all the families of the earth.

The Apostle Paul referred to this very promise, declaring that the seed of Abraham mentioned therein is Christ. All Christians agree to this, even though they have not distinctively and properly associated it with the declarations of the promise. But the apostle makes clear to us that, in saying that Christ is the seed of Abraham he had in mind not only the Lord Jesus as the head of the body, the head of the Christ, but also the overcoming saints of this gospel age as the body of Christ. This he distinctly states in many places, for instance, Galatians 3:16-29. Here he declares the matter expressly, saying: "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

ABRAHAM'S SEED NOT COMPLETE

The "seed of Abraham" is the Gospel church, with her head the Lord Jesus, as the apostle states, again saying: "We brethren, as Isaac was (typified by Isaac), are the children of promise" (Galatians 4:28) It follows that the seed of Abraham mentioned in the promise is not complete and will not be until the full close of this Gospel Age, the harvest time of which we believe we are now in.

But what a wonderful thought is involved in this plain interpretation of the Divine Word. It is big with hope for spiritual Israel, the spiritual seed, and no less it means a blessing to the natural seed, fleshly Israel, and ultimately the Millennial blessings to all the families of the earth.

Let us examine these three hopes: The hopes for these three classes center in this great oathbound covenant. Let us thus obtain what the apostle tells us was the Lord's intention for us, namely, strong consolation—strong encouragement.

All through the prophecies the Lord foretold the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow; nevertheless the glories to follow have been granted much more space in the Divine revelation than the sufferings of the present time. The implication suggested by the apostle is, that when the glories of the future shall be realized, the trials and sufferings and difficulties of the present time will be found not worthy to be compared, but those glories and blessings have been veiled from our mental vision, and instead a great pall hangs over the future in the minds of many of the Lord's people. With some it is merely a mist of doubt and of uncertainty, with others it is the smoke of confusion, blackness and despair as they think of their own friends in connection with an eternity of torture, and the probability that a large majority of those they love will spend an eternity of horror in torment. We know that these clouds and dark forebodings come to us from the dark ages, and through theological twistings handed down from time to time.

Many of us have learned to distort the simple language of God's word in such a manner as to cause us anguish and distress. For instance, "destroy," "perish," "die," "second death," "everlasting destructions," etc., terms used by the Lord to represent the ultimate complete annihilation of those who will not come into harmony with him after a full opportunity is granted them, are interpreted to mean the reverse of what they say—life, preservation in torture, etc.

It is high time, dear friends, that we should learn that God's book is not the foundation of these horrible nightmares which have afflicted us, and which in the past hindered many of us from a proper love and reverence for our Creator. It is high time that we should take the explanation which the apostle gives us of this matter and of all the errors which assail poor humanity respecting the future. He says: "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 our Lord, should shine into their hearts." 2 Cor. 4:4

We cannot here and now discuss this subject, but have provided, in the hands of the ushers, some free pamphlets on 'What say the Scriptures about Hell?' Should the supply prove insufficient drop me a postal card and I will cheerfully send from Allegheny what will satisfy both your head and your heart.

Now, what hope and interest has the church of Christ in this promise made to Abraham? To us belongs the very cream of

the promise, “the riches of God’s grace.” The promise implies the greatness of the seed of Abraham—which seed is Christ and the overcoming church. This greatness is so wonderful as to be almost beyond human comprehension. The overcomers

2H531

of this gospel age, who “make their calling and election sure” in Christ, are to be joint-heirs with Him in the glorious Millennial Kingdom which is to be God’s agency or channel for bringing about the promised blessings of all the families of the earth.

THE MILLENNIAL PROMISE

The great blessing of forgiveness of sins which are past, and even the blessing of being awakened from the sleep of death, would profit mankind but little if the arrangements of that future time—the Millennial Age—were not on such a scale as to permit a thorough recovery from present mental, moral and physical weakness. Hence we are rejoiced to learn that in that time Satan will be bound, every evil influence and every unfavorable condition will be brought under restraint, and the favor of God through the knowledge of God will be let loose among the people—“the knowledge of our Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep.” Blessing! Aye, favor upon favor, blessing upon blessing, is the Lord’s arrangement and provision. All shall know him, from the least unto the greatest, and none shall need to say to his neighbor or brother, “know thou the Lord.” Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34

The prophets spoke repeatedly of these blessings due to the world in the future. Mark how Joel tells that, as during this gospel age, the Lord pours out his spirit upon His servants and handmaidens, so after these days, in the Millennial Age, He will pour out His spirit upon all flesh. There will be world-wide blessing through the knowledge of the truth. Mark how Moses, the prophet, spoke of these coming blessings, and told how God would raise up a greater law giver than himself, a greater teacher, a better mediator, and under the better covenant of the Lord would bring blessings world-wide. Mark how again he represents the atonement for the sins of the whole world in Atonement Day sacrificial arrangements. Mark how again He typically foretold the blessings of the Millennial Age, representing it in Israel’s ‘Year of Jubilee,’ in which every man went free and every possession was returned to its original ownership—thus representing the blessings of the future, man’s release from servitude to sin, to Satan, and the return to Him of all that was lost through Adam. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Micah, have spoken of these coming times, so that the Apostle Peter, pointing to the future, could truthfully declare that the coming times of restitution of all things

have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:10-21

HOPE FOR JEWS AND OTHERS

The second class to be blessed under this Abrahamic covenant is fleshly Israel. We are not forgetting that the Jews were a rebellious and stiff-necked people; that they slew the prophets and stoned the Lord's ministers and caused the crucifixion of our Redeemer. Nevertheless, the Scriptures clearly hold forth that after they have had a period of chastisement, which they have been undergoing as a nation since the Lord's crucifixion, and after spiritual Israel shall have been glorified in the Kingdom, then a blessing from the Lord will come upon natural Israel; they shall be saved or recovered from their blindness and, as the prophet declares, they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn for Him, because the eyes of their understanding shall be opened. We rejoice, too, that the promise is clear and distinct that the Lord will pour upon them the "spirit of prayer and of supplication." (Zech. 12:10) See also Romans 11:25-33.

"But if God is to have mercy upon the natural Israelite, whom He declares to have been stiff-necked and hard-hearted and rebellious, would it surprise us that the divine, benevolent intention should be to bless others than the Jews—others who had not in the past the favors and privileges of this favored nation and whose course, therefore, was less in opposition to the light? It should not surprise us, and so we find in this great oath-bound covenant a blessing for all nations—all peoples.

Let us look at the promise again—remembering that our Heavenly Father made it deliberately and subsequently bound Himself to its provisions by an oath, so that we might not only be sure that He could not break His word, but doubly sure that He could not break His oath, and that therefore without peradventure this promise shall be fulfilled. It reads: 'In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' What is the blessing so greatly needed by all mankind? We answer, it is the very blessing that Jesus declared He came to give, saying: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Ah, yes. Life! Life! It is life that the whole world needs, and our Lord Jesus declares Himself to be the great life-giver. Indeed, in the Syrian language, in which probably our Lord discoursed, the word life-giver is the equivalent to our word saviour. Jesus came to save man—from sin, and from the penalty of sin—namely death. It is a human invention of the dark ages to attach eternal torment as the penalty of sin; it is the divine arrangement to attach to sin a reasonable and just, but an awful penalty—Death. It is because we are sinners that we are all dying creatures and for the Lord to give life implies

that He will take away the sin and all necessity for its penalty.

POOR, IMPERFECT CREATURES

*We make God's love too narrow
By false standards of our own.*

2H532

It is time for us to wake up to the fact that we are no better than our God, but that we are poor, imperfect creatures of the dust, fallen by nature, and that it is time for us to stop misconstruing the divine character and plan as against His creatures, and to hearken to the Lord's own word when He declares: "Their fear toward Me is not of Me, but is taught by the precepts of men." It is time for us to be praying for ourselves and for each other as the apostle prayed for some, saying, "I pray God for you that the eyes of your understanding may be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths—to know the love of God which surpasseth all understanding." Eph. 1:18; 3:18, 19

Do not misapprehend us; we are not teaching that heathen and imbeciles and the unregenerate in general shall be taken to heaven, where they would be utterly out of harmony with their surroundings and require to be converted and to be taught. Such an inconsistent view we leave to those who are now claiming that the heathen will be saved in their ignorance. We stand by the Word of God, that there is no present salvation without faith in Christ Jesus, and hence that the heathen and the imbeciles have neither part nor lot in the salvation in the present time. We stand by the Scriptures which declare that any who are saved in the present time must walk in the narrow way, of which the dear Redeemer says, they be few that find it. We stand by the Scriptures, which say that salvation at the present time is only for the little flock who, through much tribulation, shall enter the kingdom. We stand by the Scriptures, which say that this kingdom class now being developed is the seed of Abraham under the Lord their Head, their Elder Brother, the Bridegroom. We stand by the Scriptures, which say that through this Christ, when complete, a blessing shall extend to every member of Adam's race—the blessing of opportunity to know the Lord, to understand the advantages of righteousness, the opportunity of choosing obedience and by obedience obtaining everlasting life.

JUDGMENT DAY OPPORTUNITY

The blessings of the future will be of such a kind that every individual who does not have his full opportunity in this present life will have it then; not an opportunity to become members of the "little flock," not an opportunity of becoming members of the "seed of Abraham," not an opportunity to have part in the great "change" from human nature to divine nature; not an opportunity to sit

with the Lord in His throne. But an opportunity to obtain that which was lost—human perfection, everlasting life under human, earthly, paradisiacal conditions; an opportunity of coming again into divine likeness, almost obliterated in the human family through the 6,000 years of the fall.

This period, in which this opportunity will be granted to man, is in the Scriptures termed the day of judgment—a thousand year day—the Millennial day. It will be a day of trial, a day of testing, a day of proving the world to see whether, with a full knowledge of God and of righteousness, which He requires, they will choose it in preference to sin, choose life in preference to the second death.

Thank God for that wonderful judgment, the trial day for the world secured for all through the precious blood of Christ. “When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” Isaiah 26:9

Following a public debate with Elder L. S. White of the Disciple denomination, on Baptism, Pastor Russell on Friday baptized 37 adults, 18 men, 19 women, some of whom had been Elder White’s adherents. The debate was printed in full in a Cincinnati paper, and a few copies can be secured at Pastor Russell’s office, Allegheny, at cost of 5 cents each.

[The National Labor Tribune, March 27, 1908](#)

WHO THEN SHALL BE SAVED?

Pastor Russell preached at Allegheny Carnegie Hall ready effected by his friends. In the interim the Bible yesterday to his home congregation, and at the close of House Congregation will meet regularly at the Arch his address bid them an affectionate good-bye until Street Chapel and be served by various brethren of May 10. In the meantime he will make a tour of En- ‘ability. Pastor Russell’s text yesterday was from 1 Peter gland, Ireland and Scotland, speaking in 13 of the 4:18, “If the righteous scarcely be saved where shall the principal cities, in accordance with arrangements al- ungodly and the sinner appear?”

*This discourse has been republished in **Pastor Russell’s Sermons**, pages 303-315, entitled, “Who, then, Shall Be Saved?”*

[The National Labor Tribune, April 19, 1908](#)

THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST

Glasgow, Scotland, April 19. A three-days' Convention of Bible Students closed its session today. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, U.S.A., delivered the afternoon discourse to an immense concourse of people at Victoria Hall, our largest auditorium. Nearly five thousand heard, and of this number nearly one thousand from all parts of the Kingdom were attendants at the three-days' Convention. The speaker's discourse was heard with rapt attention, and was based upon the Savior's words, "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the Just." (Luke 14:14) He said:

With the use of the word Easter we have little sympathy. We regret that our ancestors, during the "dark ages," considered it expedient to adopt the name of a heathen goddess and a heathen festival for one of the most sacred and inspiring memorials of the Christian faith. It does not seem a sufficient excuse that it was hoped thus to gain an influence over the heathen worshippers of Estera. Far better would it have been to retain the original word Passover used in the Scriptures and mistranslated Easter. It was undoubtedly a wrong thought that to get away from the influence of Judaism it was desirable to ignore the word Passover, a word which, anti-typically considered, has such profound significance to those who are in Christ Jesus, to the "Passed-over-ones," to those who have passed from death unto life and who have come into relationship to God through Christ. But let us not stop to quarrel with the name of the Festival which in itself is so full of beauty and meaning to every Christian. We memorialize the event which this day celebrates, and not the name attached to the day; and to whatever extent we are able to forget the heathen origin of the word Easter and to attach to it the signification of joyful awakening to newness of life, to that extent the name will be sweet to us.

Cast the mind backward to the 4,100 years that had elapsed from the time of Adam's creation to the time of our Lord's birth and note how dark that period was. The sentence of death which came upon our first parents because of disobedience and which resulted in ejection from Eden, causing to come upon them the various blighting influences incidental to the fall and to the execution of the sentence of death upon them—these have been in operation for that long period of 4,000 years. When half of the period had elapsed God made known to Abraham the first outlines of the divine plan for human salvation, saying, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Still the blessing did not come and two thousand years more rolled by, with merely a partial blessing

upon the one little nation of Israel and that blessing an unsatisfactory one, for as the Apostle declares, "The Law made nothing perfect;" and again, "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight." (Heb. 7:19; Rom. 3:20) The whole world lay under condemnation of sin and death and the only rays of light and hope on all the horizon came from the promise to Abraham, which God reiterated through the prophets. That was a dark night of hopeless despair for the world in general, of whom the Apostle says that they were "without God, having no hope in the world." Eph. 2:12

THE DAY STAR AROSE

Our Lord's first advent as the man Christ Jesus was intended, we are informed, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and to "bring in everlasting righteousness." (Dan. 9:24) We are all conversant with the beginning of our Lord's consecration of himself to do his Father's will when he had reached manhood's estate and symbolized that consecration by baptism. We are all aware that his consecrated life was laid down throughout the three and a half years of His ministry and that this sacrifice was finished at Calvary; but in order for our Redeemer to be our deliverer it was necessary that He should not remain dead, it was necessary that the Father should raise him from the dead by his own power and most explicitly do the Scriptures explain that the Lord's promised resurrection was accomplished, and that he rose again on the third day. The Master himself referred to the matter before his death, telling that he would rise on the third day; and he has referred to it since saying, "I am he that was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore." (Rev. 1:18) And the Apostle, referring to the same thing, declares the object of our Lord's death saying, "For this purpose Christ both died and revived and rose that he might be the Lord (controller) both of the dead and the living." (Rom. 14:9) We perceive, then, that the two most important events of all past history were the death of our Lord and his resurrection from the dead on the third day. No wonder that all Christian doctrine centers in those two great events! No wonder we celebrate the day of the resurrection of our Lord—but, indeed we celebrate this weekly by our observance of the first day of the week, a weekly memorial that our Redeemer liveth.

Everything in nature seems to be so regulated as to constitute a picture or illustration of something in grace, and thus Easter, the Passover season, arranged by divine providence for the spring time, represents the

2H534

springing up of new hopes, new life, new knowledge, where before there was death. Believers in Jesus recog-

nize the fact that he is the Life-Giver, and that their hopes of eternal life center in the Lord—not merely in the work that he accomplished at Calvary, but especially in him whom the Father raised from the dead and has made the Lord of all, the Life-Giver to the Church and ultimately to be the Life-Giver to the world of mankind—so many of them as will receive this grace of God at his hands when it shall be offered to them in due time. The Apostle says, “To us who believe he is precious.” (1 Pet. 2:7) We do not need to wait until his second coming and until the actual resurrection which shall then take place, but by faith we already recognize the divine plan and consider ourselves as though we had already passed from death unto life. What joyful experiences belong to those who are thus able to accept the divine Word by faith! Verily, as the Apostle says, they can rejoice with joy unspeakable; they can rejoice even in tribulation. By faith in these, old things have passed away, all things have become new.

And let us not forget that these who have the hearing ear of faith and the seeing eye of faith are the ones and the only ones whom the Father is now drawing from amongst men to be joint-heirs with their Lord in his glorious Kingdom which is to bless the world of mankind with opportunities for knowledge and deliverance from sin and death. Blessed are their eyes for they see, blessed are their ears for they hear. Blessed are their hearts if they respond, for to such now come the great and wonderful opportunity of becoming the “Bride of Christ,” of becoming “members in particular of the Body of Christ”—of suffering with their Lord and by and by reigning with him.

“A SHARE IN HIS RESURRECTION”

The Apostle, speaking for himself and for all who have the hearing ear and seeing eye of faith and the obedience of heart, declares that our grand hope is that we may share with our Lord in his resurrection. The Apostle’s words are, “I do count all things but loss and dross that I might win Christ ... that I might know him and the power of his resurrection by being made conformable to his death.” (Phil. 3:8) What does this mean and in what sense can the Apostle and we share in Christ’s resurrection? We answer that Christ’s resurrection is what is described in the Scriptures as the First Resurrection or chief resurrection in that it is a resurrection of perfection of being on the highest of all planes, the divine plane. As we read our Lord was put to death in the flesh but quickened in the spirit; and the Apostle’s description of the resurrection of the Church is to the same effect, that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven,” and hence that we must all be changed in our resurrection, as Jesus was changed in his resurrection from earthly to heavenly nature. (1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:50) Describing this chief resurrection the Apostle

says, “It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body.” (1 Cor. 15:43, 44) This is not the description of the general resurrection of the world, but a description of the First Resurrection, which is God’s provision for the Church alone, for the Christ, the Anointed of God, of which our Lord Jesus is the Head and the Church, figuratively, members in particular of his Body. (1 Cor. 12:27) So, then, the Apostle’s hope of a share in Christ’s resurrection was that he might make his calling election sure to a place amongst the Very Elect, the Church in glory—joint-heirs with their Lord. The same, dear friends, is your hope and mine and should be the hope of all those who have ears to hear and hearts to appreciate the glorious invitation extended during this Gospel Age to a little flock out of all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues. Concerning this chief resurrection we read, Blessed and holy are all they who have part in the Chief Resurrection, over such the Second Death has no power. They shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years. Rev. 20:6

THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST

We are deeply interested in this matter, dear friends, for the Apostle divides the human family into two classes, the just and the unjust. He declares that there is a resurrection provided for both; and it is for you and me to determine in which of these resurrections we prefer to have our portion. Our Lord, the greatest of theologians, similarly divides mankind into two classes and shows that there are two resurrections. He says, “Marvel not: the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment”—mistranslated damnation in the common version. John 5:28,29) We do not wish to be understood as holding or teaching that there are no gradations amongst men, some more saintly and some less so, some are more wicked and some less so, and we understand our Lord and the Apostles to teach that there will be a difference of reward amongst those who will share in the First Resurrection, as well as differences of punishment for those who will share in the second resurrection, and that these will be regulated according to the amount of knowledge and consequent responsibility and according to the zeal of our right doing or wilfulness of our wrong doing—a just recompense

2H535

of reward to each. We are here calling attention to the fact that there is a general division line between the just and unjust, those who please God and those who please him not, the First Resurrection class and the latter

resurrection class, the Chief Resurrection class and the less desirable resurrection class.

Who are the ‘just’ referred to in the Apostle’s statement? Who are the “good” of our Lord’s statement? We are to remember that by nature no one is just, no one is good, that all are fallen, all are imperfect, all are unworthy of divine favor, all have forfeited divine favor, all are “children of wrath.” Hence, the word “just” and the word “good” must here be used in a relative sense, as referring to those justified by faith and those good and acceptable to God through faith in Christ. But we find that it is not sufficient that we should merely believe, but that the Lord has laid certain tests upon those who are now being called. They are called to walk in his steps, they are called to be his disciples, they are called to take up their cross and follow him they are assured that only those who do so shall share with him in the great honor, glory and immortality which God hath in reservation for those who love him. Hence plainly enough the “good,” the ‘just,’ those who please God in the present time are only a little flock, who, according to their ability, are walking not after the flesh but after the spirit. In these reckonedly the law of God is fulfilled and whatever they are short of full perfection is compensated or made up to them by the Redeemer, whose precious sacrifice is available to them for this purpose. Thus we see that the “Very Elect,” those whom God will pass upon as good, as just, as acceptable to him, those whom he will decree worthy of life, eternal, will be a “little flock.” Nor can we find fault with the divine justice and love which has thus determined. However, when we considered how small is the number of these in the world, how few are walking, living not after the flesh but after the spirit we are assured that the majority of our neighbors and friends, the majority of Church members as well as all the heathen, will have their portion in the resurrection of the unjust, in the resurrection of those whose lives have not pleased God—for “this is the will of God, even your sanctification”—all the unsanctified, therefore, are in an attitude that is not pleasing to God, in an attitude that will hinder their share in the Chief Resurrection.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE UNJUST

Those justified before God are counted worthy of eternal life, their trials and testings all being in the past in the present life. Hence, they all come forth to a life resurrection, perfected in life in the very moment of their coming forth from death. But it is not so with the majority of mankind, they have had no trial at all, for although all were condemned in Adam and all were redeemed in Christ, yet the only way to get the blessing in Christ is through the knowledge of the only name given under heaven and amongst men; and since only a small proportion of the heathen have ever heard of that only name, it

follows that the vast majority have had no testing or trial at all, have had no opportunity as yet. So whether our minds dwell chiefly upon those who have had no opportunity or chiefly upon the smaller number who have had some knowledge, some opportunity, we perceive that all belong to a class that will not be counted worthy of a life resurrection, but who, as our Redeemer says, will come forth unto a resurrection of judgment, come forth from the tomb, come forth from the blindness of the Adversary, come forth from the dominion of sin and death that they may have a glorious opportunity of being raised up gradually step by step, inch by inch, out of the degradation and sin into which they were plunged through heredity as Children of Adam. God has provided the thousand years or Millennium for their uplifting, mentally, morally and physically, out of sin and death conditions that they may be brought back eventually to the glorious estate of perfect manhood, to all that was lost in Adam and all that was redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Hence their resurrection will be a gradual work, lasting a thousand years and provided with tests all along the way. The declaration is that if they will not be obedient to the tests and opportunities then granted to them, when full light and knowledge will fill the earth and when Satan will be bound that he shall deceive the nations no more—if they will not avail themselves of these privileges and blessings and opportunities for raising-up out of sin and death conditions, they shall be judged worthy of the Second Death, from which there is to be no redemption, no recovery—eternal death, extinction, as with brute beasts. How glad we are that the heavenly Father's gracious plans are so high and so deep and so broad that they extend to every member of Adam's race; that while we may rejoice in our glorious prospect of a share in the First Resurrection, a resurrection to a new nature, which the Apostle Peter calls the "divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4), how glad we are that the world also is to have a glorious opportunity of resurrection, of being raised up to human perfection! How glad we are that we have the promise of the Lord that their eternal home, the earth, shall again be the Paradise of God; that God's Tabernacle shall again be with men, that he will dwell with them, that he will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, and that God, through his various agencies and provinces, will wipe away all tears from off all faces, and that the inhabitants of the land shall

2H536

no more say, I am sick; and that there shall be no more pain, no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things shall have passed away. for all those, unworthy of eternal life, shall then have been destroyed in the Second Death, everlasting destruction. Rev. 2:7; Ezek. 37:27; Joel 2:28, 29; Rom. 14:11; Rev. 21:4; Isa. 33:24; Acts 3:23.

BENEVOLENCE TO BE REWARDED

But notice our context: our Lord accepted an invitation to dinner from a prominent Pharisee, and the words of our text were addressed to this Pharisee and his friends. The special point of the lesson, therefore, was not to the Lord's disciples, but to people in general, as shown when our Lord said, When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren nor thy kinsmen nor thy rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast call the poor, the lame, the maimed, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed, because they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Luke 14:13, 14

Several matters here deserve consideration: (1) No recompensing is suggested as taking place at death; (2) those to be recompensed are to get their reward or blessing for good works, not for faith and not because they were disciples of Jesus and took up their cross to follow him; (3) the reward of such good works will not be a share in the resurrection of the just, but when the just are resurrected and when God's Kingdom shall then have been established amongst men and the new order of things inaugurated, a blessing will accrue to these for having done kindness to the poor, the lame, the blind who could not return the kindness. In other words, in God's great counting, every act of kindness is a credit and every act of unkindness is a debit as respects the world and signifies either blessings or adversities proportionately when their judgment day shall come, when they shall be on trial during the Millennial Age.

If any one be disposed to differ with us in this interpretation let him reflect that to make a dinner or supper to the poor who could not recompense it, would be a very cheap way indeed of attaining a place in the First Resurrection, a place in the Kingdom. And if this is the condition upon which the Kingdom is to be gained our Lord and his apostles and the majority of his followers would have little opportunity of gaining it, for most of them are poor in this world's goods and unable to make feasts for the poor, the blind and the lame. Manifestly, therefore, our interpretation is the only one who fits the case. And how much more reasonable is this view than the other one which has been sanctioned since the "dark ages," namely that any who failed to get into the Kingdom of God as members of the Church would be consigned to an eternity of torment! Where would be the opportunity for rewarding the gift of a cup of cold water to a disciple? Where would be the opportunity for rewarding mentioned in our context? But with the Scriptural presentation in our minds, that there is neither wisdom, knowledge nor device in the grave, all is simple and clear! When the First, the Chief Resurrection shall give God's rewards to the Church, the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the "little flock" when the Kingdom shall be established then

the awakening of the world of mankind in general will take place, and then will be the time when every good deed or every evil deed will be a credit or debit.

Nor are we to suppose that little, trifling acts of kindness or of unkindness will be read from the great book and literal stripes laid on and literal blessings bestowed. Rather we may suppose that every act of kindness which any one may now do for those who are more distressed than themselves will have its effect upon their own hearts and minds not only blessing them for the life than now is, but preparing their hearts through a greater nobility for a higher relative position in the future during the Millennium. Similarly those who now do unkindness are responsible in proportion as they have light and knowledge, and the unkind deeds react upon their own hearts and lives, more or less hardening them and toughening them, and this hardness and toughness of conscience and character will be theirs in the awakening of the resurrection time and they will have that much the more to contend against when during the Millennium they shall be required to make progress out of the sin and death conditions back to harmony with the divine law of love. Let us, therefore, in the world and in our families and amongst those who are not of the consecrated class, encourage large benevolence, kindness, generosity, knowing that these will be beneficial to our friends. Let us help them in any tendencies they may have to greatness of heart, knowing that they will be the better prepared for the trials and disciplines which will come to them through the Millennium.

In conclusion, I exhort so many of you as have been begotten of the holy Spirit and are New Creatures in Christ; so many of you as are risen with him to walk in newness of life, that you more and more seek to put away all things that belong to the sin and death conditions and that you seek to put on all the glorious characteristics of our Redeemer, the fruits of his holy Spirit—meekness, patience, humility, kindness, love. I exhort you that you think more and more of the Master '5 resurrection and of the privilege granted to us of

2H537

being sharers in that Chief Resurrection, and that you think of this as not only the spring time of your own precious hopes in the Lord, but that the completion of this First Resurrection will mean the glorious spring time of divine favor to the whole world, when we shall have entered into the joys of the Lord. It is of this glorious restitution spring time that the Apostle Peter speaks saying, "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord: and he shall send Jesus Christ (his second advent), whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the

mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began”—the time of the world’s rejuvenation and restoration to human perfection, the time of the earth’s rejuvenation, when it shall be brought to its paradisiacal splendor and completeness. For these things, dear brethren and sisters, let us seek, looking longingly in our hearts to this glorious consummation of the divine plan and in our daily lives seeking to perfect holiness, that we may be sharers in those things which God hath in reservation for them that love him.

[The National Labor Tribune, April 26, 1908](#)

NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

Manchester, England, April 26. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburgh, U.S.A., preached here today to a deeply interested audience of nearly 4,000 people in our largest auditorium. He rather scored the “New Theology” recently brought into prominence here by the noted preacher of the London City Temple. He made clear that he sympathized with the adherents to the New Theology to the extent of sharing their shame and repugnance to the theology of the “dark ages” with its millions in Eternal Torment at the hands of fire-proof devils, but he denounced the New Theology as merely another name for infidelity, an utter repudiation of the Bible. He claimed that the Bible had been vilified and misrepresented in the house of its friends, and that this course is driving multitudes of the wisest heads and best hearts into passive infidelity or into the more active form of the same, known as Higher Criticism and New Theology. He declared that the Bible should be studied free from the bias and coloring of sectarianism and that thus viewed no noble heart or logical mind need be ashamed of it. He took his stand with that great reasoner and master and theologian, the Apostle Paul, and fully endorsed his statement which constituted the text of the afternoon, namely, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.” (Rom. 1:16) Pastor Russell said:

Those who have studied the masterful writings of the Apostle Paul, constituting so large a portion of the New Testament, must surely have been impressed with the reasonableness and logic of his mental positions as therein stated. While it is true that not many understand the Bible at all, yet even those who do not grasp the full import of the Apostle’s words can see enough therein to convince them of his soundness of logic; and the comparatively few, begotten of the holy Spirit, who really understand the depths of his writings, unanimously accord his epistles the first place amongst the writings of the Bible as well as in general literature. And now we ask of all who recognize his ability at all and his sterling honesty of expression, Is it possible to suppose that when the Apostle

wrote the words of our text he had in mind anything akin to the gross travesty upon justice and love which in the “dark ages” was branded the Gospel of Christ and has been handed down to us? Could we suppose that he had in mind a race not only born in sin and shapen in iniquity but condemned by its Creator to an eternity of torture since the time of Adam’s disobedience; could we suppose that he had in mind for such a race a message that Christ had died and that the net result of his sacrifice for sin and all of the results of that sacrifice would effect only about one in a thousand or one in ten thousand of earth’s teeming millions—to open their eyes of understanding and to lead them from darkness to light, from sin to righteousness, from enmity to God to loving obedience as saints with a reward of heavenly glory? Can we suppose that he had in mind the Gospel as preached by Jonathan Edwards which declared that the handful of the saved would look over the battlements of heaven into an abyss containing the thousands of millions of their fellow-creatures including their own parents and children and friends, and that they would turn around and praise God the louder for the sight, rejoicing that they were saved from such a fate “so changed” that they would have no sympathy or sorrow or compassion for the tormented ones?

We care not which view of the matter is taken, whether it be held that God fore-ordained that only one out of ten thousand should be called and sanctified and glorified, or whether, as our Methodist friends claim, he did not fore-ordain us but, doing his best to the contrary, these results were inevitable. We hold that the shame which is growing prevalent throughout “Christendom” as respects this Gospel of the “dark

2H538

ages” is a most hopeful sign of our return to sanity and reason! We hold that the ascribing of such a program to the Almighty is a slander upon the whole race! We hold that it was this very “doctrine of devils,” gradually foisted upon the Church by Satan, which led men during the “dark ages” to torture one another on the rack, and to burn one another at the stake, and to think that in so doing they were manifesting the Spirit of God and working the works of the Father and of the Son! A devilish doctrine is sure to have a blighting influence upon the heart and head and conduct. We first learned to be ashamed of the conduct of our forbears as manifested in their persecutions; we are now learning to be ashamed of the creeds by which they were deceived into their unrighteous course, and we rightly charge it to the great Adversary, who has always sought to put darkness for light.

ASHAMED OF “ANOTHER GOSPEL”

Even in the Apostle’s day he noted the tendency of the Adversary to bring in false doctrines and to put another

Gospel instead of the true one. He was not only ashamed of the false Gospel but denounced it and forewarned the Church to be on guard against the wiles of the Adversary, telling us that he would attempt to present himself as an angel of light on purpose to deceive the followers of Christ. To what extent he has been successful as a theologian and teacher in the Church, let all the creeds of the “dark ages” and since bear witness! Do not think for one moment that I am stating anything new. For years, especially within the last forty years, thinking people and particularly ministers of the Gospel, have been perplexed and fretted in soul in respect to the creeds. Both heart and head told them that they were wrong; that such a plan, so far from being a heavenly one, is earthly, sensual, devilish, far beneath the standard of moral honesty and decency amongst men—not to speak of love for our neighbor as for ourselves, which should do for others as we would that they should do for us. This false Gospel contradicts entirely the Lord’s statement, that as the heavens are higher than the earth so are his ways higher than man’s ways.

There are many of our fallen race, alas, who are very mean and moved by very wicked and malicious influences at times, but we have yet to find a man or woman so wretchedly degraded, so unjust, so unsympathetic, unloving, so fierce, so venomous, so deficient that he or she would purposely, knowingly, intentionally, bring into being any creature, human or brute, and then take continual pleasure, century after century, in torturing those creatures, in witnessing their sufferings, their groans and their agonizing cries. What awful things have we done? By following Satan’s delusion, foisted upon us as a race during the “dark ages,” we have unwittingly, stupidly ascribed to the God of wisdom, justice, love and power a plan which in proportion as we really believe it slanders him and makes him more detestable to the eyes of our understanding than any of his creatures in the universe. Alas! For such a slander our heavenly Father, for such blasphemy of his holy name, we might well mourn in sackcloth and ashes for the remainder of our earthly life. But he is gracious unto us, not imputing our transgressions to us. He remembers that we are dust, fallen dust, and that as a race we have come largely under the deceptive influence of our Adversary, who has blinded us with ignorance and superstition. It is high time that we all awake, that we learn to use our God-given reasoning faculties on religious matters as well as upon the affairs of our natural lives.

“LET US WALK CIRCUMSPECTLY”

To awaken as a race from our long sleep, from our stupid, dreamy condition as respects religious matters—yea, to awaken from our nightmare and “nocturnal hallucinations,” it is surely high time! But let us remember that our first steps upon awakening are apt to be more or less uncertain and our course of reasoning

more or less faulty. Added to this let us remember that our Adversary, Satan, still anxious to hold us in the chains of ignorance and to prevent us from seeing the Lord in his true character and from coming into close touch with him, is very apt to appear as an angel of light and to guide our footsteps, if possible, still farther away from the right path, our heads and hearts still further away from their proper relationship to God and his Word.

We have a prominent illustration of this matter in the course of one of the brightest ministers in this great metropolis. Awakening from his troubled sleep, he has discovered that the doctrine of eternal torment was but a nightmare which he properly rejected and of which he was glad to be rid. But in the excitement of the moment he has rejected the Bible and its many precious instructions as being part and parcel of his nightmare. He has leaped over the traces and become one of the shining lights of the so-called "New Theology," which so far as the Bible and its teachings are concerned, might more truthfully be termed the new infidelity. Alas, that a blinded mind should be turned to another Gospel! And the end is not yet; there are hundreds, yea, thousands in this and in other lands who wait for a leader and who are now committing themselves in opposition to the Bible and its true message—the Gospel of Christ, of which the Apostle Paul was not ashamed. Moreover, as these men cry out thousands of slumbering Christians are awakened, and in their bewilderment

2H539

they are as apt not to follow the pernicious ways of this pseudo Gospel, this "New Theology," this new infidelity.

"A TRUMPET IN ZION"

Thank God not all of his people are asleep! And not all of those who have awakened from the nocturnal hallucinations have followed the lead of the Adversary, searching for new light, with their faces toward nature and the west and their backs toward God and his Word! God has not left himself without witnesses at any time, although at no time have these been a majority either in numbers or in influence. But it is these who are now called upon, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion! Sound an alarm in my holy mountain!" But the Lord through the prophet forewarns us that we must not expect that many will have the hearing ear as respects the truth; the declaration is, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." (Dan. 12:10) Neither is the term wicked here used in respect to murderers and thieves and the world in general, but in respect to the Lord's professed people who have made a covenant with him and who are esteemed wicked, wrong, in comparison as they fail to live in harmony with that covenant. The wise toward God who shall understand in

this time are the faithful ones who hearken to the Word of the Lord and who may hope to be of his jewels in the gathering time near at hand. It is respecting these that we read, "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" and again "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him and he will show them his covenant"—his purposes. (Psa. 25:9, 14) The Apostle declares that "Ye, brethren, are not left in darkness," in ignorance with the remainder of the world, and our Lord pointing down to our day declared that the Adversary would deceive, "if it were possible, the very Elect." (1 Thess. 5:4; Matt. 24:24) This implies the widespread and deceitful character of the delusions which already prevail and which, we understand the Scriptures to teach, will increase until "a thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand," implying a great falling away from the Truth from the Bible and from the Lord himself. The Apostle Paul, pointing down to our day, implies that the Lord will permit Satan to have special power now for the purpose of sifting and separating and approving the faithful and the unfaithful in the Nominal Church. He puts it strongly, saying that God will send strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that they all may be condemned who had not pleasure in the truth but in untruth. Let us, then, be very firm, very courageous to stand for the truth, to stand for the Lord, to stand for his Word, whatever the course of others may be.

MERELY A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

We are aware that many will be inclined to say that the difference between those who hold to the Bible and those who hold to the New Theology and reject the Bible are merely differences of opinion which are not vital as respects the Christian life of our relationship to God. We dispute this and call attention to the Scriptural presentation that our salvation must be recognized as of either faith or works. If it be of faith there must be a vital point to the faith, something in particular that is necessary to be believed; but if it be of works, then of course faith is ignored and the heathen, without any faith in Christ and an unfounded faith in God and his plan, would have the same opportunity of salvation by works as the Christian who has heard the Gospel of the Son of God and the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12) The battle on this question has waged ever since the days of the Apostle, but there is no question as to what was their stand. It is plainly declared that no man can be saved by works of the law, works of righteousness, and that our justification and salvation are through faith in the blood of Christ. If then the old theology of Jesus and the apostles shall stand the teachers of the New Theology

are convicted out of their own mouths with being false apostles, false teachers, not Christian, not only in their tendencies leading away from the Word of God, but in all their theories denying salvation through faith, which is the only salvation the Bible proclaims to mankind this side of the Millennium, the only terms on which any can be accepted of the Lord to the present high calling to membership in the "Little Flock," the Bride of Christ, the Very Elect.

Let the fight be squarely drawn and clearly seen. If the New Theology is right the Bible is entirely wrong; if man's existence on earth began on a plane one removed from a monkey, and he has been gradually evolving to his present condition and position, and if he is to save himself by his own works without a redemption and without divine interposition, then the Bible is wholly wrong, for it teaches the reverse of this in every particular. The Bible teaches that man was created in God's image, upright, and that he fell into sin and that, as the Apostle declares, the degradation of the heathen was because they were not willing, not desirous of retaining God in their mind, and that God gave them over to a reprobate mind and to doing evil things which have intensified the degradation of the race, some more and some less. The Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed represents that the penalty of all this sin and degradation is extinction; but that God in mercy provided Jesus as our Redeemer. It shows us that no member of the race could redeem it because

2H540

each member himself was under the divine sentence of death. It shows us that Christ's death was the offset or redemption price to Father Adam's sentence, and that as the whole race suffered through Adam's disobedience and sentence so likewise God could with equal justice permit that the redemptive work of Christ should apply not only to Adam but to all of his race. This Gospel of which St. Paul was not ashamed he clearly sets forth in Romans 5:12-19. He does not say that the penalty upon Adam was eternal torment, but that it was death. He does not say that our penalty is eternal torment, but death. He does not say that Christ went to eternal torment to pay our penalty but that he died for our sins. He does not say that we are to be recovered from eternal torment, but that we are to be justified and delivered from our condemnation from sin and from the death penalty which was upon all, and that, therefore, there is to be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust.

Delineating further the Gospel of which he was not ashamed the Apostle Paul explains to us that during this Gospel Age God is gathering out of the world of mankind a special Elect class to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife, to suffer with him that

they may also reign with him, to die with him that we may also live with him. (Rom. 8:17) He declares that there is a mystery connected with the matter which is not generally discerned and only intended of God to be understood by the Spirit-begotten ones, the faithful. He tells us that this mystery was hidden from us previously and that it consists in the fact that the heavenly Father fore-knew and predestinated that the great Messiah, the Seed of Abraham through whom all the families of the earth should be blessed, would be composed not only of our Lord Jesus but also of the Elect Church, which symbolically he calls his Body, saying, "God gave Christ to be the Head over the Church, which is his Body (Eph. 1:22,23); and again he declares we are members in particular of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27), and again that "Jesus, the Redeemer, the Lord and Head of the Church and the Seed of Abraham per se, shall have associated with himself the Church as members of the Seed of Abraham through whom the world is to be blessed. (Gal. 3:29) The false doctrine of the "dark ages," of which we are ashamed, declares that when the Elect Church shall have been gathered all the families of the earth shall forever be condemned and eternally tormented, but the Gospel which the Apostle Paul preached declares to the contrary, that when the Church is complete as the Seed of Abraham its mission as the glorified Kingdom of Christ, the Millennial Kingdom under the whole heavens, shall be to bless all the families of the earth, to convert them, to lift them up out of sin and death conditions and to give so many as will a full opportunity to return to divine favor as Adam first enjoyed it and the blessing of an earthly Paradise restored. The Apostle also declares that the blessing of the world waits until the Church, as a part of the Seed of Abraham, shall be completed and inherit that glorious promise and in fulfillment of it scatter divine blessings world-wide. Note how particularly he emphasizes this relationship of the Elect Church of this Gospel Age with Christ and with the promised Seed of Abraham through whom the blessing of the world is to come, he says: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29

CROSS AND CROWN—SHAME AND GLORY

The Gospel which the Apostle preached and of which he was not ashamed invited those who have the hearing ears to consecrate their lives that they might be of the Elect Church. It gave assurance that the cross of the present time would end in bringing not only everlasting life in the future but also glory, honor and immortality, a share with Christ in his Kingdom and in its glorious work. In view of this believers were urged to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through Christ, and to suffer with him now, be sharers of his ignominy and death that they might in due time be sharers with him in his Kingdom and honor and work of blessing all the families of the earth. In all of his teachings the Lord kept before the minds of the Church that the cross and the crown were inseparably united in

the divine program—"If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him," is his plea. The faithful were at the second advent of Christ to receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away. (1 Pet. 5:4) In their glorified condition they were to be the exalted Seed of Abraham with the glorious mission of blessing Israel after the flesh and all the families of the earth. (Rom. 11:25-32) Even the casting away of Natural Israel from divine favor upon the rejection of Messiah, the Apostle assures us, will be overruled eventually, so that Natural Israel will receive mercy at the hands of the spiritual Seed of Abraham.

In his letter to the Ephesians the Apostle indicates that the glories of the Church are not to be expected in the present time, which is a time of sacrifice and suffering with Christ. The glory is to follow and is to last not only during the thousand years in which the world will receive a blessing, but during the ages to come, through all eternity, the Elect Church, proved and tested by present disciplines, will be forever blessed of the Lord and sharers with their Redeemer and Head in the grace of God. Of this the apostle specifically says, "In the ages to come he (God) will show the exceeding

2H541

riches of his grace and loving kindness toward us in Chris Jesus." (Eph. 2:7) He also urges us not to cast away our confidence, our trust in God's promises, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not. He calls to our mind the fact that during this present time of suffering and trial, the oath-bound promise made to Abraham is to be to us who believe God's Word and oath an anchor to our souls sure and steadfast entering into that which is beyond the veil, whither our forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, who has already been glorified as the great High Priest, who during the Millennial Age shall exercise his office for the blessing of the world, and in line with this is the assurance that all the faithful of the Church of Christ, the "Little Flock," shall be in due time members of the Royal Priesthood, who as enthroned priests and associated with their enthroned High Priest Jesus shall share with him the blessed privilege of both ruling and instructing and assisting the world of mankind. Who, we ask, needs to be ashamed of such a Gospel? This is not the Gospel of the "dark ages," but it is, we see, the Gospel of the Apostles, and the only Gospel which fits and dovetails with their various expressions on the subject.

The Apostle Peter also has much to say respecting these same matters—the blessing of the world at the second coming of Christ and intermediately the trials and testings of the Church—that the overcomers thereof may be proven and made ready for a share with their Redeemer in the glorious

work of the Millennium. Harken to his words when preaching under the influence of the holy Spirit at Pentecost. He declared, pointing down to the future and the blessings that would come to mankind in general at the second coming of Christ, "Times of refreshing (literally in the Greek, springtime) shall come from the presence of the Lord: and he shall send Jesus Christ (his second advent), whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21) How could the Apostle emphasize the glorious outcome of the divine plan more distinctly than he has done? How could he more particularly tell us that at the second advent of Christ, instead of the destruction of the world, as all our creeds teach, there shall be indeed restitution times, times of refreshing, times of returning things back to a pristine glory and dignity and beauty! And the grandest of all restitution will be the raising of mankind to the perfection enjoyed originally by father Adam before he fell into sin, degradation and death. St. Peter not only declares this matter, but he calls us to witness that every prophet who could properly be called a holy prophet has directly or indirectly declared respecting this coming time of the world's blessing.

In harmony also with this and with the Apostle Paul's declaration are St. Peter's appeals to the Church that they make preparation, that they add to the graces and fruits of the Spirit continually, that they make progress in the good way of Christ-likeness, which the Apostle Paul denominates "putting on the whole armor of God." (Eph. 6:11) St. Peter says, "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:10, 11) No one will claim that the Apostle in these words was referring to any Kingdom established in his day. Undoubtedly he was pointing our hearts and minds forward to the Millennial Kingdom and to the promise of our dear Redeemer that his faithful would sit with him in his throne and share his glories and honors and work. (Rev. 3:2 1) Undoubtedly his words are and were intended to be in full accord with those of our dear Master, who assured us of his willingness to bless the faithful at the end of this age saying, "Fear not, Little Flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." The same Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven."

Let us then, dear friends, cast away our fear and shame when we cast away the creeds of the "dark ages," but let us hold fast to the Bible and its exceeding great and precious promises, the like of which are to be found in no other religion and, when rightly appreciated and understood, are nobler, better far than any human creed or condition ever penned! Let God be true though it make every creed a lie, as the Apostle would say! And believing in the living and true God, whose character is

shown by this his wonderful plan for man's salvation, let us render him the homage of our lips, confessing him in all our ways, not only with our tongues but with our lives and so far as possible, also exalting him in the very thoughts of our minds! Let us bow before him, and let the joyful recognition of his goodness sanctify our hearts more and more for him and his service!

* * * *

*“Life's heavenly secret was revealed —
In Christ all riches are concealed.
We try and fail; we ask, He gives,
And in His rest our spirit lives.”*

2H542

[The Greensburg Weekly Press, May 3, 1908](#)

DIVINE PREDESTINATION AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

May 3, On-the-Sea—Homeward Bound. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, Pa., U.S.A., addressed a large audience through our columns. We report his discourse on “Foreordination and Predestination” of the Bible, from the text: “Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate.” (Rom. 8:29)

Disguise and explain as we might the doctrine of predestination, as we received it from the “dark ages” through the Westminster Confession of Faith it is necessarily a horrible doctrine, painful and difficult for every reasoning mind connected with a good and sympathetic heart. Now, as our eyes of understanding begin to see the Word of God more clearly and as we more and more allow it to be its own interpreter, we find that a gross blunder of interpretation is responsible for our confusion. We cannot wonder that good Brother Wesley was led to take a position utterly at variance with our text and at variance also with other Scriptures which speak of the Elect, and to conclude and to teach that there could be no election, that on the contrary divine grace must be free and impartial to all mankind. It was because this view so appealed to the hearts of men that Methodism made such great and rapid advances, so that today it is so firmly established and so in accord with the sentiments of the human heart that those who still hold to the doctrine of election, predestination, etc., theoretically and in their Confession of Faith, avoid any particular mention of its tenets. They prefer not to come into conflict on the subject, which is sure to enlist the hearts of men in opposition to them whatever their heads may think respecting the teachings of the Scripture.

And our Methodist friends also are quite contented to avoid a battle along these lines well knowing that the Scriptures as a whole do teach something respecting a divine election and elect class, that they do mention the Very Elect and urge upon God's people to make their calling and election sure. So, then, while having a theory that is more attractive to the hearts of good people, our Methodist friends let the subject alone lest some should be stirred up to investigate who would follow the Scriptures at any cost. Indeed, it is plain to be seen that Christian people in general either have no confidence in the doctrines of the Bible which they have professed in their creeds, or else they have no faith in their ability to expound them before the close and cogent reasoners of our day. The effect is in some respects advantageous and in other respects injurious. It is to their advantage that people are no longer so hidebound and narrow as once they were in their reasoning; it is to their disadvantage in that their broader reasoning is not along lines of a better understanding of the Bible, but because of their neglect of the Word of God. Hence we find that the present generation of Christians are generally ignorant of the Word of God except along the paths of Sunday school lessons, which generally avoid all disputed points such as our text.

THE SHORT BED AND NARROW COVER

It might be supposed that the doctrine of divine predestination would be a very comfortable one to those who could convince themselves that they belonged to the Elect class. This has been true to some extent. Thousands have been willing to think of the Almighty as determining in advance of Adam's creation how many of his posterity would be born into the world, how few of these would reach the heavenly estate and what immense hosts would be consigned to an eternity of torture — their consent to proposition being in view of the fact that they believed themselves to be of the favored few, the Elect. Nevertheless many have been the anxious hours of thought devoted to seeking full assurance of faith on this subject. Subtle fear persistently attacks and it causes disquiet by asking the question, "Are you sure that you are one of those predestinated to glory and not one of those predestinated to eternal torment? Are you certain that you are one of the Very Elect, making your calling election sure?"

The Lord through the Prophet Isaiah pictures this uncertainty of the mind which particularly attaches to those who hold this doctrine of predestination, but which also is applied to others, for all with one consent agree that the Scriptures teach a narrow way of life and tell us that few there be that find it—and with the thought that all except these few go to an eternity of torment the question obtrudes itself time and again before the minds of the most earnest christians. Are you sure that you are one of the saints, that you are one of those walking in the footsteps of Jesus, that you are one of the called, chosen,

faithful? The trepidation of mind is dreadful, and we do not wonder that the majority of the Christian people prefer not to think much about these things and incline to hope that there is no eternal torment; but immediately they are perplexed with the thought, If there is no eternal torment, then how do I know that there is any eternal life at all. Their difficulty lies in the misinterpretation of the Scriptures given in the “dark ages” which teach

2H543

that eternal torment, purgatory, etc., is to be.

The statement of the Prophet to which we advert is, “The bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering is narrower than a man can wrap himself in it.” (Isa. 28:20) In this comic pen picture the Prophet tells a volume of truth, as nearly every Christian heart can agree. Our creeds, formulated in or directly after the dark ages, are too short. Designed as resting places of faith, beds of ease, they were long enough for so long as we were infantile in our experiences and reasoning. But in proportion as we became developed in heart and in head, we find, as the Prophet has graphically portrayed, that the bed is too short and that we cannot have ease or rest therein; the more we grow the more we must kink and double ourselves in order to remain in these short beds. As a consequence the noblest minds are deserting the creeds as being anything else than faith rests. The narrow covering of the pen caricature represents the attempt we make to wrap and cover ourselves, to protect ourselves, to secure ourselves. When we were children, actually or merely in mental development, we thought as children and understood as children and were well satisfied with the assurances that we were of the Elect and perfectly safe; but as we grew larger these assurances were too narrow for us, we wanted a reason why, we wanted a proof, we wanted a demonstration. The covering of assurances satisfied us and wrapped us well as babes, but a man cannot wrap himself in them and the larger he grows, the greater is the discomfort until he gets out of the short bed and its narrow covers and reaches a higher understanding of the divine character and plan, and awakes clothed in his right mind, children of the day and not of the night.

WHAT GOD DID NOT PREDESTINATE

We might be sure, even without a divine revelation at all, that our Creator did not predestinate that either a large or small proportion of the human family should spend an eternity of torment in a burning hell nor an eternity of any other kind of torment. If he could not create us to some better fate than that he surely would not have created us at all. So surely as we recognize the difference between the Word of God and the word of the devil, so surely must we hold to this conviction;

because if to us the word God properly means the supreme and holy one, the loving one, the wise one, the all-powerful one, then we know that such a being could not premeditate, predestinate, foreordain or otherwise fix upon any of his creatures yet unborn an eternity of torture, suffering. To have any other conception of God than this would mean that any of us who have just, loving, generous minds could not worship God at all, because we would be obliged to admit that he would be much our inferior and hence unworthy of our worship. The trouble in the past has been that with illogical reasoning we have appropriated to the Almighty the characteristics of the devil—worse indeed than we have any knowledge of in respect to the devil. In view of this false premise it was in vain that we called upon our souls to worship and adore. It was only in proportion as we were able to hide from our minds and hearts these erroneous teachings of the “dark ages” that we were able to surmount the barriers and to realize something of a God of love and justice and to give to him worship and homage as such.

SCRIPTURAL FOREORDINATION

Foreordination is perfectly proper. It would have been wrong for the Almighty to undertake a haphazard creation without any forearranged or foreordained plans in respect to the same. What would we think of the man who would undertake the erection of a large building without counting the cost, without mapping out in some considerable degree the kind of a building he would construct and the purpose for which he intended it to be used. The man who would proceed to the erection of a building without any fore-arrangement for its use and construction would be held in derision, and much more so a God who would undertake the creation of this world and the twenty thousand millions of Adam’s race which have been born into it.

The difficulty comes when we begin to attach to this reasonable thought of foreordination the erroneous, unscriptural thought that the majority of men are to spend an eternity of torture. When we link the truth with the error we corrupt the whole thought. Thus it has been that we have blinded and confused ourselves on this subject of foreordination. It was first determined that there was to be a class tormented; it was secondly determined that God must have foreknown and must have forearranged this, and on this wrong foundation our theological blasphemy was reared. It is time that we get back to the proper basis of reasoning, that we eliminate altogether from our theology the hell torment of the “dark ages” and substitute for it the Bible teaching respecting hell, respecting the punishment of sin. This, as we have already shown, is a death penalty. Any of God’s creatures who will not use his gift of life in harmony with his direction must forfeit that life, must

die as a brute beast. The Scriptures show us that Father Adam committed an intelligent, wilful sin and that the death penalty was visited upon him and descended naturally to all of his children. This would have meant that we would all die without hope of a future life, like the lower animals, had it not been that God, in his foreknowledge and love, had predestinated

2H544

something better.

What did God predestinate in respect to our race and for our benefit? The Scriptures declare that he purposed in advance the sending of his Son to be the Redeemer of the world — father Adam and all of his race - to give his life a ransom for many who lost their life through father Adam's disobedience. This part of the divine foreknowledge Christians gladly believe has already been fulfilled and as the Apostle declares, we believe that "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried and rose again on the third day" for our justification. (1 Cor. 15:3; Rom. 4:25) But what more did God predestinate or forearrange in his divine plan for our race? We see no great change in the world's condition since our Redeemer died for us. How then is the world to be benefited according to the divine solution? We reply that according to the Scriptures God predestinated or purposed that the one who redeemed the world at Calvary should be the one who later on in due time, will take to himself his great power and reign King of earth under the whole heavens. The Scriptures explain to us that he must put down all insubordination and bring order and righteousness out of present confusion incidental to the reign of sin and death, which has persisted throughout the 6,000 years. The Scriptures show us that part of his work as the great King will be the binding of Satan, and that as a result of the Millennial blessing the knowledge of the Lord shall reach every member of Adam's race and an opportunity be given to all to be restored from sinful and dying conditions back to full harmony with God and to eternal life, the gift of God. But they show us that this will be left optional with each person, that each will be required to co-operate to his own blessing and uplifting and eternal life and that the unwilling will (lie the Second Death "as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed." 2 Pet. 2:12

THE PREDESTINATION OF THE CHURCH

We have spoken of the world as a whole and of the time for its blessing, the Millennial Age, during which Christ will be King over all the earth. We now come to another feature of divine predestination, a feature which does not relate to the world as a whole, but merely to a small number of Adam's posterity. The Scriptures assure us that in God's eternal purpose which he purposed in himself before the world was, he foreknow us, the Church. (Eph. 1:9-11; 3:9-11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2) We are interested! What did God foreknow or predetermine

respecting the Elect Church? The Scriptures tell us that the divine purpose from the beginning was to gather out from amongst the nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues of earth a "Little Flock" to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, to be associated with their Lord and Bridegroom during the Millennial Age as members of his Kingdom class in the work of blessing mankind and uplifting them and instructing them in the ways of the Lord. If this can be shown to be the true Scriptural theory of the election of the Church it should surely be a gladsome message to every thinking Christian the world over. We meet, however, with a difficulty: our minds, long poisoned with the false doctrines, find it difficult to believe that God is as good as he is great. Hence many are disposed to say that this simple message, so well supported by the Word of God, is too good to be true. But, dear friends, how could anything be too good to be true when we consider that the source is the Word of the living God, the very embodiment of wisdom, justice, love and power; the God who declares to us that his very name is love, and of whom the Apostle says that we are unable to appreciate the heights and depths and lengths and breadths, and to know the love of God which passeth all understanding. Eph. 3:18,19

“ELECT IN THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD”

The Apostle Peter declares of the Gospel Church that it is Elect according to the foreknowledge of God. But let us not fall into misapprehension. Let us see that the Apostle means that the Church as a whole was predetermined of the Father not that the members of the Church were individually predetermined and elected. God predetermined before he created mankind at all that he would select such a company from the nations of the world and that such a chosen company should constitute the Bride of Christ, his joint-heirs in the Kingdom. Let us be content with this simple and harmonious view of the matter. The entire work of this Gospel Age has been the finding of those who would be worthy to be of this Elect class. There is not an arbitrary election; on the contrary God has limited and defined the elements of character necessary to a share in this Elect Church. He had a standard of character for our Lord, Jesus, who was found faithful and who was granted a glorious resurrection; as we read, Wherefore, because of his faithfulness unto death, God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name. (Phil. 2:8,9) Similarly he has called us to glory and to virtue, and we can reach the grand end of our glory only by the attainment of the virtues which God has marked out as conditions.

To our understanding this work of calling, testing, proving, finding who are worthy to be of the Very Elect class has constituted the great work of this Gospel Age,

lasting now for nearly nineteen centuries. To our understanding this work of finding and testing,

2H545

chiseling and polishing the Very Elect, preparing them for their future work in association with their Redeemer and Bridegroom, is nearly accomplished. All through the age there has been a nominally elect company under test, under investigation, under trial, to see whether or not they would make their calling and election sure by obedience to the terms and conditions of their covenant with the Lord full consecration to him and his cause. Reasonably the number who will not make their calling and election sure will be much larger than the number who will make it sure; as the Scriptures declare, "Many are called but few are chosen." But be it noticed that the called ones, not chosen, are not condemned, are not to be consigned to a future torment; they lose the great prize, the great privilege to which they were invited to aspire. They lose the joint-heirship with their Lord in the Kingdom and the privilege of being co-laborers with him in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth during the Millennial Age. As for mankind in general, the vast majority are not even of the called, let alone of the Elect. The heathen millions who have never heard the name of Christ, the only name given under heaven whereby men must be saved, have not been called in any sense of the word. The Apostle speaks of these and declares that they are deaf and blind, they cannot see, they cannot hear. He explains to us that the god of this world is responsible for their condition, that he has put darkness for light and light for darkness so craftily before their minds that they are entirely confused. But we are assured also that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped and all shall come to a knowledge of the truth.

OUR TEXT PROPERLY INTERPRETED

How strange it seems that for so long a time we have read into this beautiful text doctrines which it does not even hint at. Where does it refer to the predestination of damnation to anybody? Where does it refer to a divine predestination that anybody shall go to heaven? What it does most beautifully teach is that God I foreknew the Church and that he predestinated that whoever would be acceptable as a member of that Church must be conformed to the character likeness of his Son our Lord. How reasonable, how beautiful, how strangely our eyes were holden by error in the past, so that we were blind to this grand truth. It is not sufficient that God foreknew and prearranged to have a Church as the Bride of Christ; it is right that we should know additionally that he fixed certain limitations of character for all those whom he would accept to that glorious position. And what a high

standard is set for them! They must be conformed to the image of his dear Son; not a physical likeness is here meant most evidently, but a heart likeness. In the spirit of their minds these must be copies of Jesus. As he was loyal to the Father and faithful even unto death this must be their spirit; as he was willing to endure hardness as a good soldier in the cause of right, this must be their attitude; as he laid down his life for us, these must also lay down their lives for the brethren. This predestination teaches us then that there will not be a single one in the Bride class who will not, during this period of call and acceptance and chiseling and polishing, attain to heart-likeness to our Lord. And how reasonable this is when we consider the high honor, the distinction to which these are invited, to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord; if so be that they suffer with him that they may also be glorified together.” (Rom. 8:17) This is a reasonable predestination, it exalts our conception of the Almighty that he should require so high a standard of harmony with himself and the principles of righteousness in those whom he would accept to the high honor to which he has invited the Elect Church.

On the other hand, not a word of predestination respecting the wicked or respecting the world in general; the world is not elect in the largest possible sense. But this does not signify in any sense of the word their injury. Consider our own use of the word election in connection with politics; see how the public elect a few to Congress, one out of an entire district. Yet no one considers that the non-elect should be eternally tormented; they lose enough in that they do not gain the special office or honor. And so with those whom he calls or nominates through the message of truth and grace and who respond; they are informed that it is with them to determine their success or failure. So far as God is concerned all whom he calls may make their calling and election sure if they will; all the grace, all the assistance will be granted on the terms upon which they were called. How reasonable! How beautiful! Let us no longer regard this matter from the standpoint of the past, dishonoring the great Creator and dishonoring ourselves also by the imagination of the “dark ages.”

STATED IN REVERSE ORDER

The Scriptures frequently remind us that God has not declared that his Word is so simply written that it can be understood by everybody. The time when a wayfaring man shall not err therein is still future; the wisest of the worldly wise find difficulty in the present time. Only the truly wise toward God understand his Word now. To this end it is written in parables and (lark sayings, that seeing they might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand.

For an illustration of this principle of measurably hiding the truth except from a certain class and hiding the truth under a measure of obscurity until a certain time, notice in our context the statement, “Whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified.” This word glorified is an improper translation and is confusing; it should be rendered honored.

The mind naturally expects the Apostle to take the standpoint that God first predestinated, secondly called, thirdly justified and fourthly honored and that the honoring here referred to is the honor of the Kingdom the change promised to the faithful in the “First Resurrection.” But this mistake has doubtless been responsible for much of the error connected with the understanding of this passage. As a matter of fact the Apostle begins at the opposite end to count. He first declares that God predestinated these. He looks down through the Gospel Age to the glorification of the Church and declares that those whom God predestinated before the world was are the very ones who will be the glorified “Little Flock” the Bride of Christ, in the future. He tells that every one of those must previously have been called and that every called one must previously have been justified and that every one must previously have been honored — honored with the opportunity of a knowledge of the Lord. Let us consider the matter from this standpoint: Looking out into the world we see today 1,600,000,000, but not many of these have been honored by the Lord with the privilege of hearing the good tidings of his grace in Christ. The majority of them are blind and deaf. The comparatively few who have been honored of the Lord with a knowledge of the Gospel obtained thereby the opportunity for justification by faith. True, not all of the honored ones accept the favor of God and allow Christ to be unto them wisdom. Only a comparatively few accept this message and consequently only a few comparatively have been justified through faith. Next these justified ones are privileged to be called, are invited to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord as members of the Bride class. But where many of them are called, few will be chosen, because the vast majority of the justified seem unwilling to hear the call when it does reach them. But all of the called ones who will prove faithful to the call, faithful to their obligations of consecration, will then be glorified and constitute the Very Elect of God, the very Church, the very Bride which God foreknew and predestinated —all of these members conformed to the image of God’s dear Son.

Let us, dear friends, who see the beauty of divine election, give earnest heed that we may make our calling and election sure. Let us hearken to the Apostle, who tells us that we must add to our faith the various fruits of the Spirit which characterized our Redeemer and who declared that if we do these things we shall never fall, but so an entrance shall be administered abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus

Christ. (2 Pet. 1:11) Let us so run that we may obtain, faithful is he who has called you who also will do it; — he will do all that he has promised, any failure therefore will be because of our own fault. As for the world, their trial time, their time of testing as to whether or not they will be worthy of life eternal or death eternal belongs to the next age, the Millennium. There will be no election there, free grace will prevail toward every creature. The Lord's picture of that glorious coming day of blessing represents a river of the water of life flowing from the New Jerusalem, the glorified Church, and to its refreshment of life eternal all mankind are invited in the words, "The Spirit and the Bride say Come and whoever will, may come and take of the water of life freely." The Bride is not yet saying Come, because as yet there is no Bride. We are waiting for the marriage, that we may become the Bride. Then shortly after it will be our glorious privilege to call the poor, blind, deaf world, which then will be able to hear and to heed, that they all may be blessed with this stream of refreshment and life everlasting which will proceed from the throne and from the Lamb, who redeemed us with his blood.

[The National Labor Tribune, May 10, 1908](#)

“HE BRINGETH THEM TO THE DESIRED HAVEN”

N. Pittsburg, Pa., May 10. Pastor C. T. Russell was warmly welcomed by his home congregation at Allegheny Carnegie Hall today on his return from his tour of the British Isles, where he addressed immense audiences in London, Liverpool, Bristol, Manchester, Leichestor, Bradford, Birmingham, Luton, Belfast, Dublin, Glasgow and Edinburg. His text evidently associated with his home-coming, was, "So he bringeth them unto their desired haven." (Psa. 107:30) He said:

Although I greatly enjoyed my visit abroad and my

2H547

privilege of meeting and greeting so many of the Lord's dear people and the opportunity afforded me of addressing them in respect to the exceeding great and precious promises of our Father's Word, nevertheless, as I journeyed homeward across the mighty deep, the feeling that I was homeward bound was very distinctly present with me. I assure you all, dear friends, that while I love and fellowship all who are the Lord's in every place, my heart instinctively turns to this company of the Lord's people as being the one which I have so long been associated in heavenly spiritual interests. I am glad to be with you again and glad to read in your faces a similar gladness and welcome on your part. Thinking of my homecoming and associating with it our heavenly home and our anticipation that

before very long we shall be gathered to that shining shore, I choose my text, "He bringeth them to the desired haven.

*This discourse was republished in **Pastor Russell's Sermons**, pages 739-748, entitled "Nearing The Desired Haven Of Rest."*

[The Springfield Homestead, May 18, 1908](#)

THE OVERTHROW OF SATAN'S EMPIRE

Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, Pa., spoke twice here yesterday to large and attentive audiences. The afternoon discourse at Court Square theatre was on the Overthrow of Satan's Empire. The large audience listened with rapt attention to things new and old from the Scriptures. We report the discourse as follows:

Explain the matter how we will the fact must be confessed that according to our own experiences and the records of history our race has for centuries been under a reign of sin and death unexplainable except in the light of the Bible, the divine revelation. The downward tendency with which we were born, the mental, moral and physical imperfections experienced by all are explained only by the Scriptural declaration that we were born in sin and shapen in iniquity. In vain have we endeavored to reconcile the present and past experiences of our race with love or even justice on the part of our Creator—except as we obtain light upon the situation from His Word. It is but natural that our first thought should be that the Almighty God, the Creator, is the King and ruler of earth; and it is with considerable surprise, therefore, that we find the Scriptures teaching to the contrary, that Satan is the "prince of this world," (John 14:30), the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4), that the prince of devils, the prince of darkness, is the ruler of this world. Nevertheless we must admit that the prevalence of sin, of unrighteousness, of injustice today and all the way back so far as history shows, as well as the tendency toward sin which we all realize, and the misshapen heads which speak of more or less of mental or moral unbalance—these all agree with the Scriptures and contradict the thought that God is the author of such confusion as now prevails in the world. Surely conditions are not so in heaven; else it would not be heaven; surely Satan is not the prince there; surely sin does not prevail there; surely death is unknown there, with its concomitants of pain and sorrow and crying; surely there are neither graveyards nor hospitals where the Almighty God of love is monarch and his reign of righteousness prevails. 1 Cor. 14:33

WHY EVIL IS PERMITTED

In our perplexity we turn again to the Word of God and read there the assurances of the Almighty that by and by in his own due time the reign of sin and death shall cease. Satan shall be

bound for a thousand years, and that instead Immanuel shall reign, and the blessing of the Lord and the knowledge of the Lord and the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth; and that instead of God's footstool being in a cursed or unfit condition he will make the place of his feet glorious. (Isa. 60:13) Pursuing our investigation we mark the promise that in due time God will wipe away all tears from all faces, and there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things—the things of the curse—shall have passed away; and he who sits upon the throne declares, "Behold, I make all things new!" (Rev. 21:5) O glorious day of Christ! O glorious millennial epoch! We long for the glorious dawning of the Sun of Righteousness, which will usher in those promised blessings to the sinful, weak, depraved, dying world of mankind, uplifting them, rejuvenating them, purifying them and causing that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God, and that all who will not come into heart harmony with divine righteousness shall after fullest opportunity be utterly destroyed from among the people in the Second Death. Acts 3:23

But while waiting for that day, the glorious "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began," (Acts 3:21), we ask, Why does God permit sin and all its

2H548

train of evils in the present time? Having the power to bind and to destroy Satan, the prince of this world, why has he not done so long ago? Why is it that our Master taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," and did not rather establish the reign of righteousness at once? Why did he not prevent even the beginning of the reign of sin and death? These are proper questions, reasonable questions, but they are answerable only from the one standpoint—the divine revelation, the Word of God! Let us, then, inquire earnestly, diligently, what say the Scriptures on this subject! Let us realize that there is no information from any other quarter and that it is of vital importance to us to have the true answer, which alone will satisfy the queries of our minds and give us intelligently the proper views of life and proper ideals and ambitions therefore.

According to the Scriptures Satan was a great and holy angel of a very high order. Before he fell from his honorable station, he was known as Lucifer, the bright and morning star. As a "covering cherub" (Ezek. 28:14), his rank, nature or plane of being was higher than that of the ordinary angel. He is referred to as a gorgeous prince among the holy ones called the "morning stars," (Job 38:7), the angelic sons of God. But like all of God's intelligent creation he was made in God's likeness, with liberty of will—a free moral agent. Before there was any opportunity for attempting a rebellion against the divine

sovereignty we are informed that Lucifer was proud of his glorious station and in his heart meditated the possibility of himself becoming a king of glory with subjects. (Isa. 14:12-14) We are not to suppose that he for a moment contemplated the overthrow of the divine empire, the supplanting of Jehovah, but merely the possibility of establishing himself as an independent monarch or sovereign superior to all others and a rival to Jehovah. The opportune moment for a possible gratification of this ambition God permitted to come, foreknowing all the results and fully prepared to cope with them all and ultimately to bring order out of the confusion. More than this, divine wisdom premeditated just such a test of the loyalty of Satan and all the holy angels in such a manner as would ultimately bring neither loss nor disadvantage to any but a testing of all with a view to the destruction and annihilation of all who would not stand the tests of loyalty.

A TEST TO ANGELS AND TO MEN

The test of Satan's loyalty came, no doubt, when he beheld our first parents in Eden, a new creation with the powers of pro-creation for the development of their own species, a power which even the angels did not possess. The temptation is obvious: Satan saw that if he could obtain possession of **our** first parents, all of their children would be under his control. The pride and ambition of his heart leaped forward and embraced the situation. He presented to mother Eve the temptation which ultimately led into sin and death. Thus, by usurpation and not by divine authority or appointment, Satan became the prince of this world, the god of this world, the ruler of this world, who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience. (Eph. 2:2) So successful has he been in alienating the hearts of mankind from their Creator that we read, "The whole world lieth in the wicked one" (1 John 5:19), and that only the few believers have escaped the thralldom. Even these are measurably under the darkening influence of the errors with which Satan has deluded mankind—by misrepresenting the true character of the Almighty and the true teachings of the Bible—putting darkness for light and light for darkness. Thus the apostle says, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. 4:4

But the Creator desired to test the loyalty not only of one, but of all the holy angels. He therefore permitted Satan apparently to triumph in his rebellion and to work apparently irretrievable damage to the Divine purposes, restraining him only in a limited degree, in matters that would have interfered with the ultimate purpose of God. The success of Lucifer would of itself be a test of the loyalty of all the angels, for if one could succeed and go unpunished, would it not imply a deficiency of Divine power or of the control of the situation? Hence, it would

appear that God permitted the holy angels to have free intercourse with humanity during the 1656 years preceding the flood. This intercourse served double purpose: (1) It demonstrated that the influence of the holy angels was not sufficient to offset the sin which had contaminated humanity, and that man could not be lifted out of his sinful, dying condition back to harmony with God by example and sympathetic aid. On the contrary, man's course in sin and death continued downward, and a contaminating influence extended from mankind to the holy angels, which had a corrupting influence upon them and drew some of them away from obedience to the Divine will into sin. The record of this fall is briefly given in Genesis 6, where we read that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and took unto themselves wives of such as they would, the result being children that were giants, men of renown, superior in some respects to the fallen, Adamic stock.

To comprehend this situation it is necessary to remember that the angels in harmony with God were

2H549

granted powers of materialization, as illustrated in the case of those who appeared to Abraham. We read that Abraham supposed them to be men, and that they did eat and talk with him, though subsequently he ascertained that the one was the Lord, and the other two, angels who, though spirit beings, had for the time and purpose assumed human bodies and human clothing. This intercourse between the angels and humanity was not only unauthorized, but contrary to the Divine will and arrangement. It was a recognized disobedience referred to by the Apostle Peter and Jude, who spake of the transgressors as those angels who kept not their first estate, or nature—preferring to live as human beings and to indulge in sin. (2) This condition of things was permitted for probably a good share of the 1656 years preceding the flood, long enough, we may be sure, to furnish a test of loyalty of every member of the angelic host. Apparently those who would, might commit sin with impunity; apparently God who had issued his commands, could be defied by His creatures. Then those who preferred purity and harmony with God demonstrated their choice; while others, rebelling against God, became associated with Satan, the prince of demons; for all of those angels who thus transgressed were ultimately separated and isolated from the Lord and the holy angels, and known as demons, while the terms the devil and Satan are personal titles of the first rebel. The result of this illicit fellowship between angels and men is stated in the Scriptures—the whole world became corrupt, the exceptions evidently being very few. Then the time came for the circumscribing of the evil that it

might not hinder the outworking of the Divine purposes. Accordingly, God caused the flood of waters, which destroyed the corrupt race except Noah and his family, of whom, be it noted, the Scriptures distinctly tell us, “Noah was perfect in his generation.” (Gen. 6:9) There was no admixture of the angelic seed in his case nor in that of his family, for they were all of the Adamic stock, with which alone God intended to deal thereafter. No redemption was to be provided for the illicit offspring of the angels, only for Adam and his race was Christ to die eventually, to become Redeemer King and Deliverer.

A MURDERER FROM THE BEGINNING

Hearken to our Lord’s description of Satan, the prince of this world, and his explanation of how the devil obtained his great power, his great influence among mankind. Our Lord says, “He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth.” (John 8:44), and again declares of him that he is the father of lies, the first great liar. Following this clue we turn back to see in what respect Satan was the first great liar and murderer. To our astonishment the record in Genesis is most explicit. After God had informed our first parents that disobedience to his command respecting the tree of knowledge would bring a death penalty, that old serpent, the devil and Satan contradicted God, declaring that this would not be true. He lied, and there became the father of liars. God’s words were, “In the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die,” Satan’s words were, “Ye shall not surely die.” The lines were strictly drawn. To help along his lie and thus to deceive mother Eve, Satan posed as her truest friend and well-wisher, picturing the Almighty as jealous, and wishing to deprive them of knowledge and keep them in ignorance, that he might maintain their subservience through that ignorance. Thus mother Eve was beguiled, as St. Paul says, into thinking of the Almighty as ignoble and selfish, conspiring against the interests of his creatures and threatening them with death, which the old serpent had assured her God was unable to inflict. (2 Cor. 11:3) Alas! Through that lie by the father of lies the death sentence came upon father Adam and mother Eve and their entire race!

Thus Satan was the murderer of our race, whose number is now reasonably estimated at 20,000,000,000, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, depraved, misshapen, unbalanced of mind and brain, and prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward. Nowhere else is the explanation given of conditions as we see them about us today and experience them ourselves. The Bible alone gives us this information—and, thank God, it does not leave us merely in such a plight, but assures us that the good God who created us will not leave us under the power of our Adversary everlastingly, but will eventually deliver us by his Millennial Kingdom of Messiah, and that Satan shall be bound, that he shall deceive the nations no more, and that instead, Immanuel will set loose all the various

agencies of blessing and knowledge, an uplifting influence which the world of mankind so greatly needs for their recovery out of sin, imbecility and death. The Scriptural statement of the whole matter is most plain. Our confusion has resulted from our following Satan's delusions, which have tended to separate us from God and His word and to make the latter of no effect. Satan has been consistent in his course from first to last, starting out with a lie, he has maintained that lie ever since; and it has been at the foundation of all of our misconceptions of God, of His Word, and of His great plan of salvation. Satan's message on the subject has been believed by all the heathen world, and has been enforced by the various teachings propagated through the demon hosts, who have worked in various ways through spirit mediums, witches, wizards, etc., for the propagation of the error. Consequently today all the heathen agree with Satan's word that when men die,

2H550

they are not really dead, but are more alive than ever. Some have seven hells and some have thousands of hells to which the departed one would be said to have gone, but none of the heathen believe the Lord's Word, that the dead are dead and "know not anything." Eccl. 9:5

SATAN THE FATHER OF LIES

Similarly, Satan has continued his lie even amongst Christians, and notwithstanding the fact that we have in our hands, Bibles which give us the truth upon the subject and which tell us that God's sentence upon sin is death, and that Satan contradicted this statement. Christendom has been misled, and has accepted Satan's lie instead of God's truth. Beside the corpse of our friend we have denied the testimony of our five senses and the testimony of God's Word, to the effect that he was dead, not alive in any sense of the word. We have accepted Satan's lie, and have believed that when a man dies, he really is more alive than when he was a-live. The result of our failure to hearken to the voice of the Lord has brought confusion to our heads and atrophy to our hearts. Not content merely to tell us that our friends are more alive than ever, but intent upon the misrepresentation of God's character and our alienation as far as possible from God and His Word, Satan has told us most terrible things, most horrible things, in respect to the conditions of the dead. This blasphemy of God's character, which the Apostle terms "doctrines of devils," was gradually introduced to the Christian church early in the third century. During the dark ages these devilish doctrines prevailed so thoroughly that our forefathers thought that they were but copying God and His methods when they tortured one another upon the rack, when they tore out each other's tongues, when they burned one another at the stake. We have learned to reprehend their course of conduct, but have largely held to the blasphemous doctrines which misled them into

their wrong course. As a result today we have the Christian world divided practically into two great lines of thought in respect to the dead. First is the older thought, held by Roman and Greek Catholics, constituting two thirds of all who claim the name of Christ. These tell us that a mere handful of saints have gone to Heaven, because no more were fitted for that holy place. They tell us of a hell of eternal torment, too, but say that not many have gone hither because it is only for the wilfully and intelligently disobedient, of whom there are comparatively few, because ignorance is so prevalent. They tell us that the great mass of mankind, heathens, Protestants and Catholics, go to a place which they term purgatory, there to be chastened, disciplined, tormented for centuries or thousands of years, but with the hope of ultimate deliverance as a reward for their sufferings, and thence to be assisted by prayer, masses and good works offered on their behalf by fellow-creatures in the flesh, with occasionally the assistance of a benevolent pope, who on a jubilee day grants remission of hundreds and thousands of years for the sufferers. They tell us that their bishops, cardinals and popes, all go to purgatory, as being at the time of their death unfit for Heaven, and that for this reason when these die, masses are said in all Catholic churches throughout the world— “for the repose of their souls,” for the relief of their anguish, for their rapid deliverance from purgatory.

We Protestants, who claim to be the most enlightened of earth's population, console ourselves that we have dropped purgatory and other Catholic superstitions and are much in advance along religious lines. Doubtless there is some truth in this boast, yet as a whole it seems to be unwarranted. Note, dear friends, that our protestant theory respecting the state of the dead is the most absurd, the most God-dishonoring “doctrine of devils” of any known throughout the world—not only less reasonable and more devilish than that of Catholicism, but exceeding in diabolical ingenuity the most outlandish imaginations of the heathen mind. We agree with our Catholic friends that the heavenly reward is promised in the Scriptures only to a “little flock,” of whom not many wise or great or noble or rich (1 Cor. 1:26). We agree that the Scriptures teach that only those who take up their cross and seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus will be sharers with Him in His heavenly kingdom and glory; we agree that this requirement excludes the great mass of humanity, not only of the heathen, but of the civilized; we agree that only a few come up to the standard of walking, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. But what do we do theoretically with all this great mass who are not saints, who have not heard of and accepted faithfully “the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved.” We have professed to believe that the Almighty God, before He created them, prepared for their eternal torture by providing a great place called hell, manned

with fire-proof devils and provided with fuel to last to all eternity. To our shame, dear friends, be it noted, that we who thought ourselves the most intelligent of Adam's race have been more thoroughly hoodwinked by Satan than have any other people in the world. Only because we did not take this theory too seriously have we not been more injured by it in mind and in morals and more alienated from God and from His Word than we are. Ah, that is what Satan has endeavored to do by putting darkness for light and light for darkness. He has sought to lead astray those who are feeling after God, until today you

2H551

and I well realize that he has made great headway; that the majority of Christian people the world over are losing faith in a personal God and all confidence in the Bible as His revelation. Notice that we are not blaming our forefathers for the ignorance and superstition of the "dark ages," which is still, like smoke, blinding our vision and hindering us from appreciating the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding. On the contrary, we are charging all these errors, as the Scriptures do, to the father of lies, the murderer of our race.

It is high time, however, that we awake to the fact that the Bible is wholly out of accord with those miserable, blasphemous traditions of the "dark ages," of which we are so much ashamed, and that the Scriptures contain the only reasonable explanation of the present condition of our race and of its future. We do well, therefore, to note that all the ignorance and superstition connected with religion has been built directly upon Satan's lie that the dead are more alive than before they died. If the dead were believed to be dead, as the Scriptures assert, then there would be an end of masses for the dead, of prayers for the dead, of the theory of eternal torment, and of purgatorial sufferings, wonderfully delineated by Dante and awfully pictured by Dore.

THE SOUL THAT SINNETH, IT SHALL DIE

God's message on the subject is plain, that death is the penalty for sin, and when once we get a glimpse of what death signifies, we see that it has been indeed a just but awful penalty. It has been awful, in that it has involved our entire race of twenty thousand millions in sickness, mental, moral and physical, alienating us from God and leading on to all the sorrows and difficulties, mental and physical, with which we are acquainted. It has meant twenty thousand million of painful births with tears, an equal number of equally unsatisfactory lives, an equal number of sick and dying, surrounded by sympathetic friends; and an equal number of graves surrounded by mourners. That it is not unjustly severe,

however, is evidenced by the fact that, notwithstanding our tears and sorrows and disappointments, we prefer even our present bitter experiences rather than to be blotted out of existence. But God, who is rich in mercy, has made glorious provision for us. As he allowed sin and death to come through one man's disobedience, He has provided another man to be the Redeemer, to take the place of the first, to pay His penalty and, incidentally, that of His race. The penalty paid by Jesus was not an eternal torment penalty, God never having pronounced such a penalty. It was a death penalty, "Christ died for our sins;" "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man!" "He poured out His soul and shall be satisfied." (1 Cor. 15:3; Heb. 2:9; Isa. 53:12, 11) Ah, yes! God hath laid help upon One who is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto the Father through Him; for as by man came death, by man also comes the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, every man in his own order. (1 Cor. 15:2 1-23) As the penalty of sin is death, full recovery from sin and condemnation and death will be a resurrection and raising up, not only from the death state, from the tomb, but from all present dying conditions, up, up, up to the full perfection in which Adam was created in the image of God and from which he fell, by disobedience, into death.

A KIND OF FIRST FRUITS UNTO GOD

But why the delay? If the death of Christ was for the cancellation of Adam's sin and the release of Adam and his race from death, why did not the resurrection of the world begin at once after Jesus had died and paid the penalty and had risen from the dead? Why did He not at once set up His Kingdom, bind Satan and begin the work of restitution of mankind to their former estate? The answer to this proper question means much to you and to me and to all Christians of this Gospel age; for the Scriptures inform us that before the divine plan of salvation will be extended to the world in general through Christ's millennial kingdom, God will first select from the redeemed race a "little flock," a Church, a Bride class, to be joint-heirs with His Son in the kingdom work of ruling, instructing and uplifting mankind in general. This Gospel Age since Pentecost has been the time in which God has been gathering this "little flock," and in which they have been invited to make their calling and election sure by obedience to the teachings of Jesus, walking in His footsteps in the narrow way. Their blessing will come in the First Resurrection, in which they will be changed from human nature to the divine, made like their Lord; far above angels, principalities and powers. (2 Pet. 1:4; 1John3:2; Eph. 1:20-23) The blessing designed for the world, on the other hand, will not be a change of nature, but a restitution of the fallen race to that perfection of human nature in which their first parents were created, and the

restitution of the earth as their future home. Soon, we trust, the election and selection of the Lord's Jewel class will be completed, their polishing finished, and their change to glory in the First Resurrection accomplished. Then will come the blessing of all the families of the earth; for, be it noted the church and her Lord constitute the spiritual seed of Abraham, to whom the promise is made, "In thy seed shall all the

2H552

families of the earth be blessed," and "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29

THE OVERTHROW OF SATAN'S EMPIRE

We have already noted the Scriptural promises that the present reign of sin and death, under the prince of this world, is to give place to a reign of righteousness under Christ, the Life-Giver, at His second coming, when He will establish His kingdom. We have already noticed that the new reign will begin with the living nations and signify to them release from ignorance and superstition into the knowledge of the glory of God, and every favorable opportunity for their raising up out of present conditions of degradation, mental, moral and physical, to all that was lost in Adam—the full perfection of human nature. We have already shown that the death penalty upon father Adam has involved the race in every sense; that Christ has paid the full penalty, not only for those who will be living and be blessed at His second coming, but also for all who, during the 6000 years of the reign of sin and death, have gone down into the tomb, sheol, hades, the grave. It will be the work of the Life-Giver to resuscitate these, to awaken them from the sleep of death, that they also may share in the blessings of the millennial uplift, that all may have the fullest opportunity for obtaining human perfection and everlasting life; so that only the wilfully wicked and disobedient will die again, die the second death, from which there will be no hope of redemption, no hope of recovery!

Now we inquire, how will this be brought about? Can we hope for the conversion of the world suddenly? Will men soon renounce Satan and his works and become followers of righteousness? Alas, no! There is no room for hope along this line. The past century has been the most vigorous known in history in the battling of Christianity against heathendom; yet there are twice as many heathen today as there were a century ago. In 1800 the census of heathendom was 600,000,000 in 1900 the census of heathendom was 1,200,000,000! There is no hope in that direction! But even if the returns were the opposite of what they are, if Christianity were making inroads upon heathendom and had the assurance of conquering it completely this very year, what then? Alas! we must confess

that if the heathen were no better than the people of your own city are, they would need converting again and that repeatedly, and would still have no hope of accomplishing what the Lord taught us to expect and pray for, "Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

The Scriptures show that at the time of the second coming of Christ, God's providence will permit a great time of trouble, world-wide and awful, which will involve all present institutions in anarchy. "A time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1) will accomplish the breaking of many hearts and their preparation consequently for the "balm of Gilead." As a result "many people shall go and say, Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." (Isa. 2:3) Subsequently the Divine Law shall go forth from Mount Zion, the heavenly, glorified church, and the word, the message, the command of the Lord, from Jerusalem, the earthly representative of the kingdom. Under the new dispensation righteousness will prevail and thus the "desire of all nations shall come. (Haggai 2:7) In harmony with this prophecy, the Lord declares that at His second coming He will rule the nations with a rod of iron; that as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to pieces; and He declares further that the glorified church, spirit beings, will be associated with Him in this work, saying, "To him that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, will I give power over the nations," etc. (Rev. 2:26) Under the new reign of righteousness every evil thought, word and deed will receive its just recompense, a reasonable penalty for the correction of mankind, for their instruction in righteousness; and every good endeavor, plan and effort will be rewarded, so that evildoers shall receive chastisements or stripes, and well-doers, servants of righteousness, will make repeated progress from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, climbing upward to the eventual attainment of human perfection, in the image of God, into a world-wide Eden, under the Divine favor and blessing; while the persistently wilful and sinful will be cut off and die the second death.

Let all who rejoice in the coming of the Lord's kingdom and the reign of the prince of Righteousness rejoice also that the overthrow of Satan's empire of sin and darkness and miserable degradation and ignorance is near at hand; and let us who by the grace of God come to understand the Divine plan more and more clearly, see to it that we are standing firmly in defense of every principle of righteousness and supporting the Divine word and Divine attributes, and living in harmony with the Divine plan of the ages! Thus may we by the grace of God make our calling and election sure to a part in the glorious change of the First Resurrection, which will bring us

completely into the glorious likeness of Him who redeemed us!

2H553

[The Greensburg Morning Press, May 26, 1908](#)

GOD'S HIDDEN GLORY TO BE REVEALED

Beaver Falls, May 24. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., preached twice here today to large and attentive congregations. In the afternoon he gave his Bible-defense lecture on "To Hell and Back. Who are there? Hope for many of them." We report his morning discourse from the text "The Glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." (Isa. 40:5) He said:

The language of our text implies that the glory of the Lord has not yet been revealed; and this revelation belongs to the future. The prophecy of which it is a part was written about 3400 years after the creation, and implied that the Lord's glory had not been revealed up to that time. The context also shows that the promise of a revelation of God's glory was prophetically fixed for a date in the far future. Certain great events are first to happen; then the glory of the Lord will be revealed to all flesh. To show that this Scripture is still unfulfilled should be quite sufficient to point to the heathen and to note the fact that at least three fourths of the human family are wholly without the knowledge of the Lord and hence without the knowledge of his glory. It should be sufficient even to point to Christendom, to demonstrate that very few have eyes to see and ears to hear his message of grace or to appreciate the glory of his character. All the facts as we know them fully corroborate the statement of our text and of its context, that it belongs to a still future day. In demonstration of this fact note the opening verses of Isaiah 40, in which the Lord calls upon his people to comfort and console natural Israel, which far more comforting declaration is that at the appointed time Israel's sins will all be purged away, her iniquity pardoned and she shall be received back into divine favor. This recovery of Israel from blindness and alienation from divine favor is distinctly noted by the Apostle Paul, who after pointing out how and why natural Israel stumbled, also points out to us her recovery, the return of God's favor to her, the taking away of her sins. He shows that this favor will come after the completion of the Elect Spiritual Israel. When the Church, the Bride of Christ, shall have been changed by the First Resurrection, then through her favor and mercy, blessings will be showered upon Natural Israel, whose blindness will then be taken away. Note the explicitness of the Apostle's words, "There shall come out of Zion (the Church) the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins. As

concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election they are be-loved for their father's sakes ... Through your mercy they also may obtain mercy; for God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all." Romans 11:25-32

THE TIME OF THE REVEALING

Thus we have clearly fixed by the Apostle the time of the fulfillment of the prophecy of which our text is a part—that it is still future, though we believe not far distant. The remainder of the context is in full accord also. It tells us that the proper message at the time of the completion of the Church and the return to Natural Israel will be that there must be a general leveling, and exaltation of the humble and a bringing down of the lofty, to the intent that the glory of the Lord may be revealed. Other Scriptures show us that this general leveling process amongst mankind will involve the world in a great time of trouble. But it is comforting to know that the outcome of their trouble will be the blessing of mankind and the glory of the Lord, whom the whole world will ultimately acknowledge. Verses 9-11 of the same chapter pictures the blessings which then will follow: Zion the Church, that has borne the good message for over eighteen centuries will be called up into the mountain, the kingdom condition; while those primarily representing the Lord amongst men will be called upon to lift up their voices with strength and not to be afraid, but to tell the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" We read, "Behold the Lord God will come as a mighty one, and his power shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him and his recompense before him." Up to the present time the Lord's dealings have been with the patriarchs, and Natural Israel and Spiritual Israel, to instruct, to counsel, to guide, to chastise, to bless; but hitherto he has not dealt with the world of mankind. In this coming day when his glory shall be revealed, his dealings will be no longer secret, but open; no longer with a few Elect, but with all the families of the earth.

Why the Lord has kept his glory secret up to the present time is a mystery to the world—a mystery which is revealed only to his saints through the Word. As explained in the Scriptures he has so done in order to the better carrying-out of the selection of the Church, whose members during this Gospel age are called to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord; and to prove their individual worthiness of this position by honestly confessing natural imperfection and unworthiness; by faithfully accepting the grace of God in Christ and the forgiveness of sins, and by demonstrating

to the Lord of which of them shall stand fiery trials and tests and prove faithful unto death. This special class in all a "little flock," who "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth" (Rev. 14:4), whithersoever he leadeth,—these must first be selected. Meantime the world, in ignorance of them and of their call, effects the tribulations which polish, fit and prepare these for the Kingdom. Meantime also the world in general learns its own lessons respecting the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the weight of divine displeasure enunciated in the curse, "dying thou shalt die." (Gen. 2:17, margin) Under these adverse conditions an immense host estimated at 20,000,000,000, has been born and given an experience with the evil side of life, the side of sin and death, the Adversary's side, thoroughly shut off from the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Under the prince of this world, darkness covers the earth and darkness the heathen. (Isa. 60:2) A great work has been quickly accomplished, great lessons have been learned by the vast masses of humanity as well as have been the still more important lessons and testings which have incidentally shaped and polished the Church as the Lord's jewels. How truly the poet said:—

*"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps on the sea,
And rides upon the storm.*

*His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud will have a bitter taste
But sweet will be the flower.*

*"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scans his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."*

The ways of the Lord are thoroughly inscrutable to all except those who have inside information, granted only to God's Spirit-begotten children, to such zealously follow on to know the Lord, to study his Word and to walk in harmony therewith. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant." (Psa. 25:14) Blame for ignorance of God is not generally attached to mankind. Our Lord did not blame the common people, his chief imprecations were against those who were high in the Church, "Woe unto you Scribes, Pharisees and Doctors of the Law—ye have taken away the key of knowledge!" (Luke 11:52) But even these are not scripturally held responsible for all that they have done against the Lord and his faithful ones.

Satan is charged as being the great deceiver who, along with their own pride and selfishness deceived and misled them. Mark the Apostle Peter's criticism of the Jews and their leaders in connection with the awful crime of the crucifixion of the Prince of life, our Lord. He says, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17) The responsibility of that people was a limited one, for which they have received stripes or punishments. These as our context and the Apostle assures us, will shortly be completed, ended, will cease and be followed by return of favor through the Christ, Head and body.

Only from this standpoint can we appreciate divine compassion and forgiveness with mankind in respect to the crimes in the name of justice and religion in all ages of the world, and the slanders and misrepresentations of the divine character and plan, published by every false religion in the world. God is permitting these misrepresentations, these aspirations, these falsifications as a part of the great lesson to mankind, a part of the lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its injuriousness in every way, as respects both the mind and the body. All who are his people have in the Lord's own course a lesson of peace and forgiveness, gentleness and love, a lesson that was fully exemplified by our dear Redeemer when jeeringly his enemies cried to him, "If thou be the Son of God, save thyself and come down from the cross." With patience he endured their sneers and taunts, the vilifications and various contradictions of sinners against himself—intent upon doing them good, determined not to fail in the work he had undertaken, not to be turned aside from his great work of giving his life as their ransom price. Similarly the Father's Word has gone forth from his mouth and shall not return to him void, but shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it. (Isa. 55:1) That word or message was one of peace and blessing to Abraham, "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) Reiterating these blessings through the prophets he sent a further confirmation at the mouth of the angel when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, saying, "We bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people." (Luke 2:10) Nevertheless, the poor world, degenerated and unbalanced, and under Satan's leading, has turned every promised blessing into a curse; has accepted doctrines of devils instead; theories of eternal torment for nearly all of mankind; blasphemous aspersions against God's Holy Name; against the just and loving character of our Creator. With what patience He has long borne these misrepresentations!

A THOUSAND YEARS AS ONE WITH GOD

When we receive the Apostolic injunction that a thousand years with us are as one day with the Lord (2 Pet. 3:8), or as a watch in the night, as the prophet

2H555

says (Psa. 90:4), then we began to see what before we shortsightedly overlooked; namely, that the divine plan is working out speedily on a scale much larger than we had contemplated. The 6000 years in which God has suffered sin and death to reign amongst men have permitted them to defile themselves, and to blaspheme and to misrepresent his holy name and character; but this long period of time is only a moment in comparison with eternity; and from the divine standpoint the work which it is accomplishing from is fully justified.

Shortly, at the second coming of our Lord and the establishment of his Kingdom, the present condition will be changed. No longer will it be a night-time of ignorance and sin and darkness, of gross darkness with the heathen; for the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. Christ and his glorified Church (Matt. 13:43), as the Sun of Righteousness, shall shine out upon the world to scatter its night, its ignorance, its superstition, its fear, its doctrines of devils, its misapprehensions of the divine character. That glorious sunlight of the new dispensation will reveal to the wondering world the true character of God, not only his almighty power, his infinite wisdom, and his inflexible justice, but also his wonderful love and compassion, which has, in and through Christ Jesus our Lord, provided for Adam and every member of his race, a full and glorious opportunity of recovery from sin and degradation and death, into which all came through Adam's fall and its penalty.

Some one may say, yes, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed; but what assurance have we that the blind eyes will see it? Some who have the eyes of their understanding opened can see the glory of the Lord; but the great mass, as the Apostle says, are blinded by the god of this world. (2 Cor. 4:4) What assurance have we that this blindness of understanding will not continue; and that the god of this world will not continue to blind the minds of others? That is a good question, quite to the point; but note how thoroughly it is answered in the Word of God. We are assured that Satan, the old serpent, the devil, shall be bound for that thousand years, that he may deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished. (Rev. 20:2, 3) During that period he will no longer have the power to blind, to deceive, for his deceptions will all be exposed by the glorious light of that day. Moreover we have the further assurance of the Lord that all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. (Isa. 35:5) How inspiring, how happifying these assurances of God's Word to those who can see them, who can appreciate them, who have come to such a knowledge of God's character that they can no longer believe the slanders and blasphemies and misrepresentations of the divine character and plan, which have come down to us from the "dark ages!" In advance we who can see, we who can hear are blessed, as the Master said (Matt. 13:6); and we can in advance join with the Great

Company in their song “Hallelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad; let us give glory unto him.” Rev. 19:6, 7

REVEALING THE GLORY

Those whose eyes of understanding have been opened, those who can now see a measure of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding, realize that their blessing is rightly described by the Apostle as the “spirit of a sound mind.” (2 Tim. 1:7) They perceive that the difficulty with the world in general is its unsoundness of mind, its unsoundness of reasoning in respect to God and his character and his plan. They can sympathize, nevertheless, with mankind in this blindness, realizing how all God’s glorious purposes are secret, covered, hidden for wise purposes; as our Master said, “I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” (Matt. 11:25, 26) It surely did not seem good to the Father to hide his plans from mankind in general so as to give him an excuse for eternally tormenting them! Surely our Lord Jesus did not thank the heavenly Father for obscuring, for hiding from mankind truths which are necessary for their salvation and without which they will be consigned to eternal torment! On the contrary the Father kept secret his plans for a time from the majority of mankind for good, sufficient, wise and loving reasons—reasons which our Lord Jesus understood and also approved, and which he has revealed to us in his Word; namely, that it was the wiser and better plan first to select a Church, then to use that Church as an instrumentality for the blessing and enlightening of all the remainder of the race “in due time.” It is true that none are to be saved in ignorance; and hence that the world in general are not saved now; but it is true that “The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together”—in due time—God’s due time; or “the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” The glory of the Lord was revealed to the Church class, not when we first believed nor even when first we consecrated, but subsequently, when as the “servants and handmaidens,” we were anointed with the holy Spirit of adoption. Then we were permitted to see, to appreciate the deep things of God. (Acts 2:18) How glad we are that the Lord explains that “after these days” (in which

2H556

he pours out his spirit upon his handmaidens) “he will pour out his spirit upon all flesh!” Thus all mankind not only shall have ocular demonstration during the

Millennial age of the goodness of God of his mercy and love and glorious provisions for them all, but in addition will have an enlightenment of the holy Spirit, whereby they will be the better enabled to understand the deep things of God, the riches of his grace, etc.

Coming now to the methods that will be used in revealing God's character, we note first his promise that he will turn a pure message to the people. No longer will there be discordant notes causing confusion, Babel, mystifying and deluding those who will be seeking the way of the Lord. The one pure message of divine justice, wisdom, love and power will be so clearly demonstrated to the whole world that The knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. Hab. 2:14 To such an extent will this be true that ultimately "They shall no more teach every man his neighbor and every man his own brother saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know him from the least to the greatest of them." (Jer. 31:34) Neither will the instruction of that glorious day, that Millennial Kingdom epoch, be merely in words. Still more forceful will be the lessons of experience by which the world will have demonstration of divine power and justice and mercy and wisdom; for we are told that "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will then learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9) Ah, yes! It is because mankind sees no judgment of the Lord abroad in the earth at the present time that unbelief and sin are rampant. The world sees every form of unrighteousness prosper; and as for the blessings that come to the Lord's consecrated ones, the world is unable to see and appreciate these: for they are hidden from sight.

With the new dispensation, however all this will be changed; every exercise of faith will bring its corresponding blessing; every evil deed will bring its corresponding chastisement, just recompense of reward to every soul of man that doeth well and to every soul that doeth ill. (Rom. 2:6-9) Very soon the world will learn through these lessons of experience what is right, what is wrong, what will bring divine favor, and what will bring divine reprobation and chastisement. It is safe to say that these lessons will appeal very quickly to humanity and will constitute the beginnings of the revelation of the glory of God, a display of what God recognizes as right and what he recognizes as wrong, as the years of the Millennium roll around, and mankind shall be blessed more and more with restitution, rising higher and higher out of degradation and sin and toward righteousness and perfection. (Acts 3:19-21)

Their view will become more and more enlarged, and their appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights

and depths of divine love and justice will gradually extend, and ultimately all who avail themselves of those privileges may come to know God in truth and sincerity and to know Jesus Christ.

ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE GLORY

Other Scriptures tell us of the revelation of the divine glory to the angelic hosts and to the Church; but our text tells us of humanity, all humanity, all flesh; Adam and all of his race with the exception of those gathered out during the Jewish Age and during this Gospel Age. This means more than merely those who will be living at the time when that glorious epoch will be ushered in, when the new heavens and new earth shall take the place of the present order of things, of which Satan is declared to be the prince, ruling secretly and unrecognized by his subjects. We cannot understand the mental processes of those premillennialists who are looking forward to great favors upon the living generation of the human family at the second coming of Christ and the glorification of the Elect Church. We know not why their faith cannot grasp the fulness of the divine assurance that Jesus Christ tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9); and that God's provision is for a day of judgment for the whole world, (Acts 17:31), every member of the race, aside from the Church, which has its judgment during this Gospel age. We cannot understand why they have difficulty in recognizing the force of the Scriptural promise that a resurrection has been provided not only for the just, but also for the unjust (Acts 25:15); that all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth (John 5:28, 29), the few to the life resurrection, but the great mass to the resurrection of judgment, of testing, of trial for life or death eternal, in that day when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together. In that day Jesus shall indeed be the true light that will enlighten every man that is come into the world. (John 1:9) In that day when as Immanuel, his Kingdom shall be under the whole heavens, in that thousand-year day in which the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father and sit upon the throne of his glory, he shall gather all nations before him, and judge the living and the dead according to the things that are written in the books of the Bible, according to his own words in which he instructed that love is the fulfilling of the law—love to God and love to our neighbor. This same rule of love will judge mankind during the Millennium and will test each member of Adam's race, to locate him either as a sheep or as a goat, in the favor or disfavor of the Judge. At the conclusion those sheep

thoroughly tested shall be rewarded with the gift of life everlasting; while the goats will be rewarded with the penalty of divine disfavor, everlasting punishment—everlasting death—everlasting destruction from which there shall be no recovery. Acts 3:23

In conclusion, dear friends, let us more and more allow our hearts to feast upon the good things of our Heavenly Father's Word, which reveals to us the glorious attributes of his character. For in proportion as we come to know him and to appreciate him, we shall have the riches of his grace in our hearts, and the power of God working in us more and more to will and to do his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12, 13) We have a God greater and nobler than ourselves, more just, more loving, more tender as well as more wise and more powerful. Job 36:26; 37:23

And how few indeed have such a God as this! The great majority, blinded and confused by the errors of the "dark ages," are striving unsuccessfully to worship a God inferior to themselves in justice, love, wisdom. Let us more and more copy the true God and his love and kindness; let us more and more cherish the various assurances of his Word in regard to the coming revelation of his glory, that we may become more and more patient ourselves in respect to the matter, and feel more content to be sharers for the time in the blasphemous reproaches and misrepresentations which come to us in connection with our endeavors to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, for now the world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not. (1 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 3:1)

But very shortly the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together. Then we, if faithful now, shall be participators with Christ in his glory even the glory which shall be revealed in us; and we shall be glad also with exceeding joy to have the privilege of showing forth to others the glorious character of our Heavenly Father.

[The Greensburg Morning Press, June 3, 1908](#)

THE BLOOD THAT SPEAKETH BETTER THINGS

Madison, Wis., May 31. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, Pa., addressed large and attentive audiences twice here today. We report his evening discourse from the text, "The blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. 12:24) He said:

St. Paul was the most profound of the apostles; through his writings the Lord has given to his faithful the broadest, the deepest, the clearest views of the divine

plan. Paul was well qualified by nature for his noble service to the Church. From his own pen we are informed that his knowledge of divine things, the deep things of God, not only was obtained through the prophecies of the Old Testament and the illumination of the holy Spirit but was supplemented by visions and revelations, one of which in particular he tells us he was not permitted to explain, saying, "I heard things unlawful to be uttered." (2 Cor. 12:4) But although the Apostle might not utter the things he himself had heard, the information which he thus obtained is reflected by all his subsequent writings, and doubtless for this reason their illuminating power is so great that it gives to the students of the Word of God such clear and deep insight into those things which otherwise would be darkest mysteries. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight to send the necessary attestations to the pilgrims in the narrow way, followers in the footsteps of Jesus.

Our text is a portion of a large panoramic view, or word picture, which the Apostle sketched. Here, as in many other places, he points out that certain matters with which the Israelites were familiar were types and shadows, on a small scale, of great and wonderful things to come. Pointing back to the institution of Israel's Law Covenant at Mount Sinai he holds that notable event up before his readers as an illustration of the grand antitypes toward which he and they were approaching. In the type were God, Israel and Moses the mediator; in the antitype God, mankind and Jesus, the mediator. In the type the people, after leaving the bondage of Egypt by successive journeys, approached Mount Sinai, where their Law Covenant was to be inaugurated with grand ceremony. They approached gradually, some of the people reaching the mountain while others were yet quite a long way off. Similarly, the Apostle points out, God is about to inaugurate a New Covenant between himself and mankind; and this antitypical Covenant is higher, greater, better because it will have a better Mediator. It will not be inaugurated at Mount Sinai or at any other literal mountain, but at the symbolical Mount Zion, the Kingdom of God, which is about to be established and for which our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come." With the establishment of that mountain or Kingdom will come the blessing of the world through the Mediator and the New Covenant. Meantime the whole world has been gradually approaching that glorious day when God's tabernacle will be with men;

2H558

and its representative, the Christ, shall reign in kingly glory and power for the blessing and uplifting of the people—a reign of righteousness. First in this general marching concourse toward the Mount or Kingdom of God comes the Church of Christ, which is not only nearest to and most deeply interested in the Kingdom, but best informed in respect to it.

THE UNTOUCHABLE MOUNTAIN

In harmony with this picture the Apostle declares, "Ye are not approaching a mountain that might be touched and that burned with fire, nor unto the blackness and darkness and tempest and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them anymore." Such was Mount Sinai in the type; but the antitype is different, although it is similar. The Mount or Kingdom which we are approaching, the Apostle describes as Mount Zion, the City of the Living God, the New Jerusalem, where we shall be brought in contact with innumerable hosts of angels; where the General Assembly and Church of the First-borns, whose names were written in heaven, will meet; where we shall meet God, the Judge of all, where we shall meet the just men of the previous dispensation, made perfect in spirit or life; where Jesus will be the Mediator of the New Covenant; and where the blood of sprinkling will speak peace, forgiveness and reconciliation with God. For more than eighteen centuries since the Apostle wrote these words we have been approaching, approaching these glorious things, but we have not yet reached the end of the journey, although it is in sight.

As soon as the last member of the Royal Priesthood shall have come to the mountain the First Resurrection, the resurrection of the Just, will bring together the Church of the First-born and bring them into full relationship with the host of angels, the Father's presence, the New Jerusalem condition, etc. Then speedily the whole world of mankind will find themselves close up to the glorious spiritual Mount or Kingdom of God, from which it is designed that the Lord's blessing shall extend through the New Covenant to father Adam and every member of his race. The inattentive world knows not that we are so close to this mountain. In general people recognize that we are living in peculiar times; and many of the world are beginning to look forward into the future peeringly, fearfully, wondering about and dreading the things which may speedily come to pass. But only the Royal Priesthood are privileged to know of the deep things of God and to appreciate the blessings which he intends shall speedily come through an awful time of trouble to the whole world's groaning creation.

Looking back to the type we see the pen picture which the Apostle is sketching: Mount Sinai trembling under the glorious manifestation of divine power, symbolically represented in flame and smoke, in quaking earth and in rolling thunder and lightning flashes, which served to prepare Israel for the Law Covenant. The Apostle points out that the antitypes of this must be much more strenuous and will serve to prepare mankind in general

for the blessings of the New Covenant under the antitypical Mediator. The shaking of the earth there from the power represented in the mountain, the Apostle shows prefigured the shaking of society here by the power of the Lord through his Kingdom, which will be established amongst men in power and great glory, though the glory may be hidden from all except those who have the eyes of their understanding opened, hidden from all except those begotten of the holy Spirit. Everything here connected with the inauguration of the New Covenant will be on an immensely higher and grander scale than were the things in the type. And the shaking, as the Apostle shows in the context, will be such as the world never before knew.

GREAT GENERAL SHAKING

From other Scriptures we know that it will include political, financial and social institutions. Everything shakable is to be shaken; everything not authorized and approved by the divine law of love and justice is to be shaken, loosed, overthrown, destroyed. And the Apostle adds that the shaking will affect not merely the earthly things, but also the heavenly, the ecclesiastical. Churchianity will be shaken in all its various sects and parties; and the shaking will be necessary because with the central truth which they hold the various creeds and practices of Christendom has combined, so many egregious errors and superstitions and falsities or dishonesties. The Apostle declares, in a word, that everything will be shaken except the Kingdom which the Church will receive (v. 29), and he exhorts that those who have been accepted as prospective members of the glorified Church, the Kingdom class, should seek to have the graces of the Spirit whereby we may offer service well pleasing to God—"For our God is a consuming fire;" that is to say, although he is just and loving he will not countenance wilful sin; his anger will burn against it to its utter destruction, and if we harbor such sins a portion of his anger will assuredly burn against us proportionately, and we should not be fit for the kingdom.

God's anger burned against Adam when he was wilfully disobedient; and the sentence or penalty upon him and upon his posterity has been executed for now 6,000 years, "Dying thou shalt die." Hence all the sickness,

2H559

pain, sorrow, crying, dying are the results of this original burning of God's anger against mankind. It still burns; and only those who have seeing eyes of faith have thus far been blessed with the hearing ear and the privilege to escape from the divine anger, the divine sentence, the divine condemnation, the divine curse, the divine wrath,

and to be accepted through Christ as Children of God, whereby they may cry, "Abba, Father," and realize that God acknowledges the relationship. However, since the death of Jesus a measurable blessing of knowledge of God has come into the world, the true light; nevertheless men love darkness rather than light. (John 3:19) And in proportion as any who have seen even a glimmer of the true light, have hated and refused it, in that proportion have they added to their responsibility. Such is the condition of Churchianity today—so-called Christendom. The presence of the light has increased men's responsibility, as our Lord said in his day. Nevertheless, the Lord has permitted mankind to follow wrong courses and more or less to sin against the light without visiting upon them any special chastisements, because in the interim he has been gathering out of the world his "little flock," his "jewels," the Bride of Christ. When all of these shall have come to the Mount of God the time will be at hand for dealing with the world; and a manifestation of God's real attitude toward sin will be necessary and appropriate. It will not be such as has mistakenly been presented, a roasting and eternal torture of mankind at the hands of demons, but the permission of sad and awful trouble to come upon mankind as a result of the outworking of their own selfish propensities. The hand which has stayed the winds while the gathering and sealing of the Elect has been in progress will no longer stay them. The winds of selfishness, strife, passion, anger, covetousness, hatred, will be allowed to blow; and awful will be the "distress of nations and perplexity" and the "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation until that same time," when every man's hand shall be against his neighbor." Luke 21:25; Dan. 12:1; Zech. 8:10

REVEALED IN FLAMING FIRE

This fiery trouble amongst men will be for their good, not for their destruction. Evil works will be consumed, selfish institutions will go down in that awful conflagration of human passion; but humanity as a whole will survive (though of course a considerable number will perish in the troublous times). The first flaming up of this great conflagration will be the most terrible, because it will be so unexpected, so sweeping, but the flames will die down as soon as the wicked works, the selfishness which occasioned them, shall have been consumed. Nevertheless the Lord distinctly tells us that his indignation will always burn against every form of iniquity, injustice, selfishness and sin; and that these shall be destroyed root and branch. We may assume safely, therefore, that some of these roots and branches of selfishness will be smoldered, consumed, all through the Millennial Age until nearly its close. But surely, after the flaming fire shall have executed the divine decree against sin and selfishness, the world will learn righteousness and the advantages thereof; and correspondingly

the blessing of the Lord shall come upon them, the blessings portrayed in our text and represented in the statement:

“THE BLOOD THAT SPEAKETH”

Coming more particularly to our text we find that it can be rightly appreciated only by recognizing its relationship to the context and to the picture which the Apostle has portrayed. Looking back to the type we see that from the midst of the quaking mountain Moses came forth to the people, his face shining with glory and covered with a veil to represent, the Apostle says, the still greater glory of the Mediator of the New Covenant,—the Christ. Here we should remember the Apostles explanation that God’s work during this Gospel age is a mystery to the world; that he is taking out from amongst men a “little flock” to be members of the great High Priest under their Lord and Head, Jesus, to be members of the antitypical Mediator between God and men — “Members in particular.” Then the last member of the Church shall have reached Mount Zion, the Kingdom, their resurrection change will make of them spirit beings like unto their Lord, glorious beings, yet invisible to men even as are the angels. In the type this spiritual glory is represented in the shining Moses’ face covered with the veil. Notice the work of the mediator of the Law Covenant. Moses took of the blood of the slain animals sacrificed for sins and sprinkled first the books of the law, the tables of the Law. The act signified the satisfaction of divine justice, the presentation of the merit of the sin-offering on behalf of the sins of all the people. Then he took of the same blood and sprinkled all the people, this representing the forgiveness of their sins and the bringing of them into harmony with God and his divine Law.

Now let us turn from the type to the antitype and see the signification and beauty thus revealed. The antitypical Mediator Jesus, the Head, representing the Church also, which is his Body, will first of all make satisfaction for the sins of the whole people, the whole world, presenting formally to the heavenly Father the blood of Jesus, his sacrificed life, and the blood or sacrificed life of all those whom he has accepted as members of his Body and who in the present age have shared

2H560

with him in the laying down of their lives in his service. When our glorious Head shall have made satisfaction before the Father, the next thing in order will be the sprinkling of all the people with the same blood. In the type it would take but little time to sprinkle the blood upon the two tables of the Law, but quite a long time indeed to sprinkle all the people, who numbered millions. So in the antitype. The sprinkling of the people will require a long time—the thousand years of Christ’s Millennial reign. The entire work of the Millennium will

be said to be the sprinkling of the people, the bringing back of as many of mankind as will come, into relationship with God through the merit of the precious blood of Jesus, his sacrificed life. How glad we are, then that we are approaching, not merely the glories of the Kingdom, the fellowship of the Church, the companionship of angels, and our presentation to the Heavenly Father, but also the glorious mediatorial work of the Christ and the sprinkling of mankind with the blood that speaketh—that makes atonement, that makes satisfaction, that speaks the world's forgiveness and release from bondage of sin and death which came through Adam's disobedience.

Justice cries for vengeance; every injustice cries out except one. The great injustice of Christ's crucifixion did not cry out for vengeance; but instead the blood of Christ speaks the forgiveness of our sin to all those who will accept his favor. How wonderful that instead of penalizing the world of mankind for the death of the only begotten Son of God, and subsequently for the persecution also of all those adopted of God as members of the Body of Christ; instead of sentencing the world to death on this account, the divine arrangement and program from the beginning has been that it shall be presented, not as a charge against the world, but as a ransom price, as the payment of the kindness toward the children of men—his mercy, his long suffering, his forgiveness! Yet his justice is still retained; and it is still his law and ever shall be, that "the soul that sinneth it shall die." Hence although the blood of sprinkling shall be applied to all the families of the earth; nevertheless their own wills shall determine finally whether or not this blessing of forgiveness will result in their attaining reconciliation with God and eternal life, or whether they will reject all these favors and blessings, and by sinning wilfully come under the sentence of eternal death, "everlasting destruction." 2 Thess. 1:9

HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED

But some one will say, "Do not we who are accepted of the Lord as his Church, his little flock—do we not need also the blood of sprinkling, as well as do the world? Why is not our sprinkling shown in this text?" We reply that the Apostle has already discussed the Church in a previous chapter and showed our share in the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus in advance of the world's blessing. Notice how in Hebrews 10:19-23 the Apostle speaks particularly of the Church and her sprinkling, and refers to her as a priestly class, privileged now by the grace of God as priests to enter into the holy places. He says: "Having therefore, brethren, courage to enter into the Most Holy by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us (through the veil; that is to say, his flesh); and having him as High Priest over the house

of God (the Church, the Royal Priesthood), let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith (as his followers, underpriests, members of his body) without wavering: and let us consider one another to provoke to love and good works.” Ah! here it is.

There are two parts to the atonement work shown in the Apostle’s word here and elsewhere. First he shows the Church sprinkled, washed, cleansed, accepted as members of the body of Christ, privileged to enter into the Holiest, to be called sons of God, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, members of the Royal Priesthood, members of the body of the great High Priest, who is their Head. Already reconciled to the Father, they need not wait for the inauguration of the New Covenant. Instead they are accepted in the Beloved as members of the great Mediator; and their sacrifices which would have no value of themselves, the great High Priest counts in as part and parcel of his own, which has the merit. Consequently these are all ready for participation with their Lord in his glorious work, as soon as the resurrection change shall fit them for their future service in glory. Later during the Millennium will come the sprinkling of the world, as we have seen. These same two parts of the atonement, as we have previously pointed out, are represented in the typical day of atonement as recorded in Leviticus 16. The first sacrifice, representing the death of our Lord Jesus, typified by the bullock, is made applicable for the sins of the members of his body and of the household of faith, and these alone. The second sacrifice of The Day of Atonement, the sacrifice of the goat, represented the sacrificing by Christ of those whom he accepts as members of his body. This sacrificing has progressed all through this Gospel age, and soon, we believe, will be finished. The acceptable day, the day in which the Lord will accept such sacrifices, will soon be ended. Then all the members of the High Priest’s Body, passing beyond the vail will be changed into spirit beings. Then will follow the sprinkling on behalf of all

2H561

the people, in full harmony with what we have already shown.

Our appreciation of the divine program yet to be fulfilled in the blessing of all the families of the earth gives us renewed confidence in our God, in his love, in his justice, and should prompt our hearts the more earnestly to desire to do his will. Moreover the more clearly we discern the glorious work of the Church in the future age as joint-heir with her Lord in the blessing of the world, the more should we be energized to make our calling and election sure. And the more of love

toward God, of zeal for his cause, and of sympathy for the world we have, the more these should have a transforming influence upon our hearts and lives, such as would best tend to prepare us for the glories to follow. I trust that these precious truths of the divine Word are having these effects upon our hearts and minds. In conclusion I exhort you in the words of the Apostle, that, "Having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil (justification), and having our body washed with pure water (the putting away of the filth of the flesh), let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (our profession as footstep followers of the great High Priest, our profession as under-priests, as sons of God); and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works"—not to hinder or stumble or offend one another, but to render all possible assistance to every fellow-pilgrim in the narrow way, realizing that whatever we do toward one another in the name of the Lord we do as unto him; and that because we love him that begetteth, we love also all who are begotten of him, in a special sense above and beyond the sympathetic love which goes out to all mankind, yea, even toward enemies.

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, July 2, 1908](#)

CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE

Lowell, Mass., June 28. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, Penn., spoke twice here today to large and interested congregations. His afternoon topic was "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire." He was heard with profound attention, speaking nearly two hours. We report his morning discourse, from the text, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." (Heb. 10:35) The speaker said:

Confidence lies at the foundation of all progress, both material and spiritual. Whatever undermines confidence to that extent injures the matter with which it is associated. Whatever builds and establishes confidence correspondingly is helpful to the thing with which it is connected. We have just seen an illustration of this in the world's financial affairs. A manifestation of weakness in an unsuspected financial matter caused a spasm which is even yet being felt throughout the world. There has not at any time been real ground for suspicion of the insolvency of the great majority of the banks but irregularities in a few have cast a shadow of doubt upon the many, so that had it not been for the extreme measures taken by the various Clearing House Associations whereby the banks supported each other and refused to pay out the cash except in small quantities, the result would have been such a wreck of the financial confidence as was never before witnessed in

the world's history. The difficulty was a temporary casting away of confidence—a spasm of fear and doubt.

To our understanding the Scriptures clearly teach that just before us looms the most terrible trouble which this world has ever witnessed. The Prophet Daniel describes it as “a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.” (Daniel 12:1) Our Lord Jesus described it in almost the same words with a little addition, saying, “Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be (afterward).” (Matt. 24:2 1) That time of trouble is coming along the very lines of our topic—lack of confidence, casting away of confidence. Describing it, the Scriptures show this, saying there was no “peace to him that went out or came in, because of the affliction; for I set all men, every one against his neighbor.” (Zech. 8:10) Thus in symbol the Lord pictures the selfishness and fear and lack of confidence which will bring upon the world the awful shock of anarchy. We merely mention this incidentally, however, as illustrating the value, the importance of confidence, as related to peace, prosperity and happiness in general. Adhering to the thought of our text, we wish to consider our subject from the standpoint of the church, her interests, her peace, her prosperity—individually and collectively.

THE HAVOC WROUGHT BY WORLDLY WISDOM

The church of Christ has departed from the divine standard and methods, and the result has been the undermining of Christian faith as respects God and the Bible as His revelation. We are not of those who despise education, but we are of those who appreciate the fact that there is one wisdom which cometh from above and another wisdom which is “earthly, sensual, devilish.”

2H562

We are of those who recognize the Apostle's words when he says, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:14) We are of those who hold that educating a man for the pulpit can never make him a proper minister of the truth—that something more than this is necessary. We hold that only such as have received the anointing of the holy Spirit are either authorized or qualified to be ministers and expositors of the truth. We hold that no amount of laying on of hands, conferring of holy orders and ordinations of men are effective, or could qualify any one for the ministry of God's truth; that the Lord's anointing is essential.

Looking back to the early church we find the example of our Lord and His Apostles to be in full accord with what we have just set forth. The selection of the Apostles was not made from the colleges of that time, although one of

the Apostles, St. Paul, was probably a graduate of the school of Gamaliel, who was not only a talented, but an educated man. Paul was not chosen however, on account of his education, but on account of his heart. Similarly the other apostles were none of them educated, learned men. Indeed, we read concerning two of the most prominent, and that after they had received the anointing of the holy Spirit, that the people “perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men.” (Acts 4:13) We do not claim, however, that they were chosen on account of their ignorance and lack of learning, though we do believe that if they had had more learning the probabilities are that they would have been proportionately less ready for the Lord and His message, and less suitable, since they were to be His chosen vessels for the distribution of that message.

Here has been the great mistake in the nominal church, dating back for centuries—the supposition that worldly education could make a preacher of the truth. We extend the matter further and assert that religious education in a theological seminary would not of itself make a proper minister of the Word of God; that a prerequisite to that service is the anointing of the holy Spirit and its enlightenment of the mind and of the heart. This view and wrong course have resulted in filling theological seminaries and religious pulpits with men who, while educated in the wisdom of this world and to some extent along theological lines, are not competent to be preachers of the Gospel of Christ, because not begotten again of the holy Spirit. Of course there are noble exceptions; nor are we judging the others except by their own testimonies from time to time as they may be known to the public. So far as we know, there are very few ministers who even profess to have made a full consecration of their lives to the Lord and to be begotten of His holy Spirit. So far as we are aware, very many, if not a majority, regard their ministry as a profession, chosen more after the manner that a physician chooses his, and rarely as in the Apostles’ cases, because they felt, “Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:16)—rarely because the beauty and importance of their message is, in their esteem, so high, so great, so all-important.

HIGHER CRITICISM AND EVOLUTIONISM REPROVED

But there is another way by which ministers in general are more and more openly telling their hearers that they have departed from the faith and are no longer ministers of the Word of God. They announce their skepticism respecting the Bible, not in vulgar terms, as did infidelity a century ago, but it is the very same infidelity nevertheless. They announce their belief in the doctrine of the evolution of man from the power forces of animal life, and thus they announce to such as understand them their disbelief in the Scriptural account that Adam was a

special creation of God, created in God's image and likeness. They claim that evolution has brought the intelligence which we have today, and thus they declare their disbelief in the testimony of both the Old and the New Testament Scriptures to the effect that man, when perfect and in harmony with his Creator, fell from the divine favor into sin and degradation, under the sentence of death. This implies a rejection of the testimonies of our Lord Jesus also, for He declared that He came to "seek and to save that which was lost," whereas the evolution theory teaches that nothing was lost, but that instead man, starting at the bottom of the ladder, has attained to his present condition through evolution. Thus they deny the very foundation of the Gospel, to wit, that the lost man, sentenced to death and degraded by sin, needed a redeemer to pay his penalty for him, and that our Lord Jesus left His heavenly glory and became a man for the suffering of death, and in order that He might redeem all mankind from the original curse of death, and might in due time restore back to harmony with God and to the original perfection as many as will receive the favor—the elect of this Gospel age receiving a still higher blessing through the begetting of the holy Spirit to a new nature, spiritual. They reject the Apostle Paul's statement on the subject, when he declared that by one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because all are sinners. (Rom. 5:12) This, as well as the foregoing Scriptures, fully contradicts the worldly wisdom of the higher critics

2H563

and evolutionists as they seek gradually to present their anti-Biblical, anti-Christian theories.

The result of this error of relying upon worldly wisdom as the almost sole qualification for ministry in the church is thus bringing about a loss of confidence wherever its influence is felt—world-wide. The Bible, discredited in the minds of Christian people, loses its weight and force, and thus the anchorage of faith and trust is gradually being severed. Many noble and good people are already adrift, and others feel their faith going. These worldly-wise teachers declare that the world will be all the better off by reason of its loss of confidence in the Scriptures; that it will learn to fasten itself upon the judgment of the advanced scholars of our day; but they are mistaken. They have nothing to give to the true Christian, nor even to the nominal Christian, which will take the place of that which they have destroyed and are destroying. The result is that already the various denominations are feeling the waning power of Christian influence in their midst, and are held together largely by clerical machinery and zeal, not according to knowledge. In their

effort to strengthen their own hands and feeble knees the present program is “a confederacy” (Isa. 8:1), a federation of all the different “orthodox” denominations for mutual support, after the manner of mutual support granted to financial institutions by the Clearing House Associations. But the Lord declares that this confederacy, this federation, is not along the lines of truth, but along false lines, and at the end will mean a great fall of Babylon. (Rev. 18:1)

WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND

Coming now to that smaller class of God’s people in all denominations throughout the world—namely, the Lord’s faithful ones, fully consecrated to him and begotten of His holy Spirit—these have need of admonition and encouragement that their faith fail not, that they cast not away their confidence. We must never lose sight of the fact, frequently brought to our attention throughout the Scriptures, that there are legions of wicked spirits, fallen angels, who, under the captaincy of Satan, the prince of demons, are on the alert to oppose the Lord, the truth, and all who are faithful to Him. They have a double mission—to forward, to encourage, to assist those who are in error and leading others into error, as well as to oppose the light and the children of the light. We cannot doubt their co-operation with higher criticism and evolutionism, and that they have done much to assist in error many who are quite unconscious of the fact, and we may be sure that as the Adversary opposed our Lord and the apostles and all the faithful ones of the Gospel age, he, with his associates, is doubly active today, realizing that he has but a short time and that the fight is a desperate one.

The apostle speaks of the Adversary’s influence, saying: “We are not ignorant of his devices,” and again he declares, “We wrestle not with flesh and blood [only] but against spiritual wickedness in high [influential] positions.” (2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:12) To realize this which the Scriptures represent as the real situation of affairs will cause the Lord’s people to tremble, in view of what the great Adversary and his subordinates might accomplish to their injury. But we are to remember on the other hand the encouraging words, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31) And the assurance that the Lord will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able, but will with the temptation provide a way of escape. (1 Cor. 1:13) Let us, then cast not away our confidence in the Lord and in His Word; let us rather avail ourselves of the great and special blessings and privileges and assistance which the Lord has provided for our special day, that we might understand His Word and be guided by the “spirit of truth,” which is the “spirit of a sound mind.” Rather as we come to a right understanding of God’s Word, these trying conditions which are now confronting us, and which will increase

day by day, should have the effect of more firmly establishing our faith in the Lord's Word, and our faith in the God whose wisdom foretold present and future conditions and their results.

The Apostle calls this epoch upon which we have entered a time of "shaking." He points out that it will shake not only the symbolical earth, society, but also the symbolical heaven, the Church nominal. He tells us that the result will be that everything shakeable, everything out of proper harmony with the Lord, will be shaken out, so that what will result will be that only that which is in harmony with the Lord shall remain. The merest glance will show us how terrifying will be the shaking and the results, and the lesson speaks to us admonishing that we lay the firmer hold on the hope set before us in the Gospel — upon the anchorage of our faith. Who shall be able to stand? inquires the Apostle, implying that it will not be a question as to who might fall, but the reverse of this; that it shall be only the occasional one that will stand the shaking, the sifting, the testing that is coming—yea, is almost upon us! In Psalm 91, the Lord pictures the trials and difficulties that He will permit to come upon His people in this time. The Adversary will be wroth, and do all in his power to tempt and to try those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. (Rev. 3:10) The Lord's people of the present time have had special privileges and opportunities for growth in knowledge and in grace, and the test upon them along these lines will be proportionate. We may expect, in common with

2H564

others, doctrinal tests, and that the Adversary will endeavor to confuse us so to turn our minds aside from the statement of the truth provided us by the Lord for our refreshment and comfort. Evolution, Higher Criticism, Christian Science, New Theology, Universalism and other quirks and twists of supposed human wisdom, which ignore the Word of God, may be brought to our attention with a view to diverting us; and anyway our natural minds are prone enough to speculate and unsound enough to be unreliable.

Those who have received instructions in the school of Christ to any considerable degree of development of heart and head should be so established in the invulnerable teachings of God's Word that none of these besetments would move them, but those of God's people who have been overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to the neglect of the Divine Word will find themselves lacking of the armor of truth, and vulnerable to the shafts of error. Remember the Apostle's words in this connection, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to

withstand in the evil day.” (Eph. 6:13) Confidence in God and in His Word will lead into a knowledge of the truth such as are begotten of His Spirit, so that, as the Apostle declares, it will be true of them that although this evil day shall come upon the whole world as a thief and as a snare, and they shall not escape, ye, brethren, will not be in darkness that that day shall overtake you as a thief, because you are not only at heart children of the light, but are walking in the light which God provides, and are therefore not in darkness with the world. 1 Thess. 5:4, 5

THE SECRET PLACE—THE MOST HIGH

Through the Prophet the Lord tells us, “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” (Psa. 91:1) He shall be saved. But what is it to thus abide? Is this not a statement of similar import to that of the Apostle. “He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him?” (1 John 4:16) This thought should be specially impressed upon all of our hearts, namely, that God is love, and that the development of God’s characteristics in our hearts and characters is our highest possible attainment in the present life. To this every energy of the Christian should be bent. It should ever be kept in mind that all the doctrines, all the instructions of God’s word, all the preaching in His name, all the trials and misapprehensions which come to his people are with a view to their perfecting in love, for “God is love,” and the command is that we should be like unto our Father in heaven. Love is the fulfilling of the law, the mark of perfectness. (Rom. 13:10) Hence, as the Apostle says, if we had all knowledge and could understand all mysteries, and have not love, it would profit us nothing. If we were generous to a fault, so that we could give all our goods to feed the poor and leave ourselves penniless; if it were mere generosity and not love it would profit us nothing, and if we should be so loyal to our convictions that we would go to the stake and give our bodies to be burned, if we have not love, it would profit us nothing. (1 Cor. 13:2-3)

Our thought, then is that the principal test upon the most advanced of the Lord’s people will be along the lines of love. Love for God will test our loyalty to His word and the spirit of that word. Love to the brethren will be tested and tried doubtless in various ways. Love for the world and even for our enemies will doubtless be tested severely. “The Lord your God proveth you to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” (Deut. 10:3) Now is the time for these very testings. As the Scriptures declare, the Lord will try His people as in a furnace—as silver and gold are tested and purified—not with a view to their destruction in their trouble, but contrariwise, for the elimination of their dross and a demonstration of their purity. It is said that in the old-time method of refining silver the metallurgist kept up the process of purifying until the molten silver was so pure that, like a mirror, it reflected his features. Similarly with us, according to this picture, the Lord would

see in us copies of His Dear Son, and anything short of this will not be acceptable to Him, and the more speedily we reach this condition of heart (and so far as possible the flesh) the greater will be our blessing under the Lord's approval.

The loss of confidence which we have already referred to as the coming bane of the entire social fabric which will wreck society in anarchy and set every man's hand against his neighbor and his brother, and give no peace to him that goeth out or to him that cometh in, will, we believe, begin with the house of God, with the church. This is clearly the indication of the Apostle, "Judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be?" (1 Pet. 4:17) There is a house of God nominal, the professing millions, and the house of God actual, the consecrated ones, much fewer in number. Our supposition is that this test will come first to the latter class, and then proceed to the others, ultimately culminating in anarchy. We must never lose sight of the arch enemy who is opposed to the Lord, and all those who are His; and we should credit to him the instigation of the evils which would prove such temptations to brotherly love that many will fall. The Apostle says, "We are not ignorant of his devices." What are they? The Apostle explains that they are insidious, like leaven, spreading themselves, corrupting in their influence, injurious,

2H565

roots of bitterness which, getting mixed with the food of the Lord's family, many might thereby be defiled, poisoned. Our enemy is a master at this poisoning of the human mind. He knows our frailties, and will be sure to take all the advantage possible.

The Apostle tells us that the tongue, a little member of the body, is one of the most dangerous, both for ourselves and for others. He says, "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God." Jas. 3:9) He proceeds to say that the tongue setteth on fire the course of nature. (Jas. 3:6) Ah, there it is! The fire of that day, which shall try every man's work; the fire that already is enkindling all over the world is set on fire by the tongue. Evil speaking, slanders, backbitings, these are the matches which enkindle the flame, and once started poor fallen humanity is almost helpless before it. It brings anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife, and these things the Apostle tells us are works of the flesh and of the devil. (Gal. 5:19; 1 John 3:8) It will be through these agencies largely that the angry nations of the world will be brought to the melting point. As the Apostle symbolically expresses it, the symbolical heavens, the church, shall be on fire, and the elements of society shall

melt with the fervency of the heat, the strife, the friction and the earth (society) shall melt. 2 Pet. 3:10

THE LESSON TO BE LEARNED

But someone was saying, how could it be possible for those who are the Lord's people, and who have received of His holy Spirit, and who have brushed out the old leaven of malice, hatred, strife, to be tempted along such lines? How could those who have renounced sin and all its meanness, and who have entered the school of Christ and been taught by Him, and been cultivating in their hearts the spirit of love and practicing the same to the extent of their ability—how could these be overtaken in a fault by some work of the flesh and the devil as has been suggested as a temptation? Alas! dear friends, we indeed have the treasure of the new nature, but, as the apostle declares, we have it in earthen vessels, and those earthen vessels have all the weaknesses and blemishes which they originally had before we became children of God; and all of those blemishes, frailties, would very soon open up and admit to our minds and conduct the selfishness, bitterness, anger, etc., which are of the world. If in any degree the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love, of devotion to Him and to the service of His truth departs from our hearts, the adversary evidently has it in his power to bring great pressure upon all of these earthen vessels from the outside, and we need correspondingly a great pressure and weight of love on the inside to withstand the pressure of the world, the flesh and the adversary. The Lord has promised grace sufficient. It is sufficient if we apply for it and use it, but not otherwise.

Undoubtedly the Lord continually protects His people from the adversary's power, otherwise we might be overwhelmed. Who is sufficient for these things? Although the Scriptures intimate that in this great testing in the end of this gospel age the Lord will permit Satan to have special power against His people, that would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. It does not signify a lack of divine interest in and attention to His people that this trouble time will be upon them, but merely that the day having come for the harvesting, the testing, the separating of the wheat from the tares and from the chaff, that work is now in progress. The elect will be kept, but not others. The Lord knoweth them that are His and will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but will with every trial provide a way of escape, succor. (2 Tim. 2:19; 1 Cor. 10:13) But all except the elect, and those are very few, we may expect the elect, not being similarly safeguarded, will stumble, not, we trust, for their eternal destruction, but for a manifestation, and incidentally as a great lesson not only to themselves, but to the world and to angels, a lesson which will demonstrate the wisdom of the divine plan and word and loving rules, and the unwisdom of any and everything else.

The Scriptures do not point out directly how the testings will come. Indeed, we may assume that they will come in some manner not expected, and that they may be very severe, crucial tests of our love and loyalty. Our text, however, suggests the clue not only to the world's trouble, but to all these special testings of this "evil" day—a casting away of confidence. The unruly member, the tongue, which will set on fire the course of nature, will undoubtedly in many instances be exercised in what may be thought by its owner a comparatively innocent manner—through insinuations and hints mixed with love. The sweetness of love covers considerable of the bitterness of slander. This is Satan's artifice. He may mix with it a little of conscientiousness and duty, and make it more acceptable to the giver than to the receiver. As surely, however, as the poison is in it, it will work and increase, for "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" —confidence is destroyed, love goes with confidence and extends from one person to another, and so the poisoned mind has no confidence in God, in the Scriptures, in the brethren or in anything.

What is the safeguard of the Lord's people in this evil day? In what manner will the Lord keep His own, "The very elect" that the enemy may touch them not? We reply that their safety lies in (1) keeping their hearts in the love of God (Jude 21), which means also

2H566

keeping them in the love with all the dear brethren, the members of Christ, and with all mankind in a sympathetic sense—yea, with their enemies also. (2) Additionally, these must remember the Word of the Lord and show the love for Him as He directed, “If you love Me, keep my commandments.” His command is, “A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you” (John 14:15; 13:34)— with such a love as would lay down life for the brethren. “We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (1 John 3:16) But even with good resolutions and good intentions along this line, we would still be in danger unless we observe to the full the Lord’s direction as to how love should deal with the brethren if in our judgment they have committed any fault. This law of procedure is pointedly stated in Matt. 18:15-17.

That law should be understood in the smallest details and followed without any modifications. Its design is to bar out the adversary from an opportunity to work on our hearts, upon our own weaknesses, upon our own flesh, and to avoid bringing similar temptations upon others. It is remarkable how few of the Lord’s people seem to understand the importance of this rule and the blessings that would come from its observance. Let us be more particular hereafter, and when the Lord says, “If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone,” let that be our rule with no deviation. To have a desire to tell of the weaknesses or faults of another is an intimation of lovelessness on our own part; for, on the contrary, we should be glad to lay down life itself in the service of any brother, and to do anything we could to shield him or her from anything real or fancied which might reflect to his or her discredit. We should be careful not even to hint an evil which another might take up and, by evil surmising, use injuriously as respects himself or another.

Cast not away your confidence, then, in God, in His Word, in the rules and methods which He has laid upon us in that Word. Cast not away your confidence in the brotherhood of Christ, nor in the world of mankind in general. We believe that even in those on the most degraded plane there is something left of the divine characteristics which sympathizes with truth and righteousness, and that by and by when in the Lord’s providence, under the millennial kingdom reign of Christ, Satan bound and evil influences in restraint, it will be as easy to do right as to do wrong, then doubtless many will be on the side of right who now oppose it because of their inherited weaknesses and unfavorable influences of present environment. Present responsibility, however, is less with them; it is chiefly with the Lord’s consecrated people who have received of His Spirit of begetting and adoption into the divine family as joint-heirs with Jesus in His coming kingdom.

Now is especially their hour of temptation. We fain would reach them with this word of caution and comfort. Our text says that the confidence maintained will bring a great recompense of reward. The severer the trial that is endured faithfully, the grander we may suppose will be the reward to the faithful.

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, July 16, 1908](#)

WHERE, OH HADES, IS THY VICTORY?

Dallas, Texas, July 12. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, Penn., addressed the Bible Students' Convention, in session here, this afternoon at the Maccabee Temple. He took for his text "Where, O Death, Is Thy Sting? Where, O Hades, Is Thy Victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55) The speaker said:

Our text is usually read out of its connection, and hence to the majority is meaningless or worse. To those who have parted from loved ones by death, by the grave, it sounds ironical indeed to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The grave is surely gaining a great victory over humanity at the present time, since it sweeps up an average of 90,000 human lives each day. And that there is a sting to death need not be told, for it has touched every member of our race. We wish it, therefore, to be distinctly understood that the Apostle is not responsible for such a misconception of his words as is usually drawn from them, by the sum of the thousands of educated ministers who throughout the world are ostensibly devoting their time to expounding the Word of God to 400,000,000 of nominal Christians.

To understand the Apostle we must note the logic of his reasoning, his argument, of which our text is a part. He is not denying the actuality of death, the actuality of sin, the actuality of its sting and of the victory of death! On the contrary, he is setting forth these very things. His argument from Verse 12 to Verse 22 is that death is a horrible reality; that the only hope of escape from it is through a resurrection of the dead, and that the only hope of a resurrection lies in the fact that Christ has died for humanity — the just for the unjust; that He was raised from the dead, and eventually is to bring forth from the power of the tomb all mankind

2H567

purchased by His precious blood; for, “as all in Adam die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order.” (1 Cor. 15:22-23) He has made the actuality of death so prominent as to declare that if there be no resurrection the Christian’s faith is vain; that all mankind are yet in their sins, and those who have gone down into death are perished. Vs. 17-18

CHRIST’S REIGN OF ONE THOUSAND YEARS

Proceeding with his argument further, the Apostle shows that as the death of Christ was necessary for the redemption of man from the power of sin and death, so His resurrection was necessary before He could be the King, the great Deliverer and Lifegiver. He proceeds to show that the church now being selected by faith is a first fruits to God, and that following the gathering of the church to Himself will come its glorification in a share in the First Resurrection, describing it as follows:

“It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body.” (Vs. 42-44) The Apostle points out that this glorified church, which is to share with Christ His Millennial Kingdom, His glory and His power for the blessing of the world, must be gathered first, and then the reign of Christ will begin, in harmony with the petition of His prayer, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven.” That reign of the Lord and His glorified church, His bride, during the millennium, he assures us, will accomplish great things, for He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Then He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, by whose authority and in whose power the millennial reign will be inaugurated and brought to a successful issue. Vs. 24-38

Explaining the transition from the present reign of sin and death to the reign of righteousness and life, the Apostle tell us that not only those of the church who have already fallen asleep in the unconsciousness of death would be awakened spirit beings, immortal, but that those of the same class living at that time would not need to sleep, but in dying would be changed instantly, “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” (V. 52) Thus, under divine providence would be inaugurated

THE BLESSING OF THE WORLD.

The Apostle presupposes some general information among his readers respecting what blessing is coming to the world at the second coming of Christ and the glorification of the Church, the elect. Elsewhere in his writings this is very prominent that the Church constitutes the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, and that its mission when completed, when glorified, is to fulfill the divine promise made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (1 Cor. 15:22, 23) The blessing which the world needs and which God has promised is the removal of the curse, which for six thousand years has rested upon Adam and his race. This is not, as many suppose, a curse or sentence to eternal torment, but the curse or sentence of death. The removal of the curse would mean the release of humanity from the death sentence; the bringing of mankind out of the sin and death conditions which have prevailed against all ever since our first parents, through "original sin," brought themselves and us as convicts under the calamity of death and its concomitants of sorrow, pain, trouble of mind and body, and its incidentals of death-dealing conditions, storms, cyclones, earthquakes, floods, famines, etc., all elements of the reign of sin and death.

For many centuries before the Lord came into the world God had vaguely stated His purpose of ultimately blessing mankind. But not until the death of Jesus, the just for the unjust, and the application of the merit of His sacrifice to believers could any be fully restored to the divine favor. These, called the "household of faith," have, indeed, enjoyed much blessing of the Lord in proportion as they were able to exercise faith in His promises; but they were obliged to walk by faith and not by sight—and, indeed, the trial of their faith constitutes a part of their testing. Their real blessing, their real deliverance from sin and death, cannot come until the end of this age, until the resurrection of the just, the saints—the First Resurrection.

Following in general from the death sentence; as the Lord has declared He will wipe away all tears from off all faces; there shall be no more sighing and crying and dying, because all the former things shall have passed away. (Rev. 21:4) This therefore, will include the blessing, not only of the living world at the time, but also the blessing of the thousand of millions who have gone down into the tomb, to the prison house of death, called in the Old Testament Hebrew, sheol, and in the New Testament, Greek, hades. The awakening of these will be but the first step in the blessing that is to come to them. Following this will be their enlightenment with a knowledge of the truth until that knowledge shall be so complete that there will be no need to say every man to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know Him; the knowledge will be so widespread that every knee will bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God. (Jer. 31:34; Isa.

14:23) With this release from the bondage of sin and death will come proportionate responsibility

2H568

to each individual, and only those who from the heart shall accept Messiah's rule and become lovers of righteousness and haters of iniquity—only such shall be counted worthy of the eternal life conditions beyond the millennium; all others shall die at the Second Death, be as though they had not been.

“THEN SHALL BE BROUGHT TO PASS”

Those who have followed our argument may now comprehend the apostle's words of our text—“Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written death is swallowed up in victory. Oh, death, where is thy sting? Oh, grave (hades), where is thy victory?” Ah, yes! then, and not now, will be the victory of the great Messiah. As yet death has the victory—sin dominates the world, and the Lord's faithful fall with the rest of mankind under the power of hades, the tomb. But then, at the close of the Millennial age, everything will be very different, the victorious Messiah shall have swallowed up death in victory, death shall no longer reign over the race, but instead of it life. None will longer need to die, none will die except as a sinner for willful, deliberate refusal to accept the gracious provisions of that time. How grand that consummation of God's plans, as compared with the one which so many of us have received from childhood and which is taught by all the creeds of Christendom! And by the way, it should be noted that our text is supposed to be a quotation from Hosea, which reads, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave (sheol), I will redeem them from death. Oh death, I will be thy plagues. Oh, grave (sheol), I will be thy destruction! Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.” Hosea 13:14

We remind you, dear friends, that the word here rendered grave is in Hebrew sheol, the only word rendered hell throughout the Old Testament. Grave or tomb is its proper rendering, though the majority are kept in ignorance of this fact, which is known to all educated ministers, throughout the world. The Lord through one prophet distinctly tells us then that sheol is to be destroyed, proving that it cannot be a place of eternal torment and assuring us also, according to its true signification, that the tomb, the state of death, is not to be perpetual, that ultimately it shall be destroyed, the taking out of it every member of our race, by the awakening of all from the sleep of death. This is the same thought that the apostle sets before us in our text when he assures us that Christ's victory, by the close of the millennium, will be so complete that the sting of death will be no more felt, even sickness, pain and sorrow shall have fled away and hades (the same word frequently rendered hell in the New Testament), the grave, the tomb, will no longer have the victory, but will be destroyed! By the time that all mankind shall have been raised from the

power of death and the tomb this victory will be complete, and the testimony of the apostle again is, "Messiah must reign until he shall have put all enemies under his feet, the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Vs. 25,26

The destruction of death and hades, however, does not signify that all mankind will have eternal life, for that is provided for only the willing and obedient when they shall come to a knowledge of the truth and shall accept it heartily. For all willing and intelligent rejecters of divine favor, the Lord has provided the second death, an utter destruction, from which there will be no hope of recovery, no redemption, no resurrection, because all who go into it will first have every opportunity which God's grace could justly provide.

THE STING OF DEATH

The Apostle incidentally calls attention to the fact that "the sting of death is sin." (Vs. 56) It was the poison of disobedience that entered our race through our first parents and has developed in us—as poison passes through the system from a serpent's bite. This is, indeed, the picture God gave us through Israel's experience in the wilderness when he permitted the fiery serpents to bite them, to poison them and then provided for them a way to escape through the exercise of faith in looking upon the brazen serpent which Moses was permitted to erect. Here we have the picture of the human family all bitten by sin, all poisoned, all dying under sentence of death. God has provided in Christ a great Sin-Bearer, who took our place as the sinner, who died the Just for the unjust, so that all looking to Him as their Redeemer and following His directions may ultimately be delivered, if they will, from the power of the sting of sin. Our Redeemer declared: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." He has indeed been lifted up on the cross, but only a few as yet have had the eyes to see and to appreciate the fact; but He is to be lifted up in glory as the King of kings and Lord of Lords during the millennium, and then the message will go forth, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth. (Isa. 45:22) The Glorified One will draw all men by influence of truth and righteousness and enlightenment, and only those who resist and refuse the drawing of righteousness shall ultimately die the second death. The drawing of the church, the elect, in the present time, be it noticed, instead of being the drawing of the glorified Lord Jesus, the Redeemer, is the drawing of the Father, as we read: "No man cometh unto me, except the Father who sent me drawn him." (John 6:44) This is the rule in respect to the elect now being gathered, a little flock from every people, kindred, nation and tongue, that those found worthy may be joint-heirs with our Redeemer in his kingdom

2H569

and work of blessing the world.

LAW THE POWER OF SIN

The Apostle further explains that the strength of sin is the law; that is to say, sin brings forth death in us because this was the divine law. God indeed could have given a different penalty in Adam's case, one which Adam could have fulfilled in himself, and after which he might have been received back to Eden and divine favor. But divine wisdom preferred a different program, and hence gave to Adam and his race the full limit of sin's penalty in order that in due time God might show forth his love in providing a Redeemer and a redemption and the restitution times, and incidentally develop to the divine nature and glory the little flock of which Jesus is the Head and the church the members.

As the apostle points out, God's law condemned us all; and we would have been helpless had He left us under that sentence. But He did not so leave us, as the Apostle proceeds to show, saying: "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." The victory that He is speaking of not only includes the church's victory in the first resurrection, but the victory of all that shall ultimately be saved through the millennial age, but all the victory comes through our Lord Jesus Christ and His meritorious sacrifice. Neither is there salvation in any other name nor in any other manner than by faith in His blood. Hence the darkness of ignorance and superstition of the present time is a barrier to the world in general, and only the specially favored ones can grasp the blessing now in advance of the millennium. Of these few our Lord said: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." And we have found it so. Blessed, indeed, are all those who are accepted in the Beloved in advance of the world; but blessed also will the world be when God's due time shall come; when Messiah shall take His great power and reign and Satan shall be bound for a thousand years and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. Thank God for the Savior He has provided— a Savior and a Great One, able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto the Father through Him! Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory now through faith. And thanks be to God, who ultimately will give the victory to Christ and the church, and through them to all the families of the earth who will avail themselves of the privileges extended!

We conclude with the Apostle's words: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (Vs. 58) Our labor at the present time must seem small and insignificant, because few have ears to hear and hearts to receive, the great majority of mankind being under the

adversary's blinding influence. But we know that our labor is not in vain, because it is acceptable to God through Christ, and it is working out in our own hearts and characters experiences which, by the grace of God will fit and prepare us for joint-heirship with our Lord in His great work of the millennial kingdom, which will complete fully and finally His great victory over sin and death.

[The Greensburg Morning Press, July 20, 1908](#)

GOD RECONCILED, MAN RECONCILED

St. Louis, Mo., July 19. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., preached twice here today. The discourse on, "Where are the Dead," drew an immense concourse of people. Notwithstanding the oppressive weather they listened with baited breath for nearly two hours. We report his second discourse on Reconciliation, from the text, "Now, then, are we ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us: we pray in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. 5:20) The speaker said:

The translators of the common version failed to grasp the Apostle's thought that himself and all consecrated believers as members of the Church the Body of Christ, are God's ambassadors in speaking to the world, hence they add the word "you" in two in-stances, although it is not found in the Greek, its absence from the original being indicated by the placing of the word in italics. The Apostle addressed his entire epistle "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia." Manifestly it was not necessary to beseech the Church to pray, the saints and the Church to be reconciled to God because unless they had already become reconciled they could not have been saints and acceptable at all as members of the one true Church. And only such could be ambassadors for God, his representatives in making known to mankind in general his gracious provisions for the receiving of sinners who desire to return to his favor and love and blessing.

The word reconciliation of itself is a contradiction to

2H570

the Evolution theory. It implies that at one time mankind was in harmony with the Creator that by some means that harmony was disturbed, broken, and that by some means God is now willing to have that harmony restored. This is in line with the entire teaching of the Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testaments. From Genesis to Revelation there is the one story of Paradise lost through disobedience, of the race of Adam

plunged into sin and death under divine disfavor, of the redemption accomplished by God himself through our Lord Jesus Christ; and of a reconciliation and return to divine favor to all that was lost—available to every member of the race because “Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man,” gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim 2:6

Let us not forget that the breaking of that fellowship between God and men was not man’s act, but God’s. After his transgression of disobedience in the eating of the forbidden fruit, father Adam evidently would still have his relationship to God and his enjoyment of the divine provisions in Eden. It was God who pronounced his sentence or curse against the sinner—”dying thou shalt die” (not roasting thou shalt roast, as the teaching came down from the “dark ages”). It was in order to the execution of the death sentence that man was cast out of Eden into the unprepared earth, there to struggle against adverse conditions, thorns, thistles, etc.; that as a culprit and convict he might pay the penalty of sin. Of course, all of his children were born under sinful, imperfect, dying conditions, as it is written we were born in sin, shapen in iniquity. These adverse conditions, accomplishing man’s death, are Scripturally spoken of as God’s wrath, signifying God opposition, his unwillingness to permit sin and sinners to exist indefinitely. Thus, for instance, the Apostle says respecting the Church, “We were children of wrath even as others (still are)” (Eph. 2:3) We have escaped the condemnation that is on the world. 1 Cor. 11:32

How long will divine wrath continue against mankind? We reply that the Almighty never had such a wrath as some of his creatures misunderstand this expression to signify. From the very first he had sympathy with our race; and even before the sin had come, foreknowing it, he had so loved his creatures as to make a provision for their ultimate redemption and so far as possible their reconciliation. That which the Scriptures term the “wrath of God,” the “curse of God,” the “condemnation, passed upon all,” merely therefore signifies the decree of justice which God allowed to fall upon the sinner race. He designed it to be a temporary destruction, from which he would ultimately recover Adam and his children in a way which would show forth to angels and to men the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of divine wisdom, divine justice, love and power. Note the statement of this in the expression, “Thou turnest man to destruction (death— and then), and sayest, Return ye children of men (by the resurrection power through the Redeemer),” — Psalm 90:3

For over four thousand years there was an uninterrupted reign of sin and death—all mankind going down the broad road to destruction—not to eternal torment. During all that time the world was allowed practically to

take its own course, and the only revelation of divine favor was to Abraham and his seed, Israel. Even then the blessings granted them were only partial and typical, for “The Law made nothing perfect.” Year by year continually the nation of Israel was reconciled to God by typical sacrifices—the blood of bulls and goats which could never take away sin. There was no real reconciliation, but merely types of it pointing forward to Spiritual Israel and to better sacrifices, which would put away sin thoroughly and forever and bring about the desired reconciliation between God and men.

GOD RECONCILED FOR US

As it was God that condemned man to death because of violation of the divine law, therefore there could be no hope of recovery of man to harmony with God under the divine arrangement until first atonement for that original sin had been made. The sinners could not atone for their own sins neither for each other’s sins, because all were imperfect, all were condemned. From this standpoint the recovery of man from under the death sentence looked like an impossibility; and God’s promise made to Abraham, that eventually a blessing should come to all the families of the earth through his Seed, might naturally be viewed by angels and by men as an intimation that ultimately the great Supreme Judge intended to reverse his own decree, intended to relent and cancel the sentence. Not until the advent of the Redeemer nearly nineteen centuries ago did the divine purpose manifest itself. The angels beheld Michael, the Logos, humbled by his own consent from the heights of the spirit plane to the human plane—becoming the man Christ Jesus. In him they beheld the ransom of Adam and consequently of the whole race which perished through his disobedience. In his death, the Just for the unjust, all whose eyes of understanding are open may see that divine justice has preserved its integrity and yet permitted the exercise of divine love.

But the death of Jesus, the Just for the unjust, was only one step in the route to man’s reconciliation. Had the Redeemer remained dead the result would have been nothing. But in due course the Father on the third day raised him from the dead, not again to human nature

2H571

and its limitations—but put to death in the flesh, he was quickened in spirit, highly exalted above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named to the right hand of God; to a position next to the heavenly Father, being also made partaker of the divine nature. 1 Pet. 3:18; Phil. 2:9,2

We read that our Redeemer ascended up on high there to appear in the presence of God for us. He appeared before the Father with the full merit of his sacrifice; no less would have done for the redemption price of a single one of the race, no more was needed for the sins of the whole world, for all had shared in the one man's condemnation and therefore all could be properly included in the justification that came through the sacrifice of the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Be it noted, however, that although the promises foretold that through this Redeemer and his work the blessing of the Lord should come to all people, kindreds, nations and tongues, nevertheless, when our Lord appeared before the Father, he did not apply his sacrifice for all mankind, but merely for the household of faith, or, as the Apostle says, he appeared in the presence of God for us—believers.

Let us not suppose for a moment that there is any mistake in the record, not that the Lord failed to guide the apostles in the use of the proper language in respect to this great matter. Let us note rather the outworking of the divine arrangement as specified and see therein a "wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea." The limitation of the forgiveness to the believers is another feature of the divine program designed to illustrate still further the mercy of God and His loving kindness; for the Scriptures clearly show that a blessing of reconciliation for the world is still the outcome of the divine program while the present blessing of believers is for the purpose of selecting from the world a peculiar people, a little flock of such as are most zealous, most loyal to the Lord, to his truth and to righteousness. The selection of these during the present time is declared in the Scriptures to be a "mystery." The matter of this selection of the Church is left a mystery to the world for two reasons: (1) That the world, knowing us not, even as it knew not the Redeemer in the days of his flesh, might oppose these consecrated ones, might make their pathway a narrow and a difficult one with obstacles, oppositions, persecutions, etc., in all of which they would be aided by the great Adversary, who has usurped the power and is the god or ruler of this world.

(2) The Church is left subject to these miseries and persecutions and oppositions of the world and without a special outward manifestation of divine favor in order to the testing and proving of their faith, their obedience, their loyalty to the Lord, to each other and to righteousness. As the Scriptures clearly show us, the result will be that only a little flock will be found in these respects. copies of God's dear Son. This little flock, lifted from degradation and sin, justified through faith, permitted to consecrate life and all to the Lord and to his service, after having suffered awhile, after being perfected by suffering and specially strengthened, settled and

fixed in character and tested, will at the close of this age be glorified as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, as joint-heir with their Redeemer in his glory and honor and divine nature and also in respect to participating with him in his great work of blessing all the families of the earth —Gal. 3:29

THE RECONCILING OF MAN

Bear in mind that the ransom price which Jesus paid was a sufficiency for the sins of the world, and when he ascended on high he merely 'applied it for believers. Meantime he has accepted these believers as though they were members of his Body. He has permitted them to sacrifice their earthly interests, following his example.. Their sacrifices are not counted as their own, but as his because they are his, and when the last member shall have finished sacrificing and has passed beyond the veil, then the great Redeemer will present the merit of all this sacrifice which is his own on behalf of the sins of the whole world and as sealing the New Covenant between God and mankind in general. Thus the Christ, Jesus the Head, the church "members in particular of his Body," will constitute the great Prophet, Priest and King, Mediator, Judge between God and the World; and in "his day," the Millennial day, a thousand years long, the work of this great Priest will be the reconciling of the world to God.

Do not mistake the order: Justice is reconciled or satisfied first by the great Atonement sacrifice. No reconciling of the world is possible until this has been accomplished. But subsequently, as a result of the satisfaction of divine justice and the release of mankind from the penalty of sin and death, the great Mediator of the New Covenant (Christ and the whole Church) will be privileged to enlighten, instruct, uplift and in every way bless the fallen and to bring back all the willing and obedient, step by step during the Millennium, to the grand original standards approved by God. All mankind who will develop the proper spirit of obedience to God will thus be privileged to come back by restitution to that condition in which they will be in the likeness of God, as Adam was when created and before he sinned. Here, then, are the two sides of the atonement, the two sides of reconciliation: (1) Justice satisfied as respects original sin, (2) man restored, brought back to perfection and the image of

2H572

God, where it will be possible for him to be acceptable to God and to have eternal life according to divine purpose. In the meantime those who will refuse to avail themselves of the divine favor will be cut off in the Second Death.

We perceive, then, that the divine program is not the coercion of the human will, which would make man merely a machine and inferior to the brute, but a cooperation with the human

will and its assistance of it through lessons, instructions and experiences. All mankind have learned to some extent the bitterness of sin and its death-dealing influence. All will need to learn of righteousness and of the blessings, mental and physical, which flow from the hearty obedience of the divine laws. The teaching of this lesson to the world during the thousand years of the Millennial Kingdom will be directly under the supervision of the glorified Christ, Head and body, and their active representatives amongst men will be first of all those ancient worthies, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets and subsequently such of humanity as fall in line with the divine arrangements. All such will be ambassadors of God and of righteousness, speaking to one another and assisting one another, building one another up, preparing one another for that ultimate perfection which alone shall make them ready for presentation to God at the close of the Millennial age.

ABLE MINISTERS—AMBASSADORS

The Apostle speaking of himself and others of the consecrated Church as able ministers, qualified ministers or servants of God's grace; and again he refers to those in our text, saying, "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us: we pray in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Each one who is now drawn of the Father and comes to the Son in faith and full consecration, when accepted of the latter as a member of his Body, a member of the under-priesthood, is properly qualified to make known, to tell, to express to the best of his ability about the grace of God in which he has already participated. He may tell of the love of God in the provision of a redeemer, of the great sacrifice for sins—of Christ's resurrection and exaltation to the divine nature, of his ultimate second coming to receive his faithful Bride class and to establish his Kingdom for the blessing of the world. They are qualified and authorized further to tell of the high calling of God now extended to such of mankind as have the ear to hear, the 'hearing of faith;' that such might become joint-heirs with Messiah in all the glorious features of the Kingdom work.

God could indeed have used the angels to call out of the world a little flock of joint-heirs with Christ, but instead he gave this opportunity to the Church to call one another, to be God's representatives and ambassadors in the work of selecting the Bride, and thus to gain experience which will be valuable to them now in character development and by and by valuable to them in connection with their work of drawing and blessing all the families of the earth. Moreover, the Lord would prove those whom he accepts as members of the Body of Christ, and this experience constitutes a closer test of their love for God and for their fellowmen. As it was the love of the Father and the desire to do his will that prompted and energized our Savior and led him step by step in all the way of his sacrificed

life even unto death, even the death of the cross, so it must be with all of his followers; they must so delight, to do the Father's will, must have so great pleasure in being God's ambassadors, that they will be willing to serve in this capacity at any cost, at any sacrifice, any self-denial. Moreover, as love for the people was necessary in our Lord's case, leading him to sympathize with them in their sorrows and difficulties and to rejoice in the pleasure of their redemption and final uplift, so this same spirit must be in all who would be acceptable as members of the Bride class; they must not love the world in the sense of loving the sin and unrighteousness, injustice and iniquity of present conditions of the world, but they must be lovers of mankind as God is, for God so loved the world as to give his Son Jesus, who so loved the world as to be its Redeemer, and all these who would be joint-heirs in the ultimate work of blessing all the families of the earth are required now to manifest their sympathetic love in doing good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.

“BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD”

Even after we realize the situation as it is now outlined before our minds, that the reconciling of divine justice has been provided for in the death of Jesus, we are still surprised that God should urge sinners to come back to him, to be reconciled to him and that God should send us forth as his ambassadors to call to the sinners. What is the explanation of this? Why is it that sinners are not hastening to avail themselves of the opportunity for a return to God, as Adam doubtless would have availed himself quickly had such an opportunity been granted to him after his sin and sentence? Ah, we answer, God's calling after mankind and sending ambassadors to them to tell them of his love and gracious provision in Christ, is the result of 'Love divine—all love excelling,' and man's alienation from God, so that he does not desire a return and is slow- to believe, slow to accept the message of the ambassadors is because sin has hardened the human heart. Sixty centuries of sin and death, mental, moral and physical

2H573

deflection, has alienated mankind in general and to a very large degree has obliterated the character-likeness of God as it was originally implanted in father Adam when he was created in God's image and likeness. Only faint outlines of divine character are now perceivable in the fallen ones.

Instead of looking longingly to the Lord and desiring reconciliation, instead of listening for any message of divine favor, the world's attention has turned in an opposite direction for two reasons: (1) Because the great Adversary, using every means, has misrepresented the

divine character and misinterpreted the divine revelation, often using the children of God as mouthpieces of error to picture the Almighty God of all grace with the lineaments of a demon so that mankind has a dread or fear respecting God and not a confidence in him as both just and loving. Hence their alienation, their disinclination to think of him or listen to his word which they incorrectly imagine speaks only wrath and eternal torment.

(2) Additionally the depravity of the human mind has led into ruts of sin which are pleasurable and difficult to overcome, and which the world indistinctly recognizes as in opposition to the divine will. Hence, any suggestion of reconciliation to God is seen at once to signify the breaking off of these practices, and hence appears undesirable, as none even imagine in advance the rich blessing of peace and love and joy which come through full reconciliation to God. This means a turning away from injustice and unrighteousness in every sense and degree, and it is the fallen flesh, therefore, that rebels and declines reconciliation at the present time.

Those who now accept reconciliation are such as are willing to come unto God and to submit themselves, such as never were pleased with injustice or unrighteousness; or such as have found by experience, by broken hearts, sorrow and trouble, that there is no real pleasure in sin and unrighteousness and who are feeling after God that they may have the rest that he alone can give. Is it enquired, How then would such, as now reject the Lord's grace be profited during the Millennium? We answer, it will be because the conditions then will be so different from those which now prevail. Satan will be bound, wrong will become bitter and right will become sweet, the very reverse of the present order of things. The sinner will suffer and the righteous will be blessed; whereas now, under present conditions, whosoever will live Godly will suffer persecution. And of the wicked it is written, "Their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart could wish. Psa. 73:7

The lesson to God's people of the present time is their own full submission to the divine will in every particular; that they be reconciled in full harmony with God, desiring that his will be done in his own time and way and in all things. This work in their hearts, according to the Scriptures, will be a gradual one —At first they submitted because they realized that in no other direction was peace obtainable. Then they learned that the more submissive they were the more fully they were reconciled, the greater would be their blessing and their growth in the Lord's favor. The consummation of such reconciliation to God and to his will in the present time is found in those who rejoice to do the will of the Lord in all things and who gladly and willingly by faith accept all that may come to them as under divine supervision

and providence, and guaranteed by the Lord to work out for them some good, some blessing. These, fully reconciled, have no will but that of their Lord and heavenly Father. Let this be more and more your experience and mine, dear brethren and sisters. And if any have not yet attained to this degree of reconciliation, let him not despair, but let him take the step in the pathway which leads to this station and thus, through full submission to God, leads to a share with Christ in his heavenly Kingdom beyond the veil.

The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, July 26, 1908

**“A COVENANT
WITH DEATH”
“AN AGREEMENT
WITH THE GRAVE”**

Glean, N.Y., July 26. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, Penn., preached twice here today. Notwithstanding the heat, he had a large and attentive audience. Of the two discourses we report one from the text: “Ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell (sheol, the grave); we are at agreement. ... Your covenant with death shall be disannulled and your agreement with sheol will not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be trodden down by it.” (Isa. 28:15-18)

2H574

*“With the exception of the paragraph below under the Sub- Title, A CAUSE FOR SUICIDES, this discourse was republished in **Pastor Russell’s Sermons**, pages 107-109, entitled, “A Covenant with Death.”*

A CAUSE FOR SUICIDES

This false doctrine, this agreement with death, this teaching that the dead are so much happier and better off and more alive than before they die, this bestrewing the casket with flowers, this weeping tears of sympathy and joy on their behalf, is inducing the great tide of suicide which is spreading over the whole world and which, as statistics show us, is rapidly increasing year by year. The newspapers report that in Allegheny County during the first 19 days of this month there were 22 suicides. We have every confidence that the statistics would show that very few if any of these were Roman Catholics, who are taught to expect horrible experiences in purgatory. We have every reason to suppose that the poor deluded creatures came under this worst form of Satan’s delusion, which has held Protestants; and that they all expected to better their condition by death, to pass to some happier place.

[The National Labor Tribune, August 16, 1908](#)

“DEATH-BED CONVERSIONS”

Mansfield, O., August 16. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., preached twice in the Opera House here today. He had an excellent hearing, some of our foremost religious people being present. We report one of the discourses on the text, “Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:43) He said:

Our beliefs strongly influence our conduct, both temporal and spiritual, hence the Scriptures present to us the doctrines of Christ—the proper beliefs of those who will be his disciples and seek to walk in his footsteps. The Lord’s people are expected to join in the race in love and the various fruits and graces of the spirit. Corresponding false doctrines are condemned by the Scriptures as misleading, injurious, blighting, in their influence upon the Lord’s members, the branches of the true vine and upon their fruitbearing. The more we consider this subject, the more we will be convinced that our Adversary, Satan, has made his attacks upon the Lord’s true followers chiefly along these lines, putting darkness for light and representing the light for darkness. It behooves us, therefore, to inquire for the “old paths” for the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles rather than for the intermediate traditions of men who, however honest their intentions, have certainly been grossly misled by the great deceiver, who in practically every creed in Christendom has pictured the Almighty Creator as an abominable character, plotting the eternal torture of his human creatures by the wholesale; and preparing therefore, before their creation.

How can we wonder that some of the noblest minds the world has known, under such misrepresentations, conclude that they could not worship the God of the Bible at all, that they were far superior to such a God themselves and possessed far nobler sentiments than those and would deal far more justly with the brute creation under their care than the Almighty is represented as doing, toward those whom he created in his own likeness. We may well be thankful for this liberalizing sentiment, even though it has turned many against the Bible. Otherwise we might still be under the domination of the same misbeliefs which led our forefathers to burn one another at the stake under the misapprehension that they were thus manifesting the holy Spirit and copying the Almighty’s disposition and message.

What we all need is correct views of the Holy Scriptures—their consistency, reasonableness and harmony in their presentations of the character of our Creator—that

he is wise, just, loving and righteous altogether, in his dealing with us.

A VERY PERNICIOUS ERROR

The teaching of Catholicism is that nearly all mankind are going to Purgatory, there to stew and fry for centuries as a penalty for sins and indiscretions of the present life and that only the saintly will escape this awful fate. One might expect that with such thoughts brought prominently to their minds day after day and week after week Catholics would be terrorized into outward morality at least. They are not, because they have a secret hope that perhaps it is not true and another hope that if it be true some way of escape will be found from some of its most awful features—aided by masses, indulgencies, papal jubilees, etc. Thus does one misrepresentation

2H575

offset another in the minds of men, leaving them nevertheless greatly injured in mind and heart by so unjust a presentation of the divine program.

The Protestants have a still worse and still more irrational theory, namely, that all except the saintly go to an eternity of torture, from which there will never be an escape. We would naturally think that this doctrine drilled into the minds of children from infancy through the catechism and the creeds and the influence of the pulpit would strike such terror into the hearts of Protestants as to make them very careful in their living that they might avoid so indescribable an eternity of sorrow. But it does not. On the contrary it seems scarcely to enter into their consideration, and very fortunately too, otherwise the insane asylums would fill up still more rapidly than they do. What is the secret of this indifference? It is in the first place born of doubt that there is any such place or that the Almighty would be such a monster as to treat his intelligent creatures as the most devilish man we have ever known would not treat a brute beast. Secondly, where there is a measure of faith in eternal torment there is also a measure of hope and expectation that after having “sown their wild oats” they may settle down to average respectability and that in any event the probabilities are small that they would die so suddenly as not to have the time for the brief prayer, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” And somehow the idea prevails that this prayer for a moment preceding the last gasp of life would change the eternal destiny of that person from the road of ruin to the Elysian fields of Paradise and glory, honor and immortality with God and the angels and the saintly. A reasonable mind, of course, cannot accept this proposition but alas the majority of minds lack the balance wheel of reason or deliberately stifle its voice.

Surely the “common people” are measurably excusable for such irrational conclusions when we consider that they have put themselves under the instruction of talented and well educated doctors of divinity, whom they suppose to be possessed of rationality and a knowledge of the Scriptures. Surely much of the responsibility rests therefore with the clergy. If the leaders of the people be blind what can we expect but that they will lead their followers into the ditch of inconsistency and unbelief.

If it is disputed that the clergy are teaching this irrational proposition—that the murderer who has lived a vile life at war with the laws of God and men can, by a mere confession on the scaffold and a prayer to God, be instantly fitted for the fellowship of God and the saintly, then where is the incentive before him to an earlier conversion or announcement of sin? And if the saintly and self-sacrificing ones seek to walk in the foot-steps of Jesus and for years have sought to mortify or deaden the desires of the flesh and to cultivate the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit—if these are to understand that these efforts to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil profit them nothing, where is the incentive to them to become saintly and, as the Apostle says, “To present their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is their reasonable service?” Is not this false doctrine operating everywhere disadvantageously? Let us remember what our Lord prayed to the Father, “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth.”

THE THIEF NOT IN HEAVEN

Since our Lord’s words to the thief on the cross are made the basis for a part of this erroneous theology, let us examine his words and see what they really do mean. That our position may be clearly understood we use great directness and plainness of speech and set forth that we will prove:

- (1) That the thief did not go to Paradise on the day of crucifixion, but to sheol, hades, the tomb, the state of death.
- (2) That our Lord did not go to Paradise on that day, but to sheol, hades, the state of death, from which the Apostle declares he was raised on the third day.
- (3) Paradise referred to was not then in existence.
- (4) The whole earth will become Paradise; thus Paradise lost through Adam will be restored through the “times of restitution” during our Lord’s Millennial Reign—during the one thousand years of the reign of Christ following his second advent.
- (5) Our Lord meant and the thief understood that then, during the Millennial in the restored earth, the thief would have a blessing as a reward for his kindness by

the words he expressed—as a reward for the sympathy of heart manifested.

(6) The thief died: has suffered nothing, known nothing ever since, and will not be conscious until in the Millennial Day, the Redeemer shall call him with others from the tomb — “Every man in his own order.”

(7) Our Lord did not go to heaven when he died, but into the tomb, sheol, hades, from which he was resurrected on the third day—“raised from death.” It was after his resurrection that he said to Mary, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father and to my God and your God.” (John 20:17)

(8) Christ has not yet come into his kingdom for which as he taught us to pray, “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

2H576

The key to the proper understanding of our text lies in its punctuation. The comma, which in the common version is before today, should be after it—in order to make this statement harmonize with the remainder of the Bible. Punctuation is no part of the inspired word. It was not invented until modern time. There is no punctuation in the original manuscripts. Notice the punctuation of this passage as we have quoted it— “Verily I say unto you today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise.” Notwithstanding the fact that today you see me under such adverse conditions, crucified as a malefactor, nevertheless I am not a deceiver. I am the son of God, whose Kingdom has long been promised for the blessing of the world and the binding of Satan. I have not yet come into my Messianic Kingdom, which is not of this age, but of the next, and I assure you today and give you the consolation that when I do come into the Kingdom in the Father’s appointed time, you shall be with me in that Paradise which knows only blessings and no fears for all those who will obey me.

Let us analyze the thief’s request and our Lord’s response. The thief was familiar with the Jewish expectations that the Messianic Kingdom was to be established. He knew that many believed in Jesus as the Messiah. He realized the wide difference between his own condition and that of Jesus, who was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” He felt that it might be possible, as some said, that Jesus was to have a spiritual kingdom different from what the Jews had believed. He had nothing to lose and all to gain by speaking a word in defense of the holy dying one. Per-adventure this might be the Messiah. He would at least ask his blessing. “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom”—possibly you have a kingdom and

that in power and great glory shall be later manifested beyond the tomb. If so, remember my kind words on your behalf and deal kindly with the thief. Our Lord's answer was in strict line with the request. The word "verily" is the same word which is ordinarily translated "Amen" and signifies "so be it." "Your request is granted. Verily I say to you this day, notwithstanding its adversities, 'Thou shalt be with me in Paradise.' Have this as a consolation in your dying moments."

A JUST RECOMPENSE

God has made a provision through the redemptive work of Christ for the forgiveness of sins—for the covering or ignoring of our sins from the eyes of justice, so the believers in Jesus need not longer consider themselves children of wrath even as others, but as reconciled to God through the death of His Son through the merits of his atonement sacrifice. But this covering of our blemishes from the eye of divine justice is merely a means toward an end. It does not constitute a passport whereby we may be instantly counted as saints and heirs of glory. On the contrary it is merely a passport granting us ability to make full consecration of ourselves and to be begotten of the holy Spirit and as new creatures to enter the school of Christ. This schooling may be longer or shorter according to our zeal or faithfulness, but in any event the lessons to be learned are meekness, gentleness, kindness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. Only those who learn these lessons will ever be what the Lord calls, "Fit for the Kingdom."

Only those in whom the spirit of love and devotion to God develops to the degree of sacrifice and laying down the life for the brethren, spending and being spent in their service—nothing less than this will gain for us the reward of the overcomers, "Glory and honor and immortality"—joint-heirship with our Lord. Moreover those who learn their lessons in the school of Christ must subsequently pass examination—be tested, be proven, because the joint-heirs of Christ are all to be copies of God's dear Son, while others, even if they develop these fruits of the spirit, will be of another class before the Throne, instead of in the Throne, palm-bearers, instead of crown-wearers, unless they sacrifice themselves in the Lord's service willingly. From this Scriptural standpoint it will be seen that while no repentances are to be scoffed at, nevertheless death-bed repentances are not to be esteemed passports to glory in the Kingdom. As the thief was made glad by the assurance that he would then be under the Kingdom rule in Paradise, so all who come to any understanding of the divine program can rejoice, even though their lives hitherto have been mis-spent, even though they be not of the Kingdom class and not fit to be of the royal priesthood and hence have not developed the fruits of the spirit sufficiently to merit a

share in the Kingdom. Let us remember the Apostle's words, "If ye do these things, ye shall never fail; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:10-11)

FEW STRIPES AND MANY STRIPES

Our Lord discoursing on future punishment declared that some would be punished with few stripes and others with many—but that there would be a limit even with the many. These stripes are not to be given by demons in a theological hell of torture, nor in a place of Purgatory, nor yet in the Bible hell, the grave, the state of death. The stripes will be given in Paradise—after the Lord's Kingdom shall have been established, after Satan, the prince of darkness, shall have

2H577

been bound for one thousand years, after the Sun of righteousness shall have beamed to enlighten all the families of the earth into true knowledge of God. After the living nations shall have been corrected with stripes and chastisements to assist them up out of their degradation, "Then all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth." The few, the little flock, the faithful in Christ, will constitute the first resurrection, coming from the tomb perfect spirit beings to be associated with Christ in the government of the world in its uplifting during the Millennium. Later as our Lord declares, "All that are in their graves shall come forth—not from heaven, not from Catholic Purgatory, not from the Protestant Hell, but from the Bible Hell—the grave. They come forth that they may experience the judgments of the Lord—rewarding them for every good endeavor, giving them stripes for every misdeed, and assisting them up, up, up, towards the perfection from which the race fell in Adam and to which the merit of the redemption permits them to return—whosoever will.

Those stripes and chastisements of the Millennial Age will not be direct punishments for present misdeeds, yet indirectly they will be such. In the direct sense Christ will forgive all the sins of mankind in precisely the same manner that the sins of the past upon the conscience and upon the character will be there and must be gotten rid of by efforts in the contrary direction—upward towards righteousness. Thus in proportion as a man has wilfully degraded himself, in the same proportion will he be obliged to retrace himself if he would have eternal life. And the retracing of himself through imperfection implies that he will receive stripes—stripes directly the result of the misdeed.

Thus the two thieves crucified with our Lord will be in Paradise with all the remainder of mankind, except the Church of this Gospel Age. Both thieves will be under the rules of the Millennial Kingdom the object of which

will be restoration back to their former perfection lost in Adam. The penitent thief, however, will have the advantage of the other, because, instead of hardening his heart and joining with the rabble in reviling our Lord during his dying moments, his heart was softened. This insures us that in Paradise under the Millennial Kingdom blessing he will find less to battle against and thus will require fewer stripes than the impenitent thief. As a reward of the Church will be everlasting life, hence to the wilful transgressors against light and knowledge the penalty will be second death. So also will be the judgment of the world in its trial. At its conclusion—the end of the one thousand years, every member of the race will be subject to severe trials—to prove, to demonstrate his heart loyalty or disloyalty to the Lord and his government of righteousness. All who stand tests will be ushered into the everlasting state, while all who prove lacking of fullest loyalty to the Lord and to righteousness will be destroyed in the second death, as it is written, “It shall come to pass that every soul that will not obey that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.”

[The National Labor Tribune, August 23, 1908](#)

CHRISTIANS MUST SUFFER

Lancaster, Pa., August 23. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, preached twice in the Opera House today. He had an excellent hearing, his audience including some of our most prominent people of all denominations. His afternoon discourse was on the “Overthrow of Satan’s Empire.” We report the evening topic from the text, “Let none of you suffer as a murderer or as a thief or as an evil-doer or as a busy-body in other men’s matters, yet if any suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf.” 1 Pet. 4:15, 16 The speaker said:

It is one of the peculiarities of the Bible that it teaches so many things which are the very opposites of what we would have expected and yet in full accord with the facts of life as we see them daily and come in contact with them. Our natural thought would be that suffering should only follow the course of sin and that when the sinful course is abandoned and the heart given to the Lord, all the suffering should cease. Particularly does this thought have weight when we remember that the Lord calls such his sons after that they had turned from sin and accepted Christ and his redemption and become his followers or disciples. Naturally we reason that the children of God having his favor would be blessed exceedingly and favored above all the remainder of the race. It is one of the first lessons connected with the true discipleship for us to learn the truth of this subject, namely that the

heavenly Father permits special trials and scourgings and disciplinary lessons to his children. Naturally we are disposed to cry out that our experiences are contrary to what we had anticipated, a sore disappointment, and almost incomprehensible. If our heavenly Father loves us more than he loves the unregenerate world why should he

2H578

permit us to have severe experiences, or even so bad experiences as our fellows?

The Scriptures explain the situation to us, telling us that we by nature were like the remainder of the human family sinful children of wrath even as others, but that the Lord has taken us under his special care and put us into the school of experience and is giving us the lessons of life that we may learn the exceeding sinfulness of sin and be developed in an opposite direction— that eventually under the molding and fashioning we might be transformed to the image of God’s dear Son. A question arises, “Do not others, the world in general, need these chastenings and instructions in righteousness also?” We answer, “Yes.” Why then do these experiences come specially to the Church? Should not the Church have less and the world have more of such disciplines? What is the secret of this peculiar dealing on the Lord’s part who subjects the sons of God to special tribulations in the present time and often tribulations for righteousness’ sake, because of righteousness and truth?

THE FATHER SEEKETH SUCH

We reply that these who have received the adoption of children of God and who come into the school of Christ and there undergo special disciplinary trials, sorrows, chastenings for their character development are God’s favorites and the chastisements permitted to come to them are intended to work out for them “A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” (2 Cor. 4:17) These the Scriptures frequently refer to as “the elect of God”—his specially chosen ones. And since the Scriptures particularly inform us that there is no injustice with God, we may know of a surety that he has a particular reason and purpose in connection with their selection or election and that it is a just and loving and wise selection and that the election is along lines of character and principle. Those accepted as children of God are such as have previously exercised a manifestation of faith in the Lord and consecration to him; and this faith and consecration are qualities highly esteemed of the Lord and which will be specially rewarded by him. We are not to be understood as intimating that the elect ones experiencing faith and consecration are alone to be saved and that the remainder of Adam’s race are all hopelessly lost, but rather the reverse of this is true. God has purposed that all the families of the earth are to receive the blessing of the knowledge of his grace in Christ and to have a full opportunity of coming into harmony with the divine law and attaining

eternal life —only the willfully and knowingly wicked being cut off in the Second Death.

The Gospel invitation to turn from sin and to follow the Redeemer's counsel and example is permitted to do a testing work and to gather out the choicer characters amongst men for a special service designed of the Lord for the future. When we say choicer characters we speak from the Lord's standpoint, with whom many things that are highly esteemed amongst men are an abomination, while others disesteemed by men have the divine approval. The qualities of humility and submission to the Lord in fullest obedience are rare amongst men and different from the general idea; hence many of the noble of this world are not acceptable amongst the Lord's elect, while many of the ignoble, yea, some of the mean things of this world, God does accept as his children and pupils in the school of Christ to be prepared for future glory, honor and immortality.

THY PEOPLE SHALL BE WILLING

During the present time the Lord is calling merely the willing ones of mankind and assisting them to make their calling and election sure to a very high station in divine favor and co-operation with their Redeemer, in whose great work of blessing all the families of the earth they will have a part. No compulsion is used in connection with this. Their own will governs the whole matter. First they came to the Lord and when he showed that the avenue of love and mercy lay through faith in Jesus' sacrifice they gladly availed themselves of it. When still, they willed to go on, and to know the will of God more perfectly he opened to them further knowledge of his will—their privilege of self-sacrifice in walking in the footsteps of their Redeemer and the glorious reward that would come to the followers being faithful unto death. When still we willed to go on and made a covenant of consecration we were still not bound except by our wills and might at any time turn back or "Draw back to death." If our will still continued, and our desire to do the divine will day by day brought us fresh lessons, trials, experiences, all of which would be helpful to us in preparing us for the glorious things held in reservation for those who would be faithful unto death.

All who are the Lord's people, all whose hearts are in the right attitude will ultimately be delivered from rebellion against the Lord, much of which is because of weakness and blindness to the truth. To accomplish this great work for mankind the Lord proposes the establishment of his Kingdom, the preparation day, "My people shall be willing in the day of my power." All who are the Lord's people will during the Millennial Age be separated from those who are not his people. Those

willing to be with him in his righteous laws will be fully accepted and all others will be

2H579

counted as children of the Evil One and as such at the close of the Millennial Age will be destroyed in the Second Death. (Acts 3:23)

Only the willing and obedient will ever have God's favor and its reward, eternal life. We are merely now calling attention to the distinction between those who will be willing in the next age and those who are willing in the present age in the time when his power is not manifested and when all the followers are required to "Walk by Faith and not by sight."

Still progressing willingly the Lord's faithful ones find his promises well kept—"That all things are working together for good to them that are called according to his purpose." But now amongst the unwilling ones who constitute the great mass of the human family—what shall we say of these—what is God's purpose respecting them—will he let them alone in their unwillingness, ignorance, blindness, misapprehension of himself and his glorious plan or will he take some steps to make them willing? We answer, "Yes." He tells us that the masses of mankind were blinded by error and sin so that to them good appears undesirable and sin appears desirable. The Lord proposes that all this shall be changed, that all these blinded eyes of mankind shall look and see clearly and distinctly why righteousness is the best policy and why sin is reprehensible. With this knowledge will come the opportunity to take their stand for righteousness and against sin. So that those ultimately coming to the Lord's side after being fitted and prepared for it may enter into the life eternal—during the Millennial Age.

THY KINGDOM COME

Those who now have the hearing ear, who now accept the divine arrangement, who are now willing to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, through evil report and good report, on the mountain tops of joy or in the valley of trouble—these elect, according to the divine promise, will constitute the Bride of Christ and be made his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, as it is written, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." As our Lord suffered and then entered into his glory so his elect Church, his "little flock" must suffer and then enter into the glory of her Lord—become sharers of his Kingdom. Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, "That all flesh may see it together." (Isa. 40:5) The Lord's mighty power will be gradually manifested in the suppression of sin and ignorance, the

binding of Satan that he might deceive the nations no more and the letting loose of the flood-gates of Truth and blessing upon all mankind.

Well does the Prophet declare, "The desire of all nations shall come." (Hag. 2:7) The Millennial conditions are ideal and such as mankind in general have longed for but been unable to attain to because of their own weaknesses, ignorance and imperfections and because selfishness inbred in the race has always succeeded in dominating. Then under these new conditions so changed from the present that the Scriptures describe them as a new heaven and new earth condition—then our expectation as respects who should suffer and who should be protected from suffering will be realized. Then the evildoer will suffer stripes and punishment and, if his evil propensities continue, he will ultimately be destroyed as an evildoer, and a noxious weed from the garden of the Lord, or, to use the Apostle Peter's simile, "Be destroyed as brute beasts" (2 Peter 2:12), or, to use the Apostle Paul's simile, "Be destroyed as God's adversaries." (Heb. 10:27)

This is just what we would have expected—that right doing would be rewarded with God's favor and life eternal and evil doing would be punished. In due time all will be able to see that God's dealings with humanity have been righteous dealings. As the Scriptures say, "Great and Marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of nations. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; when thy righteous acts are made manifest." (Rev. 15:3-4)

Some will say, Then the world during the Millennium will have a more favorable opportunity of coming into harmony with God than have those who now hear and now respond and become the elect. Yes, we answer, in some respects and we are glad of it. They are not in a condition to profit by the blessed opportunity of this age and we may well rejoice with them that God has a future feature of his plan which will be helpful for them, but let it not be forgotten that grand and glorious as their reward will be it will be different from the reward of the elect. Their reward will be as human beings, earthly—their apartment in the Father's house will be Paradise and world wide and their condition will be that of perfect men, free from sin and blemishes mentally, morally and physically and back into harmony with God, in the time of "Restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:2 1)

THE MILLENNIAL YEARS

The reward of the Church on the contrary will be incomparably higher; not only will the first resurrection

bring these to the spirit plane and grant them joint-heirship with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom, but we are assured that it will signify to them the attainment

2H580

of the divine nature, which is far above angels, principalities and powers. The high condition to which the Church is to be elevated is not described in the Scriptures because it is beyond the power of the human mind to appreciate. It is sufficient that the followers in the footsteps of Jesus shall not only suffer with him in the present time because of faithfulness to the Truth, but they shall be like him and with him in the life to come. What more could we ask—what more could God grant us?

THE MINISTRY OF SUFFERING

To a certain extent the whole world of mankind suffers. In some respects the worldly suffer more than some of the Lord's people because the sufferings of the latter are counterbalanced by the inspired prophecies of the Scriptures. The world's condition is well expressed by the Apostle when he said "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God," in their Millennial Kingdom glory and power. The Apostle also refers to the Church, saying, "We ourselves also which have the first fruits of the spirit do groan within ourselves, waiting for our change, to wit, the delivery of our bodies"—"the body of Christ, which is the Church."

But the special sufferings of the Church are referred to in our text, "If any man suffer as a Christian let him glorify God on this behalf." Let him remember that God can accept to this high position of the elect only such as can and will under the guidance and assistance of the great teacher develop strong characters in a few short years. Because of the shortness of the time of our trials and experiences need to be the more severe. The world will have a longer time for character development and reaching perfection—nearly one thousand years. But the elect must get a heart development and reach a heart and head or will perfection and endure tests respecting the same all in a few years between the time of their full consecration and their death. Without these trials and disciplines the character development would be too slow or not at all; hence it is in love and mercy that the Lord arranges the sufferings of this present time as preparation for the glory to follow.

EVIL DEEDS, BUSY-BODYING

It may occur to some that the Apostle's is an extreme statement—"Let none of you suffer as a murderer or as a thief

or as an evil-doer or as a busy-body.” Surely, says one, no Christian could be guilty of these things, but the Apostle’s intimation is borne out by the facts. Christian people have done these things and still been Christians, that is to say, Christians have been overtaken in these faults, but being Christians at heart it necessarily meant that such wrong-doings were subsequently repented of in bitter sorrow. Perhaps more Christians have come under these terms than are aware of the facts. I remind you of our Lord’s words. “He that hateth his brother is a murderer.” And I remind you of Shakespeare’s words, “He who steals my purse steals trash, but he who steals my good name makes me poor indeed—and does not make him richer.” Here is murder and theft from the divine standpoint. Alas, how many are guilty along these lines. How many murderers and thieves in the Church! What a need there is in many for a thorough renovation along these lines: “Let none of you suffer as a murderer nor as a thief.” It may indeed be said that such murder and such theft are worse than the more vulgar forms because those who commit these are usually better educated, better balanced in mind than are the majority of these who commit the grosser murders and thefts.

Surely if this matter can be kept before our mental eye in this light it will tend to make the Lord’s people more circumspect, more Godly, more loving and kind. The term evil-doer is broadly comprehensive of everything that would in any sense of the word be injurious to others and therefore discreditable to the Lord and those who are identified with him in love and service of the Truth. Let none suffer as an evil-doer. We have little enough time and strength with which to be helpful to mankind and to use to the glory of our Redeemer. We have not time or strength to devote to evil deeds.

As for busy-bodding, the implication is that of time and strength wasted with a strong probability of evil results. It is evidently not the Apostle’s thought to reprove us for taking an interest in our fellows, to reach them, to sympathize with them, to encourage them. This is well-doing, as has been expressed. By busy-bodding is evidently meant a prying into the business of others, as though we were so wise and so good that we could help any and everybody. It implies also that we have time to waste—that after attending to our personal matters, providing things decent and proper in the sight of all for ourselves and those dependent on us, after having given time to our friends and neighbors to do them all the good in our power, we still have time to waste and are ready to make trouble for other people. Such trouble-makers usually defile their own minds, however unconsciously. They usually breed trouble for others, which generally reacts in some manner upon themselves. As the text intimates they are very likely to suffer and in a very unworthy cause, against which they are warned by the Scriptures.

SUFFER AS A CHRISTIAN

To suffer as a Christian is to suffer for our fidelity to
2H581

Christ—to his word, the Bible to his people and on behalf of a principle—being associated with Christ and his teachings of God’s word. Thus persecution may come upon us because of our loyalty to the teaching of God’s Word, or they may come to us because of our activity in the service of the Truth, or they may come because of our opposition to long-established and much venerated errors. All such suffering is suffering for righteousness sake, for Christ’s sake; and the Apostle declares that if we so suffer the glory of God rests upon us. And if we so suffer it is worth while—such suffering may be endured with joy because of the reward that we anticipate. If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, but if we deny him he will also deny us—not recognize us as members of his Bride Class.

[The National Labor Tribune, August 30, 1908](#)

“COME YE... AND REST AWHILE”

Put-in-Bay, Aug. 30. The Convention of Bible Students, which opened here yesterday, is a pronounced success thus far. It opened yesterday with a program covering nine days’ sessions and thirty-two addresses. Those in attendance seemed not to be pleasure-seekers, but rather those who have found the pearl of price, of great value—if one can judge from the contentment and joy of their faces and their interested converse on religious themes. Hotel Victory, which claims to be the greatest summer hotel in the world has put in 1,000 extra cots and claims about 2,400 guests. Others are lodged in smaller hotels. We report the discourse of Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, delivered this afternoon from the text “And Jesus said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest a while.”—Mark 6:31

*This discourse was republished in **Convention Report Sermons**, pages 34-36, entitled, “Come Ye Apart.”*

[National Labor Tribune, September 6, 1908](#)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CHURCH OF THE FIRST-BORN

Put-in-Bay, Ohio, Sept. 6. The Bible Students’ Convention at this place is drawing to a close. The time has been very thoroughly filled up, four Bible studies a day being the

average. Many of the speakers are of marked ability, and such earnest listeners are rarely seen at religious gatherings. The attendance of 3,000 with which the convention started has been more than maintained—while some have been obliged to go, more have come. It is by far the greatest gathering ever witnessed on this island. Satisfaction and inward joy seem to be written on every face. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., was listened to by fully 3,000 people. He took for his text Heb. 12:22, 23; “But ye are come unto Mt. Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the first-born, which are written in heaven.”

*This discourse was republished in **Convention Report Sermons**, pages 37-40, entitled, “The General Assembly.”*

[The National Labor Tribune, September 13, 1908](#)

THE “HELL” OF THE BIBLE

Carbondale, Pa., Sept. 13. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., preached this forenoon at Wilkesbarre, Pa., and this afternoon in this city, in both instances to large audiences of very attentive hearing. We report the latter discourse from the text, “Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.” Psa. 90:3. The speaker said:

Dear friends, I shall address you as Christians or as

2H582

those who respect Christianity and desire as close an affiliation with it as their reasoning faculties will permit. We must acknowledge that the number of the intelligent, saintly Christians is rapidly diminishing under the intense light of our day. This is the reverse of what we ought to expect. Rather should we suppose that increasing knowledge would bring increasing faith in God and in the Bible and increasing devotion to righteousness. The cause of this phenomena is not difficult to find. The light of intelligent thought is disclosing to Christendom many inconsistencies and much false reasoning in the creeds and traditions which we have received from the dark ages. Many supposing these to be truthful interpretations of the Bible are being forced against their will to reject the Word of God. Thus they are left upon the high seas of human speculation and conjecture without chart or compass. And alas, so dense are the mists and fogs of superstition that not even the stars of heaven are discernable as guides!

THE HELL OF THE BIBLE

Close to the foundation of all our errors and difficulties has been the misrepresentation of Almighty God, which

represents him before our minds as diabolical to the last degree—as having planned, predestinated before the creation of our race the eternal torture of all except the “little flock” of “the elect” and as having prepared for that denouncement a great torture chamber, prepared before man’s creation, sufficiently large to receive the millions of our race, with fireproof devils as tormentors. This inconsistent teaching has served to frighten the weak-minded, to horrify the good, and to disgust the intellectual, and to hinder the approach of all to their Creator in response to the invitation of the Gospel. We shall endeavor this afternoon, to give you a glimpse of the error which as a chain has hindered us from proper progress towards the Lord in love and reverence. We cannot hope to deal with every phase of the subject in the time allowed. There are a few of our Lord’s “parables and dark sayings” and two verses in the Apocalypse which as translated are misunderstood and seem to favor the error; but after hearing an explanation of the error and seeing a general outline of the divine plan, some pamphlets will be supplied you free which will straighten all these out to the comfort of your hearts and to the satisfaction of your brains. As you come to see the reasonableness of what the Bible presents on this subject of hell we trust it will serve to re-establish your faith in God and in the Bible and to turn your footsteps afresh in or toward the narrow way which leads to immortality.

DESTRUCTION THE PENALTY FOR SIN

Our text declares the penalty imposed by the Almighty on our race to be destruction—not eternal torment. We will see shortly that to this agree the words of our Lord, the Apostle and Prophets. We will see that the Scriptures teach that because of original sin Adam was condemned to death and not eternal torment and that his race shares his penalty. We will see that this death penalty was paid for us by our Lord Jesus and that he paid no eternal torment penalty for any. We will see that because God provided for our redemption by the death of his Son, therefore the promise of the Scriptures is that our race shall be recovered from destruction — recovered from the tomb, the hell of the Bible—sheol of the Old Testament Hebrew, Hades of the New Testament Greek. This recovery from destruction, from hell, the tomb, the state of death, is Scripturally termed the resurrection of the dead. This resurrection is provided for Adam and every member of his race through the merit of Christ’s death as their redemption price; as it is written, “Who redeemeth thy soul from destruction.” (Psa. 103:4) After being awakened and being brought to a knowledge of the Lord, his goodness, justice, love and power, any who then refuse to make progress to perfection will die the

Second Death, from which there will be no redemption and no resurrection. "Christ dieth no more." We will show you, dear friends, that God's great work in the salvation of our race belongs to the next Age, the Millennium. Then will be fulfilled the many glorious promises respecting the blessing of all the families of the earth and the filling of the world with the knowledge of the Lord and the causing of every knee to bow and every tongue to confess.

The only work first to be accomplished is the selection of the Church, "the elect." These are "called, chosen, faithful" and will with Christ their Lord and Head be God's agents, missionaries, kings and priests to instruct and uplift humanity during that glorious Millennial Age, when Satan and sin will be bound, restrained. This Church class is now reckoned as "passed from death into life" figuratively, but the real passing into life will be at the close of this Age, at the Second Coming of Christ. Then their trials and testings and instruction in the school of Christ being passed, the graduates will constitute a special class in the resurrection, "the First Resurrection." "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection on such the Second Death hath no power: but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6)

2H583

THE HELL OF THE BIBLE

You are all aware that the Old Testament portion of the Bible was written in the Hebrew language and the New Testament in the Greek. We will commence with the Old Testament. We find that the word "hell" everywhere throughout the Old Testament is a translation of the Hebrew word "sheol," which occurs altogether 66 times, and is translated three different ways in our version; 32 times grave, 31 times hell and three times pit. It should have been translated grave or pit or tomb in every instance. Indeed, in two instances, where it is rendered hell in the common version, the marginal reading says, "Hebrew, the grave."

One of these is Jonah 2:2. Jonah is represented as telling how he prayed to God while he was in the belly of the great fish. He was buried alive, entombed. Our common version reads, "Out of the belly of hell cried I," the literal meaning is, "Out of the grave-belly I prayed." Adding these two instances to the last we would have grave 34 times, pit three times and hell 29 times, or the word is erroneously rendered 29 times out of 66. I shall not weary you by giving you all of these 66 passages, nor is this necessary, for we have a free pamphlet to which you are all welcome on request. It takes up every text in which the word hell occurs, from Genesis to

Revelation, and every passage which in any sense of the word appears to teach an eternity of torture. It analyzes these with their context and shows what they do and what they do not mean. It will convince any fair-minded man who will give it careful reading.

In passing I remark that much of the difficulty on this subject has arisen from careless handling of the word of God, adding to its statements in our minds if not in our words. For instance, when we read in the Bible, "All the wicked shall God destroy," (Psalm 145:20), we unwittingly said to ourselves, "Destroy must mean preserve, preserve in fire, preserve in torment, preserve with devils eternally." Thus we distorted the word of God to our own injury as well as to the injury of others. Similarly the word "die," when we read in the Scriptures, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," (Ezek. 18:20) we perverted the word of God as we would not think of perverting any other writings and said, "Die must here mean live, live in torment eternally with devils in suffering." Similarly the word perish; on reading in the Scriptures that the "wicked shall perish" (Psalm 37:20), we turned the language upside down and said, "Perish means preserve." Thus our confusion continued; we were blinded by the Adversary on the lines on which he has blinded the entire heathen world, hindering the glorious light of the goodness of God from shining more and more into the hearts of men. 2 Corinthians 4:4

GRAY HAIRS IN HELL

The first occurrence of the word sheol is in connection with the patriarch Jacob and his 12 sons. His two youngest sons, nobler than their brethren, were most beloved by Jacob. Joseph, his favorite, clothed in his handsome coat of many colors, was sent to his brethren, who were pasturing the sheep at a distance from home, to take them delicacies and bring back word of their welfare. The brethren, moved with envy, first thought to kill him, and subsequently sold him to the Ishmaelites, who in turn sold him to the Egyptians, in whose land under God's providential care he in after years became ruler next to the king. Meantime the brethren took the peculiar coat of many colors, bedraggled it in the blood of a goat and in the dust, and sent it home to Jacob, inquiring if he recognized it. He answered, Alas, it is Joseph's coat; wild beasts have devoured him. I will go down to sheol to my son mourning. (Gen. 37:35) What did he mean? Did he mean by sheol a place of fire and torment? Did he believe that Joseph, his best son, had gone there, and that he Jacob, also expected to go to that place? No, we answer; he meant that evidently Joseph was dead, and that he would mourn for him the remainder of his life, until he also should go into the state of death, into sheol, into hell.

The second occurrence of the word is a little further on in the same narrative. The brethren had been to Egypt to buy corn, because of famine in Canaan. It was necessary that they should go for more, but they explained to Jacob that the Governor, whom they knew not was Joseph, had required of them that if they come again they must bring with them Benjamin, their brother, the one whom Jacob now specially loved. Jacob protested, but finding that there was no escape he finally told them to take Benjamin, but told them also that if they did not bring him back alive and safe they would bring down his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave, sheol. Jacob evidently meant not that he would go to a place of eternal torment if Benjamin did not return, but that a failure to bring Benjamin back would hasten his death through sorrow. Does any sane person have any doubt as to the meaning of sheol in these instances, the first two occurrences in the Bible? No ! you have no doubt, nor reason for any. And the word has the same meaning exactly in its every occurrence throughout the Scriptures, as you will see when you read carefully our free pamphlet.

HELL IN OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE

Just a word in defense of the translators of our common version, English Bible. All living languages are

2H584

subject to variation in meaning, and this seems to have been particularly true of the English. To illustrate, the word hell at one time meant the grave in the English language. But gradually this meaning had been dropped out of the word, until now it is never used in ordinary conversation. An illustration of its use in bygone times we find in ancient English literature references to the helling of a house, meaning not the burning of the house, nor the torturing of it, but the thatching of it. Similarly we read of the farmer helling his potatoes, the meaning of the expression being not the roasting of potatoes nor the torturing of them, but the putting of them into a pit for preservation from the frosts, etc., until needed for use..

As for the translators of the revised version they seem to have been too honest to use the word hell as a translation for sheol and hades, but not honest enough to tell the people the truth on the subject. Hence you will find that in the revised version no translation at all is given, but the Hebrew word sheol in the Old Testament and the Greek word hades in the New Testament are used instead of the word hell when grave is not used. The translators evidently anticipated what occurred, namely, that the public, knowing nothing about Greek and Hebrew, would esteem this as an attempt to do away with hell, whereas the real animus of the translators was

to perpetuate. The translators knew that the public would say that hell was just as hot and just as real although now called sheol and hades. They knew that the public would never suspect that the wool was being pulled over the eyes of their understanding to hinder them from seeing the plain teaching of God's Word, that sheol means the grave or tomb or death state—nothing more, nothing less.

PRAYING TO GO TO HELL

Job, one of the most prominent characters of the Old Testament, one especially mentioned as a favorite with God, made a most eloquent prayer that he might go to hell, to sheol, to the tomb. And no wonder, poor man, for surely in his case was fulfilled the statement, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous." (Psa. 34:19) Unwilling to suicide, he craved relief from the sorrows and troubles in death. Refresh your memory respecting his troubles. The Almighty, while approving him, permitted the Adversary to vex him sorely, to the extent of taking away earthly possession except the mere thread of life itself. His children, gathered for a birthday party, were killed by a cyclone; later his flocks and herds and property in general were destroyed. Finally his health gave way, and he broke out in boils from head to foot.

To add to his sorrow, friends and neighbors, instead of consoling him, turned against him and declared that he had been acting the part of a hypocrite, and that God was now exposing him—showing his disapproval. In vain did Job protest his innocence and appeal to the Lord, until subsequently the Lord gave His verdict in favor of Job against his friends. But as though all these trials and difficulties were not enough for the poor man, to cap the climax his wife exclaimed, "You are accursed of God and should die." Then poor Job poured forth his prayer for death, saying, "O, that Thou wouldst hide me in sheol until Thy wrath be past." Job 14:13

Does anyone of sane mind think that poor Job, after passing through all these afflictions, was in these words praying to God to cast him into a place of eternal torment, to be the sport of devils? No; such a supposition would be irrational. Very evidently Job meant that, if God were willing, he would be glad to die, to go into sheol, the tomb, the state of death.

SHEOL NOT DESIRABLE FOREVER

But Job had a hope for the future—he was not desirous of being annihilated; hence his prayer is, "O, that Thou wouldst hide me in sheol (hell, the tomb) until Thy wrath be past." The "wrath" here mentioned is elsewhere called the "curse." Back in Eden, when our first parents were perfect, by disobedience they brought upon

themselves the divine sentence of “curse” or “wrath”—the death sentence, which includes all mental, moral and physical degeneracy known to our race, and which has been afflicting us as a whole for now 6,000 years. Job was looking beyond the period of the permission of this “curse” or “wrath” to a time future, when the “curse” would be removed, and instead of it a “blessing” would come to every member of the race, himself included. As a prophet he recorded his hope of a common Redeemer. “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth,” through this Redeemer’s work he realized that the “curse” would be abolished, and his prayer to be hid in sheol, the grave, the tomb, was merely until the “curse” the “wrath” would be over— until the great blessing time, the millennial reign, should begin. His prayer continuing shows his hope of a resurrection, “that Thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me.” Then particularly referring to the resurrection, he says, “Thou shalt call and I will answer Thee, for Thou wilt have regard unto the work of Thy hands.” Job 14:15

We remember also the Prophet David’s prayer for deliverance from death. He said, “O, save me for Thy mercies’ sake. For in death there is no remembrance of Thee; in sheol (hell, the tomb) who shall give Thee

2H585

thanks?” (Psa. 6:4-5) We remember the good King Hezekiah also, whose life was spared 15 years in answer to prayer. In thanking the Lord for this he said, “Death cannot celebrate Thee; sheol (the tomb) cannot praise Thee.” Isa. 38:18

QUOTE THE ENTIRE PROVERB

One of Solomon’s inspired proverbs much quoted is, “Do with thy might what thy hand findeth to do,” but very rarely do we ever hear the remainder of the quotation, namely, “because there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in sheol (the grave) whither thou goest.” (Eccl. 9:10) How reasonable is the statement rightly understood—there is no wisdom nor knowledge nor work in the hell to which the good and the bad, all mankind, have been going for the past six thousand years. The dead are really dead, extinct, except as God has provided for them a resurrection from the dead, a reawakening to sentient being. The very moment of their awakening will seem to each to be the next moment to the one in which he died, because there is no wisdom or knowledge in the tomb, in sheol, in hell. How wonderful the goodness and mercy of God will appear to the great mass of our race, when they are awakened from the sleep of death and learn for the first time of the goodness of God, that instead of having provided devils and torture

he has provided through His Son an opening of the prison doors of the tomb and a setting at liberty of the captives of death, providing also for their future uplift out of sin and degradation under the favorable conditions of the millennial kingdom of God's dear Son.

SHEOL IS IN THE GREEK HADES

We now call your attention to the fact that the word sheol in the Old Testament, which we have shown means merely tomb, the death state, is the exact equivalent of the word hades in the New Testament Greek, which likewise means the tomb, the state of death. For instance, in Psalm 16:10 we read, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol" (hell, the tomb), and we find St. Peter quoting this on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:27-31) "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades," hell, the grave. St. Peter proceeds to explain that David spoke this not respecting his own soul, but the soul of Jesus, and thus foretold our Lord's resurrection from the dead on the third day. How simple, how plain the entire matter is from this the Scriptural standpoint.

Take another illustration: the prophet Hosea declares, "I will ransom them from the power of sheol (the grave, hell), I will redeem them from death: O death, where is thy sting? O sheol (grave, hell), I will be thy destruction." The Apostle Paul quotes this passage in his great discourse on the resurrection, saying, "O death where is thy sting? O hades (grave) where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55) What could be simpler, plainer? All that we need is to get the smoke of the dark ages out of the eyes of our understanding, and to allow the true light from the inspired Word of God to speak to us plainly and be its own interpreter.

RETURN YE CHILDREN OF MEN

Our topic inquires who are in hell. The Scriptures answer that all go to hell, the tomb, the death-state, as Solomon says, "There is no wisdom no knowledge, nor device in the grave (sheol), whither thou goest." In this vast prison-house it has been estimated that something like 20,000,000,000 of Adam's children are prisoners. But the very word prison implies that they are not extinct, that it is in the divine power and purpose to bring them forth, as Job expressed it, "Thou shalt call and I will answer thee." Our Lord Jesus was the first of these prisoners to come back from sheol, from hades, as the Apostle Peter and the Prophet David have just told us. He went to hell, to sheol, to hades, to the tomb, to the death-state and came back by a resurrection. As the Apostle declares, "God raised him from the dead by his own power. The Apostle tells us that in the resurrection of Jesus we have God's assurance of his ability and

willingness to deliver all from sheol, hades, the tomb, to raise all the dead through him. Acts 17:31

This figure of death as a prison house, holding captive until the glorious morning of the resurrection the whole world of mankind, is frequently set forth in the Bible. There the dead are spoken of as “prisoners of hope.” In his last message to the Church our Lord declares, “I am He that was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of death and hades”— the grave, hell, the tomb. Zech. 9:12; Rev. 1:18

How glad we are to know that the keys of the great prison are in the hands of one who “so loved the world as to give his life a ransom price for theirs,” that God “might be just and yet the justifier of those who believe in Jesus.” How we who now believe do rejoice exceedingly in this great Savior, able to save unto the uttermost. How glad we are to know that, although the number of believers now is small, the day is coming when all shall know of the Redeemer and the provisions and conditions of the eternal salvation. As it is written, “The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep;” then, as the prophet declares, “None shall need to say to his neighbor or brother, know thou the Lord, because all shall know him from the least to the greatest.” Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34

2H586

JESUS HOLDS THE KEY TO HELL

The keys of death and the grave, which the Lord holds and is ready to use, merely waiting the Father’s due time—symbolize his rightful authority to control the dead and the dying. If the Lord had said, I have a crowbar or a sledge-hammer, it would have signified His violent opposition to the dying and death-conditions and that He would rescue the people by force; but the choice of a key as a symbol represents right and authority, and the Scriptures everywhere coincide with this thought, declaring that it was God himself who condemned our race to death and that our Lord Jesus in no sense of the word designed to oppose the Father’s power and authority. The Bible declares that our Lord redeemed us by paying our penalty for us, and thus “bought us with His precious blood,” and that thus justly He has the authority to do with the race of mankind as He wills. And, thank God, He wills their blessing and uplifting in accordance with the Father’s promise to Abraham. “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

OPENING THE PRISON DOORS

It was to this great prison that our Lord referred in His sermon on Isaiah 61 and His application to Himself of the prophecy that He would open the prison doors and set at liberty the captives. Our Lord made no effort to

rescue prisoners from the literal prisons of Palestine or other parts of the world at His first advent—He had a higher and grander mission. He even allowed John the Baptist to be beheaded in prison without so much as uttering a word of protest or giving one particle of assistance for his liberty. Our Lord was in the process of redeeming the world, purchasing all the prisoners and the prison house with a view to eventually set all free during the Millennial age by a resurrection from the dead.

Did time permit we would like to point out how the testimony of the Scriptures respecting the resurrection of the dead is in full accordance with the setting of captives free. We would like to show that the “life resurrection” (John 5:28-29) R. V., will be an instantaneous one to perfection, embracing only those who, during the present life, have made their peace with God through faith and have demonstrated their loyalty to Him and whose trial therefore is ended and their full reward to be granted them in the moment of their resurrection. We would like to show how the remainder of the world will be awakened from the state of death during the millennial age, in practically the condition in which they died, but surrounded by the new conditions of the millennial kingdom—Satan and every evil influence “bound,” restrained, and truth and righteousness and every good influence surrounding them, and with the Church of this Gospel Age, the Bride of Christ, the Royal Priesthood, their assistants, governors, guides, to help the willing and obedient up, up, up, out of sin and degradation and death conditions back to the full perfection of perfect humanity, the image and likeness of God—back to all that was lost in Adam and Eden, with added blessings of increased knowledge through experience.

THIS IS NOT UNIVERSALISM

We find nothing in the Scriptures implying that all men will eventually attain to eternal life, but quite to the contrary, a provision of Second Death for all who will refuse the divine favors and blessings and privileges that through Christ shall ultimately come to every member of the race. We do claim that the Scriptures teach a universal opportunity through which every member of the race may come to a knowledge of the only name and to obedience to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Thus each, if he will, may ultimately attain to everlasting life through the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. (John 1:29) We urge all who feel a deeper interest in the Word of God through this presentation of its teachings, and who consequently would feel a deeper reverence and love for the Almighty and for the Savior, that such shall not content themselves with what they have heard, but shall avail themselves of the helps for Bible study, which God is now granting to his people, that they may come to “Full assurance of faith” and to

that full rest of heart which is the privilege of the
“sanctified in Christ Jesus.”

[The National Labor Tribune, September 22, 1908](#)

THE GOLDEN RULE

Pastor C. T. Russell preached Sunday at Carnegie Hall, Pittsburgh (Northside), to a large audience on the Golden Rule, taking for his text the words of Jesus, “Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” (Matt. 7:12) He said: The poet has well said,

*“How wise are God’s commands
How just his precepts are!”*

2H587

Our conception of a God measures our highest ideals **and principles. Whoever, therefore, has a mean or slipshod** conception of the Almighty is bound to be more or less mean and slipshod in his conduct of life, for every man or woman to some extent worships his own highest ideal. And this is authorized by our Redeemer’s words, “Do ye like unto your Father which is in heaven.” Our forefathers during the Dark Ages burned one another at the stake and otherwise tortured one another, because of their misconception of the Divine Character; because their ideals were too low. They truly believed what they formulated in their creeds and handed down to us, namely, that God in the present time is gathering from amongst men a handful of saints for the heavenly condition and that he will turn over the remainder—all who walk not after the spirit, but after the flesh—to eternal torment at the hands of demons.

Having before their minds this misconception of the Bible teachings, they merely copy that misconception. That civilized men have gotten beyond these standards of the Dark Ages is a matter for congratulations. We regret, nevertheless, that their freedom from an error has not brought them all the blessings that it should. They have attained the higher ideal mostly by ignoring the Bible, by denying its infallibility, by accepting their own judgment and reasoning in supposed contradiction of the Bible teachings. How sad is the fact that a majority of the noble minds of Christendom today deny that the Bible is a Divinely inspired revelation of God and consider it merely the work of well-intentioned, but ignorant men, in comparison to whom the theologians of today are pastmasters every way, quite competent to write out of their own wits matter much superior to that of the Bible, the Divine inspiration of which they deny.

But what a sad condition the true believer would be in if he lost this, the anchor of his soul, and were cast adrift to his own speculations or those of others, which continually contradict one another. To those who have never known the value of the Word of God as the Divine counsel and who are totally ignorant of its “exceeding great and precious promises”—to such the loss would be less, but to us “who have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come and been made partakers of the holy Spirit”—for us to lose all these would be to lose almost life itself, for truly, as the Prophet declares, the knowledge of God’s loving kindness is better than life, the best life, so that to lose it would mean to take away that which makes life most precious to us.

THE FOUNDATION OF GOD’S THRONE

The Bible declaration that Justice is the foundation of the Divine Kingdom or Throne gives the mind pictorially an appreciation of the value of Justice in its relationship to every element of the Divine Character. “Be just before you are generous,” is a proverb amongst men, which evidently is in full accord with what the Scriptures declare of God’s Character. He is first just—never anything less than Justice. His wisdom, his power, his love must all co-ordinate with and rest upon this quality of Justice. And so it is with all those who would copy this character. They must be first just. Any quality built upon any foundation to any extent ignoring this one is faulty, improper, sinful. The first man, made in God’s image and moral likeness must have had justice as the foundation of his character. And all of his descendants still possess this quality, though in varying degree. We call it also conscientiousness, righteousness. Some, indeed, have this quality in so weak and slight a degree that it is easily overbalanced by their other stronger qualities of mind, such as acquisitiveness, approbation, etc. It is for this reason that prisons are necessary to restrain all the stronger organs of man’s minds and to encourage their conscientiousness, their sense of justice, righteousness. These standards of righteousness heretofore have, from the first, been considered and esteemed the Divine standards, and are still so esteemed, except by atheists.

During the Dark Ages reasoning minds tried the various expedients whereby to harmonize the Justice of God with the “Doctrines of Demons,” which misrepresented the Divine program for mankind. (1 Tim. 4:1) But in our day the dawning light from every quarter reveals to the awakened conscience the fact that the old creeds require of humanity far higher standards than they accredit to our Maker. We are to be just, generous, kind, loving; but the Divine pattern held up to us in the misleading creeds

portray our Almighty Creator as claiming all of these qualities, but by his course of dealing with humanity violating them all, every one.

Who with an enlightened mind can any longer claim that it was ever just or kind or loving for God to bring into being a race of intelligent creatures, for the great mass of whom he had no better provision than an eternity of torture, and knew all this before he created them? Who can deny that it would have been more just, more kind, more wise, and more loving, to have left the entire race uncreated than to have made provision for the eternal torture of 999 out of every 1,000 of them, or a worse proportion, for surely the saints do not number one in a thousand of the world's population?

2H588

“THY RIGHTEOUS ACTS SHALL BE MADE MANIFEST.”

The Bible freely tells us that many features of the Divine Plan are now hidden in mystery, but the last book of the Bible, which prophetically pictures the future, assures us that in God's due time “The mystery shall be finished, which he hath declared to his servants the prophets” (Rev. 10:7) The same book assures us that in God's due time, when the mystery is cleared, “All nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy righteous acts have been made manifest.” (Rev. 15:4) We are now living in the time when the “mystery” is ending and the righteous dealings of God, from the Scriptural standpoint, may be clearly seen.

But these revelations are not meant for the world in general now, but merely for “the elect,” the “sanctified in Christ Jesus.” “To you it is given to know the mysteries, to outsiders these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings.” (Matt. 13:11, 13) But not until the elect shall be glorified and the Millennial Kingdom be established with the “Mystery” be made fully known to the world and every knee bow and confess. Hence, only those of a contrite heart may now see, now understand, the real character of God, his real purpose towards man, etc. Thus our Lord declares, “This is life eternal that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3

To the class addressed by our Lord, “Blessed are your eyes, for they see,” and for these alone, is the message that the hell of the Bible is the tomb, the state of death. They were all condemned to death through Adam's sin and not one, according to the Scriptures, was condemned to eternal torment. It is for these to see and appreciate the love of God, which has made provision for the salvation of all from the

present state of degradation and sin and death. These alone may see that Jesus was “The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world,” and not merely the sins of the Church. These may see that the blessings of salvation are for two classes of mankind—now for the saintly class, “The called according to God’s purpose,” and who are promised a share in the First Resurrection and then during the Millennial Age salvation for all of the race—an opportunity for Restitution to man’s original estate in the image and likeness of God. These may see that this original state will not be forced upon any, but made possible to all on terms of full and hearty obedience to the Great Prophet, Priest and King during his Millennial reign. And these may see also that the end of the wilfully wicked is to be destruction and not to be preserved in torment; but the Second Death will signify the second destruction, but this time without hope of redemption or resurrection or recovery. These, then, see the Justice of God manifested toward man for now six thousand years, under the infliction of the original penalty, “Dying thou shalt die.” These see how Divine love met the requirements of Divine Justice, when our Lord Jesus “gave himself a Ransom for all.” “He died, the Just for the unjust”—redeemed the first Adam and all his family and all his estate with his own precious blood, his sacrifice. These may see how wisdom bids love to wait throughout this Gospel Age, while the elect class is being called out from the redeemed world to constitute the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife, and joint-heirs with him in his Millennial Kingdom. These can see how in due time Divine power will cooperate with love, and justice be silent while Satan is restrained and the human family granted the opportunity for uplift—resurrection to all that was lost plus valuable lessons of knowledge through experience.

THE GOLDEN RULE FOR THE CHURCH

They make a great mistake who suppose that the Golden Rule, or indeed any of the messages of the Scriptures, were intended for the world of mankind. No, they are for the Church only and this is shown not only by the fact that our Lord’s words were addressed to his disciples, but also by the fact that the Apostolic epistles similarly are addressed to the saints and the household of faith. Others cannot see, understand, appreciate, in the proper degree. The worldly mind can and does appreciate the maxim, “Honesty is the best policy” in the long run, but it cannot appreciate the sentiment of our text, in the sense of being willing to adopt this as a principle and as a rule of life.

In harmony with this thought, we seek to impress the import of our text only upon those blessed of the Father, who have been drawn, called, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and whose eyes to some extent have seen Justice to be the foundation of the Divine Character. The Golden Rule does not express all of the Christian duty; he is expected to make progress in conduct and character development

much beyond this. But this further progress marks his development in love. The Golden Rule marks the very lowest standard which must measure our dealings with others in the Church and in the world—Justice. In a word our text, although far above the ordinary course of humanity, should be in use every day and every hour by every follower of Christ. “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” That our Lord was not giving this as a Gospel standard and love standard, we note the fact that he added the words, “This is the Law and the Prophets,” this is the teaching or demand of the Law and the Prophets upon all who would seek to do righteousness—Justice.

The measure of our development as New Creatures in Christ is whatever we attain to in love above the

2H589

standard of the Golden Rule. Justice demands us to render to others as we would have them render to us. Love says, “I demand nothing, but show you the length and breadth and height and depth of Love Divine and wait expectantly to note your appreciation of this and how you will seek to be copies of God’s dear Son, who laid down his life on our behalf.” Addressing those who had made a consecration of discipleship, to walk in the Lord’s footsteps, St. Paul says, “We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren” — after the example of Jesus.

“LOVE WORKETH NO ILL”

All of the Lord’s people are to love him and the brethren; yea, even their enemies. However, let us now stop short of love and merely consider what the simple justice of the Golden Rule would imply in our conduct. How do our daily lives square with this Golden Rule of absolute justice, omitting love entirely?

If you are an employer, do you treat your employees in harmony with this Rule and do unto them as you would have them do unto you, if your position were reversed? If you are an employee, inquire of yourself, “Do I treat my employer and his business as I would have him treat me and my business, if our relationship were reversed?” Do you treat your butcher, your baker, your grocer, etc., as you would like to have them treat you, if your position were reversed? Are you polite to them and not inclined to give them unnecessary trouble? Do you pay them promptly? Or, if you are the tradesman, do you treat your customers as you would wish to have them treat you, if conditions were reversed? Do you charge them a reasonable price only? Do you give them proper weight and measure? Do you properly represent your goods to them, as you would have them represent to

you? Are you a good neighbor? Do you see to it that your children are not a nuisance to others; that your chickens are not permitted to damage your neighbor's garden; that your dog is not a ferocious one, and that his bark does not keep the neighborhood awake? In a word, do you treat your neighbor justly, along the lines of the Golden Rule, doing unto him only as you would wish him to do to you? Do you allow any member of your family to be a nuisance to the neighborhood, while trying to learn how to sing or play the clarinet or violin, the harmonica, or a tin horn?

Let us now step into your house and measure things there by the Golden Rule. As husbands, how do you treat your wives? And wives, how do you treat your husbands? Can you apply the Golden Rule to your words, to your conduct, to your demands of each other? Or do you act meanly, selfishly, in taking advantage of each other, to the limit that the other will forbear? Do you deal with your children according to the lines of the Golden Rule? Are you an ideal parent, according to your own advanced standard of what a parent's duty would be to his children? Do you remember that you have a responsibility for their training, a responsibility so far as your circumstances will permit, for their environment and happiness and education and general preparation for usefulness in life? Or are you indifferent to their interests, neglectful of your responsibilities? Do you recognize that your children have certain rights and that these increase as they near maturity, or are you forgetful of these, disposed to keep the children under the restraints of childhood, souring their dispositions and making them unhappy, until they resent the injustice and a family quarrel results? As children, are you thoughtful of your parents, their welfare, and their wishes, their happiness, as you would like your children to be thoughtful of yours? Do you remember the hours and weeks of feebleness and sickness and toil which you cost them in your infancy, and are you seeking to repay those kindnesses, and seeking to make their last days the happiest of their lives? Are you observing the Golden Rule toward your parents? How is it in your relationship to your brothers and sisters? When they borrow your things without leave, do you retaliate by borrowing theirs without leave, and thus keep up a continual fret and vexation of spirit in the family? Or do you practice the Golden Rule of justice and do nothing to your brother and sister, or their things, or theirs, that you would not wish them to do to you or your things?

THE GOLDEN RULE IN CHURCH

Surely in the church you should remember the Golden Rule laid down by the head of the church. Nevertheless I am sure that if you are unjust in your own family, and to your business associates, you will be unjust also in your dealing with the "church, which is the body of Christ." He that is unjust in little things would be unjust in greater ones. He who is faithful in little things will be

faithful in the greater ones. He who practices the Golden Rule during the six days of his contact with business will surely be faithful on the seventh also; but faithfulness to the Golden Rule on one day in seven only will never win divine approval.

In applying this Golden Rule to the consecrated people of God, we are following the symbols of Revelation 11:1. In symbol St. John was commanded to take the Golden Rule and measure the "Temple of God and the altar and them that worship therein." Let us each ask himself, not only the foregoing questions pertaining to earthly relationships, but questions also respecting

2H590

the higher relationship in Christ. Am I making an honest confession before the people of God, with whom I am in association? Or am I deceiving them?

If I have taken upon me a denominational name which stands for denominational creed, do I really believe that creed and endorse it and uphold it? Or am I in a measure out of accord with it? Does it misrepresent me, or do I misrepresent it? Am I doing to my associates and to the Lord, the Head of the Church, as I would have them do to me? If not, I should square my conduct by the Golden Rule. I should be honest with my Lord, with my brethren and with myself, and make no false professions. Do I treat all the brethren as such as the Apostle says, "Without partiality and without hypocrisy?" Or do I pick out some of special class or caliber or style, and measurably ignore some of the poorer or less literate, who, perhaps, need my assistance more? Am I doing to all these a brother's part, as I would that they should do to me, if our positions were transposed? As the pastor, am I thoughtful of the interests of the brethren? Do I watch out for their liberties? Do I seek to impart to them freely whatever knowledge I possess, or am I trying to hoodwink them and to keep them in ignorance, and to hold them down? In a word, am I doing for the Lord's sheep, as an under-shepherd, what I would wish to be done to me by an under-shepherd, if I were one of the Lord's sheep under his care? Or as one of the Lord's sheep under a pastoral head, am I seeking by word and act to encourage and assist the pastor, as I would like to have the Lord's people do for me, if I were in pastoral service?

Finally, do I apply the Golden Rule in the exercise of my tongue and my brains as these have to do with neighbors and friends and brethren in the Church? Do I think generously or meanly of others? Am I continually surmising dishonesty, meanness or impurity on their part? And would I like to have them similarly imagine those things toward me? Whoever has this disposition should know that he is harboring what the Scriptures designate "iniquity in his heart." Such thoughts

should be resisted as unworthy of noble minds, and in their place we should foster kindness and generosity and nobility of sentiment respecting others. How about the tongue? Do we always follow the Scriptural rule, "Speak evil of no man?" Or do we find ourselves possessed of a mean disposition, which takes pleasure in gossiping to others respecting what we know, or what we have heard derogatory to others? Would we like to have others do this to us, or is such a course contrary to the Golden Rule?

Do we find ourselves seeking a justification for speaking something that is unkind or ungenerous, whether truthful or not? If so, do we recognize that this is an element quite contrary to the Golden Rule, and in our endeavor to find justification for doing that which we recognize as contrary to the Golden Rule do we see that it is merely an attempt to deceive ourselves, in a manner which will not deceive our Lord? "Be not deceived. God is not mocked." He that doeth righteousness is righteous. He that keeps the Golden Rule is just. He who under any pretext violates the Golden Rule thus displays the injustice of his heart whatever may be his outward professions of righteousness.

In this connection let us not forget the Scripture which declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." If, then, we find ourselves disposed to slander, or in any manner to injure or seek a pretext to slander or injure another, whoever he may be, it should be to us a signal of distress, indicating corruption of mind, injustice, inequality. To find such a condition of injustice in any measure associated with our thoughts or words or deeds under any of the heads already examined should mean chagrin to us, who have undertaken to follow in the footsteps of the Master. It should mean alarm! For if such condition were not altered it would lead toward a worse one, to more ungodliness, so that whatever we have by nature or by grace would become vitiated, perverted, valueless, and we would be certain to be of those who would fail to "make their calling and election sure," to a position of joint-heirship with Christ in his Kingdom.

For is it not predestinated that that "elect" company must all be copies of God's dear Son in character likeness? And is it not equally certain that our Master is not only just toward all, but loving and self-sacrificing as well? Let us, then, remember the words of the Golden Rule, "And be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven." If we be not able to fully live up to this grand standard, let us at least approve it in our hearts and keep as close to it as possible in thought and word and deed!

* * * *

*They do the most
Whose lives possess*

*The sterling stamp
Of righteousness;
For deeds are true.*

[The National Labor Tribune, September 28, 1908](#)

“THE OUTWARD MAN VS. THE INWARD MAN”

Springfield, O., Sept. 27. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, preached twice here today. He had large and attentive audiences. Considerable numbers came from neighboring towns and cities. A Columbus party had a specially chartered car. Fairbanks Opera House was strained beyond its capacity, many being turned away. We report one of the discourses from the text “Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” 2 Cor. 4:16. The speaker said:

Our text and similar expressions throughout the Scriptures are not understood by the masses. Few, even amongst Bible students, discern that the Church is wholly distinct and separate from the remainder of mankind: that the Scriptures speak literally when they declare the Church to be a “new Creation” and its members “new Creatures.” As to the natural man there is a human begetting and a human birth so to these “new Creatures” there is a spirit begetting, which will culminate in the first resurrection, in their spirit birth—“changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”—spirit beings, glorious, immortal, joint-heirs with their Redeemer in his glorious Millennial Kingdom and sharers with its great work of blessing humanity.

On reading our text the majority even of Christians are inclined to apply it to all mankind and to look for an outward man and an inward man. Such a misunderstanding is apt to result in one of two things (1) He looks at himself and recognizes to some extent his own two-fold nature and then, looking at the world, he mistakenly supposes that all men are the same; or, (2) Looking at mankind in general and seeing no such dual personality as our text suggests he doubts his own—fails to appreciate this Scripture, fails to get any profitable lessons therefrom. He is further confused by the fact that nominal Christianity embraces three classes: (a) A class which claims to be Christian merely because the name is popular and because they neither wish to be known as Jews nor as heathen; (b) A class of justified believers in the cross of Christ, the scope of whose consecration is merely a desire to avoid sin in its crudest form and to live decent, creditable lives; (c) A class which has gone beyond the “b” class, has recognized with appreciation the divine mercy already received and in response has made a full consecration of itself to the Lord—a consecration even unto death, a consecration to serve the Lord and walk in his steps whatever the cost—a consecration to sacrifice earthly interests, advantages, privileges, etc., as well as to avoid sin, in the interest of Truth, righteousness, and all

the principles of righteousness which represent the heavenly Father and his Son.

This latter (c) class is of course that of which was declared, “a little flock,” and contains, “not many great, wise or noble.” It is this class alone however which receives spirit begetting, which the Apostle declares is “an earnest of our inheritance” “which God hath in reservation for them that love him”—love him more than they love houses or lands, parents or children, husbands or wife, or life itself. These spirit begotten ones, the smallest section of nominal Christianity, are the only ones addressed by our text. More than this when I say that they are the only ones addressed throughout the New Testament, for these are prospectively the “saints,” the elect so frequently mentioned in the New Testament writing and uniformly addressed in the opening of each Epistle.

“ALL CALLED IN ONE HOPE”

It may be thought by some that the Apostles were exceptions to every rule and that their sacrifice of earthly interests and their suffering of persecutions in the flesh and their self-denials in the interests of the Gospel service were not intended by the Lord as illustrations or examples for the remainder of the Church. We answer that this is a mistaken view, which, if yielded to, would hinder us from obedience to the Apostolic injunction, “ye become followers of us and of the Lord.” 1 Thes. 1:6. It is true that Jesus was not only the Redeemer but also the Great Shepherd and Guide of his followers. It is true that he sent forth the twelve Apostles as his special representatives and mouth-pieces in the establishment of the Church and that this entailed upon them special obligations and duties, as well as special privileges and opportunities. It is true, also, however, that all of the Lord’s followers are called his sheep and that respecting all of them he says, “Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world.” And again, “Marvel not if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you.” “Whosoever will be my disciple let him take up his cross and follow me and where I am to be there shall that disciple be also.” That all of these disciples and followers, not only the Apostles, but the humblest of the sheep, are included in these conditions and the promised rewards of the faithful is distinctly shown in our Lord’s reference to his Second Coming and the rewards and blessings then to be administered to all of his faithful, amongst whom he includes not

2H592

merely the twelve Apostles (who are indeed to have the most honorable position in glory) but also every member

of the “Church, which is his Body.” “I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also.” In the parables of the pounds and the talents our Lord evidently addresses those who will be alive at his Second Advent as the representative of all his faithful servants throughout the Age, to each one of whom he has entrusted certain pounds and talents, gifts and responsibilities as his servants as New Creatures. “Ye are called in the one hope of your calling.” Eph. 4:4

“OUR OUTWARD MAN PERISHED”

Changing times and circumstances vary conditions but the principles enunciated in the Scriptures continue to have force and meaning. It is no longer the custom to crucify, nor to stone to death, nor to beat with rods, nor to burn at the stake, nor to imprison for religious conviction. The Gospel of Christ has made a deep impression upon the world and its general sentiments, even though it has influenced only a “little flock” to accept full discipleship and willingness to “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” It is still true, however, that whosoever will live godly in this present Age shall suffer persecution—more refined, more civilized, but in some respects no less bitter and malicious than that of times past—sometimes causing excruciating pain and sorrow and heart-ache. It is still true also that as the persecution of our Lord’s time came from the nominally religious and orthodox of his day and Nation; and as all the persecutions of the dark ages similarly were instituted by the professedly religious and professedly orthodox, so, likewise, today more of the pain and sorrow, “more of the mortification of our flesh,” comes from the professedly religious, professedly orthodox, professedly brethren.

In every instance the difficulty arises from the fact that these nominally religious people who would persecute the members of the Body of Christ, his consecrated followers, do so because of mistaken conception of the Divine Will—because they lack the spirit of Christ, the spirit of God, the holy Spirit or disposition, the spirit of love. The Scriptures explain to us that Satan exercises a great influence on the world, blinding and prejudicing many and using them unwittingly as his tools—and that God permits him so to do for the better ultimate accomplishment of his great and glorious purposes. Thus of those who crucified our Lord, the Apostle declares, “I wot, brethren, that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.” (Acts 3:17) Similarly those of the dark ages who burned one another at the stake no doubt thought, as did Saul of Tarsus, that they verily did God service. Blinded as to the real purpose of God and not appreciating his spirit of love they served Satan and Sin while supposing that they serve God. And the same is undoubtedly true of those who after a more refined manner today oppose, speak evil of, misrepresent

(slander, murder), their brethren. Nevertheless God from first to last has been overruling in the affairs of his people so that blessing has resulted to those who are “new creatures” in Christ—while their outward man has suffered and perished and been mortified, their inward man, their new nature, has been renewed, strengthened, upbuilt, in the image of God. Their trials have made them more nearly as “new creatures copies of God’s dear Son.” Rom. 8:29

“MORTIFY THEREFORE YOUR MEMBERS”

Thus far we have considered merely the attacks upon our mortal bodies which come from without and have seen how as our context declares, “Our light afflictions which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” From this standpoint we have realized that all the persecutions, trials, sorrows, pain, which come to our flesh are really blessings in disguise, because our human nature must be utterly destroyed before we as “new creatures can be perfected in the first resurrection. It may surprise some to note the Apostle’s exhortation that we not only endure and appreciate the Lord’s providences in respect to the persecutions from without but that our zeal as new creatures” leads us to make an attack upon our own flesh from within. He assures us that there is a conflict to be waged between the “new nature” and the old and that the progress and development and victory of one means the overthrow and destruction of the other— so antagonistic are these interests. Hence we are exhorted to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life.” (1 Tim. 6:12) We are told that our courage and persistency and zeal in this fight against the old self and its natural tendencies and this fight in the interests of the heavenly Kingdom and its divine Law means to us either victory or defeat as respects our attainment of the glorious goal set before us in the Scriptures—joint-heirship with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom and Divine Nature. It is to the conquerors and more than conquerors that the blessed promise of the Scriptures apply. And our Redeemer is the Captain of our salvation, the Head and Leader of all these conquerors, without whom they would be unable to conquer, but by his assistance and grace they may triumph in harmony with the promise that “God is able to bring us off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors through him that loved us.” Rom. 8:37

This battle of the “new creature” against the old

2H593

man is referred to by the Apostle when he exhorts the “new creature” saying, “Mortify therefore your members” which are of the earth—deadened them—first of

all surrender your human will to death that you may have no will of your own, but may adopt in the fullest measure the mind of Christ, the Will of the Father, that it, the will of the “new creature,” may henceforth dominate your life and more and more control your every thought and word and deed. But this deadening is not to end with the will though it must begin there. The mortifying or killing is to proceed to grapple with every organ of our mortal bodies and to render them dead to Sin and to quicken them with the holy Spirit of the “new creature.” Henceforth our hands and all their doings, our feet and all their goings, our eyes and all their visions, our tongues and all their words, are to be dead to Sin, dead to selfishness, dead to everything except the new mind, the holy Spirit, which, controlling those, is to use them daily, hourly, incessantly, in the service of God, the service of Christ, the service of the brethren, the service of the Truth, and, so far as opportunity may afford, in the service of humanity—not forgetting, however, that the real service of humanity comes in the Millennial Age and will be granted only to those “new creatures” who in the present times fight a good fight against the Old Man and its natural inclination and in favor of the “new creatures,” the perfect Will of God.

As the natural man perisheth the “new creature” develops. At first the natural man is comparatively strong, but if progress be made eventually he will be quite in subjection to the “new creature.” The outward man perisheth and the new being renewed day by day will mean eventually a thorough preparation for the complete “change,” for the birth of the spirit in the first resurrection. Since there is no development or schooling in the grave and since none can enter the heavenly condition except those who in the School of Christ in the present life have been made “meet for the inheritance of the saints in life,” it follows that, as the Apostle says, the spirit begotten ones need to “Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” 2 Pet. 1:10-11

WARNING NECESSARY TO SOME

Here a warning word is necessary. Some have gotten the erroneous impression that actual perfection in every word and thought and deed is the divine requirement. This is a mistake. Such a perfection is an impossibility. The perfection which God requires according to the Scriptures is a heart perfection, a perfection of the will. “Blessed are the pure in heart” — the pure in desire, and hence the pure in endeavor. God’s elect ones, accepted from various stations, are some more and some less noble, some more and some less depraved by nature. We are not to expect that these will all reach the same plane of

outward self-control in the present life, but we must understand the Lord's judgment of them will not be according to the letter, but according to the spirit — not according to their outward attainment but according to their inward attainment — hence some of the Lord's people naturally noble, having more or less a high estimation be considered unfit for the Kingdom and its high responsibilities and honors. On the other hand some of those whom the Apostle enumerates according to the flesh, "The mean things of this world" and according to men never highly esteemed in the flesh, might in the Lord's estimation be highly esteemed because of his knowledge of the trueness of their hearts, their loyalty to him and to the Brethren, and to principles of righteousness — their fulness of the holy Spirit of love. Undoubtedly there are some great surprises in store for the time when the Lord will make manifest his judgment, his decision.

In conclusion we exhort nominal Christians to accept Christ as their Redeemer and thus take their place amongst the justified ones who renounce Sin and desire righteousness. Secondly we exhort these and many who have already taken this position with God to take the second step and to enter the Body of Christ and become "members of the School of Christ, the Church" and members of that "little flock" —fully consecrated followers of the Lamb. We exhort these that when begotten of the holy spirit they will recognize themselves as "new creatures" and fight a good fight against the old nature—putting off the works of the flesh, anger, malice, hatred, strife, and putting on the character fruits of the holy Spirit, meekness, gentleness, kindness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These heavenly qualities will not make us popular with the world, who have a different spirit of darkness which hates the light, because it reproves them, but these graces of God's spirit of love constitute a "panoply" of God, and an army which will enable us to withstand all the fiery darts of the Adversary and enable us to assist others and finally through the grace of God in Christ perfect us as conquerors, "Yea, more than conquerors through him that loved us and bought us with his precious blood."

[The National Labor Tribune, October 7, 1908](#)

FOLLOWERS OF THE PRICE OF PEACE

Pastor C. T. Russell preached Sunday in Allegheny Carnegie Hall to an audience of about six hundred, which gave closest attention. His text was, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in the one Body; and be ye thankful." Col. 3:15 He said:

Has it occurred to you, dear friends, that inventions, conveniences, comforts, luxuries, which are daily becoming more and more common to the masses, are not bringing to them the peace, rest, contentment, which might have been expected? On the contrary, is it not true that while statesmen are measurably successful in avoiding great wars by the maintenance of terrific armaments, nevertheless there is a growing spirit of discontent which is ready to burst forth under almost any pretext? Is not this the explanation of the increase of mob violence within the last ten years? Is not this restless, dissatisfied sentiment the explanation also of the alarming increase in the number of suicides, which in our own county for weeks at a time have averaged one per day. And the remainder of the world are apparently in the same condition.

Some seek to explain the situation by saying that we are as a race living under the pressure of the highest known civilization in the world. Others attempt an explanation by suggesting that business and labor are operating upon a pressure basis which, even with shorter hours, is more exhausting than the longer hours and less pressure of the past. Others suggest that the evil spirits, the fallen angels, have more to do with the excitement of the human mind, especially along the lines of the fallen propensities, and that this is the special cause of present restlessness. Others charge the difficulty to present social conditions and offer Socialism as a panacea. Many other explanations are tendered us by those who seem to be wise and thoughtful. There may be truth in some or in all of these explanations; but we, dear friends, will not discuss that feature of the matter, but allow each philosopher to have his own theory while we proceed to offer the remedy—we may say the only remedy for such conditions. We may be curious to know the cause of a disease, but we are much more interested to know the remedy for it.

“LET THE PEACE OF GOD RULE”

Our text gives the remedy—“Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” Wherever that peace is received and granted the rule, the control of the heart, of the affections, of the will, the result will be peace—not necessarily an outward peace, however. Our Lord distinguished between the outward and inward peace, saying, “My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” Many a man knows an outward peace with all circumstances favorable to his joy, but knows an inward unrest, unhappiness; likewise some have learned that there is such a thing as an inward peace and joy which can be maintained, notwithstanding all manner of outward disturbances, conflicts, distresses. This is the peace of Christ, the peace of God. There is none other like it. Many have no knowledge of it experimentally and can but imperfectly imagine what others describe of their experience in this life. This is the peace of which the Apostle writes, “The peace of God, which passeth all understanding.” Even those who possess the peace can with difficulty understand, fully comprehend the philosophy of it, so contrary is it at times with the outward experiences upon which human peace generally depends.

It is called the peace of God for several reasons: (1) Because it is the kind of peace which God himself has, which rules in the divine character and affairs; the peace which comes from realization that every condition in the universe is under divine control. (2) Because it is the peace which comes from God as a gift, not to all mankind, but to certain ones to whom it is his good pleasure to give this comfort, this rest of heavenly peace.

Not all mankind can receive this peace. It is the heavenly Father’s good pleasure to give it only to those who become his children, and to these he gives it in increasing measures as they come more and more fully into heart harmony with himself and his gracious arrangements through loving obedience. The holy angels all have this peace, because they are all in full accord with their Creator and fully secured of his wisdom, justice, love and power. There is nothing therefore to distract their rest, their peace, their joy. The fallen angels, of whom the Apostle tells us that they are reserved in chains of darkness in our atmosphere, Tartarus, we are just as confident as destitute of peace and joy. “There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.” Had we an intimate knowledge of their affairs we undoubtedly would find them distressing, because having gotten out of harmony with their Creator, having taken the spirit of rebellion and opposition, we must expect that in them are developed the various elements of malignant dispositions, which to some extent are manifested in

fallen humanity and which the Apostle describes as works of the flesh and of the devil—anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife, evil-speaking, bitterness, wrath. We are not to understand that these evil spirits are in some far-off place torturing humanity. That is one of the delusions with which they once fettered our minds. In the light of God's Word we see that the human dead are dead and are not being tortured and that Satan, the prince of demons, and his hosts of fallen angels, full of the bitter spirit of rancor and animosity, which the Apostle calls devilishness, are continually near us to incite to evil, to propagate their own spirit, their own disposition, to implant in the minds of men the bitterness, the evil, which have become elements of their own characters. Alas! the poor world does not realize that, as the Apostle declares, they are under the domination of these wicked spirits, and their fallen dispositions

continually incited to evil from this quarter. The Apostle's declaration is that the "God of this world hath blinded the minds of all that believe not," that the Adversary is unwilling that the light of God's knowledge and goodness should shine into men's hearts; hence he with his subordinates in opposition to the Lord and his spirit are cultivating the spirit of animosity, venom, strife, "and every evil work," as the Apostle says.

On the other hand we have the divine power. This is represented to some degree in every member of our race. The original image and likeness of God, in which father Adam was created, has come down to us much marred, much blurred, degraded; nevertheless there is in all something of that original image of God. Every human being possesses some of the mental powers which appreciate goodness, purity, truth, justice—some more, some less. Each has a measure of will power more or less. To some extent, therefore, each individual is prepared by nature to appreciate the right and to resist the evil tendencies and suggestions of the fallen angels, but it is an unequal fight in some respects. The constant attack is upon the will and in proportion as it gives way the diabolical spirit gains control.

DIVINE AID IS NECESSARY

As each individual reaches a development of mind he realizes to some extent his situation, that right and wrong are before him, and that because of his fallen condition and evil suggestions and his environment, sin is not only attractive, enticing, but difficult to resist. He realizes temptations. Some more, some less successfully battle against these and to some extent develop character. What all need is divine aid. But our great Adversary who first led mother Eve into temptation and has since been deceiving her children seeks in every manner to hinder our race from accepting the offers of divine assistance: The heathen, as the Apostle Paul explains, are so far deluded

that they “worship devils instead of God.” And even in Christian lands and Christian fields are many “doctrines of demons,” as the Apostle Paul calls them. All of these seek to terrorize humanity and to hinder their approach to an acceptance of divine assistance. Even God’s book, the Bible, has been so misrepresented and misinterpreted as to hinder some of the very best of humanity in respect to its counsels or accepting its teachings. Thus, as the Apostle says, If our Gospel is hid, it is hidden to the perishing. Undoubtedly therefore the great mass of mankind are in this alienated, perishing condition, slaves of sin.

Meantime we inquire, What has the Almighty done for the relief of his deluded human creatures? The light of the Bible is that he has set in motion a great plan of salvation which ultimately he will bring within the reach of every member of Adam’s race. The initial step was the work of redemption, to accomplish which our Redeemer left the glory above and took our nature without its sin, and paid the penalty of Adam’s sin, thus redeeming him and all of his posterity, every one of whom were sharers in the results of his death sentence. What is the next step in the divine program? It is more than eighteen centuries since Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification. What means the delay in bringing the relief? The Scriptures answer that the interim of time from Calvary until now has been devoted to the selection of a very special class from amongst men to constitute a Bride class of joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his Kingdom, which will shortly be set up for the blessing of the world. Then Satan will be bound. Then the fallen angels who now misrepresent themselves as our dead friends through spirit mediums will be restrained, hindered from further interference with humanity, while the glorified Redeemer and his glorified Church will bring to bear upon humanity blessed, uplifting influence to deliver them from ignorance, superstition and degradation, back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

A PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE.

While it is encouraging to us, helpful, happifying, to know something of the divine good purposes of the future, what can we say of the present? While we see that the Millennium will bring wonderful blessings to every creature under heaven, ‘that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God,’ we are interested to know something about the Lord’s provision for his people in the present time. How may we now enter into his rest, his peace? Our text tells of some

2H596

who have this blessed experience and it intimates that these have it in increased measures as they will let, per-

mit the Lord through his Word to work in them, to will and then to do his good pleasure. Our text says, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Here we see that it is not only with the special class, but also with all, that their own wills have something to do with this matter of letting in something of this peace of God. The more we realize of the truth of this the more it will help us to avail ourselves of our heavenly Father's bounty, which the Scriptures speak of as "Riches of grace and loving kindness through Christ Jesus." In the first place, then, we must briefly trace the steps to be taken to come into such relationship to God, that under his terms we may have a right to his peace. The initial step is a desire to turn away from sin and to follow righteousness. Additionally we must learn that we are so fallen that we cannot do the things which we would; that the divine standard is so high and our entire race so blemished that there is in God's sight "none righteous, no, not one." We must realize that God is absolutely just in the matter of our condemnation to death. Then we hear the Gospel message that God is not only just but also loving, and that his love has opened a door through his justice that those who trust in the blood of the Redeemer may return to heart harmony with their Creator and eventually be with him in his Kingdom. Whoever heartily accepts this in the present time is said to be justified by faith. His sins of the past are forgiven, set aside, because of his acceptance of the Crucified One. Here is the first introduction to true peace; as the Apostle says, "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Quite a good many Christian people have entered into this peace and rest through believing, but alas, many of them have lost this peace, this rest, because they have not gone on according to the direction of the divine Word. The acceptance of Christ sufficed for the sins of the past, but not for trespasses future. Hence the believer who neglected to keep in touch with his Redeemer, who neglected to look to him for grace to help in every time of need, would be apt to fall into condemnation—alienation from the Lord—and this means loss of peace, loss of heart rest.

TRIALS WHICH TRY YOU

Many trials are experienced by believers after they have taken the step of faith and accepted of Christ. If they allow these to turn them back into sin without battling for the right they are not of the class whom the Lord is now seeking, but will be allowed to lapse back again into the worldly condition. But if they do battle with the world, the flesh and the Adversary they will find that they need the Lord Jesus, not only for their Redeemer as respects the sins of the past, but they need him also as their Advocate and Helper in respect to all the affairs of life, that through him they may obtain mercy for every unwilling failure "and find grace to help in every time of need." Heb. 1:16

The effect of these experiences rightly received should be to lead to a full consecration of their wills and powers to the Lord, the acceptance of him as their Ruler, their Guide, their all. This secondary step in the Scriptures is called sanctification or setting apart in the Lord's service. It is to such sanctified ones that the Lord grants a begetting of the holy Spirit to draw them near to himself and to grant them the necessary instruction and assistance that they may make their calling and election sure to joint-heirship with their Redeemer in his Kingdom and his great and glorious work for mankind.

This class, called in the Scriptures the saints, the holy, the elect of God, because they are seeking to make their calling and election sure, are the ones specially addressed in our text. The peace which they obtained when they first found the Lord expands in every direction and becomes an all-pervading peace, guiding and ruling in their hearts and in all the affairs of their lives in proportion as they grew in grace and knowledge and love. It is to this class addressed by our text, dear fringes, that we trust that many of us belong and to this class for whom God has provided perfect peace ruling in their hearts even in the present time we invite all to come who are weary with the strife and hatred and envying and evil-speaking which belong to the world of mankind because of the fall and to the fallen angels--works of the flesh and of the devil. If the times past have satisfied you in respect to the wrong conditions and if you are willing to let the peace of God rule in your hearts and with us accept the Redeemer and give him your heart that he may cleanse it and embellish it, then, as the Apostle says, "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the holy Spirit." Let us have the holy Spirit ruling in our mortal flesh; and then how can we have other than the peace of God ruling there.

But, alas, dear friends, there are many lessons for us all to learn after we thus make our consecration and receive a begetting of the holy Spirit and its peace and enter the school of Christ to learn there the great and important

lessons to fit and properly prepare us for the heavenly Kingdom, its joys, its peace, its blessings. The Apostle represents these spirit-begotten ones as new creatures wrestling with, fighting our own perverse disposition according to the flesh. We are not without assistance in this conflict, else we could never win. But the Lord declares, "Greater is he that is on our part than all they that are against us." Our dear Redeemer, remember,

2H597

bids us fear not. "I have overcome the world," he says, and he promises us grace sufficient for every time of need and that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear and that with every temptation he will provide a way of escape. He nevertheless desires to develop in us character, and therefore permits the temptations of life to assail us, and often "fiery trials," promising, however, that all these shall work out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" if we faithfully endure them, and promising further that amongst all the trials and difficulties and besetments of life we may have the "peace of God which passeth all understanding" ruling in our hearts. Our Master's words are, "My peace I give unto you!" He tells us however, through the Apostle, that we wrestle not with flesh and blood merely, not merely with our own mortal flesh and its blemishes, not merely with the imperfect beings who are our neighbors and friends, but, as new creatures, we must contend also against wicked spirits in high positions, "against principalities, against powers, against rulers of darkness." (Eph. 6:12) Our conflict is not only with our own fallen flesh to keep it in harmony with God, not merely with the imperfections of our neighbors and friends, but with these fallen spirits, whose power to incite to malice, envy, hatred, strife, is very great. The only safety is in abiding close to the Lord—in close sympathy of heart—in obedience to him and his Word. To our understanding the Scriptures clearly teach that the great time of strife and personal animosity is before us in the immediate future and that the effect of this upon the world will be to more and more take away its peace, its moderation and to let loose its envy, hatred, malice, strife, evil-speaking, etc., until the culmination of all in a period of anarchy, which the Scriptures briefly portray as the time in which "Every man's hand will be against his neighbor," and there will be no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in. The intimation of the Scriptures is that the Lord has had a special restraint over the evil spirits during the past centuries and that that restraint will be relaxed at the present time so that a great lesson may be given to men of what the effect of an evil disposition is, a disposition not subject to God, the disposition of the Adversary. In a short, sharp lesson mankind will learn the exceeding sinfulness of sin and how it utterly destroys peace and everything that makes life happy. The lesson will have its designed effect and during the Millennium, which the day of trouble will introduce, mankind will be the better prepared to appreciate the reign of righteousness under the law of love and obedience

to God, and the peaceable fruits of that reign of righteousness and love will more and more become “the desire of all nations.”

And now a brief word more particularly to ourselves. The distress which is already coming upon the world will undoubtedly come upon God’s people—the household of faith everywhere. Judgment must begin with the house of God. The testings will come first with us. Let us all, dear brethren and sisters, be on guard to cultivate the fruits of the spirit; as the Apostle enjoins in our context, “Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye; and above all things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” Col. 3:12-15

[The National Labor Tribune, October 11, 1908](#)

JEWISH HOLY DAYS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

Chicago, Oct. 11. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., addressed large audiences here twice today. He had an immense crowd at Orchestra Hall to hear him on, “Where are the Dead?” We report his morning discourse, the text of which was, “Then thou shalt cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the 10th day of the 7th month; in the Day of Atonement shalt thou make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.” (Lev. 25:9) He said:

The Christian religion is so interwoven and built upon the Jews’ religion of the Old Testament Scriptures that its glorious message of hope to the world and the various details of the same cannot be fully understood or appreciated except as their foundation is studied and comprehended. In harmony with this our Lord continually referred to the Law and the Prophets and what they said respecting himself and his word. Similarly the Apostles quoted liberally from the Old Testament, and, under the influences of the holy Spirit, explained, expounded the Prophecies and types which had been observed by Israel for a century, but not understood because the due time for their appearing waited for Jesus, Pentecost and this Gospel Age. As the Apostle declared, “The Law was a shadow of better things coming after,” it was a type and picture on a small scale of divine favors coming.

2H598

We say nothing derogatory to the intelligence of our Jewish friends declaration that they did not understand and do not yet

understand the deep spiritual import of the Law given by Moses and the various ordinances and ceremonials connected therewith. It was not because of Israelitish stupidity that they did not perceive the antitypes, nor because of superiority of acumen that we see them now and they do not. It was the divine intention to hide certain great truths under those symbolisms and to reveal them during this Age only to those Jews and Gentiles who through acceptance of Christ and consecration to him and begetting of the holy Spirit would constitute that special class of whom it is written, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to outsiders these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings. Luke 8:10

Every year about this time (varying a little, because the Jews count by the lunar calendar) our Israelitish friends celebrate the beginning of their civil year, and on the 10th day of the same they celebrate their Day of Atonement. This is one of their most important days. In olden times on this day the whole people recognized themselves as specially under the curse of sin, because the value of their atonement sacrifice lasted for a year only. At its close on the 10th day of their New Year the people put on sackcloth and mourned for their sins and entreated the Lord through the priests a fresh cancellation, which would avail for them an entire year. The priest on that Atonement Day after offering the sacrifice for sin and entering beyond the veil of the "most holy," sprinkled the blood upon the mercyseat, otherwise called the propitiatory. Thus, as the Apostle said, "Without the shedding of blood, there was no atonement for sins." The high priest who made the sacrifice symbolized Christ, "the High Priest of our Profession." (Heb. 3:1) His first sacrifice typified his own death. The second sacrifice typified the death of the consecrated members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church, "The Royal Priesthood." When this second sacrifice for sins had been offered, the Jewish high priest, having received as a result the divine blessing and authority, went forward clad in his robes of glory and beauty and lifted up his hands and gave to the people a blessing of forgiveness and reconciliation to God, valuable for an entire year, beginning with that day.

The Apostle points out that our Lord Jesus is a still more capable High Priest; that heaven itself is the "holy of holies," in which the blood of Christ is sprinkled, which affects the reconciliation between God and men. He points out that this is done by "better sacrifices" than those of the Law. The first of the antitypical sacrifices was finished at Calvary. The second will include the consecration and death of every member of the elect Church, which is the Body of Christ—the Body of the Great High Priest. This sacrifice is not yet completed. We still hear the Apostle's words, "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him," and "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice,

holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”
Rom. 12:1

REMOVING THE SINS OF THE WORLD

So far as the household of faith is concerned their sins were graciously covered by the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and this permitted them to be accepted as joint-sacrificers with their Lord. Their full reward and full release from all the bondage of sin and death will be at the second coming of the Great High Priest, when, by the power of the First Resurrection, they shall be changed from human to spirit beings, made actually perfect and in their Redeemer's likeness, to be sharers with him in the great work of dispensing the forgiveness of sins “to all the people”—the world of mankind in general.

Do some wonder why the Lord makes a discrimination between the “household of faith” and the world, and why this was shown in the type by the fact that the merit of the first sacrifice of the Jewish high priest affected the blessing and release from condemnation of only the tribe of Levi? Do they wonder why the second sacrifice by the same high priest was offered on behalf of all the other tribes? We reply that the tribe of Levi typified the “household of faith,” and the other eleven tribes typified the world of mankind.

But some may wonder why there should be any discrimination made since all our race are alike children of Adam, sharers of his condemnation, “children of wrath. We reply that God during this Gospel Age is not attempting to coerce mankind into obedience to his laws for their welfare and uplifting; he is leaving that work for Christ to do during the Millennial Age. He is now merely accepting volunteers, the willing and obedient. He is, therefore, now calling or inviting and holding out promises of rewards, whereas, in the next age, during the Millennium, when dealing with the rebellious, not invitation but command will be the rule. “And it shall come to pass that the soul that will not obey that teacher shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people.” (Acts 3:23) Israelites bowed in the dust making lamentation, fasting, praying, symbolically represent the world of mankind at the present time. Of these the Apostle says, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now— waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:19-22) The sons of God are the antitypical

2H599

royal priesthood under Christ, their Head or Chief Priest.

As soon as the last member of this priesthood shall have finished his sacrifice, and, as a member of Christ, shall have passed beyond the veil glorified, then the sprinkling of the mercy-seat will be accomplished. The

sacrifice of the blood of Christ for the sins of the whole world will be accepted of the heavenly Father and, as a result, the High Priest and his "little flock," the royal priesthood, with him will come forth in the power and great glory symbolized by the high priest's glorious garments. They will come nigh to the people, though the latter, bowed down, groaning and travailing, will not perceive. The tinkling of bells will tell those who are nearest, and soon the voice of the priest, accompanied by the uplifting hands, "The manifestation of his power," will be made known to the people. As in the type the people arose and gave a great shout and offered praise to God, so with the antitype. It will mean the uplifting of the people from ignorance and superstition and death, by the power of God through the Great High Priest. The uplifting will begin at once, but it will require the entire period of the Millennium, the one thousand years of the reign of Christ, to accomplish the full uplifting and blessing.

WHY NOT SO OBSERVED NOW?

It may be asked, Why do not the Jews still observe the Atonement Day as formerly, as described in Leviticus 16? We reply that there are several reasons: (1) Such sacrifices of atonement required a high priest, and while so great confusion came to the Jews after the fall of Jerusalem A. D. 70 that they had no high priests since then and have been unable therefore to keep the Day of Atonement as prescribed in the Law, Christ having become a High Priest of God on a higher plane than the typical priesthood of Aaron, it is doubtless of God's providence that their priestly genealogies were lost. Thus Hebrews named Levi and Korah are presumed to be descendants of the priestly tribe of Levi, but the Law requires a most definite establishment of the ancestral line to Aaron to permit any one to serve as high priest. One might suppose that our Hebrew friends would be impressed by such a wonderful matter as this, but apparently it has escaped general attention.

We call the loss of the priestly genealogy a distinct providence of God to that people, because all of their affairs were supervised by the Almighty, and this supervision leaves that people, according to their own law and teaching, wholly in sin and without hope of ever attaining an atonement of any kind along the lines of the Law. Did not God thus shut them up to the thought that they must accept Christ as their High Priest, through whom they might have forgiveness of sins, or else, according to their own explanation of the matter, be hopeless? Apparently very few Jews realize that the annual Atonement Day sacrifices constituted the very foundation of their relationship with God and his mercy for the year. Hence we have the facts thus:

(1) There is no high priest because of no genealogy to show who might occupy the position. (2) Since no one else than the high priest can offer these sacrifices or make atonement for sin annually therefore, according to their own theory, they have no atonement, but are under their condemnation. (3) This has been going on thus for centuries, and any hopes that they entertained are baseless so far as their Law is concerned. (4) As sinners without a priest, without an atonement, without a forgiveness of sins, they are in as bad, or a worse, way as their Gentile neighbors according to their own reckoning; nor have they any hope along this line if the centuries should continue to stretch out indefinitely into the future.

SPRINKLING THE CHICKEN BLOOD

Realizing partly the situation, not daring to create a high priest contrary to the divine Law and not daring to give the killing of the Atonement Day sacrifices of a bullock and a goat to any one else than a high priest, the Jews, partly as a satisfaction to their feelings, and partly as a blind, have been authorized by their Talmud to make a new institution for their atonement day, one not authorized by the Law. A Rabbi takes a white chicken, and sprinkles its blood upon those desiring forgiveness of sins, after the penitent repeats, "This chicken is my substitute. It will be killed for me, that I may have peace and eventually enter into life everlasting. Amen." If an intelligent man, however, he knows that what he does is a subterfuge.

TWO TYPICAL PRIESTHOODS

All who will consider the subject should be ready to admit that the passing of the Jewish priesthood implies most positively that an antitypical or higher order of priests with higher order of sacrifices had taken its place. This is exactly what the Apostles teach in the New Testament; that our Lord Jesus became the antitypical High Priest and that his followers are the antitypical under-priests. Aaron and his sons as men offered beasts in sacrifice, but Christ as a New Creature offers himself, his flesh, as a sacrifice, and all his followers similarly present their bodies living sacrifices. Our Lord at Jordan, a perfect man by special birth, presented himself in consecration and sacrifice, saying, "Lo I come. In the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will O God." And similarly all of his followers are constrained to offer their justified humanity in the divine service. God's acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice was

2H600

indicated by the descent of the holy Spirit upon him, and so likewise the acceptance of the sacrifices of his Church are

indicated by their reception of the holy Spirit. The consecrated will in each case thus accepted of God, is what is Scripturally considered the new priest. Thus our Lord, anointed of the holy Spirit, was anointed to be the Priest as a New Creature, while his mortal flesh, consecrated to death, was the sacrifice which he, as a New Creature, offered upon the Altar of divine service during the three and a half years of his ministry.

Thus Christ lived a dual life, and so do all his members. Our Lord Jesus, as the man, was dying daily upon the Lord's altar of sacrifice, and in some respects suffered outside the camp, but, as a New Creature, he grew stronger and stronger day by day fulfilling his priestly office of sacrificing the flesh for the service of God. As a New Creature this antitypical High Priest, our Lord, entered into the holy and at his death, passed beyond the veil and subsequently entered the "most holy." Aaron entered the literal "holy" and "most holy" places made with hands, but Christ and his followers entered by faith into that holy, or consecrated condition, which is the antitype. Aaron ate the literal shew-bread and received light from the literal candlestick, and offered literal incense at the literal golden altar, but Christ and his followers, entering into the holy conditions, are illuminated by the Word of Truth and partake of the antitypical shew-bread and offer incense before the Lord at an antitypical golden altar—the incense of a full consecration and heart service rendered to the Lord and his cause. Our High Priest went beyond the veil of death, and not beyond the literal curtain. He entered heaven itself, and not the "most holy" of the tabernacle. His followers, the "little flock" the "Royal Priesthood," are invited to follow in all these steps that they may be with him where he is and behold and share his glory and work; this is as far as the Aaronic priesthood is used of the Lord as a type. In a word, the Aaronic priesthood system typified the spiritual condition of the work of Christ and his followers while offering up their flesh as living sacrifices for the Lord, the brethren and the Truth—and nothing more.

But there is another priesthood, also typical, but not typical of the same things. Melchisedec, as the Apostle Paul points out to us, was a typical priest. As a type he connected with the Aaronic and represented "The Christ in glory and Priest upon his Throne." There was no under-priesthood with Melchisedec. In his own person he antityped a future of glory and service of Jesus the Head and the Church his Body. He did no sacrificing and neither will there be sacrificing necessary in the future for Christ or his "little flock." "By one sacrifice, therefore, he hath perfected them that are sanctified." "Christ dieth no more. Death hath no more dominion over him." As Melchisedec was King of Salem, King of Peace, so this Great Antitypical Priest, Christ shall be a Priest on his Throne exercising his kingly office for the world and the putting down of all insubordination and ungodliness. In his priestly func-

tions he will be the Great Helper and Instructor of the people, appropriating to them graciously the merits of his own sacrifice on their behalf and helping their infirmities, that he may thus accomplish the “Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all holy Prophets since the world began.”

THE WORK OF ATONEMENT

The word At-One-Ment signifies the bringing together into harmony and oneness, parties previously estranged. From the Scriptural standpoint Father Adam and his race became estranged from their Creator through disobedience and the sentence, “Dying, thou shalt die,” passed upon the race. The gradual dying of the race under this sentence increases the estrangement. Knowing that man could do nothing to atone for his own sin, because the penalty for that sin was death—a penalty which left nothing; hence any overtures toward Atonement should properly come from the Almighty. God being just must maintain his Law and execute it, and so for a long time there was no indication of how God could be just and yet open a way for the return of sinners to himself and to his blessing of eternal life. Doubtless it was a surprise, to angels when the Logos, “the Beginning of the Creation of God,” in harmony with the divine Will, was transformed and took the human nature that he might accomplish the propitiation for the sins of men by the sacrifice of himself, the just for the unjust. It was a still greater amazement to the angels, as they beheld the Son of God consecrated to death and finally crucified, that he, “by the grace of God, might taste death for every man” by meeting the penalty that was against man — a death penalty, not a penalty of eternal torment. There the foundation was laid for the At-One-Ment, the coming-together-again in harmony with the Creator and his creatures.

ELECTION, THEN FREE GRACE

We may suppose that the angels of heaven were amazed that as a result of the Redeemer’s Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, no work was at once begun competent to reach the world and give it the blessings. They beheld merely what the Apostle calls “The foolishness of preaching,” and the few here and there brought to sanctification of spirit through belief in the Truth. Why did not the great work of God proceed

2H601

more rapidly? Why were so few brought to a condition of At-One-Ment and reconciliation? Doubtless it was a test of their faith in the divine program. Nevertheless, this work has gone on and the Scriptures assure us has accomplished the work intended of the Father, namely,

the selection or election of a “little flock” of saints, copies of God’s dear Son, who will shortly be changed by the power of the First Resurrection and made spirit-beings as he is and made sharers of his glory. Now in the light of the divine Word we may see the wisdom of this election and how it will bring glory to the Father and to the Son. We are to remember that it is not an election of the best specimens of the human race and samples wherein humanity could boast, but a selecting of the willing and contrite of heart, chiefly the mean things of the world and the things that are naught.” But on these mean things the grace of God operates with transforming and sanctifying power, changing them from glory to glory of character-likeness and ultimately presenting them by the resurrection change faultless in his presence.

What a lesson there will be in this for the angels and the restored human family! As they shall note what God is willing to do for those who love him and consecrate themselves to his service and lay down their lives therein, they will have a lesson for eternity. The elect, then, are the first class to come into At-One-Ment with the Father through the merit of the sacrifice of his Son and through his assistance as their advocate and helper. These are said to be, “a kind of first-fruits of God unto his creatures.” (Jas. 1:18) If the first-fruits are holy what shall we expect of the after-fruits? We may be sure that none will ever be acceptable to the Father except on the same conditions of holiness and consecration. But there are not many able and willing to come into this condition at the present time—some are weak, some wavering, many blind. With the opening of the new dispensation the Great Mediator, Jesus, the Head, and the Church, his Body, will begin the work of rescuing the human family, estimated at twenty thousand millions. They will be blessed under a “New Covenant,” which seems to stipulate that the Jew will return to prominence, with the world under him, and be amongst the first to be reconciled to God by that Covenant. All through the Millennial Age the work will progress—not a work of election, as now, selecting a certain class, but a general work of reformation and uplifting—“Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess.” All the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. The uplifting work will progress, not only with those who will be living at that time, but subsequently will include those who have gone down into the great prison-house of death, all of whom must come forth that they may share in that blessed reconciliation to God, the At-One-Ment with him. Not all, however, whose eyes are opened, whose ears are unstopped and whose tongues confess and whose knees bow will be worthy of eternal

life. It is clear intimation of the Scriptures that some will fail to come into that condition of thorough heart-harmony which God has determined shall be the test for eternal life beyond the Millennium. The test in the close of the Millennium will be crucial, to the intent that all not in harmony of heart may be disclosed and that such may die the Second Death and not go beyond to mar the harmonies of eternity. Then comes the assurance of God's Word that thereafter every voice in heaven and in earth and under the earth was heard saying, "Peace, glory, honor and dominion and might be unto him that sitteth on the Throne and unto the Lamb forever."

[The St. Paul Enterprise, October 25, 1908](#)

WHOM THE LORD LOVETH HE CHASTENETH

Altoona, Pa., Oct. 25. Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., preached here twice today; in the morning at Eagle Hall, in the afternoon to a very large audience at Nishler's Theater. We report his morning discourse from the text, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Heb. 12:5-8) He said:

The essence of the Apostle's thought presented in our text is found repeatedly in God's presentation of his dealings with the Israelites, the typical people of God—in Deuteronomy (8:5), in the Psalms (94:12), and in the Proverbs (8:11). The identical thought of our text is presented and in almost the identical words. Nevertheless it seems to some peculiar that divine love manifested itself in chastisings, in disciplines, in the permitting or causing of suffering to those who are specially his children through a consecration of their hearts and by his adoption through the holy Spirit. Naturally we would be inclined to say, Why not leave these well-disposed ones without chastisements and indeed shower upon them blessings of every kind, while putting chastisements, rebukes, stripes, punishments upon the wilful evil-doers and the careless? This, that

2H602

we would be inclined to expect the Scriptures to declare, will be the divine policy during the Millennium. When Christ shall reign and Satan shall be bound for that one thousand years, then every well-doer will be blessed, encouraged, assisted and every evil-doer will receive stripes, punishments for his correction and finally it shall

come to pass that the “soul that will not obey that Great Teacher shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people.” (Acts 3:23) There must be reason why this seemingly national policy is not followed by divine providence at the present time.

The meek do not now inherit the earth. The sanctified in Christ are not now the kings and priests of earth. On the contrary, as the Psalmist declares prophetically, it is true, “ I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked... They are not in trouble as other men ... Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. ... And they say, How doth God know? And, Is there knowledge in the Most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.” (Psa. 73:3, 7,14) Our natural wonderment is expressed for us by Malachi (3:14, 15), “Ye have said, It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.” Let us not make the mistake that is so common of philosophizing on these experiences of life from the standpoint of our own imperfect knowledge, but let us under the guidance of the wisdom from above seek in the divine word an explanation of this divine procedure, which seems so incongruous to reason. Let us not conclude with others that times have changed and that the Lord’s holy ones no longer are subject to chastisements in special degree more particularly than the world. Let us not conclude that because honorable men are frequently found today in high positions of life, in political influence, in worldly wealth, in financial power, in social distinction, that this means a diametric change from the times and conditions of the times of which the Apostle wrote.

Let us see, rather, that the Lord’s “little ones,” his saints, were not only esteemed a peculiar people in the days of the prophets and apostles, but that our text is not addressed to the Scribes and Pharisees and Chief Priests and Doctors of the Law, and Captains and Rulers of the apostles’ day, but to the saints, the holy ones, the faithful in Christ Jesus. If we get the proper focus upon our subject we will find that our Lord’s words are still true, “He that will be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me,” and “Whosoever will live godly in this present time, shall suffer persecution. Our Master’s words are in full accord with our text and indicate that there are no exceptions to the rule; that every son whom

the Father receiveth will have disciplinary chastisements.

Notice Christ's words again, "Marvel not if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; 'They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake; but rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.'" The rewards of Christ's discipleship were not to be expected in the present life. All that we may now have in the way of compensation will be the peace and blessing of the Lord in our hearts, with glorious hopes for the future.

THE EXPLANATION OF THE PROBLEM

The problem why God deals with his holy ones in this peculiar manner, so opposite to the methods he will employ during the Millennium, is that he is now selecting from the world a very special class, a "little flock," a "Bride" class of "joint-heirs" to be sharers with his Son, their Redeemer, in his Millennial Kingdom, which will bring blessings to all the remainder of mankind and helpful opportunities of attaining perfection and eternal life. Our race has been 6,000 years in falling from its original perfection, as represented in father Adam, and God purposes a period of 1,000 years in which the uplifting process out of sin and death conditions shall go grandly forward. But indeed now with the Church he does not purpose their physical uplifting out of weakness and imperfection, physical, mental and moral, but merely proposes to deal with them as New Creatures, spirit-begotten, according to their will, their intention, and not according to their actual attainment; because believers in the present time exercise faith in God and in the redemption which he has provided in the death of Christ and because they turn away from sin to follow righteousness and because additionally they make a full consecration of themselves to the Lord to do not their own wills, but the Father's will, even unto death.

For these reasons the Lord specially adopts this class as his sons and puts them into the School of Christ, that they may learn of him, who was meek and lowly of heart, that thus they may find rest to their souls now, and eternal glory by and by. It is expected of these—faithful, willing, obedient of heart and of will—that they shall be tried, chastened, disciplined, and in the few short years of the present life, demonstrate the

2H603

few short years of the present life, demonstrate the perfection of their wills (not of their bodies), the perfection of their intentions (not of their performances.) In a word, these willing and obedient and faithful ones

are to have severe lessons and tests in the few years of the present life, that they may learn quickly the lesson of full obedience to Gods which the world in general will be 1,000 years in learning. More than this, they will have more severe lessons than will ever be given to the world, because they are called to a higher station of glory, honor and immortality, to which the faithful will attain to by sharing in the “change” of the “first resurrection,” which will include only such blessed and holy ones. Rev. 20:6

The world is not dealt with now because their hearts are not in the condition to be reached by the lessons given in the School of Christ to the Royal Priesthood class, of whom the Apostle said, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; but it does not appear what we shall be (of grace and glory), but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him. for we shall see him as he is”—on the spirit plane.

Even in this class there is a sifting and testing, and not all who make the consecration and enter the School of Christ will graduate with highest honors as “more than conquerors.” Some, the Apostle tells us, will return to wallowing in the mire. After having escaped from the bondage of sin they may become entangled again therein and participate in the works of unholiness and get into heart-harmony with selfish ambitions and participate in the works of the flesh and of the devil, which the Apostle explains to be anger, malice, hatred, strife, bitterness, evil-speaking, evil-surmisings — a murderous spirit, a contentious spirit, a spirit out of accord with the holy Spirit of the Father and the Son.

Another class, the Apostle explains to us, may fail to graduate with highest honors, fail to be of the Bride class and joint-heirs of the Kingdom, but may attain to the class styled the “great company,” who, instead of crowns, will receive palm branches, symbolizing victory on a lower plane and, instead of sitting with Christ on his throne of glory, will serve him and the Bride before the throne. These will fail, not by rejecting Christ and repudiating the ransom, but because of insufficiency of zeal—because not rightly exercised by the instructions given them in the School of Christ. They will graduate, but with secondary honors. And their fears of losing worldly honors and respect, so far from shielding them from fiery trials, will really bring upon them more severe testings in the end; as it is written “They shall come up out of great tribulation, washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb”—“delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

THE SUFFERING OF CHRIST

The Scriptures sharply differentiate between such sufferings as might come upon the Lord's people because of sin and the sufferings which are necessary to them as sons of God, in preparation for the Millennial service and glory. The Apostle says, "Let none of you suffer as an evildoer, nor as a busybody in other men's matters; but if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this account." (1 Pet. 4:15, 16) As another Apostle suggests, "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope—and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." (Rom. 5:3-5) Let us note this point distinctly: As children of God, if we neglect the cultivation of his spirit of justice and love towards the brethren and towards all men so as to be evil-doers or evil-speakers or evilsurmisers, and thus get ourselves into difficulties we are not suffering as Christians, but as evil-doers as those who, walking after the flesh, deserve stripes of punishment such as never came to our Lord, who was always obedient, and such as should never come to us as his followers, if we gave heed to his Word and followed its spirit.

Busybodying in other men's affairs, the Apostle here calls attention to, is a fruitful source of trouble to the Lord's people, but any who suffer from such a course have cause to be ashamed, for never did our Master teach us to be busybodies, nor set us such an example. On the contrary, he suggested that instead of busybodying ourselves to look for the moats in our brother's eye, we would better be on the lookout for both moats and beams in our own eyes. Probably one-half the troubles experienced by Christians come from this fruitful source of trying to set others right instead of giving proper attention to setting themselves right. That as burning and shining lights they might be examples to the flock, to the brethren and to the world.

The sufferings of Christ, then, were not on account of sins nor on account of busybodying, but sufferings for righteousness' sake—because his right-doings were misinterpreted by those of his day, who were blinded by ignorance and superstition, of whose crucifixion of Jesus the Apostle says, "I wot, brethren, in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Very different, however, is the record respecting Judas, whose intimate acquaintance with the Lord made him specially responsible, and of whom it was written, "The Son of man goeth, as it was written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born." Mark 14:21

As our Lord was holy, harmless and undefiled and separate from sin, so in him “was no Sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” Hence the sufferings of Christ were not the suffering for sin, but the lessons, the schoolings, the testings, by which his loyalty to the Father and to righteousness and to his brethren were demonstrated. So it must be with us who are now taking lessons from him with a view to our development into his character-likeness, that we may thus make our calling and our election sure to joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.

THE JUST SUFFERED FOR THE UNJUST

“He suffered, the Just for the unjust,” writes the Apostle, and it is this suffering in which his followers are invited to participate—suffering for righteousness’ sake, for the sake of their loyalty to the Lord, to his Word, to his brethren. And what is the promise? It is this: “If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.” Surely, if the Lord’s consecrated people realized the force of the Scripture teaching on this subject, they would not be shirking duty and privilege and responsibility, in order to escape the world’s disfavor or sneers or sufferings of any kind, but on the contrary they would be joyfully willing to suffer and, as the Apostle suggests, they may even come to the point of rejoicing in tribulations also, as well as in their spiritual blessings. These tribulations are not to be expected from the heathen, with whom we are little in contact, nor specially from the outwardly wicked and immoral of our neighbors and friends.

When our Lord said, “Marvel not if the world hate you. It hated me before it hated you,” he used the word “world” as including the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of Divinity of his day and the various oppositions direct and indirect which these brought against him. So the Lord’s consecrated people should expect that their trials and sufferings and testings and lessons in patience and meekness and gentleness and long-suffering and love would come chiefly from the worldly spirited amongst the professed people of God.

POLISHING THE JEWELS

The Lord speaks in most wonderful terms of this class which he is now specially selecting from the world—these that are the pupils in the School of Christ and elsewhere declared to be “A kind of first-fruits of God of his creatures.” Jas. 1:18) Gold, the most precious of metals, is the symbol used to express the value of this elect class in the estimation of the Lord. He declares that as gold is refined by fire, so these must be refined for his

special use and that as gold is carefully watched, lest it should be injured by the fire, so will he, as the Great Refiner, watch over his faithful ones, to the intent that no trials may be too severe for them, no chastenings more than they can bear, or of such kind as would be to their injury. When he speaks of these as his jewels which need polishing, he is giving us the thought which is presented in our text, namely, that as sons we need instruction called chastenings and disciplines to prepare us for his service. As it is not every stone that is worthy of being shaped and polished, so it is not every member of our race that the Lord is seeking at the present time, calling and drawing and putting into the School of Christ for chiseling disciplining and polishing.

If, then, we realize ourselves as amongst those justified by faith in the precious blood and those who still further; through consecration and begetting of the holy Spirit, have received the adoption of sons of God on the highest spiritual plane, let us not be surprised that we need chiseling and polishing to make us 'meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.' (Col. 1:12) The Apostle Paul exhorts us that we forget quickly the trials and difficulties and sacrifices we have made in the past and that we press onward day by day to receive fresh lessons from our Great Instructor. And he remarked that these light afflictions, chiseling, chastisings, which are but for a moment in comparison to eternity, are working out for us "a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4:17) Again he says, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18

THE NATURE OF OUR TESTS, POLISHINGS, ETC.

The New Creature, the new will, begotten of the Lord's spirit, is the jewel which must receive the polishing. The drills and burrs and finer and coarser polishing to which these jewels are exposed for their development and use are all about us, and various, as we might expect. Chiefest amongst them all, ever present with us with allurements and cajoleries and pleadings and threatenings is the old nature, represented by the crying desires of our mortal bodies. The resistance of these brings the polishing, the development, the beautifying of the New Creature. Are we by nature depraved in our appetites of body and mind? The New Creature must not only resist such and seek to be dead to such influences and not gratify them, but must go still further and insist that the mortal body must serve the New Creature along spiritual lines, in harmony with the Word and spirit of

the Lord. If our mortal body naturally longs for worldly honor, ambition and praise, the new nature, the new mind, must resist this and insist that humility is declared of the Lord to be of

2H605

primary importance and that the height of our ambition must be to learn to do the will of our Father which is in heaven.

Is the natural tendency of our flesh combative and dictatorial or quarrelsome? The New Creature must insist that these influences shall not be exercised, but instead the spirit of meekness, gentleness, long-suffering and brotherly kindness must hold sway. Along all of these lines there are daily battles and by these frictions, in proportion as the New Creature resists the old, the polishing is gradually effected. These are all sufferings for righteousness, for however the new mind may triumph and rejoice, our flesh at first shrinks and squirms and rebels and suffers. But this is not all. The scriptures tell us that we have many foes surrounding us, some of them invisible to us. They tell us that we wrestle not merely with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high positions. These seek to quicken our mortal flesh, and we seek to deaden it. These seek to enslave us and to make our battle with our old self constant. Meantime they are but turning the polishing wheel, which, under our opposition, will polish us and fit us for Kingdom glory. Not only so, but all about us in the world we are surrounded by those who see things different from what we do; those who see things from the natural standpoint, take the earthly view of matters, who consider houses and lands, name and fame, and family the gods to be served with heart and mind and strength.

These think us fools that we do not run with them to the same excess of idolatry of earthly things, speaking evil of us—who are fools for Christ’s sake—because of our loyalty to the principles and teachings of Christ; but in addition they are opposed to us because they realize that if the standards which we are serving be the true ones, then they are more or less condemned. Our Lord describes this attitude of mind, calling his followers the children of the light and all others the children of darkness. He told us to “let our light shine;” and he forewarned us that the darkness would hate the light. This we are to do by example, if not by word.

In view then, of our besetments by the world, earthly ambitions and strife for glory and honor of men, and our temptations of the adversary, who fain would deceive us and allure us, as the serpent deceived mother Eve, and

besides our conflict with our own flesh, there is no doubt but that all these certainly represent sufferings, trials, disciplines necessary to us. And we have the Master's assurance that he will make all these things work together for our good, so that the trial of our faith and our patience and our perseverance, and the testing of our development of the graces of the spirit all are precious to us—the precious fruits which the Lord is desirous to see, the fruits of the vine, the fruits of the spirit and those who endure these faithfully to the end are promised a crown of life and participation in the Kingdom of Glory. Let us be amongst these faithful ones and assist others in every manner in our power into attaining thereto! Shortly the elect will all be gathered and gloriously enthroned, and the blessing of the world in general will begin!

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, November 12, 1908](#)

GOOD SEED IN GOOD SOIL YIELDING THIRTY, SIXTY AND A HUNDRED FOLD

Guthrie Center, Iowa, November 8—Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, Penn., preached twice here today to large and intelligent audiences. We report his morning discourse, the text of which was, “Hear Ye, Therefore, the Parable of the Sower.” (Matt. 13:18-23) He said:

The words, “Hear ye,” in our text have the sense of “understand ye.” The disciples, along with the multitude, had already heard the parable of the sower who sowed good seed only, some of which fell by the wayside and was devoured by the fowl; some fell on stony ground and was thrifty for a time, but was soon scorched by the sun, because of insufficiency of depth of earth; some fell on good, rich ground that was infested by thorns, which choked it, and some fell on good ground and brought forth variously, some 30 and some 60 and some 100 fold.

The disciples wondered why the Lord spoke in parables, which neither they nor the multitude understood, and, on this occasion, they asked, specially, why this was so, and also to be given an explanation of the parable. Our Lord pointed out that in thus doing he was fulfilling prophecy—and for a purpose. The purpose was that those in the right condition of heart who would earnestly seek might receive the instruction, while others, indifferent, careless, would be left in ignorance. This method would best serve the Divine plan, which would

be beneficial only to those in the right attitude of heart and might be misused by others, and

2H606

thus the divine purposes be interfered with. For instance, if the masses of the Jews had heard, understood, comprehended our Lord's teachings, "they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory," as St. Peter declares, and since it was a part of the divine purpose that our Lord should be crucified it was expedient that the masses and their rulers should be left in ignorance, and that only those whom the Lord is specially calling should be able to understand His teachings.

The same principle holds good today, as the apostle explains: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But as our Lord was willing to explain His parables to His consecrated followers so that they might be informed and strengthened and guided by the wisdom from on high, so the apostle informs us it is today—that the spirit-begotten ones of the Lord's people may, can, must understand the deep things of God to be properly instructed and "thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work."

Hence, as our Lord said to the disciples, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to all the outsiders these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings, that seeing they see not and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." Similarly the apostle declares that the natural man, not begotten of the spirit, cannot know of the deep things of God, yet the "little flock" of spirit-begotten ones may know, will know. He declares, "But God has revealed these things unto us by His spirit, which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. 2:10

THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM

Explaining the parable our Lord declares: "When anyone heareth the word of the Kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside." Several items here demand attention. First of all the kind of seed. Next, that it was expressly stated that it was "the word of the Kingdom," the Gospel of the Kingdom. Apparently very few Christian people have much knowledge of the Kingdom. They have not received the word of the Kingdom properly. Instead, they receive through the traditions of men the word of eternal torment, the message that nearly all mankind are bound for eternal woe or for a purgatorial experience, which only a very few might hope to escape—the saintly. We should note well that

nearly all of the Lord's parables and teachings related to the Kingdom, for which he taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven."

2H607

When He sent forth His disciples into every city it was with the message, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." When the Jews failed to receive Him He informed them that they were rejecting the Kingdom of God, as had been foretold by the Prophets. And He told them that "the kingdom should be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. 21:43) We remember the particular day when the kingdom was taken from them—just five days before our Lord's crucifixion. When riding upon the ass He declared, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." (Matt. 23:37) This was the house of Moses, the house of servants. Our Lord gave them the first opportunity to become the sons of God and to be associates with Himself as the Great King, to sit with Him in His throne and to exercise the foretold Millennial Kingdom powers for the blessing of all the families of the earth. John 1:13

But they were not worthy as a whole, and hence were rejected as a nation and ceased to be God's special people for a time. Nevertheless, among them were found a "little flock," of Israelites indeed, who were accepted as the nucleus of the Kingdom class. To this nucleus the Lord has been adding throughout this Gospel Age "elect" ones out of all nations—chosen and accepted because of their faith, love and obedience. With the completion of this election the present age will end and the Church of Christ, which has suffered with the Master throughout this age, will be glorified with Him in the First Resurrection. Then the Kingdom class will be complete and be granted real power and authority for the ruling, blessing and uplifting of mankind out of present degradation, sin and death—by restitution bringing the willing and obedient back to the likeness of God, in which Father Adam was created, and utterly destroying the disobedient 'in the Second Death. Acts 3:23

The word of the Kingdom, therefore, is the message which has been going forth since our Lord's first advent—the information that God has appointed Christ to be the Great King to bless and restore the world and that He is now seeking a "little flock" to be His associates in that work, otherwise called the "bride," "the Lamb's wife"—at other times styled "the royal priesthood." This word or message has not been generally proclaimed throughout the world until the nineteenth century. For a long time it was mainly confined to the few nations

contiguous to Palestine, where the light of this message first went forth. But the Lord proposed that it should be presented to all nations, in order that all might be represented in this Kingdom class now being

2H607

selected. Hence, during the past century he not only awakened a missionary spirit among His people to carry the message everywhere, but He provided printing presses and Bible societies and railroads and steamships and mail services, that now the message should be carried to all people. And thus it has reached every nation. It has not converted the nations. It was not so intended. The purpose was to gather out of them a “little flock” to be joint-heirs with Christ in the Kingdom.

THE WAYSIDE HEARER

Alas! the wayside hearer represents the vast majority of our race who have no ear to hear the glorious message as it is now going forth. We blame them not. The Lord blames them not. It was not their fault, perhaps, that their minds were so down-trodden with ignorance and superstition that the message of the Kingdom could find no lodgment in their hearts and in their minds. Hearing with the outward ear, the truth is incomprehensible to them. They were under the adversary’s power, too, and he soon caused them to forget what they had heard but not understood. This is his constant policy, as the Apostle declares, “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.” (2 Cor. 4:4) Their minds are closed to the message that is now going forth.

Thank God! They are not to be sent to eternal torment because they have been thus blinded of the Adversary and unable to receive the message now promulgated. Praise be to God that after the present message shall have served its purpose in gathering the “elect” for the Kingdom, Satan shall be bound to deceive the poor world no more and the message of God’s grace in Christ will be known to every creature! The Divine assurance is that then, “All the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears unstopped.” And “the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the great deep.” And “there will be no need to say to our neighbor, know the thou the Lord! For all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest.”

STONY-GROUND HEARERS

There are well-intentioned people, “good people,” who are very shallow—well-intentioned, but they have not deep, strong characters. When God’s truth reaches these they can appreciate it and they receive it with joy and start in the good way with zeal, but they are not the kind

that the Lord wants in this special election. He will want them, and all during the Millennial Age, but now He is seeking a special class, and these are not fit. Their unfitness is shown by the fact that they are not producing the fruits of the spirit. Persecution withers them. They are not strong characters. They will be passed by as non-elect; but, thank God, they will not be tortured, but reserved for the Millennial time, when the influences of the Kingdom will be quite sufficient to deal with their case and to give them strength of character and to take away the unfavorable, stony condition which now hinders fruitage!

GOOD SEED IN THORNY GROUND

It requires good soil to produce thorns, but when the good seed was sown upon that soil, and both sprang up together, the thorns choked the wheat. It sapped the nourishment of the soil to itself and the wheat was choked. Perhaps all of us have heard these thorns compared to the attractions of the theatre, the gaming table, sports, novels, etc. —that these as thorns beset the Christian way and tend to choke the development of the fruits of the spirit. But is this the proper interpretation? Is it true that the danger of the Christian lies along these lines? It seems to us that there are nominal Christians who might be beset by such matters, but that the higher thought is that the true Christian, begotten of the holy Spirit, is out of sympathy with such things, and that they have no place in his heart.

Thus the Apostle declares of such, “Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new,” and “the things that I once hated I now love, and the things that I once loved, I now hate.”

A brother in the Lord, who but recently made a full consecration of himself remarked to me recently, “It seems so strange, Brother Russell, the wonderful change that has come over my life. A year ago I was wildly excited over baseball. It occupied much of my thought and I always attended the games when possible. This year it has no attraction for me whatever. Instead, God’s wonderful plan of salvation captivates my thought and every spare hour that I can command I wish to be studying it or fellowshiping with those of like faith. Truly with me, “Old things have passed away. All things have become new.

Harkening to our Lord’s explanation we notice that it is in agreement with this thought—that the thorns are not wicked practices, but “cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches.” Ah, yes! the true Christian whose heart has been renewed by the gracious promises of God’s word and the hopes of a share in the Kingdom

with his Lord is in danger of being swamped by the ordinary duties of life—proper enough in themselves to a limited degree. The Lord's Word commands him to be not slothful in business and to make provision for those of his own household, but he is in constant danger of allowing these things to crowd his spiritual interests as a new creature. Instead of curtailing earthly desires, ambitions, business and family responsibilities—minimizing these that he may have the more time or

2H608

money or both to expend in the Divine service, he is apt to allow the matter to go the other way, to give too great heed to these things and to “provide more than things needful and decent.”

Pride, ambition for self and for family, love of money and the pursuit of it, and the award which this pursuit brings and the hindrances to spiritual growth and to fruitage in the Lord's service—these are the thorns. Alas, many of God's true saints are thus injured! These will not be fit for the Kingdom. They will miss the great prize. They will suffer the great loss, whatever may be the blessings and whatever they may attain to in God's providence by coming up through great tribulation.

The thorny ground, of course, cannot cast out its own thorns, and herein the parable is defective. The Lord's explanation shows that you and I and all Christians are exhorted of the Lord to keep ourselves in the love of God, to cast out of us thorny influences and to bring forth much fruit. If, then, we find that our hearts are infested with the cares of this life and with the pursuit of earthly riches, let us at once cast out these thorns that our hearts may bring forth the fruitage, in harmony with the intimation of our Master to bring forth the good seed.

THIRTY, SIXTY AND AN HUNDRED FOLD

Some good-ground hearers will be found. God foreknew this, and hence prepared this Gospel age and all of its sowing for the sake of these who bring forth good results. Ours will be a blessed condition if we shall have but thirty fold; still more blessed if we bring forth sixty fold; and yet more blessed if results shall be an hundred fold. While the soil cannot change itself, yet we as new creatures have the determining of the condition of the soil in our own hearts. The more fully we are submitted to the Divine will, the more fully we are dead to self and the world, the more abundant will be the crop, the fruitage which we will yield to the Master's sowing.

It should be our ambition every day to attain to that condition of fullest harmony with our Lord which would yield the hundred-fold results in us in return for the

exceeding great and precious promises which constitute the seed. Not alone will the Master be best pleased with the largest fruitage, but we ourselves will be most pleased with this result, both in the present time and in the future. The more fully the more heartily we surrender ourselves to the influences of the good seed of the Kingdom, the more we allow these Divine promises to work in us to will and to do the heavenly Father's good pleasure, the greater will be our own satisfaction and joy, both now and by and by.

The Apostle speaks of differences in the future glory of the church, saying: "As star differeth from star in glory, so also will be the resurrection of the church." All of the faithful ones will receive a blessing and hear the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord." Nevertheless, those who have been most earnest, most zealous, most devoted and who yield a hundred fold, according to this parable, will shine the more brightly in the Kingdom, will be the nearer to the Master in His throne.

A similar thought is suggested by our Lord in the parable of the pounds; for while all who used their pounds faithfully were welcomed as good and faithful servants and entered into the joys of their Lord, nevertheless the one who had gained the ten pounds got the greatest blessing, as expressed in our Lord's words, "Have dominion over ten cities." So then, dear friends, let us realize that every word, every act, every thought has to do with our present and our future nearness to the Lord. Let us cast out the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, and let us overcome the spirit of the world, the spirit of indifference, and let us be so enthused with the Gospel of the Kingdom that we will bring forth much fruit. "Herein is your Father glorified."

[The Pittsburg Dispatch, December 21, 1908](#)

COSTLY GIFTS

WOOSTER, Ohio, Dec. 20—Pastor Russell preached twice here today to attentive and large audiences. One of his discourses, from the text, "Take of the choice fruits of the land in your vessels and carry down the men a present; a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds." Gen. 43:11. He said:

The gift-making season is upon us, with its pleasures and burdens. Millions of gifts, great and small, will be distributed, with varying motives. It is appropriate that all who respect the Divine Will should learn to govern themselves in this matter, as in everything, in harmony therewith. Undoubtedly many gifts are presented with a

view to paving a way for more than compensating favors and privileges. As the wise man has said: "A man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth

3H609

him before great men." (Prov. 18:16) Although this is not the most honorable motive for gift-making neither is it necessarily a dishonorable procedure. It is, so to speak, an acknowledgment of the favor in advance and an expression of appreciation of the service expected. And who should not wish to make reasonable returns for every favor? Surely such a desire is in fullest accord with justice and with the Lord's and the apostle's directions, "Owe no man anything but love." Our debt of love we can never discharge. If everyone who sought a service or received a benefit were scrupulously just in making the terms therefore undoubtedly the whole world would become more generous and more genial.

The mean gift—we may say the only mean kind of gift—is the hypocritical one, which represents neither heart love nor gratitude nor a desire to make just returns. Let us not encourage, either in ourselves or in others, such gift-making. It is injurious every way—despicable. If we have no good motive for the gift-making we would a thousand times better give nothing. Such honesty would have a better effect on the friend or neighbor as well as upon our own hearts.

THE MOST DESIRABLE MOTIVE

Of all the motives leading to gift-making, love, affection, is the very highest, the ideal. Whether great or small, rich or poor, such gifts from the heart to the beloved ones should be brought with a view to the expression of the sentiment represented and the needs or pleasures of the one served, and not with any desire to make a gaudy show. Such gifts should be in value within our reasonable ability—a reasonable service. If rich, our gifts should be in some measure of correspondence to our earthly possessions. If intended to represent very deep love and devotion they should be of such character as would represent this — either in cost of time or in cost of money. Aside from this our interchanges with our friends would best usually be of small commercial values but emblematic in some sense of our love, our fellowship.

Kings are supposed to be wealthy and their gifts to correspond, while the gifts of their subjects to them might be great or small, according to the rank and wealth of the subject. This brings us to the pith of our topic, the relationship between the Great King Eternal, our Creator, and ourselves, as His redeemed, forgiven, reconciled and spirit-begotten children. What gifts has

the Father of Lights for such and what gifts shall they render to him in return? This gift-making on God's part is the foundation of the entire custom. As the apostle expresses it, "Not that we first loved God, but that He loved us and gave His Son for us." That gift of His Son has been more or less appreciated by mankind and is celebrated by the Christmas festivities of Christendom with more or less sympathetic intelligence. As the Great King He gave a Great Gift, because of mankind's great need. Nothing less would have availed for our relief. Nothing less would have manifested the opulence of the divine mercy and love.

NO INJUSTICE IN THE GIFT

At first thought it might appear that our Creator's gift was at the expense of another—His Son. It is only when we come to understand the matter from the divine standpoint that we gain the proper conception of this transaction, namely, that the Son of God entered sympathetically into the divine program connected with the gift, so that He delighted to do it and was highly rewarded for His sacrifice; on account of which the Father hath "highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess, of things in heaven and on earth."

The gift has been given, and, although not fully appreciated by many as yet, neither the Father nor the Son is disappointed thereby. Well they know, and have pointed out to us, that the god of this world, Satan, has so blinded the minds of mankind in general that they cannot see the matter in its true light. However, some have seen; some have appreciated; some have responded, accepted and made returns. As for the others, the Scriptures assure us that the time will come when all the blinded eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears unstopped, and when all mankind shall know, from the least to the greatest, of the heavenly Father's love, and be made the recipients of blessed opportunities, through the merit of that Great Gift of Love Divine. This will be, we are told, "in due time" (1 Tim. 2:6), during the Millennium.

"TO US—HE IS PRECIOUS"

The Apostle, in speaking of this Great Gift, Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Redeemer, says, "Unto you, therefore, which believe, He is precious." (1 Pet. 2:7) How precious He is depends upon the clearness of our sight. To those who get the proper view of this Gift of God's love "He is altogether lovely." (S. of S. 5:6) Grading backward in proportion to the darkness and blindness

and deafness, the Gift of God's love is less and less known, understood, appreciated, even among those who have named His name, and are known as Christians.

King of all kings and Over-Lord, our heavenly Father did not content Himself with merely this great Gift, but, as the Apostle declares, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" And again,

2H610

"Therefore, all things are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." (Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 3:21, 23) What wonderful things are these, and who can understand and receive them? Ah! as the Scriptures declare, "The secret of the Lord is with him that reverence Him and He will show them His covenant." He showed them first the Gift of His love, and then, because they accepted that with gratitude, with thankfulness, responsively He was pleased to pour upon them favor upon favor, grace upon grace, gift upon gift, that all of His blessings might be theirs, the Very Elect's.

THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE

It is asked, What are these favors additionally to the original gift, the Sacrifice of Christ? We reply that God has in reservation blessings for the world of mankind who shall ultimately accept of Christ and respond to the privileges and opportunities that will be granted to them during the millennium. The blessings for the willing and obedient of that time will be Paradise restored, a world-wide and individual restitution from the degradation of sin and death, back to the full perfection of manhood, in the image of God; for our Lord declares that He came to seek and recover that which was lost. It is not yet recovered. Merely the foundation has been laid—Adam and his entire family, entire estate, have been redeemed—bought with the precious blood, the sacrificed life of the Son of God.

As for the Church now being called out of the world, in advance of the blessings of the world, because blessed with the hearing ear and the seeing eye of understanding and the appreciative heart—to these, the Elect, God's additional gifts are most wonderful. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him" now. These being justified by faith, have been called to joint heirship with Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom in His great heavenly inheritance and Kingdom and divine nature. It is of these, after they had responded, that we heard the Apostle say, "All things are yours." But, before they could enter into this high relationship and be begotten of the holy Spirit and

become inheritors of the heavenly things, and joint heirs with their Redeemer in His Kingdom, something is expected of them. They must show their appreciation of God's Great Gift. They must show their love in return, by making the greatest gift within their power. The Apostle speaking of these says, "Ye gave yourselves to the will of God."

Our Great Creator, so generously kind Himself, appreciates whole-souledness wherever it may be found, even amongst the members of our fallen race. Desiring to show His appreciation of such characters, He has arranged His plan accordingly, that the greatest of all blessings, exaltation to the Divine Nature, far above that of angels, should be the reward of the "little flock," who would voluntarily consecrate during this age their every power and talent to Him and His service—because of their love, because of their appreciation for Him and His glorious purposes. St. John says, "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2) These are to be the Bride. These are to be sharers with Messiah in His Kingdom glory. These are to be exalted with Him far above angels, principalities and powers. These are they that are said to love God—in the supreme sense—more than they love houses or lands, parents or children, husbands or wives; yea, more than they love their own lives—so that they gladly sacrifice anything, everything, in their endeavor to carry out the divine purpose within and without. These are the Lord's jewels— "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Mal. 3:17

I BESEECH YOU, PRESENT YOUR BODIES

St. Paul, prompted by an appreciation of God's unspeakable Gift, not only laid down His own body a sacrifice in the service to the Lord and His Truth and His Plan, but sought to have others also appreciate this great privilege, which, in the Divine arrangement, is limited entirely to this Gospel Age. "Now is the accepted time"—now is the time when God is willing to accept our sacrifices, however poor or lean, contemptible or mean, if they are all that we have and are presented with faith in the name and the merit of Jesus. In a little while this special day of sacrifice, this specially acceptable time will be passed forever, and the new dispensation will be ushered in, under new conditions, under a reign of righteousness, which will preclude the possibility of suffering or sacrificing for righteousness' sake. It appears, then, that we are highly favored of the Lord, by being permitted to have that degree of the opening of the eyes of our understanding which enables us to avail ourselves of this exceptional opportunity—of not only

accepting God's Gift, but bringing to Him our gift in return, and thereby demonstrating our appreciation of Him, our loyalty to Him and to all His righteous arrangements.

To what extent have we already done this is a proper question for each of us to consider at this time. If we have enjoyed the blessing and privilege of the hearing ear, what effect has the message of God's love had upon our hearts? There are many counter-attractions from the world, the flesh and the Adversary, which will draw our attention away from the Lord's Gift and the wonderful privilege attaching to it. Have these drawn our attention away? Are we amongst those who have received

2H611

the grace of God in vain, not making use of it, not bringing to the Lord our returning gift and thus availing ourselves of further blessings—favor upon favor. If we have neglected this in the past, shall we continue so to do? If so, we should thereby confess ourselves unappreciative of the favors and unworthy of them, according to the Divine decree. While some of us will get these blessings, a sufficient number to complete the predestinated, foreordained Church, which is the Body of Christ, yet none will be of that number who do not present themselves living sacrifices, unto death. Of such the Apostle declares that "They receive the grace of God in vain," in that they fail to use the great gift of their Justification and to go on to Sanctification and its reward to heavenly glory, honor and immortality. Let us not be of such as hold back from sacrificing, nor of those who, after sacrificing or consecrating, draw back and renounce their privileges, and whose end is the Second Death.

"GO OUT UNTO PERFECTION"

When the Apostle says, "We are not of those who draw back unto perdition," destruction, he is not referring to the world of mankind, who have never seen and tasted of the Lord's grace; nor is he referring to those who have been justified through faith in the blood, but who have never made a consecration of themselves, never offered their present to the Lord; neither is he referring to such as have possessed all these advantages and accepted them, and who then, definitely, intelligently, wilfully, draw back from doing what they see to be the Lord's will, and thus renounce their sacrifice—withdraw the present which they had offered to the Lord, and which He had accepted. For such there remaineth nothing but "A fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. 10:27

Wherever we stand today, dear friends, as respects the grace of God, we want to resolve to go on to the end, to completion. If, then, we have heard, let us go on to the full conviction of faith in the precious blood of Christ. If we have already tasted that the Lord is good, let us go on to add to our faith and love and zeal, and to hearken to the voice telling us of the multiplied blessing of God provided for those who love His appearing. If we have already offered our present to the Lord, and it has been accepted, and He has granted us a measure of the holy Spirit, let us realize that these fruits of the spirit are merely a foretaste of the vastly greater riches of His grace prepared for us, and for all who shall be faithful to Him, even unto death. If we have learned to battle royally and faithfully for the Lord, His Truth and the brethren, let us persevere, remembering that the reward is great; not to those who begin, not to those who have enlisted in this army of the Lord, the followers of the Lamb, but to those who in patient perseverance in well-doing shall thus seek for these things in God's appointed way, by learning the lessons provided us in the School of Christ, by faithfully performing all of our Covenant sacrifice, even unto death, by continuing our sacrifice upon the Lord's altar, binding it there with chords of love and zeal.

This is our present acknowledgment of His grace. He has promised that those who indicate their appreciation and utilize the favors provided will be granted still further blessings of grace and Truth in the present life, as well as an eternity of glory with himself. Let us, then, not only at the time of our consecration, take a present in our hand, when coming to the Lord, but day by day let us do so, renewing and conforming our sacrifice until its consummation.

[The St. Paul Enterprise, December 27, 1908](#)

GREAT JOY FOR ALL PEOPLE COMING SOON

Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 27. The convention of Bible Students which opened here yesterday was addressed today by Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn, N.Y. He had a deeply interested and attentive audience, taking for his text the message of the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10) Great joy to all people? Did God send that message by the angels? Can we believe it implicitly? If so, it tells us of the most momentous change conceivable

in human conditions. Of the present the poet has truthfully said:

*“Now the world is full of suffering,
Sounds of woe fall on my ears,
Sights of wretchedness and sorrow
Fill my eyes with pitying tears.
‘Tis the earth’s dark night of weeping;
Wrong and evil triumph now;
I can wait for just before me
Beams the morning’s roseate glow.”*

2H612

This is in full agreement with the prophetic declaration, “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” (Psa. 30:5) The question is not as respects the weeping and the night, the reign of darkness, of sin, or death. That is fact—not imagination, nor speculation. Even those most favorably situated share with the world in general the condition which the Apostle describes, saying, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together., waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:19-22), waiting for the morning of the new and better day referred to by the angels and by all the prophets and apostles, as well as by the Redeemer. What interests us in this connection is the promised escape from present conditions to those of joy, happiness and blessing. Whoever can heartily believe the angelic message will surely agree that it is good tidings—a message of peace on earth and good will to men. But show us how it can be brought about, and when. Prove the matter to us, not only Scripturally, but demonstrate it logically, for it is contrary to all that we have ever been taught, or ever believed, and it seems too good to be true.

Dear friends, I address you as Christian believers, pupils in the School of Christ, students of the Lord’s Word, and remind you that not only all creation is groaning, but that the Apostle includes us and all believers in the matter, saying, “Ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body,” the Body of Christ. (Rom. 8:23) We have indeed a faith which the world has not—a message of peace and fellowship of spirit with the Lord, and, many of us, also a communion with saints; but, blessed as these divine favors are, they leave much still to be desired, and we groan, waiting for the glorious consummation—the conditions which are to be ours in the Resurrection morning.

THE CAUSE OF OUR GROANING

In order to appreciate the Bible explanation of how the relief and joy are coming to the world, we must note these declarations respecting the cause and source of our tribulations. Nowhere is the matter so beautifully and thoroughly summed up as in the Apostle Paul's statement, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) That explanation shows the entire situation. We perceive that sin has got hold of our race; has blemished its organism; has more or less defiled its every member. And we perceive that death is its natural outworking or penalty, and that all of our sorrows and troubles and weaknesses, mental, moral and physical, are the results of this dying process, which is operating in us. The Scriptural explanation that the entire matter in its start in weakness, original sin, was in Eden, with our first parents, is logical. We perceive exactly how these blemishes have been conveyed from parent to child with increasing force and virulence. Thus we confirm the statement that we were "born in sin and shapen in iniquity; in sin did our mothers conceive us," and that there is none righteous from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet.

As a race we are unable to justify ourselves before God, for, as the Apostle declares, "We cannot do the things that we would," for "there is none righteous, no, not one," in the absolute sense. (Rom. 3:10) We see, then, that our Creator determined not to sympathize with, nor encourage, nor permit sin, but to destroy it. His work has operated along the lines of justice, in sentencing us to death, and in holding to that sentence for now 6,000 years.

CAN DIVINE SENTENCE ALTER?

Is it supposable that the unchangeable God will change? Surely not! What then, is there as a basis of hope, since he has already decreed us unworthy of life—worthy of destruction—death? Does not justice rule in all of the Divine dealings? Could God violate this element of His character, of which we read, "Justice is the foundation of His throne?" We must assent that God cannot change. But the Scriptures reveal to us another of God's attributes coming to our relief—His love. We inquire with deepest interest, Is it possible for God's love to triumph over Justice? We answer, No; the Divine attributes are so perfectly co-ordinated that one cannot trample upon another. Human wisdom might here drop the matter as hopeless, but the Divine plan shows us to the contrary—that Divine love provided for the

satisfaction of justice by a sacrifice and corresponding price. To our astonishment, the Scriptures hold up our Lord, “The man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. (1 Tim. 2:5, 6) Now we begin to see that our all-wise and all-just Creator, in the fulness of His love, provided for the satisfaction of His own justice, and thus provided for the relief of our race, and for the fulfillment of our text, that ultimately great joy should come to all people, through Messiah’s sacrifice.

But would it be just to lay the penalty of Adam’s sin upon a substitute? Would it be just to cause the innocent to suffer for the guilty? Ah, yes! That course would be unjust. But that is not the Divine program. On the contrary, Divine wisdom set before the Redeemer a great prize and rich reward if He would undertake the sacrifice incidental to our deliverance from the power of sin and death. Jesus did this. As we read, “Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the

2H613

cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. 12:2) The Apostle, telling us of the sacrifice, assures us that He voluntarily left the glory which He had with the Father, was made flesh, and gave Himself as the “propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.” 1 John 2:2

The Apostle assures us further that He who was rich became poor for our sakes, voluntarily, and has now been gloriously rewarded in part for His faithfulness to the Father’s will. He notes how Jesus humbled Himself, even unto the death of the cross, and then adds, “Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and the things under the earth; that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.” Phil. 2:9-11

JUSTICE, WISDOM, LOVE, POWER

These are the fundamental Divine attributes. The first three have been exhibited to us in operation. We wonder and adore Divine justice, unchangeable; Divine love, immeasurable. What remains, therefore, is to see the final demonstration of Divine power in action. A sample of it was given us by our Lord when He awakened Lazarus from the sleep of death, as showing further the glories of His coming Kingdom—the Divine Kingdom. Divine power is still more manifest in our Lord’s own resurrection, His “change” from earthly to heavenly condition, “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” (1

Cor. 15:52) The work of this Gospel Age, the selection of the church from amongst mankind, demonstrates further the justice, wisdom, love and power of God; but the power still waits for a full development. If that element of the Divine character shall prevail it will indeed mean what our text declares, that “Great joy shall come to all people.”

Love Divine has sought the world and bought it with the precious sacrifice of our Redeemer. Adam was the transgressor, and all his race suffer in consequence. Jesus Christ redeemed Father Adam, and in so doing redeemed all of his family and all of his inheritance. Our glorious Lord proposes to take the place of Adam and to adopt all of his children, if they will, and to give them back again all that was lost in their Father Adam. We must remember that, no matter what our plane of birth, no matter how deep our degradation, our rights, as the children of Adam, were the perfect human rights had those not been forfeited by his disobedience. Consequently the restoration which our Redeemer proposes is not merely a restoring to each individual of the things which he once possessed, but a restitution of all that was His by right under the original Divine arrangement, if Adam had not sinned. Hallelujah! What a Savior! “Able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him.” (Heb. 7:25) So surely as the Divine program has thus been carried out, exhibiting God’s justice and wisdom and love, so surely the remainder of the Divine program will follow, and demonstrate Divine power.

WHY SO LONG A DELAY?

With a haste which properly belongs to our short-lived and dying condition, we wonder why Divine power has not made greater haste in the deliverance of Adam and his race from the bondage of sin and death—why Messiah, after purchasing the world and the fulness thereof, has not made haste to take possession of it, but has permitted the reign of sin and death to continue, and has permitted Satan still to be the god of this world and the deceiver of men.

The Scriptures give the only answer. They tell us that, from the Divine standpoint, the 6,000 years of the reign of sin and death are a short time in God’s sight— that a thousand years in God’s sight are but as yesterday, and that we are to have patience and faith. They show us that the Divine command was to multiply and fill the earth, and that this work has been much more rapidly accomplished under the reign of sin and death than it would have been otherwise, and that thus God has provided by now a sufficient number of Adam’s race to fill the whole earth. They show us further that these have

all had some lessons and experiences along the line of sin and death and will thereby be prepared for the lessons on the side of righteousness, which God intends they shall have in the future, when the Redeemer shall fulfill His promise and call them forth from the tomb, the prison-house of death.

An example of the operation was granted to us when our Lord called to his friend Lazarus, who was dead: “Lazarus, come forth”—and the dead came forth. He was not alive. He was dead, or, from the Divine standpoint of speaking of things which are not yet accomplished, as though they were, he was asleep, just as Stephen was asleep when he was stoned to death, and as the good and bad of all the past are said to be asleep with their fathers.

Another particular reason for the delay of the establishment of Messiah’s kingdom and the blessing of the world which He redeemed is that there is another feature of the Divine purpose, namely, the selecting or electing of a “little flock” to be the Church of Christ, His Bride and Joint-heir in His kingdom glory and millennial work. The type or pattern of this church was Israel in the flesh and the overcomers of that time, briefly mentioned by the Apostle in Hebrews 11. They

2H614

are to have a special reward and share in the services of the future. They, however, were not invited to be members of the Bride class, the selection of which began at Pentecost and will, we believe, very soon be completed, when the last one of them shall have been accepted, found faithful, chiseled and polished, and made ready for the kingdom glory, into which they will be ushered by the power of the First Resurrection. “So also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” (1 Cor. 15:42, 44) “And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had they received his mark upon their foreheads, nor in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

JOY IN THE MORNING

That time is scripturally designated the “morning” of the New Dispensation. The picture is carried out by telling us that now darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen, but that in due time the light of Divine glory shall arise. Meantime the Lord’s faithful must walk by faith and not by sight, and the Father’s word of promise, must be the lamp to their pathway, the light of their

footsteps, even as a “Lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns.” 2 Pet. 1:19

Our Lord Himself is styled the “Sun of Righteousness,” which shall arise with healing, restitution, in His beams. (Mal. 4:2) And in one of His parables our Lord represents His church, which is also to be with Him the “Sun of Righteousness,” which is to return and refresh the world. He describes the future glory of the garnered wheat of this Gospel age, saying: “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Matt. 13:43) The results will be the scattering of the ignorance and superstition and darkness of sin, which now prevails, and the enlightenment of all mankind.

A further guarantee of the blessing of that time is given us in the assurance that one of the first works of our Lord in respect to the establishment of His kingdom will be the binding of Satan. The apostle says: “And He laid hold on Satan and bound him for a thousand years, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be finished.” (Rev. 20:2, 3) How careful our Lord is to prove to us how every detail of that glorious plan has been worked out, and that nothing shall fail! He assures us as follows: “So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please,

and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it. (Isa. 55:1 1) And if our faith be lame, He assures our hearts, saying: “For as the heavens are higher than the earth so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isa. 55:9

“GREAT JOY TO ALL PEOPLE”

Our Lord said: “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (Matt. 5:4) So if we find that the great majority of mankind have had considerable experience in mourning and sorrow, under the reign of sin and death, there is comfort in the thought that the same large majority of the race shall be comforted, shall receive joy. All will have the opportunity of coming to this estate of joy, promised for all who are redeemed by the precious blood. And the promised “times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began,” will be world-wide in their influence. All except the church will share in that glorious restitution blessing. And the faithful of the church will have, before then, received their richer blessing through the “change” of nature from human to divine. “Behold, I show you a

mystery,” says the apostle; “we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” 1 Cor. 15:51-52

The restitution work will begin immediately with the generation living at that time—following the great time of trouble, which the Scriptures declare will usher in the millennium. As soon as order and blessing shall be established in the world under that glorious kingdom or dominion, invisible to men except through its agents or channels, then will begin the awakening of the sleeping millions—gradually. The last will be first, so that the first Adam will probably be the last to be awakened. But their awakening will be for the purpose of bringing them to an accurate knowledge of God, His justice, wisdom, love and power, to the intent that, if they will be rightly exercised in obedience to Christ, the great Mediator between God and men, they will gradually regain the perfection lost by original sin and, if they become careless, they will receive stripes, chastisements, that by these judgments of the Lord they may finally regain all that was lost. Their joys will be increasing with every step taken on the return journey back from sin and death to perfection of life. The joy will be unto all people, yet there is the intimation that some will reject the Divine favor. As it is written, “And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear the Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” Acts 3:23

Thus enlightened by the Divine message, our hearts

2H615

will undoubtedly be drawn nearer and nearer to the Fountain of all grace and our lives will be all sunshine. Let us not only put off the works of darkness, but put off all that pertains to the darkness and error, and be clothed in garments of light, and

*“Praise to Him by whose kind favor
Heavenly truth has reached our ears,
May its sweet reviving savor
Fill our hearts and calm our fears.”*

[The National Labor Tribune, January 10, 1909](#)

“FORGETTING AND REMEMBERING”

Pastor C. T. Russell addressed a large and attentive audience Sunday afternoon at Allegheny Carnegie Hall from the text, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things that are before, I press down upon the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.” Phil. 3:13

Each year a mile stone! We have just passed another on our way toward our eternal destiny, whatever that may be. We are glad that, by the grace of God, we have been delivered from the terrible nightmare of eternal torment which for so many of us for years darkened our understanding of the Divine purposes set before us in the Bible. We are glad, not merely for our own sakes, but for the world of mankind, that we now see that the wilful rejecters of Divine Love and its provision will die the Second Death, perish, "Be as though they had not been." We are glad that the Apostle so explicitly stated this, saying, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction"—a destruction from which there shall be no redemption, no recovery, no resurrection. 2 Thess. 1:9

But it is not enough for us to know that our Creator has no fiendish intentions towards us. Rather this knowledge of the mercy and love of God should draw our hearts to him and incline us to love him in return, and to seek to do those things which would please God, and which incidentally would bring to us, according to his arrangement, the highest amount of favor and blessing. This also is the Apostle's suggestion, saying, "Not that we first loved God, but that he first loved us, and sent his Son to be a satisfaction for our sins." (1 John 4:10) And again, "The love of Christ constraineth us, for we thus judge ... that we henceforth live not unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us." 2 Cor. 5:14, 15

Our text addresses those who have responded to God's love, and who have become "followers of God, as dear children," followers of the Redeemer, "walking in his footsteps," as he hath set us an example. Notice the statement, "I count not myself to have apprehended"—to have grasped or taken possession of. In the preceding verse the Apostle tells us that the Lord apprehended him—laid hold upon him, when he was in a hopeless condition. He laid hold upon Saul because he was, honesthearted even while wrong-headed. He opened Saul's eyes and gave him a helping hand out of his condition as a wanderer from God and a member of the fallen race. He offered to keep hold of him and to lead him, if he were willing, to exceeding glory and the divine nature, though the way would be a narrow and difficult and self-sacrificing one—impossible for all except those who at heart love the Lord and desire to avail themselves of the Lord's assisting grace. Note that the Apostle had not laid hold upon our Lord, but reversely the Lord had laid hold upon him, and had opened his eyes of understanding to discern the prize of the high calling, promising everything in the way of assistance and grace, if he continued sincerely earnest in his

endeavor to grasp that prize, to lay hold upon it, to apprehend it.

FOLLOW US WHO FOLLOW JESUS

It is a mistake to suppose that the Apostle and the early Church were called with any different calling or privilege from that which appertains to the entire Gospel Age. It is a mistake to suppose that the Scriptures recognize a clerical class and laity in the Church, and that the terms and conditions and narrow way and sacrifices and crown of glory at the end were intended only for the clergy. On the contrary the Scriptures assure us that the Church as a whole is a Royal Priesthood and that each faithful one is to be a sharer in the work of sacrificing, as well as in the coming glory of the Millennial Kingdom.

The loss of this correct Scriptural thought on the subject has done incalculable injury to the Lord's people, leading them to recognize one standard for the clergy and another for the laity, whereas the Scriptures declare, "Ye are all called in one hope of your calling" and "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." And again, "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a

2H616

Holy Nation, a Peculiar People." Let us revive this proper Scriptural standard in our minds and get there-with the blessing that is due.

In order to understand what the Apostle meant by forgetting the things behind, let us note the context preceding and apply it individually, each to himself. St. Paul has been accused of disrespect to the Jewish Law of Circumcision, because he pointed out that it was not intended for nor necessary to the Gentiles—because he pointed out that it was merely a type, however, of the cutting off or putting away of the filth of the flesh from our minds and hearts. But "circumcision of the heart" has in the Church taken the place of circumcision of the flesh commanded to the Jewish Church, whose day passed with Pentecost. The Apostle proceeds to show that if he chose to boast of his zeal for the Law, he would have as much to say for himself as could any Jew. But he declares that these things which he had before counted as gain, as something to be boastful of, as something to glory in, he now counted as loss and dross for the privilege of having a share with Christ in the sufferings of this present time, and by and by a share in his glorious Millennial Kingdom. He was willing to count everything of his previous hopes and ambitions as "loss and dross," as unworthy of the slightest notice, because of the knowledge he had gained of Jesus as the Messiah, and because of the privilege that had come to

him of being a follower of Jesus, in his footsteps of suffering in the present life and in joint-heirship with him in the glories of the future. These earthly things behind he was daily losing sight of, and hoped might never again have a place in his heart and ambitions, which were now turned in another direction entirely. And so, dear friends, should it be with us.

THAT I MAY KNOW HIM

The Apostle, at the time he wrote these words was far from ignorant of his Saviour, but intimates that the more he knew, the more he realized the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of God, “manifested in Jesus.” He wanted to know him more and more. He wanted that intimate heart-communion and fellowship which would enable him to take the Lord’s view of every incident and experience of life, that thus he might be the partaker of the sufferings of Christ, and bearer of the cross of Christ daily. Nor was this the end of his ambitions. Beyond this, having heard of the Father’s intention that all believers who would become “copies of his Son” should be sharers with him in his glorious nature and Kingdom, the Apostle was anxious to know the Lord to the full and to enter with him into the heavenly glory. That was the prize set before him in the Gospel of Messiah, which had changed his whole life current, so that those whom he once despised and persecuted he now loved and served, so that the things he used to enjoy were now repulsive, and the things he once disdained now filled his heart and enthused him and occupied his time and energy. The things before him were so glorious that the things behind, which once seemed grand, now seemed puny, insignificant, unworthy—dross.

What he saw before him he tells us. He calls it the “prize” and says that it is to be attained only by believers—and then only through consecration unto death. More than this, they would need a resurrection before they could enter into those glories, not such a resurrection as will be made possible to the remainder of Adam’s race, but a special resurrection, called elsewhere the “First (chief) Resurrection.” The Apostle here speaks of this resurrection, in which himself and all the faithful of the elect Church shall share as being a part of “His (Christ’s) Resurrection.” What can he mean? Was the resurrection of our Lord different from that which will come to mankind in general? Yes, indeed! Mankind in general will be privileged to be resurrected, raised up, not only out of the tomb to such a condition as is now enjoyed, but beyond this, gradually, during the Millennium, to be raised up, up, up to human

perfection—to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by Christ through his obedience even unto death, the death of the cross. But Christ’s resurrection was different from that of the world. And the resurrection of the Church, “Which is his Body,” will be like his, different from that provided for the world in general. (Eph. 1:23) This resurrection of “The Church. Jesus the Head and the Church, his Body)” the Apostle describes minutely in 1 Cor. 15:42-49.

He here speaks of the “First Resurrection.” “His Resurrection,” as “The Resurrection”—the special and peculiar class of the dead—”The dead in Christ”—those who lay down their lives in sacrificial service, as members of Christ. Note the Apostle’s words, “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” (Phil. 3:11) To attain this glorious resurrection, provided only for the spirit-begotten members of the Anointed; he was glad to have fellowship in the sufferings of Christ and to conform to his experiences, so as to have share in his death. Is it so with us, dear brethren and sisters? Are we thus in earnest? Does the prize of the Divine calling thus shine before the eyes of our understanding, making every other ambition insignificant dross in comparison?

“THIS ONE THING I DO”

Ah! this was the secret of the Apostle’s great success—“This one thing I do.” He concentrated his time, his

2H617

thought, his energy, upon this one object or goal, which proved the brighter and more valuable to his appreciation every hour. True, there were ordinary things of life, such as eating and drinking and resting and, at one time, tent-making, which occupied some of his hours. But these were not paramount, were not dominating. He aspired, not to be known as the greatest or most expert tent-maker. He aspired not to amass great wealth in that or any other labor or business. He lived not for his belly, nor did he, as a sluggard, waste valuable time in sleep. Every hour, every energy, had been devoted to God and his service—and was so applied, not of compulsion, nor of slavish fear, but out of a faithful heart, appreciating the privileges and anxious to show to the Lord his loving devotion. Is it so with us? If it has not been so with all of us in the past, shall it not be our resolution now for the year just beginning our vow to the Lord renewed? Shall we not cast aside and forget the earthly aims and projects which occupied us and devote our time and energy and strength and thought to the Lord? Shall we not lay aside every weight, and whatever may be our besetting sin, and resolve or vow to the Lord today “To run with patience the race that is set before us?” Heb. 12:1

Whoever divides his heart, whoever attempts to serve the interests of several equally, will surely fail. Not only does such a half-way course fail to meet with the Divine approval as worthy of joint-heirship in the Kingdom with Christ, but it fails also to meet the world's approval and to gain the advantages of this present life. Each of us, therefore, should sit down and count the cost, and reap the benefits accruing. If we believe that it would pay us best to serve mammon, then we should serve mammon, with all our hearts. But if experience and the word of God bring us to the conclusion that only the service of God can bring us truest happiness in the present and the future life, and if we hear the Master's words to us, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," then let us determine to serve the Lord and not serve mammon, but merely use mammon and advantages of life as special assistances leading on to God, to righteousness, to self-sacrifices for joint-heirship in the Kingdom with our Lord and all the faithful.

SOME THINGS TO BE REMEMBERED

The Apostle surely never meant that everything behind should be forgotten; for, in that event, all the valuable lessons of life, which we have learned in the School of Christ, would be lost to us. We want to remember life's experiences. We want to profit by them. We desire that every failure shall be discerned, and its cause, that, by remembering the same, we shall not from similar weaknesses of the flesh, fall again into the same snare of the Adversary. We desire that all the lessons of life, which have cost us so much in the School of Christ, shall be cherished and grow more valuable to us every day. Let this also be our endeavor during the year that is just beginning—to see to it that no valuable lesson is lost, and that those lessons of the past are clearly and firmly held.

But, on the other hand, there are certain things connected with the experiences of God's children in the past that they are invited to forget, and to remember that God has forgotten them and blotted them out, in so far as there was a record against us.

But all this is faith; God's dealing with the Elect Church during this Gospel Age is on that basis. "We walk by faith, and not by sight." Whoever cannot exercise faith cannot have the blessings now proffered to the believer, but must wait for the next Dispensation, in which sight will be granted and works will be required. And there are different degrees of faith; those standing the severest tests thereby evidence their preparation for God's favors of the future life beyond the veil. Let us, then, learn to exercise faith in all the glorious promises of God's

Word, but not credulity in the words of man. One of the most beneficent uses of faith is in connection with the realization of our “forgiveness of our sins that are past by the forbearance of God.” In proportion as we can realize this and act upon it, it gives us confidence and joy and peace and preparation for further Divine leadings and blessings.

So then, let us with the Apostle, remember all of God’s favors of the past, as well as of the present, and remember the lessons learned through our experiences, including our stumblings and failures. But let us put away every feeling of condemnation, as respects the sins which God has freely forgiven, that “We may assure our hearts before him in love,” and let us forget our worldly greatness, if we had any, our worldly prospects and aims and ambitions and triumphs and flatteries, and let us set our affections, aims, purposes, zeal, on the things that are before and make haste towards them, with full assurance of faith in him who promised them. Thus may we come off conquerors and have a most profitable Year—1909—by his grace.

* * * *

“Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” Isa. 65:24.

2H618

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, February 18, 1909](#)

HOW AND WHAT TO FIGHT

*With the exception of the last four paragraphs printed below, this discourse was republished in the **Overland Monthly**, Pages 313-317, entitled, ‘How and What to Fight.’*

We come now to the gist of our lesson. We see in the Apostle an example of the Christian fighter. In the battle for some time, he has become wise enough to know that bodily exercise and fuss and beating the air with the arms is not the way to vanquish a foe. He must be methodical, scientific. He must know what he is fighting about, who he is fighting, and the object to be gained, if he would wisely direct his energies and gain the victory.

Some are “beating the air” in their endeavor to convert the world, mistakenly supposing that that is the Church’s mission. With this wrong impression, they are discouraged and apt to stop their fight, when they realize from statistics that there are twice as many heathen today as there were a century ago. As bodily exercise may profit something, so spiritual exercise has its advantages and is better than drowsiness, but it is not so good as

learning who is the foe and then battling him persistently and effectively. Others do still worse, when they battle one with another, quarreling, slandering, back-biting, etc.

Let us see to it that, like the Apostle, we fight the good fight of faith and lay hold upon the prize of eternal life, which God has promised to the victors. Our light is against sin and selfishness— especially in ourselves. If we sometimes lend a helping hand to others, it should be sympathetic, and directed not against them but as assisting them to overcome in their battling with the world, the flesh and the Adversary.

Each one of us, dear friends, has more than sufficient to engage his time and energy in the warfare progressing in himself, the warfare between truth and error, right and wrong, holiness and sin. Seeing now the character of our controversy, let us be more diligent, vigilant, faithful in maintaining the rule of our Lord and Master in our thoughts and words and conduct. So shall we be like Him. Then by and by we shall hear our Redeemer say: “Well done, good and faithful soldier; thou has been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things.” Then, granted an abundant entrance into His eternal Kingdom, we shall be His assistants in the great Millennial work of teaching and helping the world in their great fight then on.

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, February 25, 1909](#)

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

The weekly discourses by Pastor Charles T. Russell, as published regularly in The Enquirer, are strictly Nonsectarian. Their tenor is altogether free from favoritism toward any one denomination at the expense of another. Like those eminent molders of public thought, Beecher and Talmage, Pastor Russell discourses “with charity toward all and enmity toward none.” In the field of religion he is perhaps the most widely known speaker the country possesses, having lectured in practically every large city, both in the United States and in England.

“Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. For David is not ascended into the heavens.” (Acts 2:29,34) “And no man has ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man.” John 3:13

For a man to declare himself uninterested in this subject would be to proclaim himself idiotic —thoughtless. If

the ordinary affairs of this present life, food, raiment, for a few years, are deemed worthy of thought, study, how much more concern should we have in respect to the eternal future of ourselves and neighbors and mankind in general!

Of course, so important a question has had the most profound study, ever since the reign of sin and death began 6,000 years ago. By this time the subject should be threadbare. The entire world should be so thoroughly informed respecting this question that there would be nothing new to-day and nobody curious to hear. But the large audiences of intelligent, thoughtful people which come to hear, and which listen with breathless interest to what we have to say, imply that after all the study the subject has had but

2H619

few who are thoroughly satisfied with their conclusions.

This discourse has been republished in Reprint 4549-4553, January 15, 1910, entitled, "Where Are The Dead?"

[The National Labor Tribune, February 28, 1909](#)

THE LENGTH AND BREADTH, HEIGHT AND DEPTH, OF CHRIST'S LOVE

Waterbury, Conn., February 28. Before a large congregation in Buckingham Music Hall, Pastor C. T. Russell spoke twice here today. The audience was very attentive. The afternoon subject was, "Where are the Dead," and the evening text was as follows:

"That ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. 3: 17-19

The word *love* is as *warming* and cheering correspondingly as the words *hatred* and *selfishness* are cold and discouraging. To some who all their lives have been immersed in a world of selfish frigidity, the real quality of the word love is disallowed, disputed, claimed not to exist. Nevertheless there is a craving in every human being for love, pure and sincere, even though never expected to be found. This craving of the human heart for love and sympathy increases as the years go by. Inevitable reverses and failure for the majority take the place of anticipated successes. However strong, cour-

ageous. or even brutally fierce has been the warrior in the battle for bread and fame and earthly glory, he craves ultimately, in his partial or complete disaster, the love which he has never shown to others, nor ever really expected that others would show to him. Whether he succumbs to financial disaster, or to immorality, or to narcotic stimulants, or to disease, it matters not which, the balm of Gilead for the wounded soul is love.

Sometimes this love comes from the partner of life, the wife or the husband; sometimes from parents or children, sisters or brothers. Thank God for these “sometimes” and for the evidence they afford us of some measure of the image of God in humanity! But alas! in a vast majority of cases the failure, the disaster suffered not only shatters hope, but cools friendship and destroys the semblances of love, which were merely emotional or perfunctory or admiration! At such a time the message of the love of God and Christ is balm indeed, if it come to the wounded and discouraged one! And our thought is that, particularly at this time of the year, such discouragement is apt to be borne in upon large numbers of the human family. With the opening of the New Year, many properly made fresh resolutions to themselves, or to their friends, or to the Lord—to live more noble lives, to be true to their Creator, to themselves, to their companions in life—in general, to all of their interests and obligations. But the first month of the year has witnessed trials, testings, and to many has brought defeat and discouragement.

“COME, WEARY AND HEAVY LADEN”

Now is the opportune moment to these discouraged ones to hear the voice of him that speaketh from heaven, telling them of his love, sympathy and his willingness to aid those who will accept his assistance. Harkening obediently to his voice, the hour of defeat may be changed to the hour of victory, by the Lord’s assisting grace, just as, many a time in earthly warfare, victory has been wrested from defeat by the arrival of re-enforcements at the opportune moment. The moment of discouragement and hopeless despair and loss of confidence in earthly progress is the opportune moment for the discouraged one to recognize his need of the Saviour and to cry unto him, and forthwith receive the re-enforcements promised from him who has declared, “My strength is made perfect in your weakness;” and again, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Matt. 11:28-30

Ah! but it requires faith to believe in a Saviour whom we have never seen, and with whom we are not acquainted, and especially in one who has been so frequently misrepresented to us as having prepared from before the foundation of the world for our eternal torment. How can we assure ourselves of his love? How

2H620

may we know that he is not the cruel one that has been pictured to us, but instead a loving, generous, kind, faithful friend—a God who delighteth not in our trouble, who rejoiceth not in iniquity, who rejoiceth not in eternally tormenting his creatures, nor even in destroying them eternally in the Second Death, but, conversely, in doing us good, in exhibiting towards all who will receive it, his loving kindness and tender mercy, enabling them more and more, in the language of our text, to appreciate the height and length, breadth and depth of his love, and who eventually will have all men saved (recovered) and brought to a knowledge of the Truth, and to obedience and character development, to life everlasting in the Paradise of God?

We see the difficulty of such, and it cries aloud to those of us who have learned the way of the Lord more perfectly to let our light shine, to let all the world who are not completely blinded by the Adversary see the true character of our God, and of the Son of God, and the Scriptural presentation of the love and mercy and abundant provision arranged for in the Divine Purpose. What the world needs is to get over its fright respecting the Lord and the future and to see the love of God, and his gracious provision in Christ. This alone will win the heart, in the proper sense of the word. Fear may bring torments, but only the Truth can sanctify and happify, like our Redeemer's prayer, "Sanctify them through thy Truth; thy word is Truth."

The fright that is upon the world came from the Dark Ages, echoed by all the creeds of orthodoxy, breeding in the hearts of men distrust, fear, hatred of God and of the Bible, which is falsely accredited with being the Fountain from which these brackish waters of tradition, represented by the creeds, have been drawn. It is time that every true Christian should take his stand for the right, the Truth, for the Word of God, for the exposition of the falsehoods which have slandered the Almighty character, which have benumbed the zeal of the saints, and have repelled the weary and the heavy laden, as they looked for relief and balm in the direction of their Creator. Is it not time that all ministers of the Gospel announced and manifested their freedom from the creedal misstatements of the Divine character and purpose, which in their hearts they long ago have rejected? It is well that all such should lift up their voice

like a trumpet and give no uncertain sound to the masses of the groaning creation, who are awakening and hungering and thirsting for the bread and water of life, which alone can satisfy their longings.

**“THERE IS A WIDENESS IN GOD’S MERCY,
LIKE THE WIDENESS OF THE SEA”**

This is the message which we bear to the troubled and discouraged ones. They must take our word for it, until they have time to take up with us a thorough study of the Scriptures, and to demonstrate to themselves that the justice, wisdom, love and power of God are all enlisted on the behalf of Adam and his race—to do us good, to save us from our sins and from the dead and dying condition in which we find ourselves mentally, morally and physically. Nor should it be so difficult to exercise this degree of faith. The Scriptures declare, “He that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Heb. 11:6) This involves a faith in the justice of God, that, inviting us, he will not spurn us, when we respond to his call. Moreover it should appeal to every reasonable mind that God should be just and loving towards all. The thought of an angry, vindictive, torture-loving, unloving Creator should be rejected instantly by every rational mind as being ungodlike, demoniacal. And no doubt this would have been so had it not been that the misconception on the subject, which the Apostle calls the Doctrine of Devils, was imposed upon our minds from our very earliest childhood, and often by those whom we properly loved and whose piety we revered, but who were themselves deceived.

It is high time that more reverential, more loving, theological views were seen by all mankind. It is the lack of this true theology that is driving many away from the Lord and his Word, into vain philosophies and “science falsely so-called—Higher Criticism, Christian Science, Evolution, Theosophy, etc., etc.” 1 Tim. 6:10

The world has discovered that the bonds of ignorance and superstition have been holding it for centuries, and that its eyes of understanding have been so long covered that now they blink in the dazzling light of the dawning Millennial Day. At one bound the so-called scientific world has left the Word of God and leaped into a refined agnosticism, which professes a phase which it does not possess. The middle class and the lower class of Society are ready to follow their leaders, and this means very shortly what the Scriptures predict, “A great time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation” — a social, religious, financial and political upheaval — and anarchy. Thank God for the assurances of his Word that the spasm will be but a brief one, that “A short work will

the Lord make with the earth,” and that everything has been prepared for the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom upon the ruins of present systems. It is folly to think of holding the people back and bandaging the eyes of their

2H621

understanding and to again enslave them with ignorance and superstition. Those who are thus endeavoring to meet the situation show clearly that they do not understand it. The tidal liberty of mind can no longer be repressed than the ocean tide can be swept, stayed with a broom. There is just one remedy, the truth, and a correct understanding of the teachings of the Bible. Whoever fails to receive this fails of everything with respect to the present life. And this applies not only to the world in general, but also to believers, to the entire Church of Christ. The hour of trial predicted to come upon the whole world is now upon us, and the Apostle Peter's declaration is that it must begin with the Church of God. The statement of the Prophet is that one thousand will fall to one that will stand — “A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.” (Psa. 91:7) The statement of the Apostle, respecting the same time and trial, is “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. . . Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.” (Eph. 6:11-13) Not, Who shall fall, but “Who shall be able to stand?” is the question.

LENGTH, BREADTH, HEIGHT, DEPTH

We are not able to tell the wonderful measures of God's love—nor can others tell them. Indeed, as the Apostle suggests, the privilege of appreciating these measurements is granted only to the “saints,” and to these in proportion to their saintliness. Thus a babe in Christ, though beloved of the Lord and carefully cherished, cannot, as an infantile saint, comprehend these measurements of Divine character. When first he believed in the Lord he saw something of Divine love and mercy, which influenced him and drew him to the exercise of faith and the renouncement of sin. From that standpoint of Justification by Faith he could see more of the Lord, and appreciate more the measurements of his greatness. Then called and appreciating it, he bound his heart before the Lord and made a full surrender to him in response to the invitation, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Rom. 12:1

Having thus done all in his power and laid himself at the Lord's feet, he received the begetting of the holy Spirit, not with outward show or demonstration, but with inward grace and the enlightenment of the eyes of his understanding. From this new standpoint of consecration and harmony with the Divine will, he began to see more of the length, more of the breadth, more of the height, more of the depth of God's love, and hourly, daily, monthly, yearly, if living up to his privileges faithfully, he has been growing in grace, growing in knowledge, growing in opportunity to see these measurements of the Divine character.

Note that this is the very expression of our text and context: the reception by faith of Christ into our hearts as a rule brought strengthening, mighty strengthening by his Spirit in the innerman, to the new nature. As this Spirit of Christ dwelt or resided in our hearts by faith, it tended to root us and to ground us in his characterlikeness, which is the same as that of the Father — Love. Now, then, all this experience makes us able to comprehend with all saints these measurements of our Creator's character as others cannot appreciate them. Yet, as the Apostle says, that even we know now in part only, by and by, after experiencing the resurrection "change" from earthly to heavenly nature, shall see our Lord as he is and then know as we are known. How grand will be this consummation!

So in our text, which applies to the present life, the Apostle declares that the saints even cannot know the love of Christ, because it "passeth knowledge." He then gives a further intimation of how this keen appreciation of the glorious character of God comes to his consecrated ones, namely, "by their being filled with the holiness of God." This means, dear friends, not only the renouncement of sin, and faith in the Lord as our Redeemer and consecration to him, but a filling with his spirit, his mind, his disposition. This, as already stated, is a gradual work, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." The Lord's Spirit is one of holiness, not only of separateness from sin, but of opposition to it, not only of sympathy with righteousness, but of activity on its behalf; not only of putting away from our hearts every sympathy with unfruitful works of darkness, but also the receiving of that spirit which condemns them by daily life and a word fitly spoken; not only by an appreciation of the fruits and graces of God's Spirit—meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love—but so great an appreciation of them as more and more induces us to stamp these gracious characteristics of Divinity upon our own thoughts and words and deeds.

Thus it is that we become “copies of God’s dear Son,” and “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” To these more and more the Father is pleased to grant the opening of the eyes of their understanding, even to appreciation of the things of the Spirit—”The deep things of God.”

ST. PAUL PRAYED FOR THEM

The great Apostle not only preached Christ and shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, yet

2H622

he never once refers to eternal torment or anything akin to it. No, not in all of his writings, which constitute more than one-half of the New Testament Scriptures. The severest penalty that he ever declared was everlasting destruction, the Second Death, from which there is no hope for deliverance. Undoubtedly he was right in this course. On the contrary he preached and wrote not only about the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of Christ, but in the context (verse 14) he tells that he prayed for the Church, that they might be able to attain such and more of God’s love. Undoubtedly this is the great need of the Church today.

Let us all pray for ourselves and for each other a wider opening of the eyes of our understanding, and a still more full comprehension of the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of God in Christ. From this attainment comes our blessing and the world’s blessing. The light from the great Sun of Righteousness; which shortly is to flood the world, will be the “Light of the knowledge of the glory of God”—of Divine mercy and love.

[The National Labor Tribune, March 7, 1909](#)

IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST WE GLORY

Brooklyn, N.Y., March 7—Pastor Russell in the Brooklyn Tabernacle preached twice here today. His discourse in the morning on Baptism was listened to attentively by a large audience. The meetings here are growing larger each time. We report his sermon in full in the evening from the text: “The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” 1 Cor. 1:18

It is very remarkable that the Cross, which symbolized the most ignominious form of capital punishment under the laws of the Roman Empire, should be the symbol of

Christianity. Thus, believers who are deeply learned in the Bible, will have no difficulty in discerning that the same Divine providence which in advance marked bread as a symbol of the Bread of Life from heaven, and water as a symbol of the water of life from the throne of God, and marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and the Church, directed also that the Roman should adopt the Cross as a symbol of ignominy. Was not this anticipated in the Divine prophecy which declared, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree"—a cross? And did not our Lord Jesus use this very word Cross with a proper figurative signification considerably in advance of his own crucifixion, saying, "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me." Matt. 16:24

Evidently the Cross, the shame of the Cross, the ignominy of the Cross, the ordeal pictured by the Cross, were foreordained picture-lessons—lessons of the self-denial and sacrifice expected not only for Messiah, but for all those who would be associated with him as his "Bride" class, "members of his Body," his "Royal Priesthood," his "Peculiar People," his "Holy Nation."

It will be discerned that we are drawing a sharply-defined contrast between the meaning of the cross presented to our minds in the Scriptures and the unregenerated sentiment which sees it merely as the symbol of pride and ostentation, whether upon banners or buildings or bestudded with jewels for personal adornment. Let us be understood, that the People's Pulpit stands for the Cross in the simplicity of its original institution a symbol—in the words of our Lord and his apostles—a symbol of self-denial, self-sacrifice, suffering for righteousness' sake in opposition to the spirit of the world, the flesh and the Adversary.

On the other hand, let us not be understood to have any superstitious reverence for a splinter from the Cross of Christ or for one of the nails reputed to have been driven through our Saviour's flesh. We do not bow down to them nor reverence them in any sense. Our thought goes out to the Cross of Christ on a much higher and nobler plane when we recognize the work of grace connected with our Saviour's sacrifice, which was finished on the Cross. In the proper understanding of the matter our Lord took up his Cross as soon as he reached manhood's estate under the Law—when thirty years of age. Immediately he presented himself to John at Jordan and made a full consecration unto death, symbolizing it by water immersion. There, begotten by the holy Spirit, he came up out of the water and for three and a half years figuratively, symbolically, was bearing his Cross. His Cross consisted not in his living separate from sin, for he

had lived separate from sin up to that time. “He knew no sin.” 2 Cor. 5:21

His Cross, on the contrary, consisted in self-denial as respects things which would have been entirely proper and right, against which there would have been no law. These he sacrificed in the doing of the Father’s will, in laying down his life a *ransom* for mankind. Although his own will was a righteous one, he tells us that he came

2H623

not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him—the Father’s will. He tells us what this will was, namely, that he should lay down his life, giving himself a ransom for many, and that ultimately he should receive his life again as a reward, on a higher plane, and that thus, by the sacrifice for our sins, he should be qualified not only to atone for our sins and thus to purchase the world by the sacrifice for sin, but additionally that he should have power and authority to save the world from its lost condition—from sin and death.

PURCHASED BY HIS BLOOD

The Apostle Peter states the same matter in other words, saying that we were redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” (1 Pet. 1:19) As the Cross of Christ was not merely the timber to which he was nailed at death, so the blood of Christ was not that which issued from the spear-thrust in his side after his death. The Scriptural statement is that the “life is in the blood.” In accord with this the Lord’s sacrifice of his life was the shedding of his blood. “Blood-shed,” indeed, is a proper name for any violent death. When it is said that we were bought with the precious blood of Christ it signifies that the valuable sacrifice of his life was made on our behalf. That sacrifice, that shedding of his blood, began when he was thirty years of age, at the moment of his consecration unto death... It continued for the three and a half years of his ministry. It was finished when he cried with a loud voice and gave up the spirit of life. His life, his blood, was thus gradually shed, and the shedding was completed before the Roman soldier pierced his side. As we see this proper, broad conception of the Cross of Christ and the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God, we find that the two thoughts are identical, merely stated from different standpoints and represented by different figures of speech.

The value of the self-sacrifice of our Lord, represented in these two pictures, is the Gospel theme. On it hang the Law, the prophets, the promises of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments. Without it death to humanity would mean the same as to the brute beast. For

although man was made in the image of his Creator and with noble qualities of mind and heart, constituting him an earthly image of his heavenly Creator, nevertheless all of his rights were forfeited, lost, through Adam's disobedience and the death sentence upon him would reduce him to the level of the brute. Only by the "Blood of his Cross" is recovery through redemption made possible. He sacrificed himself. He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring mankind back into harmony with God. The entire transaction was aside from humanity. Our heavenly Father planned it all from before the creation of the world, for we read that our Redeemer was the "Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world"—in the Divine purpose or intention. Rev. 13:8

THE WORLD'S SHARE IN THE CROSS

That the Church has a share in the Cross is freely admitted, but many do not see that every member of the race has an interest in the work of Jesus, begun at Jordan and finished at Calvary. A little radiance from the Cross and the Gospel message encircling it has indeed blessed people of every nation! But oh, how little has yet been really accomplished for the race as a whole! Three-fourths of humanity are still heathens totally ignorant of the Lord—and this after more than eighteen centuries. And more than this, the natural increase of heathenism so far outstrips our most energetic missionary effort that disproportion doubles with every century; for instance, today there are twelve hundred millions of heathen, while a century ago there were six hundred millions. What does it mean? Has the Cross of Christ proven a failure? Did Christ die in vain, even relatively? Will the blessing of the Cross never bring reconciliation to any but the few blessed by the sanctifying influences of the present life?

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS

Ah! we have made a great mistake in the reading of our Bibles. We have failed to discern that God's time for dealing with the heathens is future; that a Millennial Age is to be introduced, in which Christ with power and great glory will suppress the power of Satan and drive away the mists and fogs of ignorance and superstition and lift from the degradation of sin and death all who will then accept his gracious provisions. This is the Kingdom for which the Master told us to pray, saying, "My Kingdom is not of this world (age)." (John 18:36) Again, he said, "Pray ye: our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name; thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:9, 10) Ah, yes, while doing all that we can for ourselves and our neighbors, let us

remember that the work is not ours but the Lord's and that he has declared that the coming Millennial Age of the reign of Christ and the Church is his time appointed for the blessing of all the families of the earth. Then the Cross of Christ will triumph, because without his Cross no such Millennial Kingdom and its "Time of Restitution of all things" would be possible. First, the sacrifice for sins needed to be made before the "curse" could be lifted and the blessing could come to the race of sinners.

2H624

PREACHING OF THE CROSS FOOLISHNESS

If, then, it is the Divine program that Christ shall establish his Kingdom, shall overthrow the rule of Satan and sin and death and enlighten mankind and deliver the willing and obedient, why did he not begin that work eighteen centuries ago? Why has valuable time been lost? Is it not a foolish waste of time to preach the Cross of Christ and faith and obedience, under the present adverse conditions? Do not the results of these eighteen centuries of preaching show the folly of this procedure?

We answer in the words of our text, Yes, the preaching of the Cross of Christ seems foolishness to the perishing ones—to the world in general. But it does not so seem to us. The saved ones, we who have come into relationship with the Father through faith in the precious blood and have come to an understanding of the Divine Plan of Salvation, realize the "cross to be the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:18) To us the message of the Cross has been a transforming one, which, more and more as we have come to appreciate it, has been changing our characters and lives from glory to glory, enabling us to more nearly approximate the glorious character of our dear Redeemer and to become at heart "copies of God's dear Son." Romans 8:29

In a word, while all mankind were imperfect, sinners, "children of wrath," condemned, yet amongst them were two classes. One class was in sympathy with its environment and general condition of alienation from God, and at enmity, not only outwardly but also in their hearts loving sin. The other class, outwardly the same, much fewer in number, had a love for righteousness and an opposition to iniquity and loathed their own weaknesses and blemishes. This latter class longed for righteousness and perfection, which they were unable to attain, because of their weaknesses of the flesh; because of their inability to do perfectly; because they were "born in sin and shapen in iniquity." It is this latter class that God is now drawing to his Son and permitting to be justified by faith, and then admitting by begetting of the holy Spirit to the relationship of Spiritual Sons of God

and prospective Joint-Heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord and Redeemer. Of these Jesus said, "No man can come unto me (now) except the Father which sent me draw him." John 6:44

In a word, God has divided mankind into two general classes, and has made arrangements that only one of these classes will be specially drawn, blessed and saved by faith now, leaving the other to be dealt with during the Millennium. The class favored in this present time are such as have the "hearing of faith" and come into relationship to God under the terms of the great Abrahamic Covenant. Their special blessing now is not because they are sinless, "for there is none righteous, no not one" (Rom. 3:10), but because they loved righteousness and hated iniquity. On this account they may be the "fellows" or "brethren" of Christ, because they have this heart likeness to him of whom it is written, "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness (holy Spirit) above thy fellows." Heb. 1:9

Those who are now specially drawn of the Father are not compelled to become fellows with his Son, their Redeemer, but are privileged to have this honor if they wish on certain terms and conditions. To attain this relationship they must stand trial in this present time, while sin and death are still reigning and while it will cost the sacrifice of earthly interests to be footstep followers of their Lord and Saviour. In a word, the Scriptures declare that they can have the great prize of joint-heirship with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom and its work of blessing all the families of the earth only upon condition that they "make their calling and election sure" by faithfulness under trials and testings and difficulties.

THE MYSTERY OF THE CROSS

Comparatively few of the hundreds of thousands of those who have named the name of Christ, and who have come under various denominational yokes, have any knowledge of the Mystery of the Cross of Christ, the Mystery of the Gospel, "The Mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." (Col. 1:26) Alas, the majority seem content to have merely a "name," to live and to wish merely to be called Christians and to wear a jeweled cross. It is but the few of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious and have felt an earnest desire to know and to do the Father's will at the cost of self-sacrifice. With the majority the intimation that a certain course in life is the "narrow way," the way of the Cross, is sufficient to turn them in an opposite direction; for,

while they would like to share the heavenly glories and honors of the Lord, they are unwilling to be sharers in his ignominy, sufferings and death. These, without relinquishing their desire for righteousness, are disinclined to go to such lengths as the Master and the apostles taught and exemplified. Hence, they are not interested in the “deep things” of God’s Word, but merely in the more superficial. In the language of the Scriptures, they are willing to say, “We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.” Isa. 4:1

2H625

However, inside and outside of all denominations we may expect to find the Lord’s “little flock,” following in his footsteps through evil reports and through good reports, singing and making melody in their hearts unto the Lord for the privilege granted them of having fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, in prospect of the fellowship in his glory which will soon be theirs. So far from the preaching of the Cross being a failure it is a great success in this particular work which the Lord intends. It has served to attract the loyal-hearted and to repel all others. It is of this Gospel of the Cross of Christ that the Apostle says, “It is a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death.” 2 Cor. 2:16

The Mystery of the Cross, then, is that it is the Divine purpose that the Lord Jesus should be the Head or Chief Priest and that during this Gospel Age God would draw out from amongst this world and sanctify to Himself through the merits of Jesus’ sacrifice an Under-Priesthood, who as “members of the Body of Christ,” would delight “to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” Col. 1:24

So, then, be it understood, the great Christ foreknown of the Father and ordained to be the World’s Deliverer during the Millennial Age, is primarily our Lord Jesus the Head, and secondarily the members of the Body, the “saints” of the Gospel Age, “Members in particular of the Body of Christ.” Thus seen there is a good reason, a very particular reason, why the Millennial Restitution work for the world did not begin immediately after our Lord’s resurrection. The interim of time was set apart for the selection of the members of his Body, elsewhere spoken of as the betrothed Church, which at our Lord’s Second Coming, will become “the Bride,” “the Lamb’s Wife,” and “Joint-Heir” in the Kingdom with the heavenly Bridegroom.

FOOLISHNESS WITH MEN, WISDOM WITH GOD

Behold then, in the light of these Scripture testimonies, the power and wisdom and love of God connected with the Cross of Christ! See how now it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that *believeth* and who is of a ready heart to accept the Divine mercies. Note the grace of God in permitting sinners from the very lowest plane to be justified by faith and to be made heirs of glory and, as the Apostle declares, to be made “partakers of the Divine nature.” (2 Pet. 1:14) If this present grace which comes only to those who have the hearing ear and the appreciative heart were all, were the end of the triumph of the Cross of Christ, it would be a wonderful triumph, a glorious one, even though all the remainder of the race except these saintly ones of the First Resurrection class, the Body of Christ, should *perish* should never come to a knowledge of the grace of God, should never attain to eternal life on *any* plane.

But God declares emphatically that it is not his will that any should perish, but that all might turn unto him and live. And he has made full provision whereby every member of the race may be brought to a knowledge of the Truth, that all may thus be saved — “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the Truth.” 1 Tim. 2:4

The selection of this favored Seed of Abraham, The Christ (Gal. 3:16-29), is but the beginning of God’s great work of salvation through the Cross of Christ; as soon as the “elect” shall have been completed and all tested and proven and glorified with their Lord, the “New Covenant,” sealed with the precious blood, will become operative. The blessings withdrawn from the natural Israel when our Lord was crucified will be restored to them under that New Covenant. Spiritual Israel will rule and bless the world through natural Israel, and all the families of the earth will then be encouraged to come into harmony with God under the terms of the New Covenant by becoming “Israelites indeed.” Thus Abraham’s Seed eventually will bless all who love righteousness, all who under full knowledge and opportunity will demonstrate their love for righteousness and their hatred for iniquity. What wonder, then, that while others are speaking slightingly of the Cross of Christ and claiming that there was no need of redemption, that our race never fell and will never be restored—what wonder, we say; that we who see something of the “length and breadth and height and depth of the love of God,” glory in the Cross of Christ!

Truly did the Lord declare through the Prophet, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your

thoughts. For my plans are not your plans, neither are your methods my methods, saith the Lord.” Isa. 55:8, 9

*“In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o’er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.”*

* * * *

“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.”

2H626

[The National Labor Tribune, March 14, 1909](#)

THE END OF THE AGE, THE HARVEST TIME

Scranton, Pa., March 14—Pastor Russell preached twice here today to the bone and sinew of the hard coal region. Some of the best people were present and listened attentively and drank in every word uttered. He chose for his evening discourse the text: “The harvest is the end of the age.” (Matt. 13:39)

Christian people have forgotten and worldly people never knew the significance of our text. We are all familiar with the beautiful hymn which inquires, “What will the harvest be?” and which gives the suggestion that in each life experience there is a sowing and a reaping. This is true and we will examine this phase of the subject by and by; but first we call your attention to the fact that our Lord in the parable of which our text is a part has no such thought in mind. The parable deals, not with the Church individually, but collectively. It points out that our Lord, the Son of Man, was a seed-sower, and that the field in which he sowed the seed was the world. His personal seed-sowing of the Gospel message was accomplished more than eighteen centuries ago, but since then from his glorious presence at the Father’s right hand on the throne of glory he has been represented by his followers, who, imbued with his spirit, have gladly laid down their lives in the same work scattering the good tidings of the Kingdom.

It is true also that our Lord did a reaping work, and associated his disciples with himself in that saying, “I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men plowed, harrowed, sowed, and ye are entered into their labors” (as reapers of the fruitage of other toil). The truthfulness of this is manifest and is corroborated by the statement of John the Baptist, who declared of our Lord that he was the reaper of the Jewish Age whose fan

was in his hand, and who did purge the threshing floor, and did gather the wheat into the barn and burned up the chaff with unquenchable fire. (Matt. 3:12) Looking back over Jewish history we see that the harvesting of the Jewish Age began with our Lord's first advent and ended forty years later at the destruction of Jerusalem. In that time he gathered all the wheat of that nation, all who were ready for the Kingdom. (John 1:12) These were comparatively a "little flock." They were all Israelites indeed in whom was no guile. These were gathered to the garner or barn of Divine favor or protection by the baptism of the holy Spirit, which came upon the leaders at Pentecost day and subsequently extended to every one of us, to every Israelite indeed, anointing these with the holy Spirit.

The threshing, the winnowing and gathering into the barn condition continued during the entire harvest period and ended in the year A..D. 70, when the Roman army completely destroyed Jerusalem and every vestige of Jewish polity. Thus was fulfilled John's prediction, "He shall baptize you with the holy Spirit (Israelites indeed beginning at Pentecost) and (the remainder) with fire. All not baptized with the holy Spirit all not adopted thus into the family of God, received their share in the baptism of fire, trouble, which came upon that nation and to it the apostle refers saying, Wrath to the uttermost is come upon this people that all things written in the law and prophets concerning them should be fulfilled. 1 Thess. 2:16; Matt. 5:17, 18

A DOUBLE WORK PROGRESSING

From the foregoing it will be perceived that during the harvest period of the Jewish Age a two-fold work progressed—the harvest of the Jewish Age and preparatory work for the Gospel Age, a reaping work and a settling time as respecting the Jews and their covenant relationship to God and simultaneously the opening of the new dispensation, in which the middle-wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was in due course broken down and all who received Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, were accepted of the Lord as members of the New House of sons, which took the place of the Old House of servants—"Moses verily was faithful as a servant over all his house (of servants) but Christ as a son over his own house (of sons), whose house are we if we hold fast." Heb. 3:5, 6

The parable of the wheat and the tares, to which our text belongs, was a brief statement by our Lord of his work in the world during this Gospel Age. The foundation of it he laid in his redemptive work, the work itself properly began with the bestowment of the holy Spirit of

Pentecost. Our Lord declares that he sowed the good seed of the Kingdom, and in harmony with this we find that he continually taught his disciples that the Jews were right in their expectation of the establishment of God's Kingdom amongst men for the overthrow of sin and Satan and for the deliverance and uplift of Adam and his race. But he instructed them that his Kingdom was not of this world, not an earthly kingdom, and that

2H627

his servants were not to fight with weapons of carnal warfare for the establishment of his Kingdom. It would be established at his second coming in power and great glory. It would have all power and to it every knee would bow, every tongue confess. It would not oppress, but would bless its subjects and fully restrain its enemies, and ultimately destroy the impenitent.

THY KINGDOM COME ON EARTH

Thus he taught his disciples, and us through them, to pray for the coming Kingdom as the Divine boon and blessing most desirable. He said, "Pray ye, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) That Kingdom was associated with nearly all of his promises to his disciples. As the young nobleman he would go to a far country and in due time would return and reckon with his servants and reward them according to their loving loyalty and energy in his service. In his Kingdom, some of his glorified servants would be granted dominion over two cities, some over five, some over ten and thus all would be joint-heirs with him in his Kingdom, sharers of his throne, partakers in his great work of uplifting Adam and his race out of their present fallen conditions, mental, moral and physical. Luke 19:12

Not only does the parable which we are discussing refer to the Kingdom, but practically every parable which our Lord uttered was given to teach something respecting the character of the Kingdom itself when it would come, or something respecting the character and experiences of those who were invited to share that kingdom with their Redeemer—the "called, chosen, faithful," who will make their calling and election sure to a participation in the Kingdom honors, privileges and blessings. Some of these parables show this Kingdom class, the Church, as a nominal system containing good and bad, faithful and unfaithful, saints and imposters; as, for instance, the parable of the net which, cast into the sea, gathered both suitable and unsuitable fish throughout this age, though the separation was not due to be accomplished until the end of this age. Similarly the parable we are discussing shows two classes in the Church, one, the wheat class, begotten of the holy Spirit, the other, the "tare" or

imitation class, not begotten of the Spirit of the Lord, but rather of the wrong spirit, the spirit of the world.

AN ENEMY DID THIS

Our parable shows that the Lord and his faithful disciples sowed the good seed of kingdom promises but that subsequently our enemy, Satan, over-sowed the field with treacherous and false doctrines. As the true doctrines bring forth the true “wheat” class suitable for the Kingdom, and false doctrines produce wrong characters, “tares,” which today all over Christendom are so numerous that the true wheat are being choked out. Indeed, so accustomed is the world to the high look of the tare class that the humble wheat are thought peculiar and a strange party of undesirables. So closely intertwined are the roots of the two classes that the Reaper decided that there would be no separation between them until the harvest or end of this age; because to disturb such close relationship in life would create great commotion, such a time of trouble as would wreck present institutions, hence the Lord’s decision was, “Let both grow together until the harvest; the harvest, is the end of the age.” At that time the great commotion incidental to the complete separation of the small harvest of wheat from the great harvest of tares would be due and the great time of trouble incidental to the separation would find its proper place in connection with the proper judgments with which this age will end and the proper plowing experiences of trouble with which the new dispensation will be inaugurated.

WE ARE NOW IN THE HARVEST TIME

Dear friends, in two of the volumes of the “Scripture Studies,” which many of you possess and I trust are studying, we have presented from the Scriptures the evidence that the harvest of this Gospel Age is forty years in length and that already considerably more than one half of it is in the past. We have pointed out that this is the meaning and the true interpretation of the peculiar conditions, favorable and unfavorable, which now surround the pathway of all of the Lord’s people. This is the explanation of the federation movement among the churches, of the trust movement among the wealthy and of the union movement amongst the masses. The awful time of trouble which shortly as a plowshare will prepare mankind for the new dispensation, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ and his Church, is even now casting its shadow before. Already our Lord’s prediction of it is being realized, “Men’s hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth.” (Luke 21:26) The courageous are

saying, "peace and safety," but the Scriptures declare that the consummation of the age is upon us and that nothing can avert it; that the destruction will come with suddenness, "as pangs upon a mother," with brief respites between, but gradually increasing in intensity until the new dispensation, the Kingdom of God's dear Son, shall be born in the morning of the new day—"The Sun of Righteousness shall rise with healing in his beams."

If we are right, the present is the time for God's people to draw very near to the Lord, to come under the shadow of the Almighty, to put their trust more and more in him and to purge themselves from all filthiness

2H628

of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord. (2 Cor. 7:1) As the harvest of the Jewish Age brought fresh tests to nominal Israel, so the present harvest period will surely bring fresh tests to nominal Spiritual Israel, tests which only the faithful, the saintly, will be able to stand. The fiery trials of this day will try every man's faith and works of what sort they are. Only the gold, silver and precious stones of Divine truth, faith and character, will survive these tests. The wood, hay and stubble character, like the tares of our text-parable, will succumb to the fiery trials of this great and notable day of the Lord toward which the eyes of the prophets of God and of our Lord and of his apostles all looked—the day of which they all made mention. Now is the time for the fulfillment of Malachi 3:16, when They that feared the Lord (that revered him) spake often one to another (conferred respecting his promises and sought to be helpful to each other) and a book of remembrance was written for these and to them was given the assurance they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day when I come to make up my jewels. It is pertinent to our subject that we inquire one of another respecting our preparation for the evil day into which we are entering. Have we on the whole armour of God; are we standing firmly ourselves and helping the brethren to stand firmly against the wiles of the Adversary, our common foe; have we on the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness, faith in his blood? Are we seeking to keep it free from spot and wrinkle or any such things? Are we distressed by any imperfection, spot or wrinkle, so that we go at once to the throne of heavenly grace there to obtain mercy and cleansing and to find strength to help for all times of need? While keeping in memory the foregoing, as the proper interpretation of our Lord's parable, let us labour with the great Reaper to the extent of our ability under his promise, "He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto eternal life." John 4:36

WHAT A MAN SOWETH HE REAPETH

Before closing we note the fact that not only our Lord has been sowing and now reaping the harvest of this age and preparing for the greater sowing and reaping of the Millennial Age, but that each of us, and indeed all mankind, outside as well as inside the Church of Christ, does a sowing and a reaping work in respect to his own life and interests. The beginning of all of our sowing is in the mind, or, as the Scriptures would say, in heart: Out of the heart proceedeth the various good and bad influences which go to make up our characters. What we sow, we will reap in time. If we sow anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, ambition, vain-glory, bitterness, backbitings, evil-surmising we will reap accordingly. What a sad harvest results from such a sowing! How many fold these evils are multiplied to ourselves and to others! And how far-reaching may be the influence of these evil things upon others! They ripen, they go to seed, they are blown by the winds of gossip and suspicion and many are thereby defiled. "What will the harvest be?" Surely the harvest of such a sowing will be with bitterness and tears proportionate to the degree of knowledge enjoyed and sinned against.

It is bad enough that the world, uninstructed of the Lord, with no ears to hear his counsel, should sow such an evil, injurious crop. What responsibility would be ours under such circumstances if our ears have heard, our eyes have seen something of the glories of the Lord, and the beauties of his character and the fruits of his spirit! God forbid, you say, that any of us should make such a mistake and thus sow in our hearts a crop so displeasing to the Lord and so injurious to ourselves and to others! On the other hand; the Lord's consecrated people, whose hearts have been prepared under Divine supervision, have heard the Master's words instructing us how to sow profitable crops that will prove to be blessings to ourselves and to others and glorious to his name. In his Word he supplies the good seed and he gives us freely the seeds of meekness, gentleness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness, faith, hope, joy. He who sows these carefully, patiently, perseveringly in his heart and who watches day by day lest the enemy cast in any seed of malice, envy or strife—to promptly purging it out and destroying it—what a blessed portion is his! How beautiful are the flowers of grace and truth as they develop and more and more manifest themselves in looks, in words, what a fragrant perfume is exhaled from the heart and life which is thus regulated in harmony with the Divine word!

Dear friends, let us make no mistake; let us do no experimenting; let us not think for a moment that our own

wisdom is sufficient and that we may set aside the instruction of our Lord and of his apostles. Let us now, in the harvest of this age, be if possible, doubly alert to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation, lest we fail of the grace of God—fail to attain a share in the glories of our Redeemer which so shortly is to be used of the Lord for the blessing of all of the families of the earth and to guide them and instruct them as to how they must root up all evil weeds—malice, strife, envy, etc.—and must sow freely the seeds of truth and grace, to the intent that the harvest of the Millennial Age in turn shall see them blessed with human perfection and full restitution; failing of which they will be utterly destroyed in the Second Death. (Acts 3:23)

Desirous, dear friends, that you should have every

2H629

opportunity for helpful Bible Study, I have arranged with the publishers of one of my books, *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, that between now and the time of my starting on a European trip, May 5, they should supply any orders coming through me at absolute cost. This will enable all of you to procure for yourselves and friends this book of 380 pages, in cloth binding, postage prepaid, four copies for a dollar or one copy at the same rate, 25c, or the same matter in magazine form for 5c per copy. On this book, dear friends, I receive not one penny of royalty. I merely am solicitous that you have the *Divine Plan* in a still more orderly presentation than is possible in my weekly sermons—and the latter will be still more clear to you after the reading of this book, which some have styled “*The Bible Key*.”

The National Labor Tribune, March 19, 1909

HOSANNA! HOSANNA! TO THE SON OF DAVID!

After being absent for over a month, Pastor Russell made a visit to his old home in Pittsburg and was welcomed by his old friends. The Carnegie Music Hall was crowded when he delivered one of his telling sermons, and after adjournment held quite a levee among his friends. He took for his text the following: “*Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.*” *Matt. 21:9*

Next Sunday will be generally observed as Palm Sunday, but the real anniversary date according to the Hebrew calender would be next Thursday, and the

Sunday night following will be the anniversary of our Lord's Memorial Supper.

Four days before his crucifixion our Lord rode to Jerusalem on the ass as the King of Israel. The people preceding and following him shouted, "Hosanna to Messiah, Son of David and King of Israel," and spread their outer garments and palm branches on the road, as was the custom with great heroes in triumphal procession.

For three and a half years from the time of his baptism at thirty years of age our Lord had been preaching the Kingdom of heaven at hand. Additionally he had sent forth his disciples two and two; first the twelve, and later seventy others, to preach the same thing, namely, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand"—get your hearts into a condition of readiness that you may be received into that Kingdom, to be associated with Messiah in the blessing of all the families of the earth, in harmony with the promise made to father Abraham. Our Lord had become quite noted. "The common people heard him gladly." Some of them said, "Never man spake like this man." "And they all bare witness to the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, for he spake as one having authority (knowledge) and not as a scribe." On more than one occasion it appeared as though the people would take him by force to make him a king; but our Lord avoided the matter and withdrew himself and discouraged the efforts. The scribes and Pharisees, jealous of his popularity, ashamed of his following and afraid that he would yet become the center of a futile movement antagonistic to the Roman government and their own prestige, had already threatened his life. As it is written, "Jesus could no longer walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." Their antagonism to him was all the greater after the awakening of Lazarus.

BEHOLD, THY KING COMETH

Suddenly a change was manifest in Jesus' attitude. He came to Bethany, notwithstanding the protest of his disciples, who valiantly said, "Let us go that we may die with him." Discarding caution he went directly to the home of Lazarus and his sisters. There he was the guest of honor with his disciples at a special feast. There Mary poured upon him the precious spikenard perfume which Jesus declared was an anointing for his burial. In that expression we have the key to his outward course. He knew that his hour was come; that the end of his ministry was at hand; that he was about to be crucified.

It was under these circumstances that the next morning he not only did not hinder the people from proclaiming him King, but he sent his disciples to bring the ass upon which he was to ride in triumph as a King, for it was the custom of Israel's kings to be thus presented to the people. The account tells us that the people hailed Jesus as the Son of David, the King of Israel, the Messiah, and that in the concourse were Pharisees who had come from Jerusalem to Bethany to see Jesus and Lazarus, whom he had awakened from death; these beheld the proceeding and expostulated with Jesus' disciples, telling them that he should call the attention of the people to what they were saying and that Jesus should reprove them. Our Lord's answer

2H630

shows how important was the event. He said, "If these should hold their peace the very stones would cry out." (Luke 19:40) The Evangelist calls our attention to the fact that the entire procedure was in fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah, as through him the Lord had declared centuries beforehand the events which must transpire at the appointed hour, namely, "Shout O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Zech. 9:9

Here we see the reason why our Lord said that if the people would hold their peace and not shout the stones would cry out; because the Lord through prophecy had foretold a shout and the Scriptures must be fulfilled. How strengthening it is to faith to realize that even the jots and tittles of prophecy must all be fulfilled. Thus realizing the Divine supervision of the affairs of our Lord and of his followers we may indeed have a strong consolation and good hope, realizing that all things written in the Law and by the prophets shall have their fulfilment in due course.

Little did the Jews on that Palm Sunday realize what was taking place. And indeed very few Christians to this day realize the purport of that occasion. Let us see what it was. God had promised a Messiah and that he should be of the Seed of Abraham and of the family of David. Zechariah's prophecy quoted had foretold his formal entry. All those things must be fulfilled; God must keep his part of the contract. If failure occurred it must be Israel's failure. And so it was. Israel, as represented by her rulers who "sat in Moses' seat," was not ready for the Messiah. If they had believed the preaching of John the Baptist a genuine reformation would have made them ready to receive the Messiah. But not being in heart condition led them to expect a worldly conqueror

rather than a Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. We read that “All men were in expectation of him.” And yet, when he offered himself, they were ashamed of him and of his peculiar following of fishermen, publicans, etc. The rulers of the people received him not but plotted his destruction, and the common people furnished not only multitudes to cry Hosanna, on this occasion, but also later multitudes to cry, “Crucify him, crucify him,” under the influence of their leaders.

As for our Lord, he knew that his hour was come. He had foretold that he would be rejected and crucified, but it was his duty to make the tender of himself as Israel’s King. The very prophecy he was fulfilling declared not only that he would come as King, but foretold that the people would “shout” and also that Israel would be cast off and have a “double” part of disfavor—the length of the favor they had enjoyed as God’s peculiar people. The prophet specified, saying, “Even today do I declare that I will render *double* unto thee.” (Zech. 9:12) Thus he indicated that particular Palm Sunday as the turning point of Israel’s career. Our Lord also indicated the importance of that day as the turning point in Israel’s history; for when he had ridden to the brow of Mt. Olivet, overlooking Jerusalem, the procession stopped, Jesus saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. Verily I say unto you, Ye shall see me no more until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Luke 13:34, 35

In other words, that first Palm Sunday was the turning point marking the rejection of natural Israel as a nation and the inauguration of Spiritual Israel as the “holy nation,” the “royal priesthood,” the “peculiar people” for a purpose. Other Scriptures show us that natural Israel is to return to Divine favor as soon as the “election” of spiritual Israel shall be accomplished. But at his Second Advent Messiah will no longer present himself as a man riding upon an ass, but, as the Scriptures declare, he shall come a spirit being, invisible to men, but nevertheless with great glory and power, which shall be “revealed in flaming fire” symbolical of judgments. We are assured that then the blinded eyes of Israel’s understanding will be open and they shall look upon him whom they pierced and shall mourn for him; and the Lord declares that then he will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication and the blessing of the New Covenant shall be theirs. As it is written, “Behold, the

days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house, of Israel, and with the house of Judah. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer. 31:31-34) “And I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh.” Ezek. 11:19

REJECTING THE LAMB

But that Palm Sunday was a notable and important day to Israel from another standpoint. At the beginning of their national existence, when they were delivered from the bondage of Egypt, God specially arranged for their Passover. This will be our topic for next Sunday, but today we notice that their passover lamb was to be taken up and brought into the house on the tenth day of the month Nisan, while it was to be

2H631

killed on the fourteenth. As John the Baptist has declared, our Lord was the antitypical “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) And now the antitypical passover sacrifice was due, when the Lamb of God was to be slain for the sins of the world; and Israel as a nation should have received the Lamb of God into their house by faith on this very Palm Sunday on which he presented himself as King. He filled the double role of King and Passover Lamb. However, as they rejected him as King, so likewise as their Passover Lamb he was not accepted or received; thus as a nation they were not passed over or saved, but, contrariwise, their national destruction followed. As the rich man of the parable of Dives and Lazarus, they died nationally from Divine favor.

But while our Lord was rejected both as Lamb and King by the Jewish nation there were individual exceptions. All the “Israelites indeed,” in whom was no guile, were granted special enlightenment of the eyes of their understanding. These recognized Jesus as the Lamb of God—their Redeemer. And not only so, but they recognized him also as the great King, the King of Glory, the Messiah. As indicating the blindness of the nation and the spiritual sight of the small remnant who received him, our Lord said, “Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears for they hear.” These who now recognize their Redeemer, and voluntarily become obedient to him by a full consecration of their hearts, are a very exceptional class, as well as a very small class. His cause has really been unpopular from the first, and only such as are willing to endure hardship as good soldiers have the courage to volunteer to be soldiers of the Cross.

There is an outward religion today that is popular, just as there was an outward religion in our Lord's day that was popular. But to be true disciples, followers of Jesus, to walk in his footsteps, to forsake the world and follow him, means to all his disciples since what was meant to his disciples at the First Advent — alienation and separation. Our Lord said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, ... but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:18, 19) Again he said, "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." John 4:36

"FEAR NOT, LITTLE FLOCK"

A point that is not generally recognized is that where natural Israel was rejected the selection of spiritual Israel began, and that what natural Israel failed to get, spiritual Israel is to receive, namely, God's Kingdom— not God's Kingdom in the flesh, but on the spiritual plane. True, there will be an earthly or fleshly Kingdom of men and amongst men and of Israel. It will be inaugurated at the Second Coming of Christ and be his representative amongst men. Meantime, however, during this Gospel Age the Lord is selecting a still higher class—Spiritual Israel—to constitute a spiritual Empire, of which he is Head. The spiritual, the higher Kingdom class, must be developed first and the spiritual promises inherited by these must first be attained; afterward the earthly blessings will all be sure to God's earthly people, Israel, under their new (Law) covenant. Rom. 11:27-32

Note how the Apostle Paul, the Divinely appointed Teacher, explains this, saying, "Blindness in part (for the time) is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved." Then all Israel shall be recovered from their blindness. "As it is written, There shall come out of Zion (spiritual Israel) the Deliverer (the Christ) and he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gospel, they are (treated as) enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sake. For the gifts and calling of God he will not repent of. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy, they also now may obtain mercy." Rom. 11:25-31

The New Covenant which God will seal with Israel after these Gospel days will be "of your (the Church's) mercy," in that it will be sealed with the blood of The Christ—Head and Body. This is the meaning of our

Lord's words to us spiritual Israelites, "This is my blood of the New Covenant—drink ye *all of it*"—*all* who participate in it. It is a great privilege to suffer with Christ, to be dead with him, to drink of his cup, to be privileged with him to seal the New Covenant of Israel. All who thus join with him will be permitted to share with him the glories of his Kingdom, his spiritual Kingdom, through which Israel will be blessed, restored to prominence, made the channel of Divine blessings to every nation under heaven.

TWO ANTITYPICAL FULFILMENTS

We have noticed that our Lord's riding on the ass to Jerusalem was a fulfilment of a prophecy and a type. We note now that there are secondary fulfilments of the same on a still higher plane (1) the proclaiming of Jesus by the multitude shouting "Hosanna," was a proclamation of faith in him as the Messiah; so we today, and all of the Lord's followers down through the Gospel Age, have first hailed him Messiah and proclaimed ourselves believers in him—and this to us was Justification by Faith. Hence, Palm Sunday may be considered as symbolizing the attainment of justification

2H632

by those who recognize Jesus and are willing to acknowledge him, just as subsequently at the Memorial Supper Jesus passed the cup to all of his followers, saying, "Drink ye all of it." This signifies full consecration, even unto death, on the part of all who accept the Lord's invitation to thus share his cup, the sufferings of Christ. In this sense of the word, dear friends, I trust that all of us have thus declared our faith in the Messiah, the Redeemer. I trust that we have all taken the Lamb into our hearts, into our homes. I trust that to the full we as members of the Church of the First Born are partaking of the antitypical Lamb, drinking into his spirit of full consecration, as well as partaking of the glorious elements of his character through eating his flesh and appropriating the merits of his sacrifice.

A second antitypical fulfilment of today's lesson is brought to our attention by the fact that everything pertaining to the Jewish people was typical of that nation's connection with spiritual Israel's experience. As Jesus offered himself in the flesh to fleshly Israel at the proper time as their King, so in the parallel of time he must offer himself to *spiritual* Israel at the appointed time as their King of Glory. As the time of natural Israel's visitation was at the First Advent, so the time of spiritual Israel's visitation is at the Second Advent. As nominal Israel stumbled and was blinded and failed to receive the King and lost the blessing, so will it be with nominal spiritual Israel. Thus it is written, "He shall be for a

stone of stumbling and rock of offence to both houses of Israel." As with the Jews (every "Israelite indeed," in whom was no guile, was specially blessed and kept and assisted), so it will be here. All others will stumble and, as it is written, "A thousand shall fall at thy side." That which to the one class will be the stepping-stone to higher favors and the Kingdom blessings, will to the other class be a stumbling-stone. As amongst the Jews it was necessary that the proclamation of the presence of Messiah be made, so here the Second Presence of Messiah must be made known. Nevertheless the parable will be complete, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." (Acts 13:4 1) We see here the force of the Scriptural declaration that it is given or granted to some to understand the deep things of God and not given or permitted to others. "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to all outsiders (to all not members of the inner circle of "Israelites indeed") these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings, that hearing they might hear and not understand."

YE CAN DISCERN THE SKY

To the religious people at the First Advent our Lord said, "Ye can discern the sky. How is it that ye cannot discern the signs of the times?" Our interest in the weather leads us to take notice of those conditions of the sky which presage storm and fair weather. Should we not be much more deeply interested in the much more important things pertaining to the development of the Divine Plan as respects our race and its various interests? Nevertheless, it is a fact that so occupied are men with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches that they think little respecting the weightier interests. This is the reason why many do not more accurately discern the signs of the times. However, he would be a dullard indeed who does not recognize the peculiar day in which we are living. On the one hand, the wonderful blessings and favors of God which already have brought to the world so many useful inventions which are helping to spread Millennial blessings on every hand, and which the Scriptures declare are but advanced messages of God's favor and blessings to mankind, to be ushered in in connection with the sealing of the New Covenant with the merit of the precious blood. Many see the signs of the new dispensation without knowing how to read them (what they signify.) On the one hand there are some who recognize not the Almighty in connection with earth's affairs, but boast of the progress and inventions as merely the outworkings of Evolutionary progress by

which mankind is advancing from *primordial protoplasm* to Divinity.

Others are looking for the establishment of the reign of righteousness through the channels of the nominal Church by an intermixture of Christian principle with worldliness. Few, almost none, see the truth on the subject, namely, that the Lord is now selecting his “jewels,” sometimes called the “Bride, the Lamb’s Wife,” and that this class of the entire age, as well as the living members of the same class, will be resurrected and “changed” and as spirit beings like unto the angels, but of higher plane, and will be associated with the Redeemer in his great work of blessing the world under the gracious provisions of the New Covenant with Israel. Few see that so far as the living Church is concerned, now is the time of the coming of the spiritual Kingdom into the rulership of the world. The Church as a whole is unready to receive it, because of looking in another direction for success to their own efforts.

Few see that, as the Lord declared to the Jews, “Your house is left unto you desolate;” so now he declares to nominal spiritual Israel the same thing. Addressing them under the name of the Church of Laodicea, he says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. Every

2H633

man who hears my knock, let him open the door and I will come in and sup with him.” It must be an individual matter. Neither sects or parties will be acknowledged in this testing time—only the “Israelites indeed” in whom is no guile, who get ready for and receive the blessing promised. To Laodicea the nominal system as a whole the Lord says, “Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked; I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed; and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and eye-salve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see.” (Rev. 3:17, 18)

Let us individually heed this our Lord’s warning, that we may have a share as true spiritual Israelites in the glorious blessings now due to us, and thus be prepared for the Millennial glories just in advance of us.

[The National Labor Tribune, March 21, 1909](#)

THE SONG OF THE ELECT

Brooklyn, N.Y., March 21—Pastor Russell returned home this week from a short visit to the hard coal regions. He reports good audiences at all his meetings. He delivered one of his telling sermons at the Brooklyn Tabernacle today, to a large audience. He took for his text the following:

“And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps; and they sung as it were a new song before the throne., and no man could learn that song, but the hundred and forty and four thousand. “Rev. 14.2, 3

The world knows its bacchanalian songs, and its foolish ditties, and its plaintive melodies tinged with pain and sorrow; and the latter are most in favor with its thoughts because, as the Scriptures declare, “The whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain.”

It is amongst the hymns of Christianity that we find the noblest, grandest, most sublime expressions of the human soul, because their authors, under the influences of the precious promises of God’s Word, look with hopeful eye beyond the clouds and shadows of their present pilgrim way towards the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that love him. Some of these have well been styled “ageless hymns,” so new are they every morning and so fresh every evening. Well may the Lord’s consecrated people delight their souls in harmonious worship at the throne of grace, using these hymns as the beautiful channels of their sentiments and petitions. Would that all who sing the songs of Zion might appreciate them as poetic prayers, so that not merely with their lips would they make melody unto the Lord, but also with their hearts.

But neither of our texts refers to such songs and hymns. Rather they are symbolic and poetic expressions which represent the thought that a new theme, a new message has been received into the heart and that it is so happifying that it continually overflows through the lips—the Scriptures’ joyful message, harmonious, metrical. As a poem may be either in meter or blank verse, so may a song be either a cadence on the air or a harmonious message in the heart or on the lip, publicly or privately delivered.

THE JOYFUL SONG HUSHED

Who has not noticed the exultant songs of the prophets and the apostles—that notwithstanding their trials, their difficulties, their persecutions for righteousness’ sake, they were joyful in the house of their pilgrimage: and a

note of triumph may be found in all of their messages to the Church. As for instance, the Apostle Paul states exultantly in the midst of great tribulation, "Rejoice always! and again I say rejoice!" He tells them of rejoicing also in tribulation, and in everything giving thanks. Never do we hear the note of murmuring or complaint, repining or despair. But with the passing of the first century, with the death of the apostles, there came upon the Church gradually a horror of great darkness. Of this our Lord in his parable tells, saying, "But while men slept, the Enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." (Matt. 13:25) Of the same the Apostle tells, saying, "For I know this, that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:29, 30) And again we read "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." 2 Thess. 2:3

With the coming of the error of doctrine came multitudes of nominal Christians who were in reality merely "tares" or imitation "wheat." Proportionately the songs of triumph and confidence in the Lord faded from the hearts and died on the tongues of those who were the Lord's nominal mouthpieces. A horror of

2H634

great darkness came upon the souls of men by reason of the "doctrine of devils" being given a place in the Gospel message. The true Church is symbolically represented as having gone into captivity to Babylon. Undoubtedly the world was never left entirely without witnesses for God, but the conditions were such then that few could sing the songs of Zion's triumph.

"HARPS UPON THE WILLOWS"

The condition of God's faithful during that period of history known as the "dark ages" was graphically portrayed long before in the Psalms. Speaking for these by inspiration the Prophet says, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's songs in a strange land?" Psalms 137:1-4

Nevertheless, here and there in a very humble manner the saints did hum the song of Zion, though ultimately many of its joyful notes were lost, forgotten. Hence the

implication of our text that in the end of this age the song of triumph, of faith, of confidence in God, of the harmonies of his Word would be revived, but would be, “*as it were* a new song.” It is not a new song, for it is the “Song of Moses and the Lamb.” (Rev. 15:3) It is the old, old story of the “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”—the Lamb of God who, as the King of Kings and Lord of lords, is soon to set up his Kingdom for the overthrow of the reign of Sin and Death amongst those whom he redeemed by the sacrifice of himself. This old, old story, dear friends, became so warped, so twisted, so forgotten, so covered with human tradition and superstition and error and “doctrines of devils” that when now it is being resung it is, “As it were, a new song.

Here is illustrated the proverb that “Truth is stranger than fiction,” for many of the Lord’s dear saints have had the ears of their understanding so perverted by false teachings respecting predestination to eternal torment, etc., that they do not know the song of Zion when they hear it.

The real story of the Cross—the Love of God behind it, and the blessing of God before it, first for the “elect,” and subsequently for the non-elect—is indeed a wonderful story; but let us not forget that the Scriptures continually declare that these things at the present time are mysteries, except to those to whom the Lord will reveal them. Thus he said to his disciples at the First Advent when they inquired respecting some of his parables and dark sayings, “It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given ... Therefore, speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.” (Matt. 13:11, 13) And again the Psalmist says, “The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him; and he will show them his covenant.” Psa. 25:14

THE BURDEN OF THE SONG

The real gist of this Song, which so few can appreciate and sing at the present time, and that few only the “saints” and not the worldly, is stated as follows: “Having the harps of God, they sing the Song of Moses, the servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee *when* thy righteous acts are made manifest.” Rev. 15:3, 4

As we have heretofore seen, the symbolic harp symbolizes the Word of God, which is the source and the accompaniment of this Song, which is, “*as it were*, a new Song.” It is the Song or message of Moses and the Lamb, because Moses was the type of Christ and in all of the sacrifices of the Law he typified or foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ, “The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) And in type also he told the story of blessing and restitution eventually to come to the whole world of mankind through the merit of the slain Lamb. This is shown in the type which pictures the blessings that are to follow the Day of Atonement. It is shown in the typical Jubilee year, in which Restitution was made, both of personal liberty and of property. Similarly, the various feasts of the Law foreshadowed the coming blessings and “feast of fat things,” which, during the Millennial Age, will be spread before all people by the great antitypical Moses, as St. Peter recites in Acts 3:19-23

Moses in the type told of the Passover Lamb, the sparing of the first-borns and the subsequent deliverance of the after-borns. Those who see in Jesus the Lamb of God, our Passover, may discern now that the “Church of the First-Born” are the “elect” of this Gospel Age and that the after-borns of the type represent the world of mankind, delivered from bondage to sin and Satan, as typified in the deliverance of Israel’s hosts from the power of Pharaoh at the Red Sea, which scene pictures the time of trouble with which the present age will end and the new dispensation begin.

RIGHTEOUS ACTS MANIFESTED

Notice that feature of this New Song which refers to God’s righteous acts, righteous dealings, and assures us

2H635

that this ultimately shall be seen by all mankind, and that all then seeing will be reasonably expected to worship.

The fact is that the righteousness of the Divine Government of the world is not yet manifested to any except a faithful few. To the majority the ways of the Lord are dark, mysterious. Not only do they see Divine permission of calamities, but Divine permission of sin, of crime, of blasphemy against the Holy Name, of false doctrines, of superstitions. Many indeed wonder at these things and some are inclined to doubt altogether that there is a supervising Providence. Nay, worse! The doctrine of demons forced upon the Church in the dark ages has made it appear to the average mind that God himself is a demon, who calls upon mankind to love

their enemies and to do good to them, while he has made provision for the eternal torture of his enemies and all who have not heard of and accepted the merit of the “Only name under heaven given amongst men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12) Alas! how is it possible for those who are under these delusions of error to honor God in their hearts or to sing this song, “True and righteous are thy dealings, Lord God Almighty”?

THE SONG OF THE MORNING

While it is true that “He giveth songs in the night” (Job 35:10), it is especially true that this Song, “*As it were* a new song,” belongs to the early morning of the new dispensation, when the “Mystery of God, which he hath kept secret from the foundation of the world,” is being finished, and when all the light of sacred story is centering in the Cross of Christ, and now shining forth as the morning star, heralding the rising of the “Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams” to bless all the families of the earth.

This new Song can be appreciated and sung only from the standpoint of “The Divine Plan of the Ages,” which is the title I have given to Volume I of my “Scripture Studies” which many of you already have. The Bible Society supplies it at cost, but any too poor to purchase I will gladly supply with a magazine edition free, on postcard request.

It is only after we have come to a knowledge of the fact that the Jewish Age furnished a series of types and shadows of better things to come, that we know to look for the better things and are able to discern them. It was after we learned that the “elect” Church of this Gospel Age, the “little flock” who walk in the “narrow way” and in the footsteps of Jesus, are not the only ones to be favored; it was after we learned that these, as the Bride of Christ, are being schooled and prepared by the trials and disciplines of the present time for a future place of honor; it was after we learned that these elect members of The Christ are to be associated with their God, the Love of God and the Wisdom of God. From this standpoint also we are enabled to exercise faith in God the Father—that according to the promise of the Scriptures, he is able and willing to confer all these blessings through Christ, by a resurrection of the dead, during the “times of restitution of all things.” Acts 3:19

This accounts for all the trials and persecutions permitted to come upon the Lord’s saints and shows us that they, like their Redeemer, Lord, must be tested, proved, found faithful even unto death, in order to be accounted

worthy of this high exaltation. It shows us also, not only that the world is not to be hurled at death to eternal torment, but is preserved by the power of God in the great prison-house of death, ready to hear the command of the great King and to come forth. Even as he said, “The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth”—the Church to a life resurrection, perfect and complete, the world to a judgment resurrection, gradual raising up under disciplines and chastisements, out of sin and death to perfection and everlasting life, during the Millennium; or, refusing this favor, to be remanded to the Second Death—“everlasting destruction..”

LEARNING TO SING THE SONG

This song is not given in a miraculous manner, but must be *learned*, as is intimated by the statement, “No man could *learn* that Song except the hundred and forty and four thousand.” Many indeed have learned a bar or two; some perhaps a stanza; but ability to sing the song to a finish implies such a faithfulness to God, such a study of his Word, such a relationship with Christ, as none can attain except the “very elect,” those “filled with the spirit.” All this implies patience and perseverance. And can we wonder that the Lord should make such stringent regulations when we remember the high glory and honor and immortality promised to this faithful “little flock”? If we look about us we find many willing to spend considerable sums of money, considerable time and thought and energy to acquire the secrets of Free Masonry, Odd Fellowship or other earthly institutions. Of how much more are “the secrets of the Lord,” which are to go only to those who reverence him and who love the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul, strength. Although the Gospel is free in one sense of the word, the Lord has evidently found a way to make it *cost us something* in order to make our love, our devotion, our zeal known.

If we have learned *some* of the Song let us sing that portion; let us tell it out to our neighbors and friends, as soon as we have made sure that what we have learned is not traditions of the ancients from the dark

2H636

ages, but the true Song of Moses and the Lamb, as foretold by the apostles and the prophets. As we faithfully proclaim what we have already learned and become more and more imbued with the Truth it will enable us to appreciate to a greater extent “the deep things of

God,” which the natural eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath in reservation, and hath revealed unto us by the Spirit of his Word. (1 Cor. 2:9, 10) The *learning* of the Song is thus a progressive work which belongs to this, our day. Let us, therefore, go on from grace to grace and from knowledge to knowledge!

“LOVE THE PRINCIPAL THING”

We have intimated that knowledge will be a mark of Divine favor in this time, and so various Scriptures declare, “Ye, brethren, are not in *darkness*, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” (1 Thess. 5:4) Again speaking of the present time the Lord declares, “None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall *understand*”—*not* the wise of this world’s wisdom, but the foolish in the world’s estimation, who are wise toward God, seeking first, chiefly, a share in the Kingdom of God’s dear Son.

Incidentally, however, let us remember that if our knowledge outstrips our love we will be in danger. The Spirit of the Lord, Love, is the principal thing. Those who love the Lord supremely, more than they love houses or lands, parents or children, sisters or brothers, or self, will find themselves in that attitude of heart in which every item of knowledge will be a blessing and an aid; but those without this degree of love will find themselves caring mainly for the things of this present life, rather than for the will of God, and will thus be left without this Song of the Morning and its evidence of their faithfulness to the great King and to his Word.

Not so much are great intellectual powers necessary to the *learning* of this Song, but chiefly the character of love, meekness, teachableness, faith, by which the soul is enabled to come into close fellowship with the Lord, and to drink in the spirit, as well as the letter, of his Word. Nor are great talents and pulpit opportunities necessary to the singing of this Song of Moses and the Lamb. It can be sung with melody in the heart and can be brought to the attention of others through the printed page. Hence, to know the Song and not to sing it, to understand the good tidings and not to proclaim them, would mean fear or shame or lack of zeal, any of which would be quite sufficient reasons for losing a knowledge of the Song. The Lord is seeking for “overcomers,” for those who are not ashamed of him and of his Word. He declares that those who are ashamed of him, he will be ashamed of and not confess them before the Father and the holy angels.

[The National Labor Tribune, April 11, 1909](#)

THE RISEN CHRIST

Boston, Mass., April 11—Pastor Russell preached twice here today. His main discourse was in Tremont Temple and he took for his text the following: *“I/then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” Col. 3:1*

Notwithstanding the fact that our word Easter is of heathen origin and was originally applied to the queen of heaven, we may perhaps do well to remember that this need not banish the thought of Easter as it has now developed before the Christian’s mind in commemoration of our Lord’s resurrection from the dead. With the word Easter let us pray and seek to understand the full importance of the great resurrection event. Our Lord’s resurrection may be viewed from three different standpoints, all of them interesting.

First.—His resurrection from the dead meant that he finished the work which he undertook to do on our behalf—the great work for which he left the heavenly glory and humbled himself from the spirit nature to the human plane when he was born of a woman. He undertook to do the Father’s will and to give his life a ransom price in offset of original sin and its death penalty, which passed upon Father Adam and by heredity upon all of his race. The Scriptures inform us that a reward or joy was set before our Lord—the joy of doing the Heavenly Father’s will, the joy of redeeming mankind and the joy of attaining thus to the great reward offered—namely, glory, honor and immortality at the right hand of the majesty on high, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. Our Lord’s resurrection from the dead implies that his work met with the Father’s approval and that all of that reward promised to him had been legitimately secured as his high reward.

MEANING OF THE RESURRECTION

Second—His resurrection meant much to the world, for the mere giving of his life did not finish the work of redemption. It remained for him to make application

2H637

of the merit of that sacrifice, and before he could present it before the Father on our behalf he must need be himself raised from the dead. So, then, our Lord’s resurrection means that he who has undertaken the reconciliation of the world by his blood has taken the

first great step and merely awaits the Father's time for the second great step, the inauguration of the reign of righteousness and the blessing of Israel and all the families of the earth. This importance of Christ's resurrection the apostle emphasized, saying: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain. Ye are yet in your sins. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15:14-20) He himself "slept" for parts of three days and is declared to have been "the first that should rise from the dead"—"the firstborn amongst many brethren." Others had been awakened to a revival of their perishing condition—Lazarus, the widow of Nain's son, Jairus' daughter and others. Christ alone up to that time experienced resurrection—a full rising up out of death in every sense and degree.

Third—Our Lord's resurrection has a special significance to the church because we are informed that as he was raised from the dead he experienced a change of nature, being put to death in the flesh and quickened in spirit, so the church is promised that she shall have a share in his resurrection—his kind of resurrection, a resurrection to a new nature, a new spirit. As further evidence of this the apostle points out that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" hence the necessary "change" in resurrection of all those who would be "heirs of God and joint heirs of Jesus Christ," their Lord, in his heavenly kingdom. He emphasizes this still further in describing the resurrection of the "elect" church. He calls it "the resurrection of the dead," saying: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is an animal body, and there is a spiritual body. As we (the church, the members of his body) have borne the image of the earthly one (Adam), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly (Christ)." (1 Cor. 15:42-49)

GLORIFIED TOGETHER

This resurrection of the church the apostle styles His resurrection because all of the "elect" members of the body of Christ are counted as participating with their Lord in the glorious things of his resurrection, which is so different from the resurrection which will come to the remainder of mankind. Of his resurrection the apostle says, "I count all things loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dross; that I may win Christ and be found in him, a

member of the body of Christ, the 'elect' church; that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death" (Phil. 3:8-10) In these words the apostle shows that the "elect" church share in "Christ's death" and share also in "his resurrection. They are thus separate and distinct from the world in both of these particulars, which are indeed made interdependent one upon the other. The apostle says, "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and, if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:16, 17)

"IF YE BE RISEN WITH CHRIST"

We have seen that the world's resurrection will be a gradual one during the thousand years (millennial period) of Christ's reign. Notice now that the church's resurrection is also a gradual one. Each believer after making a full consecration of his earthly powers and talents to the Lord and after being begotten of the holy Spirit is counted a new creature in Christ Jesus, and he is said to have risen from the dead state to which our Lord referred when he said, "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matt. 8:22) These new creatures are reckoned as dead in respect to their fleshly, earthly interests, etc., but alive in the sense that they have new hopes, new ambitions, new purposes and prospects.

However, these are not dealt with in the same manner as the world—in a period of a thousand years in which they will be required to rise to actual perfection. On the contrary, their human bodies, being devoted to death, must not be restored, must not be perfected, but must go down in death as their sacrifice, even as Jesus' body laid down its vitality and finally expired. But as Jesus the new creature was developing, the while his earthly nature was perishing, so must it be with the church, the "members in particular of his body." While the "outward man perisheth, the inward man is renewed day by day." Indeed, we have the assurances of the Scriptures that the new creature can triumph, become strong in the new, the resurrected life only in proportion as the old body is kept dead—mortified. "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth." (Col. 3:5) So, then, the Scriptural suggestion is that from time of the begetting of the holy Spirit the Christian, as the new creature, begins the new or resurrected life and that his "change" to spirit body at the second coming of the Lord is dependent upon the

maintenance of this resurrected life. If it perishes he will have no share in the “first resurrection,” no share in “his resurrection,” to glory, honor and immortality.

The apostle’s words imply a query, “If, then, ye be risen with Christ.” It is for you to decide. None is able to read the heart of another thoroughly. God is calling out a church and exhorts them to make their calling and election sure. He has laid down the terms and conditions, and it is for the favored ones who have heard of the grace of God to allow that grace to operate in their hearts, moving them to will aright and to do aright the Lord’s good pleasure. Seeing that there are to be some who will share in Christ’s resurrection, seeing that we know about it and have this heavenly hope and calling before our minds, the responsibility is ours, and the apostle was doing a faithful service to us in calling the matter to our attention.

“SEEK THOSE THINGS ABOVE”

If the begetting to the new nature, the heavenly nature, is in us, there should be correspondingly an interest in and a longing for the heavenly things, the higher things, the things above. This does not mean what the poet mistakenly thought,

*“Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have all lost their sweetness to me*

It may mean—we believe that it should mean, the very reverse to this, namely, that

*“Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers,
Have all gained new sweetness to me.*

It means, moreover, that in the flowers and birds and everything that is beautiful the awakened, the quickened soul finds a hint and suggestion of the still grander, still nobler things which God hath in reservation for those that love him. “Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” (1 Cor. 2:9) The new creature must live more than ever along the higher lines mentioned by the apostle, “Whatsoever thing are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (Phil. 4:8) It means, contrariwise, that the new creature will disesteem more and more whatsoever things are vile, impure, ignoble, slanderous, and all evil speaking. By our progress along these lines we may

know something respecting our resurrection progress. If we be without love for righteousness and truth and without hatred of iniquity it would be a sure evidence that we were not new creatures at all; that we had not passed from death into life; that we were not risen with Christ.

We seek the things above with our new minds, with the eyes of our spiritual understanding, with our ears of faith. This means the searching for information along these heavenly lines, just as, if we were interested in India, we would search the libraries for histories and works of travel bearing upon the same. For the information of these New Creatures in Christ, risen with him and seeking the things above, the heavenly Father has provided spiritual food, knowledge—but not so much respecting the heavenly place or state, because he tells us that its glories are beyond description—beyond our powers of comprehension. He tells us that the natural man could not at all receive the heavenly things, and that we can receive them only by the exercise of faith. The one general summary of what we will be like is, “We shall be like him”—our Lord, our Bridegroom—“for we shall see him as he is,” and shall share his glory. The information given us respecting the heavenly things is along particular lines, namely, in respect to the qualities of heart necessary to fit and prepare us for any share in the complete resurrection of the blessed and holy.

SET YOUR AFFECTIONS ABOVE

Some of our fallen race have very little affection of any kind by nature. It will be very difficult for such to enter the kingdom, the very basis of which is “love out of a pure heart.” However, those who have strong affections sometimes find themselves sorely distressed, because there is a conflict of interests between the earthly and the heavenly. The two are at warfare. Our Heavenly Bridegroom demands that if we love him as his bride we must first demonstrate that we love him supremely—more than we love parents or children, houses or lands or even life itself. The Lord does not fault us for affection, strong affection, but it is a reasonable demand that we should appreciate most of all him who has redeemed and “called” us, not only in respect to the things of this present life, but also as to things in the future.

The apostle’s statement, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth,” implies a repeated setting, as though the affection might slip from the heavenly things or had already done so. The intimation

is that we are to have before our minds the proper standards or things of the kingdom first and are to keep seeking and keep setting our affections upon the heavenly things. This might reasonably call forth the question, Why should such an exhortation be necessary? Seeing the danger and importance of those things, why should it not become second nature to us to

2H639

think chiefly of the heavenly things? We reply that this is because we are by nature earthly and must do our thinking through the natural brain and because we are continually surrounded by earthly attractions which draw us earthward and make bids for our time and interest. Furthermore, our great adversary, seeks to attract us from the great prize, from loyalty to the heavenly kingdom.

THE WORLD'S RESURRECTION

Incidentally let us notice the world's resurrection, not because it is a part of our topic, but because it is so misunderstood that some clarifying of the subject may assist us in understanding more particularly the difference between it and our resurrection—the church's.

The Greek word “anastasis,” rendered “resurrection,” signifies to lift up again, to lift up completely, with the implication that the something lifted up has previously fallen down. Father Adam, from harmony with God, perfection of being and lasting life, fell down into a condition of sin, dying, death. He had not the power to restore himself to divine favor nor to raise himself up out of the condemnation. His entire race share in the fall from perfection; hence the Saviour, the Deliverer provided by God, we are assured, is “able to save to the uttermost,” able to deliver not only from sin, but from death; not only from the tomb, but from all the weaknesses of heredity, all the sin, the blemishes, which rest upon our race. Christ has already “died, the just for the unjust” to accomplish this end. True, he has applied the merit of his sacrifice only to the household of faith, only to the believer. No one else is properly prepared to receive or appreciate it. But the provision of the divine plan is that the Christ Jesus, the head, and the “elect” church, his bride) at the close of this age shall become the mediator between God and the world of rebels and shall seal, ratify, make firm the new covenant between God and Israel. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (Jer. 31:31) Under this new covenant the blessing of forgiveness and reconciliation shall be most favorably arranged for Israel. Satan shall

be bound, and all the families of the earth shall have the privilege of becoming “Israelites indeed.”

This will be the world’s resurrection opportunity. The living of the nations will be dealt with first. By promises, instructions, punishments and rewards they will be raised up, resurrected out of their sin and death condition, and if they be obedient will attain to a full deliverance from death—to everlasting life, in harmony with God. The ministrations of the Great Mediator will extend also to those who sleep in Jesus—to the dead world, redeemed by the precious blood, and will grant them not only an awakening from the tomb, but subsequently an uplifting blessing and power, with all the privileges and opportunities of attaining everlasting life and perfection. In the past we have had too small, too narrow a view of the divine purpose as expressed in the word “anastasis” (resurrection). The Apostle Peter refers to this resurrection and calls it restitution in Acts 3: 19-21.

“FOR YOUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST”

The life of the true Church is a hidden one. As the Apostle suggests in our text, “Your life is hid with Christ in God.” Elsewhere he tells us that “when Christ who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory;” we also shall be manifested with him in glory; “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.” (Matt. 13:43) Respecting this *hidden* life the Apostle says, “The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” (1 John 3:1) Again the Apostle Peter suggests that if the Jews had known who Jesus was they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Similarly if they really knew the followers of Jesus, if they really understood their hearts, if they comprehended the fact that they are the children of the Highest, the world would be very careful in its treatment of the “little flock.” However, the Lord permits matters to be thus at the present time for our development in patience, in experience, in faith, in love—the love that thinketh no evil, that is not easily provoked, that rendereth not evil for evil or railing for railing, that seeketh not its own interests merely, but is on the lookout also for the interests of others.

This same thought is expressed elsewhere in the Scriptures when we are told that the Church is the “*Mystery*” and we are assured that ultimately the “*mystery* of God shall be finished.” The “First Resurrection” will end all the mystery and the secret features of the Divine Plan, which until now have greatly perplexed both saints and worldly. Then all will see the wisdom of God in selecting the Church under special conditions of

trial and testing of faith and loyalty and endurance. So great is to be the glory and honor of the Church that had all these matters been seen with distinctness at the present time, some might have striven for the prize through a spirit of ambition. But the method which God has taken requires that we shall walk by faith and not by sight, that enlightenment and understanding will be granted only in proportion as the heart manifests loyalty to the Lord and as it manifests humility and every form of righteousness. This Divine method will ultimately commend itself to all.

The lessons and experiences of the church in her own progress along the lines of the resurrection life will enable her to have sympathy with the world during the

2H640

millennium, when, as the bride, the Lamb's wife, she will be privileged as his mouthpiece to grant the world the riches of God's blessing in and through Christ Jesus our Lord. Then shall "the spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17) "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father." (Phil. 2:10, 11) "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. 40:5

Dear friends, are we settled upon this matter? Having believed in the Lord Jesus and turned away from sin, have we made a full consecration of ourselves to him and his service unto death? Have we received of his holy Spirit, begetting us to the new nature? Are we thus dead to the world and to self and to earthly interests, good and bad, and risen as new creatures to have interests in the higher, the heavenly things? Are we setting our affections daily on things above? Are we mentally keeping account of our progress and daily making right with the Lord by prayer and the merit of our Redeemer for any imperfection? Are we thus seeking in the proper way the heavenly things, so that eventually the Lord will say to us: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many." (Matt. 25:23)

[The National Labor Tribune, April 13, 1909](#)

FOUR GREAT JUDGMENT DAYS AND THE RESULTS

Pastor C. T. Russell preached in Allegheny Carnegie Hall to a large audience, from the text, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9) He said:

The expression "day of judgment" is greatly misunderstood, being often interpreted to mean doomsday, as signifying the time when trial is ended and the decision given. With this thought in mind, the expression "day of judgment" carries to the minds of many a sense of dread, of fear. Very peculiar is the mix-up in the average mind on this subject, for in one breath it is claimed that reward and punishments are entered upon immediately after death, while in another it is claimed that the day of doom comes at the second advent of Christ. How reasonable minds can harmonize these two errors is past comprehension. The fact is, that remarkably few people do any reasoning whatever upon religious subjects, and this unreasoning ignorance is perhaps as profound amongst the wealthy and the educated as amongst the poor and the ignorant.

In the melee of error the Truth has been entirely lost sight of. Surely it is high time that Christian people should learn that the vagaries and inconsistencies of their creeds from the "dark ages" not only conflict with reason and with common sense, but are in violent opposition to the teachings of the Bible. The latter, as we have already shown, explicitly teaches that mankind are really as dead as they appear to be, and do not pass into any living state of pleasure or torture while dead, but must all wait until he who paid the death penalty for Adam and his race shall assume his kingly office at his second advent and "send forth judgment unto victory," as foretold. (Matt. 12:20) Under his beneficent reign the prisoners of sin and of death shall be set free; and the prison bars of the tomb shall surrender the thousands of millions of humanity who have gone into it under the penalty of Father Adam's sentence, "Dying thou shalt die."

A day of judgement signifies a day or period or epoch of trial, of testing, of proving. This, of course, is eventually to be followed by a sentence, favorable or unfavorable to the one tried. The wrong thought lies mainly in the poor translation of the word *krisis*, which signifies trial or test and not decision or judgment, though, as already suggested, a decision or judgment or sentence should by implication follow a crisis or trial.

The Greek word *krisis*, frequently mistranslated judgment, with its original thought has been absorbed into our English language with the same signification that it has in the Greek; namely, sentence or trial. We are all familiar with the course of fevers, and understand what the doctor means when he tells us that the crisis may be reached by the patient on the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first or twenty-eighth day. We know that he means that it will be the trial time or testing time as to whether the power of the fever will break and the patient begin to recover, or whether the disease will get the greater hold and the patient rapidly sink. This is exactly the thought that should be attached to the expression judgment day or crisis day. It refers to a period, long or short, in which a full test will be made

2H641

with a result one way or another—for righteousness or for sin.

THE FIRST JUDGMENT DAY

It is more than six thousand years since the first judgment day. So far as we are able to approximate from various Scriptures the first crisis day lasted about a year and a half, during which Adam was on trial in Eden. The test upon him was as respected his obedience to the Creator and his retention of the gift of life, or his disobedience and the loss of that gift under the sentence, “Dying thou shalt die.” We all know the result of that first crisis, that it involved not only Father Adam and Mother Eve, but all of their children, then in their loins. As a result of that first crisis or trial, death sentence passed upon Adam, which is still effective against all of his offspring and on account of which we are a dying race. As the Apostle says, by the disobedience of one condemnation passed upon all of the human family. (Rom. 5:12-19) Hence it is that as a race we are a groaning creation, travailing in pain, going down to the great prison house of death. Our only hope of recovery from that original sentence rests in Christ. Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man, we are assured. (Heb. 2:9) And all being thus “bought with a price” we may hope for a full release from the death sentence in God’s due time, the penalty of failure under the first crisis, judgment, trial.

Whoever grasps the subject clearly will perceive that Adam and his race could not come again under a new judgment, crisis, trial, until the penalty upon the first man had been paid, and until the culprits had been released from that penalty.

THE SECOND JUDGMENT DAY

Some might expect us to treat the consummation of matters at the flood as the result of another judgment day; but we answer, No, mankind was still under the sentence of the first trial or crisis. That period terminating with the flood was indeed a crisis time or judgment day for the angels, for it proved which were loyal and which disloyal, and marked the beginning of the sentence of God against the latter class. "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4) At this time, however, we are not considering the trial and failure and penalty upon those fallen angels, who are known in the Scriptures as demons and who personate the dead, deceiving mankind through necromancy, spiritism, witchcraft and hypnotism, feigning that they are our dead friends and thus assisting in the perpetuation of Satan's first great lie, "Ye shall not surely die." Warning all to take heed and have nothing whatever to do with Occultism, and Spiritism and Hypnotism as being the works of the Adversary, we proceed with our subject to discuss the other judgments, the crisis which God has ordained amongst men. The second crisis day amongst men was instituted at Mount Sinai, when God entered into a special covenant with the nation of Israel through Moses, the Mediator of that Law Covenant. There an offer of life eternal was presented to that nation upon the condition that they should keep the divine law perfectly, completely, in letter and in spirit. Thus the Apostle interpreted it, saying, "He that doeth these things shall live by them."

But since Israel was a part of the world, all of whom are "children of wrath" and under sentence of death because of father Adam's transgression, before God could enter into any covenant with Israel or give them another trial in any sense of the word, it was necessary first of all to provide for them a typical justification, to forgive them their sins and release them from their penalty. This was done by Moses, their Mediator, who offered typical sacrifices for their sins: he being a sinner and his life being forfeited, the animals represented Moses justified, as he represented typically the coming Messiah, the world's Mediator.

After the sacrifices had been offered and their blood had been sprinkled on the Law, as representing God and his side of the covenant, and upon the people, as representing their side of the covenant, then the crisis, trial or judgment of that people began, to determine whether or not they could and would keep the Law

Covenant, and if they were successful, to reward them by making them God's Kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth. But if they would fail in their trial or judgment, it would mean the loss of their privilege and their remanding again under a death sentence, as unworthy of life under the law. The trial of that nation—its crisis—lasted for 1646 years and terminated on the day that our Lord Jesus rode the ass into Jerusalem, was rejected by them, and pronounced the sentence against them indicating that their trial of judgment epoch had terminated. He said: "Your house is left unto you desolate. Ye shall not see me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Luke 13:35) Their crisis being ended, nothing remained except to note the results, which were found to be as follows:

(1) By the deeds of the Law can no flesh be justified. (Rom. 3:20) Therefore it follows that every member of that nation was condemned according to the Law. But the Apostle shows us that there was a small class which, while failing to keep the Law Covenant because of weakness of the flesh, exercised throughout that age, a

2H642

faith toward God which was pleasing and acceptable to him. These are recounted to us in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and are described as those who out of weakness were made strong and who through faithfulness to God endured various tribulations, rejoicing therein and trusting for a share in a better resurrection than they would otherwise have received. After setting forth this lesson the Apostle declared, "These all died in faith not having received the promise," (Heb. 11:13); and he assures us that they can never be made perfect without us, the Lord's elect ones of this Gospel age.

(2) Another result as respects that nation was that several thousand of the Jews, lifted out of depths of degradation through the instructions of the Law, were so developed in heart as to be recognizable as "Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile." (John 1:47) These were granted the first opportunity for entering upon a new trial of a new epoch, which began with our Lord's baptism and which still continues.

As for the remainder of the Jews the Scriptures assure us that they were cast off for a time from all special favor and relationship with God, but with the divine promise that later on they shall again receive God's favor and under it become the leading nation of earth during the Millennial judgment or trial. Meantime note that the nation at large was cast off from divine favor, and certain responsibility for unappreciated and unused

opportunities lay against it, as a penalty for which a great time of trouble came upon that nation, resulting in their complete overthrow nationally in the year A.D. 70, an overthrow from which they have not yet recovered and cannot until Spiritual Israel shall have been fully developed and glorified.

THE THIRD JUDGMENT DAY

On the conclusion of the Jewish crisis or trial epoch began another special trial day, not for the world nor for the Jewish nation, but for a certain class of justified and sanctified ones gathered out of all nations. The nucleus of this class came from the nation of Israel, beginning with the Lord, his apostles, the five hundred brethren who believed on him during his ministry and who were seen by him after his resurrection (1 Cor. 15:6), and the several thousand who believed on the following Pentecost day and subsequently. (Acts 2:41, 47) These Israelites indeed, being justified through faith in the Redeemer and sanctified by a full consecration to God in his name, were begotten of the holy Spirit and became the nucleus of the new nation, the holy people, the royal priesthood, mentioned by St. Peter (1 Pet. 2:9)

Subsequently the message of the grace of God in Christ has gone hither and thither throughout the world, and like a magnet has attracted a certain class, without particularly influencing others, though some have been repelled by this magnet of divine truth and grace, the message of God's love in Christ. The effect has been the gathering of some in the name of Christ in every land, many more indeed than have rightly and fully appreciated the course and its terms. The vast majority do not know that they are called to enter upon a period of schooling under the tutelage of the Lord Jesus, their Redeemer. The message of God's grace having been generally misrepresented, many have fled to the name of Christ to escape an eternity of torture, being quite untaught so far as God and his Word are concerned. These hosts who have come to the banner of Christ under false impressions and wholly ignorant of the cost and conditions and rewards, are a great encumbrance to the faithful little flock, but serve to deceive the world as respects who constitute God's elect, what constitutes the lessons and testings of this trial time, and what will be the reward to the faithful. Meantime, however, the Master's voice is heard above the din of Babylon, and the true sheep recognize it as being very different in tone, in spirit, from the confusion of the world and of Babylon.

This crisis or trial time has lasted now for nearly nineteen centuries. Beginning with our Lord and with his

Church at Pentecost, this crisis still continues and must continue until a sufficient number shall have been found to constitute the very elect of God, to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord. As with the judgment previously mentioned, there was a period of trial and testing, and then in conclusion a decision, a rewarding and punishment; so the Scriptures declare it will be in this trial or judgment of the Church, the approved will be manifested and will be ultimately rewarded by a share in the First Resurrection change. These the Scriptures declare to be the blessed and holy who shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4)

Next to this will be another class developed during this time—tried, judged, tested, found worthy of life everlasting, but not found worthy of joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom glory. These the Scriptures speak of as the Great Company, whose number no man knoweth, a company not specially called; for all were called with the one hope of their calling—the divine nature and glory and honor and joint-heirship with Jesus in the Kingdom. (Rev. 7; Rom. 8:1) These, having failed to make their calling and election sure, are nevertheless found loyal to the Lord under test to the degree that they will not deny his name, that they would suffer rather than do so. They have love for the Lord and for the brethren, but not to that extreme degree

2H643

which leads to self-sacrifice, a seeking of opportunities therefore. Here again as with the Jewish nation, there is a large element of nominalism which does not stand the test in the crisis and which is therefore counted derelict; and as respects the call these are castaway, utterly repudiated, even though they have named the name of Christ and have professed to be separate from the world as his followers. The great time of trouble, with which the age shall end, will merely reduce these to their proper standing as members of the human family and not separate begotten ones, not called out ones, not disciples of Christ.

THE FOURTH JUDGMENT DAY

Of the fourth crisis day or epoch the Apostle speaks saying, “God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath foreordained.” (Acts 17:31) This appointed day has not yet arrived, but the Scriptures clearly outline it as the Day of Christ, the Millennial day, 1,000 years long, in which the world will have its trial, its test, Christ and the Church being its judges (1 Cor. 6:2), not for its condemnation, but for its assistance, its up-building, its instruction and the granting to it of a full *krisis* or trial or test, to prove which of mankind would intelligently

choose the side of evil with its penalty of the Second Death—utter destruction. No wonder the prophet, looking forward to that judgment day at the second coming of Christ rejoices therein, saying—

*“Let the heavens be glad,
And let the earth rejoice;
And let men say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth.
Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof;
Let the fields rejoice and all that are therein.
Then shall the trees of the wood sing aloud
At the presence of Jehovah,
Because he cometh
To judge the earth.
O give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is good;
For his mercy endureth forever.”
I Chron. 16:31-34*

The coming judgment of the world will be Jehovah's judgment day, but the Christ (our Lord and the glorified Church his Bride) will be the judges of the world, both representing Jehovah and his laws and acting also as Mediator. From this standpoint the prospect of the world's crisis or judgment is a blessed one. It implies that in some manner the first judgment of Jehovah against Father Adam and the race, the result of the first trial, has been set aside or cancelled, for there could not be another trial granted to humanity unless the sentence of the first trial were in some manner liquidated. And so we find—the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people is that the penalty of the first judgment, in which Father Adam failed and we all shared his penalty, has been met, has been cancelled by the death of Jesus, “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” The good tidings further is, that because all have been redeemed by the precious blood, the sacrificed life of Jesus, therefore all are to have a new trial, none are to be allowed to be under the Adamic death penalty any longer. The merit of Christ has cancelled that sentence; and in harmony with the divine program he becomes the Life-Giver to all of Adam's race who will accept the favor.

Hence the whole work of the Millennial age will be to scatter the ignorance, darkness, superstition, error with which the prince of this world has beclouded the minds of men, and to let in the sunlight of divine truth, and to cause all men everywhere to know the truth that the truth may make them free. As for the experience of the present life, these all will be valuable when the new dispensation shall show in contrast the operation of the reign of righteousness, so different from the present operation of the rule of sin and death. Glad are we of the assurance that ultimately every knee shall bow and every

tongue confess to the glory of God (Phil. 2:9-11), that the judgment of that time will operate amongst mankind so effectively that the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and they shall no longer need to say every man to his neighbor and every man to his brother, Know the Lord, for all shall know him from the least of them to the greatest of them. Jer. 31:34

The crisis or trial time of that thousand year judgment day will result in a full complete testing of every member of Adam's race. It will fully demonstrate those of the right condition of heart, ready and willing to build character in harmony with the will of God, and hence worthy of the reward of life eternal. It will also demonstrate those who will refuse to build such a character and mark them as unworthy of life eternal, to be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power." 2 Thess. 1:9

"I PRAY NOT FOR THE WORLD"

Whoever will consider the subject with an unbiased mind must admit that the world is not having its judgment or trial now. The terms and conditions of those now on trial are that they must have a knowledge of the only name given under heaven whereby men must be saved, and that they must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Redeemer, for without faith it is impossible to please God. (Acts 4:12; Heb. 11:6) Surely but a small majority of humanity has ever enjoyed this blessing of knowledge of Christ during this Gospel age, and

2H644

those who lived previously of course have no knowledge of the only name. Without this knowledge they could not come to this crisis or test; and they died without it. Hence they died not for their own sins, but for Adam's sin, for they were "born in sin, shapen in iniquity," as the children of Adam.

Because our Lord Jesus realized that the new dispensation which he was inaugurating was not the world's judgment day, but merely the trial day for the Church, he declared, "I pray not for the world but for those whom thou hast given me." Similarly our prayers and appeals do not need to be put forth on behalf of the world in general, but in the interest of those who have the ear to hear and the heart to respond to the heavenly calling of this Gospel age. We are to remember that now no man can come into the Son and into the blessed privileges of the present trial except the Father which sent Jesus draw him. John 6:44) This does not imply that we are to feel careless respecting the interests of the world in general, who are included in our petition when we pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth

as it is done in heaven.” It merely means that the Lord’s people who are aware of the divine program, know that the heavenly Father has a great blessing in store for the world in general, the great blessing mentioned in our text, “He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained,” Christ the Head, the Church his Body. We are content to have the Father’s will done, knowing that it is the best in every way. We are content with the restrictions which prevent any but a limited class from hearing the Lord’s message during the Gospel age. We are content with the fact that the Adversary is still unbound, and, with his deceived subjects, is permitted to make the way to eternal life so narrow now that few find it. We are content with the Lord’s assurance that this “little flock” of faithful overcomers will be glorified with himself in the end of this age, as the Bride class, and reign with him for the judging, uplifting, blessing, restitution of all the families of the earth.

Meantime we realize that our chief concern is to glorify the heavenly Father by exercising faith in his promises to the extent that will enable us to walk separate from the world, and we hearken to the voice of our Lord and Redeemer, our Teacher and Guide, instructing us that his new commandment is that we should love one another as he loved us (John 13:34), namely, to the extent of laying down our lives for our brother, directly or indirectly, giving moments or hours, time, money or influence to aid one another in making our calling and election sure to the heavenly prize which the Lord has granted to us and for which we are on trial, during this our crisis day.

WHY THIS ORDER?

There is an order in connection with the divine arrangement which man had not perceived: (1) The trial of Adam, of course, had its place at the beginning, since it was to be the trial of the whole race representatively in the one man, the head of the race. And this was accomplished rather than an individual trial for each, because each member of the race would probably have acted just as Adam did under the circumstances and because our all-wise and all-powerful Creator designed that but one sacrifice for sin would be necessary and therefore that the transgression of one should entail the calamity of death upon the entire race.

(2) The judgment day of the Jewish age came in its logical order because it was designed to do two things. First it was to act as a schoolmaster, or rather as a pedagogue, to bring children to the schoolmaster, Christ. So the Lord endeavored to uplift the minds and educate the character of the Jewish nation and to prepare them for the still higher instruction of the great Teacher Christ.

Second, God, realizing that the law could make nothing perfect, permitted the Jews to go through the formality of endeavoring to keep the Law Covenant, endeavoring to gain eternal life under it, while at the same time they were making types and pictures, illustrative of better things, a higher priesthood and nobler sacrifice for sins to come afterward through Christ.

(3) The trial of the Gospel Church came at just the appropriate time, because it could not have taken place sooner. No one could be actually released from the death sentence until the redemption price had been actually paid at Calvary and presented on behalf of believers when the Lord ascended up on high and shed forth the holy Spirit at Pentecost. And not until this had been accomplished could the Church, justified believers, present their bodies living sacrifices and fulfill the terms of the high calling of this age—to lay down their lives with Christ, to have a share with him in his death.

(4) Not until the development of the Church, as the Body of the Anointed One, under the glorified Jesus, would the Mediator of the New Covenant be complete and the blessing of the world through him be possible during the world's day of judgment, which God has appointed. So then we see a wonderful beauty in the divine arrangement of these judgment epochs, and note how step upon step they are in full harmony, the one with the other, and with the glorious character of the heavenly Father and for the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth. Let us who are now seeking the special prize of God's favor in this, the Church's crisis or trial day, be diligent that we may be found faithful

2H645

overcomers and hear the Master's words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matt. 25:24

[The National Labor Tribune, April 25, 1909](#)

THE MOST PRECIOUS TEXT- JOHN 3:16

Brooklyn, N.Y., April 25. Pastor Charles T. Russell preached today in the Brooklyn Tabernacle. He took for his text the following: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. He said:

The first thought connected with this text, dear friends, is the peculiarity of the fact that the God of all grace, the

Almighty, the All-Wise, the All-Just, should have love for the world of mankind. It would surprise none of us if the Apostle had written that God greatly loved the holy angels and that he would do any and everything for their protection and blessing. We would have said, "It is just like him. Of course he would do so. They have always been loyal, always been true. They are noble images of himself in character." If the statement had even been that God so loved his saints, that, blemished by the imperfections of the flesh, he had accepted them through the merits of Jesus' sacrifice and counted them as perfect and entire in him, this would have caused greater surprise than God's love for the angels. And yet we would have said, "Yes, it is just like our heavenly Father to be abundantly gracious and to remember the sins and iniquities no more against those who have turned to righteousness and by faith have been covered by their Redeemer's Robe of Perfection."

"CONDEMNED SIN IN THE FLESH"

If this were the only text of Scripture to the contrary (but it is not), it would be an utter refutation to the blasphemous declaration respecting the Divine Purpose toward mankind. The thought that God created our race with the foreknowledge and prearrangement that the overwhelming majority, all except the saintly "elect," must spend an eternity of hopeless torture, is thoroughly out of accord with reason, as well as contradictory to our text, "God so loved the world." Does love plan torture? Does loving provision not imply wisdom in the use of power, that the creature may not be injured, if he shall not be benefited by the program? Is it conceivable that he who commands us to love our enemies and to observe towards them the Golden Rule would himself ignore that Rule and injure, not merely his enemies, but also the ignorant, the superstitious, the great masses of mankind—of whom the Apostle declares, "The God of this world hath blinded their minds?"

Let us have done with such nightmares, such "doctrines of demons," as the Apostle styles them. Let us begin to know our Creator, our heavenly Father, for such knowledge is a step towards love for him and hence towards life eternal for ourselves. It was our dear Redeemer who said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3) Not only the world perishes because of a lack of true knowledge of the Creator, but many of God's people are similarly hindered. As the Scriptures declare, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Hos. 4:6

It should be understood by all that God's love for mankind, as well as Divine Justice and Wisdom, prepared man's penalty—"The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23) It is in full harmony with this that we know when the Lord drove our first parents out of the garden of Eden and placed the cherubim with flaming sword to prevent their return thither, it was a merciful provision, because had they continued to have access to the trees of life, and thus to continue existence, it would have meant everlasting life for sinners. And to give sinners eternal life and to perpetuate a condition of sin, rebellion, anarchy, in the universe to all eternity would have been discreditable to the Divine Character and Government, as well as injurious to his creatures. God's determination, therefore, from the very beginning was that he would have a clean universe, and hence the law, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"—a law which ultimately must prevail as respects the fallen angels and Satan, as well as in respect to mankind.

Thus we have the assurance that ultimately nothing shall mar the harmony of the universe. What the Scriptures point out respecting the future will prove true. "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. 5:13) Thus the time will come when sin and all who love sin will be destroyed and when, as a consequence, the

2H646

Scriptures assure us, "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Rev. 21:4, 5

"THAT HE GAVE HIS SON"

God's love for sinners, as we have seen, was so great that *he would not allow them to have everlasting life*, because that would mean to them everlasting imperfection and sorrow, etc. But our text tells us of a still further step that the Lord took—and hence shows a still further love. He not only had the passive love for sinners which would not arrange for their eternal suffering through a perpetuation of life out of harmony with himself, but he had the active love which arranged for their recovery out of sin and death conditions, as stated by our text.

"He gave his only begotten Son." How? When? Where? What for? We answer, he did not give his only begotten Son to suffer eternal torment for us. Thank God, No!

Yet, if eternal torment had been the sinner's penalty, God's Son could not have been their Redeemer, except by paying that awful price. As we have seen, however, the penalty was not that, but a death penalty—"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4); "Dying thou shalt die;" "The wages of sin is death." God gave his only begotten Son to die for our sins that he might bring us back to God. Our Lord's death on Calvary was the sufficient price for the sins of the whole world, although he did not apply that price directly to the world, but to believers of this present time; and, indirectly, through the consecrated believers, the Bride of Christ, it will be applied to mankind in general, thus permitting the Church class to "fill up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ," and to share with him in the sealing of the New Covenant for Israel and through Israel for the world. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." Jer. 31:31

Nor should we understand that God compelled his only begotten Son to die for us, but rather, as the Scriptures inform us, he set before him a great prize, so that Jesus counted it all joy to lay down his life that he might be the heavenly Bridegroom to the Church and be the Mediator of the New Covenant for Israel and the world of mankind. How wise, how just, are God's arrangements! Though he possesses all power, yet he would not infract the rights or liberties of even the most humble of his creatures, much less the rights of his only begotten Son, our Lord.

HE LEFT THE HEAVENLY GLORY

The Scriptures inform us that it was in accord with the Father's arrangement and the giving of his Son that he made to him the proposition to become man's Redeemer and uplifter and the Head of the Church, to receive glory, honor and immortality. It was in view of this proposition as a whole that we read of our Lord that he, "For the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God." (Heb. 12:2) Again, "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (1 Tim. 2:6) He left the heavenly glory and took upon him the human nature and, as the man Christ Jesus, gave himself as the Ransom for all.

WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM

God's love is not only large and broad, but it is also deep and wide. In blessing mankind he proposes the largest blessing possible in the wisest manner. He will not justify the heathen in their ignorance nor justify wilful rebels. He limits his favor by two conditions:

(1) The blessing through his Son shall go only to those who intelligently know of it and by faith accept it.

(2) It shall be available only to those who desire to come into harmony with Divine laws as obedient children.

This presents a difficulty to our minds until we come to understand what the Scriptures call the Divine Plan of the Ages. Until we understand that Plan, we are inclined to find fault with the Divine arrangement and with ourselves and with fellow-Christians and generally to be uncomfortable and disappointed in proportion to the largeness of our hearts and our interests in God's character and in humanity. We find fault with ourselves and others that the world has not long ago been evangelized and made acquainted with God. We fault God that he is allowing the heathen to go down into death at the rate of ninety thousand per day, with no knowledge of the "only name under heaven whereby we must be saved." We squirm and twist in our reasonings in trying to justify this course and are still further harassed by the horrible nightmare of eternal torment, which teaches that the heathen not only do not get eternal life in glory, but that they do get eternal life in misery.

Alas, how true are the Lord's words through the Prophet, "Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with the grave shall not stand. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the doctrine." Isa. 28:18, 19

2H647

THE PLAN OF THE AGES

The key to the whole Mystery is that God first selects from amongst mankind a special class of those able and willing to exercise faith in him, to receive the Spirit of Christ, and to demonstrate their loyalty by walking in his steps. These, he tells us, he is calling out of the world, by what the world calls the foolishness of preaching. These he is testing as respects their faith and loyalty and using the trials and oppositions of this present time as chiseling processes and burrs to shape and polish and prepare the precious stones for their glorious setting in the heavenly Kingdom. There are not many of these altogether. "Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." (Luke 12:32) They are being selected out of all denominations, kindreds and tongues, and amongst them are not many great, wise, noble or rich. They are chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom.

This “little flock” of “saints,” this “royal priesthood,” with Christ their Redeemer, their Lord, their Bridegroom, their Head, their Chief Priest, are to constitute the Kings, Priests, Judges, Rulers of the world of mankind, when in the age to follow this one, in the Millennium, God’s time shall come for dealing with mankind as a whole. In co-operation with the Kingdom work will be the binding of Satan and every evil influence amongst men, and the letting loose of every good influence and every helpful truth. Thus the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep.

This is God’s provision for the world of mankind, whom he so loved; not merely for the saints, who already having the hearing ear, the seeing eye, and the appreciative heart, is God’s loving provision, but for poor, degraded humanity, which, through centuries of sin, has almost entirely lost the image and likeness of its Creator. The promise for these is that they shall be privileged by resurrection processes to return to full harmony with the Lord and to repossess the blessings and favors lost by father Adam, when he sinned—blessings and privileges redeemed for Adam’s race through the merits of our dear Redeemer’s sacrifice at Calvary.

Who will say that this Divine Plan, outlined in the Bible, does not contain the very essence of Divine wisdom and loving provision best adapted to the needs of our race? Belief in the Lord Jesus, acceptance of him, obedience to the Divine law, will thus be the conditions upon which mankind may be recovered. Would any other conditions be safe or just or proper? Is there any other way of arranging these conditions which God’s wisdom and justice provided and which his grace reveals?

BELIEVERS MIGHT NOT PERISH

Notice how the various features of our text intermesh with each other, like the cogs and pinions of a well-fitted machine! Let us get rid of the wrong thought that so long has befogged our reason and robbed our hearts of the proper reverence for our Creator! Let us get rid of the thought that “perish” means to *preserve* in eternal torture, thus confusing the minds of the Lord’s people and the world to the true teachings of the Scriptures. Perishing, of course, means perishing—to lose life, to become extinct. Man, originally made in God’s image, was prepared for eternal life; that eternity was to be his destiny. But sin forfeited those life-rights conferred upon him by his Maker. He came under a sentence of death—that he should perish like the brute beasts. Hence his only hope of a future life is in the Redeemer and the resurrection which his sacrifice has secured. His intelligence and higher organism could only avail him on

condition that they would be used in harmony with his Maker's reasonable and just requirements. Otherwise he must die the death, as being even less worthy of prolonged existence than the brute. Note how our text points out that God saw that in the race of Adam there would be many who, if they understood the light and the Truth and had it in contrast with the wrong, would be glad to return to harmony with God—glad to accept of Christ and Restitution privileges and blessings, and to come into full accord with the Almighty and with Jesus, and to have back again the life-rights forfeited by father Adam. Hence God's provision for the race as a whole—that *they might not perish as the brute beast*, but attain to eternal life again; attain to all that was lost in Adam, all that was redeemed by Jesus Christ our Lord—eternal life, fellowship with God the Father and the Son and communion with the holy Spirit; fellowship in all the rights on both the heavenly and the earthly plane and, indeed, become inheritors again through God's mercy in Christ of all that was lost by Adam and redeemed by Christ.

*“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.”*

These words of the poet are wonderfully true! Truth is, indeed, stranger than fiction! The Divine Plan for human salvation is higher and deeper, longer and broader than any of us dreamed of! Yet it is most exact; nothing about it is slipshod or irregular. While the blessed privileges of reconciliation will be granted all of Adam's race, they will be forced upon none—except that all will be forced to bow the knee and to confess with tongue the glorious manifestations of Divine power and goodness, as they will be exhibited during the Millennium. Evidently it must rest with each individual to determine whether he will be during this age

2H648

one of the “elect” or not. “Keep yourselves in the love of God,” writes the Apostle. “Make your (own) calling and election sure,” he urges. (Jude 21; 2 Pet. 1:10) And so it must be during the Millennium. The knowledge will be forced upon all and obedience will be forced to a certain limit, but in the end the sinner himself must determine whether or not he will accept the grace of God for the remission of his sins. The provisions have been made by the Divine love, but God requires none who will not come into harmony with him and have a fixity of character, that there should be no further outbreak of sin through all eternity.

All who, after being brought to a knowledge of the Truth, persist in loving falsehood shall be accounted as children of Satan, who have wilfully adopted his spirit of

enmity towards truth and righteousness. The end of such, as the Scriptures declare, is destruction. As the messengers and followers of Satan they, with him, and with the fallen angels, shall be utterly destroyed. Acts 3:23

BLESSING AND CURSING, LIFE AND DEATH

The test before mankind is not along lines of eternal torment or eternal joy, but between eternal life and eternal death. Thus the Apostle states it, “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23) We cannot change these Divine arrangements, if we would. We ought not to wish to change them, if we could. It is for us not to seek to have our wills done in heaven and earth, but rather to learn of the imperfection of our judgment and to pray to the Father, “Thy will may be done on earth, as it is done in heaven,” assured that when the glorious consummation is attained it will signify the highest possible blessing for every creature—eternal life, eternal joy, for all in harmony with God, and death eternal “everlasting destruction” for all the enemies of God.

“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts (plans) than your thoughts (plans),” saith the Lord. (Isa. 55:9) How true! How we should feel humiliated by the fact that we so greatly ignored the Divine testimony on this important subject and were so willing to give heed to our own immature thoughts and to those of our fellow-mortals. Let the lesson go down deep into our hearts, that it may make us the wiser and more humble. And let us learn as the Apostle suggested to Timothy, “Study to show thyself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing

“THE WORD OF TRUTH.”

2 Tim. 2:15

Ah, yes, the more we come to understand the deep things of God, and the riches of the wisdom hidden in Christ and revealed to us in the Scriptures, the more we may well respect and reverence our Creator. “Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?” queries the Apostle. (Rom. 11:34) Surely we all agree with him and will hereafter give him the more earnest heed that we place not our confidence and faith in works of man, but in the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever!

[The National Labor Tribune, May 5, 1909](#)

THE HELPFULNESS OF PROPER VOWS TO THE LORD

Brooklyn, N.Y., May 2—Pastor C. T. Russell preached at the Brooklyn Tabernacle today taking as his text the words, “I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.” (Psa. 116 : 14, 13) He said:

No less than ten times does the Prophet David refer to his vows to the Lord; the propriety of so doing and his appreciation of the responsibilities thus incurred and his determination to fulfil his vows. The word Vow is rarely used today except in respect to clerical vows, baptismal vows, marriage vows. The word *vow* has to considerable extent been superseded by the word *promise* and other words which signify an obligation to the Lord, a covenant or agreement, as, for instance, we speak of our covenants with the Lord, meaning our vows or obligations. The word consecration is frequently used to express this thought of avowed obedience and sacrifice to the Lord and his cause. Thus when St. Paul writes, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service,” he is exhorting us to consecration—to an avowal of fidelity to the Lord, to the extent of death. Much is said in the Scriptures respecting the making of such consecration vows to the Lord.

The Scriptures contain severe warnings against the making of vows to the Lord carelessly, assuring us that

2H649

it would be better to make no vow at all than to vow and to fail to perform to the extent of our ability. It is in harmony with this, that our Lord forewarns us to sit down first and count the cost of discipleship, so that there may be no falling back or even looking back subsequently. He declares, He that puts his hand to the plow and then looks back, regretting his covenant or vow of sacrifice, will not be accounted worthy of a share in the Kingdom. The Scriptures abound with exhortations that we take heed to promise the Lord nothing that we will not fulfil to the best of our ability. Permit me to quote you some of these instances.

“When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord, thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will

surely require it of thee (it will be sin in thee to ignore it)—that which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform, even a *free-will offering unto the Lord thy God.*” Deut. 23:21-23

“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay (the vow).” Eccl. 5:4-5

“Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed. O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.” Psalms 65:1-2

“Vow, and pay unto the lord your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.” Psalms 76:11

“My praise shall be in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.” Psalms 22:25

“Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High: and (then) call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. But unto the wicked (covenant breakers, vow breakers), God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant into thy mouth? Seeing that thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.” Psalms 50:14-17

“Thy vows are upon me, O God. I will render praises unto thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death; wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling?” Psalms 56: 12-13

“I will abide in thy tabernacle forever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings. For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name. So will I sing praise unto thy name forever, that I may daily perform my vows.” Psalms 61:4-8

“I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.” Psalms 66:13-14

PROPER VOWS VALUABLE

As we have seen from the foregoing illustrations a *vow* represents a promise or covenant with God, respecting some matter not strictly called for by Divine Law. That is to say, whatever is demanded of us by Justice is an obligation, and could not properly be considered a sacrifice or consecration, such as the word *vow* would imply. It is for this reason that specific vows are not outlined and commanded in the Scriptures. The entire decalogue is commanded; and love for God and for our neighbor to the fullest extent is *commanded*; but the

Vow is merely *suggested* as a possibility to those desirous of making an offering or sacrifice to the Lord. Similarly the Divine Law, which *commands* that the human nature be restrained from sin and be obedient to every law of righteousness, *does not command* that we shall consecrate our lives to the extent of sacrificing them, even in the Divine service.

A thing demanded and commanded cannot be a sacrifice. Thus the Apostle, when urging upon all believers consecration, does not command it, nor even hint a penalty upon those who do not consecrate. He merely urges, saying, "I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Whoever accepts the Apostle's suggestion sacrifices his human rights to the Lord and his cause and the expression of such a sacrifice or consecration is a vow—an avowal.

While it is true that those who make a vow of consecration and who fail to perform it in spirit will be less esteemed of the Lord than those who never made this vow, nevertheless there is a great blessing connected with such an avowal of loyalty to God, to the extent of self-sacrifice. Those who never make this consecration, this Vow, will in no sense be sharers of the heavenly Kingdom and its high spiritual reward. This does not mean that God has no other portion, no other blessing, for those who refrain to vow, for those who refrain to come into consecration. We have previously shown that in the Divine purpose there is an age of restitution just in advance of us, the blessings of which the Scriptures assure us will be for all the families of the earth. (Acts 3:19-21) But we remind you that the high calling, the election of this Gospel Age, guarantees to those who make the *Vow of consecration* to the Lord and who perform it faithfully a still greater blessing than restitution *and* heavenly spiritual nature with glory, honor and immortality and participation in the Divine nature. God is now justifying believers through faith, in order to give them an opportunity to consecrate themselves, to make their vows unto the Lord and to show their love and loyalty by keeping these vows. In view of this who will say that God has not attached a great blessing to this vow of consecration—to all those who present

2H650

themselves in sacrifice to him?

HOW VOWS MAY ASSIST

The will is the proper ruler of human life; but the fact is that a great many people are without this ruler and guide as respects the higher things of life. Early in life the will

usually decides for name and honor and wealth, to be secured as honestly and as easily as possible. The will represents the sentiment of our strongest or preponderating characteristics or mental qualities. In a majority of people these are not the highest qualities of the mind, but rather the lowest. Selfishness, acquisitiveness, combativeness, destructiveness and animal passion lie at the base of the brain and are usually persistently cultivated, encouraged and gratified, with merely certain limitations of decency, honesty, respectability, associating with them as a veneer.

A phrenological examination of the brain shows other higher and nobler qualities of the mind in every case, but with many the upper stories of the mind are comparatively unfurnished and unoccupied. The owner of the frame lives almost continually in the cellar. Why is this so? Because the lower organs have to do with the necessities of every day life. And the owner of the brain often finds it inconvenient to consult the higher elements of his organism, because these usually through conscience would be inclined to *reprove* his course of life. His justice would frequently forbid commercial transactions which his lower nature desires to put through. His benevolence, his spirituality, his veneration for God and his Word, if allowed to speak, would thwart his selfish plans and resolutions.

What such a man needs to do is to make *a vow to himself* that he will seek to live in harmony with his own convictions—that he will not allow the baser qualities of his nature to rule him, but will regulate those qualities by the noblest and best sentiments of which he is possessed. We suggest that this vow be to himself, because it could not be a vow to God. *God's Law commands his best* and, in living according to any other standards he is living in violation of the Divine Law written in his very constitution, represented in the organs of his brain. True, our fallen brains are not perfectly balanced, nevertheless, a measure of the Divine likeness is to be found in every human brain not idiotic.

If the whole world could come to appreciate these facts and if each person would *vow to himself* to live his own very best—according to his own highest ideals—in full harmony with the measure of the Divine likeness which he possesses, the world would straightway be comparatively a Paradise. True, many things would still be amiss, but the will, the most important factor, if right with God, would bring a measure of peace to every heart, to every home, to every land.

A NEW HEART NEEDED

“Create within me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a right spirit within me.” (Psa. 51:10) The man or woman who begins reformation of life by *vowing to himself* to live according to his best natural ability will find himself disappointed still; because of the impossibilities of harmonizing all the various qualities of his mind under present conditions connected with the reign of sin and death in the world. He will find that to *will* may be present with him, but to perform the will of his nobler mind will be an impossibility, because through heredity and through commercial customs and through his own habits of life, his lower organs are fully developed and stronger in their combination, while the organs representing his nobler sentiments are relatively weak, inexperienced and out of accord with the Sin and Death conditions which prevail on every hand.

It is asked why this is so? The Scriptural reply is that we were born in sin and shapen in iniquity; and in sin did our mothers conceive us. (Psa. 51:5) The Bible tells us of the origin of sin in the disobedience of Eden. It tells us of the sentence of sin. And we see how that sentence has bound and enfeebled our race on its way to the tomb. The effort to live righteously, soberly and justly in this present world is so great that if there were no future prospects, no Divine promises of future life, we might well consider, as the Apostle suggests, whether we might not better eat, drink and be merry and die rather than fight a continual warfare against so heavy odds.

GIVE THE WILL TO GOD

The Scriptures inform us of the Divine pity for our race in its fallen condition; yea, that God perceived all of our distressed conditions before he created us and even then planned a remedy, “The Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world.” The Bible shows us that Jesus was that Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. It shows that before he can deal with the world, according to the Divine arrangement, he must purchase all of its rights and interests by his own perfect life. In our Lord’s sacrificial experiences these two things were accomplished. He kept the Law and had a right to all of its blessings as a *man*. He sacrificed those rights in the interests of the world of mankind. He received a reward of life eternal on the higher spiritual plane. The next thing in order is to give to mankind the blessings secured by his sacrificial death.

Our Redeemer might have consummated the entire work of uplifting humanity from sin and death back to all that

was lost and which he redeemed by his own sacrifice.
But God had a higher and a grander message

2H651

which would still further illustrate the length and breadth and height and depth of his justice, wisdom, love and power. This plan, which God is pursuing, calls from amongst the redeemed race those who have hearts hungry and thirsty for righteousness and harmony with God. By various processes these are “called” and chosen, instructed and tested and made ready as the members of Christ, God’s jewels, who are promised a close relationship with their Lord in the future, represented by the picture of a bride and queen in relation to the king of Glory. It is to these, after they have believed, that the Lord makes known his gracious purposes. Such of them as respond with zeal have the Apostle’s exhortation to take upon them a Vow of full consecration to the Lord unto death and then to live up to the terms of that Vow to the best of their ability until the close of life.

This Vow, unlike the other we suggested, is not to themselves, not to other men or congregations, lodges or societies, but to God only. While it is true that the Vow to the Lord will not end our responsibilities, but merely begin them, it is also true that we cannot come into relationship with the Lord at all, except by making a consecration Vow. It is the Vow in advance that the Lord accepts and responds to by the begetting of the holy Spirit. Whoever, therefore, has failed to Vow unto the Lord with consecration has failed to be begotten of the holy Spirit and will have no share with the Church’s glory. He may not have called it a Vow, he may not have called it consecration, he may not have called it anything; but the Vow of consecration must, nevertheless, have been his—uttered or unexpressed, before he could become a member of God’s Spiritual family.

Thus our Lord’s Vow of consecration was expressed in the words, “Lo, I have come, as in the volume of the Book it is written of me—to do thy will, O God.” The will of the Father was that our Lord Jesus should have the opportunity of presenting himself a living sacrifice on man’s behalf. Our Lord accepted this and his acceptance was his consecration Vow of obedience, even unto death on the cross. A man might have the intention for days or months or years to purchase a piece of property which he knew was for sale, yet the intention did not purchase it, nor did it give him any right or interest in the property. But when the desire for the property reached the point when he went to the agent and signed a *contract* for the purchase and made a payment on account, then he had interest in the property.

Similarly God has a wonderful proposition for us. We heard about it for years and more or less believed it, yet we had neither right nor interest in it until the time came when we accepted the Lord's favor and surrendered to him our wills. That surrender of ourselves, our rights, our interests, our lives, in whatever terms we made it, few or many, words or thoughts, constituted our consecration Vow, which became to us the channel of God's grace in Christ.

BIND THE SACRIFICE WITH CORDS

Our original consecration vow, even if carefully made, we found to be but an imperfect one because of our imperfect knowledge of the trials and responsibilities and difficulties and the Lord's requirements. We found need for new vows covering new features or guarding weaknesses. Some Vows we made for our own assistance, although it might be said that everything possible was included in our original Vow. Those who follow this course bind their sacrifices the more firmly and the more closely to the altar of sacrifice and correspondingly are assisted in the narrow way and in maintaining themselves in the love of God.

In conclusion, then, let us not Vow hastily, but soberly, wisely. Let us bring ourselves under all reasonable restraints of thought and word and action-restraints to God and not to men or creeds. So doing, undoubtedly our cup of blessing will more and more overflow.

[The National Labor Tribune, May 16, 1909](#)

FOREORDINATION, PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION

Glasgow, May 16—"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Rom. 8:28, 29

Coming to the land of that sturdy man of God, John Knox, I am reminded of his able contention for the doctrine of Election—its Scripturalness and its demonstration of the greatness, majesty and sovereignty of the Lord our God. We surmise, however, that the good man's heart must frequently have been sorely distressed

with the logic of his own argument—that the eternal woe of nine-tenths of our race was as unalterably fixed in advance of their birth as was the eternal joy of the blessed handful predestinated to be saints and to share the heavenly glories. We may well thank God, dear friends, that in the clearer light now shining upon the Scriptures we may discern the errors handed down to us from the dark ages, without losing our appreciation of Divine foreknowledge and Divine sovereignty.

While it is true that it would be difficult to estimate the value of the doctrine of Divine foreknowledge taught by Brother Knox, not only in this nation, but also throughout the world, inculcating a reverence for the Almighty, it is also true that it would be difficult to estimate the amount of damage which has resulted to Christendom and throughout the world from his teachings respecting the Divine treatment of the non-elect. This serious error has alienated the hearts of thousands from God and from his Book. Let us look together at the doctrine of Election, Predestination and Foreordination, from the Scriptural standpoint, that we may note its beauties and be drawn the nearer to the Lord and to his Book in true reverence and worship.

FOREKNOWN AND PREDESTINATED

Our text declares that whom God did foreknow them he also did predestinate; but we notice that the predestination is stated only as respects the Church and not in respect to others. This fact does not escape the attention of others, but they have reasoned erroneously,—that if God foreknew an elect Church, for whom he predestinated special blessings and honors, this would imply that the remainder of mankind non-elect were to be tortured eternally. The logic of this position is unsound and it is quite unscriptural to say that all of the non-elect will be consigned to an eternity of torture at the hands of fire-proof demons in fulfilment of a Divine predestination fixed before creation. There is no Scripture whatever to this effect, and Brother Knox and others were in error to the extent that they wove into their theories matters not Scripturally stated.

According to the Scriptures, as well as according to human judgment as expressed in the laws of civilization, the highest, the severest penalty to be enforced, is the death penalty, the taking away of the life not used in harmony with the Creator's reasonable, righteous requirements. This is the Scriptural declaration to which, for so long a time, we were blind: "The wages of sin is death;" "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" "All the wicked shall he destroy;" "They shall perish as brute beasts;" "They shall be destroyed with an everlasting

destruction” (the Second Death). Rom. 6:23; Ezek. 18:4; Psa. 145:20; 2 Pet. 2:12; 1 Thess. 2:9

Thus seen the very severest results possible to non-election would be extinction—the Second Death. But the Scriptures clearly show that God has gracious purposes, not for the “elect” only, but also for the non-elect, and that in his due time the non-elect shall be brought to a clearer knowledge of the Truth and to a full opportunity of harmony with their Creator and through Christ Jesus the re-attainment of all that was lost in Adam, all that was redeemed by the precious sacrifice of Christ. Thus, as the Scriptures declare, there is a “common salvation” (Jude 3) in which all of Adam’s children shall be privileged to have a share. There is also a special salvation, a “high calling” of God in Christ, which is referred to as “so great salvation which began to be (preached) spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” (Heb. 2:3) This special or great salvation is the one which our Lord hath provided for the “Elect,” while the “common salvation” is his provision for the non-elect.

Does it not seem strange that Brother Knox and others, his coadjutors, in getting away from much of the smoke of the “dark ages” failed to even think of a salvation of the non-elect in God’s providence? Their eyes, beholding the awful and blighting errors respecting eternal torment, totally blinded them to God’s provisions for the non-elect; for they reasoned that if God had predestinated them to eternal torment and had in advance of their creation prepared a great place of torture and fire-proof devils and fuel enough for eternity, then surely he could have no plan of salvation for them. The entire premise was wrong. The death into which they went was not eternal torment but the tomb, as represented by the Hebrew word *Sheol* and the Greek word *Hades*. And they can have no release from the tomb, no return to consciousness or pain or pleasure until the Second Coming of the Redeemer in the morning of the Resurrection.

Thank God, then, for the rolling away of the mists of darkness and error which permits us to see in the Bible that the “common salvation,” God’s provision for the world, will be a Restitution, a restoration to human perfection in the rejuvenated earth, a world-wide paradise! Thank God for the promises to the effect that then “the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep” and that “the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams;” that “nothing shall hurt or destroy or injure in all God’s holy Kingdom;” that “the wayfaring man, though simple, need not err therein,” and that a broad highway shall be there as a way of

salvation — a much traveled way — and that all the redeemed of the Lord from mankind shall be privileged to go up thereon out of sin and death conditions to conditions of life everlasting. We thank God, too, that those who shall refuse to make proper progress and shall fail of that “common salvation” because of wilful sin will not be permitted to live endlessly in sin nor in torment, but will be utterly destroyed in the Second Death; because God is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna, the Second Death. We thank God also that the elect Church, under Christ, the Captain of their salvation, are promised a share in that glorious work of the Redeemer, in blessing all the families of the earth in bringing to them that common (general) salvation.

YOUR HIGH CALLING

If once we dreaded to think of God’s grace towards us in accepting us as members of his elect Church, because of the opposing thought of the damnation of the non-elect, we may now correspondingly rejoice the more in our privilege, of election, seeing that it means our privilege of sharing in the world’s uplift under the direction of Emmanuel, our Lord, during his Millennial reign. The Apostle speaks of the prospect of the elect as “our High Calling;” and again, “our heavenly calling.” The thought is that we are called to a very high honor and wonderful distinction and that on a heavenly plane. The Gospel Church is invited to experience a change of nature from human to Divine, from the highest of the earthly natures to the highest of the heavenly natures—far above angels and principalities and powers and every name that is named—“join theirs with Christ,” “partakers of the Divine nature,” members of “the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

Truly do the Scriptures tell that not many would be able to hear, to appreciate, to understand, to accept this high calling. The Divine arrangement of the call is elective, selective. It appeals to some and does not appeal to others. It has an attraction for some and not for others.

If we had here a box of sawdust and scattered through it a paper of tacks until the latter were quite hidden from view, surrounded and covered in the sawdust, we know that we could take a magnet and, by passing it to and fro amongst the sawdust, the magnet would attract to itself every tack. It might indeed exercise a still further attraction upon some of the sawdust, but the holding would be so slight that we could blow it off, while the tacks would be firmly held by reason of their responsiveness to the magnetic influence. The box of sawdust represents the world of mankind. The tacks of the illustration represent a small class of humanity, zealous at heart for God and for righteousness. The magnet represents

the Gospel invitation which is now passed up and down, hither and thither throughout the civilized world, and to some extent, into the heathen world.

It is not the design of the Lord to elect, select, choose, gather all mankind (the sawdust) by the magnet; merely he would now gather the true-hearted, represented by the specks of steel, the tacks. The illustration might be enlarged by supposing some other tacks of other metallic composition not so subject to the magnetic influence as the steel. The illustration of these would represent mixed characters, such as we see about us in the world everywhere. The illustration might be extended to include good tacks covered with dirt or other foreign substance which would hinder them from responding to the influence of the magnet and this would represent true characters encrusted with the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, etc.

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God through sanctification of the spirit and the belief of the Truth,” writes the Apostle, God designed the election of this Age. He desired to separate to himself a peculiar people, to be the associates of Jesus, their Redeemer, in his subsequent work of uplifting the willing and obedient of the world of mankind. But God has not predestinated nor desired the election of any except a sanctified class, a class not sanctified through stripes, not through force or compulsion, but sanctified through a knowledge of the Truth. Such are drawn to God in devotion through a knowledge of his glorious purposes and heart sympathy therein, sufficient to induce them to sacrifice their all, so far as earthly matters and interests are concerned. These are the elect, whom the Lord has been searching for and testing with the magnet of his Truth, and the manner of their response to it throughout this Gospel age, determined whether “They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up my jewels.”

“WHOM HE DID FOREKNOW”

It is not for us to quibble respecting the Divine power of foreknowledge—to question the ability of our Creator to have foreknown, had he chosen to do so, and foretold every member of the elect class. The Divine is so far above the human that it is impossible for the human mind to measure the infinite or to comprehend his power. We must merely accept the Divine statement. However, nothing in the Word of God tells us that we were foreknown individually—personally. Rather the intimation is that God predestinated the election of a Church, predetermined the number of persons who would be accepted as members in that Church, the Body of Christ, predetermined what characters they must have and what tests of character would be necessary

2H654

to demonstrate their loyalty and to prove the individual worthy a place in the foreordained class.

It is in full harmony with this that we read that many are called to the few who will be chosen, and that again we are exhorted to “make our calling and our election sure.” We are assured that “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it”—do all that he has promised—keep his part of the contract. This being so, all of the called ones have the determining of results in their own cases. God is faithful. If they are faithful at heart to the terms and conditions of their Covenant they will be of the elect—otherwise not.

“HE ALSO DID PREDESTINATE”

We come now to the particular clause of our text which has seemed to fortify the error. “Them he also did predestinate.” Ah, say many, that fixes it! There is no option, nothing dependent upon it. God predestinated everything. Not so, we answer. In the past we have been prone to read our text disconnectedly and thus doing we have overlooked its clear teaching. We thought of it as though it read, “God predestinated the elect,” but not so. The declaration is that God predestinated that all that would be of the elect class must be copies of his Son. The predestination of this verse relates not to individuals, but to a certain character which all of the elect individuals must attain to — otherwise they will not be of the elect.

How beautifully simple and plain this makes it all. Nor would we ask the matter otherwise. “Just and true are thy ways, Lord God Almighty!” The great honor, the high distinction which God proposes to confer upon the “very elect” in the First Resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ is so grand that the very highest possible test of character is appropriate to those who would be granted such honors and immortality. Our Lord Jesus said to his disciples, Sit down first and count the cost of discipleship and if you determine that it is worth the price, come, “take up your cross and follow me.” As a reward I promise you that “where I am there shall my disciple be.” “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.”

Those who attain the character likeness of Christ Jesus will have the character likeness of the Father, of whom the Son is the express image and character likeness. Hence the appropriateness of our Lord’s words “Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven.”

So direct an application as we are making of these words may appall some of the Lord’s people who have been thinking carelessly that if they were once in grace they would always

be in grace—if once elect they would never fail. I desire to awaken such to a realization of the heights of our calling and of the necessity of our obedience to the terms of the calling, if we would make our calling and our election sure—certain. However, it is well to remark here that the perfection to which the called ones are exhorted is not a perfection of the flesh, which would be an impossibility because of its natural blemishes, its hereditary taints and weaknesses. It is the heart, the will, that the Lord is inspecting, proving, and not the flesh. “Blessed are the pure in heart,” said our Savior. And we may be sure that the pure in heart, the pure in intention and endeavor, will make considerable progress in overcoming the weaknesses of the flesh. The Lord will expect them to prove their faith and their loyalty by such good works as are possible to them in their weakness and under their environments.

“CALLED CHOSEN FAITHFUL”

The “very elect,” those who will make their calling and their election sure—those who will inherit the glory, honor and immortality in the First Resurrection; are described as the “called and chosen and faithful.” Those called through the Gospel message, through the Bible and Tracts and hymns and Christian lives every way, are many. “Many are called.” But not so many respond to the call. The majority, noting the fact that the Vows of consecration imposed score hard against the will of the flesh and make the way to glory narrow decline to enter the “straight gate and the narrow way,” hoping still for some favor from the Divine provision—hoping against nearly all the creeds and theories of the world, but still hoping. Nor is the hope in vain, as we have already seen. God has a gracious arrangement and a “common salvation” which, in due time, will be offered to all men. But how much they will miss!—All the wonderful things that “God has in reservation for them that love him”—for the elect! And besides, to whatever extent they shall wilfully engage in sin and selfishness they will degrade their fallen natures and make the more difficult the ascent in the Restitution Highway of the coming Age. Let us be glad, in God’s providence, our ears have heard the message of his love and grace and if our hearts have responded and if, subsequently, we have been begotten of the holy Spirit and thus have a mark of being not only called, but chosen.

ALL THINGS WORK GOOD

It is to this class that our text refers, assuring us that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose.” So we should expect. These called and chosen, begotten of the holy Spirit, are “children of God, and if children, then heirs— heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord.” (Rom. 8:16, 17) Could we expect less than that their Heavenly Father would watch over

2H655

their every interest, temporal and spiritual? Could we think for a moment that he would become negligent of their interests? On the contrary the words of our text are in fullest agreement with just what we should have expected. For, as the Apostle says of these, “All things are yours and ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.” 1 Cor. 3:22, 23

How is it, then that our Redeemer was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grieves? How is it that so many of his followers have suffered afflictions? How is it that the Great Teacher forewarned those, “Think it not strange if the world hate you and persecute you and do all manner of evil against you for my sake.” How is it that the Apostle writes, “Whosoever will live godly (in this present time) shall suffer persecution” and assures us that we “must suffer with Christ, if we would reign with him?” How do these sufferings comport with the assurance that “All things shall work together for good” to these?

Ah, the secret lies in the fact that these are counted as New Creatures, begotten of the Spirit, and merely for a time tabernacling—subjected to trials and testings, chiselings and polishings, through the weaknesses of their own flesh and through their association with other imperfect ones. The new nature develops, grows strong in proportion as the human nature is conquered and brought into subjection and finally mortified. It is, therefore, not inattention to our best interests on our Father’s part that permits us to have trials, difficulties, persecutions, but, on the contrary, his interest in us guarantees that no good thing will he withhold from us — no trials, no difficulties or other experiences which will be really helpful shall be withheld. Yet he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with every temptation provide a way of escape. How glad we are to know aright our Heavenly Father’s Predestination and Election and to have a share therein! Let us with increasing zeal seek to make our calling and election sure.

[The National Labor Tribune, May 23, 1909](#)

THE ASCENSION

“He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” Eph. 4:8

Stockholm, Sweden, May 23—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle preached here today to a large congregation, composed chiefly of those acquainted with him through his books of Bible study. He spoke through an interpreter. He said in part:

As many of you are aware, we have just passed the anniversary of Christ’s ascension. We recall that following our Lord’s crucifixion he arose from death on the third day. He remained with his disciples during forty days, although he manifested himself to them only a few times and then very briefly—probably seven manifestations in all, and of but a few moments each. The work of those forty days was primarily to demonstrate to the Apostles, and through them to his followers throughout the Age, that he who redeemed us through the sacrifice of himself is not a dead Savior but a risen one. Secondly, he wished them to understand that as he had left the spirit condition and humbled himself to take the bondman’s form for the suffering of death, he resumed his spirit nature in the resurrection and was no longer flesh and blood. He wished them to know that flesh and blood could not inherit the Kingdom and that the Divine calling to them as his disciples was that they lay down their lives in his service so that in due time they also might experience a share in his Resurrection to *spirit nature*, glory and honor. In his own person he illustrated what the Apostle explained will be the experience of all the faithful saints of this Age—he died and was buried in weakness, he was raised in power; he died and was buried in dishonor, he was raised in glory; he died and was buried a natural body, human, he was raised a spirit body, Divine. 1 Cor. 15:42-44

These great lessons required time, and evidently the forty-day period was none too long. The Apostles were convinced at once that their Lord was no longer dead. He had appeared to them. He had manifested himself at various times and in various forms—as a traveler, as a gardener with wounded hands and feet, and otherwise; but, as he declared, “They were slow of heart to believe all things written in the Law and prophecies concerning him.” They were disappointed that he did not stay with them as previously when he was “the *man* Christ Jesus.” They were amazed when he came into the room where they were assembled, the doors being shut and securely barred. They knew that no human body could thus come in, and yet so he appeared, and when the interview was ended he vanished. He walked not away, but vanished. They looked for him frequently, but he disappointed them—not manifesting himself for more than a week

several times. They could not understand spiritual things because they were but

2H656

natural men, even though consecrated to the Lord; they had not yet received the holy Spirit, and hence were slow to learn spiritual lessons. John 7:39

“WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING”

Toward the close of the forty days the apostles were not only perplexed but dispirited. The Messiah with whom they had hoped to reign had not only been crucified, but now, in Resurrection, he had been so changed that they were at a loss how to understand matters. They concluded to give up the entire proposition and to return to their secular business. The leaders were the first to so decide—Peter, James and John. They took back their boats, nets, etc., and resumed the old business partnership on the Sea of Galilee. Now came the opportune moment for our Lord to teach them a great lesson respecting his power as a spirit being—that it was no less than that which he exhibited to them when as “the man Christ Jesus” he had fed the multitudes and miraculously filled their nets with fishes at the beginning of his ministry.

It was a part of the Lord’s providence that they caught nothing on the first night. In the morning they saw a man upon the shore who inquired if they had fish. They replied that they had toiled all night and had caught nothing. The stranger suggested dropping the net on the other side of the boat and, without specially reasoning that the little boat was continually turning about anyway, they obeyed him. Forthwith they found their net choked with fishes. The lesson was sufficient. The apostles knew at once that the stranger on the shore could be none other than their Master, who had adopted this new form of manifesting himself. They could scarcely wait to reach the shore. St. Peter, impatient of delay, swam to his Master, fearful that he would disappear again before he could reach him. When ashore they found that the Master had miraculously provided a fire and fish and that their breakfast was ready. We read that “None of them durst ask him who he was, knowing that it was the Lord”—knowing by the miracle which he alone could work, but not knowing by any wounds in hands or feet, nor by any exact reproduction of his garments, which the soldiers had parted amongst them.

The lesson needed had been taught. The disciples had learned the force of the Master’s words, “Without me ye can do nothing.” They learned that they were under his careful supervision, even when they saw him not, and that he had withholden fish from their net during the night as a part of

their lesson, and that similarly he had filled their net with fish as an exhibition of his power; finally that he could provide the fish on the shore ready cooked and that, therefore, as his disciples and laboring under his instructions, they might be sure that “no good thing would he withhold.”

It was at this time that he gently reproved Peter for denying him by saying, “Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these” (nets, boats, etc.)? And when he answered Yes, three times, the Lord enjoined him to feed his sheep and his lambs. Peter, the oldest of the apostles, received his lesson with meekness, as was attested by the faithfulness of his entire ministry. Never again did he deny his Redeemer and never again did he think of leaving the work to which he had been specially called—to be a “fisher of men.”

Once more did our Lord meet by appointment with about five hundred, and a little later by appointment he met the twelve at the Mount of Olives, gave some parting instructions and ascended from them. He could have vanished before ascending to the Father; but he assisted the disciples’ faith, and ours also, by retaining his materialized body in which he had appeared and in it ascended into the clouds. They needed all of this assistance evidently. But it was sufficient for them. They remembered his word and tarried at Jerusalem ten days longer, waiting for the Pentecostal blessing and when it came upon them and they began to have spiritual eyesight and to see spiritual things then all of their experiences became plain. 1 Cor. 2:9-14

“THIS SAME JESUS”

We remember that two angels appeared to the apostles and said, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11) This was an additional attestation of the Lord’s ascension and a reminder of his promise that he would come again. The angel did not say, however, that at his Second Coming he would appear in the flesh, nor should we so expect. It was the manner of his going that would be duplicated at his Second Coming—its quietness, secrecy, unknown to the world and known only to his most intimate ones. Not with trumpets on the air, not with dazzling brightness will our Lord’s Second Coming be heralded. On the contrary, the voice of prophecy will declare his presence, and the enlightening influence of the Truth shall gradually display the glory of his Kingdom. But his words will prove true, as uttered to the Jews, “Yet a little while and ye shall see me no more.”

The only reason why the Church will see the Lord in glory will be because, as the Apostle explains, she will be “changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”—

the Resurrection change—because “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom.” At his Second Coming

2H657

our Lord will not appear in the flesh, else it would not be necessary for his Church to be changed to spirit beings, in order to see him as he is. But after receiving the Church to himself in the Resurrection change the Millennial Kingdom will be established, and its power and great glory will gradually be made manifest through its enlightening influence upon the world, which will speedily come to see the great change from the rule of the invisible Prince of Darkness to the rule of the invisible Prince of Light—from the reign of Sin, tending unto death, to the reign of Righteousness tending unto life everlasting.

Instead of appearing as a man to instruct the world, and instead of the Church appearing to co-labor with that work of instruction, the Scriptures inform us that the new teachers of that period will be Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets resurrected to *human perfection*. These will be the earthly representatives of the Kingdom to men, and in themselves will be examples of human perfection, to which the entire human family will be privileged to return by obedience to the Divine laws then promulgated.

“ASCENDED UP ON HIGH”

The expression “on high” refers not so much to locality as to station, power, dignity, as the context clearly indicates. He came to earth from on high, from the heavenly plane, as “the firstborn among many brethren.” (Rom. 8:29) He came down to earth—not merely to our world, but to our earth condition, to human nature. Still lower he stooped. He humbled himself even unto death. Nor was this all. He humbled himself even down to the very lowest, the most ignominious form of death, the death of the cross, and the tomb, as a blasphemer, as a sinner. Mark St. Paul’s expression as to how high he ascended. He says, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.” (Phil. 2:9, 10) This is the thought also of our text. He is ascended up on high, “Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named,” up to the Throne of the Father. Eph. 1:21

St. Paul quotes from David’s prophecy, saying, “Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the

Lord God might dwell among them.” (Psa. 68:18) St. Paul quotes this, “Gave gifts to men.” The Scriptures represent that all the blessings which our Lord Jesus is to shed forth, first upon his Church for its perfecting on the spirit plane, and secondly through the Church upon the world, “the rebellious also,” are of the Father though *through* the son. Our Lord received the dignity, blessing and power of the Father, as St. Peter tells us, and then shed forth a part of what he had received upon the waiting Church in the upper room at Pentecost. The blessing still continues with all who are his, all who come into the position of Justification by faith and Sanctification of heart.

“GAVE GIFTS UNTO MEN”

We might have had room for speculation as to what kind of gifts the Lord bestowed had not the apostle proceeded to specify and to leave us without a question of doubt. He says, “He gave some (the gift to be) apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.” This declaration is in harmony with another from the same pen, to the effect that “God hath set the various members in the Body of Christ, the Church, as it hath pleased him.” The Scriptures clearly teach that but twelve were set to be apostles; that the office is not, as some claim, prolonged in the bishops, cardinals and popes. The Scriptures tell us of the “twelve apostles of the Lamb,” whose names are written in heaven, and of the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem. Another picture of the same thing in Revelation represents the Church as a woman, upon her head twelve stars, no more, no less, one being chosen in place of one of the original, Judas, who was lost, so that the *twelve* might be maintained. While the number of pastors, teachers and evangelists is evidently greater, we are not for a moment to doubt that the Lord has the supervision of this matter and has been giving the gifts to the Church throughout the Gospel Age as their services were necessary and, as believers were prepared, to make use of their assistance. Here we are reminded of the Apostle’s words, “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?” His intimation assuredly is that all are not so recognized of the Lord; that God makes his own selection—and it is for his people to hear, to recognize his voice and to follow the same and not to follow the voice of strangers.

AN IMPORTANT TRUTH NEGLECTED

Alas, that an important Truth is slighted; that the Lord’s people have forgotten that he himself is the Head of the Church; that by his appointment the twelve apostles are the channels of his blessing; that only through them do the streams of Truth go forth, and that evangelists, pastors and teachers are to be heeded only as they can

show that their messages are from this Fountain Spring!
Would that every consecrated

2H658

Christian would realize what the Apostle Paul so clearly sets forth, namely, that all the teachings represented in the name of the Lord and the apostles are to be proven, to see whether or not they do proceed from these Fountains and without admixture and adulteration.

“PERFECTING OF THE SAINTS”

For what purpose did the Lord give these gifts unto men? For the conversion of the world, some one answers. Yes, we reply, but not directly so. We must be guided by the Apostle if we would know the Truth of the matter. He says distinctly that these gifts were for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the Body of Christ, till we all come into unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God; unto full-grown men; unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Eph. 4:11-13

According to this it is a mistake to suppose that God's will is accomplished in the mere preaching of the first principles of the doctrines of Christ. The Apostle explains that our first standing in Christ is that of babes, but that we need to be nourished, strengthened, developed to perfection, to the condition of manhood. We believe that the Apostle would find fault with the sentiments of men today on this subject; that he would tell us that the doctrines of Christ are not sufficiently taught and not sufficiently understood to produce the finished Christian character which the Lord desires. Men are to become saints first, and then to attain a perfecting as saints. Full consecration, therefore, is a mere beginning of the matter and not the end of it. We must “go on unto perfection.”

He says that the saints are to be “perfected for the work of ministry.” To whom are they to minister? We answer that the saints have indeed some opportunity for serving one another in the present life; yea, and some opportunity for “doing good unto all men;” but the special work of opportunity or service will be that of the future, when, as the Royal Priesthood in glory, they shall be associated with the great High Priest, Jesus, in his Millennial Kingdom work of blessing all mankind. As the prophet says, “Yea, the rebellious also.” The rebellious are not now being dealt with, only the willing and obedient, the meek, the teachable, the willing. The rebellious will be dealt with by force and with “stripes” during the Millennium and, as St. Peter says, “It shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:23)—in the Second Death.

Taking this view of the great plan of God we see a special reason why these gifts of the Lord should be now granted to the willing and obedient for their perfecting; because they will need to learn obedience themselves before they can properly become the teachers, judges, kings and priests unto God, governing the world of mankind to uplift humanity out of degradation and sin and death.

“UNTO A PERFECT MAN”

St. Paul says that these gifts through apostles, prophets and teachers are to develop the Church to the condition of a perfect man, “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” He does not mean that each individual is to become of Christ’s measure and stature and character. Nothing of the kind is possible nor has ever been accomplished. His meaning is that from the Divine standpoint of intention The Christ, of which Jesus is the Head, has many members, possibly one hundred and forty-four thousand, and that these members, when all completed at the end of the Age, will constitute the perfect man—the Great Prophet.

This is the same new man of which the Apostle speaks, saying that the Head and some of the members were Jewish while others of the members were of Gentile origin, *“that of the twain he might make one new man.* (Eph. 2:15) This is the same Body that the Apostle refers to in 1 Corinthians 12 when he says that “the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more, those members of the Body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.” That Body complete will be the great Prophet, Priest and King, our Lord the Head and his perfected saints the members. Through the Kingdom then to be established the gifts and blessings will proceed through Abraham’s Seed to all the families of the earth; yea, unto “the rebellious also” will come fullest knowledge, fullest opportunity for reconciliation to the Father through the death of his Son. Thus seen our Lord’s ascension to be Lord of all is close to the core of the Gospel program.

* * * *

COURAGE! MORNING DAWNS

2H659

[The National Labor Tribune, June 6, 1909](#)

A STORM AT SEA

Mid Ocean, S. S. Mauretania, June 6—Pastor C. T. Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle and associates are on board returning from London Bible Students' Convention. He took for his text the following: "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Mark 4:38

In our text we have the despairing cry of the apostles to the Lord, in the midst of what must have been a remarkably severe storm on the Sea of Galilee. Some of the disciples, at least, were experienced fishermen, accustomed to the sudden squalls for which that sea is noted. For such courageous men as Peter, James and John to appeal to Jesus for superhuman aid implies that the conditions were critical. It seems rather astonishing indeed that our Lord could have slept under such strenuous conditions, but he was extremely exhausted from speaking to large multitudes and the journey was made in considerable measure to get away from the people, in order that he might have necessary rest. But again, it is possible that our Lord feigned sleep for the very purpose of permitting his disciples to reach the point of extremity which led them to call for his aid; because man's extremity is God's opportunity. The Master arose and rebuked the wind, saying, "Peace, be still." And there was a great calm. And he said to the disciples, Why are ye so fearful? Have ye not yet faith?

This expression constitutes one of the great lessons of the Master to his pupils, his disciples, and it has come ringing down the centuries, speaking peace to his followers ever since. The message it brings is that he who is able to control the storms and the sea is likewise able to govern all the affairs of life in the interests of those who are his consecrated followers, his disciples. Whether we have had so remarkable an escape from a storm at sea or not, I am sure that some of us have had the Master's supervision and intervention for our protection from the storms of life. To some of our hearts he has spoken these same words, "Peace, be still. Have ye not yet faith?" And with the message came a great calm, a great serenity, a great rest in the Lord and his superabundant care. If for a time the Master seemed unconscious of our condition and asleep to the dangers about us, it was only seemingly so. His care and his power were equally with us, and none could really harm our interests as New Creatures. He whose eye never slumbers nor sleeps keeps watch over the interests of those who are truly his; and he is pledged that all things shall work together for good to them; because they love him; because they have been called according to his purpose; because they are seeking to make that calling and election sure by loving, self sacrificing obedience.

THE PROVINCE OF FAITH

In our judgment the Lord was not specially condemning the apostles for fearing the storm and awakening him to quell it. Indeed, their action indicates that they had faith; that they believed that the Master had the power which could save them. The Lord would have them exercise a still broader faith than this. He would have them realize the Father's care as he had taught them, saying, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father? Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matt. 10:29-31) The lesson sought to be inculcated was this: "The Father has called you to be my disciples and co-laborers. You with myself, therefore, are specially under Divine guidance and supervision. And he who has begun the good work in you, and who purposes to use you as his mouthpieces in the proclaiming of his message and grace, is able to care for all your interests, both temporal and spiritual. Do you suppose that, after calling you to the ministry of his grace, he would permit you to perish? To so fear, implies that you do not realize your calling to have been of God, or do not realize the Divine power, or that you doubt Divine wisdom and supervision—being of insufficient faith."

Shall we not similarly judge ourselves, scrutinize our own hearts, inquire within, if in the midst of the storms and tempests of life we become terrified? Would not this imply that we doubt the Divine providences in our own cases in the past and that we are uncertain as respects our calling of the Lord to be followers of the Lamb, sharers in the sufferings of Christ now and heirs of the glory that shall follow? Or would it mean that we lacked faith, lacked confidence in God? Perhaps no other lesson is more important for God's children to learn in the present time than this—to have absolute confidence in their Father's Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power.

WE WALK BY FAITH

The Apostle remarks of the Church of this age, "We walk by faith and not by sight." In this respect the Gospel Church is different from the Jewish Church of the preceding age and different from the Millennial Church of the oncoming age. The latter will walk by

2H660

sight. The Sun of Righteousness will shine forth, we are assured, and scatter all the darkness of ignorance, superstition and prejudice, and flood the world with the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God." There will be no more walking by the light of the lamp, the Bible, so precious to us now, so necessary to us now as a lamp

to our feet and as a light to our footsteps to assist us in walking in the “narrow way” by faith and not by sight.

The Jewish church of the preceding age was privileged to walk considerably by sight, not so clear and distinct a light as that which will illuminate the world in the Millennium, but, nevertheless, they walked by sight, because the Divine terms were that if they obeyed God’s Word and walked in his statutes he would bless them in basket and store and flock and herd and in their families and in their hearts. And the assurance was that if there was any calamity it would be because of their departure from the Lord and would mark his disfavor.

But during this Gospel Age how different! Whoever would be God’s child, a follower of Jesus, in the present time must walk by faith and not by sight. He must believe what he cannot see. He must learn that the cost of discipleship in this age, the cost of sonship in the Divine family in this present time means self-sacrifice, a narrow way, opposition and persecution. “Yea, whoever will live godly in this present world will suffer persecution.” Instead of being blessed above other men in their temporal affairs the consecrated, the sanctified, have the Scriptural assurance that they must expect the reverse. Instead of being kept in perfect health many of the Lord’s followers have had sad experiences on beds of sickness and pain. Instead of being wealthy it was foretold that there would be not many rich amongst them, not many great, not many wise according to the course of this world, but that the riches they must esteem are the riches of God’s grace associated with the exceeding great and precious promises of God’s Word. Instead of being surrounded by conditions of affluence, wealth and ease their circumstances are generally the reverse of these. And why is this so? Because the Lord is now choosing or selecting from amongst mankind a little flock of “peculiar people” who he designs shall eventually be joint-heirs with his Son in the Heavenly kingdom.

“A PECULIAR PEOPLE”

The Lord’s people are peculiar in their dress—not as respects their outward clothing, but as respects their robe of Christ’s Righteousness—theirs by imputation, because of faith in the blood of Christ, faith in his sacrifice for sins. They are peculiar also in that they have a “wedding garment” which they wear continually and which they seek to keep “unspotted from the world” and which they trust by and by will admit their entrance with their Lord to the great Marriage Supper when they, as members of the Bride-Elect, shall become the Queen of Glory, Joint-Heirs with the Bridegroom.

These are peculiar also in that they love Righteousness and hate iniquity, whereas the majority of people love

iniquity and are ready to indulge in it to the extent that they would not be caught or seriously injured. These, on the contrary, love Righteousness because they have come to esteem it as the character of their Heavenly Father and his will respecting them, and they have come to hate iniquity because they have learned of its injuriousness and that the Heavenly Father is not pleased with iniquity, injustice, wrong in any form. These peculiar people are so desirous of pleasing the Heavenly Father that they are quite willing to be thought peculiar or strange to the world in general that they may hear by and by the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." Matt. 25:23

"O YE OF LITTLE FAITH"

All the circumstances and affairs of life, its storms and its calms, its joys and its sorrows, its ups and its downs, its pleasures and its pains, are so ordered of the Father's providence as to give these "peculiar people" the lessons they most need, primarily to develop in them this quality of faith, and secondly the various graces of the Lord's spirit, which can be built only upon this faith, this trust, this confidence. And as the members of this class learn to take the proper view of the Lord's dealings, learn to have faith in him, learn to note his providences and to trust his promises; proportionately it is their privilege to have peace and rest in every time of storm and distress. As the Master declares, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27) Whoever, therefore, would be most pleasing to the Lord; whoever would be most ready for the graduating exercises at the end of the age; whoever hopes to hear the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant," must give diligence to the cultivation of this quality of faith, a "faith which firmly trusts him come what may."

ON A TEMPESTUOUS SEA

What we have applied individually to the Lord's people may also be applied to them as a whole. Looking back over the nearly nineteen centuries since the institution of this Church by our Lord at his First Advent, particularly since Pentecost, and marking the

2H661

varied experiences of these centuries, we perceive that the Church has passed over a tempestuous route in her journey to the heavenly home. Storms and calms mark the entire course, and the evidences are thickening all

about us that the severest and darkest hour, the most stormy period of her entire career, is just ahead of her-- just upon her, we might say. The sea, the world, is all about her and seeking to enter into her, seeking to swamp her, seeking to swallow her up.

Many of the Lord's followers already are crying to him in terror, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Seest thou not how agnosticism, under a new name of Higher Criticism, is seeking to capsize us, to overwhelm us, to break the cable of faith by which we are anchored to the sure promises of thy Word! Master, seest thou not that the very mention of thy precious blood as the Ransom Price for sinners, the purchase price of our release from sin and death is reviled, is belittled, is esteemed a common thing, is repudiated by those who name Thy Name! Master, carest thou not that thy Word has been so misrepresented during the dark ages of the past that today the intellectuals of the world disdain it as the teaching of doctrines unworthy of a noble intellect! Master, carest thou not that these have no reverence for thy Book and for thine own Holy Name? Master, carest thou not that thy people, thy saintly ones, are perishing in infidelity, in agnosticism; that they are losing their faith in the precious blood and in all the wonderful promises of the word, because they see not, neither do they understand the height and length, the breadth and depth of the love of God which passeth all understanding! Master, carest thou not that those who have had a glimpse at the teachings of thy Word and who have there beheld that as the heavens are higher than the earth so are thy ways higher ways and thy purpose and plans higher than man's plans! And carest thou not that these find it so difficult to present the glorious message of thy Grace to such as have the hearing ear and understanding heart! "Master, save or we perish!" Master, thy Church is about to be swallowed up in the overwhelming tide of worldliness, of sin, superstition and ignorance and deception of evil spirits!

PEACE, BE STILL! BE STILL!

To all such appeals the Master's reply is, "Have ye not yet faith?" Do ye not know that the Word that goeth from my mouth shall prosper in the thing whereto it was sent? Do you not realize that he who began the work of selecting the Church will accomplish it? Do you not know that naught could come to pass without your Father's knowledge and permission? Do you not remember the words of the Lord, "Thou couldest have not power at all against me, except it were given thee from above," except it were permitted thee of my Father. (John 19:11) Our difficulty has been to some extent the same that our Lord mentioned to the Sadducees saying, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Matt. 22:29

But what say the Scriptures on the subject? We answer that they foretell the present condition of things and give us an outlook future. They call our attention to the fact that there is a nominal Church, as well as the real one, an outward class of considerable numbers which have a form of godliness, but without the power, and a "little flock" which has the Truth and is in heart relationship with the Lord, begotten of the holy Spirit. They tell us that we have been mistaken in the past in supposing that it is a part of the Heavenly Father's plan to convert the world during this present Gospel Age; that that part of his plan belongs to the next age; that his present work is the gathering of the "elect," the "little flock," to be associated with the Redeemer as his Bride in the glorious Kingdom, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." They assure us that the storm of Higher Criticism, infidelity and Evolution and general godlessness and faithlessness which we see coming, which is already upon us, will indeed be a terrible storm, the like of which was permitted in the time of trouble which closed the Jewish Age, and again in the close of the eighteenth century in the French Revolution. The Scriptures show us that the Lord intends to make a separation between merely nominal Christians and the saints—the pure in heart, the full of faith, the full of zeal, the lovers of Righteousness, the haters of iniquity. And his testing and sifting of the true wheat and its separation from the tares will be a thorough and complete work.

But we say, if the Church goes down, if the storm shall wreck the Church of Christ, will not the entire social fabric be wrecked? Shall not we all perish? But the Lord answers, Nay, verily, "a thousand shall fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee" (to injure thee). The shaking of the social, political and financial fabric, which is closely interwoven with the religious, will be something awful, according to the Scriptural pictures, "A time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, nor ever shall be afterward," said our Lord. (Dan. 12:1) For a time fierce anarchy will follow the destruction of faith in God and in his Word—quite contrary to the expectations of the Higher Critics. Then, in due time to save the fabric, our Lord will stand forth in power, majesty and great glory and will say to the raging waves of human passion in that tempestuous storm, "Peace, be

2H662

still!" And there will be a great calm, and that calm will extend throughout the Millennial period and give favorable opportunity for the living nations to see, to comprehend, and to accept the Lord's righteous arrangements and to accept, if they will, his gracious pro-

visions. And it will give opportunity also for all mankind, including those who have gone down into the great prison-house of death, to come under those gracious provisions.

“MASTER, CAREST THOU NOT?”

To many of the Lord's people it must seem as though the Lord were asleep, because he has allowed so long a reign of sin and death to be upon the world and has not the sooner rebuked the great Adversary and caused him to be bound, that he might deceive the nations no more. To many it has seemed as though the Lord were heedless or careless of his own dear people who have faith in him and cry unto him day and night as they battle with the world, the flesh and the Adversary. But no, the Lord knoweth the end from the beginning. He is working all things according to the counsel of his own will. He will yet make the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder will he restrain. Only in the light of the Divine Plan of the Ages do we find the mystery solved and realize that God is working his great Plan according to system and order, and that the trials and difficulties, the darkness and clouds upon the pathway of his people, which he has permitted are but necessary disciplinings for their preparation for the glorious blessings and services of the future, to which he has called them with a “high calling,” a heavenly calling, and for which he is preparing them by these chiseling and polishing experiences.

Let us then have faith in God, remembering our Master's words, “Thy Father himself loveth you.” Nothing doubting, let us rely upon the sure foundation of the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word and make these more and more our own each day! Let us learn how to understand our Bible! Let us purge our minds from the hymn-book theology of the dark ages and come back to the words of divine inspiration and learn how to rightly divide them and to appreciate those which apply to the past and those which apply to the present and those which apply to the future! The sooner we attain this glorious position, the sooner we may rejoice in the fulness of our Master's grace and peace and blessing and the sooner we may have his love and joy shed abroad in our hearts and the sooner we shall be able to rejoice also in tribulation and to know that “all things are working together for good” to us, because we are his called ones, according to his purpose!

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, June 10, 1909](#)

FEAST OF WHITSUNDAY

London, England, Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, addressed a large convention of Bible students from all parts of the kingdom here. We report one of his discourses from Acts; Chapter 2.

Christians to-day celebrate one of the most epoch-making events of history—the Pentecostal blessing, by which the Heavenly Father indicated the acceptance of the Redeemer to glory, and the application of the merit of his sacrifice on behalf of the “household of faith,” for the covering of their sins. Because of this blotting out of the condemnation of sin as respects believers, the consecrated ones, waiting for a cancellation of their sins, were accepted of the Lord and granted an anointing and benediction of the holy Spirit. Jews condemned by the law, which they were unable to keep perfectly, had been unfit for divine acceptance as sons, and at the very most were permitted to be members of the House of Servants under Moses and the law. The impartation of the holy Spirit signified to these that they were transferred from the House of Servants to the House of Sons: “For Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” (Hebrews 3:5, 6)

The Scriptures very consistently show that God could accept none to be members of his House of Sons until first of all the sacrifice for sins had been offered; more than this, not until it had been presented to the Father and accepted by him. Adam, indeed, is called in the Scriptures the Son of God, because he was created in God’s image and likeness; but so soon as he had sinned he forfeited this relationship, and none of his posterity was counted worthy to resume this relationship until redeemed by the precious blood. Abraham, noble and grand that he was, might merely be styled “the friend of God,” and others could boast merely of being his mouthpieces and servants. He who came from above and assumed our nature and became a

2H663

member of our race through his mother, was the Son of God, “the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” But we read that “To as many as received him he gave the power (privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:12, 13)

This is in full accord with St. Paul’s record in Hebrews 11:38-40. There, after recounting the worthies of the past, he declares, “These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us (the Gospel Church) should not be made perfect.” In other words, they cannot get the earthly blessings and privileges and honors which God is pleased to give them until first Christ the head and the church His body shall have been developed and glorified. Then, through the glorified Christ, God’s

blessing shall extend to the ancient worthies and through them to Israel and to all the families of the earth.

This is in full accord also with what our Lord said of John the Baptist, the last of the prophets. His words were, "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he."
(Matthew 11:11)

In other words, the humblest one in the glorified church on the spirit plane, as a member of the body of Christ and a member of the glorified kingdom class, will be greater and occupy a more honorable position than the greatest of the prophets. So, then, from this standpoint we perceive that Pentecost distinctly marked a new dispensation, the dispensation of the holy Spirit, the period for the development of the sons of God.

We do not wish to be understood that God never exercised His spirit or power previously. Quite to the contrary; the Scriptures tell us that it was the holy Spirit, the holy power of God, that constituted the active principle in the creation. Again they tell us that throughout the past holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the holy Spirit. But they were not moved by the holy Spirit in the same way that the church is moved and controlled and guided. They were controlled mechanically. They spoke and wrote, but they did not understand; as St. Peter distinctly tells us in the same connection, that "not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things now freely reported unto you through the holy Spirit sent down from heaven." In other words, the prophets of old were merely the pen and tongue which the Lord used and that chiefly, in preparing statements to be understood by us, his people of this gospel age. For instance, the Prophet David, when he declared, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10), had no knowledge that he was writing prophecy of Jesus, nor any knowledge of how it would be fulfilled. But St. Peter, after he had received the holy Spirit at Pentecost, was able to point out that it was spoken of Jesus and not of David, whose sepulcher is with us unto this day—"No man hath ascended up to heaven." (John 3:13)

PICTURED IN THE TYPE

The Pentecostal blessing of the holy Spirit was pictured in the anointing of Israel's high priest, Aaron, whose sons represented his body, the under-priesthood, the church. The holy anointing oil poured upon Aaron's head symbolized the holy Spirit poured upon our Lord Jesus and the members of His body. In Aaron's case the anointing oil descended upon the body, and the prophet declares that it was poured upon "his head, even Aaron's head, and ran down unto the skirts of his garments." Thus the anointing of our Lord, which he received of the Father at the time of his baptism at Jordan, descended

upon His members and has been with the church ever since—upon the church accepted of the Lord as “members of the body of the Christ.” A similar type was instituted in connection with the Kings, who were all anointed in the name of the Lord. These two offices of the Priest and King were both typical of the Christ—Jesus the head and the church his members. As a sacrificing priest, first His own person was sacrificed, and secondly the flesh of the church, the justified bodies of those accepted to membership in Him. These are called a royal priesthood because their service extends to a work of glory in the future, typified by Melchisedec, who was both priest and King. So the Christ of glory will be priest upon His throne. As the priestly office represents the instructions and uplifting influences which will be a part of that millennial kingdom work, so His kingly office will represent the authority and power and government of that epoch.

The gospel of the kingdom was the theme of the preaching, both of Jesus and the Apostles. It is a great loss to the church that this feature, once too prominent, has been lost sight of. Instead, the prevailing idea today is that civilized peoples of the world constitute God’s Kingdom, and it is for this cause that the word Christendom came into vogue as signifying Christ’s kingdom. Alas, the most civilized of these kingdoms are no more than what the Scriptures term “kingdoms of this world,” more or less under the power or dominion of the Prince of this world, Satan. It is for this reason that they are spending millions of money on armies

2H664

and navies, guns, explosives and torpedoes that they may blow one another off the face of the earth—”because they so love one another!”

The Scriptural proposition is that God is now selecting those who, in the close of this age, shall be glorified, and constitute His royal priesthood to administer righteousness, truth and corrections to the world in the name of the Lord and along the lines of his righteousness. This will be with a view to the world’s uplifting out of sin-and-death conditions. So many of God’s dear people as obtain this view of matters are thereby prepared for a great blessing. It will take from them unnecessary distress on account of the heathen, for it will show them that God is not neglectful of the heathen, but ultimately, when his plan matures, when his kingdom shall be established under the whole heavens, all who have not had a full opportunity for reconciliation with him in the present life shall have such an opportunity there—during the millennial age—under the ministrations of Christ’s kingdom of righteousness.

Not only those living at that time will receive a great blessing, but also those who have gone down into the great prison house of death. "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth," the faithful to their reward of everlasting life; the ignorant and the undeveloped to trial or judgment, that they may prove themselves to God. Restitution to original perfection and eternal life, will be the reward of the willing and obedient; but those refusing God's grace will demonstrate their unworthiness of eternal life and bring upon themselves the eternal penalty of second death. (Acts 3:23)

"UPON SERVANTS AND HANDMAIDS"

It will be noticed that St. Peter referred to Joel's prophecy in connection with the Pentecostal blessing, declaring that what was witnessed and experienced was in fulfillment of that prophecy of Joel. (Joel 2:29) But the prophecy was not all fulfilled—merely a portion of it. Another portion of that prophecy remains to be fulfilled after the glorification of the church with Christ, after the establishment of the heavenly kingdom, for which we pray "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." St. Peter merely refers to the part of the prophecy fulfilled in his day and, in so doing, followed the custom of his illustrious Master. The Pentecostal blessing came only upon the "servants and handmaids" of the Lord—only upon the consecrated. And so it has been all down through this age. None others have received the Spirit, the unction from the Holy One. It is the spirit of begetting, and only those who receive it can ever hope to be born again—"born from the dead." It is written that our Lord was "the first-born amongst many brethren." The faithful ones of the spirit-begotten class will be those members who will be born from the dead in the first resurrection.

Subsequently, however, the other part of Joel's prophecy will be fulfilled—God will pour out His holy Spirit upon all flesh, upon everybody. The power, the energy of God, will operate during the millennium upon all mankind to the opening of blind eyes and the unstopping of deaf ears, to the awakening from the sleep of death of all those who are in the great prison-house. And in proportion as each shall respond to the influences of the holy Spirit upon his will, so will be the rapidity of his progress upward to harmony with God, though not the path which leads to the heavenly glory. It will be altogether different from the one now open.

Joel's prophecy is stated in a hidden manner, yet it is perfectly plain if the eyes of our understanding are properly focused upon it. One of these outpourings of the holy Spirit was to be "in those days" and the other was to be "after those days." In those days the Lord would pour out His Spirit upon His servants and handmaids. After those days He would pour it out upon all

flesh and the rising generation (your young men) would see the vision which the ancients (your old men) had seen obscurely—dreamed about. We are living, dear friends, at the culminating point between these two outpourings. The Pentecostal blessings has almost accomplished its designed purpose, the sanctifying to God of a “peculiar people,” a “little flock,” out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, to constitute the body of Christ and be his joint-heirs in the kingdom. Just as soon as this shall be finished the great time of trouble which the Lord has foretold will come. “A time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, nor ever shall be afterward,” shall break upon the world, not for its destruction, but that, as a plowshare, it may break up the fallow ground and prepare the hearts of mankind. Then will come the great divine blessing of truth and grace through the glorified church and through the earthly ancient worthies, the representatives of the spiritual kingdom.

“THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM”

When our Lord said unto Peter, I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, it was a dark saying which St. Peter could not understand. Some dear Christian people think that the Lord meant that St. Peter should have the right or authority to determine who might go through the gate into the New Jerusalem; and some think that perhaps it meant that to him would be entrusted the keeping of purgatory and the letting out of purgatory into heaven such as would be prepared for eternal life by its sufferings. With both of these views we must disagree. In our judgment the

2H665

Lord's words had a fulfillment that may be plainly discerned from the standpoint of His Word. While it is true that the church is only now called to be a kingdom and is not yet a kingdom in the particular sense, nevertheless, for convenience, our Lord refers at times to the church as the kingdom in embryo—in some of the parables, for instance. It is composed of the class which, after being proven and found faithful, will constitute the kingdom.

When on the day of Pentecost St. Peter, after receiving the holy Spirit, stood up and acted as the chief spokesman and explained the purport of the power of the holy Spirit as manifested, he threw open the door, as it were, to the Jews, who came together and through that doorway several thousand came into that embryo kingdom. Thus did St. Peter use the first key in opening the way to the Jews. But it was "keys" in the plural that he was to use. And so we find that when three and a half years later God's due time came for granting similar privileges to the Gentiles, St. Peter again was the Lord's servant who used the key and threw open the door to the Gentiles, in connection with the bestowment of the holy Spirit upon Cornelius, the first Gentile convert. These doors still stand ajar, because the full number of the "elect" have not yet been accepted of the Lord and fully tested and found worthy. We have numerous reasons, however, for believing that the selecting work is nearly at an end; that soon the last member of the body of Christ will have finished his course with joy and will have passed beyond the veil to join the church triumphant, the Christ, the great King, the great Prophet, the great Priest, the great Judge, the great Mediator, through whose ministrations Divine blessings and glorious opportunities are to come to all mankind.

Question, dear friends, what is it worth to attain such glory, honor and immortality, and to share with the Redeemer in His great work of dispensing Divine favor to all families of the earth? That is just the question the Lord is putting to consecrated believers to-day. According to their answer they will be esteemed worthy or unworthy of a place in that kingdom. The only answer that would be satisfactory to the Lord, the only attitude on our part that will bring us to a desired place among the "elect," is to give our all to the Lord and to his service. "If ye do these things ye shall never fall, but so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The National Labor Tribune, June 13, 1909

LIBERTY!
LIBERTY!!
LIBERTY!!!

Brooklyn, N. Y., June 13 After a month abroad Pastor Russell returned home, and was welcomed by large audiences twice today, at the Brooklyn Tabernacle. We report one of his discourses, taken from the text:

“Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Gal. 5:1

Although the Christian recognizes his special allegiance to the Heavenly King and sets his affections chiefly upon the heavenly home and feels a broad kinship with the entire groaning creation of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, he, nevertheless, returning from a visit abroad and passing the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor, is bound to feel grateful to God for America and the torch of enlightenment which it has lifted before the masses of humanity.

Let us not go to the unwarranted extreme of some; let us not call this land of the free the Kingdom of God established on earth; but let us on the contrary realize that with all of America's blessings and enlightenment and advantages every way for both the poor and the rich, she is far from perfect! Let us, while appreciating our glorious land, and our wonderful blessings therein, rejoice that a still better Government and still more favorable conditions are parts of the heavenly promise to the world of mankind! Let us rejoicingly continue to pray to the Lord, “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.”

“LET US THINK SOBERLY”

St. Paul urged believers, “Let us think soberly,” according as God has granted to each a measure of his grace. Hence the Christian's rejoicing is not boastful, but tempered with moderation. He sympathizes with the groaning creation in other parts of the world and does not ignore the faults of his native land, even while he does not unduly magnify and parade them. In all soberness, however, Bartholdi's statute of Liberty Enlightening

2H666

the World is true to the facts of the case. He would be blind indeed who failed to recognize the great influences which the principle of liberty established here exercises all over the world. When Liberty was born on these shores, rocked in the cradle of the Revolution, it had no

kith or kin in any part of the world. Europe alone had civilization, but not even had it Liberty. Everywhere the barons ruled and the masses, comparatively ignorant, rejoiced to submit. Liberty and equality and manhood were almost unrecognized.

As Liberty emerged from its cradle a stalwart youth, its influence and example shook Europe and threatened to overthrow it with Revolution as accomplished in France. And when finally better counsels prevailed, aristocracy realized that its days were numbered, unless concessions were made to the liberties of the people. It yielded with good grace, with the result that the monarchs of Europe are no longer despotic, but limited, Parliamentary; the people have a vote and voice in their own government.

The blessings of liberty came to Europeans so slowly that few of them probably today recognize how very different were the conditions a century ago, and how gradually the change has come about. The most advanced nations of Europe have only quite recently granted suffrage to the people and even yet it is under restrictions, limitations. Nowhere is the standard of manhood recognized as in this land. All the reforms of Europe of the past century, directly or indirectly, owe their impulse to the example of America. As the sons and daughters of Europe by the thousands and the millions have come to these shores they have learned the blessings of liberty and the meaning of manhood. And their letters to their brethren at home, filled with their new conception of human rights, have had a leavening influence upon the bureaucratic and monarchical theories and institutions of the old world. Yes, Bartholdi had it right! Liberty has been enlightening the world during the past century!

GOD'S MYSTERIOUS WAYS

It is not for us to boast, but to think soberly. Whence came the light of liberty's torch? We answer that the spark was divine. In a certain sense and degree this spark and torch was given to Abraham's natural seed, the Hebrew nation, in the Divine Law, at the hand of Moses. Later the antitype of Moses, "Christ, brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel" message. Of our Lord it is written, "He is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Our assertion, therefore, is that whatever blessing there is in the light which shines from Liberty's torch is the light of the Gospel.

Notice the language of our text, "The liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Of course, man originally made in the Divine likeness, must have had the love of liberty in his very constitution; but thousands of years of experience in slavery to sin and death have considerably

crushed out the proper conception of liberty—Godlike liberty. It is to these sinners or perverts from the Divine likeness that the Lord Jesus offers the true liberty. Note the effect that this Gospel message had upon the early Church. It made them a “peculiar people.” It broke from them the shackles of superstition which firmly held their fellowmen. It gave them higher, broader, deeper views of human rights and human responsibilities. It taught them that all men are sinners and that the king and the peasant, the learned and the ignorant, are all responsible to the one God and that he is no respecter of persons. As a consequence, Christians came to be generally recognized because of the influence of Christ’s message of liberty which affected their every interest with its enlightening influences. We read that the people took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and had learned of him. They learned of Jesus no lessons of anarchy or strife, but those which taught the proper relationship between man and man. They were also taught to live peaceably, to endure, to suffer, to wait for justice, until God’s time would come when, at the Second Advent of Christ, his Kingdom would be established and ‘justice would be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet.’” Of the Apostles we remember that it is written that the rulers were astonished at their courage in standing up for principle in faithfulness to the Divine Word. They marveled at such courage in men whom they perceived to be “ignorant and unlearned.” The fact is that having learned in the School of Christ the real principles of righteousness and the relationship of the things of the present time to the things eternal, these were transformed men, whose balance of mind, of judgment, was in accord with their knowledge—lessons in the School of Christ.

A GREAT FALLING AWAY

St. Paul, and indeed all of the apostles, prophetically declared that before the Second Coming of Christ a great falling away would occur in the Church, which would affect the whole world. These declarations came true in the period known as the “dark ages,” when the Word of God was inaccessible to the people and when the teachers of the Church turned aside from waiting for the Son of God to establish the Millennial Kingdom, and collaborated with earthly princes to use the name of Christ interwoven with ignorance and superstition and a chain of slavery, whereby the people would be restrained of their religious liberties, in order

that they might not appreciate their political liberties. The School of Christ and its enlightening power belongs by right merely to the fully consecrated, "The sanctified in Christ Jesus." But others, their relatives, neighbors and friends in large numbers partook of the spirit of *liberty* without the spirit of *consecration*. The result of this spirit under present conditions, it may easily be seen, would be anarchy. Hence the princes, kings and emperors were glad to have the ministers of Christ come to their aid in binding and restraining the people. Nevertheless, nothing has occurred that God did not foresee, and that he is not able to overrule eventually for the advantage, the blessing of such as are truly his.

LIFTING THE VEIL

Evolutionists tell us that the liberty and attendant blessings of our day, are because of Evolution, but they do not explain why or how Evolution should so suddenly lift the veil of ignorance and superstition from the race; why it should so suddenly bring to us the blessings of invention, skill through machinery ministering to our comforts in ten thousand ways undreamed of a generation ago.

The Bible answer to the question is that God's due time has come, and therefore these blessings, which are a part of and leading up to the Millennial Age conditions, are ours. The great clock of the Universe, under Divine regulation, has been keeping perfect time. At the proper stroke of the hour the Jewish Age began, at the death of Jacob, in the close of the Patriarchal Age. Again, at the proper stroke of the hour the Gospel Age began, at the close of the Jewish Age, at the death and resurrection of Jesus. And now likewise at the dawning of the Millennial Age and the close of the Gospel Age—coming at exactly on time, all the events properly connected and rightly understood show that our great Creator is working all things according to the counsel of his own will and that the world's present experiences are wholly of Divine prearrangement.

Looking from this standpoint we notice that in Divine providence America was hidden from the world until God's due time for its discovery. It was opened for settlement at a time when religious persecution was rife in Europe, when a man had no liberty even to think for himself—no liberty to worship his God according to the dictates of his own conscience. It was under Divine providence, doubtless, that the Pilgrim fathers reached these shores and cast their influence with that of others in bringing forth the child of liberty. In God's providence various religious sentiments were at that time so evenly balanced that all the colonies gladly arranged for religious freedom, which really meant a higher

standard, a more Christlike standard than had been known in the world since the days of the apostles. It is this spirit of liberty in which there has mingled a considerable measure of the light of the cross, the light of the world-this liberty has had the blessing and enlightening effect upon this land and upon the world. And with it, in God's providence, has come a mental enlightenment born partly of that liberty and partly of avarice.

WHAT WILL THE HARVEST BE?

God has not granted us prophetic vision whereby to declare the future of this goodly land, which has so much of his blessing thus far; yet he does in the Scriptures portray in a general way what we may expect. And alas, it is a sad picture from one standpoint. The Scriptures show a very dark cloud overhanging liberty and the world. But, thank God, they show a silver lining to that cloud to those who have the eyes to see it-the spiritual perception. The Bible teaches us that the inventions of our day and its enlightenment will, under the operation of avarice prove to be the upper and the nether millstone which will crush humanity terribly.

How can these things come about, do you ask? We reply that the inventions of our day, which are bringing so many blessings to the whole people at so little cost., are gradually drifting into "strong hands," the hands of trusts and capital. Some of these, indeed, have been and are yet blessings helpful in many ways. Yet the concentration of power into the hands of a few is too strong a temptation to be long resisted. The day is not distant when the leverage will be used gradually to draw the coveted wealth more and more to the coffers of the trusts.

Meantime liberty and enlightenment have been doing more than merely giving us mechanical inventions and helpful contrivances and comforts. They have given us thought, intelligence, compulsory education, breadth of mind and general information. They have lifted the poor man out of the dunghill and have given him thought, and have recognized his liberties and rights theoretically, even more than he has yet realized them actually. The masses cannot be said to be asleep and needing to be awakened. They are awake, as evidenced by their thorough organization, extending to every avenue of business. But although awake the giant has not learned his power. He knows not how to coordinate his force and to use them at the polls.

We cannot doubt that men will learn this lesson very soon. Then will come the time of trouble, when the giant of Labor will strike against his master, Capital, and when the wonderful resources of both will be used with frenzy. The result will be what the Scriptures graphically

portray as a “Time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.” Dan. 12:1

2H668

WILL NOT GOD INTERPOSE

Yes, we answer, God will interfere, but not in the time and manner nor for the purpose generally expected. The same great Creator, who through the past has supervised, and who latterly has caused the development of liberty and the preparation of the mechanical arrangements for the Millennial Age—this same God has purposed the time of trouble which he declares, and which we understand is nigh, even at the door. He purposes it because through it better than in any other manner the world can be taught great lessons and be prepared for the Millennial Kingdom of Christ. In that time of trouble, according to the Scriptures, the rich, the proud, the great, the mighty, shall weep bitterly and have sore distress. Likewise the poor.

Yes, the Word of God declares that there shall be no peace to anyone—the trouble will be general. There will be no way of escape from it. The Scriptures imply that in that time of trouble the rich and the great will receive a lesson; likewise the masses a different lesson— but both evidently to their mutual advantage. The rich will learn that the possession of riches means a responsibility to God and to fellowmen—greater, perhaps than the majority of them have ever yet appreciated. The masses will learn that their share of the trouble will come because they did not trust the Lord to bring about his salvation in his own way, but ignorantly attempted to do his work for him without authorization.

THE SILVER LINING

Thank God, the Scriptures give us a view of the silver lining behind the clouds of trouble, assuring us that at its conclusion the whole world will have learned a most valuable lesson in the furnace of its affliction. Both parties to the strife, humbled by their utter failure, will be ready to acknowledge Messiah King of kings and Lord of Lords. Many nations shall go and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” (Isa. 2:3) Of the glories and blessings of that Millennial day the prophecies of old are replete with testimony. But the chief blessing then to be brought to mankind under the reign of Messiah’s Kingdom will be the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. All men shall come to appreciate the Divine character and its principles of Righteousness—Justice, Love, Wisdom and Power—that all men might, after experiencing the bitter and the sweet, the evil and the good, know how thereafter to

choose the good, in harmony with the Divine Law, and, by obedience, come to everlasting life and joy and blessing. It is of that happy time, we remember, that St. Peter assures us, saying, "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." The Apostle additionally informs us that whoever will not accept the righteous regulations of that Government shall perish in the Second Death. "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." Acts 3:19-23

"IF THE SON MAKE YOU FREE"

We read, "If the Son, therefor, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:36) This evidently applies not to the world nor to nominal Christians, but merely to those who come into special relationship to Christ by faith and consecration during this age. While we have applied our text in a general way, strictly speaking it belongs only to the saints. None can stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free until first he has been made free and only upon conditions can anyone have this freedom now. The conditions are:

- (1) A realization of sin and a desire for reconciliation with God;
- (2) The renouncement of sin and acceptance of forgiveness;
- (3) A consecration of heart and life and all to the service of God and Christ and the Truth. Only such are accepted—New Creatures to whom "old things have passed away and all things have become new." These, once the slaves of sin and under condemnation of sin, are henceforth, upon God's assurance, freed from sin and reckoned through Christ worthy of life eternal. Even then their standing is dependent upon certain conditions—if they abide in Christ and his Word abide in them. By so doing they make their calling and election sure to the heavenly reward promised to the faithful.

If anyone, freed from sin and from condemnation to death, by faith shall willingly, knowingly, intentionally return to sin wilfully and persistently, he loses the liberty wherewith he was made free by Christ: he becomes again a slave to sin and a subject to death— Second Death!

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, June 21, 1909](#)

“AWAKE, O SLEEPER!”

New Britain, Conn., June 23 Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, addressed a large audience twice here Sunday. The topic for one was, “Where Are the Dead?” We report the other one from the text Eph. 5:14. He said:

The figures of Scripture are forceful, as well as true. Our Creator speaks of the whole world being dead—because under sentence of death. More than this, through the fall our reasoning faculties are more or less unbalanced, some in one particular, others in another. Some have hope disproportionately large, and are continually overestimating their possibilities. Others have the quality of hope proportionately small, and are continually discouraged and hindered from making the best use of their faculties. And thus it is with all of our talents. None of them could really be too large if the others were proportionately large. It is the mental balance, or poise, that constitutes a sound mind and judgment. Thus, George Washington was great: “First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen,” not because of special or freak qualities, but because he had a remarkably well-balanced brain. Similarly the great French statesman, Gambetti, was influential, notwithstanding the fact that he had a phenomenally small brain—what he possessed was well balanced, giving him soundness of judgment. .

Viewed from the Creator’s standpoint, our race is sadly unbalanced—greatly changed through the 6,000 years of the fall. Originally in the divine likeness, many of its gracious qualities and much of its balance have departed, and hence the Scriptural assumption that the world is nine tenths dead as respects its best qualities of mind and heart. And since death is a condition without consciousness, well illustrated by sleep, the Scriptures frequently refer to the world as being asleep. The Gospel of Christ is a message for the awakening of some who are not too profoundly asleep. And even those awakened by the gospel message are intimated to be in danger of becoming overcharged—drowsy with the spirit of this world.

AWAKE, O SLEEPER!

In one sense of the word, the world is very much awake—very full of activity—to-day as never before. When one looks at the wonderful architecture of our day and considers the rapidity of its construction, and the wonderful conveniences of elevators, electric lighting, etc.; when one travels on an express train and notes the conveniences, comfort and speed attained, the

highways cast up throughout the length and breadth of the land for these arteries of life; when one travels, either by the subways or elevated tractions hither and thither; when one sends or receives a telegram or a cablegram; when one crosses the Atlantic or the Pacific on an ocean liner—all of these convince him that the world has wonderfully awakened within the last century. Looking back a century, it is evident that the world was much more asleep then than now. And yet this awakening has affected chiefly what might be termed the middle brain. The lower organs of the mind have never been idle. The higher organs of the brain are still dormant with the majority. Indeed, it would appear as though the activities in the middle brain and in the animal passions of the lower brain have rather detracted from the upper or higher qualities of mind. Hence to all appearances mankind are more stupidly asleep to-day in respect to spiritual things than ever in the past. We are seeking to sound forth the message of the Lord, "Awake, thou that sleepest," especially desiring to awake spiritual consciousness and responsibility and activity. Nevertheless, the Scriptures and experience forbid us to hope that a majority, or even a very large minority, will be awakened by anything that we can utter.

It is not for us to alarm or threaten or shake the world with fear of eternal torment. It is not for us to do evil that good may follow. It is not for us to awaken by such false alarms those who cannot be awakened by the truth—by a truthful presentation of the divine character and the divine plan and the duties and privileges proclaimed through the Gospel. It is for us to speak the message of the Lord, knowing that none will receive it except such as have the "hearing ear" of faith—that none will be able to see the beauties of the message except those who have the eye of faith. As our Lord said to some, "Blessed are your ears, for they hear, and your eyes, for they see."

"ARISE FROM THE DEAD"

Our Lord defines the second step to be that those who are awakened should arise from the dead—should separate themselves from the world, its sins, its objects, its methods. Our awakening signifies our coming to a consciousness of the actualities of our condition as individuals and as a race. As consciousness comes to us we look about and see the pell-mell rush of humanity and ask ourselves, "Why, What, Whither." We soon discover that the majority of those about us are practically

2H670

unconscious as respects a future life—conscious only of their present existence, and worried and fretted because they cannot attain all of their ambitions, which are practically limited to the few years of the present life. As we become awake to the Lord's message we say with the poet:

*“Life is real, life is earnest,
And the grave is not its goal.”*

We begin to look beyond the grave, to realize that our Creator had a great purpose in our creation as a race, and that the present life consequently can be nothing more than a vestibule to the future possibility of life eternal. We note the tendency of our day to devote at least the first 15 years of childhood to education, in order to fit and prepare for the few remaining years of the present life. We conclude that if this be reasonable then surely all of the present life can be none too long for a course of schooling and training, and preparation for the life eternal. As our minds become awake to the realities of the situation from this standpoint we determine to follow the injunction of our text—to arise from the dead—to follow no longer with those who ignore the future as not really believing in it.

This exhortation, “Arise from the dead,” evidently does not relate to actual resurrection from the dead, from which we would have no power to raise ourselves. The power of that resurrection we are assured is in the hands of God, and all we can have to do with it is to make such a preparation of heart as would, according to the divine terms, fit and prepare us for a share in the “better resurrection”—in the “first resurrection.”

The real resurrection of the future is our only hope of life beyond the tomb, according to the Scriptures, but the thought of that resurrection is carried forward and the word resurrected used in a figurative sense in respect to the phenomenal change which may come to those who honor the Lord’s voice in the present time and are awakened thereby. These may, through the operation of their wills undergo such a transformation, such a change, as is well represented figuratively by the expressions, “Arise from the dead,” “Resurrection,” etc.

RISEN WITH CHRIST

Thus the Apostle suggests, “If then ye be risen with Christ, seek these things which are above.” (Col. 3:1) Again he says, “But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom. 8:8) In this last text the Apostle likens the great transformation of the present life to a resurrection from the dead, and explains that none of us could have such a transformation of character except as we should receive the begetting of the holy Spirit, the spirit of Christ. That spirit—that holy mind or disposition—accepted by our wills should rule in our mortal bodies, however imperfect, however fallen, however dead they may be to the perfections and righteousness in which we were created as a race.

Because Christ died for human sins—“for the sins of the whole world”—therefore eventually an awakening from

the dead will come to all mankind. Thus it is written, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear (obey) shall live." (John 5:25) The masses of mankind do not hear the voice of the Lord at all in the present life; many of these die in infancy, and the majority are in heathenism. The time when all such shall hear will be during the millennial age, when all that are in their graves shall hear the command of the Son of Man and come forth—just as Jesus at the door of Lazarus' tomb commanded, "Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth." As the world is now counted dead from God's standpoint, so those in the millennial age which come forth from the tomb will still be dead in the sense that they will not have the perfection of life, and not be thoroughly awake intellectually. They will come forth from the tomb in order that they may hear the voice of God speaking peace through Jesus Christ—informing them that still they are sinners, and justly condemned to death and extinction. Nevertheless God in mercy had provided a redemption through Jesus, and therefore they were awakened from the tomb and caused to hear the message of God's grace. How blessed the assurance, "They that hear shall live." They that hearken to the King of Glory will be gradually raised up, up, up, out of their condition of sin and death to righteousness and the perfection of life. As for the unwilling, those who refuse then to hear, to obey, we have the Scriptural assurance that their punishment will be, not everlasting life in torment, but "everlasting destruction." Acts 3:23; Rom. 6:23

Our text, however, is not describing the future age, the millennium, in which the Lord will speak so forcefully to the world that all will hear and be awakened and come to a knowledge of the truth. It is speaking of the present time when the god of this world, Satan, blinds the minds and stops the hearing of all mankind except a few. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears," for they hear. The awakened ones of the present time are expected to have new desires, distinctly separate and apart from those which control the world in general, and these must be so strong as to lead them to a changed course in life—to arise, to take a higher plane of thought and action than that of the world in general. The desire to arise must be their own

desire, prompted by the awakening which the Lord has granted them. Whoever, becoming awakened, is content to abide in death, to have his fellowship with the dead world, to live on the plane of sin and death—such is not called of the Lord at the present time. Christ's call and his assisting grace are only for such as voluntarily seek to arise from the dead, seek to walk in the paths of righteousness, seek justice, seek righteousness.

CHRIST THEIR LIGHT

To those awakened ones who seek to “arise from the dead” world, comes gradually the conviction that they have undertaken the impossible thing. They find, as the Apostle explains it: “To will is present with me, but how to perform the law of God perfectly I do not find.” This was the condition of the Jews as a nation for more than 16 centuries, from the time the Law was given at Mt. Sinai until Christ came and “brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” The Law awakened many of the Jews to a realization that they were in the bonds of sin and death—it set before them the perfect standard of the divine law—love for God with all their hearts, mind and strength, and love for their neighbor as for themselves, and promised them eternal life if they would arise from the dead to this grand development of character.

We are assured that many Jews strove to fulfill the conditions, only to find that they could not do the things they desired, because “the reign of sin and death” in their bodies had perverted their powers and made it impossible for the higher organs of their nature to thoroughly dominate, subdue and control the lower organs. St. Paul, speaking for those representatively, cried out: “O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from this dead body?” (Rom. 7:24) I would like to “arise from the dead.” I would like to live in newness of life, but I am bound down to the sinful condition by my physical frailties, and there is no one that can help me. Then he announces the message of the Gospel, and points us to Christ as the one who gave him release, and who is willing to give release to all of those who desire to come unto the Father through him—release from the bondage of sin and death.

Our text tells the same story briefly in the words “Christ shall give thee light,” or Christ shall be thy light. But the question is, How shall we come into this relationship with Christ? How shall we get this light, this assistance, this deliverance from our old selves, from the reigning power of sin and death in our mortal bodies?

There is but one way to attain this. After seeking to “arise from the dead,” and finding ourselves unable to do so, our hearts cry out to the Lord, and through His word and providence we are directed to the Lord Jesus. Coming to Him by faith we inquire, What shall we do that we may be saved from ourselves, from our own fallen conditions, from the death that is upon the whole world? How may we obtain eternal life? How shall we prepare ourselves for it? The answer comes that we are not only to believe on our Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, our Redeemer, but that additionally we will need Him to be our guide and our helper, and that only those who enter the school of Christ to learn of Him will be prepared for a share in His resurrection, the chief resurrection. We are assured that this resurrection change must begin in us now if it will be completed in the glorious transformation that will be granted to the elect at Christ’s second coming.

There is, however, only the one way to enter the school of Christ, to become His pupils. In the Scriptures it is called the “narrow way,” entered by a strait or difficult gate. Our Lord explained this when He said: “If any man will be My disciple let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.” Any who decline these terms are declining the only entrance conditions connected with the school of Christ, and hence decline all the blessed arrangements of this Gospel age. They decline to enter the list of those invited to be joint heirs with Christ in His kingdom—the very elect. Nor is it enough that we make the consecration, that we enter the gate; to gain the prize, we must continue in the narrow way to the end; we must keep awake; we must keep separate from the world, and keep in touch with our Redeemer, who becomes the Captain of our salvation. While He leads His followers by such a narrow way, beset by difficulties, tribulations, testings of faith and obedience, we have the assurance that He is faithful, loving, sympathetic, and that He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but with every temptation in the narrow way will provide also a way of escape, so that the trials of life will not consume us as new creatures, but merely consume the dross.

Acceptance of Christ by a full consecration to do the Father’s will, laying down our lives in His service and in opposition to sin, brought us to the place of begetting by His holy Spirit. And such as the Father thus received and accepted by the spirit of adoption into His spiritual family became thus heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord upon condition that they suffer with Him, that by and by they may share His glory. (Rom. 7:17) Their sufferings are counted in as parts of His suffering, as they are counted in as “members of His body.”

FOLLY TO BE WISE

A worldly adage has it, "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis

2H672

folly to be wise." So with the world during the dark ages; it dreamed, and was measurably happy in its slumbers. In some respects it was happier than now. The awakening of the past century has not brought to the world blessing, contentment, happiness, but rather the reverse. Awakened aesthetic tastes call for satisfaction in dainties and luxuries which all cannot attain. While "Christendom" to-day is more comfortably housed, and better fed, and better clothed, than ever before, it is more wasteful, and peevish, and discontented, and unhappy, than ever before. Why? Because the selfish propensities are in control of the will, and the more they see the more they know, the more they have, the more will they desire.

The suggestion then comes that awakening and knowledge are dangerous things to come under present conditions. We answer, yes; the only safe prescription for those awakened is that which the Lord provides, namely: Arise from the dead and have Christ give thee light, and follow that light. Otherwise the awakening is not profitable. Otherwise the heathen might just as well remain in their heathenism, waiting for the millennial age, with its strong government, law, order, enforced righteousness, etc. Japan is a commendable example of this. Aroused from the sleep of centuries, the Japanese have a feverish desire to be and to do. Yet they are no more happy than before, and no doubt many of them are farther from God and His righteousness at heart than were their forefathers—more unhappy, more discontented. We reiterate that the prescription will be of advantage only when taken as a whole—"Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

A GREAT TIME OF TROUBLE

Awakened Christendom is on the verge of anarchy, but does not realize it. In connection with her awakening she has developed financial giants, who, discerning the vast possibilities of the hour, have seized in various ways, more or less legal and more or less just, the inventions and opportunities brought in by the awakening. These advantages have been capitalized, stocked and trusted in harmony with the general laws of our time, the laws of selfishness which govern both poor and rich. Under these conditions these financial giants control the world—all others to a greater or less extent do them homage and service willy-nilly.

On the other hand, the masses, equally selfish, but less fortunately situated, are becoming more and more awake

to their rights and their wrongs and their power through the ballot and otherwise. They, too, are organizing and federating and growing in intelligence. The battle between these two great institutions is sure to come, and cannot be long deferred. Love on the part of one or the other would save the day, but more and more they are losing confidence in love and are developing its opposite. Injustices on each side are magnified. Neither gives the other credit for any other principle or motive than avarice. The clash between the two will precipitate what the Scriptures designate as “A time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.” (Dan. 12:1) Thank God for the Scriptural assurance that in the height of the trouble the Lord will bring deliverance by the establishment of His Kingdom, for which we pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven.”

Let us, then, seek to awaken ourselves and others along the line of our text—to awaken to righteousness and not to sin. Let us, when awakened, be prompt and energetic to “arise from the dead.” Let us note the impossibility of so doing in our own strength. Let us accept the Divine provision in Christ, not only for forgiveness of sins that are past and the covering of present blemishes, but let us also accept the great Redeemer as our great Teacher. Let us come into His school by a full consecration of heart. Let us abide in His school and learn the message of life, which will prepare us for an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

[The National Labor Tribune, June 27, 1909](#)

“BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH!”

Glen Falls, N.Y., June 27--Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, preached to large audiences here today on two occasions. We report his discourse on prayer from the text, “Behold, he prayeth.” (Acts 9:11) He said:

The thoughtless utterance of formalistic petition is not prayer, even though it be so called. The poet expresses the truth on the subject in the words:

*“Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed.”*

Some of our Lord’s most severe criticisms of the formalistic piety of his day condemned those prayers which were offered in public places to be seen or heard of men, to be considered pious. His curt criticism of

such prayers was, “Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.” They were in reality praying to men, seeking for human approbation. They got the reward they sought, in that many were deceived and thought them holy, pious. But while men might be deceived with such outward pretensions, God looketh upon the heart, and accepteth only the soul’s sincere desires. “The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24

Our text is a part of the Lord’s message to Ananias when directing him to Saul of Tarsus. The latter had been a persecutor of the Church, an injurious person, honest at heart, but misguided and prejudiced. Saul had sought to do God service by opposing the Church of Christ. Following the lead of his elders, the Scribes and Pharisees of Judaism, he had allowed prejudice to make him a foe to Christ, and an opponent of all those who sought to walk in his ways. The Lord had allowed him to proceed to a considerable extent in his persecutions of the Church. The Lord wished a certain amount of persecution to come against his cause, and permitted an honest-hearted man to go to considerable length in his opposition. The intention of this was to accomplish the scattering of the Church, that the believers, going everywhere, might proclaim the Gospel that Saul himself might feel humiliated and forever afterward be on guard against a persecuting spirit and against the danger of being deceived respecting the Lord’s will. When the due time came he was smitten with what he describes to have been a glance of the Redeemer’s face, while on his way to further persecute the Church at Damascus.

The flash, above the brightness of the sun at noonday, worked serious injury to Saul’s eyesight, completely blinding him. Led by the hand, he was entertained in Damascus at the house of one called Judas. He recognized the source of his affliction. The Lord had reproved him for his persecution, saying, Why persecutest thou me? Saul inquired, Who art thou, Lord? And the response was, “I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest”—because persecuting a member of the Body of Christ is persecuting the Head of the Church. After reaching Damascus, Saul evidently continued his praying. He accepted the fact that his experiences were miraculous, and proved that he had been serving God, but not according to knowledge; that he had been a persecutor and an injurious person as respected the cause of his Creator. In his blindness of natural sight the eyes of his understanding began to open. He was so deeply affected with the thought of how wrong his course had been, and how he had been fighting against God, that he could neither eat nor sleep, but was continually in prayer for forgiveness and for some manifestation of divine favor which would indicate this. He had finally come to the proper attitude of heart, and as a consequence the Lord received his petition and answered it by

sending a faithful believer to restore his physical sight in a measure, and to further enlighten [us understanding. The explanation given by the Lord to Ananias in sending him to Saul was,

“BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH.”

How much meaning there was in these few words! They meant, Saul of Tarsus is a changed man; he is no longer the self-confident one, boastful of his phariseeism, his holiness, his tithes, and his service of persecution; but, humbled to the dust, he has come to realize that while he thought he did service to the King of kings, he was in reality a servant of the Evil One, an injurious person.

While it is true that good men have prayed, and in spite of their prayers have made mistakes, it has doubtless generally been true that the mistakes made by religious people have been along the lines of too great confidence in themselves—too much self-assurance in respect to the teachings of the Bible, too much self-confidence as respects their service of the truth. And when good men have made mistakes after praying for Divine wisdom, it is not only possible but probable that their prayers were only partially sincere; that when they prayed to the Lord, “Thy will be done on earth as in heaven,” they sometimes meant, “Approve my will on earth as I approve your will in heaven”—“deceiving themselves.” Let us all be on guard against any such self-deception. Let us remember the Master’s words, “Blessed are the pure in heart.” Let us remember that to be pure-hearted means to be sincere, and to utter nothing which we do not mean. Let us learn to search our hearts, as the Scriptures suggest, to scrutinize our words, our thoughts, our conduct, with a view to noting to what extent self-will, or our own plans and arrangements, are influencing us, and to what extent we are sincere in desiring to know and to do the Lord’s will.

SAFE IN A PRAYING HOME

Most of you probably have heard the story of early frontier life, in which two travelers were obliged to seek shelter in a mountain home, in a locality which they had been warned was dangerous, especially as they had money. Only the necessity of the occasion forced them to seek the shelter. They purposed keeping guard throughout the night, the one sleeping while the other watched in turn, fearing they would be robbed, possibly murdered. However, just as they had reached this conclusion, one of them noticed a crack in the door,

2H674

and peering through it beheld the uncouth householder on his knees in prayer. He explained the situation to his

companion, and they both realized their safety and went to sleep in peace.

There is a principle involved in this matter of prayer. The heart which seeks fellowship with its Creator seeks the loftiest companionship, one which will be sure to lead him more and more out of willful sin and depravity. Those who have no fellowship with God cannot keep up for long a prayer of formality in secret. There must be a motive, either to be seen of men or to be heard of God, otherwise there would be no prayer.

Whoever seeks his Creator in prayer is proportionately amenable at heart to righteous influences. Whoever has no appreciation of prayer thereby shows that proportionately he is estranged from his Creator—out of fellowship with him. And while such may at times, or perhaps for a considerable time, be outwardly moral and honest, we may be sure that their estrangement from God might at any time lead off into sin. They are off the path of divine fellowship, and on the path of carelessness and worldliness, which may at any moment lead off into the ways of unrighteousness.

THRONE OF HEAVENLY GRACE

St. Paul exhorts the church, “Let us come boldly (courageously) to the throne of heavenly grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.” (Heb. 4:16) He is not addressing the world, but the household of faith, as indicated by the word “us.” The picture he brings before our minds is that of the Tabernacle and the priests conducting the service. He points out that our Lord Jesus as the great anti-typical High Priest has made an atonement for the sins of all believers, and that therefore believers who have turned from sin may come to the heavenly Father courageously—not in fear, nothing doubting. They may come even when they realize their imperfection and natural blemishes; when they realize they have fallen short of the Lord’s standard, and of their own standards; they may realize that it is a throne of grace, of mercy, of favor, where they drop the burden of their imperfections and obtain a blessing, and bear a song away.

The world cannot come to this throne of grace, because still in sin; because they have not yet turned their backs upon sin, because they have not yet accepted Christ as their Redeemer, their Savior, and because, therefore, he is not their High Priest. The Apostle says, “He hath appeared in the presence of God for us”—believers. He has an arrangement, disclosed in the Word which says that by and by he will appear on behalf of all, but as yet the new and living way is opened only to those antitypical priests and Levites who desire to come to the Father through him. No one loving and practicing sin has any invitation to this throne of grace. He must learn first the

exceeding sinfulness of sin; he must become sin-sick before he will realize his need of or have an appreciation for the Good Physician and the balm which he alone can supply for the healing of the soul.

FIND GRACE TO HELP

The Apostle not only declares that believers at the throne of grace may obtain mercy, forgiveness of unwilling sins, imperfections, but that additionally they may find grace to help in every time of need. (Heb. 4:16) Surely this is true, as every developed Christian must know. Hence, the faithful approach the throne of grace with courage, not only when they have trespasses to confess and apologies to make, and forgiveness to ask, but also as they think of the trials, temptations and difficulties along the way, and of the day. They learn to seek fortification against sin, against their own weaknesses, against the encroachments of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. They obtain these blessings by their fellowship with the Lord. It lifts their hearts from the earthly things and the sinful things. It brings to them a fresh realization of the Father's love and care. It reminds them repeatedly of their call of the Lord to be his disciples, and of the terms and conditions upon which they are accepted. It brings before them repeatedly the glorious standard above all standards—the Divine. It reminds them of the Savior's words, "Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven, who is kind to the evil and the good, and extends his mercies to the just and the unjust." It reminds them afresh that they should pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," and thus it tends to make their hearts and minds more tender, more gentle, more forgiving toward all with whom they have to do.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

We have read of King's commands that prayers should be said; we have read of general Church orders respecting the kind and number, and sometimes the phraseology, of prayers, but our Heavenly Father has left the matter open; he has no commands respecting prayers, nor concerning their length or frequency. He has merely indicated, through the words of Jesus and the Apostles, that he may be approached in prayer through the merit of the cross of Christ. When our Lord gave his Apostles an example of a proper prayer in what is generally known as "The Lord's prayer," he did this not of his own volition, but at their request. The lesson in all of this is, that "the Father seeketh such to

2H675

worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." Any who do not desire at heart to have communion with God

would not be welcome at the throne of grace. Any who merely pray in a formalistic manner are not heard at all, and might better not pray at all.

To those who appreciate the great privilege, the great honor, of being permitted to go into the presence of their Creator, to bow low before him, to tell him of their realization of their dependence upon him, and their confidence in him, of their weaknesses, of their trials, of their endeavors to please him, and who thus come through the merit of Christ's redemptive work— these and their petitions are ever acceptable at the throne of grace. They are encouraged to come, and no limitation is made on the number of times in which they may call upon God, and enjoy this privilege.

What God has not commanded we may not command in his name, but surely we may recommend to all our own experience and the experiences of the world's most faithful followers; namely, that prayers should be made with regularity and frequency. Who will say that a day is properly opened until the Creator, the author of our being, and the giver of every good and perfect gift, has first been approached in acknowledgement and thanksgiving? Who will doubt that a blessing upon the entire day must result from a committing of our ways to divine providential oversight and care, and the asking of divine blessing upon our endeavor to walk righteously, soberly and courageously in the pathway of the just. And when the shades of night appear, and we retire to rest, is it not most appropriate that we should review the day before the Lord, and render thanks for his mercies and care and blessing, and entreat for continual favor, and rest, and refreshment as he may see best for us? Does anyone doubt that the mere lifting of the heart, thinking of the will of God, and the calling to mind of the gracious promises and privileges that are ours, would have a sanctifying and happifying effect on the mind.

The Apostle speaks, however, of praying without ceasing. By this we understand he meant that God's consecrated people should be continually in an attitude of prayer—"uttered or unexpressed." The interests of life, committed to the Lord in the morning, and divine wisdom and providential guidance asked in the name of Jesus, should be expected throughout the day—looked for. The heart should train itself to repeatedly, continually, be on the lookout for evidences of the Lord's guidance, and to give thanks in the heart, if not outwardly, for each recognized mercy and guidance, praying and singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord. Similarly, if any unexpected trial or testing should come, the heart in full fellowship with the Lord would be prompt to carry its troubles, its perplexities, to "the God of all grace."

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS

By way of emphasizing his exhortation that the Lord's followers pray without ceasing, St. Paul adds, "In everything give thanks." Thanks for life's blessings, for the things that are happifying, for the successes of life, for the opportunities of divine service that are pleasurable; thanks also for the trials of life, its difficulties, its sorrows, its disappointments, because all of these bring experiences which should be valuable to us, developing the fruits and graces of the Lord's spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love.

The Christian who is well advanced in the narrow way, and in preparation in the school of Christ for the day of graduation, who is able to fulfill the Apostle's injunction and "in everything give thanks"—such an one will surely be able to rejoice in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation is a part of the Lord's providence for all those who are called to be footstep followers of Jesus, sharers in his sufferings now, and by and by to be sharers in the glory of his Millennial Kingdom.

"I PRAY NOT FOR THE WORLD"

We have seen who may and who may not pray, according to the limitations of the Lord's Word; that no one is invited to pray except the penitent who turns from sin and accepts of Christ. We have seen how the people of God may pray for the forgiveness of their own trespasses, and have Divine mercy and help, and how they may give thanks on behalf of themselves and each other. But may they pray to God for sinners, for the world? Undoubtedly the majority of Christians would answer, Yes, they should specially pray for these; but if we find the Scriptural answer to the query, it is, No. Our Lord's words in his prayer to the Father on the same night in which he was betrayed were, "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me." (John 17:9) Our Lord was the great exemplar for all of his followers, who are exhorted to walk in his footsteps. If he prayed not for the world, neither should we.

But what is the philosophy of this? Did not Jesus love the world? Yes, verily, he so loved the world as to die for us while we were yet sinners. Why, then, did he not pray for those whom he loved and for Whom he died? We answer, because it is not the Divine Plan to save people by praying for them, but, as the Apostle declared, It pleased God that through the preaching of the Cross of Christ believers should be saved, though this course may seem foolish to the worldly. God has made a great plan of salvation, which eventually will

reach the whole world of mankind—every creature. He does not need, therefore, that either our Lord Jesus or we should pray for the world, for he has every arrangement made on their behalf that Love and Justice could provide: The time for blessing the world has not yet come.

The present is the time for blessing the Church, believers who are now being called out of the world—to separate themselves as God’s peculiar people. It was for these that Jesus prayed, and for these, therefore, we following his example, should pray. Their afflictions are his afflictions, and hence our afflictions, because if one member of the Body of Christ suffer, all the other members suffer with it. Hence, as the Apostle says, we should pray one for the other, as well as labor to assist each other, and to build one another up in the most holy faith, for this is the will of God. This is the plan of God—that during the present age the Elect class should be called and tested and chosen, in order that in the next age they with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom may be the divine agency for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Why should we not pray for the conversion of our families, and neighbors and friends? Because it is not for us to ask the Lord to select according to our judgment those who shall be of his elect Little Flock, his Bride class. Divine rules are in operation, and it is for us to cooperate with them. We may tell the good tidings to our friends, neighbors, families; we may exemplify the Gospel in our daily lives, and thus bring to bear upon our friends the things of the truth, which God has ordained shall be the sanctifying power—”Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is Truth.”

We may, however, ask of the Lord wisdom and grace whereby we may serve him acceptably, whereby we may present his message faithfully as his ambassadors, and whereby we may be more and more burning and shining lights, and living epistles known and read of the dear friends whom we would love to serve and to bring to him. We might even ask for the Lord’s blessing upon favored opportunities for presentation of the Truth, and for the wisdom which our Lord exhorted us to exercise, saying that we should be wise as serpents and harmless as doves in the presentation of his message.

The exhortations to pray for our enemies, and for rulers and magistrates, are not in conflict with the foregoing, because our prayer for our enemies would be that whereas they might be justly entitled to stripes on account of injury done to us, we would be willing to forgive them, that the trespass might not be laid to their charge; but this would not be asking the Lord for some miraculous power upon them for their conversion to be his disciples. And when the Apostle exhorts that prayer

be made for magistrates, he makes no suggestion of praying for their conversion, but rather that their government might be so ordered as to inure to the benefit, the blessing, of the Lord's Elect Church—"that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty." 1 Tim. 2:2

I close with the exhortation that we all seek to appreciate more and more the great privilege which we enjoy as Christians, of coming in the name of our Lord and Head into the presence of the Emperor of the Universe, to get his smile, his benediction, obtaining his mercy, and finding daily grace to help our needs.

LOVE'S ALCHEMY

*LOVE is the filling from one's own
Another's cup.
Love is a daily Laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of the stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease.
A smoother way.
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes;
And asks not "Must I give?" but "May
I sacrifice?"
Love hides its grief, that other hearts
And lips may sing;
And burdened, walks, that other lives
May, buoyant, wing.
Brother, hast thou a love like this
Within thy soul?
'Twill change thy name to saint when thou
Dost reach thy goal.*

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, July 8, 1909](#)

THE COMING KINGDOM

Brooklyn, N. Y., July 4—Pastor Russell preached today at Brooklyn Tabernacle to a large audience. He took for His text Matt. 6:10.

The words of our text have been repeated by Christian people of all nationalities for centuries. You recognize them as a portion of what is generally termed the Lord's prayer, given to the Lord's followers as a model in answer to the request of the Apostles, "Lord, teach us to pray. The fact that our Lord instructs us to pray for His kingdom to come implies several things. (1) That it was not already here. (2) That it is part of the Divine provision that in due time the dominion of the Highest shall be established among men. (3) That this is one of the chief desideratums for God's people and for humanity.

In this connection we remember the Apostle's statement to some of the early church, "How ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven." (1 Thess. 1:9-10) We remember how the same Apostle links the second coming of Christ with the coming kingdom, saying, "Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and kingdom." (2 Tim. 4:1) There is a double thought, however, connected with the matter which in the past has tended to confuse us as Bible students, until we recognized that the Lord has in store a blessing for the world in addition to the still greater blessing for the church. The double thought is this: (1) That the church now being selected is to constitute that kingdom. (2) That the kingdom will be established for the blessing of all the families of the earth by establishing a rule of righteousness and causing the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth. If this double thought be kept in mind the entire matter will be clear, and every text of Scripture on the subject will be found harmonious.

THE LORD'S PARABLES

It surely has not escaped the attention of every Bible student that nearly all of our Lord's parables are more or less closely identified with this kingdom thought. The majority of them open with such expressions as, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto," etc. If we keep in memory that it is a kingdom of priests that is to be established, otherwise called a royal priesthood, all will be plain. Our Lord Jesus, after He had paid our ransom price, after He died the just for the unjust, as our sacrificing High Priest ascended upon high to be our King, to be a priest upon His throne. And similarly he is now calling

for an under-priesthood, willing to follow His example of self-sacrifice in the present life. These in due time He will glorify with Himself, giving them a share in that royal priesthood as priest upon the throne of the Millennial kingdom. Thus he promised, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." (Rev. 3:21)

If all Christian people could realize that their "high calling" of God is not a calling away from eternal torment, but a calling, or invitation, to association with Christ in His great kingdom, which shall ultimately rule the world, "under the whole heavens," they would read the Bible with a fresh interest; it would soon be to them a new book.

Glance at some of the parables. Note how they give snap-shot pictures of the church's experiences, not only in the future, but especially in the present time of development and preparation and testing —picturing the trying experiences necessary for attaining the kingdom. In other words, the church while on trial is the embryo-kingdom, the probationary kingdom class. This is the enlisting time, the testing time, the proving time, and none will be accounted worthy to share in the actual glories and privileges of the coming "kingdom of God's dear Son" except those who now demonstrate not only loyalty but loving devotion to the Lord, to His truth, to all who are His —to the extent of laying down their lives for the truth and for the brethren.

Note the parable of the sower, and that the message sown is the "good seed of the kingdom." Note that the ripe wheat developed from the sowing is denominated the children of the kingdom. Note that the gathering of wheat into the barn—by the resurrection change, to the heavenly state —is still associated with the thought of the kingdom in the words, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Now they are exhorted to shine forth their light as tallow candles, that they may show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. If unfaithful in shining forth the light under the present conditions of prevalent darkness, they will not be esteemed worthy of a place with the glorified faithful in the kingdom which shall shine forth as the sun.

2H678

Note in the parable of the net cast into the sea, which gathered fish of various kinds, that the net represented the nominal church of this present time, which in due time is drawn ashore, the fishes caught separated, and those suitable for the kingdom are represented as gathered in baskets, while the unsuitable are represented as being cast back into the sea.

Notice the parable of the pearl of great price, which represented the kingdom blessings and privileges, and could be obtained only by the selling of all that was possessed; that thus the Lord's followers who desire a share in His kingdom are to reckon that no sacrifice is too great to make to attain that blessing—indeed, they are to know that the kingdom can be attained at no less cost than the surrender of all their earthly hopes and aims.

Note the parable of the pounds and talents, which represented our Lord's departure to heaven for investiture in authority to be the great King of earth, the sovereign of the Millennial kingdom to be established at his return. Note the giving of the pounds and the talents to his faithful servants to be used in his interest in his absence. Note that on his return he first reckoned with these, and rewarded the faithful, saying to one: Have thou dominion over two cities? to another, have thou dominion over five cities? to another, have thou dominion over ten cities? Note that this giving of the dominion to his faithful servants signified their sharing with him in his kingdom at the time of its establishment at his second coming.

THE KINGDOM IN GLORY

Note the parable of the sheep and the goats, which pictures the Millennial kingdom in full operation. It opens with the announcement, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." (Matt. 25:31) This is unquestionably a picture of the Millennial reign of Christ, and His dealing with the world. When that time shall come the elect church, the bride of Christ, will be with him in the throne, sharing his glory, and sharing in the work of judging the world; as said St. Paul, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" 1 Cor. 6:2

The prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures abound in testimonials respecting the blessing which shall come to the world during the reign of Messiah's kingdom. The Jew had every reason to expect that God had honored their nation as the seed of Abraham with especial relationship to his Kingdom—that as his holy nation and people Israel should be the channel for the dispensing of the divine blessings to all the families of the earth. Nor will that expectation prove false. The Lord has not changed His plan. A portion was not previously revealed, styled by the Apostle Paul "the mystery of God." This mystery is, that before Israel can be God's earthly agents for dispensing his blessings to mankind in general to every nation, people, kindred and tongue, God will first select a special class, a "Little Flock," a "Royal

Priesthood” —the church, the bride, the members of the Body of Christ, as a spiritual Israel. When this kingdom class shall have been fully selected, and the last member shall have been glorified with Christ beyond the veil on the spirit plane of existence, then divine favor will return to natural Israel.

We are not to understand that every one who has Abrahamic blood in his veins will on that account be permitted a special service for the Lord during the Millennium as an earthly representative of the spiritual Empire. Nay, they are not all Israelites who are of the seed of Abraham. But the Lord shows us through the apostle that prior to the coming of Christ God had already selected Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets and other faithful ones enumerated by St. Paul in Hebrews 11. These, having demonstrated their faith and willing obedience to do the Lord’s will, have this testimony, “that they pleased God.” These ancient worthies of the earthly seed of Abraham are already prepared of the Lord to be the earthly representatives of his Spiritual Kingdom. In due time, after the glorification of the Church in “the first resurrection,” these will come forth not on the spirit plane, but as perfect human beings. Through these the Lord’s blessings and instructions to mankind will be disseminated. They will constitute the earthly Jerusalem, as the Church will constitute the heavenly Jerusalem, Mt. Zion; as we read, ‘The law shall go forth from Mt. Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem’ (Micah 4:2), for the blessing of all nations, for their instruction in righteousness, for their assistance in the highway of holiness, that they may gain at its farther end the great reward of life eternal.

It is but reasonable to expect that with the establishment of that kingdom for which Israel has so long waited and hoped, its mercies through these ancient worthies will first appeal to the nation of Israel, and subsequently to all people, of all nations, as they shall come to the faith of Abraham and receive the instruction of the Kingdom. Thus it is written, “And many nations shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in His paths.” (Micah 4:2)

THE GOSPEL AGE PARENTHETIC

It may help some to think of this Gospel age as a parenthesis. God's dealings with the Jews in the flesh were interrupted by the development of the spiritual seed of Abraham—Christ and the Church. (Gal. 3:29) As soon as this work of developing Spiritual Israel shall be completed, and the "little flock" be exalted to glory on the spirit plane by their resurrection change, then the parenthesis will be ended, and divine favor will resume its operation with natural Israel, and through Israel to all nations for their blessing.

Note how distinctly this matter is set forth in Romans 11. There the Apostle notes the rejection of natural Israel, and how it was foretold by the prophets Isaiah and David that their table of divine mercies and promises would become a trap and a snare to them, making them proud and arrogant instead of humble, and thus showing the unfitness of the majority of them for a share with Messiah in the spiritual part of the Kingdom. The Apostle pictures these in the olive tree, whose roots represented the Abrahamic Covenant, and whose branches represented the Jews. He points out that nearly all the branches were broken off—because of unbelief—and that the unbelief was because of an improper condition of heart. He says that those Jews who received Jesus were the branches not broken off, and that God during this age has been choosing out from amongst the Gentiles such as would be suitable substitutes for the broken-off Jewish branches, so that eventually the olive tree would have the full number of branches definitely known and intended—a few of them natural branches (including the Apostles and all the Jews who received Christ in sincerity), and the remainder of that spiritual olive tree branches grafted in from amongst the Gentiles. The tree as a whole, then, represents spiritual Israel, the one new man mentioned by the Apostle, whose head is Christ and whose members are partly Jewish and partly Gentile, transformed, renewed. (Eph. 2:15)

IGNORANT OF THIS MYSTERY

Continuing his discussion of the subject in this same chapter, St. Paul says: "I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceit; that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer."

Let us not make the mistake of supposing the Apostle meant that all Israel will be saved to heavenly glory, or to eternal life.

Israel will be saved from the blindness and rejection of God which came on them as a nation when they rejected Messiah. The great Deliverer who will bless them will be composed of Messiah, the head, and the Church, his body— composed of overcomers, some of whom once were Jews, and some of whom once were Gentiles. This great Deliverer who comes out of Zion is the spiritual Son of Zion, the Messiah, the King, the Royal Priest, the Judge, the Mediator of the New Covenant. The first blessings of His Millennial kingdom will be upon natural Israel, from whom the kingdom was taken away, and to whom the earthly phase of the kingdom will be restored in the hands of the ancient worthies, who will be the earthly representatives of the heavenly kingdom. The kingdom itself will be invisible to men, but its earthly representatives will be seen and known to all mankind; as it is written, “Ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the Kingdom of God.” Luke 13:28

St. Paul proceeds to point out that this return of divine blessings to Israel at the second coming of Christ, and the establishment of his spiritual kingdom will be merely the fulfillment of the divine promise to the natural seed of Abraham. He declares that it will be because the gifts and calling of God are things not to be repented of— things from which God will never change, nor need to change, because he knew the end from the beginning, and promised nothing out of accord with his divine purpose. St. Paul continues, “As concerning the gospel, (the privileges of the spiritual Empire as members of the Body of Christ) they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes.” “As ye in times past did not believe God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief and rejection, even so these are now unbelievers *that they may obtain mercy through your Mercy.*” For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon them all. O the riches of his wisdom. Rom. 11:28

HE MUST REIGN UNTIL

The object of our Lord’s reign is distinctly set forth in the Scriptures. Also its length of duration. He is to bind Satan, “the prince of this world,” to overthrow entirely his dominion of sin, ignorance, superstition, as they now control the human family, bought with the precious blood. His Kingdom will cause the knowledge of the Lord Jehovah to fill the whole earth, that every creature may receive a blessing through that knowledge — that as many as will come into harmony with God may obtain eternal life, and that all others shall be destroyed in the Second Death.

We are distinctly told that this Millennial Kingdom will not last forever, but for a definite period of time —for a thousand years. The Scriptures clearly intimate

2H680

that the work of havoc caused by the reign of Sin and Death during six thousand years —from Adam to the second coming of Christ —will be fully offset by the one thousand years' reign of the Kingdom of the Righteous. How stimulating the thought! How it must thrill the hearts of all who love God and their fellowmen — all who grieve to see the divine will and standards violated, all who love righteousness and hate iniquity, all who love their fellowmen, and realize that the dying, and the crying, and the degradation, and the sin, which prevail throughout the whole world, are enemies, contrary to the Lord's Kingdom.

St. Paul assures us that in due time God will give this Kingdom to the Christ —divine power shall be established in the Millennial Kingdom, and at the end of that Millennial reign Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father —the entire work and purpose of the reign being then fully accomplished. He tells us that meantime Christ “must reign until He shall have put down all insubordination” —everything contrary to the divine will, everything sinful — until He shall have uplifted mankind out of the miry clay and the horrible pit of sin and death —until all shall have been delivered who are willing to come into harmony with the divine will —such as God is willing should have eternal life. (1 Cor. 15:24, 28)

YE KNOW YOUR CALLING

Ye know your calling, brethren, how that not many great, or wise, or rich, or learned, are called to the heavenly kingdom. More and more as we learn of the blessings that are to be dispensed thereby, our hearts long for that kingdom —not only because we hope for a share in its glories on the spiritual plane, but because we long for the blessing of humanity, its release from the bondage of sin and death, the deliverance of so many as are willing “into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.”

It is the hope of a share in the kingdom that the Lord sets before His people as the inspiration of their lives as new creatures. They are to esteem it as the pearl of great price, and to give all they have of time, and of energy, and of effort — even life itself, to attain this prize. They are to count it all joy when they fall into various kinds of temptations and trials, knowing that such experiences are necessary for their development, for their chiseling, polishing and preparation for participation with Christ in that glorious kingdom. They are to realize that only through great tribulation may they enter this kingdom and become sharers with Christ in its glories. They are to remember the apostle's words, “If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him.” We are, therefore, to expect no royal road to the kingdom, but a “narrow way,” the way of

self-sacrifice, self-denial, painstaking carefulness, with testings and provings from the Heavenly Father to demonstrate our fitness to be of that royal priesthood which shall be His representatives in dealing with the world of mankind, for their instruction and uplifting.

This is the thought brought before us by St. Peter saying: “Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21) These times of restitution are the kingdom times, the times of resurrection, the times of human uplifting from sin and death conditions to life, and joy, and peace, for all who will receive the Lord’s favors upon His terms.

Let us then, remember our Lord’s words, “Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven” — a share in the glorious kingdom, in its righteousness, the righteousness which it will require of the world, and the righteousness which must be attained by all who would be sharers in that kingdom. This we are to seek first, chiefly, and to be content in respect to all the temptations of life. We are to trust to our Lord’s wisdom and grace that He will withhold no good things —joys or sorrows, trials or blessings — and that He will make all things work together for our good, giving us the needful things of life according to His wisdom of what would help us make our calling and election sure to a place on the throne with His Son.

* * * *

*HE knows the way I take,—
What matter then if dark it be,
Or rough, or hedged about,—
His staff shall comfort me.*

[The National Labor Tribune, July 11, 1909](#)

TIMFS OF THE GENTILES

New Orleans, La., July 11—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle, preached here today. He took for his text the following: “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Luke 21:24. He said:

As the city of Babylon represented the Empire of Babylon, so the city of Jerusalem represented the Jewish nation. In our text our Lord refers to the fact that centuries before his day the Jewish kingdom had been overthrown— had passed to the control of the Gentiles — and in our text he declares that this subserviency would continue until certain times of the Gentiles — certain years or periods of their control — would pass away. When we read that certain times will be fulfilled, we are justified in thinking that these times have been foretold. And in looking for the statement of the matter in Holy Writ, we notice the facts of the case as follows:

God established the Jewish nation as his representative nation, or Kingdom, in the world, with the understanding that in some manner and at some time that nation would be the channel of divine blessings to all the families of the earth, in harmony with the original oath-bound promise made to Abraham. After a precarious existence of nearly six hundred years, the star of Jewish Empire set, and it has not re-arisen since. The particular date at which the typical kingdom passed away is clearly marked in the Scriptures. The solidarity of the Empire in the hands of King David, and his son King Solomon, was lost in its division in the days of Solomon’s successor. Nevertheless, in harmony with the divine prediction, the royal line continued in the tribe of Judah, as it is written, “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.” Gen. 49:10

Of the last King of Judah, Zedekiah, the divine declaration was, “And thou, profane and wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come when iniquity shall have an end, Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same . . . -- I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.” (Ezek. 21:25-27) That statement was made just prior to Israel’s captivity to Babylon, B. C. 606. And the crown and sceptre have been overturned since then, and will continue so to be until Messiah himself at his second advent shall take the throne as the antitypical son of David.

THE INTERIM OF TIME

The interim of time between the overthrow of the crown in the days of Zedekiah and the establishment again of the crown in Messiah's Kingdom at his second advent is Scripturally termed the "Times of the Gentiles" —that is to say, the years of the Gentiles; the years in which the Gentiles would bear rule over Israel and all the earth — the period in which God would have no representative nation in the world. Some may inquire, Were not the Israelites restored from the Babylonian captivity? Yes, we answer, but they did not receive back the Kingdom; they were thereafter subject to the great dominant kingdoms of the world. First, they were subject to the Media-Persian Empire, whose Emperor Cyrus restored them to their own land as a subject-nation. Subsequently they were subject to the Grecian nation. And in the time of our Lord they were still a subject-nation to Rome. Pilate represented the Roman government, and so did Herod, the King of Galilee. Anyway, the Herods were not Israelites, but Edomites.

While it is true that an outward form of Jewish kingdom was maintained subject to the Roman Emperors for a time, the last vestige of this authority passed away with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army in A. D. 70, and the Jews have never been able to re-establish themselves in their own land up to the present time. Now, in harmony with the Scriptures which foretell Israel's restoration to Palestine, and their re-establishment as the earthly representatives of God's Kingdom, the Zionist movement is coming forth with good hopes of soon effecting a Jewish sub-kingdom. We may be sure, however, that the declaration of our text will come true to the very letter — 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled' — or, filled full.

Let us look backward and note what the Scriptures declare respecting earthly Empires and the period of their domination. If possible, let us ascertain when the Gentile times began, and when they will end—giving place to the Kingdom of Messiah, the spiritual Kingdom, the Church glorified, whose work will be

2H682

the ruling of the earth, the blessing of all nations, and the uplifting of the human family out of sin and death conditions —to all that was lost through Adam's disobedience, to all that was redeemed through obedience of Christ Jesus.

The Scriptures very particularly draw to our attention King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Very carefully does the Prophet explain that Nebuchadnezzar had a vision of deep interest to him, but the particulars of which he

could not recall. He demanded of the wise men of the Empire a statement of the dream, as well as an explanation, arguing that if they had any supernatural power by which they could explain a dream, the same power could rehearse it. Then it was that Daniel, the Prophet, was brought to the notice of the king, and by divine power not only rehearsed the dream but explained it — a dream of much more interest to all Christians than it possibly could have been to Nebuchadnezzar himself.

Many of this audience doubtless recall the dream and its interpretation, yet we will briefly rehearse it. In his dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a great image of wonderful height and grandeur; its head was of gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, and its feet of iron mixed with clay. While it stood erect, a stone was taken from the mountain and hurled at the image, striking it on the feet. Forthwith the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold were crushed to powder and became as the chaff of a Summer's threshing floor, and the wind carried them away. By divine illumination, Daniel, the Prophet, explained the vision thus: The head represented Nebuchadnezzar's own universal Empire, Babylon. The breast and arms of silver represented the kingdom which would succeed his as a universal Empire; namely, the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. Upon the fall of Media-Persia, the Grecian Empire would become universal, to be succeeded in turn by the Roman Empire, whose great strength was symbolized by the iron. This is the Empire which ruled the world in the days of our Lord. Thus we read that our Lord was born at Bethlehem, whither Joseph and Mary had gone at the command of Caesar-Augustus, the Roman Emperor, who sent forth a decree that all the world should be taxed. The civil Roman Empire lasted for several centuries after Christ, and was followed by the ecclesiastical Roman Empire, of which the popes at Rome were the representative heads. This Empire, partly civil and partly ecclesiastical, was represented by the mixture of the iron, representing civil power, and with the clay, representing papal religious powers, and this phase of Daniel's image still exists in the kingdoms of Europe as represented in the ten toes of the image which stands for the divisions of the territory of the old Roman Empire in Europe.

SMITING THE IMAGE

Let us have in mind that this image represented all the Gentile governments which would bear rule over the earth from the time of the removal of the crown from Zedekiah down to the time when Messiah, the rightful heir to the throne of David, will take to himself his great power and reign. He has not yet taken that power, he has not yet begun that reign. On the contrary, as the Scriptures declare, the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence — the true Church, the Body of Christ, is disesteemed amongst men, because "the world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not." Our Lord, in

answering the representative of the Roman Empire, said, My kingdom is not of this world—this age — if it were, my subjects would fight, and I should not be delivered into your hands. The same is true today: if the Lord's Kingdom has been established, his servants, instead of being subject to the princes of this world, would be the princes of earth, the judges of the earth, the Royal Priesthood.

DANIEL'S VIEW OF THE MATTER

When God subsequently gave his servant, the Prophet Daniel, a vision of these same Gentile governments that would bear universal sway over the earth from the time of the removal of the diadem from Zedekiah until the establishment of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom, the picture was a different one. Instead of a glorious image of towering height and splendor, Daniel saw four great, terrible wild beasts. The first, like a Lion, corresponded to the head of gold of the image —representing Babylon. The second, like a bear, corresponded to the breast and arms of silver in the image, and represented Media-Persia. The third, like a Leopard, corresponded to the brass of the image, and represented Grecia. The Fourth beast great and terrible, found nothing in the animal kingdom to represent it. It corresponded to the legs of iron, which represented the Roman Empire; while the ten horns of the latter beast corresponded to the ten toes of the image, representing papal Rome and the present subdivisions of imperial Europe. The difference between these two visions represents how differently present institutions, the kingdoms of this world, are viewed from the human stand-point and from the divine stand-point. From the worldly standpoint and estimation, the kingdoms of the past have been majestic, grand; from the stand-point of God, and those who have his spirit, they have been beastly.

2H683

The world glories in its records of military and naval victories, while to the Christian the pages of history are stained with blood, and are full of records of man's inhumanity to man.

The sequel to both of these dreams showed the overthrow of the earthly government. As it is written, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a Kingdom, and it shall break in pieces and consume all of these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." The Kingdom of God was pictured in the stone which smote the image on its feet. That stone prefigured Christ and the Church, and shows that it will be the power of God through the Church that will ultimately work the wreck of all earthly governments. Do not misunderstand me: nothing in the Word of God teaches anarchy, or

authorizes God's people to fight with carnal weapons; rather they are exhorted to seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and to leave all else to the Lord, assured of his willingness to make all things work together for their good.

As Christ in the flesh neither lifted hand nor tongue to smite the earthly Empire, nor opposed Caesar and his representative Pilate, so his followers are to raise no opposition to the powers that be, but are strictly enjoined to be subject to the powers that be, and to recognize that they are ordained of God. It will be after the glorification of the Church with her Lord that, invisibly to mankind, this power will be exercised, Gentile governments will be overthrown, and the whole world will be brought into submission to the reign of the Kingdom of Righteousness and its earthly representatives. Thus our Lord taught in his last message that in due time he would take unto himself his great power and reign, and that then the nations would be angry, and divine wrath would come upon them for their destruction. Thus also our Lord said respecting his followers, who *in due time will be glorified with him*, "To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations; And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers. Rev. 2:26-27

"HOW LONG, O LORD?"

It would be impossible for any child of God, in heart sympathy with the Lord and righteousness, and in opposition to iniquity, and appreciative of the divine promise of the Kingdom, and hopeful of a share in that Kingdom, not to desire some knowledge respecting it, and that it might come as quickly as would be in harmony with the divine program. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This does not imply impatience, nor a desire to hasten matters before the divine time, but it does imply interest in the gracious things of the heavenly Father's plan. And if it pleased the Lord to make known to us some things of his glorious purposes, it would be disrespectful on our part not to feel a deep interest in them, and not to seek to know all that he might be pleased to inform us respecting his plans and their times and seasons. Nor should we be deterred from investigating whatever we may find written in the Bible on this subject because of our Lord's words to his disciples, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but my Father only." This passage does not tell us that no man would ever know, but that none *knew at that time*. It does not tell us that our Lord Jesus would never know the time of his own second coming, nor that the angels would never know. As we surely believe that the Lord and the angels will know at about the time of the second advent, so we may well believe that the Lord's faithful saints will not be left in darkness on the same subject. Indeed this is what the Apostle distinctly tells us — "Ye, brethren, are not in

darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day.” The Apostle intimates that those who do not have the light in its due season would thereby justify the inference that they belonged not to the Church but to the world, upon whom that day shall come as a thief and as a snare. 1 Thess. 5:1-8

GENTILE TIMES 2520 YEARS

What we would like to know, if it has pleased the Lord to reveal it, is, just how long a period is meant by the expression “Times of the Gentiles” —or, years of the Gentiles—in which the Gentile nations will bear rule or sway over the land of Israel. If God has been pleased to reveal the matter, let us enjoy it; if he has not been pleased to give any clue to the matter, we cannot find it. We are to remember, however, that this, like other features of the divine revelation, was intended to be kept secret from the world, and to be made known only to those who are in heart harmony with the Lord, interested, and very desirous of knowing the mind of the Lord on this and on every subject. Hence we may not look for a plain statement to the effect that in so many years from such an event the Gentile lease of power will terminate and God’s Kingdom be transferred to Israel again. Rather we should expect that the matter would be stated in a more or less obscure form, in which it might be read over and over again without attracting attention except from those especially interested ones led by the Lord’s holy Spirit.

2H684

We believe that the period is what the Scriptures term “seven times” —seven years. Not seven literal years, but seven symbolic years. A “time or year in symbol represents 360 literal years. In other words, each day of a symbolic year is a year, and hence the seven times, or seven years, would represent 7 times 360, or 2520 years. I give it to you as my conviction, dear friends, based strictly upon the Scriptures, but corroborated, it seems to me, by the events of our day, that this 2520 years, beginning in 606 B. C. will end in October, 1914 A.. D.

That a times’ or “year” has been Scripturally used to represent 360 may be very easily and very quickly demonstrated. For instance, in Revelation a period of time is mentioned in three different ways; namely, 1260 days, 42 months, and 3½ times. The 3½ times of Revelation are exactly one-half of the “seven times” of the Gentiles. The 1260 years of Revelation are exactly one-half of the 2520 years of the Times of the Gentiles. And these 2520 years we believe will expire with October, 1914; at that time we believe the Gentile lease of power will expire, and that the God of heaven will set up his Kingdom in Israel.

We do not expect universal peace to immediately ensue because Christ is styled the Prince of Peace. On the contrary, to our understanding the collapse of the nations will be through a fierce strife, “a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation,” in which “there shall be no peace to him that goeth out, nor to him that cometh in,” because God will set every man’s hand against his neighbor. Our belief is that the warfare between capital and labor, emperors and peoples, will be short, sharp, decisive, and bring untold calamity upon all concerned. If people could only discern it, they would avoid it, but their eyes are holden; they see not, neither do they understand. All the parties to the conflict are plunging into it, each intent on gaining its point, and each oblivious to its own best interests.

It is here that the voice of the Lord speaks to his people, and to all with whom they have influence, favoring peace and discouraging violence, saying, “Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.” Zeph. 2:3

THE SEVEN TIMES

These seven times were foreshadowed in the experiences of Nebuchadnezzar, who was irrational for *seven years*, and at the end of that time recovered his reason and acknowledged the Lord as the ruler of the Universe. So history seems to show that during this period of Gentile domination the poor world has been in a measure insane, putting light for darkness and darkness for light. Our trust is that at the close of the Gentile Times, and following the short, sharp, decisive, time of great trouble in 1915, humanity will regain its sanity and praise the God of heaven and acknowledge that all authority comes from Him and pertains to Him.

Likewise the Scriptures show these same seven times as being the period of Israel’s chastisement. At the beginning of their national career the Lord set before them the possibilities of their nation: if they would obey his law and keep his statutes they should be his peculiar people, his peculiar treasure, and he would bless them temporally, as well as refresh them with promises and favor; but if they would walk contrary to him, and ignore and neglect his laws, he would deal to the contrary with them, and punish them in various ways. Amongst other things he said that if for all of this they would not come back into proper relationship to him, he would cause *seven times to pass over them*, until they would be thoroughly humbled and ready to learn the lesson and to appreciate the favor of his protection and direction.

These *seven times of the Gentiles* are the same *seven times of Israel*, only to the one they have meant seven times of domination which would close, and to the others they have meant seven times, (2520 years) of

being dominated until the close of these times, when at Messiah's second advent Israel was again to return to divine favor and be used during the Millennium as God's agency for the blessing of every nation, people, kindred and tongue throughout the earth.

To us, dear friends, the lesson is, Seek ye first the Kingdom of God —a joint-heirship with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom. We should make this our first consideration in life, our primary aim, knowing that to gain a place in the Kingdom will be the greatest boon imaginable, and realizing that our Heavenly Father and our Redeemer have "called" us to this glorious station, and that the acquirement of it will be cheap whatever it may cost of self-sacrifice of the things of this present life. Amen.

* * * *

*Men sit in darkness at thy side,
Without a hope beyond the tomb;
Take up the torch and wave it wide,
The torch that lights the thickest gloom.*

2H685

[The National Labor Tribune, July 18, 1909](#)

THE HEATHEN FOR AN INHERITANCE

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Psa. 2:8

Oakland, Cal., July 18—The Bible Students' Convention of Believers in the Atonement by the Precious Blood opened here yesterday. Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, was the principal speaker on the program to-day. He made two addresses. We quote one of these as follows:

Our text is from one of the Messianic Psalms. It represents our Lord as making known to his people the Heavenly Father's decree rewarding him for his faithfulness as our Redeemer, assuring him of his exaltation to the Kingdom, and that with this will come the inheritance of all the earth, with power to fully subject all things to the Heavenly Father's will. He was to have it for the mere request — "Ask of me." As a matter of fact, this world-wide dominion has not yet come to Messiah; the heathen are not yet his inheritance; the uttermost parts of the earth are not yet his possession. Indeed, as a prophet declares, "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the heathen."

When we remember our Redeemer's love for the race, the love which led Him to lay down His life "to seek and to recover that which was lost," we are in-dined to amazement that He has not yet asked the Father for His inheritance of the heathen —we are astonished that He has permitted "the prince of darkness" and the "reign of sin and death" for more than eighteen centuries since He suffered, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Our perplexity in the matter might well be answered by our Lord's words to the Sadducees. "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." As we come to understand the Scriptures more fully, and to appreciate how the power of God will be exercised in bringing the heathen under the domination of the Redeemer, the eyes of our understanding open and we are enabled to rejoice accordingly.

WHY HE DID NOT ASK

Our Lord did not ask for His great power to reign at an earlier date because he knew the Father's plan, and was well contented with the divine times and seasons; He had no wish of change in this. He did not ask to receive the heathen for an inheritance at the beginning of this gospel age, but has been content to wait and place that request in its due time in harmony with another feature of the Divine program which must first be fulfilled. That other feature is the selection of the church, the bride of Christ, the members of His body. It pleased the Father to make our Lord not only the world's Redeemer, and the world's King, but also to make Him the High Priest of an Underpriesthood, the Bridegroom of the church, his bride; the Elder Brother of these saints of glory whom the Father is pleased to have developed during this gospel age as new creatures of Christ Jesus" —sharers of His sufferings and of His glory to follow.

Meantime the heathen have been suffering no damage. Born in sin, shapen in iniquity, condemned to death, they were having experiences with sin and death, and going down to the great prison house for periods of unconsciousness — until the Redeemer at His second advent shall call them and all mankind from the great prison house, the tomb. This he foretold, saying, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth." This will include not only the Church of the first-born ones, who have been approved of God, and who, passing trial now, will come forth unto life eternal, but it will include also all the remainder of mankind, those who have not had God's approval, all of whom, because redeemed, shall come forth unto judgment — trial. A fair trial will be theirs to determine their worthiness or unworthiness of life eternal by the manner in which they receive or reject the Christ of God when, during the millennium, the same shall be made fully known to them.

It was part of the Divine purpose also that the whole earth should be filled with people, and hence the bringing forth of a progeny is a part of the Divine will. The few short years of the present life, with experience of sin and death conditions, will in due time be supplemented by the glorious period of the millennium, with its grand opportunities for lessons of

2H686

righteousness and obedience and rewards. Its corrective “stripes,” or punishments, to the careless will be to the intent that so many as possible may ultimately be entirely recovered from death conditions and brought into full accord with God in Christ. And others, demonstrating their unwillingness to come into heart sympathy with righteousness, will be utterly destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:23)

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY

So, then, our Lord’s reason for not asking sooner for the heathen as His inheritance, and the remotest parts of the earth for his possessions, was because He knew the Father’s plan to be a different plan, and that it was the more excellent way, and He delighted to do the Father’s will. And so with all the followers of Christ: So soon as they ascertain the Father’s glorious plan of salvation, they find it to be soul-satisfying, and greatly prefer it to any plan of their own. It is the undeveloped Christians, whom the Apostle designates “babes in Christ,” who are continually praying to the Heavenly Father for a change of the Divine program, imagining that their wisdom and their love in respect to the heathen are superior to those of the infinite Creator. Nearly all Christian people have had their experience with such ignorance; and we are glad to suppose that the heavenly Father laid not the sin of such presumption to our charge, but rather sympathetically appreciated our interest in the heathen, although He must have depreciated our lack of reverence, our headiness, our high-minded assumptions of more than infinite wisdom.

We are not saying a word against missions — home and foreign. Quite to the contrary, we believe that every Christian should labor with heart and hand to do all in his power to glorify the Father and the Redeemer, and to enlighten his fellow men respecting the cross of Christ, and the blessings and privileges which it secures. But while gladly, willingly, serving the divine cause, “instant in season and out of season,” we should learn to labor and to wait. We should learn that the laboring under present conditions is chiefly arranged for our benefit — for the development in the minds of the Royal Priesthood of the sacrificing qualities, and the graces of

the holy Spirit —meekness, gentleness, patience, faith, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love.

CO-WORKERS TOGETHER WITH GOD

Let us be sure, dear friends, that any theory of ours respecting the heathen, or any other feature of the divine program, which in any degree implies superior wisdom, or superior energy, or superior love, on our part, as compared with that of our Heavenly Father and our Redeemer, must be wrong. The sooner we learn to pray from the heart, “Thy will be done,” the better it will be for us, the more will we be able to get into harmony with our Lord, and the more will we be used as His ambassadors and representatives. The wisdom of man is foolishness with God, and the wisdom of God is foolishness with man, hence we must not take the human standpoint in investigating or reasoning upon the divine purposes and program. Rather, we must go direct to the Word of God, that we may be taught of God, that we may discern the beauty; the harmony of His plans.

It is written that obedience is better than sacrifice, and, this being recognized, how careful it should make us to inquire what the will of the Lord is; to search the Scriptures that we may there ascertain the divine program, and be found in harmony therewith. There we find that the Lord’s present work is the completing of the Royal Priesthood, the Royal Judge, the Royal Prophet, the Royal Mediator, the Great King, for the world of mankind — for the world’s deliverance from the bondage of sin and death, and their assistance back to harmony with God. Thus seeing, we will have patience in respect to the heathen, and strive now to make our own calling and election sure, and lay down our lives for the brethren in assisting to build them up in the most holy faith, “until we all come to the measure of the stature of a man in Christ” —the great Mediator of the New Covenant, of which Jesus is the Head.

CONVERTING THE WORLD

When will the world be converted? When will Christ ask for the heathen? When will the Father give them to Him? How long, O Lord? The scriptural answer, dear friends, is, that it has pleased the Father to select the “jewel” class during this Gospel Age by means which the world would think foolish — by means of the preaching of the good tidings. But His program for the future age is different. There are millions who have no ear to hear the preaching of the cross of Christ. There are millions who have no eye of faith to see the glorious things of God. In fact, according to the Scriptures, only a “little flock,” comparatively, can be brought into accord with the Lord under the conditions of the present time, because sin abounds, because death reigns, because Satan, the Prince

of this world, now works antagonistically in the hearts of the children of disobedience.

Hence it has pleased God to have a different method of dealing with the world of mankind in general from that which He adopted for dealing with the church in

2H687

this age. In the next age force will be used, and not merely moral suasion. Force will be employed in putting down the reign of evil. Satan will not merely be requested to desist from deceiving the world, but will be bound for a thousand years and be unable to deceive the nations. Likewise, mankind will no longer be invited to accept Christ and to give their hearts in obedience to Him, but, on the contrary, they will be compelled to be obedient. As it is written, "Unto Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God." Offers of grace will no longer be held out, with reward for faith attached; instead, knowledge shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep (Philippians 2:10-11; Isaiah 11:9). As a result, no one shall then say to his neighbor, or to his brother, Know thou the Lord! for they all shall know Him, from the least unto the greatest of them (Jeremiah 31:34).

HEATHEN FALL UNDER HIM

Another Psalm describes Messiah's triumph in the Millennial Age, saying, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with the glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously in the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach these terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee" (Psalm 14:3-5). Instead of the word "people" here, read the word "heathen," as in the original, and we have a picture of the conversion of the heathen as it will shortly be accomplished. We are not to suppose the Lord will ride upon a horse, nor that literal arrows will literally pierce the hearts of His enemies. We are to understand this picture to signify our Lord's triumphal conquering of the world, and that the arrows of truth which will go forth unto the whole world will reach the hearts of men and smite them down. Even so we read that when St. Peter preached at Pentecost that the Jews had taken and crucified the Son of God, the hearers were cut to the heart with the lance of truth. Thank God for such arrows from the quiver of divine wisdom, justice, love. We rejoice that the heathen will thus be conquered for the Lord and thus eventually every knee bow and every tongue confess.

This work of dealing with the heathen, with the world, with all except the Church, will begin with the

generation living at the time of the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom. In due time it will proceed and ultimately include all that are in their graves, in the reverse order from that which they entered, and the last shall be the first to come forth — “every man in his own order” or class.

Too frequently do Bible students neglect to see whether or not their interpretations are in harmony with the context of the passages under discussion. Let us not make this mistake. Turning to the second Psalm, we find that, following our text and a part with it, is the declaration, “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel .“ (verse 9) The application of this evidently is to the time for our Lord's second advent, when the selection of the Church shall be completed, and she shall have entered into His glory as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, symbolically pictured in the New Jerusalem we are told that the River of the Water of Life shall flow freely, and that whosoever will may partake of it freely—all that are athirst. On either bank will grow the trees of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. And the Spirit and the Bride will say Come, and whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely. But meantime, before the nations, the world, will be ready for that blessing from the New Jerusalem, they must needs pass through a period of very deep humiliation — “a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.

As for the nations of that time, the extent to which they will suffer destruction will depend largely on their own attitude, as is intimated by the verses following our text. Those of the nations who freely and heartily accept of Messiah's rule will be correspondingly saved from the breaking process. Hence it is urged, “Kiss the Son, O ye kings of the earth; kiss the Son lest He be angry with you and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.” But while this seems to offer leniency, mercy, these favors are conditional on the manner in which the Messianic kingdom shall be received. Other Scriptures seem to intimate that all the nations, not only heathen but civilized, will be found in violent opposition to the heavenly kingdom, and hence that all together they will be crushed as the vessels of a potter.

THE GLORIOUS OUTCOME

The Lord tells us that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than man's ways, and His plans higher than man's plans. And this we find true as we come to better understand the Scriptures. Who ever dreamed of such lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love divine, all love excelling, as are implied and included in God's great plan of selecting, first the

Christ —Jesus the Head of the Church, His Body — and then through these blessing all the families of the earth with a knowledge of Himself and the glorious opportunities of life eternal! We make no claims of universal salvation, because the

2H688

Scriptures do not authorize this, but distinctly speak of some who will die the Second Death, proving themselves not sufficiently in harmony with righteousness to be worthy of eternal life—even after being brought to a knowledge of the truth. But the Scriptures do show us that when all the unwilling and disobedient shall have been cut off in the Second Death, then the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, and every creature in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth, shall be heard acclaiming praise, honor, glory, dominion and might to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever. And He upon the throne declares, Behold, I make all things new. And there shall be no more sighing, and no more crying, and no more dying, for the former things shall have passed away. (Rev. 21:1-5)

[The National Labor Tribune July 25, 1909](#)

THIEVES IN PARADISE

Seattle, Wash., July 25— Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, addressed the Bible Students' Convention twice today. We publish one of his addresses taken from the text, "*Verily, I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise.*" (Luke 23:43)

The theology which came down to us from the dark ages was wonderful in its extremes. It pictured Divine *wrath* as unsatisfied with anything short of an eternity of torture for the sinner, and in the next breath assured us of a Divine *mercy* which would take the vilest sinners to an eternity of glory without character development, merely at their request. One would suppose that neither of these doctrines could command support amongst reasoning, intelligent people, but they do; and the only explanation of the matter is that by reason of the fall the balance of human judgment, on moral questions particularly, is sadly undone. It is fair, however, to suppose that the majority of intelligent people have never so much as given these subjects consideration. Receiving them through the various creeds from childhood's hour, they have swallowed them without reflection, taught that to doubt them would bring the doubters under the ban of Divine displeasure, and make sure that Divine mercy should never reach them.

BAD EFFECTS OF ERROR

It is difficult to measure the bad results which have flown from the misinterpretation of our text. (1) The Divine character and government have thereby been traduced and measurably brought into contempt as unphilosophical, unreasonable, arbitrary, instead of wise and just. Two vagabonds gambled and quarreled, drew their revolvers and shot each other. The more contemptible of the two killed his antagonist instantly, while he himself lingered in consciousness for a few minutes, during which he had opportunity to say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The creeds of Protestantism tell us that the one who used the magical words was instantly ushered to heavenly glory and companionship with the pure and holy throughout eternity. The other, we are told, though less vile, went instantly to eternal torture and despair, without a single ray of hope.

Is it any wonder that such unreasonable conclusions have driven many of the brighter minds of Protestantism unto infidelity, and led others back to the teachings of the Church of Rome, which, to say the least, is more consistent, in that it would put both of the culprits into "Purgatory," where after centuries of torture and instruction in righteousness they might be prepared, either or both of them, for heavenly glory. We are not advocating either infidelity or Romanism; we are defending the Bible, but incidentally must admit that our Protestant views of some portions of Holy Writ have been very unsatisfactory and very baneful.

(2) Who can measure the evil effects of this doctrine upon thousands, leading them to believe that whatever their crime, a few magical words of repentance will straighten it all out? Can it be doubted that this wrong theory is accountable for much of the wickedness committed by those who know better, who reside in civilized lands? First of all they doubt the doctrine of eternal torment, being unable to imagine how any one could burn forever and yet not be destroyed. Secondly, if there be such a place of eternal torment, they reason, it is quite improbable that they will die so suddenly as not to have time to offer a petition for mercy— a petition which, if offered, will surely be heard and answered, and bring them to the regions of the blest.

The further reasoning is, that while heaven is certainly desirable, it is useless to seek it *via* the strait gate and narrow way and self sacrificing experiences of

2H689

Jesus and the Apostles and all the saints. The reasoning is, that these saintly ones may indeed occupy a higher position in heaven than those who are saved after a life of sin and carelessness by a momentary prayer in the dying hour; but the philosophizing is, that the pleasures

of sin for a season more than compensate for the higher glory of the saints, since even the sinners are to get to paradise *at the small cost of nine words* —the supposed teaching of our text.

THE TRUE INTERPRETATION

Before proceeding to discuss the principles involved as between the right and the wrong interpretation of our Lord's words, let us notice what he really did say and really did mean, and how it happened the true meaning was lost sight of and the erroneous one adopted generally. The Bible teaching that "the dead know not anything," together with the doctrine that the resurrection of the dead is the Divine provision, has long been lost sight of. Our Lord's own words that "No man hath ascended up to heaven" have been overlooked, and so has *his* teaching respecting his Kingdom — that the blessing of the Church and of the world awaits *his* second coming, when *he* will establish *his* Kingdom under the whole heavens in power and great glory. Losing sight of these truths has led directly to the acceptance of the general error respecting our text.

Let us begin the investigation by noting *what* the dying thief requested. He had heard his companion berating our Lord, saying, If thou be Messiah, save thyself and us. He had sufficient character to realize the dishonesty of classifying our Lord with evil doers. He spoke up, reproving his companion; and then turned to Jesus, and, as a reward, asked, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom." He did not ask to be remembered in heaven, nor that day, but when our Lord, who was then being crucified, should attain to his Kingdom.

As the thief's request was a reasonable one, our Lord's answer was no less reasonable. He said, in the words of our text, Verily (truly) I say unto thee today (this day of my agony and rejection by Israel, and crucifixion by the Roman soldiers; this day, when I seem to be an impostor and not at all the Messiah; nevertheless, truly I tell you today) thou shalt be with me in Paradise. I do not tell you when you shall be with me, nor have you even asked me to tell you. You have asked to be remembered when I come into my Kingdom, when I shall have fully taken control of the Kingdom under the whole heavens, when the speedy result will be that the entire world will become a Paradise, and you have asked my assurance that you will be there, and I will remember you as requested.

PUNCTUATION NOT INSPIRED

It will be noticed that this different interpretation makes necessary the changing of the *comma* from before

“today” to after it. We remark that the punctuation of our text was surely not inspired, for punctuation was not invented until centuries after our Bible was written. Our interpretation, with the comma after “today,” makes this entire passage reasonable and harmonious — consistent with all the remainder of the Bible, and logical.

Further, be it remembered, that Jesus was not in Paradise on the day he died; nor has Paradise lost, yet been restored. Jesus was dead, and St. Peter declares he “arose from the dead on the third day.” He then declared to Mary, “I have not yet ascended to my Father and to your Father, to my God and to your God.” (John 20:17)

As a matter of fact, the other thief also will be in Paradise. All mankind, redeemed by our Lord’s sacrifice, will have the privilege of the Millennial blessings. As we read, “All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth.” The Church will come forth to the heavenly glory and condition, for which they have been prepared by the trials, the disciplines, the lessons, the chiseling, the polishings, of this present life. Theirs will be the instantaneous change, or resurrection, from earthly to heavenly conditions. Those of the spirit-begotten ones, all who wilfully walk after the flesh and not after the Spirit, having had their trial in the present life, will be accounted worthy of the Second Death. All the remainder of mankind, not having come to a knowledge of the Truth, not having incurred, therefore, the responsibility of this age, will come forth during the Millennium when Messiah’s Kingdom shall be established and his rule of righteousness shall have brought the earth to the condition of Paradise. Both of these thieves, and all other thieves and all other evil doers, all of the heathen, all who have not in the present life come to a clear knowledge of the truth, and sinned against light, against the holy Spirit, will be there—there to be blessed, to be enlightened, to be brought to a knowledge of the Truth, and if they will, to be helped out of ignorance, superstition, sin, weakness—mental, moral and physical.

NOT LUCK, BUT CHARACTER

The attaining of eternal life will not be a matter of luck, but a matter of character. It is true at the present time that chance, or luck, would seem to be associated with many of our affairs, except as we are able to view them in the light of Divine revelation. Some of us were fortunate to be better born than others — born of

2H690

religious parents. Some are fortunate in being born in religious communities, and in a land of liberty and

enlightenment. Some are unfortunate in being born in heathen lands, of heathen parentage, etc. But the Scripture shows that during this present time God is exercising his sovereign power in electing a special class of special characters, and assures us that a majority of these are being called from amongst the mixed peoples of Europe and America, and that proportionately few are being gathered from other nationalities.

If all of the non-elect were consigned' to eternal torment, or even to Purgatory, a grave injustice would be chargeable against the Almighty Elector. But this is not the case. The Lord is no respecter of persons, but is taking out from the world of mankind, from every nation, those with suitable characters, those upon whom his Truth and Grace exercise a transforming influence. The non-elect, not worthy of a blessing amongst the faithful of the first class now being selected, pass at death to the tomb, to the prison-house of *sheol, hades*, where there is no wisdom, knowledge nor device, as the Scriptures declare (Ecclesiastes 9:10). Although unworthy of a share in the blessings now being dispensed, God's love and mercy pursue after these through Christ, and in their interest the Millennial Kingdom will be established. Under its domination Satan will be bound, every influence of evil will be restrained, and every good influence will be brought into captivity, to the intent that all those at present non-elect, and unworthy of the present salvation, may be brought to a savable condition through the rewards and punishments (judgments) of the Millennial Age. The result of the purifying influences of that time upon the willing and obedient will be *full human perfection* and the reward of everlasting life in Paradise restored — world-wide, under the whole heaven. The result to the unwilling who will resist God's grace and merciful provisions will be eternal death —extinction — the Second Death —Gehenna. (Revelation 20:14, 15)

CHARACTER A PREREQUISITE

The Bible, in harmony with sanctified common sense teaches that character is a prerequisite of Divine favor and eternal life. Whoever is called during this Gospel Age and fails to develop *character*, will fail to attain the reward of life eternal.

Similarly, in the world's trial time, or Day of Judgment, the Millennial Age, *character* will be the test. All the influences of the great Kingdom of Messiah will be exercised with a view to the development of *character*, and only those properly exercised thereby will get the reward of *earthly life eternal*.

The question properly arises here, What kind of character will meet with the Divine approval and be granted the reward of life everlasting? We answer that God has but one standard, which is fully set forth in the Scriptures. The Law of God is the standard. That law

standard is, “Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.” As our Redeemer testified, on these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets; all the divine blessings and promises and covenants are to those who develop the *character* here described.

WORLD ACTUALLY ATTAINS

The Scriptures show a difference as between God’s dealings with the Church in this age and the world in the next age, even though there be but the one Law or standard of character for both. During the Millennium, when everything will be favorable to human uplift, during the “times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began,” actual obedience to the Divine Law, and actual attainment of this standard of character, will be required. Not all at once, however. The poor world “born in sin and shapen in iniquity” —in sin did their mothers conceive them —are prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward.” Steeped in degradation they will require years, if not centuries, of determined resistance of sin and cultivation of the principles of righteousness to develop in them absolutely the *character* required by the Divine Law —Love supreme for God and Love for the neighbor as for one -self.

During the Millennium the weakness and imperfections of the race will be conceded by the great Teacher, Christ and the Church —Jesus the Head and the Church his members. The more degraded the will, the more undermined the character, the more perverted the conscience and judgment, the more difficult will be the ascent of humanity from the horrible pit of sin and death, even with the assistance of the Redeemer. The less degraded the mind, the less perverted the conscience, the stronger the will for righteousness, the easier will be the ascent along the Highway of Holiness, of which it is written, “The redeemed shall walk thereon” (Isaiah 35:9). The laggards will receive the “stripes” of correction for their assistance; the zealous will receive the smiles and blessings of the great High Priest, the great Teacher and Mediator like unto Moses, of whom it is written, “And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will

2H691

not hear (obey) that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:23). All the reformation must be made during the allotted time—the thousand years of Christ’s reign. Sin must be put down—not only outward sin, but inward sin, even in the very thoughts and intents

of the heart. Sin must be eradicated, even to the extent of the *destruction of the wilful sinner* in the Second Death.

If the thieves and liars and evil doers in general would realize that they are either making character or undermining character every day, what a helpful influence it would have upon the social and political and financial life of the world! The effect would be the very reverse of that which is now made by the false interpretation of our Lord's words to the thief, which we are seeking to correct.

If every pernicious word uttered were realized to be so much of an undermining influence, if every pernicious thought were similarly recognized, with what carefulness would mankind come to guard their thoughts and their words, as well as their deeds. They would attentively learn the great general lesson set forth in the Scriptures, and also in the book of nature, namely, "*Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.*" Who shall say that there would not be less "sowing of wild oats" if all were assured that a proportionate crop would be *unavoidably reaped*, and that no mere prayer of repentance would constitute an "*open sesame*" to heavenly glory to the one who had lived a life deserving reprobation and punishment.

[The National Labor Tribune, August 1, 1909](#)

IN THIS MOUNTAIN

St. Joseph, Mo., August 1—The Bible Students' Convention is in session here. Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle addressed the Convention twice today. One of his discourses follows, from the text: "*And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things.*" Isaiah 25:6

As you are all undoubtedly aware, the word "mountain" throughout the Scriptures is used as the symbol for kingdom. Earthly governments are represented as mountains and hills, while the Lord's government is represented as being established "in the top of the mountains." It is this mountain or Kingdom of God that is referred to in our text. It has not yet been established in the earth, and hence the blessed work foretold in our text is not yet realized. We still properly pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." True, a beginning has been made: for more than eighteen centuries since our Lord's ascension, and the bestowment of the holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Church has been in process of selection, and the Church is sometimes styled the Kingdom, because its members when glorified will constitute the Kingdom class—the Bride—who, with the heavenly Bridegroom, will share the Kingdom honors and services for the world.

It is true, also, that our Lord is exalted a Prince and a Savior, and that shortly, at his second Advent, he is to take to himself his great power and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords—*but he has not yet done this.* He declared at his resurrection, "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me," yet he also in his last message to the Church distinctly pointed out that the time for *taking possession* of his Kingdom was future, and that the time will surely come when he will take unto himself his great power and reign, because the time to reign will then have come. Rev. 11:17

More than this, the signs of the times, read in the light of the lamp of truth, the Word of God, seem dearly to indicate that the time is nigh at hand for the setting up of Christ's Kingdom. How glad we all should be, what rejoicing it should cause to the whole world of mankind, to know that the reign of sin and death is nearing its conclusion; that Satan, the prince of this world, will shortly be bound for a thousand years, that he should deceive the nations no more until its termination. How we should rejoice that "the *night* is far spent and the day is at hand;" that the Millennial morning is already dawning; that the Sun of Righteousness is already rising; and that soon the whole earth will "be full of the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the great deep."

A FEAST IN THIS MOUNTAIN

The bare announcement of the Kingdom of God would strike mankind variously in proportion as the character of the Kingdom and its work might be understood or misunderstood. Thus today to many the mention of the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand would carry the thought of a wreck of matter and the crush of

2H692

worlds. Not only our Second Advent friends believe, but the creeds of practically all denominations of Christians recite, that our Lord's second advent and the establishment of his Kingdom will signify to mankind the end of probation, the end of hope, and usher in to all except the elect few a great burning day.

For too long we have allowed these traditions of men to becloud our judgment, to come between our hearts and the great blessings set forth in God's Word as now due to the Church and to the world. It is very proper that those who are living in alienation from God in wilful sin should realize that the establishment of his Kingdom will mean a reign of righteousness which will be strictly opposed to their pernicious ways —opposed to every form of immorality, opposed to every form of injustice and iniquity, opposed to every form of trickery, and sham, and false pretense. But surely Christians who are seeking to live in harmony with the divine law of love for God, for the neighbor, for the brother, for enemies, have every reason to look forward, to long for, to hope for, the coming of the Lord's Kingdom as the most desirable thing possible to be imagined. Indeed, it is thus described in Bible language: "The desire of all nations shall come." Hag. 2:7

However much the few, favored by present conditions, may be pleased to have them remain *as they are*, the masses of mankind, if they were but converted from ignorance and superstition and brought to a knowledge of the truth as God's Word presents it, would be glad and rejoice in the *salvation* which is to come to the world through God's Kingdom. The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of understanding of mankind and put darkness for light, and under the terrors of the words "doom's day" has obscured the glorious blessings which belong to the day of the establishment of the Kingdom of the Lord. 2 Cor. 4:4

True, the Kingdom of the heavens will be introduced, the Scriptures tell us, by a time of trouble such as never was before and never will be afterward: a time of trouble which will involve all nations, and peoples, and kingdoms, and tongues, and every part of the world; a time of trouble from which there will be no escape except for those who have made the Lord, even the Most High, their refuge and habitation. (Psa. 91:9) But then,

even that plowshare of trouble the Lord proposes shall be overruled so that it will constitute a channel of blessing to mankind, by preparing their hearts for the message of divine love and grace, centered in Christ and his redeeming work at Calvary.

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES?

Turning from the ignorance and superstition and darkness and terrors of the dark ages, let us look still further—to the inspired Word of God through the Apostles and Prophets. From these let us hear some description of the blessings which God intends His Kingdom shall bring to our sin-cursed race. The Scriptures tell us that God has prepared *a great feast* for humanity; they intimate figuratively that mankind has been *starving* for the message of divine grace—that the millions of our race have gone down in ignorance and superstition, famished for lack of the Word of God. The Bread which came down from heaven—the message of truth and grace which our dear Redeemer brought and exemplified—has indeed been supplied lavishly to some. Some of us have feasted upon the good things of our Father’s Word and plan. But the great mass of mankind have been so deaf and so blind that they see not, neither do they understand or receive the grace of God under present conditions. How glad we are that “all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped” (Isa. 35:5), and that the whole world will thus be prepared for the true knowledge of God, whose goodness and loving kindness and tender mercies will undoubtedly have a softening and mellowing effect upon hard hearts. At all events, the divine program will be carried out, the Kingdom of God will be established amongst men, they will have the opportunity of contrasting the *reign of righteousness* with the *reign of sin and death*. So many as will be rightly influenced by this knowledge may lay hold upon eternal life by accepting the divine arrangement. Truly it is the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance, and of this it is that mankind needs to learn.

BLESSED THE HUNGRY

There are many hungry hearts in the world, —many whose bodies are well nourished have famished hearts which cry out for love and sympathy. He who reads the hearts, who knows what is in them, has prepared this feast which will surely satisfy every legitimate, righteous desire. Those who already are the Lord’s people and who have already feasted at the bountiful table spread for the Church, can approximate to some extent the bounty that will be spread before the world in this *great feast* foretold through the Prophet, in our text. There will be several differences, however, between our present feast and that one for the world.

(1) The present feast is merely a feast of *promise* which must be partaken of by the exercise of faith. The feast

described in our text will be a very *actual one*, the realities of blessing, of restitution, of health, of strength, mental, moral and physical, bountifully supplied, to be partaken of freely by all who appreciate them.

2H693

(2) The present feast spread for the Church is a spiritual one relating to a heavenly Kingdom glory and honor — things not seen as yet, except by the eye of faith. To the contrary, the feast for the world, referred to in our text, will consist of earthly bounties and blessings, most tangible in kind as well as excellent in quality — all that was lost in Adam will be tendered to such of his children as will accept the mercy. The Prophet in attempting to describe the bounties of that feast uses highly symbolical terms, and describes it as “a feast of fat things, full of marrow and of wines on the lees, well refined.” Assuredly no language that we could use could fully and properly set forth the riches of God’s grace provided for the world of mankind under the ministration of his Kingdom. The earth shall yield her increase, streams shall break forth in the deserts, the wilderness shall blossom as the rose, the solitary place shall be glad. Isa. 35

THE DESTRUCTIVE WORK

The Lord through the Prophet, after describing the feast of blessing and refreshments, portrays the destruction of things injurious to mankind, saying, “And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the *covering* cast over all people —the *vail* that is spread over all nations.” (vs. 7) This veil is none other than the veil of ignorance and superstition which hinders mankind from seeing that the Creator is their friend, that righteousness and truth are to their advantage, that the ways of the Lord are righteous altogether. The sunlight of the new dispensation, the reign of righteousness, will scatter the clouds and the darkness, the veil of ignorance, and let into the hearts of mankind “the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.” What wonderful change, and how glad mankind will be, not only to have that feast prepared, but also to be rid of the darkness which would hinder them from appreciating it and coming to a knowledge of the Lord and his grace.

STILL MORE TO FOLLOW

The Prophet proceeds to describe further, saying, “He will swallow up death in victory.” For several thousand years Death has had the victory, and the human family have been swallowed up by it. The Scriptures describe the six thousand

years of earth's history as a period of the "reign of Sin and Death." It is conservatively estimated that death has swallowed up twenty thousand millions of humanity, and that ninety thousand are going to the tomb every day. The Lord tells us through the Prophet that with the establishment of his Kingdom will come a wonderful change: instead of death continuing to swallow up the race, dying shall cease. None shall die then except for *wilful sin*. How glorious a time that will be! All of our sorrows are more or less intimately associated with the reign of Sin and Death! How we may well rejoice in the new dispensation which divine wisdom has planned and divine love will execute for the releasing of our race from this dying process—from this bondage of corruption, permitting them to return to the *liberty of the sons of God*, freedom from death, freedom from sin.

But even this is not enough. The Lord proposes that he will not merely restrain the power of death, so that it shall cease swallowing up our race, but additionally he proposes that he will "swallow up Death in victory." The tomb, which figuratively has engorged itself with twenty thousand millions, will be forced to disgorge, to release its victims. "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth." The saintly few whose faithfulness to God has already been tested will come forth to the perfection of life. The unsaintly masses, the majority of whom have never known God truly, will come forth to the resurrection of trial, of judgment, of discipline, of testing. Death itself shall be destroyed.

St. Paul quotes from the Prophet Hosea, saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" He does not quote this as applicable now, for Sin and Death still have their victory in the world. Thousands are still slaves of sin, and millions are still bounden by the power of the tomb. St. Paul and the Prophet pointed down to the glorious epoch of the Millennial Kingdom (following the resurrection change of the Church) when all shall be brought to a knowledge of the truth, from the least to the greatest, and when all that are in the prison-house of death shall come forth, because Jesus has *redeemed* every member of our race from the power of the tomb.

WIPE ALL TEARS AWAY

We remember our Redeemer's tender words, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Those of us who have accepted his gracious invitation, and obtained from him the rest of faith, found that it meant to us the wiping away of our tears, the cancellation—in a large degree of our troubles. We, then, should be able to understand the next statement of the Prophet in our text, "The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." It is the same

message given to us in Revelation, where the same Kingdom, under the figure of the New Jerusalem, is brought to our attention. It will be the Heavenly Father who will wipe away the tears, not

2H694

directly but indirectly through his Son, the Redeemer. More and more as we come to an understanding of the grace of God, as illustrated in his divine plan of the ages, we come to realize that “all things are of the Father and all things are by the Son” —that the two, while distinctly separate, are also distinctly one in love, in sympathy, and in cooperating in the work of relief which has already begun in the Church, and which ultimately is to extend to the world during the Millennium.

Tears are the marks of sorrow, pain, suffering, and the poetic statement that God himself will wipe away the tears of mankind is a beautiful and forceful suggestion of how the *power of the Highest* is shortly to be employed, not in the eternal torment of the world, but in its blessing, its uplifting, the wiping away of its tears and sorrows.

When we remember that there are no tears in heaven, and that the joys of that blessed state are because of its sinlessness, our hearts overflow with thanksgiving as we catch the poetic thought included in the assurance —that all sin, and all sorrow as the result of sin, and all tears and marks of sorrow, will forever pass away in that happy day. Truly we may be glad and rejoice and give honor to our God as we see his righteous dealings with our race manifested — as the clouds and shadows flee away and permit the sunshine of divine love and grace to take their proper places before the eyes of our understanding.

Let no one imagine that this *signifies universal salvation*. Other Scriptures show us that while universal opportunity for salvation will be accorded, none except those who avail themselves of it by a hearty acceptance of the divine arrangement, and a hearty obedience to the laws of the Kingdom — these only will get the great blessing of life eternal, only their tears will forever be wiped away. All other wilful sinners will be destroyed in the Second Death.

REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE

Another matter mentioned in connection with this great feast and Kingdom work for all people is stated in the words, “The *rebuke* of his people shall he take away from off all the earth.” Throughout the period of “the reign of Sin and Death” there has been a *rebuke*, an odium, attached to being God’s people. Thus the Apostle pointed out that Christ as the anti-type of Israel’s bullock of the sin-offering “went outside the camp,

bearing reproach,” and he exhorts us as the Gospel Church as antitype of the Lord’s goat of the sin-offering, that we should “go to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.” As it is written, “The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.” The Apostle refers to the same thing again, saying, “The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not.” Hence, said the Apostle, we are become as the filth and the off-scourings of the earth, as deceivers and yet true. Rom. 15:3; 1 Cor. 4:13; 2 Cor. 6:8

This reproach has lasted throughout this Gospel age. Will it last forever? Will the world ever come to honor those who are the Lord’s true people? Will mankind ever come to know God’s saints? We answer that the declaration of Scripture in respect to our Lord is, They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn because of Him. (Zech. 12:10) And so we may expect it will be in respect to the Church of Christ, his members. In due time, after the clouds and shadows shall have passed away, after he who sits upon the throne shall have made all things new, after the veil of ignorance covering all mankind shall have been dissolved, after the tears shall have been wiped away, it will be found that the reproach of God’s people has ceased. The world will not only have come to a knowledge of the Creator, and a knowledge of the Redeemer, but to the knowledge also of the Bride, the Lamb’s wife. Instead of its being a reproach to have been a member of the Body of Christ, it will then be recognized as the greatest of all honors and privileges. “Of Zion it shall be said, This man and that was born in her.” Psa. 87:5. We who now in advance by faith thus recognize our privileges may well thank God and take courage and wait for the development of his Kingdom.

SIGHING, CRYING, DYING

In the account furnished us by our Lord in Revelation 21:4-5, we are assured that there will be no more sighing, no more crying, and no more dying, because all the former things shall have passed away—all the things of sin and death, and all in sympathy with those evil conditions in any sense or degree. How glorious it will be when Eden shall bloom without a tomb; when the character-likeness of God, exemplified in the law of Love, shall be written in every human being, when God’s will shall be done on earth as it is already done in heaven! How glorious the contemplation! No wonder, we further read, “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.”

And now another thought: those glorious conditions are *sure to come*, but the time is not yet, though very *near*.

There is still opportunity for us who are “called” to this “high calling” to “make our calling and election

2H695

sure” by obedience to the terms and conditions of the call.

The more we come into sympathy with the glorious purposes of the Kingdom, the more we have the mind of the Father and of the Son in respect to their great work of human uplifting, the more will we desire to have a share in that work. And when we remember that the zeal with which we now throw ourselves into the Lord’s service, and lay down our lives for the brethren, will determine our worthiness or unworthiness to have a share with our Lord in the Kingdom work, we are inclined to agree with the Apostle’s statement, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us (begotten of his spirit) by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”

[The National Labor Tribune, August 8, 1909](#)

ISRAEL’S HOPE

Brooklyn, N. Y., Aug. 8—Pastor Russell preached today in Brooklyn Tabernacle to a crowded house. He said “*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished; that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sin-s.*” (Isaiah 40:1, 2)

Explain it how we will, there is a persistency in the Hebrew race not found in any other. Many and great nations have risen and fallen since God’s promise to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” The Hebrew race alone has continued. It is with us today—a power throughout the civilized world. In literature, medicine, science, and art, as well as in finance, the Jew occupies today a high position. No other nationality can make as good a general showing.

The Jew, willingly or unwillingly, is a witness for God and his Word—not that the Jewish traits are all amiable, or Godlike, or worthy to be copied, or worthy to be considered examples for the remainder of mankind, but because the race connects us up with the great promise of God, which is the hope of the whole world—the Oath-Bound Covenant made with Abraham, which is yet to be fulfilled.

ISRAEL'S DOUBLE EXPERIENCE

The Jews know, and Christians know, that for centuries Israel was God's peculiar people, of whom he said, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) Both know also that since the time of Jesus' death that favored nation has been cut off from the favors once enjoyed, has been a people without a country, held together indeed, but subjected to calamities and persecutions. But very few of either Jews or Christians have investigated and are aware that there is an exact parallel, or duplication, of time between the two experiences of Israel—that is to say, that the period of their favor ending at the Cross of Christ, and the period of their disfavor beginning at the Cross, are of exactly the same length, or duration. And comparatively few know that there are several distinct promises which foretold this parallelism, this division of Israel's history into two great, equal portions, one of favor and the other of disfavor, each 1845 years long.

One of these prophecies mark the beginning of Israel's disfavor in advance, saying, "The days come, saith the Lord, when I will cast you off, and show you no favor" (Jeremiah 16:13), and render unto you double. Another of these Scriptures points to the exact date which constituted the turning point in their experience, saying, "Even today do I declare that I will render unto you double" —literally, the other half of your experience. (Zechariah 9:12) That turning day is distinctly noted by the Prophet as being the one on which our Lord rode to Jerusalem on the ass at the close of his ministry, when he wept over the city of Jerusalem and said, "Your house is left unto you desolate. Ye shall see me no more until that day when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matthew 23:38, 39)

Our text marks the closing of Israel's period of disfavor, announces the forgiveness of Israel's sins and the return to that people of God's smile of favor, and states the reason for this in the words, "He hath rendered unto her *double* for all her sins." Not double punishment is meant, as though God were unjust to punish too severely, but a double, or parallel, of experience under disfavor corresponding to a previous period of experience under Divine favor as God's peculiar people.

2H696

SPEAK YE COMFORTINGLY

Every Christian who is rightly informed and of proper heart will have three reasons for pleasure in speaking comfortingly to the Jew, in harmony with the exhortation of our text, at the present time.

(1) He should have that general sympathy for the Jews as for all others of the human family, and should therefore be glad to rejoice with him that the end of his

tribulations is near at hand, even though the Scriptures distinctly declare that his tribulations will close with a very sharp experience.

(2) When the Christian remembers that the hopes and promises which he cherished belonged once to the Jew, and were forfeited by that nation because of unpreparedness of heart to receive the Messiah, it must cause a fresh sympathy. While rejoicing in the riches of God's grace which, through the failure of the Jew, was extended to the Gentiles, we should also feel pity and sympathy for them in their loss of the Divine favor, which has come to us and which we enjoy. (Romans 11:28-32)

(3) The Christian may well rejoice with the Jew additionally because the Scriptures clearly indicate that with the end of Israel's disfavor will come the end of the present order of things and the inauguration of the Millennial Dispensation of Divine favor to Israel, and through Israel to the world. And this will mean the completion of the Church, her change in the "First Resurrection" from mortal to immortal, from earthly to heavenly conditions as the Bride of Christ and as Zion in the Millennial throne of glory—which is first to bless Israel, and then through Israel to extend that blessing to all the families of the earth. (Romans 11:26)

ABRAHAM'S NATURAL SEED

Let us hastily review Israel's hope, noting the while that it is this hope which has energized that people for now nearly four thousand years. The so-called "Hope of Israel," which has held that nation together as a peculiar people in the world, is built upon the Scriptural fact that God made a special Covenant with Abraham, saying, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This promise God made oath to, and hence the Israelites felt it to be immovably secure. For century after century they held to that promise, believing themselves to be Abraham's promised seed, and looking forward with anticipation to the time when God would exalt them as a nation and make them the rulers of the world, to establish his laws of righteousness in all the earth, and thus to bless mankind.

In due time, when Israel realized that her hope for attaining this high position was a glimmering one because of her national vicissitudes, God explained a still further feature of his plan, namely, that it would not be executed by the nation of Israel alone, but that he would send them the Messiah, the Mighty Immanuel, whose dominion would be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth, and that Israel would, however, constitute his special nation, which he would use in connection with the blessing of the other nations. This is still the hope of Israel, although it has become

faded and dim by reason of the disappointments of the long centuries which have intervened since their rejection of Jesus. When Jesus came, everything connected with his advent was so different from what they had pictured it, that they were ashamed of him, rejected him, and crucified him, thus fulfilling the prophecies they already had which told of him as the Lamb of God — the passover Lamb. We are not to think hard of the Jews for this, nor to suppose that the majority of Gentiles under similar circumstances would have done differently. St. Peter's words on the subject on the day of Pentecost are quite to the point. He said to his hearers, "I wot (know) that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Acts 3:17

THEY RECEIVED HIM NOT

The Jewish rulers saw nothing in the Redeemer but fraud. They considered Jesus an Imposter, brilliant in some respects, but a deceiver of the people. They feared his ultimately raising an insurrection, which would bring against their little nation the strong power of the Roman Empire and take from the few liberties and privileges still enjoyed as a people. The High Priest expressed the prevalent sentiment — "It is better that one man should die than that our whole nation should perish." (John 11:49-51) His words, however, were true in a sense which he did not understand; for only by the death of Jesus could salvation ever have come to the Jewish nation or to the world. The Lamb of God must die, "the just for the unjust," to make reconciliation for iniquity. The penalty for Adam's sin must be met, before its death sentence could be lifted.

As St. Paul points out, nothing happened in our Lord's experience not foreknown to the Father. Israel's rejection of Messiah, and the consequent rejection of Israel by him, were all foretold through the prophets. Let no one suppose that Israel's rejection was a finality; let no one understand that Israel fell; but merely that Israel stumbled; for as St. Paul points out, the gifts and callings of God are things he will not repent of—will not deviate from. (Romans 11:29)

2H697

Israel was cast off merely for a time, merely until Spiritual Israel would be gathered. When that great work shall have been accomplished, Divine favor will return to natural Israel — forgiveness of their sins, the opening of their blinded eyes, their restoration to Divine favor as a people, and the fulfilment through them of the promised blessing of all nations.

‘THE HIDDEN MYSTERY’

The thing which the Israelites did not understand, and which alas! comparatively few Christians comprehend, is distinctly pointed out by St. Paul as the *Mystery* hidden from past ages and dispensations, and now made known unto the saints. (Ephesians 3:3-5) The Mystery is this: That Messiah would not be one individual merely, but a composite Messiah of many members. Messiah will be spiritual, not earthly, and hence the heavenly promises would be his— “an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven” —in the heavenly condition. This will still leave the many gracious promises of God of an earthly kind for natural Israel. But the fulfillment of these earthly promises is deferred until first the Spiritual Messiah, the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, Spiritual Israel, shall have been developed, perfected, glorified. Then the blessing of God proceeding through Spiritual Israel, the Messiah, under the headship of Jesus glorified, will extend to natural Israel, and in turn pass through natural Israel, during the Millennial Age, to all the families of the earth.

No wonder the Jews, to whom only earthly promises had ever been given, were surprised and perplexed by the teachings of Jesus respecting his Kingdom. They were expecting him who would be the glory of the world, and whose capital would be located at Jerusalem; but he declared, “My Kingdom is not of this world.” And again, “The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation (outward show); neither shall ye say, Lo, here (it is), nor, Lo, there (it is), for it shall be in the midst of you” — everywhere present, but invisible. Such teachings were too deep for the Jews, except for the few who were deeply spiritual and accepted our Lord’s teachings on the strength of his merits. Even these did not understand his teachings until endued with Divine blessing and enlightenment at Pentecost. Then they remembered the Lord’s words and appreciated them, as we may now do under the same blessed guidance.

Instead of Jesus, the Messiah, taking the place of Caesar as the Emperor of the world, and as King of the Jewish nation for the conquering of the world at his first advent, he endured the cross for the world’s redemption, and at the same time began the work of calling and sealing a company of disciples, followers, who, when begotten of the holy Spirit, were accounted as “members in particular of the Body of Christ.” These members, gathered primarily from the Jews, and subsequently out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, are all required to have the characteristics of their Lord, their Redeemer, their Teacher. Like him, they must delight to do the Father’s will at any cost, at any sacrifice—like him, they must suffer for righteousness’ sake and thus attest their faith and loyalty to principle. Like him, they must bear witness to the truth under adverse conditions as ambassadors for God. Like

him, they must be servants, or messengers of the New (Law) Covenant, proclaiming it to those who have an ear to hear, and drinking of Christ's cup of the New (Law) Covenant, partaking of a share in the sacrifice, whose blood will eventually seal that New (Law) Covenant for Israel, and through Israel for the world.

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL ELECTED

Here was the Mystery — that during nearly nineteen centuries God's plan, so far as Israel and the world were concerned, was deferred, while Spiritual Israel, of which they had no previous intimation, was called, tested, and glorified. To Israel it would appear as though God had broken his Covenant with that nation, the natural seed of Abraham; a matter which they could not consider possible, in view of the fact that the original Covenant was bounded by the Lord's oath.

Yea, how wonderful! When we come to see into the matter properly, we perceive that Israel and the world could not have obtained their earthly blessings otherwise. "It was necessary that the Christ should suffer and should enter into his glory" on the heavenly plane — the Head and then his foreknown Members. Thus the prophets have foretold the sufferings of The Christ, which have now lasted for nearly nineteen hundred years, and the glory that should follow — the Millennial glory. (1 Peter 1:11) Our Lord Jesus, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (and yet through his mother a member of our race), by his obedience to the Divine Law, became heir of all things — all things which Father Adam had once possessed and had lost by his disobedience — earthly life under perfect or Paraisaical conditions, everlasting life, the rulership of earth, etc.

But instead of keeping these earthly blessings to himself, Messiah, in harmony with the Father's plan, sacrificed them, giving his life and all that pertained to human nature as a Ransom sacrifice for Adam and

2H698

his race, and all their earthly rights. When our Lord had finished his sacrifice and ascended up on high, he applied the merit of it to the household of faith — to all who trusted and obeyed him. What he gave to believers was the earthly rights which were lost by Adam but which he had purchased. But in order to become members of his Body, these believers were required to sacrifice the earthly interests and rights which they received by justification. This they have been doing for the nineteen centuries of this Gospel Age. Soon the last member of the predestined number, having acquired the Divine likeness, having consecrated all their earthly

interests, and having been accepted of the Father, will have finished his share in the sacrifice of Christ — the “suffering of Christ.” (1 Peter 1:11; Colossians 1:24)

THE NEW (LAW) COVENANT

The Law Covenant which God made with Israel of which Moses was the mediator, St. Paul points out was an unsatisfactory one; not because the Law was bad, for it was perfect; not because the Divine proposition or Covenant connected with it was bad, for it offered eternal life to whoever would keep the Law. The difficulty lay in the fact that the Jews, like the remainder of the world, were imperfect, fallen, and unable to keep the Covenant, unable to fulfill the requirements of the Law. Hence, says St. Paul, “By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God’s sight.” (Romans 3:20)

God, however, assured Israel that at some time in the future he would make with them a New (Law) Covenant, which would be more satisfactory, and yield the desired results (Jeremiah 31:31); that he would take away their stony hearts (not give them spiritual hearts, not make them “new creatures,” but give them “hearts of flesh”); that at that time he would write the Law in their hearts. Is it asked how the New (Law) Covenant would differ from the old one, and how it could bless them, when the old Law Covenant merely brought upon them a sentence of death? The answer is given by the Apostle that the Covenant will be practically the same — a Covenant to give them eternal life on condition of obedience to the law; but a difference will consist in the fact that the Mediator of the New (Law) Covenant will be more capable than was the mediator of the old Law Covenant. Not that Moses was unfaithful, nor that he did not do his best to assist the people, but because the new Mediator, Christ, having “died, the just for the unjust,” has a residue of merit at his disposal sufficient to make good to justice for the unwilling defects of Adam and all his race. In this way the New (Law) Covenant will be much more effective to Israel than the old one was.

Moses, the mediator of the Law Covenant, was a type of the Christ, Head and Body, the Mediator of the New (Law) Covenant. Our Lord Jesus in his own person came into the world to mediate this covenant. As the prophet declares, he is the “Messenger of the Covenant.” (Mal. 3:1) The merit of his sacrifice, symbolically styled “his blood,” is the blood which seals the New (Law) Covenant. Nevertheless, he has not yet applied in this manner, but has applied it merely to the household of faith for the justification of those now invited to become members of his Body under the original Covenant made with Abraham 430 years before the Law Covenant. St. Paul says that the “Law Covenant which was 430 years

after” the original Abrahamic Covenant could not disannul it. (Gal. 3:17) The Church is being selected, not under the old Law Covenant with Israel, nor under the New (Law) Covenant which will be made with Israel at the opening of the Millennium, but under the original Abrahamic Covenant, which was barren up to the time when our Lord became the heir of all things, the Christ, the Spiritual Seed of Abraham. It is that original Covenant, under which our Lord was accepted to the priesthood on the spirit plane, that is now held open to Spiritual Israel. As St. Paul declares, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s Seed and heirs according to the promise.” Gal. 3:29

So then the original Covenant provides the Spiritual Seed of Abraham —Jesus the Redeemer, the Lord, the Head, and the Church of his faithful, spirit-begotten followers, members of his Body. To these Body members the Head passes on the cup of self-sacrifice, self-denial, suffering. These, a “little flock,” are partakers now of the suffering of Christ, that they may be sharers in due time of his glory. These present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, and their reasonable service (Rom. 12:1) And accepted of Christ, they are thenceforth not their own, but members of him — members of the Mediator of the New (Law) Covenant between God and Israel.

SEALING THE NEW (LAW) COVENANT

As soon as the last member of the Mediator class shall have passed his sufferings and testings, and been glorified, as soon as the Royal Priesthood shall have been completed, then the blood of the New (Law) Covenant will be applied on behalf of Israel, sealing their Covenant and blotting out their sins, and forthwith the Great Millennial work will have begun. All nations will be privileged to share in the blessings of that New (Law) Covenant by joining themselves to Israel, by becoming children of Abraham by faith in God. Thus shall all the families of the earth be blessed with the glorious opportunity of return to Divine favor

2H699

and eternal life. The willful intentional rejection of those favors will mean to them utter destruction —the Second Death. Acts 3:23

THE CONNECTING LINKS

Notice now the connecting links of God’s great plan, and the share therein apportioned to Spiritual Israel and to natural Israel. God preached the Gospel message in advance to Abraham. The due time had not yet come to introduce any feature of the Gospel —would not come

for nearly 2,000 years. In the meantime the Law Covenant was introduced and apparently was made a part of the Covenant of Grace and Faith. It occupied the time, and taught certain lessons and types in preparation for the Spiritual Seed of Abraham.

Although our Lord was born under the Law, and kept the Law, St. Paul explains that the Covenant of Grace operates with all those who accept of Christ by faith, justifying them, even as Abraham was justified by faith before the Law Covenant. The Christ, justified before God, (the Head actually just, the members of his Body reckonedly justified through faith in his blood) constitutes the Seed of Abraham—the only ones in the whole world who possessed the faith of Abraham, the only ones, therefore, who were qualified to inherit under that promise. God might have claimed a fulfillment of his promise made to Abraham in the completion of the Church—he might have claimed that all who were of the faith of Abraham had been blessed, and that the remainder were such as had not Abraham's qualities of heart.

But God was willing to do much more than this. Hence this Seed of Abraham was granted the high reward of a spirit nature—glory, honor, immortality, in return for the sacrifice of the justified earthly life. Thus, these all pass from the earthly plane of being to the heavenly, and through the New (Law) Covenant arrangement bestow their blessing upon the natural seed of Abraham by sealing the New (Law) Covenant for them and becoming the Mediator for them.

The work of the glorified Christ during the Millennial Age will accomplish much more for Israel and for the world than could possibly be done along the lines of simple faith such as Abraham exercised, and such as the household of faith now must exercise. The inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom, the subduing of sin and of Satan, the releasing of mankind from the bondage of sin and death, the opening of the blind eyes and the unstopping of the deaf ears, will enable the world practically to walk by sight, and to come to an accurate knowledge of the Truth, instead of merely a faith knowledge. Thus many of Adam's children will be helped under the New (Law) Covenant arrangement who could not have been helped under the original Covenant without this added feature of the New (Law) Covenant.

How wonderful and how generous are the divine arrangements! Who but the Lord could have made such a glorious plan, so just, so reasonable, so far reaching? The more we see of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of "Love Divine, all love excelling" the more properly it should sanctify our hearts, and prompt us to loving obedience, that we may make our calling and

election sure as members of his Body, and sharers of his glory and his Millennial work.

[The National Labor Tribune, August 9, 1909](#)

SLAUGHTER OF THE AMALEKITES

New Philadelphia, O., August 9—Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., preached in our Opera House twice today to deeply interested audiences. We report one of his discourses from the text, “Go now and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.” (1 Sam. 15:3) He said:

Rumor has it that the Sunday School teachers throughout Christendom had very perplexing experiences two Sundays ago in the teaching of the lesson of which our text is a part. Prominent ones publicly denounced the record as surely false, and claimed that to accept the Prophet Samuel’s command as being of the Lord and his anger against King Saul for having spared even one Amalekite alive, King Agag, and the subsequent slaying of this one, is to discredit Samuel as a Prophet and the Bible as an inspired record. They assert that to teach this lesson and many other similar lessons from the Old Testament especially, would

2H700

make infidels, overlooking the fact that their own course in denying the inspiration of the Scriptures and their faithfulness of the record is itself infidelity—unbelief.

Such teachers as these and the higher critics in general are making infidels by the wholesale, for if the reliability of Samuel's course be questioned, then everything else that Samuel did and said would be equally subject to criticism and rejection; for if he deceived on one occasion, what guarantee have we that he did not deceive on all occasions? To the contrary, we have Samuel named by the Apostles as a Prophet of the Lord. He is named with David by St. Paul (Heb. 11:32) and again in Acts 13:20; while the Lord, through Jeremiah the Prophet, classed Samuel as one of the chief of the prophets, ranking him next to Moses, saying, "Though Moses and Saul stood before me to plead the cause, I would not repent. (Jer. 15:1) Whoever, therefore, undertakes to find fault with this lesson is practically finding fault with the entire Bible and is branding himself as an unbeliever in it and its teachings. And by the time the Bible has been repudiated as the standard of authority before the mind, it leaves us without any standard of judgment except what each individual may possess by nature. Thus the tendency of these higher critics is to rationalism, under which each man makes his own god, his own religion, his own hopes, fears, etc.

I am well aware that in supporting the truthfulness of my text and of other Scriptures of similar import, I am taking the unpopular side; but I trust that by the time I shall have finished my argument, it will be seen that the charges of lovelessness, injustice and slander against God and his methods are not mine, but those of my opponents, who today number the vast majority of the thinking people of Christendom. I said "thinking people," but perhaps that statement was incorrect. I incline to think that otherwise intelligent people do very little thinking along religious lines, and that this lack of thought is one of the sources of their difficulty and dilemma in connection with this subject.

STRAINING AT A GNAT AND SWALLOWING A CAMEL

The difficulty which besets the average Sunday School teacher rests upon the wrong foundation laid in the Christian mind by the creeds which have come down to us from the "dark ages," and which we have reverently worshipped because we supposed that they directly represented and interpreted the Scriptures. It is not the Scripture that is at fault, and unreasonable and impossible of acceptance by those who use their reason. The fault lies in the creeds and traditions of men contrary to the Scriptures; which we have imbibed from

infancy and which have hoodwinked Christianity for centuries. To have the right understanding, we need to go to the very bottom of the subject and to call attention to the fact that those who demur against the justice of the slaughter of the Amalekites, men, women and children accept as a fact something much more atrocious and often glory in it.

I refer to the fact that practically all of the creeds of Christendom teach that God has somewhere a great furnace called hell, large enough to contain the entire human family of thousands of millions; that he made this before he made man; and that all are to go there except the mere handful of saintly ones who walk in the footsteps of Jesus, not after the flesh but after the spirit, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, who are to go to heaven. It seems thoroughly unreconcilable with reason that those who believe this last proposition and who blaspheme the holy name of God by such misrepresentations of his character, his work and his future plans, should have any difficulty about the slaughter of a few hundred of the poor heathen. Are they not, in our Lord's language, straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel? Which is the more dishonoring to God, to teach that he used the Israelites as his executioners in destroying the Amalekites or to teach that God has a place of torture for the masses of humanity, with Satan and the whole corps of his demons as the executioners of all these? Which of these theories dishonors God the more? Assuredly the latter.

And, by the way, is it not true that the special feature of difficulty before the human mind in connection with the death of any human being is the prevailing theory that immediately at death the wicked are sent to eternal torment? Does not our horror at the slaughter of the Amalekites arise in a great measure from the impression given us since childhood that they, being wicked, would immediately drop into a burning hell, there to suffer eternally? It is that feature of the matter which consciously or unconsciously influences us in respect to the death of nearly every human being. That is the point of error; and when it is cleared up, the whole matter becomes plain.

According to the ordinary idea the Amalekites, a wicked heathen people who for centuries had been under God's sentence, as expressed to Moses (Deut. 25:17-19), would be sure to go to eternal torment when they died; while the Israelites the one nation which God had elected and favored, held a special privilege of getting into heaven when they died, except the few who wickedly repudiated their special privileges. All this is a mistake. The Israelites were not elected to go to heaven when they died, but as all the

2H701

Scriptures declare, all alike, good and bad, went into the grave, into the state of death, *sheol*, translated hell sometimes in our common version of the Bible, but never meaning a place of fire or suffering or consciousness of any kind, always signifying the death state, and corresponding to the Greek word *hades* of the New Testament. This is the same penalty which was upon the Amalekites — the death penalty. In fact, the theory of eternal torment is utterly foreign to the Scriptures. St. Paul, who wrote the major part of the New Testament and who says, “I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27), does not include in that counsel of God even one word about a fiery hell or an eternal torment or consciousness in death. On the contrary, the severest penalty mentioned by St. Paul in any of his writings is his declaration that certain incorrigible ones “shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power.” (2 Thess. 1:9)

There is a great difference between a punishment of everlasting destruction and the punishment of everlasting preservation in torment. And it is right here that the Adversary has so grievously deceived us and twisted our understanding of the divine Word. His object in so doing is set forth in the Apostle’s declaration, “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not (the truth), lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2 Cor. 4:4) In other words, the Adversary would separate us from the love of God and from the book which tells us about the love of God — the Bible. He would have us think of God as the most terrible monster of the universe, bent upon the eternal misery of nearly all of his earthly creatures. Thus he would alienate our hearts and minds from God and from his Book. And to what an extent he has succeeded in promulgating his blasphemy respecting our Creator! The general result of these false doctrines is explained by the answer given by a small child to her Sunday School superintendent, who asked, “Lizzie, what will you do when you get to heaven?” The child replied, “I will run and get behind Jesus, so that God will not see me. Poor child! how the doctrine of devils has reached even her and discredited the Almighty God, whose name is love!

CONSISTENCY A JEWEL

We are glad indeed to note the general spirit of our time, which hesitates to countenance as divine the command of our text with the thought that the poor creatures would be necessarily hastened to an eternity of torment. It will do us good, perhaps, to reason a little more on religious

matters, to enquire why the God of love has permitted the reign of sin and death, which we see all about us today and which we know has been in progress for six thousand years. Leaving out entirely the matter of eternal torment after death, we should begin first of all to inquire, Why does our loving Father in heaven permit burning fevers, consumption, etc., to afflict our race? As a matter of fact, the destroying of the Amalekites by the sword of the Israelites caused far less pain and suffering than if a plague had been permitted to come upon the Amalekites for their destruction. Famine and pestilence have ravaged the world and caused a hundred times the distress connected with the sudden death by the sword, and all must admit that God had as much power to stop the Israelites from slaughtering the Amalekites as to stop some of the plagues and famines which have swept away much larger numbers in other families of our race. To acknowledge God at all is to acknowledge his power, his wisdom, his justice, his love; and whoever has not thus far been able to harmonize these divine characteristics with the reign of sin and death has failed to learn the first great lesson in theology, in the study of the Bible, in the appreciation of God and his divine plan of the ages.

There must be a reason why everything is harmony in heaven and discord on earth, why the heavenly hosts are perfect in mind and morals, while the earthly creatures of God are all so imperfect that "there is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10) There must be some reason why they have no insane asylums in heaven, while on earth their inmates number in civilized lands about one out of every one hundred and fifty of the adults. There must be a reason for this degeneracy in the human mind, this loss of the image of God. There must be a reason why humanity sickens and dies, while the angels maintain their vitality and perfection and know nothing of death.

"THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH"

The only explanation that will satisfy reason is the Scriptural one expressed by the Apostle; namely, that death is the wage of sin. (Rom. 6:23) Do you inquire, When did we sin, that we should be born in sin and shapen in iniquity? The Scriptures answer us that our misshapen heads, twisted reasoning faculties and other characteristics; and general dying tendency resulted, not from our own transgression, but from father Adam's. The Apostle says, "By one man's disobedience, sin entered the world and death as a result of sin; and thus death passed upon all, because all are sinners." Rom. 5:12

Here then is the key to the mystery. Our race is a

2H702

race of slaves of sin, inheriting a degenerate nature from a disobedient parent and accentuating with each generation the depravity and the mental, moral and physical obliquity and decline. It is therefore on account of Adam's transgression and the inheritance of weakness on our part as his children that neither our fathers nor ourselves are worthy of eternal life on the only terms upon which God could grant it —obedience and righteousness. For this reason our whole race is going downward into death —the tomb, the grave, *sheol*, the Bible hell. The great mistake that confused us is, that we neglected the Bible teaching on this subject and accepted the false and nonsensical theory of the "dark ages," viz., that because of father Adam's one act of disobedience God sentenced him to an eternity of woe. That was our mistake; that is where the error comes in; that is where the fog and blindness affected our minds. Putting away this error and taking the Scriptures just as they read, we find that all becomes simple and plain. The death penalty was "Dying thou shalt die, Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 2:17; 3:19)—not a word about eternal torment, nor a suggestion along that line in the Bible.

NO INJUSTICE WITH GOD

Now let us examine the matter and see why it was that the Lord gave the Prophet Samuel a message to King Saul to destroy the Amalekites utterly. The record of the context is that it was to be the execution of the divine decree against that people, a part of whose special crime was their war upon the Israelites when the latter were in the wilderness journey toward Canaan. (Ex. 17:8-16) It will be noticed also that certain Kenites who were living in the same country were given an opportunity to depart that they might not be destroyed in the slaughter of the Amalekites, and that the reason for this is given, viz., that the Kenites, instead of injuring the Israelites, showed kindness to them when they were coming up out of Egypt. 1 Sam. 15:6

If now we turn to the account in Exodus, we find that the Lord had said unto Moses, "Write this for a memorial in a book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, for I will utterly destroy and blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." (Exod. 17:14) In harmony with this was the Lord's command to the Israelites through Moses, saying, "Remember what Amalek did unto you by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt: how he met thee by the way and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be,

when the Lord thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.” (Deut. 25:17-19) As a matter of fact it was about four hundred years after the divine decree against the Amalekites that the order to put it into effect was sent to King Saul. As to why so long a delay, we may merely conjecture, basing our surmises upon the Lord’s dealings with nations. For instance, when the Lord told Abraham that his posterity would come ultimately into the land of Canaan and receive it as their possession from the Lord, the declaration is made, “In the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. (Gen. 15:16) The intimation is that, although the Lord foreknew when and how the iniquity of the Amorites would increase, he allowed them to have the full benefit of time to demonstrate actually the downwardness of their course.

This same thought is set before us by the Apostle in his opening chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, in which he specifically declares that the degradation of the world is due neither to the direct acts of the Almighty nor to his failure to safeguard his creatures. Adam, the only one of our race directly created, was perfect, upright, the image of his Creator, and his sin was a wilful one, for the Apostle says, “Adam was not deceived.” (1 Tim. 2:14) Likewise the Lord has not inflicted punishment upon our race for their degeneration; but as the Apostle explained, “When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but because vain in their reasoning, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools .

Wherefore God gave them up to uncleanness, to the lusts of their hearts and the dishonoring of their own bodies between themselves . . . God gave them up into evil passions. . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting.” Rom. 1:21-28

This seems to be the course which the Lord has pursued with the entire human family except the one nation of Israel, which he undertook to specially deal with under the Law Covenant, to use them as a typical people, to prepare them for Messiah’s coming, when they would furnish the nucleus of the Church. Certain great catastrophies of the past are explained to us in the Scriptures along these lines, to be inflicted with a view to preventing the race from going into further degradation, on the principle enunciated, “Thus far shalt thou go but no further.”

AMORITES, CANAANITES, AMALEKITES, SODOMITES

Note some illustrations of this principle that very corrupt people were destroyed, lest they should become more wicked. The Canaanites were sentenced to destruction when their iniquity had come to a full: so we may assume that the destruction of the Amalekites of our text was the time when their iniquity had come to a full. Similarly it was in the case of the Sodomites, for we read that in answer to Abraham's proposition for mercy for the cities of the plain the Lord agreed that if ten righteous persons could be found the city would be spared. (Gen. 18:32) We are not including the flood in this list of calamities; for while it is true that at that time the wickedness of men in the earth was very great, nevertheless it is equally evident that the flood was intended to destroy the illegitimate progeny of the angels through their unauthorized intercourse with the daughters of men, described in Genesis 6:1-5.

The case of the Sodomites will serve us a valuable lesson on this very subject. Not only is it evident from the record that their cutting off from life was a divine judgment, but additionally we have our Lord Jesus words, "It rained down fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all" (Luke 17:29); and we have the word of the Lord through the Prophet, "I took them away as I saw good." (Ezek. 16:50) Our thought, of course, in the past has been that the Scriptures taught that the wicked Sodomites, taken away from life in so peremptory a manner and admittedly vile and sinful, were at once consigned to a place of flames and torture at the hands of devils; and perhaps we found it difficult to see how God could say, "I took them away as I saw good." We were inclined rather to say, Why did not God send Abraham to preach to them? Why did he not give Lot a commission to start a revival meeting or what not? or why should he not have given them some slighter punishment, from which they might have effected a recovery? Why blot them out at one stroke? How could this be good for them or for anybody?

We must rely upon the Scriptural account to justify and make plain the matter. It does so abundantly. The chief difficulty with us heretofore has been that we did not seek our information at the right quarter, but went to the traditions and creeds of the "dark ages." Coming now to the Bible we find its assurance that those Sodomites had already enjoyed more privileges and blessings of life than they were entitled to; for according to the divine

decree, life was provided only for the righteous. The fragment of life which the Sodomites had received through their ancestry was Adamic life, which was already under sentence of death; and they were merely enjoying more of it than was their due. God might have cut them off in the moment of birth or by disease or calamity or in any manner. They were culprits; and the death sentence was upon them, as upon all the remainder of the race. As by one man sin had entered the world and death as a result of sin, so death passed upon all men; for all are sinners. (Rom. 5:12) God took them away as he saw good when their iniquity had reached its full; and it would probably have been injurious to themselves and others if they had been permitted to go further. Meantime they have been suffering nothing except the experiences in dying; for as the Scriptures declare, "The dead know not anything." There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave (*sheol*), whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9:5, 10)

The Sodomites have no knowledge of the intervening time and had no hope in their death. But we who are instructed by the Word of God know something respecting them and their hopes. We know that Christ died for them as well as for others; for by the grace of God he tasted death for every man. (Heb. 2:9) We know that this guarantees for the Sodomites, as well as for all others of the race a full, fair opportunity for release from the death sentence of Adam, under which they died. We know that the time for their awakening will be in the Millennial Age, "Every man in his own order." (1 Cor. 15:23) We know that when they come forth, therefore, it will be under the favorable conditions of that time, when the strong hand of Immanuel will have control over all the affairs of the earth, when Satan shall be bound for a thousand years and be permitted to deceive mankind no more, when good influences will be let loose upon mankind and evil influences all be restrained, and when the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. Since, therefore, the Sodomites were taken away from conditions which were no longer helpful to them, to be brought forth again under conditions more favorable, did not our God say truly, "I took them away as I saw good?" Looking at it from this the divine standpoint of the Bible, does it not seem good to us all that God should remove them from their scenes of degradation?

“MORE TOLERABLE FOR SODOM AND GOMORRAH”

Lest some should think that we are painting fancy sketches from our imagination, lest there be some of you who do not remember the Scriptures on this subject, I quote you our Lord's words respecting those very Sodomites who were destroyed. He says that, in

2H704

the day of judgment (the Millennial Age) when the whole world will be on trial, Sodom and Gomorrah will rise up as superior to some of the Jews and condemn in contrast the people of the cities of Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin; for if, as our Lord says, the mighty works that were done in those cities by himself and the Apostles had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Hence our Lord declares that it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah under the judgments of the Millennial Kingdom, than for the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin. (Matt. 11:20-24) It is not, therefore, a question of how intolerable it will be for any of them, but the reverse. It will be tolerable for Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin, but more tolerable for the Sodomites. If this be not the teaching of our Lord, pray what do his words signify and what guarantee have we that we shall ever know the meaning of words? Let us not be so persistent in our adhesion to the traditions of the elders and the darkness of the past that we will refuse the only reasonable explanation of the facts before us, given us by the Lord for our edification and comfort.

I remind you that the Lord has also told us through the Prophet Ezekiel something about the Sodomites and what shall be their future state. He tells most distinctly that times of restitution are coming for the whole world of mankind, to lift them up out of their fallen condition and degradation, to bring them back into full harmony with God and the full likeness of God, as originally represented in the perfect man Adam. Then the work of the Millennial Age is to reach every member of our race and to prove all who will accept the gracious terms and arrangements and be obedient thereto. The Prophet declares that the Lord's favor will come again to the Israelites. The return of the Jews to divine favor will follow the completion of the Elect Church, to be changed in the First Resurrection to be like our Lord, to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And at the same time the Jews will return to God's favor; and the same general beneficent favor which will forgive their sins, even the crucifixion of our Lord, will arrange also for the blessing of all mankind, including those wicked Sodomites. So it reads word for word:

“When I will turn again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them; that thou mayest bear thine own shame and mayest be confounded of all that thou hast done in that thou art a comfort unto them. When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.” Ezek. 16:53-55

How clear the statement! How in harmony with the divine program that as there has been a reign of sin and death for six thousand years which has carried mankind down to degradation and the tomb, there is to be a reign of righteousness and life for the uplifting of them from degradation and from the tomb. And the right thus to lift mankind from under the divine sentence of death is recorded by our Lord Jesus Christ, when he bought Adam and his race by the sacrifice of himself. We are merely awaiting the glorious Millennial Age, when this great work of human uplifting shall begin, and the delay is merely to grant the opportunity for finding the Elect Church, the “little flock,” who will constitute the Bride of Christ, and in which company the Apostle urges us to strive to make our calling and election sure.

This particular statement of the return of Israel to her former estate and of the Sodomites and Samaritans to their former estate, is in full harmony with the Apostle Peter’s statement that times of such refreshment and restitution are due to begin at the second coming of our Lord. There are some who affect to find irony in our Lord’s words in the passage quoted; but this is merely because they have not attained to that degree of appreciation of the divine character which the old colored woman had when some one asked her, “Aunty, is it not marvelous, strange, that God would love us and redeem us through the death of his Son?” Aunty answered, “No sir, not strange.” “What, not strange that God should give his Son to be our Redeemer at the cost of his life?” “No, Massa, it is just like him; it is just like him “ So dear friends, there are some who think it strange if they read in the Scriptures of something gracious that God has promised to effect for the recovery of our race from the dominion of sin and death. But those who have the Lord’s spirit will feel as did the colored woman, that it would be just like him, just like a good, loving, wise, powerful God not only to redeem Adam and his race, but also to give each and all the fullest opportunity for profiting by the great redemption sacrifice, opportunity for release from condemnation and from the weaknesses of inherited dying conditions.

“AN EVERLASTING COVENANT”

Read further the prophecy respecting the Sodomites and Israelites. The Lord through the Prophet reasons with them and declares that in some respects the Israelites were worse than the Sodomites, more responsible, agreeing thus with our Lord’s testimony on the subject. He calls our attention to the fact of

2H705

their wickedness and the wickedness of the Sodomites, etc., saying, that the casting out of Israel from divine favor was the result of their having despised the Law Covenant which he made with them, not that the Law Covenant could have given them life, nor that they would have been able to keep it, but that it was expected of them at least to show respect for it and to make the best possible endeavor to comply with its conditions. This they did not do; and hence, when the worthy ones were selected by our Lord at his first advent to be members of the Church class, the remainder of that nation were turned aside and stumbled, blinded, decreed to remain so until the fulness of the Gentiles should become into divine favor as members of the Church. Then the Church being completed and glorified, favor would return to natural Israel and, as this Scripture shows us, not to them only, but to the Sodomites and Samaritans, and then to the remainder of the world. Compare this statement with that made by the Apostle Paul in Romans 11.

Here, after showing that Spiritual Israel has come in and has supplanted Natural Israel as respects the great, chief blessing of God—joint-heirship with Christ, the Apostle proceeds to declare that by and by with the completion of the Church blindness will be turned away from Israel and so “All Israel shall be saved (recovered from blindness). As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins: as concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes (treated as enemies, blinded, ignorant), but as touching the election they are beloved for the father’s sakes; for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. For as ye (Gentiles) were in times past disobedient to God but have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also now are disobedient, that by the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God hath shut up all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all. O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable his decisions and his ways past finding out!

This is the same message given us through the Prophet Ezekiel. "I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then shalt thou remember thy ways and be ashamed when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thine younger, and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant; and I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know I am the Lord: that thou mayest remember and be confounded and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame when I am pacified toward thee for all thou hast done, saith the Lord of Hosts." Ezek. 16:60-63

Let us note, dear friends, that the only possible interpretation of the Bible is along its own lines; that whenever we attempt to mix the theology of Plato and heathenism, we merely confuse ourselves, dishonor God, make his Word of none effect, and increase our own blindness. Let us learn the lesson and abandoning human tradition, take merely a "thus saith the Lord" for all our religious hopes and aspirations. From this standpoint alone we can see that Samuel was right; that God was right; that the death of the Amalekites was not a violation of any principle of righteousness, but rather in the interest of righteousness, as taking away a people whose iniquity had come to the full, that they might come forth in due time under the power and instruction of the great Redeemer to have a blessed opportunity for knowing the truth as in comparison with the error; and that if they will to choose the truth they shall live; but if they will not choose it they shall be cut off in the Second death, to be as though they had not been, or as the Apostle Peter says, as natural brute beasts. Indeed the first death sentence would have meant everlasting destruction, had it not been that God had made other provision; viz., for our redemption through the precious blood of Jesus and for an opportunity of reconciliation through him.

Let us not be misunderstood that we are advocating more than one full complete personal trial or test as respects eternal life. But let us be understood that we are preaching one trial for each and all of our race; and that we have no objection, but would rather greatly appreciate it, if all the poor heathen and others who have not had a full knowledge and opportunity of the Redeemer, as we have had, shall ultimately have as great opportunity, as great privilege as we to come to know "the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved."

* * * *

*Forever may Thy will be done:
I would not choose, I leave it all with Thee,—...
The pilgrimage, if short or long it be,—
Thy will be done!*

2H706

[The National Labor Tribune, August 15, 1909](#)

SIN'S SMALL BEGINNINGS

Sandusky, O. August 15 — “Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own desire and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Jas. 1:14, 15

In proportion to our intelligence we all know that sin abounds in the world; and more than this, that there are tendencies towards sin in our own flesh. The Scriptural declaration is, “I was born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Psa. 51:5) The explanation of these conditions is found only in the Bible, which tells us that the beginning of sin was in Eden, and that its painful influence has descended from parent to child until now, and that there was but one complete remedy for it, which is beyond our power, but provided for us by our Creator through his glorious Son who redeemed us.

DOCTRINES OF DEVILS

The Bible is God's message to all those who are desirous of learning the Divine standard and choosing and fighting a good fight against the wrong, against sin wherever found; but especially against sin and weakness towards sin in ourselves. The more truly we discern the true philosophies for sin and the Divine remedy, the better we are prepared to resist it —forewarned we are forearmed.

However it may be explained, the fact remains that the world of mankind, heathen and civilized, realizing sin, feels conscience-stricken and anticipate punishment of some kind for violation of recognized laws and principles of our being. Ignorance, superstition, mental unbalance and theory, supported by priest-craft, have led mankind, heathen and civilized, into a fear of an eternity of torture as a punishment for sin. This, the Apostle calls, “Doctrines of demons.” (1 Tim. 4:1) And no doubt the demons were responsible in some measure for the deduction of this doctrine of eternal torment; because fear is one of the most powerful influences they can bring to bear upon fallen humanity as they seek to captivate them to sin. Those who have had much to do with spiritism (thinking that they were communicating

with their dead friend, but really fellowshiping with fallen angels, called demons in the Scriptures), tell us that at the beginning these “lying spirits” gained control of their wills by telling them that they should pray much, even while presenting to them alluring, sinful suggestions. (1 Tim. 4:1) In a later step they tell them that everything is glorious and everybody happy “in the spirit land,” and that sins of the present life are unimportant matters. Still later on they prick their consciences and work upon their fears and tell them that their case is hopeless and that they will soon have them fully in their power and torment them forever. With despair comes utter abandonment and a willingness to treat with the “evil spirits.” This is sometimes followed by obsession and not infrequently reason is entirely dethroned and the victim becomes an inmate of an asylum.

The safeguard against all of these delusions and misrepresentations is found in a correct understanding of God’s Word—the Bible. In proportion as its teachings are understood and followed the mind is relieved of those “doctrines of demons” and given a rational understanding of what sin is and of what its real penalty consists. Obedience to its instructions brings proportionate measures of harmony with God and righteousness and results in love, joy, peace and a holy spirit or disposition.

“THE WAGE OF SIN IS DEATH”

Many experience great difficulty in ridding their minds of the “doctrines of demons” — that the wages of sin is eternal torment. They find it difficult to believe the Truth on the subject, which the Scriptures present, namely that “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23) God’s proposition is that all sinners against his just laws, after full opportunity, shall be “utterly destroyed.” (2 Thess. 1:9; Acts 3:23) The power of eternal life resides in God, and he assures us that he will not give it to any except those who come into harmony with him. Eternal life has not been thrust upon our race. It is entirely contrary to the Scriptures to assert that man must live somewhere to all eternity, either in joy or anguish. The Scriptures assure us to the contrary of this — “All the wicked will he destroy.”

Our Lord declares that God is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. He alone who has the power of eternal life has made no provision whereby sinners can obtain it and thus injure themselves and discredit the Divine government to all eternity. The

2H707

gift of God is eternal life, and that gift will be deployed only upon those who demonstrate a heart desire in harmony with God and acceptance of his provisions for their recovery from sin and death through his Appointed Way—Jesus Christ the Righteous. Thus we read, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but

‘THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM.’

John 3:36

This expression, “the wrath of God,” calls for an explanation. If we hear that a good man is angry we may expect that his goodness will regulate and qualify his just anger. If we hear that a bad, wicked man is angry, we would not know to what lengths his anger might lead, whether to viciousness or not. So also if we heard of the wrath of Satan, we might not know to what awful lengths and depths or horrible injustice, torment and agony this might lead, if he had the power. When we read that God is angry with the wicked every day, and that this anger or wrath came upon our whole race because of Adam’s transgression, reason, as well as the Bible, bids us expect that a good God, perfect in justice, wisdom, love and power, would exercise his wrath, his anger, along reasonable, just and merciful lines and not devilishly.

In proportion as this rational thought permeates our minds it prepares us to read our Bibles in a sane manner, contrary to our former custom. When we read, “The wages of sin is death,” reason assures us that this would be a proper penalty for a just and loving God to pronounce against his creatures after they had become wilfully disobedient and disloyal to him and his righteous arrangements on their behalf. From this standpoint the penalty prescribed against our first parents is seen to be reasonable, “In the day that thou eatest thereof, dying, thou shalt die;” “Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Gen. 3

Who cannot see that these statements represent the highest possible manifestation of righteous wrath? Our first parents were at once cut off from their special fellowship with their Creator, when they wilfully and knowingly violated his laws. Their death sentence was immediately pronounced; they were legally dead from that moment, and there their dying sentence began,

which, in Adam's case, ended in nine hundred and thirty years. He died within the day, for, as St. Peter declares, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." 2 Pet. 3:8

OUR TEXT ILLUSTRATED

The experience of our first parents well illustrates the lesson of our text. Mother Eve's desire for knowledge should have confined itself to the Divine limitations; but she permitted it to wander disloyally. Evidently she turned over in her mind how wonderful must be the wisdom of God, and how she would like to possess as much as the serpent suggested she might have, if she would but disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit. We can imagine that she had qualms of conscience — that she hesitated to disobey. But to even stop to consider the pleasures, the advantages, the desirability of transgression was to leave her mind open to a fresh assault. The serpent's next move was to suggest to her a reason why her Creator had forbidden the eating of the fruit, namely, that God knew that this would make them wise as himself, and that he did not wish for equals in knowledge, but desired to keep them in a condition of mental slavery through ignorance. Such a suggestion should have been spurned by Eve, and was, no doubt, rejected at first. No doubt she brought forth arguments to prove the merciful kindnesses and generosity of the Creator and that such an evil, selfish and ignoble as the serpent suggested could not possibly belong to her Creator. But the wrong was in giving the least countenance to these suggestions of disobedience. They should have been promptly set aside. Stopping to expostulate or reason is merely opening the door for further beguilement. In the language of our text, she was "drawn away by her own desire and was enticed;" then, when desire had conceived, the sinful act of eating the forbidden fruit resulted.

How does desire conceive? We answer, The mind entertains the desire, warms it, vitalizes it, reflects upon what advantages or pleasures would result; enters into and enjoys those forbidden pleasures mentally. Thus mother Eve reflected that no doubt the forbidden fruit was specially delicious to the palate, luscious; more than this, that the enlightenment of mind would bring to her vistas of thought far beyond anything she and Adam had ever previously imagined. Thus her desire for knowledge conceived and gradually, perhaps in moments, perhaps in hours, perhaps in days, developed more and more the thought of the joys and pleasures to result from the act of disobedience —until practically the whole of life was absorbed in this one desire, and everything else of her glorious and proper blessings on every hand was

2H708

practically forgotten and ignored. Finally the irresistible moment came. She took the fruit. She ate it; sin was born, and the wage of death would follow in due course.

The main thing to be noticed is that the admission of evil desire into our hearts, into our wills, is the beginning of sin—the conception of sin. After the conception it is only a matter of time until it shall be born, unless in some manner that sinful desire be quenched, be killed. Even then it will be with serious consequences that the wrongly conceived sin will be gotten rid of. The lesson is, as the Apostle suggests in the text, the keeping of our hearts, our minds, so the desires shall not chance to conceive therein. This means a loyalty to God and to the Truth and to righteousness, about which the world in general knows little. It means that many kinds of desires and ambitions may be begotten in the heart and lead on to one kind or another of sinful development. Let us then hearken to the Lord, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” Prov. 4:23

Eternal life or eternal death are the issues, not eternal happiness or eternal misery. True, under God’s provision, all who get eternal life will thereby get eternal happiness; but all who fail to get the eternal life or happiness in God’s provision will get eternal death, the Second Death, utter extinction. As St. Peter declares, they shall be “as brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed.” (2 Pet. 2:12) And St. Paul says, “They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord”—not with everlasting torment. (2 Thess. 1:9) For these hopelessly incorrigible ones, after they shall have had a full trial and full opportunity and have been found worthy of the Second Death, there will be no hope of further resurrection.

DIVINE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

We have seen how sin entered, and that its wage or penalty of Divine decree is death—extinction. And we have seen that mental, moral and physical imperfections are merely elements of our dying process. If this were all that the Bible had to tell us, it would be valueless to us, for why philosophize over a fact if it could not in any sense or degree be avoided. If there were no hope, as the Apostle suggests, we might as well eat, drink and be merry and make no attempt specially to strive against sin, and thus to bring ourselves into conflict with the weaknesses of our natures and our evil environment. But, as the Scriptures declare, “There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.” (Psa. 130:4) The very fact that God has provided the forgiveness and made possible an escape from the original death sentence and

return to his favor —eternal life —makes life worth living and puts a new ambition, a new hope, a new energy into all those who come to an understanding of it.

If we were dealing with fallen men like ourselves instead of with God, we might say that some men would change their word and others would not. But when we think of the unchangeable God we feel convinced that the sentence he once pronounced must stand. The great Supreme Judge of the Universe in the findings of his own court, will not retract his just sentence, “Dying, thou shalt die.” Hence we would not be inclined to expect eternal life from him who declares against us as a race that “the wages of sin is death.” We might hope that if we could live perfect, sinless lives, the Lord might excuse us from the general penalty, but our every endeavor to attain perfect standards of life has demonstrated to us the impossibility of this attainment. Hence we were inclined to disbelieve the message of God’s love and forgiveness sent to us through the Gospel. And nothing ever fully satisfied our minds and hearts until we learned the philosophy of how “God could be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Rom. 3:26

That philosophy once seen is convincing to the last degree. Briefly stated, it is that “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;” because all except the first man were sinners by heredity. (Rom. 5:12) In other words, the sentence of death was only pronounced against father Adam. Everybody else who dies merely shares in his sentence under the natural laws of heredity. Then God condescendingly explains to us the philosophy of how that one mans sins being met, the merit can be made applicable to all of his posterity, so that the death of one righteous man could satisfy the claims of justice against the race as a whole. We are astonished at the wisdom thus displayed; the Divine wisdom had thus prepared from the beginning for the redemption of our race at the smallest possible cost.

But we inquire, Where could the one man be found who would be willing to surrender his own life for that of Adam and his race? And if such a generous man could be found how could he, as a member of the condemned race, be acceptable to justice as man’s ransom price? The Scriptures again explain that no such man could be found amongst Adam’s race and that therefore God so loved the world that he gave his Son to be our Redeemer. Then the query comes, Would it be just for God to give his Son? And the answer is Scripturally given, that He set before his Son a great joy, a high reward, and that the Son, fully in

2H709

accord with his Father, delighted to do his will — “For the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.” (Heb. 12:2) We are assured that the reward for this great transaction is a great one. The Apostle, after describing how our Lord, our Redeemer, first left the glory of the heavenly estate and humbled himself to take the human nature and was then found obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, then adds, “Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. 2:9-13

THE WONDERFUL STORY

No wonder we term this “The wonderful story of God’s love!” It is so different from the doctrines of devils handed down to us from the dark ages that we are astounded, bewildered. And yet, as we reflect, this message is in full accord with the teachings of Jesus, the apostles and the prophets —in full accord with the real character of a true God —of wisdom, justice, love and power.

As we noted the downward course of evil desire to disobedient thought, to disobedient action and to the wages of sin, death, let us note now the same principle at work in the opposite direction —obedient thought, harmony with the Divine will, begotten again, developing and ultimately bringing forth life eternal. This in the Scriptures is known as the law of regeneration. Our Lord expresses this in so many words, saying,

“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN”

As we were all born in sin as the children of Adam, all must be born again if they would become the children of God. Many have failed to notice the Scriptural teaching that out of our race God intends to produce two families of sons on different planes of being. The one class begotten and born of the spirit will be resurrected, be born spirit beings, like unto the angels. The other class begotten again to human conditions will experience resurrection (Acts 3:19-21) favors, by which they will be recovered from sin and death conditions and ultimately aim to human perfection and righteousness. These will not be like unto the angels, but be like unto Adam in his sinless condition before the condemnation. The curse will be removed not only from these, but also from their earthly home, which will then become as Eden, the

garden of the Lord Paradise restored. Our Lord pointed out the time of the world's regeneration, in full harmony with St. Peter's words above cited, saying to his disciples, "In the regeneration ye that have followed me shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19:28) The regeneration time, or resurrection time, has not yet come; hence the apostles are not upon the thrones of Israel; but instead, the twelve tribes are still under the Gentile domination. And Gentile domination in Scriptural language, means the times in which Satan is the Prince of this world — "Who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience."

The apostles are not to sit upon the twelve thrones of Israel until the Second Coming of our Lord and the binding of Satan and establishing of the Kingdom; hence the times of Restitution, or times of regeneration, for mankind are yet future. When that happy day shall have fully dawned it will mean a sweet release of the world from the power of sin and death, to which all but the saintly few are now in slavery. In the Jewish order of reckoning time, night came first and day afterward. Thus the world has already been passing through a night time of darkness, ignorance, superstition and sorrow, the results of sin and death. But the redeeming merits of Jesus have provided the Millennial Day, which will soon be ushered in and chase away forever the shadows of sin and death. No wonder the poet sang,

*"O, hail happy day
That speaks all sorrows ending!"*

The Psalmist prophet refers to the same glorious day, saying, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

At a more convenient time we will take up the thread of this discourse and show that love and justice, wisdom and power Divine, have graciously arranged the terms whereby the many of our race may be regenerated during the Millennium, and a few comparatively, the 'little flock,' may be regenerated to the spirit plane. True and righteous are God's ways! Who shall not come and worship before him when all his righteous dealings shall be made manifest! Ultimately every knee must bow, and every tongue confess to the glory of God, because all who will not thus do of a hearty good will shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people in the Second Death.

The lesson of the hour is that sin is a transgression of the Divine law of righteousness; that ever, always, its tendency is deathward; that original sin has been met by Divine Love and Justice, and that consequently there is hope of eternal life for all who will forsake sin and seek the Divine aid in striving against it. The further lesson of

the hour is in accord with our text, that sin is insidious, and that every sympathy with it,

2H710

every entertainment of it in our hearts, every rolling of it as a sweet morsel under our tongue, is giving desire the opportunity to conceive. This is really sin begun in the heart, in the mind, before the outward, overt act. Hence the lesson to us each and all who have accepted God's mercy and favor in Christ is that, having turned our back upon sin, and having by faith accepted eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, we are now on trial, not as respects original sin, from which we were redeemed by the Lord's grace, but on trial to determine to what extent we have any love for sin and

would entertain it; to determine whether or not we hate sin and love righteousness. The test is expressed in our text: If our hearts are drawn away from loyalty to the Lord and are enticed by the momentary pleasures of sin, and if these sinful desires are entertained by us, conceived, harbored, nourished, developed, then to that extent we are disloyal to God and his righteousness and the end will be Second Death. In other words, to obtain the Gift of God in full measure in the resurrection we must show our complete loyalty to him and his righteousness!

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, August 26, 1909](#)

PARADISE REGAINED

Syracuse, N. Y., August 25— Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, preached here twice Sunday to large and attentive audiences. One of the discourses was from the text, "*Verily, I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*"—Luke 23:43

This discourse has been republished in Harvest Gleanings, Volume 1, pages 435-438, under same title.

[The Weekly Enquirer, Sept. 9, 1909](#)

THE VALUE OF TOIL

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." (Genesis 3:19)

Brooklyn, N. Y., Sept. 5—The Bible Students' Convention which for several days has been in session at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., decided to spend its dosing days in Brooklyn, that it might be addressed there by Pastor C. T. Russell. The Brooklyn Tabernacle proved

insufficient in capacity for this large body of Bible Students; hence the Brooklyn Academy of Music was secured for the services of the day. Pastor Russell addressed the Bible Students twice. We report one of his discourses, from the above text. He said:

This discourse has been republished in Convention Report Sermons, pages 65-67, under same title.

[St. Paul Enterprise, Sept. 16, 1909](#)

THRUST IN THY SICKLE AND REAP

“And He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal.” (John 4:36)

Pastor Russell spoke as follows: Intelligent people appear to reason upon every other subject except religion. Approach a man upon any matter of industry or social progress or political economy or finance and

2H711

we find him reasonably alert to the general law of Cause and Effect. But when it comes to religion the same man refuses to recognize or follow such laws. To illustrate: If a thousand religious men and women were asked to give some general outline of the Divine Plan under which humanity is being dealt with by the Almighty, nine hundred and ninety-nine of them look at you in blank astonishment as though it were absurd to suppose that God would conduct his affairs along the lines of order, reason and common sense —Cause and Effect. On the contrary, the Scriptures everywhere hold that our Creator is systematically ordering the affairs of earth and “working all things according to the counsel of his own will.” (Eph. 1:11) St. Peter divides the world’s history into three great epochs, which he designates as worlds. The first of these, he says, lasted from the creation of our first parents to the flood. The flood was the harvest time, the reaping time, of that epoch. It was the conclusion to the course of sin which, he tells us, there prevailed. And only eight persons—Noah and his family—were carried over as a nucleus for another great epoch or world, which St. Peter calls, “The world that now is,” and which St. Paul calls, “This present evil world or epoch,” and of which Jesus states, “My kingdom is not of this world (epoch),” and again he informs us that “Satan is the Prince of this world.” Certain things have been in progress — certain great instructions and blessings from the Almighty during this long period of over 4300 years. This world or epoch is to have a harvest time, and its affairs are to be as thoroughly wound up, completed, as

were the affairs of the world before the flood. Then a new world or epoch will dawn, the character of which is clearly delineated in the Scriptures as being very contrary every way to that of this present evil world. It will be ‘The world to come,’ whereof we speak — the new epoch, the new earth, in which the Lord will dominate human affairs, his elect Church of the present time being associated with him as his Bride. Under that new dispensation everything will be in accord with the character of its King, the Prince of light and righteousness, just as the conditions of the present evil world are in harmony with the characteristics of the “Prince of this world, who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience.”

“THE WORLD THAT WAS”

The world or epoch which ended at the flood accomplished a great work. It was during that period of 1656 years that God first tested Satan by permitting him to have an opportunity to show up his real character, in connection with our first parents. Desiring to establish himself as an Emperor over earth, separate and distinct from the empire of Jehovah, Lucifer became Satan the adversary, and has since continued in his opposition to the Divine will. Our first parents, through Satan’s lie, were led into disobedience to God, which resulted in the death-sentence on Adam and his race. Subsequently for centuries the holy angels were allowed to have intercourse with fallen men, with a view to helping them back into harmony with God—not that God expected any such results, for he already foreknew that there could be no recovery of humanity, except through the merit of the Redeemer, whose sacrifice would purchase the world and who would reign as the King of kings and Lord of lords—who would come and restore the willing and obedient of the race. But the angels to all eternity might have supposed that an easier way of saving men was possible—that if permitted they could educate, assist and uplift mankind out of sin and death conditions back to harmony with God. God not only desired to show that all such results were impossible, but also he desired to use the opportunity to test, to prove, the loyalty, the faithfulness of the angelic hosts.

Among the liberties granted to all the angels at that time was the power to materialize—to assume human forms. We need not stop to discuss the possibility of this, for we are addressing those who believe the Scriptural record, and to such it will be quite sufficient for us to cite the case of the three men which appeared to Abraham and whom he subsequently found to be angels—spirit beings. They looked like men and they talked and wore

clothes like men. Abraham knew not whom they were until subsequently they revealed their identity, as we read in the account of Genesis 18. The Apostle Paul adds his testimony to this incident, saying to the Church: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Heb. 13:2

For long centuries this relationship between angels and mankind continued. We have no record of any human being receiving an uplift from their ministrations. On the contrary, as God had foreseen, the influence of sin is contagious and ere long some of the angelic hosts became so enamored of the daughters of men that they took to themselves wives of such as they chose and preferred to leave their own habitation or spirit condition and to remain in a materialized form and to raise earthly families, although their course was contrary to the Divine arrangement, and must have been so understood by them; nevertheless, Divine power was not interposed to hinder them. The error of the sedition, the leaving of their own happiness or plane of spirit being, from a small beginning

2H712

spread, and God's noninterference justified the supposition that He was not able to cope with the situation or else that He was winking at His own law. Thus centuries rode by, while the earthly children of those angels which kept not their first estate became giants and men of renown at a time when maturity was not reached until at least 100 years. During all these centuries we may be sure that every one of the holy angels had fullest opportunity to participate in the seductive pleasures of sin. And we may be quite sure during that epoch or age God demonstrated fully, completely, which of the angels were in heart and in deed, in spirit and in truth, loyal to him and to all the principles of his righteousness; and, this work having been accomplished, that world before the flood was brought to an end, was overwhelmed by a flood of waters, the Lord declaring that the whole earth had become corrupt through this evil. The influence of the angels along licentious lines seemingly tended more to degrade humanity, so that we read that God beheld that the imagination of man's heart was evil, and only evil, and that continually. And then came the denouement, the flood of waters, the destruction of the corrupted world of mankind, including the progeny of the angels, the giants, who were also men of renown, and with them and with the closing of that epoch or world those angels which had not kept their first estate or principality or plane of being were restrained in Tartarus, our earth's atmosphere, until the great judgment of the last day. They were restrained from having fellowship with God

and the holy angels. That age, that epoch has served its purpose. Its harvest was chiefly a destructive one. Only Noah and his family were carried over from that epoch to the present one, to constitute the denomination of the new order of things —this present evil world.

THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD

This present evil world differs from the world before the flood in that it is not under the ministration of the angels, but man, in a general way, is left to himself. Since the flood the world in a general way has been going on just as if there were no God, the exceptions being the destruction of the Sodomites and in the preaching of Jonah to the Ninevites, warning them that they were about to perish. In other words, so far as outward appearance goes, God has allowed the world to take its own course, interfering only when the corruption became so great as to make life injurious rather than a favor. We may also understand the Scriptures to teach that God has had a silent supervision of the nations to hinder them from overturning or disturbing any feature of the Divine program. He is wise enough to know how to make much of the wrath of man to praise him and the remainder more than this He will restrain.

We perceive, then, that so far as the world is concerned God is letting it take its course. St. Paul, reviewing the question of human degradation as exhibited in heathendom, etc., explains that the great deterioration in the human family is the result of man's being left to himself as respects the Divine supervision. He says, looking back to the time of Noah's descendants, "When they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind," they giving themselves over to things that were not profitable, defiling themselves, etc. Rom. 1:21-28

This condition of things continued from Noah's day until three and one-half years after our Lord's crucifixion, when the special favor of God toward the nation of Israel terminated as the "middle wall of partition was broken down" — Cornelius being the first Gentile admitted to the privileges of the gospel. From that time onward the proclamation of the gospel was not restricted to the Jewish nation, but whosoever may have an ear to hear of every nation, people, kindred and tongue. The proclamation is open to all, even though only a few have the hearing ear of faith, the eye of understanding and the obedient heart.

During the long period from Noah to Christ—2500 years—God, as we have seen, had no dealing with the

world, but He did have very special dealings with, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and then subsequently with the nation of Israel. To those patriarchs He gave an oath-bound covenant, that though their posterity He would ultimately bless all the families of the earth. Moreover, the character of the promise was such that it implied not only the resurrection of the patriarchs, but the resurrection also of the families of the earth that have gone down into death under the great Adamic sentence.

The nation of Israel was segregative from all the other nations of the world and bound to the Lord and He to them by the covenant of the law entered into at Mt. Sinai. Under the terms of that covenant it was promised that the whole nation should constitute the seed of Abraham, while it blessed all the other nations, but the conditions were the keeping of the law perfectly. God, of course, knew that, as imperfect men, Israel had undertaken an impossible contract. But He also knew that under His supervision the contract would eventually be not to their disadvantage but the reverse. He used that nation as a typical people, their jubilees representing the times of restitution coming to the world under the millennial reign of Christ. Their

2H713

day Sabbath typified a coming blessing to spiritual Israel. Their year Sabbath typified a coming blessing to the world, to the universe. Their day of atonement for sins typified the day of better sacrifices of Christ and the Church. Indeed, we may understand that fleshly Israel and all of its great affairs were typical foreshadowings of God's greater blessings to come in after dispensations. Some are having fulfillment during this Gospel Age, while others will reach fulfillment during the Millennial Age.

THE HARVEST OF THIS AGE

The time for the election or selection and testing, proving and polishing of these followers of Christ, whom He refers to as His jewels, is nearly at an end, according to our understanding of the Scriptures. We are already in the harvest of this Age, which laps upon the incoming Millennial Age. With the consummation of this Age in this harvest time God's great plan of the ages will reach a culmination as respects a certain feature. The seed of Abraham will then be completed. Our Lord Jesus is the Head or Chief of that seed, and His faithful Church, by Divine grace, are counted in with Him as members of that seed. When the last member shall have completed his course all the work of the Divine plan for mankind thus far will have reached its culmination. Everything then will be ready for the blessing of all the families of the earth through that spiritual seed of

Abraham, of whom the Apostle says, “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Gal. 3:29

THE WORLD TO COME

At this time “the world to come” will have come. The heavenly Lord and His heavenly Bride, complete and fully satisfactory to the Father, will at once be invested with the Divine power and authority to rule the world—to take full and absolute control of it. Thus says the prophet: “Ask of me and I will give thee the Gentiles for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” (Psa. 2:8) Thus says the Apostle: “He must reign until He shall have put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” (1 Cor. 15:25,26) The Millennial Age just about to dawn upon the world, and in preparation for which God has provided also our inventions of the past century, will be the great epoch of blessing to mankind. In it the promise to Abraham will have fulfillment: “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 12:3) They will be blessed in being rescued from their own ignorance and superstition and selfishness by the superior power of the Lord’s Kingdom. They will be rescued from the power of Satan, by which they have been unconsciously dominated for all these centuries, Satan having invisibly operated through the children of disobedience — thus the propagation of baneful delusions and hurtful lusts. Hence, one of the assurances of the Scripture is that in that glorious new dispensation Satan shall be bound for a thousand years — shall be hindered from deceiving mankind.

The world to come merely signifies the epoch to come, the epoch wherein dwelleth righteousness, where righteousness will be in the ascendant, the rule, and where sin will be absolutely under the control of the great Redeemer, who then will be the King of Glory, ruling, reigning, enlightening, blessing, uplifting, restituting, purging, purifying and bringing to perfection as many of Adam’s race as will heartily respond to the rules of His Kingdom.

THRUST IN THY SICKLE

Very much of the Scriptures naturally and appropriately relate to the wonderful harvest time or closing period, of this present evil world — the most wonderful period in all the history of our planet thus far in many respects. Our text, as one of these Scriptures, points to the fact that the Lord at the present time is the great reaper and supervisor of this harvest. The sickle of truth for more

than 30 years has been thrust in to reap the ripe wheat of this Age, the mature and developed saints of God. The great work still progresses. The enlightening influence is still abroad. The separating work is still going on. The gathering of the wheat into the garner is still in progress. Soon, when the last ripe grain has been gathered there, the time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, with which this Age will end, will be fully kindled. The Lord tells us that immediately after it He will turn to the people a pure message. That message, with its enlightening influence, is referred to in His statement that “then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father” for the blessing and enlightening of all the families of the earth. (Matt. 13:43) Let us awake to a realization of the wonderful time in which we are living. Let us be vigilant and make our calling and election sure to the glory and honor and immortality to which we have been called.

2H714

[The Weekly Enquirer, September 23, 1909](#)

EVERY IDLE WORD

With the exception of the three end paragraphs printed below, this discourse has been republished in the Overland Monthly, pages 207-211, under same title.

“Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment, for by thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Matt. 12:36-37

It is difficult to tell how far-reaching such a lesson in brotherly kindness and mercy practiced in the church would influence the world of mankind. Undoubtedly the impression would be deep and lasting. But what does the world see in every direction, in every denomination? It sees exemplified what the apostle calls attention to as being not the spirit of the Lord, but the spirit of the adversary. He urges us, “Put off all these; angers, wrath, malice, evil speaking, filthy communications out of your mouth. .. seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.” Col. 3:8-9

It has seemed too, at times, as though some of those who profess relationship to Christ as members of His church do even more of petty evil-speaking and slandering and busy-bodily than do the worldly who make no profession whatever. According to the standards set forth in our text the worldly, if they have more of the quality of mercy in their hearts will evidently be more pleasing to God than those who have made much profession and

neglected the Master's commands and failed to cultivate his spirit of love and mercy, in word and deed.

These are strong words, but they need to be uttered and with great plainness of speech, for assuredly, if only the merciful obtain divine mercy, then a great many of our race will receive very little mercy from the Lord. It may be true —doubtless it is true —that the great adversary makes a more severe attack upon the Lord's consecrated people than upon the worldly and this may, to some extent, account for what we have remarked of the greater degree of mercy in worldly people than among God's people. Still it is God's people who are on trial and who apparently are failing in the trial; failing to develop the spirit of mercy —love. Let us all remember our text and apply it. "By thy words shalt thou be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned." As we think of the fact that these sermons reach the eyes of about 7,000,000 of readers weekly, we feel the weight of our responsibility. It is our desire that they be just such as the Lord can approve, and such as will be helpful to hearers and readers.

[The Weekly Enquirer, September 30, 1909](#)

SIN ATONEMENT

Brooklyn, N. Y., Sept. 26—Pastor Russell was in fine voice today when he addressed his congregation in the Tabernacle. He took for his text the following, "Without shedding of Blood there is no Remission" —Heb. 9:22. He said:

A realization of imperfection, of sin, is general. We were "born in sin, shapen in iniquity; in sin did my mother conceive me," and a general realization of this fact prevails amongst intelligent people. Whether the how and the why, the philosophy of the matter be discerned or not, the fact is recognized. However we may theorize that the same Creator who made the angels pure, happy, holy, sinless, also made us, we nevertheless are aware of the fact that we are not pure, holy, sinless, undefiled. Righteousness should not however be considered the phenomenon, but the original, proper condition of things. Sin is the phenomenon, the peculiarity, the disorder —the disarrangement of the proper order which previously prevailed and by right should everywhere prevail.

Nowhere in the world do we find any explanation of present conditions that is satisfactory to us, except in the Bible, which teaches that God's Work is perfect; that he made man in his own image and likeness; that

2H715

sinful ambition brought in rebellion against the Divine regulations and that present disorders are the result of that rebellion — human degradation, mental, moral, physical —dying—death.

It is true that human philosophy has sought to solve the question of man's condition of sin and imperfection aside from the Bible. Its claim is that the Bible record is untrue; that man was never perfect; that man never fell from perfection into sin and death; that man, consequently, needs no Savior from sin and death and no restitution to original perfection —to original Edenic perfection. Its claim is that if there is a personal God, he is not exercising any special powers, but merely allowing so-called Laws of Nature to operate. It claims that in the surging of the salt waters of the ocean protoplasmic life was generated, and that the microscopic germ polly-wogged and evolved into a thousand different forms —worms and snakes, fish and whale, beasts and birds and reptiles; and that finally one division of the pollywog family attained to monkeyhood, and, gradually getting used to stand on his hind legs, became a man. It ignores, if it does not deny, sin and its downward tendencies, which we all know afflict the human family and must be struggled and fought against. It denies the need of a Savior, an Advocate, a Mediator, and it holds that each generation of humanity dying, helps onward the succeeding generation to grander development and that eventually human perfection will be attained by the evolutionary process, by man's own exertion, regardless of whether there is a Creator or not.

Evolution hopes that man in his highest development may find a way of prolonging his life, probably for centuries, probably for thousands of years, by chemical discovery—human wisdom. Surely this theory is not satisfactory to any one. It is too inconsistent with what we know of ourselves and others and of the downward, instead of the upward, tendencies prevailing in nature. And surely the hope that some of our children Ten Thousand years from now may be able to live for a thousand years or more, while we, as well as our progenitors, died in giving them the uplift —this is not a satisfactory substitute for the hope of everlasting life, the hope of glory, honor and immortality through Christ.

We can only assume that this Evolutionary theory found friends and advocates because the Bible teaching has been so grossly misunderstood. It has been misrepresented as teaching that practically all of the human family were born under a Divine sentence of eternal torture and that only the few reached in the present life, by the Gospel can by faith in the Savior and

by a thorough-going conversion to saintship —that these few alone will escape eternal torment and gain eternal blessing. Thinking people, not surmising that the Bible is misrepresented by its own friends, by the creeds in general, have looked about for a substitute. Evolution, although quite unsatisfactory to them, furnished the only substitute they could think of, while it ignored the Bible.

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES

Now as the electric light supplants the tallow dip, concordances and other Bible study helps assist us to a proper understanding of God's Revelation. One Scripture throws light upon another; and thus gradually the errors of gross darkness and superstition which prevailed so generally in "the dark ages" flee away and the Lamp of Divine Truth gives forth a brilliant ray which fully satisfies our heads and hearts and glorifies our Creator.

In the light of this newly-trimmed Arc-light of Truth, God's Word, we may now see that the real penalty for sin is not a coming eternal torment at the hands of fire-proof demons, but instead the reign of sin and death. Now we may see how disobedience on the part of Father Adam brought upon him a death sentence, a dying condition, and that these, transmitted from parent to child, have increased the calamity, century by century, until today, amongst the most civilized, one out of every one hundred and fifty adults is in an insane asylum — mentally dead to the extent that he is unable to care for himself. Millions more of our race are in prisons and penitentiaries because of moral blemishes, because "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," they have inherited vices which have been accentuated by association with each other. All over the world, too, we have hospitals and infirmaries and cemeteries. The reason is exactly what the Word of God teaches, namely, "The wages of sin is death." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The great disease of sin, started by our first parents in Eden, has spread a plague amongst all their children, blemishing some specially in one particular and some in another, but corrupting the whole and bringing death to all.

SIN ATONEMENT

Our minds agree to the foregoing. We agree, too, that it is proper that the Almighty God should be a just God, that Justice should be the "foundation of his throne," his Government. We inquire as to what is possible in the way of sin-atonement, by which original sin might be offset and Adam and all his race, who fell through disobedience, might be brought back to Divine favor and be made again holy and happy, as all the angels, and recipients of Divine favors, including eternal life. The

Scriptures answer this inquiry, telling us that we are right in feeling that we are sinners; that

2H716

we are right in believing that Divine Justice must be met before reconciliation can be effected. But they tell us that God has moved first in this matter—that he did not wait for man to appeal to him for mercy, but that, “While we were yet sinners,” he sent his only begotten Son to be our Redeemer, to bring us back into harmony with God. The Old Testament is full of assurances that God’s mercy will ultimately be manifested to mankind through that Redeemer and through the nation of Israel, upon which we would confer the special privilege and honor of bearing the Truth to every other nation. The New Testament contains the record that when our Redeemer came, the world and his own nation knew him not. It tells that, in crucifying the Redeemer, the people of Israel fulfilled the Divine intention as foretold through the prophets; that they thus slew the great sin-offering, “The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” And as we learn how to bring the various testimonies of the Scripture into harmony with each other, they tell us that the Redeemer, before blessing Israel, will accomplish another work not generally known—the gathering of spiritual Israel. This the Apostle styles “The mystery of God.”

THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS

The result of sin-atonement and the return of man to God’s favor would not mean a changing of men to spiritual beings, nor the giving of mankind of a heavenly home, but rather restitution. The Eden home first provided for Father Adam was Paradise, but it was lost by his disobedience. The proposition of the Scriptures is that the great Redeemer will restore Paradise and enlarge it, making it world-wide, the home for not only Adam, but his now multitudinous progeny of Twenty Thousand Millions. The Scriptures abound with promises that Israel shall be re-gathered and restored to Divine favor and be made the instrumentality of the Lord in spreading the blessings to other nations. The Scriptures tell us how the paradisiacal condition shall be brought about. They explain that the wilderness shall blossom as the rose and the solitary place be glad. They tell that Christ shall reign, as promised, and establish justice in the earth. They tell that “the sun of righteousness shall arise, with healing in his beams,” scattering superstition, ignorance and darkness. They tell that now “darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people,” but that the coming reign of Messiah’s Kingdom will change all this. They tell that weeping may endure for the night (of this time

of sin) but that joy cometh in the morning” —the Millennial morning. St. Peter points us down to the Second Coming of Christ for the fulfillment of all these great restitution promises. He tells us that then will come to earth “times of refreshing.” He assures us that the time of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world has begun will then find accomplishment. Acts 3:19-21

BETTER SACRIFICES THAN THOSE

But now we inquire why this delay in bringing in the “time of refreshing,” the “time of restitution.” Why did not the great Redeemer begin at once to accomplish the work secured by his death at Calvary? How can he bear to delay, since he loved the world so that he died for all and since he fully admits that the whole creation is in pain, waiting for the great deliverance made possible by his sacrifice. Rom. 8:19-22

The Scriptures answer the question. They tell us that the gathering of the elect Church during this Gospel Age as a feature of the Divine program must precede the bringing of restitution blessings to the world. They tell us that God has imposed special crucial tests upon those now called and chosen. Their invitation is to joint-heirship with Christ in a heavenly or spiritual nature, and to a share with him in the Millennial Kingdom and glory, and in the work which these will accomplish for the world. The Scriptures tell us that those who will be accounted worthy of this exaltation to glory, honor and immortality, will first be required to prove their loyalty to the Lord to the extent of sacrifice. This does not mean a putting away of sin, for that would not be sacrifice. It does mean the laying down of earthly rights and privileges, after the manner and example of their Redeemer, who knew no sin. Believers are exhorted thus to sacrifice. The Apostle says to them, “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service.” Rom. 12:1

Many Scriptures inform us that God has attached the glories of the future to the sufferings of the present and that “if we suffer with Christ we shall also reign with him” and “if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.” Thus we see this entire Gospel Age is a period of sacrificing. Our Lord began the sacrificing and, in accepting believers as his members, it is on condition that they will be sanctified, separated from the world, and present their bodies living sacrifices. Thus the saints throughout this Gospel Age have been suffering with their Lord and Head and, as St. Paul declares, “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col.

1:24) The merit is in the sacrifice of their Lord, but he passes that merit

2H717

through the believers of this Gospel Age, to the intent that they may share in the glories and honors of his Millennial Kingdom, which will be established as soon as the last member of "his Body" shall have finished the sufferings of Christ.

St. Paul, after pointing out to us the typical sin-sufferings, represented under the Jewish arrangement, shows us that the sacrifices of Christ and the Church are the antitypes of these sin-offerings —offered year by year under the Jewish economy. Those are styled the "better sacrifices than these." Heb. 9:23

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

We are at the time of the year when our Hebrew fellow-citizens are accustomed to celebrate their great Day of Atonement. They celebrate the day, although in a meaningless manner. Those of them who are acquainted with the facts know that the whole procedure is a farce. In the confusion which God has permitted to come upon them they have no Priest. Since their rejection of Messiah their priestly records are lost, so that no Jew in the world can make claim to the position of High Priest or dare to perform the functions of High Priest in connection with the Day of Atonement sacrifices. They had no Tabernacle or Temple, nor dare they erect one; for if one were consecrated, no authorized priest would risk his life in attempting to pass through the Second Veil into the Most Holy.

As a consequence our Hebrew friends deserve our sympathy. Formerly the tenth day of the seventh month was their appointed Day of Atonement. By the sacrifices of that day, properly performed, reconciliation for their inequalities was made for the ensuing year, at the end of which they would again become unclean and need another Atonement Day. As the Apostle says, the arrangement God made for them for the forgiveness of sins was "year by year continually," and the yearly repetition indicated that the sins were not really cancelled, but merely covered for the year.

It is a part of Divine providence that our Hebrew friends have no Priest and that no sin atonement sacrifice is possible. Now when the anniversary of the Day of Atonement comes they bemoan their sins and fast and pray; but they have no Priest to offer the bullock of a sin-offering and then to take its blood into the Holy and Most Holy and to sprinkle the same for the cleansing of the priestly tribe. They have no Priest later on to come

and take the goat's sin-offering and do with it as he did with that of the bullock, taking its blood into the Most Holy and sprinkling the Mercy Seat for all the other eleven tribes of Israel. The priest does not come out of the Holies to bless them as of yore and to tell them that their sins are forgiven through the merit of the sacrificial blood. No! After waiting the entire day, and knowing that they have no Priest, no Advocate, no Intercessor, no Sin-bearer, at the close of their Atonement Day they endeavor to be cheerful and happy and to suppose their sins forgiven; or, rather, they endeavor to forget all about the matter in worldliness.

THE ANTITYPE OF THIS

Would that all our Hebrew friends, as well as all Christians, could understand the true antitype of that great Day of Atonement, which the Jews celebrated annually in a typical manner. Its antitype is this Gospel Age. At the beginning of this antitypical Atonement Day our Lord Jesus offered himself—the antitype of the bullock. (Lev. 16) When he ascended up on high, he applied the merit of the sacrifice to the antitypical Levitical tribe — to the household of faith of this Gospel Age, for the Royal Priesthood. Since Pentecost the second part of the Day of Atonement sacrifices has been in process. “The Lord's goat,” antityped by the Church, has been in process of sacrifice. The great High Priest has been accepting consecrated believers as members of his Body and has been seeing to their sacrificial offerings. “Now is the acceptable time” for such sacrificing.

This procedure has gone on for now nearly nineteen centuries and, according to our understanding of the Scriptures is nearly complete. Soon the last “member of the Body of Christ” will have suffered with their Lord and Head. Soon the blood of this secondary sacrifice will be sprinkled in the Most Holy on the Mercy Seat —the blood of the members of Christ. Jesus' blood passed through them. Soon the acceptance of it as the pardon price “for the sins of the whole world” will be acknowledged by the Father. Soon the great High Priest, head and members, will come forth, clothed in the glory, honor, dignity and power represented in the garments of the typical priests of Israel and will bless the world. Soon will come the time for the lifting of the hands of the Priest, the display of his power. Soon as a result the blessing will fall upon all of the people—upon natural Israel first. Soon will shouts of rejoicing arise from the people as conditions of sorrow and pain shall pass away, giving place to praise, as men seek to glorify God and lift up holy hands in his service.

Thank God for the little glimpse he has given us of his glorious arrangement for sin atonement: Now for the Levites, “the household of faith” and by and by “for all the people.” Praise to his name that ultimately all shall be forgiven! Everything that can be properly

2H718

attributed to heredity in the blemishes of others and ourselves! And the only responsibilities on each will be for his own conduct in proportion as he has had light and opportunity for better things. Thank God also that eventually all who refuse the blessed opportunities of the Millennial Kingdom will be utterly destroyed. (Acts 3:23) Thank him also that in the salvation of the world which he hath provided through his Son he has arranged that his consecrated footstep followers may have a share with him in the sufferings of this present time and the glory that shall follow.

[The National Labor Tribune, October 4, 1909](#)

GOD'S PROMISE

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Oct. 3—Pastor. Russell addressed two large audiences in the Tabernacle here today. We give one of his discourses taken from the text, “*The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich; and He addeth no Sorrow therewith.*” Prov. 10:22

Looking about us in the world we find abundant corroboration for the Scriptural declaration that instead of the Divine blessing resting upon the earth there is a curse” or a blight upon it. Accordingly St. Paul wrote, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.” In the context he declares the relief from this groaning condition —out of the bondage of corruption into the liberty, favor and blessing to follow. He indicates that this blessed “change” will come through the “manifestation of the sons of God” and intimates also that these sons of God are now being “called” and will shortly be “glorified” and thus be empowered to do the work of blessing for the groaning creation, relieving them of the burden of sin and death.

Still the question arises, Why should humanity be so differently circumstanced from the angels? Why should not holiness and purity and freedom from sorrows and pain and death prevail on earth as well as in heaven? Why should the great Creator so differently condition one branch of his creation from the other? True, the Lord's prayer tells us that we may expect ultimately that Divine power will intervene and succor humanity. The declaration, ‘Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on

earth as it is done in heaven,” is more than a prayer; because uttered by our Lord it is also a prophecy of what will ultimately obtain. But the question is, Why should it be necessary for us to pray and to wait to subdue sin and to lift mankind out of evil conditions? Why should not God’s will have been done on earth all along, as it is done in heaven? Why have sin and death been permitted to ‘reign,’ as the Scriptures declare?

THY WORD IS TRUTH

The Bible alone answers our query. It explains that originally our race was created perfect, in the image of God, sinless, holy, pure, happy. Man’s Eden home was Paradise, the Garden of God. But all that bliss was lost through disobedience to the Divine command. When the death sentence came upon Father Adam he lost fellowship with his Creator, his Eden home, his perpetual life and, instead of the Divine provision, was sentenced to earn his bread by the sweat of his face, battling with thorns, thistles and insects. The Bible does not pretend to say that the conditions as we have them today are perfect nor that they are satisfactory to God, nor that they should be satisfactory to us. The extreme opposites of the home in Eden, the drouth, cyclone, tempest and flood, belong to the unfit condition of the earth and are intended by the Lord to serve as part of man’s condemnation. Through sickness, disease, sorrow, pain, dying, the race will be brought eventually to death—to desolation. Thank God he has overruled that feature of the sentence so that death to us need not mean destruction. Thus it is written, “Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return ye children of men.” (Psalm 90:3)

The turning of man to destruction was six thousand years ago and, although the blessing of restitution was declared from the very first by all the holy prophets, nevertheless the return was not made actually possible until the Redeemer came and laid down his life as the ransom price for the sins of the whole world. A long while did God wait before sending the Redeemer. More than four thousand years passed, and for a long period he has waited since then before effecting a deliverance of humanity from sin and death—nearly nineteen centuries. This deliberate slowness on the part of the Almighty in looking after the human family and its rescue from sin and death can only be understood from one standpoint—the Bible standpoint. The Bible, contrary to our creeds formulated in the dark ages, teaches that the penalty of sin is not a future torment, but a present experience with sin and death under the sentence, “Dying thou shalt die.” In other words our present accursed or condemned,

unfavorable condition as a race is God's just penalty against us as sinners.

2H719

We are a race of convicts, and the conditions of nature are Divinely arranged with a view to speeding us onward to the tomb —to the fulfillment of our “curse” or sentence —death. In other words all the mental unbalance and distress, including insanity, imbecility and cross temper, are elements of death —the results of death working in us as a race; likewise our moral deflection - We were “born in sin and shapen in iniquity; in sin did our mothers conceive us. Phrenology, as well as physiology, shows clearly these facts. The misshapen heads indicate the unbalance in which we were born, and the Scriptures declare that we are “prone to sin (disposed to sin,) as the sparks to fly upward.” In view of these things how distinctly God's Word is corroborated. In comparison with this just manifestation of indignation of God against sin how unreasonable and unsatisfactory are the various theories that come down to us from “the dark ages” unsupported by the Word of God, teaching that our whole race was born under an original condemnation or sentence to eternal torture; and that the only ones saved would be the few grasped by Divine favor during this Gospel Age and lifted from relationship to the world and transformed into saints.

It is true enough that the Bible teaches that God has a special reward for those who love him supremely — more than self, houses, lands or any other creature. True it is, indeed, that he has for these “exceeding great and precious” blessings; but it is quite untrue, as it would be quite ungodly, that our Creator should either by predestination or through lack of foreknowledge or for any other reason consign our race as a whole, either to centuries of suffering in Purgatory, as some declare, or still worse, as others affirm, to everlasting sufferings.

THE BLESSING OF THE LORD

Having considered the Divine explanation of the curse of sin and death upon the world, and having found it true to all the circumstances and facts, let us now with confidence turn to the same record, the Bible, for an explanation of what blessings God has in reservation for the saints, and also for the world in general. “The blessings of the Lord, it maketh rich.”

The blessing of the Lord has, to some extent come to the Church, but it is a blessing only receivable by faith. It is not the real blessing, but, as the Scriptures declare, a foretaste, “an earnest” of the coming inheritance or blessing. This foretaste is very precious to all of the Lord's saints, giving them a feast and joy and comfort

under the most trying circumstances of the present life - It is indeed "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," which rules in their hearts, as St. Paul said to the "little flock" of 144,000, who are named in the Scriptures as the "very elect," the Ecclesia, "the Church of Christ, which is his Body." These believers in God's promises and arrangements for the blessing of humanity through the merit of Christ's death and by the power of the Millennial Kingdom may rejoice therein in advance. It is not the intimation, however, that the Church shall keep the restitution privileges. These are credited to them so that they may have something to "offer," something to "sacrifice." By faith they receive earthly rights and restitution blessings and privileges, as God's gift through the Lord Jesus. By faith they make a sacrifice or surrender of those rights to the divine nature and to joint-heirship with Christ their Lord and Redeemer in his Millennial Kingdom - By faith, in return, they receive the begetting of the holy Spirit. They are content, not satisfied. They rejoice, though oft it be in tribulation. Their assurance is that present tribulations are working patience, experience, hope, and preparing them for the actual "glories which God hath in reservation for those that love him." Like the Apostle, they hope for the actual salvation of deliverance, "the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich" at the coming of our Lord, when the saints shall be united to him most preciously, as represented by the Scriptural figure of a Bride united to a Bridegroom. The marriage of the Lamb will come, for his wife will have made herself ready. (Revelation 19:7)

Let us glance backward and note the earliest reference of the Scriptures as the earliest God-given intimation of coming blessings.

(1) Shortly after the fall the Lord declared that ultimately the seed of the woman (her posterity) would bruise the serpent's head —would utterly destroy sin, would triumph over sin and Satan.

(2) Later on Enoch prophesied that Messiah would come, and grant the world a fresh trial for life or death (Jude 14). The original trial or judgment, for life or death, was through the one man Adam; and his failure and its penalty affected the condemnation of his entire race, because all are imperfect and hence sinners. The promise of a Messiah, who would grant the world a fresh trial was indeed a rainbow of hope to those who could receive it.

(3) It was not until Abraham's time that God really definitely outlined the channel of the blessing which he proposed ultimately to give to the race, "the blessing of

the Lord, which maketh rich.” Let us examine this prophetic outline of coming blessing.

The promise made to Abraham was this, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Here we have something definite, something

2H720

tangible. This promise was renewed to Isaac, also to Jacob and, later on at Jacob’s death, it passed to all of his posterity, the nation of Israel. In due time, in fulfillment of this promise, Moses, as its mediator, instituted the Law Covenant between God and Israel -Under that Covenant it was stipulated that in order to inherit eternal life and all the blessing which Adam possessed and lost, and in order to inherit the promise made to Abraham of the privilege of blessing all the families of the earth, the Divine Law must be kept inviolate. God must be loved with all the heart, mind, soul, strength, and the neighbor must be loved as one’s self. Moses as mediator of that Covenant might render every assistance he was capable of to that nation; but, alas, himself a fallen man, imperfect, he was unable to lift Israel out of sin and degradation —unable to bring them to that state of human perfection which would enable them to keep that Law Covenant and inherit its blessings! As God foreknew, they failed to keep their part of the Covenant. “By deeds of Law shall no flesh be justified.” A number of discouraged Israelites continued to hope for blessing through the Abrahamic Covenant and, later on, the Lord revealed to them that in due time he would make a New (Law) Covenant with them and that Messiah would be its Mediator. (Jeremiah 31:31)

The promise of a New Covenant implied, as St. Paul points out, that God knew that the Law Covenant would not bring to Israel the hoped-for blessings. Thenceforth their hopes centered in the New Covenant, under which the Lord promised that he would entirely blot out their sins and take away their stony heart and give them a heart of flesh and that they should be his people. Confirmatory to this thought was the message sent to them through Malachi the prophet, assuring them that the messenger of the Covenant (the servant of the Covenant, the Mediator of the Covenant), whom they delighted in, the one they were hoping for, would ere long, come to his people. But the prophet intimated that few of them would be ready to receive him. He said, “Who shall stand when he appeareth?”

THE LORD CRUCIFIED

Expecting Messiah to appear in a very different way, Israel was unprepared for the “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” “the Lamb of God which taketh

away the sin of the world.” They expected a great general, a mighty leader, who would appeal to the learned, the wealthy, the noble. But our Lord appealed only to those who were pure in heart, “Israelites indeed.” Such alone had the necessary faith to recognize him and receive him. The others crucified him, but did it ignorantly. St. Peter declares, “I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. Ye killed the Prince of life” (Acts 3:15-17). And St. Paul says, “Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” (1 Corinthians 2:8)

However, our Lord’s crucifixion was merely a fulfillment of another feature of the Divine Plan to make the blessing of all mankind the deeper and broader.

By virtue of keeping the Law, Jesus would have had the right to earthly perfection for himself, eternal life and happiness. He also would have been heir of all the things that Adam possessed and lost. He might, therefore, have established an earthy empire and, by wise laws and regulations, he might have done much for human uplift — the very thing which people today are wanting to bring about. But his subjects would still have been under the Divine condemnation of death. He would merely have been the ruler, instructor, of fallen, dying men. God’s promise of blessing meant more than this. And in harmony with it our Lord Jesus did not keep his earthly rights but surrendered them, sacrificed them, laid them down on our behalf. The laying down of these earthly rights was finished at Calvary. Since this sacrificing was done in harmony with the Divine purpose, the Heavenly Father rewarded the sacrificer with a new life on a higher plane, “far above angels and principalities and powers.”

Thus when Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day he was no longer a man, but a spirit being, a partaker of the Divine nature, far above angels. More than this, he had his earthly rights which he had sacrificed, and these now constituted an asset or thing of value which he possessed and which he might bestow upon others. He laid down his earthly rights that he might receive life again on a high plane and have a right to give the sacrificed earthly perfection, honors and privileges to others. It was in this manner that the Lord provided for the blessing of the world — “the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich and to which he addeth no sorrow.” Though the blessings have not yet come to the world, as we have seen, the foundation has already been laid in the redemptive work accomplished at Calvary.

We cannot in this discourse trace the blessing to its conclusion - But knowing that our discourses weekly reach about seven million readers we shall hope to

address the majority of you through the public prints a week hence. We hope then to show how the Lord has promised that his blessing under the Abrahamic Covenant and through the nation of Israel and through the mediatorial work of Christ is yet to bring blessings to every member of Adam's race — an opportunity

2H721

for obtaining life eternal. Meantime let us all assure our hearts of the truthfulness of the promise, that the blessing of the Lord maketh rich and that he addeth no sorrow therewith. Any sorrows that come to us are earthborn and not of the Lord and may be overcome; so that eventually we may be of the mighty host who in heaven and in earth and under the earth will be heard giving "praise and honor to Him who sitteth on the Throne and unto the Lamb." (Revelation 5:13)

[The Weekly Enquirer, October 14, 1909](#)

THE BLESSING OF THE LORD

"The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich; and He addeth no Sorrow therewith." Prov. 10:22

We continue today our topic of last Sunday. Our hope is that not only those of you who hear my voice, but also the 7,000,000 readers to whom this sermon will go in print in the columns of more than 400 newspapers may have well in mind what we had to say on the text a week ago. Briefly we showed that the world has not yet received the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich — that, on the contrary, ever since the disobedience of our first parents our race has labored under the Divine sentence or "curse" of death, and that our dying condition, mental, moral and physical, are upon us as convicts. We pointed out that the Lord has declared that He will yet grant His blessing to our race, releasing all from the curse and supplying the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich. We pointed out the foreshadowings of this, especially in the promise, or covenant made to Abraham, and confirmed to the nation of Israel through Isaac and Jacob — "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

We showed the failure of the law covenant to give these blessings, and that Jesus, the Son of God, holy, harmless and undefiled, separate from sinners, and He alone, was able to keep the law and prove Himself worthy of eternal life and all the blessings lost by Adam — not heavenly but earthly blessings — the same that Adam lost. We saw next that those earthly rights and blessings won by our

Lord by the keeping of the law He, with the Father's consent and arrangement, sacrificed, laid down in death, and that His reward for so doing was a resurrection to a spirit or heavenly plane of being, far above that of angels. We saw a glorious King who had those earthly rights in his possession as an asset or thing of value to give to others.

We want now to continue this investigation and to see in the light of God's word what it is to be done with those earthly rights which Jesus gained by virtue of His obedience to the law, and which He sacrificed. How will they be applied? We might reasonably have supposed (since God's promise to Israel was that the world should be blessed through it) that as soon as our Lord Jesus had ascended up on high He would give to the nation of Israel all those earthly rights and honors which he had secured by obedience and death. We might have expected accordingly that, forthwith, the nation of Israel would have begun to realize the forgiveness of their sins and would have been thus turned to the Lord, and that, under His blessing, their work with all the nations since would have progressed. As it is written, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Admitting that the Lord Jesus was the spiritual seed of Abraham we would have expected that upon His glorification the earthly kingdom would have begun to be blessed and to be used for the blessing of others. But nothing of this kind occurred. Disaster came upon the Jewish nation, and blindness. Their nation was destroyed; and for nearly 19 centuries they have been not only blind but outcast, under the disfavor of the Almighty. Did God forget His promise made to Israel or did He change His purpose, or what is the explanation of the course which He pursued?

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL CALLED AND CHOSEN

What God has been doing since Christ died for the world's sins the Scriptures term the "mystery of God." It has been a mystery to the Jews and a mystery to the world in general, and the Lord so intended it to be. No one can understand the matter nor appreciate it, except he be in the right condition of heart and begotten of the holy Spirit. To such the Lord says, "To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to all outsiders these things are spoken in parables and in dark sayings." Some who cannot perceive in the full appreciative sense what we shall show may, nevertheless, be able to appreciate the matter to a limited degree.

The mystery is this: God intends to have a larger Messiah than the Jews had understood. Not only so,

2H722

but he will be on a higher plane than they had supposed, and will accomplish a far greater blessing than they had supposed. God's purpose is to have a multitudinous Messiah and to select the members thereof from many nations. As compared with the world these will be a "little flock." As the Master said, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Each member of this little flock company must develop the same characteristics which were exemplified in their Redeemer, Jesus. They must have his spirit or disposition. Like him, they must lay down their lives in the service of righteousness, truth and the brethren. They will become joint sacrificers with him.

Here the question arises, If no Jew but Jesus could keep the Divine law perfectly, and if he could keep it only because he was not a member of Adam's race directly, and if only by keeping the divine law perfectly Jesus could be accounted worthy to be a sacrifice and be received to heavenly glory, how could any of the fallen race be acceptable? We read that He was "holy, harmless and undefiled, separate from sinners." Of Him again we read that in order to be thus holy He required a specially miraculous birth. These things being true, how could it be possible for even a "little flock" to be found who would be acceptable to God as joint sacrificers with Jesus? How could even a little flock be found who would be of the same spirit as Jesus, a copy of him in character?

The Scriptural answer is that some could indeed be found possessed of the character likeness of Jesus in the sense that they would desire to do perfectly; but that none could be found able to do perfectly, because all are sharers in inherited sin. This is a part of the "mystery" which gradually unfolds to those who have the hearing ear and the understanding heart and the eye of faith. The Lord's explanation of the matter is this: When Jesus had sacrificed His earthly rights and had been received to spirit nature, and had the earthly rights at His command to give away. "He ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us. He appeared for, on behalf of, all who believe in Him and accept forgiveness of sins and make a consecration of their all to God's service. But Jesus did not accept as disciples those who merely believed and were justified by faith. He attached another condition, namely, that they must sacrifice all their earthly rights and privileges as He did; otherwise they could not be His disciples. Unless they walked in His footsteps of self-sacrifice they could not be counted in as His disciples, His followers, members of His body, sharers of His coming glory and work. His words were,

“If any man would be my disciple let him take up his cross and follow me, and where I am there shall my disciples be.” “Except a man forsake all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” “Unless a man love less father, mother, children and all else, he cannot be my disciple.” “He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”

In other words, the Lord’s proposition to the Church is that all the earthly rights of Adam (lost through disobedience and redeemed by our Lord at Calvary and now at His disposal) are imparted to those who, during this gospel age, will turn from sin, accept Christ as their Redeemer, and then by consecration, sacrifice all earthly rights. In a word, our Lord Jesus has a right to give the earthly rights, the earthly life and honor, to any one person or to any number of persons of Adam’s race, as something to sacrifice. When they do mentally sacrifice earthly rights they receive the begetting of the holy Spirit to the heavenly nature. But that heavenly nature itself they will not receive until they shall have finished the sacrifice agreed upon. Thus as Jesus, by keeping the law, had a right to earthly perfection and sacrificed it; so those keeping the law in the spirit of their minds, and accepting the merit of Christ, as justifying them to restitution right and glory, sacrifice these, use them in God’s service that they may share Jesus’ new nature and glory. The merit at the end of the Gospel Age will be the same merit of Jesus, and will be at his disposal, because, although passed through the Church, it will not have been kept by any member of the Church, and will, therefore, be at our Lord’s disposal at the close of this age —the dawning of the Millennium Day.

ISRAEL’S NEW COVENANT

What will be done with the merit of Christ’s sacrifice at the end of the Gospel Age, when it shall have passed through the Church? We answer that it will be used again. It will be given to the Jews and through them to the whole world. It is the blood or merit, which will seal the New Covenant promised to Israel long ago, but not fulfilled. It is one thing to promise a Covenant, another thing to draw up the terms of a Covenant, a third thing to sign and seal the Covenant. The New Covenant has not yet been sealed. The blood that will seal it, is now being used in the interest of the elect spiritual Israel; that the “little flock” may have something to sacrifice, and thereby be granted a share with Christ in His spirit nature and glory. This is the cup referred to by our Lord in the memorial supper when He said, “This is my blood of the New Covenant shed for many for the remission of sins. Drink ye all, of it.” The privilege of drinking with our Lord in this cup of sacrifice belongs to this age only. None will be left for the future.

2H723

But the blessing will not remain with those who drink of the cup — their restitution rights and privileges will be sacrificed and thus passed on for the benefit of mankind in general. The Apostle says that our Lord at His first advent in His death became the “surety” or guarantee of the New Covenant. But he did not seal the New Covenant nor put it into force in any sense of the word because it was a Covenant with natural Israel; and if it had been put into force it forthwith would have begun to bring blessings to Israel, not to be theirs until after spiritual Israel shall have been glorified in the First Resurrection. The “mystery” is, then, that philosophy in the Divine program which no one could have surmised in advance. God has been quietly taking from the world a great Messiah, a great Prophet, a great King, a great Mediator between God and the world. Jesus is the Head, and the faithful members are the Body. This is the great Mediator of the New Covenant, of which St. Peter wrote, saying: “For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me (mediator of the Covenant); him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you - And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.” Acts 3:22, 23

The spiritual blessings can go only to those possessed of the faith of Abraham, and this class receive the blessing on a higher plane. Then the earthly blessing is applied to the natural seed of Abraham — so many as will, under the Millennial Kingdom come to due reverence of the Lord - For them will be all the blessed provisions of the New Covenant specified in Jeremiah 31:31. Their sins will be forgiven, not merely from year to year, as under the law covenant, but everlastingly forgiven through the merit of the better sacrifices. Under the blessed uplifting influences of the New Covenant their stoniness of heart will give place to tenderness of heart. Come, now, let us examine St. Paul’s statement of all these matters in Romans 11:25, 43. He assures us that blindness is happened to Israel, which is not to be perpetual, but is to pass away. He explains that the Deliverer shall come out of Zion and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Zion represents the church, or rather the Abrahamic Covenant, which bears, or mothers, the church, as the apostle explains in Galatians 4:28.

St. Paul styles Sarah, Abraham’s proper wife and the mother of Isaac, the type of heavenly Jerusalem, the heavenly Covenant of which we are the children. “We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise.” “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29) Thus the

church, Jesus the head, and the faithful, his members, constitute the great Deliverer which (is born of) comes out of spiritual Zion and which, under the New Covenant, will turn away ungodliness from Jacob — natural Israel. Notice how the apostle expresses this, saying, “For this is my Covenant unto them (the New Covenant to natural Israel) when I shall take away their sins.” St. Paul enters into the philosophy of it, saying that natural Israel has been treated as enemies for our sake; but that they are still beloved for the Father’s sake, because God never repents of his gifts or calling. As they have been a long time without God’s favor, so the Gentiles were for a long time previous to this Gospel age without God’s favor. He points out that if God had mercy upon the Gentiles to bring them under the favor of this Gospel age, likewise he will have favor upon natural Israel, and he adds: “They shall obtain mercy through your mercy.” (Rom. 2:31)

We are not to understand that the mercy which they will receive under the New Covenant is purely the mercy of the church and not the mercy of the Father and the Son. Evidently St. Paul wishes us to remember that all things are of the Father and all things are by the Son. God’s mercy exercised through Christ and Christ’s mercy through the church will bless Israel under the provisions of their New (Law) Covenant.

To those who have followed the argument how evident it is that the blessing of the Lord, which goes first to the church, will make her rich — “heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with Him; that we may be also glorified with Him.” How much more riches there are in the Divine blessings than we had ever surmised! No wonder St. Paul prayed for the church that “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” (Eph. 1:13) And again, “that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.” (Eph. 3:17, 18)

Already indeed (by faith) has the church been made rich by the Lord’s blessing in proportion as the exceeding great and precious promises have been accepted, and if it will still further make us rich through the “change” of the first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, what may we not expect of its richness and blessing toward the Jew? Surely the blessing of the Lord will make Israel rich and honorable. Israel’s blessing will be national as well as personal. Indeed, as soon as the

Millennial Kingdom shall have been established, the blessing of the Lord

2H724

will mean divine favor in all the natural affairs of life to all those who are truly His — “to the Jew first.” As a people they will be the first to be ready for the divine guidance after the great time of trouble with which this present age will close. Christendom in general has little knowledge of coming restitution, to all that which was lost in Eden. Christendom in general expects to go either to heaven or purgatory, or eternal torment; but many Jews know their Bible better than this; that the blessings promised are earthly ones — “Times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:20)

With the close of this age heavenly hopes will no longer be held forth to mankind, but, on the contrary, earthly hopes, restitution. Israel, therefore, will be the better prepared for the terms and conditions of the New Covenant. Besides, among them will appear Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, perfected in their resurrection and constituting them the earthly representatives of the church, the heavenly kingdom. Naturally they will be more ready to receive these than the remainder of mankind, because this is the promise which God made to them: “I will restore your judges as at the first, and your law givers as at the beginning.” (Isa. 1:26)

BLESS ALL NATIONS

Let us not forget that the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich is not to stop with Israel, but to be passed by them as a blessing to all nations, that whosoever will may attain to everlasting life through the merit of Christ’s sacrifice and through the Church sealing the new covenant with Israel. Be it noted, however, that to obtain a share in the New Covenant blessings it will be necessary for the people of all nations to become Israelites, and by doing so they will become children of Abraham. And this will be a fulfillment of the divine promise, “I have constituted thee a father of many nations.” (Rom. 4:17) Remember also how the Lord referred to Samaria and Sodom as examples of all nations of the world, and declared to the Israelites, “I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by the old (law) Covenant.” They will become Israel’s daughters at the restitution time, the prophet declares, under their New Covenant. “When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring

again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them.”
“When Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.” (Ezek. 16:53-55)

The richness of God’s blessing will mean the granting to every member of Adam’s race a full, fair opportunity of recovery from sin and death to righteousness and life eternal under the New Covenant sealed at the end of this gospel age with the blood of Christ, head and body, through the merit of Him who was faithful unto death and who redeemed us, applying His blood, His merit, His justification on our behalf.

As now the Lord addeth no sorrow with His blessing, so it will be during the millennium with the world. The assurance of the word of God is that by the close of the millennium there will be “no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying,” but that He will make all things new. The blessing of the Lord, beginning with Jesus and continuing with the church, and then with Israel, will ultimately reach all the willing and obedient. And those who reject divine favors will lose the gift of eternal life and be lost in the second death.

[The National Labor Tribune, October 18, 1909](#)

EARTH’S GREAT JUBILEE FOLLOWS THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

HALIFAX, N. S., Oct. 18—A convention of Bible students held in this city for several days concluded its sessions today. A number of able addresses were made on appropriate themes by speakers, who evidently were deep students of the scriptures. Many of these came from the United States, one party from Boston numbering about one hundred. Pastor C. T. Russell, of Pittsburg, Pa., gave several addresses. One of these, delivered today, we report. It was from the text, “Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto

2H725

his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.” (Lev. 25:9-10) Pastor Russell said:

My topic of today stands closely related to the one of last Sunday delivered in Chicago. However, dear friends, the blessings and conveniences of the wonderful day in which we live draw together the uttermost parts of the earth most remarkably. Hence, I am well aware, many of this large audience, though not present in Chicago, availed themselves of the wide publication of the sermon through the daily prints. Therefore, I draw your attention now to the declaration of our text that the jubilee stands closely related to the atonement for sin. Without the atonement day sacrifice for sins, without the remission of sins, there would have been no antitypical jubilee provided for mankind. Hence the subject of last Sunday and the one before us today stand associated as cause and effect, the atonement work which we discussed last Sunday being the basis for the jubilee blessings about to come to mankind —which we will discuss today. The atonement day, with its sacrifices, came annually, but the jubilee only every fiftieth year. As our text declares, the trumpets announcing it were to be blown in the atonement day. The fact that the two types are associated teaches that the one depends upon the other. The atonement sacrifices must make reconciliation for the sins of the world before the jubilee can be fully inaugurated.

BLOWING THE SILVER TRUMPETS

Our text declares that the time for the blowing of the jubilee trumpet was in the day of atonement. Manifestly this would be towards its close and not at its beginning, because with the opening of that day and until the high priest had well nigh accomplished the sacrifices, the blowing of trumpets announcing the beginning of the jubilee would be inappropriate.

What think you, dear friends, of my suggestion that as this entire gospel age, from the day of our Lord's baptism to the present time, is the atonement day and is nearing its finish, and as the great jubilee here is to immediately follow it, the time of the blowing of the silver trumpets announcing the jubilee began with the year A. D. 1875? As many of you are aware, we have been engaged in proclaiming this great fact to the royal priesthood ever since that date — by word, and pen and printed page. Notice that this message of earth's jubilee and “times of restitution,” due to begin forthwith, was sounded first by the members of the royal priesthood with the silver trumpets of the divine word — this message by the world in general is being shouted and

toted in all parts of the civilized world and by every class of the groaning creation. It is a message of hope, of encouragement, of liberty. We with the silver trumpets indeed announce only the message of God's word to the effect that the liberty that is to come will be the liberty of the sons of God, the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, and not the liberty of wantonness, of rioting and anarchy.

Some have been blowing upon "rams' horns," declaring that the coming liberty is to be expected along the lines of socialism. Others vociferate that it is coming through other political parties, and some proclaim that the only hope for it is through anarchy. Those of us, dear friends, who have studied the word of God on this subject see clearly that earth's jubilee is coming by way of a great time of trouble, which the scriptures specify and particularize. We perceive that God is allowing selfishness, the predominant influence of the whole world, to so pervert judgment that those who are seeking blessings and comforts for themselves, and others along different lines, will run amuck; that evidently the confusion will become worse confounded until out of all the various theories and panaceas which are now being tooted —vociferously urged as the hope and only hope of the coming golden age —will eventuate in pandemonium and anarchy. This is the picture which the scriptures draw for us of the time of trouble, a time in which "every man's hand shall be against his neighbor and there shall be no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in."

We can picture to our imagination the first jubilee accorded to the Israelites. We can imagine some docile, never thinking of the jubilee at all, groaning under their burdens hopelessly. We can imagine others tracing their time in advance and making their preparation to leave servitude and to return to their former estate. We can imagine masters disputing as to the time and others seeking to keep their servants in ignorance of their rights and others, still more noble, rejoicing with their servants in the liberties which were about to be theirs but as the important juncture would be reached the excitement would become intense and quarrels would be frequent as respects to mine and thine, and particularly between the wealthy and the poor. So that in the first few years of the Jubilee year we might reasonably expect a sort of pandemonium in the shouting, bluster, excitement, rejoicing, recriminating, etc. Doubtless almost anarchy would prevail for a time until the new order of things would be rightly adjusted, until the Elders who would have control would rightly set things in order.

So here the confusion clamors already here with us will keep on increasing and eventuate in the anarchy which

the scriptures portray; but then, thank God, will be ushered in the new dispensation and the divinely appointed rulers of the time will speedily bring order out of the confusion. And even the

2H726

confusion itself will bring blessing when it shall have destroyed many who would be hindrances to the jubilee blessings. And now, dear friends, a word to you who have by faith entered into the covenant relationship with the Lord, our Redeemer. From our standpoint the coming jubilee to earth is grand to think about. The intervening clouds of trouble, the short, sharp work which the Lord will accomplish in the earth when the plowshare of human passion shall plow deeply, will prepare the ground of humanity for the sowing of the seeds of truth which shall bring forth abundantly. Our jubilee has begun in a two-fold sense: (1) Our love for mankind enables us to rejoice exceedingly at the thought of the blessings of God so shortly to come to them. (2) We rejoice also that the blessings soon coming to them imply a blessing to us, because this is the divine order that God's richest blessing should come through His Son, first to the church His bride, then through these elect ones to the ancient worthies and subsequently extending to Israel and to all the nations of the earth — in full harmony with the apostle's promise made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (3) This hope and confidence gives us a rest of heart in the present time, a rest of faith which keeps us calm, serene, in all the trials and difficulties of life. Of these two rests, the present one by faith and the one to be entered upon, the apostle speaks, saying, of the first, "We which believe do enter into rest"; of the second he says, "There remaineth a rest to the people of God, a great Sabbath of jubilation a thousand years long."

Jubilee is the synonym for rejoicing, and the jubilee year was certainly a joyful occasion to the masses of the Israelites though not so to the wealthy of them except they were in heart harmony with the Lord and His glorious, righteous, loving provisions. The scriptures explain that the land of Israel was reckoned as belonging to God, and that He gave it to that nation according to their tribes and families. They might buy it or sell it, but on the recurrence of the jubilee year every fiftieth year, the land reverted to those to whom God had originally given it. In other words it could not be sold outright. It could at most be leased for whatever portion of time remained up to the next jubilee. This applied not only to the land but to the persons of the Israelites. A man might get into debt and contract to pay it by his labor, but no

contract for service would hold beyond the next jubilee. By this beneficent arrangement God provided against the danger of all the property falling into the hands of the few —provided against the possibility of any combination of capital or trusts which would enslave the masses or deprive them of their share of the earth. Beneficent as this arrangement was for the Israelitish people it meant as a type a still higher antitype. It pictured on a very small scale indeed the great millennial epoch which the apostle speaks of as ‘Times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.’ Acts 3:21

Viewed from this standpoint Israel’s jubilee was as nothing in comparison to the great anti-typical jubilee which will prevail during the millennial age and especially at its beginning.

“TIMES OF RESTITUTION”

We can imagine better than describe how a family of Israelites which had become poor and surrendered its patrimony in liquidation of debt (its members scattered as servants to others) would look forward longingly to the reunion in the jubilee year! From the standpoint of the anti-type we see the entire human family sold under sin and in slavery thereto, and many of them gone into death, the great prison house - Some are aware of the fact that there is to be a grand time of restitution which the apostle describes as foretold “By the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” Whoever knows of this glorious epoch must feel a thrill as they consider the fact that Adam’s entire estate, the world in general, is to be reclaimed from the reign of sin and death and to become a paradise of God and that all of the groaning creation living, as well as all of the dear brethren and sisters of Adam’s children who have gone down into the tomb, are yet to be brought back under more favorable conditions, are to have a new start, a new trial, a fresh opportunity of deciding for God, for righteousness, for eternal life or for ultimate and everlasting extinction in the second death.

Does someone suggest that it would be unrighteous on God’s part to grant to the thousands of millions of heathen and to other millions of Christian lands who died in ignorance of God’s real character, an opportunity of recovering during the millennial reign of Christ? Does someone suggest that to give to this poor groaning creation an opportunity of restoration to human perfection and to harmony with God would be an injustice? Wherein, we inquire? It is suggested that this would be a second chance, and that it would be

unreasonable to suppose that if God ever gave one chance it would be so complete that there would be no need of His providing another? We reply that many of us have had very confused ideas as respects the meaning of this word chance. We got into our difficulty by using our reasons, but by not using our Bibles in conjunction with our reasons. The Bible tells of one chance granted to Father Adam, one chance to

2H727

retain his perfection. The Bible tells that in that one chance or trial our father failed, and that as a result a death sentence passed upon himself which proceeded in a natural way and affected all of his posterity, mentally, morally and physically, so that, as the apostle says, "We cannot do the things that we would." And as the prophet points out, "We were all born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mothers conceive us." What chance could these children of Adam, born in imperfection, have to live perfectly, righteously, and thus to demonstrate their right to everlasting life under the divine provision? We all agree that they would have no chance —have had no chance individually. Stating the matter in another form, all of Adam's numerous family were in his loins representatively and shared with him the death sentence which resulted from his disobedience. In other words, the first chance, granted in Eden, was lost by Father Adam, and for all of his children; unless in some manner God should provide a second chance there could no flesh be saved.

Surely it was for this very purpose of providing a second chance for Father Adam and for all of his posterity that God sent His Son into the world to redeem Father Adam and his entire race and to grant them all an individual chance to return to perfection and to harmony with their Creator. In a word, the death of Christ was for the very purpose of granting a second chance to Adam and his family. Had Jesus not come as our Redeemer, had he not bought us with His precious blood, the original death sentence would have left our race as hopeless as the brute creation, as respects future life. This is the Apostle's statement of the matter. "As by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead, for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive; every man in his own order." (1 Cor. 15:21-25) Which of us, then, can afford to reject this second chance which God has so graciously tendered us through His Son?

THE SECOND CHANCE OR SECOND TRIAL

From what we have said, it is evident that God has made provision in Christ for a second chance or second trial for Adam and his entire race. Follow me while I point

out our Creator, following His perfect right, has been pleased to give a second chance to some of Adam's children under special conditions during the past 1900 years, and that he proposes later or during the Millennium to give a second chance or opportunity of escape from Adamic sin and death condition to all the remainder of Adam's race redeemed by the precious blood.

During this age the scriptures tell us that a special class is being called out from amongst mankind, a "little flock," who are invited to be joint-heirs with their Redeemer in His glorious kingdom of infinite power to be established amongst men during the millennium for the uplifting of the entire race, so that ultimately all who will may come back to harmony with God and recover through the Redeemer's sacrifice and kingdom all that was lost of human perfection —the divine image and a paradise home. This special class hears of divine love and sees the divine purpose under difficulty—under trials in the world, by the adversary and their own perverted inclinations - These hinder them from seeing or hearing with full distinctness the message of divine grace. But whatever they hear and see is that much more than the masses of mankind enjoy, because, as the apostle says, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them that believe not." The masses by and by will see and hear and appreciate; as it is written, "In that day all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped."

Some of the believers who hear little and see little — some more, some less — are responsible in proportion to their comprehension, but only by following on to know the Lord do any of them come to see and hear distinctly and rejoice in the divine promises. The poor blind world does not appreciate God's message now. To them it seems foolishness to speak of a kingdom to come and such blessing to flow from it as God's word declares. Not seeing these things they live for the present time and are unwilling to sacrifice present interests for future promises. Our Lord referred to this second class, saying, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes." (Matt. 11:25) The babes in worldly wisdom have more advantage every way as respects faith and obedience in this gospel age; but the worldly wise and heathen, from whom God's favors are now hidden, will share the blessing by and by, when the clouds and shadows of sin and death shall have rolled away and when the sun of righteousness shall have arisen with healing in His beams and when the blessings shall be dispensed at the hands of His anointed one.

So, then, those who are to have their second chance in the future under the favorable conditions of the millennial kingdom will be those of the human family who have not had a full, thorough, complete chance, opportunity or trial during this gospel age. And those who — in this age or in the coming millennial age shall sin willfully, deliberately, intentionally, knowingly, against the divine standards and statutes will thereby terminate their second chance or trial and die the

2H728

second death —without hope of any future redemption or resurrection.

THE GREAT JUBILEE NEARS

According to the Bible history of the matter the Jews never heartily entered into the observance of the jubilee year. Like other men, they were selfish. Like others they preferred to have a fixity of things rather than a change every fifty years. Like others, the more successful of them preferred to keep their property and to increase it and were not solicitous of restoring liberty and property to their poorer brethren every fifty years. Bible history shows us that the Israelites observed nineteen jubilees after a fashion, but halfheartedly, not in a manner to God's pleasured. Thereupon God sent the entire nation into captivity and left their land desolate for a period of seventy years. In explanation of this period the Lord declared to the Israelites that those seventy years in which their land lay desolate He was giving the land her jubilee year or Sabbath years of rest, because the people had been too selfish to observe this divine statute. We quote you the Lord's words on the subject after describing the victories of the armies of Babylon over the Jews, after telling about the desolations accomplished, "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and the king of Babylon and his sons until the return of the kingdom of Servia to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths, for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill three score and ten years." 2 Chron. 36:20-21

It will be noticed that in the scriptures just quoted we have a key furnished us respecting the entire number of jubilee cycles, namely, seventy. Figuring this out, dear friends, we find that the antitypical jubilee was due to begin A. D. 1875. As the type was a year, the antitype, larger every way, will be the "times of restitution," earth's great jubilee, the millennial reign of Christ, a great epoch of blessing and uplifting one thousand years long. This may seem astounding to some of you dear

friends, but I am sure not to all of you, for in your city on many of your bookshelves you might have my presentation of this matter in print, showing the date, 1875, by two distinctly separate calculations of the jubilee cycles, both in fullest accord, the one according to the law, and the other according to the prophets. And why should we wonder that our day, so great, so wonderful, so different from every other epoch of earth's history, should stand closely related to the divine plan? So far from wondering if God and His plan be not connected with this wonderful day in which we live some of us have come to see that the divine purposes in connection with the coming blessings of the antitypical jubilee are at the back of all the inventions of our time, as cause to effect. We perceive that as the prophet has declared we are in 'The day of his preparation,' the day which will prepare the world for Messiah's kingdom and the world's jubilee. Instead of feeling surprised that the work of the gospel age should be near its completion and the millennial age and its great work be due to be ushered in should we not rather wonder that the selection of the "little flock" the bride of Christ, the royal priesthood, the peculiar people, should have been granted so long a space in the world's history? Yet we cannot doubt the wisdom of God in His arrangement of the plan of the ages. He allowed 4000 or more years to pass under the reign of sin and death before he sent his son to redeem us, although that redemption had been fully purposed from before the foundation of the world. Evidently the time appointed for the gathering of the elect out of every nation, people and tongue has been none too long. In due time God sent forth his son to redeem and in due time the Son of God will come again to receive unto himself his elect church his bride, his under priests. Then, following a great time of trouble and distress amongst men, will come the kingdom of God's dear Son, the reign of righteousness, the jubilation of the world.

[The National Labor Tribunes October 17, 1909](#)

CHRISTIAN VS. ANTICHRISTIAN SOCIALISM

WORCESTER, Mass., Oct. 17—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle, addressed two large audiences here today from the following text: "Godliness with Contentment is Great Gain"—1 Tim. 6:6. He said: The only proper contentment is that which combines with godliness and which sees from the standpoint of God's

Word the Divine power able to correct the difficulties which assail us and all mankind. The godly believer thus instructed is able to appropriate to himself the Divine promises of providential care and

2H729

thus to be content with conditions which are not satisfactory.

On the other hand those who either do not know of the Divine power, or have lost their faith in Divine wisdom, chafe more and more under present conditions. And the more discontented they become, the greater is their tendency toward ungodliness —doubt of Divine love, wisdom and power. Self-dependence is a poor substitute and, as disappointments come, the combative find anger, malice, hatred, envy and strife surging through their minds. Then they become rabid socialists and are in the way to eventually become rabid anarchists.

Again we have those who term themselves Christian Socialists. These well-meaning souls perceive the situation of their brethren and say, Yes, the world should be socially transformed. Its riches should not flow, as at present, into the favored channels, but should be scattered everywhere for the general refreshment and comfort of mankind as a whole. They philosophize on what God surely would and surely would not approve amongst men, and then declare that all Christians should at once set about to secure to the world of mankind a just division of God's bounties. Their love and zeal for right principles we should and do admire and commend. But we cannot commend their course, their hopes, their preaching, by which they seek to obtain the ends desired. Recognizing the principles of Divine Justice they seek to apply them, forgetful of the fact that they have not the Divine Wisdom necessary to a proper application. They seem to forget that justice has been the same for several thousand years past and that Divine Wisdom has not yet seen fit to establish Divine Justice amongst men. If they think that this is a neglect on God's part which they are wise enough to rectify, the thought is evidently an erroneous one. If they believe, on the contrary, that the time for the establishment of justice was not in the past, but has now come, they should be able to find and point us to a Divine revelation to this effect, practically authorizing them to take their stand now for socialism and explaining that the due time for the prosperity of justice has now come and how they shall proceed and what shall be the outcome. But do they offer us such evidences from the Bible. Do they offer us such proofs as these? Nay, verily. Like the other socialists they are merely discontented and, becoming discontented, seek a

remedy; and, because of a religious turn of mind, seek to justify their course as Christian and biblical, without thinking it necessary to study the Bible on the subject and to conform their message and expectations to its outlines of the Divine Plan of the Ages. From the Bible standpoint the world is not properly ready for its own control under any form of government. It is a rebellious province in the Divine Empire —one in which sin and selfishness and death constitute the ruling elements. The Bible declares that what the world needs is a monarchy — a strong, centralized government in which the masses must not be allowed to have a voice at all, because, in their fallen condition, they know not what is for their own highest good. The Bible tells us that present institutions, under the power of selfishness, driving the wealthy in one direction and the masses in the opposite direction, is about to bring a universal crash —anarchy. This and atheistic socialism and Christian socialism, and, in a larger sense, general selfishness and discontent are urging upon the two great combatants, both of whom will fall in the struggle, never to rise again, however, according to the Scriptures, they will be succeeded by the Kingdom of God's dear Son — the Millennial Kingdom — the Mediatorial Kingdom—for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Matt. 6:10

That strong Government, that theocracy to which every knee must bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God, is the Kingdom that the world needs. Its rule of righteousness alone will bring to mankind the joy and peace and blessing which all crave, but which none of us are wise enough to know how to bring about — not even our socialistic friends. The part of faith and the part of wisdom is to look unto the Lord from whom cometh our help. Nor should we look to him to approve our methods, but rather to be informed, respecting his methods and to approve them and to co-operate to the extent of our abilities.

CHURCH CONGRESS OF BOSTON

At a church congress recently held in Boston a day was given to the discussion of Christian Socialism. Both sides of the question were permitted to be presented. One minister, Reverend Eliot White, is reported in the "Christian Socialist" as having made the following statement:

"Let us answer, 'Hasten the day when Labor, united, shall shake off its chains!' Our part as Christians is to help men out of every bondage. We are not perturbed that Socialism, in its eagerness to rid labor of material bonds, has not yet realized the weight of bonds spiritual.

That realization will come in good time, and Christianity must be ready to show the workers of the world how to be rid of all those fetters of the soul which material emancipation will but render more apparent. *But for Christianity, as too often now, to profess desire to free men of spiritual bondage, while repudiating any call or need to strike fearless blows at their material prison bars, is to lay*

2H730

itself open to *justifiable charges of hypocrisy*. This must yield to braver counsels, though the striving be even unto blood against the sin of slavery which still defiles modern industrialism.

With widest meaning, then—inclusive of all that the most ardent and uncompromising Socialist lover of liberty has demanded, and embracing besides all that the Christian means when he proclaims the glory of spiritual freedom, Christianity must now take up the challenge and cry with world-wide voice like the sound of many waters and a mighty thunder —“Amen! even so, unite, ye workers; you have but your chains to lose, and you have a world to gain!”

Brother White and the other dear souls who propose to get Labor out of the “slavery of modern industrialism” should be willing to concede that if now is the proper time for it, God is as much interested in that release as they or we or others could possibly be—yea, much more so. If, then, Brother White and others have received some special commission authorizing them to preach a new Gospel or a new edition to the old Gospel they should produce the proofs of this authorization. Until we see the proofs we must doubt their existence.

On the contrary the Scriptures declare that there is but the one hope set before us in the Gospel, even as there is but the one Lord, the one Faith and the one Baptism. Brother White and his coadjutors have not succeeded and will not succeed in making the world more happy by preaching to them the Gospel of discontent. Labor today is a hundred-fold better fed, better clothed and better housed than in the days of Brother White’s grandfather, and it is safe to say that it is a hundred-fold more discontented. And Brother White, with doubtless the very best and noblest intentions, neglecting the Word of God, the “wisdom that cometh from above,” (James 3:17) is really doing injury by his gospel of socialism. Our Lord was surrounded by conditions of sickness, sorrow, poverty, etc., so that he could properly declare, “The poor ye have always with you.” (Matt. 26:11) The apostles were similarly situated. Yet have we any evidence whatever that any of these attempted to break the chains of the “slavery of Labor?” Most assuredly not.

THE REDEEMER'S EXAMPLE

While our Lord went about doing good and healed many of the sick, he by no means healed all of the sick nor comforted all the mourning ones - His favors were specialized, as in the case of the impotent man at Bethesda. "There were multitudes of impotent folk there." (John 5:3) But only the one was miraculously healed by our Lord's Word. Many widows were bereft of their sons, but only the widow of Nain had her son restored to her by the all-powerful Word of our Savior. He came not into the world to heal the sick, but to die for the world as its Redeemer. He left the great work, the important work of healing all the sick—the mentally, morally and physically sick, and of awakening all the dead, until the establishment of his Millennial Kingdom.

We likewise may do good unto all men as we have opportunity and especially to the "household of faith." But we likewise must wait for God's time and manner for the general healing of the world's sorrows and troubles. When in fulfillment of the prayer our Lord taught us, God's Kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, then all the blessing, all the helpfulness necessary to the full recovery of our race will be brought into operation. And it is not possible for any man or set of men, Christians or otherwise, either to improve upon God's great Plan of the Ages nor to hasten his Plan, "the times and seasons of which God hath put in his own power." Acts 1:7

Is it urged that the early Church at its beginning established a communistic society? We answer that this was not a worldly establishment, nor with those who recognized worldly principles. It was merely a social arrangement whereby the Church at Jerusalem sought to deal with each other as one family. It was not successful. It did not persist. It did not have apostolic commendation to other Churches. We may suppose, therefore, that the arrangement was Divinely permitted so as to show the Lord's people throughout the age the impracticability of such an arrangement at the present time. For, if that was not successfully operated under those recognized as having Divine authority, the apostles, communism never could be a benefit under present conditions — nor until the coming of God's Kingdom and its omnipotent wisdom and power to control.

HEAVENLY HOMES NOT DESIRED

Brother White and others would probably tell us that socialists are crying out that heavenly hopes are not satisfactory — that what they want is earthly riches and comforts and that they intend to have; and that what the people want is what the pulpit must supply —otherwise

the influence of religion will wane in the world and its ministers will become back numbers, whom no one will care to hear or heed.

We answer that this is all very true, but that the difficulty lies in the fact that the Gospel message is not properly presented to the people. The message which our Lord and the apostles presented is a consistent one, whereas the message from the majority of pulpits today is an inconsistent one. The people are told by

2H731

both Catholics and Protestants, that there is a heaven for the saintly who before dying shall become firmly established in the graces of the holy Spirit. As for the masses, they are told by Catholics that they must expect centuries of torment to be prepared for them. And by Protestants they are told that they will have an eternity of torment without hope of a release. And then both Catholics and Protestants unite in telling the poor world that such an arrangement for the future is the provision of a just and loving God, for which they should be deeply thankful, and that the trouble of this present life are partial penances for sin.

TELL THE TRUTH — SHAME SATAN

The Truth is so much more reasonable, so much more just, so much more wise and loving, that to every ear that hears it there comes a satisfaction, a harmony, which error could never produce. God's Word tells us that our race is a convict race—condemned to death because of father Adam's disobedience—because, as his children, we have inherited a share in his death sentence — not an eternal torment sentence. The Bible tells that Satan, who misled our first parents by misrepresenting God and his Word, has since misrepresented him to mankind and that he it is who is responsible for the "doctrine of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1), respecting the tortures of the dead, who the Scriptures declare "know not anything." (Eccl. 9:5) The Bible tells us that God, seeing that many of our race, dying because of Adam's transgression, would be glad to return to fellowship with their Creator, and to be recovered from sin and death conditions, has made a provision for them. Our Lord Jesus by his death purchased the lives and liberties of Adam and his entire race. He died, "the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us back to God." 1 Pet. 3:18

Is it inquired then why Adam and his race have not been released from the condition of sin and death and brought back to happiness, human perfection, and a Paradise home, in harmony with the promise of God's Word that these things shall result to mankind through the death of Christ? The Bible answers that God has a due time for

the various features of his great Plan of the Ages in the interest of humanity. Before the restitution blessings can come, the Redeemer must take to himself his great power and reign, binding Satan and undoing all the works of the flesh and of the devil —loosing the chains of ignorance, selfishness and superstition, which have so long bound mankind —yea, more; eventually recovering from the tomb every member of human imperfection, every member of the race will come into harmony with the new order of things, which the Kingdom of God will establish under the whole heavens.

But why must we wait? Why must we pray, Thy Kingdom come? Why the delay? The Bible answers again that the Kingdom class must first be found —“the little flock” to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the Kingdom. (Luke 12:32) This Kingdom class is to be composed of the saintly few who from positive character for righteousness by faithfully following in the footsteps of their Redeemer; by being taught of him in the School of Christ. These faithful few of present selection, or election, are symbolically spoken of as the members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church of glory; and again, as Members of the Body of Christ, his Joint-Heirs in his Kingdom. The Kingdom will not be established until this elect Kingdom class is completed. These must share in the sufferings of Christ and then the glory will immediately follow.

THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS SHALL COME

The Lord declares that the desire of all peoples shall come. The people of the world in general would desire the coming of the Lord’s glorious Kingdom and would rejoice in it, if they knew about it. The Divine provision would satisfy their longings as nothing else could do. Brother White and all ministers of God should hold up before them the glorious messages of the Divine Word. This would bring them joy and peace and rest of heart, notwithstanding the incidental trials and difficulties and weaknesses of this present time of distress. Socialism stirs up the minds of men to dissatisfaction and to worry and to fear and to strife, and leads them on and on into the great time of anarchistic trouble. The Gospel message, on the contrary, would be helpful, comforting, sustaining.

True it is not all men who are to receive the Gospel message; but those who cannot receive it would be far better off without the distracting Gospel of socialism, which merely arouses them to greater dissatisfaction. The Bible tells that in mercy God has hidden his Plan from the world and intends that only the saintly believers in the Lord Jesus Christ shall understand the secrets of it.

“The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him and he will show them his Covenant.” (Psa. 25:14) “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven,” (Matt. 13:11) but to all outsiders these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings, that seeing they might see and not understand.

So then the work of the Christian ministers as Divinely appointed is to let the world alone to be dealt with in God’s due time, and to comfort and sustain and instruct merely those whom they find to have *the hearing ear of faith*. These are to know the Truth and the Truth must make them free from error and

2H732

superstitions and bring them to the place of full consecration to God — sanctification - Such are to be informed respecting the Kingdom of which they are invited to become members, by becoming members of the Body of Christ through faith, consecration and obedience unto death. The world in due time will have the good blessing which God intends for it. Meantime surely we are not wiser than God, that we should hope for the world to hear in respect to God’s Plan in advance, nor wise enough to define and bring to pass a better Plan than the Divine one.

Socialism amongst men will be the Divine arrangement following the Millennial Age —following the lifting up of the race to perfection by the Redeemer—King. Then socialism will be a grand success, because of the perfection of all mankind then living, the unworthy having all been cut off in the Second Death.

[The National Labor Tribune, November 4, 1909](#)

ALL SAINTS DAY

AKRON, Ohio, Oct. 31 — Pastor Russell of Brookiyn Tabernacle preached to a large audience of Truth seekers here today. Much interest and profound attention was manifest. He took for his text the following: “*Both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.*” (Hebrews 2:11) He said:

Tomorrow will be observed by our friends of the Catholic, Lutheran and Episcopal churches as “All Saints” Day. At an early date after the death of the apostles, probably in the third century, the custom crept into the Church of invoking the blessing of saints. Some held in remembrance a patron saint, whose influence and memory were of a merely local character, and a certain day in the year was set apart as a memorial and for

invoking his influence in the heavenly courts. When subsequently papacy was organized, gradually the majority of the Christian congregation acceded to papacy's claims that its bishop is the special vicar of Christ, *reigning in his stead* and exercising his authority, many submitted themselves to this rule and thus were absorbed into that great system which still holds sway in the world. It was papacy that established "All Saints' Day" as a holy day for the invocation of all saints not otherwise particularly provided for by separate days of invocation.

Although saints admittedly are rare — few in comparison to professed Christians, nevertheless it seems there were enough so considered in the time of Gregory IV, to nearly appropriate all the days of the year. In other words, there were about 365 recognized in Gregory's time — after Christianity had been in operation for 800 years. Hence tomorrow will be the day for invoking the blessing of all the saints of the past one thousand years. But just how many or how few they are according to the records of the celebrating churches we do not surely know. If the records of the first eight centuries were correct, in the same proportion we should not expect that the total number of saints recognized would be above one thousand. One sad thought connected with the celebration tomorrow must present itself to all thinking minds amongst the celebrants; that is that only the saintly do they acknowledge as of holy character, fit for heaven, because the unsaintly, the unholy, would certainly be unfit. The teaching of papacy is that since only the saintly can be ushered into heaven at the time of their death, all the unsaintly, the undeveloped, they hold, must first experience awful tortures in Purgatory —to purify them, to make them ready for heaven.

Protestants on the contrary have discarded Purgatory, claiming that it is an unscriptural doctrine. They do not, however, claim that any but the saintly are prepared for heaven at death, nor that God has promised heaven to the untaught or undeveloped in Christian character. Hence, in some respects the Protestant theory is still more grievous, more terrible, more awful, for the bereaved than the Catholic view in that it offers no hope for all eternity to any unsaintly. Prayers to the saints, we believe to be unscriptural and unreasonable. Nowhere are we authorized to pray to the dead — either saints or sinners. On the contrary the Scriptures set forth our Heavenly Father as the supreme object of worship, though they do intimate propriety of praying to our Lord Jesus also. As we read: "All men should honor the Son

even as they honor the Father.” (John 5:23) But prayers to the dead are unreasonable, according to the Bible which teaches that “the dead know not anything” (Eccl. 9:5); that “their sons come to honor and they know it not—to dishonor and they perceive it not of them” (Job 14:21);

2H733

and that “there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” Eccl. 9:10

The Scriptures do recognize the difference between the saints, the Lord’s holy ones, and the remainder of mankind. And it is assuredly true that the great masses of humanity are totally unfit for the glories and perfections of the heavenly state. It is true that the Church is called upon to develop the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit and is assured, as St. Peter declares, “If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 1:11

But we hold that it is not only unscriptural, but irrational, to believe that all mankind except the saintly deserve centuries of torment in Purgatory or an eternity of torture in a worse and hopeless place. Let us take the Scriptural proposition, the only consistent one, the one which agrees with our five senses and with the Bible—that the dead are dead and that resurrection from death is what they need and what our Lord’s death will secure for every member of our race. Let us accept this statement of the Bible:

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:6) Let us accept the Scriptural explanation of that thousand years, that Millennial reign of Messiah—that it will be a time of blessing, of uplifting mankind, and that therein the elect saints of this age will be privileged to co-operate with their glorified Redeemer in bringing about the uplift, the resurrection, the restitution of all who will then prove willing and obedient.

The term saint is not a sectarian one. It occurs over one hundred times in the Bible, mostly in the plural form, “saints.” Our text speaks of a saintly, a sanctified class, and declares our Redeemer to be one of these—their Head, their Lord. He declares that all the sanctified of this Gospel Age are one—of one spirit and figuratively of one body. As for instance, the House of Lords is one body under a chairman, and the House of Commons is

another body. The United States Senate is another; and the House of Representatives is another. So the Church is the Body of Christ over which He is the Head, the Presiding Officer and Member. But the point specially to be noticed is that all who will belong ultimately to this Church class which the Lord is now calling and drawing from amongst men will every one of them be saints, every one of them be sanctified. The word “sanctified” signifies to be set apart to holy usage or services, and distinct and separate from any earthly ambition, calling or business. Nevertheless these sanctified ones are not merely the clergy or those without earthly responsibilities. While our heavenly Father is a great King, the King of the Universe, he nevertheless has made a plan which enables even the humblest of his creatures to approach him through the merit of the blood of Jesus, and by faith and obedience to the extent of his ability in sacrifice, to become a joint-heir with his Redeemer in the heavenly Kingdom. Thus the present call is confined to a call to sanctification. As St. Paul declares, “This is the will of God (concerning you), even your sanctification.” 1 Thess. 4:3

The word “saint” signifies “holy one,” “sanctified one,” ‘set apart;’ or, taken as a whole it signifies one set apart to holy usages, service, etc. We are quite ready to admit that these are a comparatively small number at the present time, as the Scriptures declare, a little flock;” and again, “not many;” and again, “few there be that find it.”

When we say that God is now selecting a special class to be joint-heirs with Christ and that he has determined that this special class shall consist exclusively of the sanctified, let us not be misunderstood to mean by this that in the next age God will accept to his favor the unsanctified, the wicked. The conditions during the Millennial Age will be much easier for mankind than are present conditions of the Church, the elect, the saints. Now we must walk by faith; then we will walk by sight, because Satan and sin and darkness will have passed away, and the light of Truth will flood and cover the whole earth, so that, as the prophet says, “They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.” (Jer. 31:34) The rewards for obedience to the Divine requirements in the Millennial will be the earthly rewards, eternal life on the earthly or restitution plane. The reward proffered to those who now walk the narrow way by self-sacrifice is a spiritual one, glory, honor and immortality on the spirit plane, like unto the holy angels — and higher than this — like unto our Lord Jesus in his glorified state; as seen by the Apostle, “Shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday.” Acts 26:13

We must guard also against the thought that the total number of God's elect would be as small a number as the calendar of the saints recognized by our Christian friends might imply. We hold that none is able to judge definitely on this subject, except the Master. He has given us general intimations of the lines of his decision, but he has not permitted us to determine the matter, saying, 'judge nothing before the time.' We are to content ourselves, therefore, with

2H734

the thought that "the Lord knoweth them that are his," and that he will accept none that in any degree are disloyal in heart, and that he will overlook and neglect none who are of the proper attitude of heart. We understand, too, that our Lord is no respecter of denominational lines, but that, in every sect, he who loves God, and who accepts the merit of Christ by faith, and who presents his body a living sacrifice daily unto death in the Lord's service — all such are his disciples and, as stated in our text, "He will not be ashamed to call them brethren." But all of this, be it noted, is based, not upon their earthly Church relationship, but upon their sanctification of heart, their relationship to their Redeemer and Head, Jesus. Not only may these be found by the Lord in various denominations, but of various ages, of various colors, of either sex, of various nationalities, and on various levels. One may be a washer-woman; another a farmer; another exercising his talents in business direction; another having his time as a Pastor, Priest, or teacher of spiritual things. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Tim. 2:19

HOW TO BECOME SANCTIFIED

Seeing that the sanctified are comparatively few, and that evidently few can properly direct the way toward a condition which they have not themselves attained, it behooves us to look carefully to the instructions given us by our Lord Jesus directly and through his apostles. St. Paul, who wrote, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification," also wrote, "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the Truth, whereunto he called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 2:13, 14) Note from these words that the call of the Church is the special feature of this present Gospel Age and its message. Note also that our call is not to sectarianism, but to a heart relationship with the Lord through a belief of the Truth and a proportionate getting rid of error. And this enlightenment through the Truth

progresses in proportion to our sanctification of spirit — of thought, of word, of deed. Note again the same Apostle's explanation of the matter. He says that he addresses them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus (who were) called to be saints, and he explains that while they had been sinners, "children of wrath, even as others," they had been cleansed by faith through acceptance of the finished work of Christ on our behalf. "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:11) The same St. Paul, addressing the Ephesian brethren says, "I commend you to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." (Acts 20:32) Note here that it is only the sanctified of the present age that are to get the inheritance that is now offered—the heavenly inheritance with our Lord Jesus — a share with him in his heavenly Kingdom. Note also how the Apostle here again lays emphasis upon the Scripture through God's message as containing the power which not only leads us to consecration and setting apart to the Lord's service, but which will strengthen us in thought and word and deed to do his good pleasure, to maintain our sanctified relationship with him through our Lord Jesus Christ.

ELECTED THROUGH SANCTIFICATION

St. Peter (1 Peter 1:2) explains to us that God's election of the members of the Church from amongst the world during the present age is along the line of sanctification. He elects that all those who shall accept his favor to the extent of sanctification in the trying conditions of the present time shall be joint-heirs with our Lord and Redeemer in his Millennial Kingdom. The Apostle's words are, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:2) Here we have the matter succinctly stated — faith in the blood of Jesus is essential as the first step in the way to God. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," said our Lord. Then our way must be through sanctification of the Spirit, of the will, the setting apart of our hearts from earthly ambitions and pleasures to heavenly ones — deadness to the world and liveness toward God. This work of grace must progress day by day. Our sanctification is not merely for the beginning of our Christian experience, but to be the very essence of our lives hereafter. The trials and testings of life from the world, the flesh and the devil will serve to demonstrate the thoroughness of our sanctification. God, however, is not seeking to prove whether or not we are perfect in the flesh, for he knows and informs us that we are imperfect.

He does, however, desire to prove that our consecration, our sanctification, our setting apart of ourselves to be faithful to the Lord at any and every cost is not merely a passing whim or fancy, but by continual instructions of his Word by the inspirations of his Promises. By the testings of his disciplines he would fix indelibly, unalterably, this decision of ours to be entirely his in thought, in word, in deed—even unto death.

Such as attain to this good degree will have the Divine approval and will hear the Master's "Well

2H735

done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matt. 25:23

"COPIES OF HIS SON"

St. Paul consistently with his statements already quoted, wrote to the Christians at Rome respecting God's foreknowledge and predestination of the Elect Church, saying, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29) Let us not lose the thought. It is this. Our Heavenly Father, who foreknew our Lord Jesus Christ, his suffering, his death, and his exaltation to be the great Prophet, Priest, King and Mediator between God and men during the Millennium, has foreordained that a company of saints should be selected during this Gospel Age to be the Bride-Consort of the great King of the Millennium—to be his Queen, to sit with him in his throne, to share with him in his glorious work. But Divine Wisdom and Justice decreed in advance that no one might be a member of this elect Church except sanctified ones. And these must be tested before final approval. Their Lord, their Redeemer, having been a saint fully consecrated to the Father's will, these called, chosen and faithful followers will likewise be saints and, in this respect, the Apostle declares, they will be copies of their Redeemer, and he will be an Elder Brother amongst them when they shall share his glory, in his Kingdom.

Notice the harmony of all this with our text, "Both he that sanctifieth (our Lord Jesus) and they that are sanctified (his elect Church) are all of one (of one spirit of loyalty to the Father and his righteousness — and baptized by the one spirit into the one body of which Christ is the Head). For this cause he (the glorified Redeemer) is not ashamed to call these sanctified ones, finally tested, his brethren on the highest plane of

nature—his own, the Divine nature, in glory, honor and immortality, far above that of the angels.”

THE INHERITANCE LATER

We have already hearkened to the Apostle’s words, to the effect that the sanctified in Christ Jesus are to receive an inheritance. I remind you that this inheritance was promised to Abraham’s seed more than thirty-five hundred years ago. The Divine Word was backed by an oath for confirmation to this effect, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Abraham’s natural posterity claimed this promise. And indeed they were doubtless as noble as any race in the world, if not more so than any of them. But God had this high standard of sanctification in mind and set it as a test. It was represented to the Jews in the Law Covenant which they were unable to fulfill because of their fleshly imperfections, the results of the fall, though the hearts of some of them, we are told, were thoroughly loyal to the Divine Law, which they could not keep perfectly. Neither are we able to keep that perfect Law. Only our Lord Jesus could and did keep it. Our saintliness under present conditions of fallen flesh cannot extend to our flesh. At very most we can be sanctified in heart, in intention, in will. Thus we see that we are not a whit ahead of some who lived in the Jewish Age. Nevertheless there is a difference. Christ has come.

[The National Labor Tribune, November 9, 1910](#)

SECRET FAULTS

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Nov. 7—Pastor Russell returned home from a short tour this week and was welcomed by a large out-pouring of Truth seekers. He preached two interesting and instructive sermons in the Tabernacle. We report one taken from the following text: “*Cleanse thou me from secret faults; keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.*” (Psalm 19:12, 13) He said:

Our text prophetically represents the attitude of mind of God’s true people. Those who are aliens and strangers from God would not thus pray. Even if they were repentant their first prayer should be in the nature of a confession of sins and an acknowledgment of their acceptance of God’s mercy in the forgiveness of their sins and of his accepting them to be his children through the merit of the Redeemer. But even those who have become children of God, by renouncing sin and exercising faith in Divine forgiveness in the merit of

Christ, have still to acknowledge that by nature they were “children of wrath even as others.” Although they are saved by grace, only their minds, their hearts, their wills, have yet been saved or fully reconciled to God

2H736

and harmonized to the Divine will. Their flesh is still imperfect, fallen.

Hence, in the language of the Psalmist, it is appropriate that the Lord’s people take knowledge of their own blemishes, imperfections, and that they seek the Lord’s assistance in fighting the good fight against those blemishes of their flesh. Thank God, this battle of the New Creature, the new mind, the new will, against the fallen flesh and its appetites will not last forever; to the faithful, death will be the close of the conflict. The glorified Redeemer is watching over the interests of his people. He guarantees us in advance that all of our trials, our difficulties, shall work together for our spiritual welfare. He guarantees us that when he shall have sufficiently tested our new minds, our new wills, by the opposition of the cravings of the flesh, he will forthwith declare our trial ended —declare us victors and heirs of glory, honor and immortality with himself, according to the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word.

THE OBJECT OF OUR TESTING

The question arises, Why should not the Lord grant to us and to all mankind an easier trial than is ours? Why should there be a fallen disposition to fight against? Why should it not be as easy, or more easy, to do right than to do wrong? Why should we not have flesh which should have a good craving merely, and not an evil craving? And if we must have an evil craving, why are we not at least relieved of the outward temptations which excite these evil cravings? temptations from the world about us, inciting to evil rather than to good, and, according to the Scriptures and our experiences, temptations also from Satan himself, and from the fallen angels, who continually endeavor to intrude upon us, to incite us to anger, malice, hatred, strife and the various works of the flesh and the devil?

These questions are not unreasonable, and God acknowledges this when he shows us that just such favorable conditions as these questions suggest will be provided for the world of mankind during the Millennium. Satan and the evil angels under his captaincy will be restrained according to the Bible and not be permitted to molest mankind in evil promptings and suggestions. We read that Satan shall be bound for a thousand years that he may deceive the people no more

until the thousand years be finished. (Rev. 20:2) Relief is also promised from the injurious conduct of others, in that we are assured that during the Millennium nothing shall hurt or destroy throughout God's holy Kingdom. In that blessed time every evil deed will be restrained that it may not accomplish injury to another, while even the effort to commit sin will be promptly punished with "stripes;" not an immoderate, not an unjust torturing for centuries for finite sins, but, as the Scriptures declare, a just recompense of reward will be given both to the just and to the unjust.

The Scriptures assure us that promptness in the punishment for sin, and its reasonableness, its righteousness, will be promptly recognized and quickly bear fruitage throughout the world in peace and order — righteousness. Thus we read, "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9) The preaching of this reasonable, righteous judgment of the future surely bears much better fruitage than the preaching of the "dark ages," now fortunately disappearing— that the wages of a trifling sin might be either a century of roasting or an eternity of torment. The exaggeration of the error is so great that the human mind instinctively resists and rejects it.

The next query we shall answer is, Are God's ways unequal? And if not, Why should he provide at the present time for the trial and testing of the Church under conditions so much more severe than those which shall prevail by and by, during the Millennium? Why must *we* battle against the Adversary and his minions as well as against our fallen flesh? Why must we contend with sinful oppositions in our neighborhoods and our homes? Why should not evil in every sense of the word be restrained for us as well as for the world during the Millennium, and our way be made smooth also?

The Scriptures answer that the Church class, which God is now selecting or electing from the world, is a very special class, for which he has very glorious designs of joint-heirship with the Redeemer in the kingly and priestly offices for the blessing of the world during the Millennium. The greatness of the dignity to which the faithful will be exalted makes it reasonable that the terms and conditions should be exceedingly difficult in this way. Hence we read that the gate is difficult and the way a narrow one, so that few may find it. These few are the "elect," whose character -superiority will be fully evidenced to God, to angels and to men to be such as fully justifies the Lord in granting to them the high reward promised. Were their honors no greater than those the world shall experience, how could God's ways be just and equal in granting them the heavenly nature

and Divine glory, while awarding the world of mankind restitution, blessing and a world-wide Eden home corresponding to what was lost by Adam and redeemed for the willing and obedient by the sacrifice of the man Christ Jesus?

2H737

WHO UNDERSTANDS HIS ERRORS?

If now we have clearly before our minds that it is the Church class who are addressed in our text, let us examine the various steps it suggests. During the Millennium the errors and secret faults and presumptuous sins of the world will all be made manifest and all be openly rebuked and punished. But not so now. Those who are now called to be of the elect Church are expected to be so zealous for God, so desirous to know and to do his will, so opposed to sin, that they will voluntarily search for their own errors, their own secret faults, and strive against presumptuous sins. It is the zeal of this class in the matter of uprooting evil from their own hearts and subduing their own flesh which entitles them to be called “overcomers” and to be rewarded as such. Of this entire class, Jesus the Head and the Church his Body, it must be true as foretold by the prophet, “Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” Heb. 1:9

When we remember that God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven the sins of the Church, the question may arise, What then are these faults or errors? If all of our sins are forgiven freely for Christ’s sake, what sins then remain to be forgiven? The answer is that through faith in Christ’s blood we were fully forgiven “the sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” (Rom. 3:25) We will never more be held responsible for sins great or small which were ours before we came to the Lord and accepted his grace, his forgiveness, and became his followers through our consecration of our little all to him. What remains of sin with us is the imperfection of the flesh and its inherited weaknesses, and these blemishes may be with us to our dying day in considerable measure. It is against these that we must fight—fight the good fight and endure hardness as valiant soldiers of righteousness, soldiers of the cross.

But some one may inquire, Is not the merit of Christ sufficient, not only for the sins that are past, but for all of our unwilling blemishes of the past and of the future? In other words, Does not our Lord’s satisfaction of Justice include our imperfections present and future, which are the result of Adam’s sin and our inheritance of the fallen

condition, as well as atone for our sins of the past prior to our acceptance of the Divine mercy? We answer, Yes, this is quite true; nevertheless the Lord requires of us that, after coming into the family of God, we shall take note of our imperfections and apply to him for specific forgiveness of all transgressions. Doubtless this is intended to assist us in keeping humble — to assist us in keeping in remembrance the horrible pit of sin from which we were lifted by the gracious merit of the Redeemer by which we were justified. All of these experiences will doubtless be helpful to us by drawing us the more frequently to the “throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace (merit) to help in time of need.” Heb. 4:16

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST CLEANSETH

The expression, “The blood of Jesus Christ *cleanseth* us from all sin,” refers not merely to the sins that are past and the cleansing which was ours at the moment we first accepted the Lord’s favor, but rather, especially, it refers to the cleansing which is continually necessary to the maintenance of our relationship with the Lord. The forgiveness, the cleansing, is freely, promptly given, but conditionally. It must be applied for. This is the Lord’s method of instructing us in the way of righteousness and of assisting us to overcome the oppositions and temptations of the world and to become at heart “overcomers.” He knows our weaknesses better than do we; and he wishes us to learn of them, not with a view to discouraging us, but that we may fight a good fight against them, conquer them and, in so doing, develop the characteristics which he approves and has promised to reward with joint-heirship with the Redeemer in his Kingdom.

Hence, instead of openly rebuking his people, the Lord leaves as ours the work of searching for secret faults and putting them away. In proportion as we love him, we will be desirous of doing those things which please him, thus living in his smile, under his approval. It is quite sufficient that the light of the Lord’s countenance, his smile, should be withdrawn from those who do not walk the narrow way with zeal — who do not seek for their own faults and endeavor to correct them and to thus make character. As those now being called grow in love for the Lord, every hindrance to his favor will be quickly noted. It is this class that in our text is represented as seeking Divine assistance in the searching out of their secret faults.

Some of these faults may be known to ourselves and to the Lord, but unknown to fellowmen. The heart that is truly converted to the Lord and to harmony with all the

principles of righteousness which he represents must more and more desire full perfection — full victory over the weaknesses of the flesh, and must strive for this condition. Other secret faults may be secret from us but well-known to the Lord and possibly quite plainly manifest to our brethren and neighbors. How earnestly all who are truly the Lord's people should seek to see themselves as others see them, and to correct those faults which hitherto have been secret to themselves.

2H738

Assuredly the Lord's assistance is necessary in this work; but, in praying to him, in the language of our text, we should remember that his method of answering our petitions is to show us the facts of our case, and then to encourage us by his promises to fight a good fight against the weaknesses thus brought to our attention. The Bible is the Lord's lamp. The Spirit of its wonderful teachings, like a two-edged sword, is sharp and penetrating. It can discern or discriminate between the very thoughts and intents of the heart which deceive so many into thinking a wrong course justifiable. The Christian who makes continual and good use of this "sword" will soon find that with its assistance he is able to analyze *his own motives* lying behind his words and his acts, will sometimes find himself secreting them and sometime masquerading them as graces and otherwise.

The difficulty with the majority of Christian people seems to be that they have never undertaken a close scrutiny of the *motives* lying behind their words or their deeds — yea, the motive or intention lying hidden in their own minds. The reasons for this laxity, the reason for their failure to follow up with the searchlight and to "bring every thought into captivity to the will of God in Christ" is that they have not yet attained to a sufficiency of love for righteousness and a sufficiency of a hatred for iniquity. The reasons for this condition of things may be either that they are "Babes in Christ" who have in the past fed merely upon the milk of the Word and not upon the strong meat and who are therefore, weak in the faith and weak everyway along the lines of Christian character development. What they need is more love for the Lord and a greater appreciation of his Word, which will lead to more earnest study of the same.

"The entrance of Thy words giveth light." (Psalm 119:130) As the Word of the Lord dwells richly and abounds, it educates us respecting God's will and its standards and, if we are obedient to his will and his gracious purposes, we will endure his tests and ultimately stand approved as our Lord's joint-heirs in his Kingdom.

KEEP FROM PRESUMPTUOUS SINS

One of the great character tests imposed upon the Church is *humility*. It is not sufficient that we love right and hate wrong and search for even our secret faults. Even after attaining perfection we might be presumptuous and, if so, be unfit for the proposed exaltation. Satan, when a holy angel called Lucifer, the Morning Star, was perfect; but the *sin of presumption* crept into his heart and blighted everything. So Satan strove to tempt our Lord, who was perfect, to commit a presumptuous sin, through which he would have made shipwreck of his career. He wished him to presume upon God's goodness and abundant care, not by starting a rival empire, as Satan himself had attempted to do, but to presume, nevertheless, upon Divine goodness to the extent of jeopardizing his life by leaping from the pinnacle of the Temple and trusting that God would suspend the laws of nature and work a miracle for his protection, when no such miracle was necessary, because no such hazard had been demanded.

Applying this matter of presumptuous sin to the Church of our day, we find some who appear to be the Lord's people presuming upon his goodness and mercy and love by jumping from financial and other pinnacles and trusting for miraculous protection from disaster. This, to our understanding, is a presumptuous sin. Sometimes we see presumptuous conduct amongst Elders and others in the Body of Christ, much after the manner of Moses' transgression, when presumptuously he smote the rock, while God had merely bidden him to speak to the rock. For pastors and elders of the Church to assume and to exercise an unscriptural lordship over the Church would appear to us to be a presumptuous sin — a presuming to take place and authority not bestowed by the Lord. On the contrary, sometimes a congregation of the Lord's people may be presumptuous in neglecting the Scriptural direction to take heed to those who have the rule over them and watch for their souls, as those who must give an account. In how many ways might we be presumptuous and ignore the Lord, his supervision over the Church, and his message to us in his Word!

Our text declares, "Then shall I be innocent of the great transgression — innocent of anything which would prove me unworthy of eternal life and worthy of everlasting death — "the Second Death."

* * * *

*Sometimes our pride would fain unfurl
Ambition's flaunting sail,—
Ah! then He knows we need to walk
Humiliation's vale.*

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, November 25, 1909](#)

WEEPING ALL NIGHT

With the exception of the paragraphs printed below, this discourse has been republished in the Overland Monthly, pages 202-206, under same title.

York, Pa., November 25—Pastor C. T. Russell arrived here from the Brooklyn Tabernacle, to address the truth-seekers in this staid old town and vicinity. He was warmly welcomed by his many friends. He took for his text, Psalm 30:5, “Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning.” He said:

Properly enough, the world seeks to put its best foot forward, to present as good an appearance to others as possible. Properly enough, sorrow and tears are hidden from the public gaze, as well as is the skeleton in the closet, which causes these troubles. This is well, for each other member of the race has quite a sufficiency of such things of his own. It is a justifiable kind of deception which seeks to appear as cheerful and happy as possible, however heavy the heart may be —however crushed and broken and lacerated. Yet there are special times when those who are near and dear may surmise each other’s burdens and give to each other a word of cheer and comfort, which will lighten the load and heal the wound to a considerable degree. Blessed are those who have attained this degree of Christlikeness that, instead of mourning or moping over their own difficulties, they make it their chief concerns to “do good unto all men, especially to the household of faith,” and to their own households.

A NIGHT OF SORROW AND DEATH

But here is a seeming inconsistency. The God of the Bible admits that the world of mankind is suffering under a load of sin and its penalty of imperfection, sickness, pain — death. But while we are assured that God is loving and wise and that He has all power in heaven and in earth, the sorrow continues as though God lacked the love, lacked the wisdom necessary to the blessing of the world, or lacked the power to carry out His loving and wise purposes.

[The following paragraph is found just before the subheading, “Learning by Suffering.”]

These are left with the world in general during the night of weeping, for because it is a part of the test of the worthiness that they must “walk by faith and not by sight.” It is a part of the test of their loyalty to God and

to righteousness that they shall follow in the footsteps of Jesus through evil report and through good report. They could not receive this crucial testing during the millennium, when sin and evil will be restrained; hence their testing comes in advance of the world's —during the night of sorrow and weeping. Of our dear Redeemer it is written that He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. (Heb. 5:8) And again, "Being made perfect through suffering He became the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him."

[The National Labor Tribune, November 30, 1909](#)

IN EVERYTHING— GIVE THANKS!

YORK, Pa. Nov. 28—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle, preached here today from the following text: "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you in Christ Jesus. "(1 Thessalonians 5:18) He said:

There is a beauty and consistency in the Bible which many overlook, to their own confusion. Failing to "rightly divide the Word of Truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), failing to discriminate between the consecrated believers and nominal believers of the world, which the Bible everywhere recognizes, has led to this confusion. To the logically-minded thus confused, the

2H740

Bible is an unreasonable Book, inconsistent with facts.

These matters are well illustrated in our text, which was addressed, not to all mankind, nor to merely nominal Christians —but to Christians "*in* God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ," as the introduction shows. This word *in* means something more than is generally appreciated. Note the Savior's words, "If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." "I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you." (John 14:20, 23) The whole testimony of the Scriptures is that those who attain to this glorious oneness with the Father and with the Son are in all but a little flock" and amongst them are "not many great, not many wise, not many learned." It is to this class alone that the Scriptures are addressed—though to some extent including a justified class supposedly approaching this sanctified condition. These may well be informed by the Apostle

that they should “in everything give thanks,” when in full harmony with the Divine will.

But note the confusion of attempting to apply these words to the world in general. What has the world to be thankful for—from its own standpoint? It knows not what God’s future purposes are, which, therefore, cannot enter into its consideration. And without that knowledge of coming blessings life is often so little appreciated that self-destruction is preferred. Undoubtedly the number of suicides would be far greater than it is, were it not for a certain fear or dread that the future might be more terrible than the present.

The average man, heathen and civilized, knows that his coming into the world was without his consent. He eats and drinks and sleeps and labors, because these are necessities. He has headaches and heartaches and every other kind. Altogether his experience is “of few years and full of trouble.” His chief pleasure is in hoping for and striving to attain pleasure. And when the “cup” of supposed happiness is in his hand, the gall of bitterness is found mingled with it, and its dregs are sorrows. Can such a man be thankful? especially if he has been taught the doctrine of the “dark ages respecting the future — that when he shall die he will either be ushered into a Purgatory of centuries of torture indescribable, or, worse still, that his lot will be to suffer endlessly—unless he should be one of the saints, which he well knows he is not, and which we all know as the Bible declares are but “few.” Surely to call upon such people for thankfulness to God would be an absurdity. And it is to the credit of the Scriptures that they are not thus absurd, and that our text is addressed, not to those who constitute the masses, but to the “little flock,” “the saints.”

GROANING CREATION’S HOPE

Before proceeding to apply our text to the class to which it is addressed, (the saints), we pause to consider the hope of the world in general as set forth in the Scriptures. The knowledge of this hope is not granted to the world, but to the saints—that they might know, might appreciate, the gracious purposes of God toward mankind in general; and that they might understand also the Divine intention respecting their co-operation with God in the blessings he purposes to bring eventually to all the families of the earth.

The explanation of the sorrows of this world is given in the Bible, which tells us that sin lies at the door and that the mental, moral and physical blemishes which cause humanity such distress are incidental to the penalty pronounced against sin; namely, death. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Because Father Adam when on trial representatively for his race sinned and came under sin’s

penalty, “Dying thou shalt die,” therefore all of his children sharing in his imperfections are likewise imperfect — sinners, as St. Paul explains. (Rom. 5:12) Thus during sixty centuries, approximately twenty thousand millions of Adam’s children have been born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and have come into the world condemned and dying, mentally, morally and physically.

Divine sympathy exercised toward this race of sinners provided a Savior, “who for the joy that was set before him” sacrificed his life — for the world. (John 3:16) “Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man.” Then instead of dealing with the world, instead of saving the world, instead of setting up the promised Kingdom to bless the world, the Savior did’ something else. And this which he has been doing from the time of his death until now the Apostle explains to us is “a mystery.” (1 Cor. 15:51; Eph. 1:9; Rom. 11:25) “The mystery of God,” the world does not understand, because God prefers to keep the matter a mystery from them. But “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him and he will shew them his covenant.” Psa. 25:14

“The mystery” is that God purposed that the blessing of the world should be accomplished not by our Savior alone, but in association with a select class of saints gathered out of the world and specially taught and prepared in the School of Christ during this age. Not only is this feature of the Divine Plan Scripturally called “the mystery of God,” which will be finished by the close of this age, but additionally the Church herself is Scripturally termed the mystery of God —the Mystic Body of Christ. “For God gave Christ to be the Head over the Church, which is his Body.” “Ye are

2H741

members in particular of the Body of Christ,” which is the Church. Eph. 1:22, 23; 1 Cor. 12:27

During these long centuries required for the finding of this saintly class for whom the Lord has been searching with the magnet of Truth, various false theories have sprung up and found acceptance in the world. One of these is that God does not love the world and has never purposed its salvation; but that, on the contrary, he foreordained and predestinated that all except the “elect saints” should suffer eternal torture, because he wished to have it so. Another wrong theory which gained acceptance was that whilst God wishes to save the world, he finds himself unable so to do, because handicapped by human self-will and by the aggressiveness of Satan, who has blinded and deceived the vast majority and has them completely in his power through ignorance and superstition. This theory tells us that God loves the world, including the heathen millions,

and that he longs to have the Gospel taken to them, but cannot do so, except through human agency, and is disappointed and baffled, because those who profess to be his people fail to raise sufficient missionary donations.

To natural minds these theories which satisfied in the past are no longer satisfactory; hence many are turned to infidelity. As the Scriptures say, “My people perish for lack of knowledge.” Hosea 4:6

THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION

Leaving these unsatisfactory errors of the “dark ages” and going back to the Scriptures we find their teachings consistent; namely, that as soon as the “mystery,” the Church, is completed, the blessing of God will proceed through The Christ (Head and members) to the world. As it is written, “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” The mystery, be it known, is that the scriptural “Seed of Abraham” is not the Lord Jesus only, but includes also his members—the Church. As we read, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s Seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Gal. 3:29

According to the Scriptures the blessing of God will proceed through Spiritual Israel, a “Royal Priesthood,” “after the order of Melchizedec” to natural Israel under the terms of their New Covenant. (Jer. 31:31) During the Millennial Age under the spiritual Kingdom of The Christ (operating through the earthly Kingdom of Israel) all nations will be instructed, enlightened, blessed. Not only so, but the merit of Christ will then be applied also on behalf of the thousands of millions who have gone down into the prison house of death —*sheol, hades* —the *grave*. The Church will constitute the “First Resurrection,” “His resurrection.” All sharing in it will attain life on the spirit plane like unto the angels, but superior, “far above angels.” Later during the Millennium the world will return from the tomb, “every man in his own order.” (1 Cor. 15:23) And the resurrecting process will continue with them, to the intent that the willing and obedient may continue to rise gradually towards perfection and finally attain it, while at the same time the earth will be rejuvenated and become the promised “Paradise regained” — restored. Acts 3:19-21

When the world begins to experience the blessings God has in reservation for it, thankfulness will break forth spontaneously and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess —for these refusing so to acknowledge Divine grace will be “destroyed from amongst the people.” (Acts 3:23) And to whatever extent the world

may gain a trifling knowledge of those coming blessings, thanksgiving and praise and self-consecration should proportionately result promptly.

The Scripture's testimony is that when God's gracious Plan shall have been thus worked out to its completion, both heaven and earth will ring with praises and thanksgiving and adoration "To him that sitteth upon the Throne and to the Lamb forever." We are informed that this praise will be from every creature — not a rebel will remain — "Every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth" will be heard giving praise to God.

"GIVE THANKS FOR HE IS GOOD"

Looking down into the future prophetically the Psalmist explains, in view of the Kingdom blessings promised to the world, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good! for his mercy endureth forever!" It is the *mercy* of God toward us and toward all who need his mercy and who desire it that is the ground for thanksgiving. True praise must come from thankful hearts, and in order to be properly thankful, one must see more than is now visible to those who have not the eye of faith and the ear of faith and the Divine revelation respecting things to come. But it is these very opportunities that the Lord's consecrated ones possess: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see and your ears, for they hear." Not only so, but to the extent that anyone's eyes see and his ear hear of the grace of God he has responsibility. To possess the knowledge of God and to disdain it is to receive the grace of God in vain, whether more or less. 2 Cor. 6:1

God's people not only give thanks for the blessings of the future which they receive by faith, but additionally they appreciate blessings granted to them in advance in the present life and give thanks for these. The first of these is the knowledge, the appreciation, of the goodness of God in granting us a release from sin and

2H742

its penalty *by faith*, so that we can (without waiting for actualities) now rejoice in the mercy which has justified us freely by Divine grace through faith in the blood of Christ. The realization of the rolling away of our load of sin, a realization of our forgiveness by the Father, called for gratitude, for thanksgiving, and this cause continuing, our thanks continue. We were lifted from the horrible pit and the miry clay of sin and condemnation and our feet were placed upon the Rock Christ Jesus. It was in consequence of this that a new song was put into our mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God. And this is the first cause for our thankfulness. All other blessings rest upon this blessing and all other

thanksgivings should properly, therefore, include thanks for this blessing.

Additionally after being justified we were inducted into a still further grace or privilege; namely, the privilege of becoming members of the Body of Christ, members of the “mystery” class. The invitation to this class the Apostle expresses thus, “I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God (your justification) that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1) Through this grace or privilege, if accepted, we gain the opportunity of a change of nature—from human to Divine. Our human nature justified, cleansed, made acceptable to God as a sacrifice through the merit of Christ, *if sacrificed by us faithfully*, will be replaced by a spirit nature and glory, honor, immortality, joint heirship, with our Lord and Head. What cause we have in this for thanksgiving! “What shall we render unto the Lord our God for all his benefits toward us? We will take the cup of salvation (his cup, the cup of self-sacrifice) and call upon the name of the Lord (for assistance to drink of the Master’s cup). We will pay our vows of consecration unto the Lord —publicly before all his people.” Psa. 116:12-14

*“Every joy he sends me,
Comes a sweet and glad surprise.*

The very fact that we do not know everything; the fact that we are ever learning as pupils in the School of Christ, so far from being a cause of disappointment, is a source of pleasure. The heart that has come into faith - union and communion with the Lord learns something more daily respecting the Heavenly Father’s love and care, and each fresh item of knowledge is a new well-spring of pleasure. “He satisfieth the longing soul.” “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” “Goodness and mercy follow me all the days of :my life.” These are the experiences of those ripe Christians called upon by the Apostle to give thanks unto God in every matter and to know that this is God’s will in respect to all those who are members of Christ —in Christ Jesus. Psa. 107:9; Matt. 5:6; Psa. 23:6

THANKS THROUGH TEARS

Let us not overlook the fact that our text indicates that we are to give thanks for our sorrows, our trials, our disappointments, as well as for our joys and pleasures, for *everything* includes all things. Nor is this the only Scripture to this effect. Harken to the Apostle’s words which urge the members of Christ to rejoice in tribulation, not because tribulation is a joy producer; but,

as he explains, tribulation works out additional patience and patience brings additional experience and larger experience brings larger hope, until we are not ashamed of our tribulations, because of increased love of God shed abroad in our hearts thereby. Rom. 5:3; 8:35

We remember also our Lord's words to the effect that when we suffer persecution and tribulation we should rejoice and be exceeding glad, knowing that great will be our reward in heaven — knowing that the faithful endurance of such trials and difficulties will fit us and prepare us for the higher and nobler state in the Millennial Kingdom, by preparing us the better to sympathize with mankind in general, enabling us to pour upon them in due time the riches of God's grace and Truth.

But, the Apostle urges, no tribulation for the time seemeth joyous, but rather grievous. Hence the Lord's faithful must sometimes be glad whilst in tears. Yea, sometimes the very best mellowing and sanctifying influences upon our characters come to us in connection with disappointments and heartaches. At such times the Lord's people are to remember the gracious promise that all things, under Divine supervision, shall work together for good to those who love God—more than they love houses or lands or self or any other creature.

The basis of all these blessings and rejoicing both as respects the future and the present experiences is faith. First, in the fact that there is a God. Second, in the fact that he has a noble character. Third, in the fact that his Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power are perfect and thoroughly co-ordinate. Fourth, in the fact that all of those powers are enlisted in the salvation of the world. Fifth, in the fact that that salvation began to be worked out by our Lord at his First Advent. Sixth, in the fact that it is still working out in the selection of his Church. Seventh, in the fact that shortly it will begin to take *practical shape* in the establishment of Christ's Millennial Kingdom. Eighth, in the fact that through that Kingdom a blessing shall extend to every creature of our race.

2H743

So, then, let every man to the extent of his enlightenment appreciate and confess the Almighty God and “give thanks unto his name, for he is good and for his mercy endureth forever.” And let those who have tasted of his grace pursue on, that they may grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in faith and grow in character-likeness to our God. And let his saints addressed in this text more and more appreciate their wonderful privilege, their high calling of God in Christ Jesus —to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord — if so be that

they suffer with him, that they may be also glorified together. And knowing that they have need of faith and patience and character-development, let these firmly trust the Great Teacher, come what may and give thanks for every experience of life, knowing that our Father is too wise to err and remembering the Master's words, "The Father himself loveth you." John 16:27

[The Weekly Enquirer, December 9, 1909](#)

UNFIT FOR THE KINGDOM

For his text Sunday, at the Brooklyn Tabernacle, Pastor Russell took the words of the Savior: "*No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.*" (Luke 9:62) The discourse follows:

The Great Teacher did not use the methods of modern revivalists to secure a following. He did not ask the multitudes to raise their hand if they would prefer to go to heaven at death and then publish them as converts — Christians. Indeed, His methods were the very reverse of this, avoiding all kinds of sensational appeals to pride, selfishness, vanity, etc. He set forth in plain terms the difficulties to be expected by all those who espouse His cause and become His disciples. He forewarned them that it would mean the taking up of a cross and the bearing of it in His footsteps in the narrow way of self-sacrifice. He warned these, saying: "Marvel not, if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (1 John 3:13; John 15:18-19)

Instead of trying to produce an excitement which would overbalance the judgment of His hearers and lead them to profess what they subsequently would not be able or willing to practice, the Great Teacher, on the contrary, said to those contemplating discipleship: "Sit down first and count the cost." Instead of attempting to sway the multitudes our Lord took a different course and attempted to make disciples of only a special class — not the poor, not the rich, not the learned, not the ignorant, but irrespective of these class-lines and distinctions His call was to all those who loved righteousness and hated iniquity. All those who were weary and heavy laden, oppressed by sin and its penalty to themselves and their friends — these He called to learn of Him and find rest of soul.

So far from expecting or seeking the conversion of the whole people our Lord's words were: "No man can come unto me unless the Father which sent me draw him, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise reject." The same thought is expressed by the apostles, who declared that they sought and expected to influence, not the world in general, but "as many as the Lord your God shall call ." Doubtless there is room for difference of opinion respecting the manner in which the Father "draws" and "calls" the Church of Christ during this Gospel Age. Our understanding is that the Lord exercises a favorable influence upon a certain class of people only and that it is an enlightening influence to the extent of bringing this class to a knowledge of Christ — to a knowledge of the fact that forgiveness of sins may be attained through faith in Christ.

Thenceforth that class, having been brought in touch with the Redeemer, can make further progress only through faith in Him and submission to His guidance into all truth and into fellowship with the Father. The class thus influenced we believe to be small as compared to humanity as a whole —only that portion which in honesty of heart deplors sin and longs for righteousness and fellowship with God. These, like the remainder of the race, are by nature fallen, imperfect, sinful, condemned, but in these still persists some trace of the image of God, in the perfection of which Father Adam was created. It is this trace or strain of the Divine character represented by conscience and faith which leads them to recognize their fallen and sinful condition as compared with the Divine standard of perfection, and this becomes the basis of their calling or drawing of God, their "ear." "He that hath an ear let him hear" (Rev. 2:7). It will be observed that we are not specially blaming or condemning those who have not the hearing ear. On the contrary, we remember the gracious words of

2H744

Scripture, that in God's due time "all the blind eyes shall be opened; all the deaf ears shall be unstopped." (Isa. 35:5) We are glad of this promise of God that ultimately all shall see and all shall hear and all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest. We rejoice, too, that when they know Him truly they will rejoice, even as do we now. That will be their time of responsibility, their time of trial or judgment for life or death eternal on the earthly plane.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Our text speaks of the Kingdom of God. And it is important that we first of all notice that these words have in the Scriptures a twofold signification. For instance, our Lord Jesus taught that we should pray to the Father:

“Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” The reference of this prayer is the millennial reign or government of Christ, which St. Paul declares will begin at the second coming of our Lord and continue until He shall have put down all insubordination, all sin, everything contrary to Divine character and law. It will be the Kingdom of God which will subdue all things. It will be the Kingdom of God among men perfected when all things shall have been subdued. And when Christ’s mediatorial Kingdom shall be at the end of the Millennium, delivered back to God, even the Father, God’s Kingdom will have fully come in the earth. God’s will then will be possible of accomplishment by men, because all will have reached perfection, and Christ’s mediatorial Kingdom will end because it will be no longer necessary. It will have accomplished the great purpose for which it was intended.

It was not, however, respecting that millennial reign, that mediatorial kingdom, that our Lord spoke in our text, nor did He refer to the perfect Kingdom, as it will be turned over to the Father at the end of the millennium, and will last forever. Our Lord used the words, “Not fit for the Kingdom of God,” as He did in many other of His discourses—in respect to the church class now called of the Father to be the “Kingdom” in the sense of being the kings and priests of that Kingdom—the royalty of the kingdom—the Queen, the Lamb’s wife, associated with the Heavenly Bridegroom, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, in His rule of a thousand years. In very many of His parables our Lord refers to this Kingdom class, which, during this gospel age, is in process of selection or election, and hence subjected to trials and difficulties specially permitted for the development of character—for the chiseling and shaping and polishing of the “elect.”

NOT FIT FOR THE KINGDOM

We now have before our minds the two ways in which the expression, Kingdom of God, is used, and we can readily see that our Lord could not refer to the millennial kingdom and say that any would be too degraded to be fit for the influences of His millennial kingdom, because that Kingdom is designed for the very purpose of dealing with the unfit and gradually, during the thousand years of its reign of righteousness, uplifting men out of sin and death conditions, if they will, to the full human perfection which Adam lost, which Jesus redeemed, and which is to be restored to the willing and obedient, as St. Peter declares. (Acts 3:19-21) It follows, then, that our Lord must have referred to those called of the Father and accepted by Himself to be chiseled and polished—to be

taught in the school of Christ and eventually to become His bride and joint-heir in the Millennial Kingdom. No man will be esteemed fit for a share in that Millennial Kingdom unless he attains to the glorious qualities of character and saintship which the Scriptures set forth as the divine standard — “copies of God’s dear Son.” (Romans 8:29)

Surely no one will consider it unreasonable that our Creator should set standards for this “elect” class —very high standards, too, are reasonable, because of the very high positions of honor, glory and immortality to which they are invited. When we consider the apostle’s testimony that divine grace in proffering this great privilege of joint-heirship with Christ, passed by the holy angels to us, we were amazed at the length and breadth of the divine favor, and freely concede that even if angels were granted so high a state they would need to be crucially tested; much more so we, who “by nature were children of wrath even as others,” but are now justified freely through faith in the precious blood.

“Fit for the Kingdom!” Let us think for a moment what these words signify. First of all, we recognize that, as sinners, we were most thoroughly unfit for any favor of God, much less this greatest of all favors, joint-heirship with His Son and “partakers of the Divine nature.” (2 Pet. 1:4) But that difficulty has all been overcome with those who have come unto God through Christ and been made partakers of His holy Spirit of adoption. Of such we read: “It is God that justifieth! Who is he that condemneth?” (Rom. 8:33, 34) It is Christ that died for our sins and who now is our Advocate. Who could in any wise come between us and our Savior and our Heavenly Father?

But this justification is not enough. If we were perfect actually instead of merely reckonedly we would not be fit for the Kingdom of God —we would not be fit to govern others — to be “kings and priests unto God and to reign on the earth.” (Rev. 20:6) We should still be unfit to be the judges of the world, as the Scriptures declare that we shall be, saying: “Know ye not that the

2H745

saints shall judge the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2) Our Heavenly Father in bringing many into glory made the Captain of their salvation (Jesus) perfect through sufferings. Should we think it strange that we, His younger brethren, justified through His blood, should be required, not merely to make a profession of Godliness, holiness, but also to approve or attest that sentiment to be a part of our very character! Is not what we as the Church of Christ experience very reasonable indeed —who would be prepared to teach the world meekness, patience,

brotherly kindness, long-suffering, love, without first of all developing these various qualities of character in himself? And how could he develop these and be tested except under just such schooling and disciplining influences as now are upon the Church of Christ, with a view to making us fit for the glorious position of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus?

When the Scriptures refer to the Church as being fit for the Kingdom and as being the “overcomers” for whom the Kingdom is prepared, and who shall share its glories and honors, because “they are worthy” (Rev. 3:4), we are to understand this worthiness and fitness, not that they were originally so, but we do understand that by God’s grace, through Christ, a transformation work will eventually bring some to this glorious position where God himself will esteem them worthy to be called His children, and to be joint-heirs with His Son, the Great King.

VARIOUS KINDS OF FITNESS

There is one certain standard of fitness for the Kingdom, and none other will do; but there may be quite a variety of conditions which make one unfit for the Kingdom. One of these is murder. “No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” (1 John 3:15) He would be unfit for the Kingdom. This would not signify, however, that one who had once been a murderer might not, by a sound conversion and by faithfulness in the School of Christ, become a member of the Kingdom class. But the word murder here used has a broader meaning than is generally attached to it — the meaning which St. John gave to the word when he said that whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. (1 John 2:2) We know, then, that no brother-hater is fit for the Kingdom. But some may have been brother-haters and have been washed, cleansed, sanctified, brought into heart-relationship with the Lord and into love of the brethren. If so, implication is that they have lost the spirit of murder from their hearts and are brother-haters no longer. The Scriptures tell us also that it will be possible for a man who has been figuratively washed from his former condition of sin-defilement and who has been clothed of the Lord symbolically in a robe of righteousness, and who had been begotten of the holy spirit of love to turn from this holy commandment of love, to turn from the way of righteousness to his former condition of sin-defilement. The Apostle gives the illustration of the sow that washed returning to her wallowing in the mire. (2 Pet. 2:22) But the case of such is helpless if the step be taken with full intention and deliberation — if the return to a murderous condition of heart —brother-hating —be with the full

consent of the heart. The Apostle, however, does intimate that up to a certain point there is hope of recovery, and hence he urges all of the faithful to assist those, saying: "He that converteth a sinner (once a brother) from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death." (James 5:20)

Again, we read: "No drunkard shall enter into the Kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 6:10) He surely would be unfit. This does not, however, imply that all total abstainers from intoxicant liquors are fit for the Kingdom. Neither does it imply that a drunkard might not reform and thus cease to be a drunkard, and by the Lord's grace, become fit for the Kingdom. Moreover, the word drunkard in the Bible is frequently used in a figurative sense. It represents an addled condition of the mind; as, for instance, we read that Babylon's cup made all the nation's drunk. (Rev. 18:2, 3) This signifies that fellowship with false doctrines has permeated, influenced, bewildered the world in general. God's people, partaking of Christ's cup of suffering, are said to receive "the spirit of a sound mind" —clearness of understanding respecting the divine character and plan and the principles of righteousness. All who will be fit for the Kingdom may be expected to have considerable clearness of understanding respecting divine things. They are to know God, and by receiving His spirit they are to have understanding of "the deep things of God," which the natural man cannot understand. (1 Cor. 2:10-14) This our Lord spoke, saying: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent." (John 17:3)

Pride is another quality of the heart which would render its possessor unfit for the Kingdom of God. We read that the Lord "resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5) Pride is one of the things which God hates. It is a foe to righteousness in general and leads captive many into sin. When we read that God shows His favor to the humble we may be sure that the favor of joint heirship with the Redeemer is for the humble alone. With what carefulness this should lead us to search our hearts and put away everything in the nature of pride, self-conceit. Love is the fulfilling of the law. Love is the law of the new creation; and pride is a foe to love. It is

2H746

related to selfishness, which is a deep-seated foe of every grace of the holy Spirit.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FIDELITY

Our Lord illustrates the subject by a plowman looking back after he had started his furrow —looking back regretfully, desiring to abandon the plow, and really doing it. The illustration teaches that any of us who now hear of the grace of God and who now accept the terms of His call and make a full consecration to the Lord will lose the promised blessing if we in heart look back, in the sense of declining to go forward, in harmony with the consecration of their lives — unto death.

The Lord wishes us to see that the Heavenly Father is not merely calling for those who have generally good intentions and who would rather do right than wrong. We may rejoice with such that they are better than their neighbors, but they are not fit for the Kingdom of God, unless their love for righteousness, for truth, for the will of God, be so firmly established that they are ready and willing to “endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ” and to “fight a good fight” to the end of the course, laying hold upon eternal life and glory and immortality. One of God’s objects in permitting the world and the flesh and the adversary to have the power which they now possess to counteract and to fight against our good intentions and good resolutions is explained in the Scriptures. We read “The Lord your God proveth you to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” (Deut. 13:3) If love of sin or love of self or love of any earthly thing can overbalance our love to the Lord and to His truth and His people we are not worthy of a place in the Kingdom —not fit for the Kingdom. Not merely good professions, but faithfulness unto death, fixity of character are required by the Lord of such as He would honor with a share in the Kingdom.

AN ABUNDANT ENTRANCE

Having noticed that lack of love, lack of zeal, lack of constancy, lack of devotion would unfit us for the Kingdom, let us notice some of the characteristics necessary to a place in the Kingdom —some of the qualities, therefore, which we must each cultivate in our own hearts, which we must each develop in his own character. The Apostle explains these and urges the matter thus: “Add to your faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things be in you and abound they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . for if ye do these

things ye shall never fail; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 1:5-11)

New Jersey Advocate, December 23, 1909

**Originally Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
April 24, 1917**

DIVINE JUDGMENTS ARE ALL GOOD, ALL BLESSED

“With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; Yea, with my spirit within me, will I seek Thee early: for when Thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” Isaiah 26:9

Sunday, Dec. 19—Pastor Russell spoke today from the above text. Brooklyn Tabernacle was crowded with an attentive audience, as usual. We report the discourse as follows:

Only those who come to an advanced degree of knowledge of God’s Word can realize how Divine judgments are all good — all blessed. Under the influence of the fog of superstition, not understanding aright the teachings of the Scriptures, supposing that they taught eternal torment for the great majority of our race, we feared God, rather than loved Him. We dared not say that such a judgment was wrong, malicious, devilish, yet we were unable to see it in any other light; hence the general perplexity of Christendom, and the general alienation of heart, and many intelligent minds driven to infidelity, and the dislike to think about God and His supposedly terrible purposes respecting our race and the general awe respecting the Bible and the fear of its misunderstood teachings.

But now in the dawning of the New Dispensation the Word of God is shining as never before; one passage illuminating another, our fear gives place to reverential love and filial awe. We begin to understand

2H747

that the torment doctrines which we received are wholly foreign to the Divine character, which, on the contrary, is distinctly marked by Wisdom, Justice, Mercy and Love toward all. We find ourselves now in agreement with the Scriptural declaration that God’s judgments are

“righteous altogether,” and we delight in them. Instead of a judgment of eternal torment as a penalty for sin, we find a judgment or sentence of death. We agree to the righteousness of that verdict or judgment. God had the right to demand of His creature the obedience he was able to render. He had a perfect right to destroy him in death when he refused the blessing of life eternal on the terms of obedience. Seeing this, how rejoiced we are to note the Divine Mercy in the Plan of Redemption for the sinner and his offspring through the sacrifice of Christ! As a result we have good hope in his judgments; for him who once judged us worthy of death has with equal Justice redeemed us and granted us the opportunity of eternal life through the resurrection.

It was another part of the Divine Judgment against our race that, instead of the death penalty coming instantly upon Adam and Eve, it came gradually, that through the processes of gradual dying they might the better learn the lesson of “the exceeding sinfulness of sin — to the intent that, when granted the new trial secured by the merit of Christ’s sacrifice, they might profit by it the more. The same principles apply to all of Adam’s posterity. ‘The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now . . . waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God’ (Romans 8:22, 19). They are waiting for the establishment of Christ’s Millennial Kingdom under which they shall have a full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the Truth.

This is God’s provision for the world in general. What God did for the little nation of Israel during the Jewish Age, and what He has been doing for Spiritual Israel since Pentecost, in this Gospel Age, are matters separate and apart entirely from His general dealing with the world of mankind. The natural and the spiritual Seed of Abraham are exceptions to the rule. They have been granted special privileges and blessings not granted to the world in general —natural Israel under the Law Covenant and spiritual Israel under the Abrahamic Covenant. From these two nominal Israels special “overcomers” have been chosen or elected. These shortly, in association with the Redeemer, will constitute the Kingdom of God. The overcomers of spiritual Israel, becoming the Bride of Christ by resurrection “change” to the heavenly nature, will be like Him and share His glory and constitute the Kingdom class in the highest sense. The overcomers of natural Israel, resurrected to the perfection of earthly nature, will constitute the earthly phase of the Millennial Kingdom. Mankind may see and have intercourse with these, but will not see nor have direct intercourse with the glorified Christ, Head and Body—the King of Glory.

GOD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE

So far as the world is concerned, it has been under the one general sentence of Divine Justice, “dying thou shalt die.” But so far as natural and spiritual Israel are concerned, they have been dealt with as freed from the original sentence and on trial for life or death afresh under God’s judgments or disciplines. Thus it is written, ‘Jehovah will judge His people.’ Not all under these judgments have understood them—not all were in the condition of heart to receive their instructions. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His Covenant” (Psalm 25:14). Thus, during the Jewish Age, Israel often lapsed into more or less of darkness and idolatry and failed to see their special privileges and relationship to God under their Covenant. But amongst them were the faithful who with the eye of faith discerned the righteousness of God’s dealing with them. Of these were the prophets who rehearsed the Divine dealings and rewards and punishments, that they were true and righteous altogether and merciful in the extreme.

Similarly during this Gospel Age Christendom as a whole has not been in the condition of heart to hear, to understand, to appreciate, the judgments of the Lord. But some have been “Israelites indeed” who possessed the secret of the Lord and who were able to rejoice in His judgments—His righteous dealings. They realized by faith God’s love for them. “The Father himself loveth you” (John 16:27). By faith they appropriated the Apostle’s assurance that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

GOD’S JUDGMENTS IN THE WORLD

We have seen that God’s judgments in the past have been merely with those who shall constitute the Seed of Abraham (natural and spiritual), through whom, according to the promise, “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 28:14). We now note the fact that our text does not relate to either of these, for their judgments could be discerned only by the eye of faith. Our text refers to the world’s judgments during the Millennial Age. Then God’s judgments will be abroad in the earth—not merely confined to one nation or specially called class, but will include every member of Adam’s race. And while these are declared to be the Lord’s judgments, note the fact that they will be

2H748

administered by the Christ, of which our glorified Redeemer shall be the Head, and His “members,” when glorified, shall be the Body—the Church. The judgments

of the Lord abroad in the earth will not mean havoc and dismay to mankind in general, but the reverse — relief, assistance to all who come into line with the righteous arrangements of that Kingdom designed for their uplifting from sin and death conditions. The judgments of that Millennial Day of a thousand years will be severe—even to destruction —only against the wilfully, the deliberately rebellious; after they shall have been brought to a clear appreciation of right and wrong, good and evil, and their result; life or death.

Mark the statement of the Prophet David when prophetically referring to the Millennial Age; he points out that the judgments of that time will be a cause of gladness. He says:

*“Let the heavens be glad,
And let the earth rejoice;
Let men say among the nations,
the Lord reigneth.
Let the sea roar,
and the fullness thereof;
Let the fields rejoice,
and all that are therein.
Then shall the trees of the wood sing out
At the presence of the Lord.
Because He Cometh
to Judge the Earth.
O give thanks unto the Lord,
for He is good;
For His mercy endureth forever.”
—1 Chronicles 16:31-34*

A MILLENNIAL JUDGMENT DAY

Mark the words of St. Paul respecting what God has in reservation for the world. He says God “hath appointed a day [the thousand-year day of Christ] in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained.” Acts 17:31

In this work ordained for our Lord he is to have associates —the “elect” Church, His “members,” of whom the Apostle writes, saying, “Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?” (1 Corinthians 6:2) And the Ancient Worthies enumerated by St. Paul (Hebrews 9:38-40) will also be judges, but on the earthly plane as representatives of the Heavenly Kingdom. As it is written, “I will restore thy judges as at the first and thy counselors as at the beginning.” Isaiah 1:26

Our All Wise Creator, who has thus made provision, both for the heavenly and the earthly judges of the world in the election from Israel and the election of the Gospel Age, has thus demonstrated to the few who understand “the secret of the Lord,” “the mystery” hidden from ages

and dispensations past. It is evident that there will be no disappointment, no failure, in respect to God's great oath-bound Covenant made with Abraham — "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The basis of the blessing is the redemptive work of Christ finished at Calvary. The outworking of that blessing will come through the glorified Lord and His Church, "His Body." The first work will be the establishment of a righteous government in the hands of those already proven absolutely loyal to God and to His righteousness — "faithful even unto death." We may have full confidence that in that Kingdom 'righteousness will be laid to the line and justice to the plummet,' as God has promised (Isaiah 28:17). Not only so, but we may have full confidence that mercy will have a free hand there to do all for mankind that would be reasonable and possible. The combination of a strong government with merciful assistants is represented by the fact that our Lord will be, not only the great King but also the great Priest and Prophet and Teacher. Even so, also, the Church shall be "kings and priests" —their office, their service, will be a combination of ruling and healing, instructing and uplifting.

Everything done will come under the head of judgment—righteous dealing. Every good deed, yea, every good effort, will be rewarded —its judgment will be a blessing, an increase of harmony with the Lord and with a character development and restitutorial physical experiences (Acts 3:19-21). Instead of the ways of darkness will be the way of light. Instead of the broad road leading to destruction with the masses going down thereon —to the tomb —will be "the highway of holiness." Instead of stones of stumbling we are assured that all the stumbling stones shall be gathered out of the way. Instead of beastly violence, over-mastering temptations and besetments, devouring mankind because of their weakness to resist the Adversary, the Bible assures us that Satan will be bound and that the wild beasts of vice and degeneracy will all be brought into subjection. Thus "nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy Kingdom." "And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called, The way of holiness." Isaiah 9:9; 35:8

The Messianic Psalm (seventy-second) finds its application to that glorious Millennial epoch. Thus we read, "Give the King thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's Son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness and thy poor with judgment (justice). . . . He shall judge the poor of the people,

He shall save the children of the needy and shall break in pieces the oppressor. . . . He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth. In His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.”

**“THE PEOPLE WILL LEARN
RIGHTEOUSNESS.”**

As already shown, God’s dealings in the past have been with the world only in the sense of executing a general sentence for Adamic sin — a death sentence with all that that involves of mental, moral and physical degeneracy — dying. All of God’s special judgments have been with those who were justified to special relationship through faith. If we were to judge of the number who will be blessed during the Millennium by the “little flock” of natural Israel and the “little flock” of spiritual Israel, saved under God’s judgments in advance of the millennium, the outcome of the world’s judgment would not appear favorable. But these would not be fair criterions. Present conditions are permitted in order to test and to prove the faith, as well as the obedience of those who are under trial or judgment and who, by reason of the fall, have such a faith as permits them to grasp the glorious features of the present call. Consequently, “few” there will be who will find the great reward now offered. (Matthew 7:14)

This is as God designs it, because He is selecting a special class. But the arrangements made for mankind in general are that the darkness and sin of the present time shall flee away. The dawning of the Millennium morning, with the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams (The Christ in glory to enlighten the world), will mean that knowledge will be granted the world — facts, evidences, proofs. The world will not be required to “walk by faith and not by sight,” as are the “elect” of this present time. Instead of the eye of faith of the present time will be the eye of understanding (knowledge), then. Instead of the secret of the Lord being kept from the world, all of His gracious purposes will then stand fully revealed. “The knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep” (Habakkuk 2:14). As a result none shall need to say unto his neighbor and to his brother, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest of them. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God (Romans 14:11). When every good deed shall receive promptly and manifestly its reward, and every evil deed shall receive promptly its punishment, the world will

speedily learn to avoid the punishments and to win the reward by obedience to the laws of the Kingdom.

THE SCOPE OF OUR TEXT

The Prophet in our text personifies the Christ, Jesus the Head and the Church His Body. Note the statement, “With my soul have I desired thee in the night” (Isaiah 26:9). The “night” of sin has been upon the world for centuries. The “morning” is at hand, but not yet fully come. During the night-time the faithful of the Church are represented as walking in the light of God’s Word. “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a lantern unto my footsteps” (Psalm 109:105). St. Peter says, “We have a more sure word of prophecy, to which we do well to take heed as unto a light shining in a dark place —until the day dawn and the day-star arise” (2 Peter 1:19). In this night-time the “elect” are different from the majority of those around them —they desire God’s righteousness and they pray, “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven.”

SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

Those who now are able to “sing in the night” because of their appreciation of the Divine Plan are prophetically declared to “sing the song of Moses, the servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee, because of the manifestation of thy righteous dealings.” Revelation 15:3, 4

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, December 30, 1909](#)

CHRISTMAS JOYS

Pastor Russell, of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, preached at Richmond, Va., Sunday, to a large and attentive audience. He chose for his text: “The angel said unto them, ‘Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.’” Luke 2:10-11 The speaker said:

2H750

There is an appropriateness in the general joy of the Christmas season, even though some of it is not wisely expressed. The happy custom of giving tokens of love and friendship prevails everywhere the story of Jesus has gone. Even the almshouses and prisons make special

provision that the day which celebrates the Savior's birth may, so far as possible, be a happy one, a joyous one, to all mankind. The poorer of our citizens and the unfortunate of slender means are often kindly remembered by their more highly favored relatives and neighbors. Surely this is as it ought to be. Some may have been injured by receiving bounties, but few, if any, have ever been other than blessed in the giving of them. Herein we see corroborated the Savior's own words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is godlike to give. The Giver of every good and perfect gift, the Father of Lights, has set an example of benevolence which all who have any knowledge of Him should be proportionately careful to obey and emulate.

Our text tells us of God's great Gift, and, although it is evident that our Lord Jesus was born about October 1, instead of December 25, this makes no material difference, for it is the great fact that we commemorate, and not the particular day of its occurrence. Let us consider today the great gift of God's love, which the apostle refers to as "the unspeakable gift. (2 Cor. 9:15) As we discern something of its length and breadth and height and depth our amazement is the more, our joy increases, and we have the more desire to be likewise generous with all with whom we have to do, especially with all who are less fortunately situated than ourselves, either in temporal or spiritual matters.

"THEIR FEAR TOWARD ME"

All men realize, to some extent at least, their imperfection — that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Men's thoughts toward God seem to run along the lines of fear; unworthy of Divine favor, they fear Divine wrath. So it was with the shepherds as related in our context. When the angel of the Lord appeared to them to announce Messiah's birth they feared. For what purpose would an angel or messenger come to them except to render some denunciation or to foretell some catastrophe? It was, therefore, that the first words of the messenger were "Fear not." So in approaching mankind in general with God's message to sinners it is appropriate that we begin by saying, Fear not! The God we preach unto you is not a demon seeking your injury and your torment. He is a God of wisdom and justice and love, with all power to carry to successful conclusion His wise, just and loving program, respecting our race, "which He purposed in Himself from before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1:9)

Satan has used this human tendency of fear as a lash wherewith to drive man away from God, and from the Bible, His revelation. We are not, therefore, to accredit

to our forefathers the viciousness of character which seems to be implied in the creeds of the “dark ages” handed down to us; rather we are to credit those vicious misrepresentations of our Heavenly Father to the great Father of Lies. He it is who in the dark of the past planted the seeds of what the apostle terms “doctrines of devils.” (1 Tim. 4:1) We thank the Lord that gradually we are getting our eyes of understanding opened to recognize the true character of God and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent, and Who is His express image. St. Paul outlines the difficulty for us, saying: “The God of this world (Satan) hath blinded the minds of all them that believe not, lest the glorious light of divine goodness should shine into their hearts.” 2 Cor. 4:4

Hark to the Lord’s message through the Prophet Isaiah. Foreseeing our estrangement Himself and our enslavement by the adversary, He tells us in so many words: “Their fears toward Me is not of Me, but is taught by the precepts of men” — as inspired by our adversary, the devil. Isaiah 29:13

GOD’S CHRISTMAS GIFT

Intending from the first not to abandon his fallen human creatures to utter destruction, the Father purposed in Himself, in advance, the great plan of salvation now in progress. From before the foundation of the world he purposed that Jesus should be the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world and eventually to bring all the willing and obedient back to harmony with Himself, so that only the wilfully wicked would experience the wages of sin, death — “second death.” But God has a “due time” for every feature of His great plan. Four thousand years sped by before it became due time to send the Only Begotten Son into the world to redeem it. “In the fulness of time God sent forth His Son, born of a woman.” (Gal. 4:4) “In due time Christ died for the ungodly” —4,160 years after sin had entered. (Rom. 5:6) At first we are amazed at such a delay. Nor can the matter be satisfactorily understood until we learn two things:

1. That man’s experience with sin and death is a part of the great lesson which God designs all to have — learning the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Later, when the second great lesson shall be given to mankind — the desirableness and profitableness of righteousness — the schooling as a whole will be the more effective.

2. We must also learn that our dear friends and

2H751

neighbors who go down into death are as if only asleep, and have no consciousness in either joy or sorrow, waiting for the millennial morning—the resurrection morning. Their death would have been absolute, as in the case of the brute beast, had not God with His great love provided for their redemption and resurrection.

(Eccl. 5:9; John 11:11; 3:13; Acts 2:34) In view of this provision the whole world is said to sleep in Jesus — in the sense that their hope rests in the great work which Jesus accomplished when He gave Himself a “ransom for all to be testified in due time.” (1 Tim. 2:6) There is a difference, therefore, between the W6rld sleeping in Jesus and the church who fall asleep in Christ. The church is composed of those begotten of the Holy Spirit during this Gospel age, who maintain their relationship to Christ, the Head, as members of His body, and when God has promised that as they share with Christ in His sacrificial death, they shall also share with Him in His glorious resurrection to honor and immortality.

The Scriptures make very plain the fact that while Jesus was born of a woman this was not the beginning of His existence, for “He was with the Father before the world was.” He was the very “beginning of the creation of God.” (Rev. 3:14) As St. John declares, “In the beginning was the word (Logos) and the Logos was with the God and the Logos was a God. By Him were all things made that were made and without Him was not one thing made.” He was “made flesh and dwelt amongst us,” “He came unto His own and His own received Him not, but to as many as received Him, to them gave He privilege to become sons of God.” John 1:1-14

The Scriptures make clear to us that the Father did not compel the Son to be our Redeemer —on the contrary, He invited Him to do so and set before Him the great reward;

1. The privilege of proving His loyalty to the Father. Heb. 10:7; Psa. 41:8
2. The privilege of serving the fallen race, as being their Redeemer and Restorer. Matt. 20:28
3. The honor of high exaltation to even greater dignities than He had before He left the Father —to honor, glory and immortality, far above angels and principalities and powers and every name that is named. St. Paul, in referring to the matter, tells us that our Lord, “for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame” — and now, in consequence, is set down on the right hand of the Father on high. Heb. 12:2

While the Savior was the Christmas gift to us in one sense of the word, yet the gift was more from another standpoint — although it was all contained in that primary gift. Our Lord first, by obedience to the divine law, demonstrated His right to eternal life; and, at the same time, by His consecration to death, He laid down the life He was privileged to have. Nor did He ever take it back. He arose from the dead on the third day, perfected as a new creature —as a spirit-being. (2 Cor. 3:17) He did indeed appear to the apostles during the subsequent 40 days, but not as before. Although after His resurrection He appeared in the flesh He was not flesh. He had taken the body of flesh “for the suffering of death,” and not to

keep eternally. When He had finished sacrificing it the flesh had served His purpose. His high exaltation is on the spirit plane, far above angels. His appearances during the 40 days were very brief and few, after the manner in which angels had previously appeared in the flesh. They were for the purpose of convincing the disciples that He was no longer dead, and to convince them also that He was no longer limited to earthly powers, as before His death. He was “put to death in the flesh, but quickened in spirit.” 1 Pet. 3:18

Notice how God’s gift expands, carrying blessings with each change. The glorified Jesus, when He ascended up on high, had to His credit, so to speak, the human, earthly rights which he had sacrificed. Those rights were sufficient for the whole world. Because all had been condemned through one man, all could be justified, atoned for, by the sacrifice of one perfect man— “the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself ransom for all.” 1 Tim. 2:5, 6

But the ascended Savior, although He came into the world to be the Savior of the world, did not apply the merit of His sacrifice for the world, but, as the Scriptures show, He applied it for His church, and the entire household of faith. Unbelievers are not covered by that application of Christ’s merit. In order to get under the merit of Christ now they must believe, renounce sin and make a consecration of themselves to walk in the Redeemer’s footsteps as living sacrifices. Under this provision the gospel call has been going forth for now eighteen centuries. The object of this, the Scriptures tell us, is to select primarily the Church of Christ, a “little flock,” “the bride, the Lamb’s wife” and joint-heir with him in his millennial kingdom, which is to bless the world. There is also a secondary class blessed during this gospel age. But the Scriptures exhort all to seek to “make their calling and their election sure” to the bride class.

“THE BODY OF CHRIST”

Throughout this gospel age a faithful “little flock” has gradually been gathered. Their test is their willingness to lay down their lives in the Lord’s service — in the service of the truth and in the service of the brethren. In doing this they are sacrificing with

2H752

Jesus; as the apostle suggests, “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1) This sacrifice of Christ’s “members” is counted in as part and parcel of the sacrifice of Christ. When this sacrificing shall be finished it will mean that the merit of Christ’s sacrifice at Calvary appropriated to the church will have been laid down again—returned to the credit of the Redeemer. Then, at the conclusion of this ages when the last “member of the body” has suffered with Him and been glorified, the great High Priest will apply the blood afresh. Not again for His members and the household of faith, however, but for the world, as the type clearly shows.

That will be the application of the ransom price or purchase price for the sins of the whole world. But that blessing is divinely arranged to reach the world through natural Israel, which is to be restored to God’s favor at the dose of this age under a new law covenant, which will take the place of their old law covenant. All nations will be privileged to share in the blessings of that covenant and to come under the protection and guidance of its Mediator, and to be helped up out of sin and death conditions. To receive this blessing they must renounce sin and become children of Abraham, by faithful obedience under the new covenant arrangement.

“THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE”

Glance backward now, and see the unfoldings of the divine plan: The Babe of Bethlehem, the Man of Sorrows, the Risen Lord, the Ascended High Priest and Advocate, the appropriation of his merit to the church, the joy of forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to God experienced by all believers; their instruction in the school of Christ, their testing and proving by trials and difficulties, and finally their glorification with their Lord in the millennial kingdom. In turn, the glorious Prophet, Priest, Mediator, King, Head and “members” complete, will institute the millennial kingdom reign of righteousness for the blessing of the world. Applying His merit for the world and using it also to seal the new covenant, He opens the way whereby all then living may become reconciled to God — may be blessed with restitution to full perfection of mind and morals and physique — and have back again the paradise lost by sin, but redeemed at Calvary.

The picture is the more enchanting the more we examine it. The glorious King and His glorious bride, the church, will be very merciful and kind and helpful, as well as very firm in dealing with poor humanity, the groaning creation. This will

insure that every one possible to be reformed will be reformed, while the willfully rebellious will be destroyed in second death. (Acts 3:23) Nor will the Great Redeemer be content with even so glorious an outcome as this from His sacrifice. The millions that have gone down into the tomb were imperfect in mind and body and morals, largely because of heredity —because they were “born in sin and shapen in iniquity.” The Savior proposes, in harmony with the divine program, that not merely the members of the race living at the time of His second coming and the establishment of His kingdom, shall be blessed by God’s great Christmas gift, but additionally, every member of Adam’s race. Hence the arrangement is, as the Master tells us: “All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth.”

The “overcomers” of this time of evil, having passed their trial, will come forth perfected in life —the church on the spirit plane, being the “first fruits.” The remainder of mankind, unapproved of Gods shall come forth unto a resurrection of crisis, trial, judgment, testing. They will come forth that it may be testified to them —in that their due time — that Christ died for their sins and that redemption through His blood has been provided for them and for all of Adam’s race. During that thousand years of trial they must either accept God’s grace and co-operate in their advance to perfection or be destroyed in the second death as unworthy of any further divine favor and blessing.

“GREAT JOY UNTO PEOPLE”

Truly, dear friends, we are beginning to understand the message sent us through the angel when our Savior was born. The message is not, “Fear greatly; I bring you bad tidings of eternal torment and misery for all people.” It is the very reverse of this, namely, “Fear not; I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people.” The joy has not been to all people as yet. Even the knowledge of the Lord has reached only about one in ten of earth’s population thus far. And what did reach them was generally a very unsatisfactory, unreasonable message of damnation and great misery. As we have just seen, however, the great plan of the ages is rolling onward toward completion, and its nearness at every stage makes for fresh blessings and fresh revelations of the glorious things which God proposed in Himself from before the foundation of the world. Truly the Scriptures say: “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God’s ways higher than man’s ways and His thoughts higher than man’s thoughts.” (Isa. 4:9)

Thankful and faithful we should be for the further knowledge of God’s great plan, which now is streaming

forth from His word for the blessing of all whose eyes of understanding and ears of faith are open. We are truly thankful that our friends and neighbors are not in everlasting torture, but, on the contrary, waiting for the glorious millennial morning. We are thankful, too, that in God's providence we have been called to be "members" of the body of Christ, to share in His sufferings and in His glorious reign and work of the future and its blood-bought opportunity of restitution (Acts 3:19-21). It is possible for those who thus see the real value of Christmas Day to be a thousand-fold more happy and more grateful to God than others could be. In turn they should seek to distribute the blessing and to glorify our Father in heaven, who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, January 6, 1910](#)

PRESENT YOUR BODIES

Chicago, January 2— Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached here twice today to large audiences. The Auditorium, of world-wide celebrity for its size and excellent acoustics, afforded the immense audience a superior opportunity to hear Pastor Russell's discourse in the afternoon. We report his evening discourse, based on the text Romans 12:1. He said:

The opening of a new year is like the opening of a new ledger. It is a favorable time for determining what should be disposed of in the profit and loss account and for putting into effect resolutions governing the new year. The fact that thousands of resolutions will be made at this season only to be broken later under the impact of temptation should not discourage us from making such resolutions ourselves and advising the course to others. The man or woman who makes no resolutions or vows makes little progress in character-building. Poor, fallen human nature needs all the bands and braces and supports which a well-directed will can give it. We are not advocating hasty and sometimes unreasonable vows and resolutions and pledges thoughtlessly taken, and sometimes unreasonable. What we do advocate is thoughtful, rational sitting down and counting the cost, and then and there resolving, with the full strength of the character, with the full determination of the mind, to pursue the way which deliberate judgment tells one is the proper course.

Let us, then, encourage every one to make resolutions to themselves respecting the course of life which they deliberately think will be the most advantageous. And let us encourage such, and not discourage them from any good resolution, helpful to themselves or to others. Resolutions made as children, under proper counsel, and entered into with deliberation, have been the "making" of many noble

characters out of material which otherwise would have floated with the current to ignominy and dishonor. We recommend that all parents counsel their children along these lines at this season of the year, supporting their counsel by evidence that they themselves also make resolutions from time to time and faithfully live up to them. To be afraid to make a resolution lest it might be broken is to be afraid of one's shadow. No one can take a step without mental resolution so to do. And likewise steps in the pathway of moral progress all mean resolutions first.

A CHRISTMAS VOW OR RESOLVE

A Christian, like other men, can be benefited by such resolves to himself, which should be sacredly kept, in proportion as he respects himself and would be respected. These resolutions may apply to sundry affairs of life—his home, his business, his personal habits, etc. But when the Christian comes to consider his highest interests he at once recognizes that they are those by which he is related to his Creator and his Savior. At the very beginning of his Christian experience, after he had longed for righteousness and turned from sin; after his eyes had seen Jesus as his Redeemer; after his ear of faith had heard that he was reconciled to God through the death of his Son and had forgiveness of sins through faith in his blood—then came to him the most important moment of his life. For God, through His word, invited him to make a full consecration of himself (including every earthly interest and affair) to the Lord and his service.

The proposition, in the language of the Savior, was that he should take up his cross and follow Him, and that as a reward he should have in the present life tribulation from without, but the peace of the Lord within, and in the future life experience a share in the First Resurrection. That change to glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature means joint-heirship with his Redeemer in His great office and work as the

2H754

mediator between God and the world during the Millennial Age. The terms are clearly stated—self-denial, cross-bearing, service for Christ, faithfulness unto death. The rewards also are clearly stated as crowns of life and membership in the royal priesthood, a seat with the Lord in His throne, an opportunity of being one of the judges for helping and uplifting mankind during the Millennium.

While stating the conditions clearly and distinctly through the Word the Lord did not urge consecration, but said rather that each should sit down first and count the cost. After having counted the cost, whoever chose to accept the proposition did so by making a vow unto

the Lord. This was to the intent that thereafter not only the conduct of life, but the words of the mouth and the meditations of the heart should be acceptable to the Lord. This comprehensive vow is symbolized in baptism, which, rightly understood, as explained by St. Paul, is a baptism into membership in the Body of Christ (the church), and this by baptism or immersion “into Christ’s death.” Rom. 6:3

Only such as make this vow are accepted at all as members of the Christ and anointed with the holy Spirit. It is respecting this vow that St. Paul urges, in the words of our text, ‘I beseech you (justified) brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God and your reasonable service.’ Our contract with the Lord is entered into, made secure, by the vow of consecration, and the remainder of life is merely a testing of the consecrated one to determine to what degree he really meant the vow, to what degree he uses his endeavor to be dead to the world, dead to self, dead to all earthly things and alive toward God and the interest of the Millennial Kingdom, to which he has consecrated himself as a “member” of the Body of the Mediator of the New Covenant. Jer. 31:31; Gal. 3:29

“I WILL PAY MY VOW”

Let no one lightly undertake a vow unto the Lord. It carries with it weighty responsibilities. It would be better every way that none should take the vow without first understanding the matter and entering fully into the spirit of the resolution they make. Once made and accepted by the Lord through the importation of the holy Spirit, it cannot be annulled. But why should we wish to annul the vow? Why should any one who puts his hand to the plow look back? To use the apostle’s illustration, why should the sow that was washed return to wallowing in the mire? Why should we, after having renounced the world and received the begetting of the holy Spirit, and after tasting of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, lose the precious taste and appreciation of these and return in craving to the beggarly elements of the world? Surely there are no good reasons for so doing. Surely the joys of the present life, as well as the hopes of the Kingdom to come, all should encourage us to fully “set our affections on things above and not on the things beneath.”

The world, the flesh and the Adversary all exercise influences contrary to our vow or resolution to the Lord to be dead to the world and to self. That we may be alive with Christ and share His glory—suffer with Him, that we may reign with Him, they do not agree. The poet has expressed the proper thought here, saying:

*“My soul be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;*

*The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."*

Much of our success in the keeping of our vow of consecration depends upon two things:

1. The clearness of our grasp of the situation when we made our vow and the thoroughness of our intention; the amount or weight thereof; the will power exerted for righteousness.

2. And additional feature of great weight in the matter is the degree of our knowledge. It is in line with this thought that the Scriptures declare, "My people perish for lack of knowledge." God has given us His Word and informed us that it is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof and for correction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished." He has advised us to search the Scriptures and to forget not the assembling of ourselves together. And where His advice is followed and the Scriptures are searched daily, not in a formal manner, but with a desire to know and to do the Lord's will and be guided in His way, a strengthening of the will is effected; correspondingly there is a weakening of the evil influences which oppose us as new creatures and our vow. The Word of God is so arranged as to provide "meat in due season" for all of his faithful people, whether old or young, in every time. As "babes of Christ," as young men and as full-grown sons of God, it is for each of us a storehouse of grace and truth, to make us strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Only by appropriating this spiritual food can we have strength to fulfill our vow, to finish our course with joy and to attain the kingdom. Item by item, as our minds are able to grasp its unfolding prospects of glory, honor and immortality, we are thereby strengthened by the Lord's might in the inner man.

In proportion as we realize the facts of the case we may appreciate what a great bargain the Lord has offered us. We surrender in consecration our earthly

2H755

rights, privileges and pleasures and receive in return more happiness spiritual blessings in the present life and the inheritance of the unspeakable blessings and glories of the future. It should, therefore, become much more easy to pay our vows with a willing heart as we grow in grace and in knowledge of the Lord and His Word. Indeed, as the Apostle suggests, it is possible for us to reach the place where we can "rejoice in tribulation also," knowing that thereby our future blessing is increased.

‘WHAT SHALL I RENDER?’

As the consecrated believer considers what God has already done, and what he proposes yet to do for His faithful, gratitude wells up in his heart and his inquiry is, “What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?” The more he considers the matter, the more he realizes that his talents and opportunities are necessarily small, insignificant. It is from this standpoint that the poet wrote, ‘O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer’s praise.’”

It is well indeed to show our appreciation of God’s grace by songs of thankfulness and praise, but we are to remember that not merely poetic cadences are our acceptable songs, but that from the proper standpoint life itself is the proper hymn of praise to be continually rendered to the King of Kings. “Singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord” will imply that our work will be in harmony — a song of life. (Eph. 5:19)

TAKING THE CUP

The Psalmist’s answer prophetically represents the attitude of heart of all the faithful. Each is expected to say, ‘I will take the Cup of Salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.’” (Psa. 116:13) The cup of salvation at the present time is the “Cup” which our Lord proffered to His disciples, saying, “This is My blood of the New Covenant shed for many for the remission of sins. Drink ye all of it.” (Matt. 26:27, 28) It is a “Cup” of suffering, self-denial, self-sacrifice, as respects the earthly things which we give up, surrender, that we may attain the heavenly things as joint-heirs with our Redeemer. There might be danger, however, of some getting the wrong thought on this subject. There is a peculiar pleasure in drinking of the Lord’s “cup” of self-sacrifices which those who have never partaken of cannot hope to understand. It is the pleasure of fellowship in His sufferings, as St. Paul explains. And a part of the pleasure connected with that cup is the associated hope of drinking with our Lord of His other cup of joy and glory and blessings in the Kingdom, as he promised.

The necessity of partaking of this “Cup” of the Lord is shown by the Savior’s words to two of his disciples, inquired, saying: “Lord, grant that we may sit with Thee, the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand, in the Kingdom.” Our Lord’s reply was that they little realized what this high privilege of sitting in the Millennial Throne with him would cost. He inquired: “Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? (Matt. 20:22)—the cup of suffering, ignominy, dishonor, death — and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” —not the baptism into water, but into that which is symbolized by the water — a baptism into his death. The apostles indicated their willingness. And we can do no

more. If left to ourselves, undoubtedly the contract would be more than we would be sufficient for. Our sufficiency is of God's providence —our great redeemer is our High Priest and Advocate, able to succor us in every time of need, and able to provide ways of escape from trials too hard for us; able to strengthen us when weak; able to give us the "meat in due season;" able to make us strong in his sight; able to bring to our attention the great and precious promises of God's word. Yea, say St. Paul: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13

IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL THE PEOPLE

In the context the prophet declares: "I will pay my vows unto the Lord in the presence of all the people." Publicly openly, I will espouse the Lord's cause. I will remember his words, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him also shall the son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." (Mark 8:38) I will be faithful in the performance of my covenant to such a degree that my loyalty shall be known to all the brethren as well as to the Lord who reads the heart. Yea, and the worldly should know of the faithfulness of God's people, even though not appreciating the matter, they should despise them and count them fools for Christ's sake.

Vows of this kind are not for the worldly, even though they be morally disposed. They are yet in their sins, if they reject the offer of Divine forgiveness upon Divine terms of consecration. Such may not think to take vows of consecration to the Lord until first they have renounced wilful sin and accepted redemption through faith in the precious blood. Until then they remain amongst the wicked. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to take My words into thy mouth (as a vow), seeing thou hatest instruction and castest My words behind thee." (Psa. 50:17) All who do not wish Divine instruction, all who spurn the Lord's Word, are in this sense wicked—in a wrong condition of heart. We are glad that there is no truth in the theory that they are liable to eternal torture.

2H756

But, Oh, how much they are missing, nevertheless, of the joys of the Lord in this present time and of the glories and eternal blessings of the future!

In closing, dear friends, let me suggest to you a little vow unto the Lord—not as instead of your consecration vow, which is all-comprehensive, but as supplemental thereto — as specifying certain matters which are indeed part and parcel of your consecration vow. The thought is that by this vow these particular features of your obligation will be daily more prominently before your mind. It is my belief that the taking of it earnestly and soberly, and the keeping of it, would be one of the wisest New Year's resolutions that God's people could make—most helpful to them in the peculiar time in which we are living.

VOW

Should any of those who take this vow unto the Lord desire to inform me of the fact, I shall be very pleased to hear from them at my Brooklyn address.

A VOW UNTO THE LORD

1. Our father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. May Thy rule come into my heart more and more, and Thy will be done in my mortal body. Relying on the assistance of Thy promised grace to help in every time of needs through Jesus Christ our Lord, I register this vow.
2. Daily will I remember at the throne of heavenly grace the general interests of the harvest work, and particularly the share which I myself am privileged to enjoy in that work, and the dear co-laborers at the Brooklyn Tabernacle and Bethel, and everywhere.
3. I vow to still more carefully, if possible, scrutinize my thoughts and words and doings, to the intent that I may be the better enabled to serve Thee and Thy dear flock.
4. I vow to Thee that, I will be on the alert to resist everything akin to spiritism and occultism, and that, remembering that there are but two masters, I shall resist these snares in all reasonable ways, as being of the adversary.
5. I further vow that, with the exceptions below, I will at all times and in all places conduct myself toward those of the opposite sex in private exactly as I would do with them in public—in the presence of a congregation of the Lord's people.

6. And, so far as reasonably possible, I will avoid being in the same room with any of the opposite sex alone, unless the door to the room stand wide open.

7. Exceptions in the case of brethren — wife, children, mother and natural sisters; in the case of sisters — husbands, children, father and natural brothers.

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, January 13, 1910](#)

WHAT GOD WINKED AT

“The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now He has commanded all men everywhere to repent; because He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained.” (Acts 17:30-31)

Pastor C. T. Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached twice at Toronto, Canada, Sunday to large and very attentive audiences. We report one of his discourses from the above text as follows:

The word “winked” in our text is used in a figurative sense to signify that God took no notice of, paid no attention to that long period of time from the flood to the First Advent of our Redeemer. During those 2500 years the world of mankind lay in ignorance and weakness and vice, but, as our text declares, God took no notice of it as a whole. He gave his attention entirely to the little nation of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, with whom He made a special law covenant. Israel entered upon a great schooling period; first in a condition of peonage in Egypt and later under the command of Moses, passing from Egypt to Canaan, with a wandering of 40 years in the wilderness; still later under judges, and then under Kings, etc. God did not wink at sin amongst the Israelites, whom He adopted as His “peculiar people” under the Law Covenant, mediated by Moses. We read that every disobedience received a “just recompense of reward.” (Heb. 2:2) Stripes, punishments, captivities under divine supervision and predicted through the prophets was the portion of the chosen people of the Lord. Obedience on their part brought blessing and disobedience and idolatry brought chastisements — God winked at nothing as respects his chosen people.

At first glance this is perplexing. Not understanding the divine plan we would be inclined to expect that the favored nation would be excused more than others; that it would be the people whose imperfections would be winked at. But not so; Israel was chosen for a

purpose. And in order to prepare them for their mission and to fit them to fill it the Lord chastened and scourged them for their sins, and thus educated and assisted them more than others out of degradation. As a result when our Lord came into the world to be man's Redeemer, under the chastising, scourging, instructing experiences of many centuries, was by far the most advanced nation in the world along religious lines.

Thus it was that when the Redeemer presented Himself some, "a remnant," were "Israelites indeed and ready to receive Him —500 during His earthly ministry and several thousand more at the following Pentecostal season. It is but reasonable to suppose that no other nation in the world would have furnished any such numbers ready of heart for Messiah, and consecrated fully to Him. Note, for instance, that St. Paul's preaching to the Athenians on Mars Hill apparently touched not a single heart nor head.

WHAT WAS NOT WINKED AT

With the smoke of the dark ages in the eyes of our understanding, and our poor brains befuddled by unscriptural theories, we once thought that this passage implied that God winked at thousands and millions slipping and sliding down into purgatory or into worse—eternal torment. With increased light we perceive that those thoughts were fallacious, that nothing in the Bible teaches that those poor creatures, who had neither the Gospel of Christ nor the law of Moses, were damned by their Creator in the manner we had supposed. We now perceive that they were simply allowed to die in their ignorance and sin under the penalty imposed upon Father Adam. We now see that God merely refrained from giving them any light upon the future respecting what he intended to do for the blessing of the world of mankind—the reconciliation of the world unto himself through Abraham's Seed. We now see that the divine purpose included them with all mankind in the redemption accomplished by Jesus, and that consequently they, with the remainder of the world, will share in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust.

What a relief this brings to our heads and hearts! How we used to wonder that the God of Love could not only countenance the eternal torture of these millions, but more than that, foreknew it, predestinated it, and winked at it as though it were a joke, a trifling matter. Surely we can love our Creator the better in proportion as the eyes of our understanding open to the true teachings of His Word. And surely at the opening of a new year all who through the Divine Word thus discern the divine character to be just and loving will be influenced

thereby to a reciprocating love, which will take pleasure in doing those things pleasing in His sight, and which will be grieved at anything that would displease Him.

THE JUSTICE OF THE WINK

The Almighty informs us that justice is the very foundation of all His dealings. He cannot be less than just, although through Christ He has provided to be more than just—that is, loving and merciful. There must have been a justice in this winking mentioned by the apostle. What was it?

The apostle explains that, owing to a death sentence that was upon the world in general, and no provision having yet been made for a redemption from that death penalty, and a resurrection deliverance, it would have been illogical for God to give laws to the world of mankind commanding repentance, etc. Why? Because they were already condemned to death, the extreme penalty of the divine law. No more could be done to them than destroy them, however badly they lived. And nothing that they could do would make them deserving of eternal life. So long as the death sentence rested upon them, and no prospect was offered even of a release from it, God let them alone and justly enough winked at their imperfection and did not lay it specially to their charge. He permitted them to go down to the tomb unenlightened respecting His gracious purposes of the future for them and for all men through Christ.

With the Jew it was different. God instructed that nation through the law and the prophets and the chastenings for their wrong doings, and thus prepared in them a “little flock” of “Israelites indeed,” ready for spiritual things. Additionally He wished to use them and their experience as types or lessons for Spiritual Israel yet future. These types under the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the New Testament, have constituted very helpful lessons to the church of this Gospel Age — Spiritual Israel — “For the Law Covenant was a shadow of good things coming after it.”

But before having this dealing with Israel God made a covenant with them, promising them life eternal if they would obey. They gladly accepted the proposition and strove to live righteously, strove to keep the law. They did not gain eternal life under the law, because they could not keep it; not that the law was defective, but that they, like all other members of Adam’s fallen race, were imperfect. God knew of their weakness and allowed them to be disappointed in the outcome of their Covenant, but nevertheless He made it a great blessing to them — a means of instruction, which, as we have seen, ultimately prepared several thousand to be of so ripe a condition of heart as to be ready for the

Savior and become His disciples. The Jew then had this advantage over the Gentile up to that time. He had God's promise. He knew the law of God. He was profited by striving to do the impossible thing of keeping it perfectly. Had God not chosen the nation of Israel to bring them under the schooling processes of the Law Covenant (Gal. 3:24) He would have "winked" at their ignorance, etc., as He did with the transgressions of other nations up to that time.

"NOW COMMANDETH ALL MEN"

What is the secret of this change on God's part —from winking at the sins and imperfections of the world to commanding them to repent? If it is just to wink at their sins for thousands of years, why did not God continue to wink at them? The apostle answers the question, telling us that this change in God's dealing which sent forth the message that the world should repent was based upon the fact that His eternal purposes had by that time reached the stage of development which justified such a message. The Son of God had left the glory of the Father which He had before the world was; He had humbled Himself to become a man. As the man Christ Jesus He had been obedient to the heavenly Father's wish and had laid down His life sacrificially — that it might first benefit consecrated believers during this gospel age; secondly, that it might bless the world of mankind during the millennial age.

For a time these good tidings were confined to the Jewish nation, but three and a half years after the crucifixion the limit of Israel's favor respecting the message came to an end, and then the good tidings of great joy were permitted to go to all the Gentiles on the same terms that the Jews enjoyed.

The Gospel, or "good news," consists of the information that God in His mercy has provided that the death sentence upon Adam and his race shall not be perpetual, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust; that the provision for this has already been made in and through the death of the Redeemer. It is inquired what advantage would there be in a resurrection of the dead if therewith all would be placed back again just where they are at present? The answer is that there would be no advantage in such a resurrection. If the Jew could not keep the law, and if the very best-intentioned of the Gentiles have found themselves to be imperfect and their efforts to stand approved before God in the present life failures, what good could result from merely awakening them from the sleep of death? Would it not be wiser and better every way to let them perish like the brute beast?

We answer that God's Word reveals a very grand outcome to His plan of salvation. The word resurrection, as Scripturally used, signifies much more than to be merely resuscitated. It signifies awakening, and more — uplifting out of all sin and death condition, up, up, up to perfection—to all that was lost by Father Adam and redeemed in the Calvary sacrifice.

“GOD HATH APPOINTED A DAY”

This, then, is the meaning of the apostle's argument. By providing the Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of the church and the world God has made possible a fresh trial, or judgment, for Adam and his race. Adam's first judgment, or trial, day was in Eden. There he lost everything by his disobedience and brought upon himself and all his race divine sentence to death. Christ has appeared that He might redeem Adam and his race, for the very purpose of giving them individually another full, fair trial or judgment for life everlasting or death everlasting.

That general judgment day mentioned by St. Paul in our text is neither a damnation day nor a twenty-four-hour day. It is the thousand-year day of Christ, the period of His mediatorial reign, in which Satan will be bound, all evil influences be removed and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God be made to fill the whole earth. St. Peter reminds us, “Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years.” (2 Pet. 3:8) This is the key to the expressions, “The day of Christ,” “The day of judgment,” etc. The millennial day will be a day of judgment or trial in the sense that all mankind, the living and the dead, will then be brought to full knowledge of God and to full opportunity to regain by resurrection processes a complete uplift from all weaknesses, imperfections, etc., which have resulted from our share in Adam's sin and our own weakness and ignorance. Sins to the extent that they were willful will to the same extent be punishable and receive a just recompense of reward.” (Heb. 2:2) Every good endeavor will be rewarded and every shortcoming will be punished.

From this standpoint we see the force of the apostle's argument that it is the divine intention to grant to every member of Adam's race another trial, another judgment, to determine afresh and individually the worthiness or unworthiness of each to have eternal life. But why would this fact make any difference to the world in the present life? Why did not God wait until the Millennial Age and give them all a surprise? Why did He send them the message of His love and a revelation of this knowledge of His future dealings? Did He not know what the past 18 centuries has proven, namely, that few of mankind

would have the “hearing ear,” and that fewer still, after hearing,

2H759

would so love righteousness and so hate iniquity as to sacrifice the interests of the present life by espousing the Gospel message, repenting of sin and seeking to live a saintly life in opposition to all righteousness?

Yes, we answer, it is written, “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world” (Acts 15:16) God surely knew that the message of His grace would generally fall upon ears that were dull of hearing. That we might know this He caused it to be written to the prophecies in advance, that few would have the hearing ear for His message of love and mercy. Why, then, did He send the message? We answer that there were two reasons for His so doing.

1. He intended that a witness should be given so that those comprehending would have an incentive to a reformation of life. He wished all to know that their responsibility in life would be proportionate to their knowledge of this fact of redemption. This principle is stated in the Scriptures of our Lord. He declares that he who knew not and was disobedient would be punished with fewer stripes and a lighter punishment for his transgressions, while those who knew better and sinned with deliberation will be punished with many stripes — in that millennial day. In other words, every violation of conscience sinks the transgressor lower and blunts his moral sense the more, and makes the highway of holiness so much the more difficult for him to enter upon during the millennium. In accordance with his knowledge and right living in the present life will be the responsibilities and advantages of the life that is to come under the mediatorial kingdom of Messiah. Whoever seeks peace and righteousness will be proportionately blessed, and on coming forth from the tomb will have a character proportionately the more in harmony with the divine standards and a shorter journey to make to perfection and eternal life.

2. Another reason for the promulgation of the good tidings of the millennial day of the Lord’s judgment is that God wishes to use this message as a primary lesson to do a primary work of instruction for a special class of “elect” characters, whom He is seeking in the present time before the inauguration of the mediatorial kingdom. He calls these His jewels, the Bride of Christ, His “members.” This class is specially called out of the world now in advance of the millennium, that they may eventually be God’s royal priesthood, or priestly kings, in association with their Redeemer. These, according to the Scriptures, are to be Associate Judges of the world with Christ. St. Paul asks, “Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2) We do know it, thank God. And we

know that they will be thoroughly competent for that work. Their experiences in the present life, in battling against the world and the flesh and the devil and coming off conquerors through the assistance of the great High Priest, make them competent Judges of the world; competent priests to assist and to bless the world; competent under-priests to govern the world from the Spirit plane.

“BUILDING UP YOURSELVES”

To this special class I particularly address myself. I am glad to warn all men everywhere to repent, and glad also to give them the good reason why they should repent — to tell them of God’s appointed time, the millennial epoch, in the which all shall have a full opportunity of gaining eternal life through Christ. I am glad to assure them that every endeavor for righteousness put forth now will bring large returns of character development and better position then. I warn them that every willful transgression, all willful ignorance, will react upon them to their disadvantage and make for shame and lasting contempt on their part, under the glorious sunlight of that millennial day. It will search out and expose to all humanity their weaknesses, their sins, to the extent that these have been accepted or approved or not resisted.

But as I said before, I trust that among the ten million readers reached by my sermons every week there are some who are of the saintly class, “called, chosen and faithful” — some of this jewel class, whose judgment or trial is in progress now. I trust that these are striving with might and main to make their calling and election sure through faith in the Redeemer’s sacrifice and obedience to His Law of the Spirit of Life—the Law of Love. Now is our judgment day, our day of testing or trial. We will not stand or fall as congregations and denominations or lodges or societies. Our testing is an individual one and nothing short of loyalty of heart to the Lord, to His Truth and to the brethren will make us as the Lord’s jewels, “heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ our Lord; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together” (Rom. 8:17). Such have my special sympathy, my special endeavors, my special love and my special prayers. And the prayers of all such I solicit on my part that I may continue faithful to the end of the journey and with you all hear the Master’s precious words, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things; enter into the joys of thy Lord.” (Matt. 25:21)

2H760

[Tippecanoe County Democrat, January 16, 1910](#)

**COST OF CHURCH
FEDERATION—TO
CONGREGATIONALISTS,
PRESBYTERIANS,
METHODISTS**

This discourse, first of four series on, “The Cost of Church Federation”, has been republished, in part, in Overland Monthly, pages 234-237, entitled, “Creed Smashing Necessary For Federation” and republished, in its entirety, in Convention Report Sermons, pages 68-70, entitled, “Church Federation-Part I.”

[National Labor Tribune, January 23, 1910](#)

**THE COST OF CHURCH
FEDERATION TO
BAPTISTS, ADVENTISTS,
AND DISCIPLES**

This discourse, second of four series on “The Cost of Church Federation”, has been republished, in part, in Overland Monthly, pages 239-242, entitled, “Changes of Creeds Necessary”, and republished in its entirety in Convention Report Sermons, pages 73-76, entitled, “Church Federation, Part II.”

[The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, February 6, 1910](#)

**WHAT EPISCOPALIANS,
CATHOLICS AND
LUTHERANS MUST
SURRENDER**

This discourse, third of four series on “The Cost of Church Federation”, has been republished, in part, in Overland Monthly, pages 243-247, entitled, “Episcopalian, Catholic, Lutheran”, and in Convention Report Sermons, entire, pages 76-78, entitled, “Church Federation, Part III.”

[National Labor Tribune, January 30, 1910](#)

THE CHURCH MILITANTS SURRENDER TO THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

This discourse, final of four series on “The Cost of Church Federation”, has been republished in part; in Overland Monthly, pages 187-190 under same title, and republished in its entirety in Convention Report Sermons pages 78-81, under title, “Church Federation-partly.”

2H761

[The National Labor Tribune, February 16, 1910](#)

THE FEAR OF THE LORD

PROPER AND IMPROPER KINDS OF FEAR

London, Ont., February 16— Pastor C. T. Russell, of Allegheny, Pa., preached here twice today to intelligent and attentive audiences. We report his evening discourse on “The Fear of the Lord,” from the text, “This people draw nigh unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men.” (Isa. 29:13) He said:

We should be as anxious to develop in our hearts the proper fear of the Lord, namely reverence, veneration, as we should be anxious to root out of our hearts the improper fear of dread based, as our text declares, upon misapprehensions of the divine character taught not by the Scriptures, the Word of God, but by the precepts of men. This false fear is to be found everywhere amongst the heathen nations and amongst the civilized. Fear is closely associated with caution, which every human being should possess to a considerable degree; but caution rightly exercised calls for evidence, for facts and in proportion as it is properly supplied with the truth respecting God and his character, it should preserve us from any unreasonable fears. While father Adam was in his perfection, before his transgression, he was in full harmony with his creator, and it is reasonable to suppose that no shadow of fear crossed his pathway. It was after he became a transgressor that he feared the Lord and hated himself, realizing that he had come under the divine sentence of death. So it is with all who perceive that they are sinners and who realize that God is the very personification of perfection and holiness. They understand that they are out of harmony with him and that he cannot approve them on account of their blemishes. Hence the natural attitude of all mankind is a

realization of divine displeasure resting upon them. This is proper enough and cannot do otherwise than result favorably, for, as the Scriptures suggest,

**“THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS
THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM”**

This is the proper fear or reverence and appreciation of the wide distinction there is between the Almighty and ourselves, especially on account of our fallen condition, in which we were born —born in sin, shapen in iniquity. (Psa. 51:5) This proper fear should be so pronounced, this feeling of alienation from God and subjection to his disapproval should be so indelibly impressed upon us as to make us feel that we were ostracized. However, a proper veneration for the Almighty should lead us to be on the lookout for any evidence of divine mercy that might be extended. We have no justification whatever for the thought that the almighty Creator had vicious feelings toward any of his creatures; it is contrary to reason that we should fear eternal torment or that God would in any manner deal unjustly with us, even if we became his avowed enemies. He has declared that “all the wicked will he destroy.” (Psa. 145:20), and loving life we may well fear that destruction, dread it, abhor obliteration and consider that the dying conditions which prevail all around us are indeed manifestations of the wrath of God revealed against all unrighteousness, against sin, under his sentence, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Ezek. 18:4

This proper fear would suggest to us that even though in our fallen condition we be not able to meet the divine requirements of perfection in thought, word and deed, nevertheless it would be right for us to come as near the divine standard as possible in our daily living — even though we realize that we are already under the death sentence. Those who are in this attitude of heart are best prepared to hear the voice of the Lord, which indeed insists that we are sinners and that God is just in the death sentence which he has pronounced, but which informs us of his love and sympathy and his provision of a Savior, who already has died for our sins and thus made judicial satisfaction therefore, and who by virtue of that satisfaction now stands ready to forgive us our sins, to cover our blemishes, and to treat us as though we were no longer sinners; to assist us back to relationship to God by faith. We are informed, too, that those who accept these provisions of the present time and follow in the footsteps of the Master will shortly have a blessing from the Father and that on a higher plane than they ever enjoyed before; that they will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye in the First Resurrection, to be like their Lord, spirit beings, and that they will be joint heirs with him in his

glorious Millennial Kingdom, which is to bless the world. Thus we see that this class in a right attitude may be privileged to hear of more than a recovery of all that was lost in Adam —something better than restitution to the original condition of perfect manhood in a perfect paradise. Thus the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, is profitable and helpful to us in all the steps in which his grace shall lead us that we may make our calling and election sure to the wonderful things to which we have been invited. But on the other hand there is a wrong fear, contrary to the teachings of God's Word, the fear mentioned in our text, which is

“TAUGHT BY THE PRECEPTS OF MEN”

This fear is as injurious as the other one is advantageous. If we inquire in heathen lands we find this fear everywhere. The heathen make no profession of love for God, for they know nothing respecting him that could command their love; they know of him as an almighty devil who wishes occasion against them to do them evil and they seek to propitiate him and thus to turn away his savage wrath. But, alas, we do not need to go to the heathen for illustrations of improper fear taught by human precepts! Christendom as a whole seems to be under this same slavish bondage of fear, which misapprehends the divine character and divine plan and stands in dread of God. It is Christendom, indeed, that is addressed in our text. Not all of Christendom; but, alas, a vast majority are truly described by the words, “This people draweth nigh unto me with their lips, while their heart is far from me.” Oh, how much of sham there is in much of the worship that is perfunctorily offered to the Almighty! How few there are who worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness —who worship him in spirit and in truth! The difficulty is that these improper worshippers have such a wrong fear of God that they cannot love him and hence cannot draw nigh to him with their hearts. They are in dread of him because of his power and because of the false fear they have received from the “dark ages” —traditions of men wrongly supposed to be the teachings of the Bible.

Missionaries tell us that one of the greatest difficulties they have in securing the hearts of the heathen is because the latter cannot appreciate the teaching that their fathers and brothers have gone to an eternity of torture; because no missionary ever before came to tell them of the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved. Can we blame the poor heathen that they should fail to appreciate a God whose character is thus misrepresented, traduced, slandered, blasphemed? It is rather to the discredit of Christendom that the same story, the same perversion, called the Gospel, awakens so little protest in the minds, in the hearts, in the sympathies of Christendom itself; for the story is the same

traditions of men in both instances, only that it strikes the heathen more forcefully because he has not been inured to it from infancy. The false Gospel, traditions of men, preached in the name of the Lord and the Bible, become so familiar to us in infancy that by the time we grow up its horrible details have been largely lost sight of. To us as well as to the heathen these traditions of men speak fear of the Almighty, who, according to all the creeds of Christendom, has already sent to eternal torment the vast majority of our relatives, friends and neighbors — all except a “little flock,” all except the “Very Elect,” all except the saints, all except those who walked in the footpaths of Jesus, all except those who have heard and accepted Christ as their Redeemer and who covenant to him to be his disciples and be faithful in their covenant —called, chosen and faithful.

No wonder! Ah, no wonder! What other effect could this “doctrine of devils” (1 Tim. 4:1) have upon the minds of intelligent, thinking people than to drive out all love, all reverence for God. What other effect could it have than to produce that slavish fear that would give outward acknowledgment and bow the knee and outwardly conform to praise and prayer but inwardly, at heart, be far from the true worship of the true God! If we had no Bible at all and only a very moderate amount of common sense, reason itself would teach us the falsity of the doctrines inculcated through human traditions from the “dark ages,” the falsity of believing that our Creator could be so unjust as to bring us into life without our consent, permitting us to be “born in sin and shapen in iniquity,” permitting us to have imperfect heads and thus imperfect reasoning faculties and morals as well as imperfect physical faculties, permitting us to be surrounded by an unfavorable environment, and then to make the condition of life very difficult and the alternative an eternity of fire and intense misery. Who but a devil could have concocted such a miserable misrepresentation of the divine character? The Scriptures assure us that these traditions of men which are so reprehensible owe their origin to our Adversary, the devil, Satan, who has been blinding and deceiving the race for centuries.

It is high time now, in the gray dawn of the new dispensation, that all the children of the light should be awake and use the Bible, the God given lamp for our feet and lantern for our footsteps, that in the light of it we might find the true character of God and be enabled to render to him true reverence, true fear, true worship, and that we should be free from the false fear which has been taught us by the traditions of men and which has done much to harden the hearts of men

and to alienate them from the God of justice and love. I speak as one who has full sympathy with those who are yet in blindness and darkness. I well remember the awful bondage of fear that was upon my own soul as the result of the swallowing of the traditions of men handed down to us through all the creeds of Christendom, the doctrine of Purgatory being a little less unreasonable than the creeds of Protestants, though equally of human traditions, contradictory to the Scriptures rightly interpreted.

I am safe in assuming that my own experience in connection with this fear born of human tradition was considerably in harmony with that of other fellow-Christians. My only relief was in forgetting it, in stifling thought, in refusing to reason on the subject. As I tried to forget the fear born of the error I found help in such passages of Scripture as were not twisted by mistranslation and misinterpretation; those which declare the love of God, which picture him as a Father and assure us that “like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.” (Psa. 103:13)—with the proper fear or reverence, homage. It would have been impossible for me to think of the Lord as a father, except as I was able to measurably cover over and forget the devilish things respecting God taught me in the creeds of men who, themselves believing those creeds and practicing them, burned one another at the stake, thinking the while that they were copying their God.

“THAT THEY MIGHT KNOW THEE”

Although at the first advent of Christ this doctrine of devils had not so thoroughly permeated the human mind, especially the Jewish mind, nevertheless our Lord intimated distinctly that the difficulty with the Israelites, the professed people of God at that time, was that they did not really know him, that to some extent their minds had been blinded and beclouded so that they could not and did not appreciate his real character. The “traditions of the elders” stood in their way, as the traditions of the “dark ages” now obscure our vision. Our Lord warned the people against those traditions of the elders and instructed them to search the Scriptures. And so now we advise Christian people to abandon the creeds of the “dark ages” and to hold fast to the Bible, the Word of God, as the anchor of truth, which alone will keep them secure in the storm which is already sweeping over the world and which will make shipwreck of the faith of all who are not thus properly anchored.

Our Lord’s words to which I refer are a part of his prayer to his Father, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) These words are still true; no one can be in that

attitude where he or she would be so in harmony with God as to be fit for eternal life, except as he has attained a correct knowledge of God. To know God and to know about God are entirely different matters. Some know more and some less about God, just as some know more and some less about the King of England, the President of the United States and others. But it is one thing to know about people and another thing to know them. Doubtless much has been told us of the potentates of earth, which is but human tradition and very misleading. We may have heard anecdotes respecting them, which gave us too high an opinion or too low an estimate of their character, and hence our knowledge of them does not permit us to say that we are well acquainted with them. Similarly, only more so the divine character has been misrepresented both by friends and foes, under the delusions of the great Adversary — and no one could know God as he is misrepresented by his adversary, Satan, and love him.

It is only when we begin to get the inside information, accessible only to the friends of God, that we can have a true conception of his character. This inside information comes to us through the testimony of the Word of God — Moses and the prophets, Jesus and the apostles. And in hearkening to these either we must exclude the views coming to us from the “dark ages,” or else if we hearken to them at all we must criticize them, expecting to find as a result of the critical investigation that our God is fully up to his own declaration respecting his character; that he is just, that he is wise, that he is powerful and that the sum of all his gracious qualities is love. Anything that the traditions of men may suggest to the contrary of this divine message must be rejected or at least held in abeyance while we make further study, and our study should be from this standpoint —with this expectation, that we shall find in the great God, our Creator, one worthy of our worship and possessed of all the qualities which his Word extols and which he commands us to copy, and the chiefest of these is love —love that extends not only to our God and finds him worthy of love but to our neighbor, even though he may be unworthy of it, and our enemies and is gracious and forgiving, not vindictive and malicious.

Only those who are enabled thus to get the true picture of God before their minds and to crowd out or entirely destroy from memory the horrible misrepresentations of the traditions of men and the fears thus engendered by them —only these can know God. It is their privilege to come into close relationship with him, to feel his love and to have something of the same love begotten in their own hearts. This knowledge of God’s character is largely dependent upon knowledge of his plan. If a workman is known by

his product, so the Master workman must be known by his finished work. He tells us that his work is not yet finished; that he created man perfect, that he permitted him to be a free agent, that he foreknew and permitted his fall and that he pronounced and executed the sentence of death against man (but he tells us nothing about a sentence of eternal torment). He tells us that he sent his Son to be the Redeemer of the world and to lay down his life on our behalf, dying the just for the unjust. That by dying for Adam the Son redeemed him and all of his race who lost life through him, that thus a corresponding price has been paid and that eventually, as a result, all mankind shall go free from the sentence — free from death by a resurrection from the dead. He tells us that all these experiences with sin and death will thus ultimately prove a great lesson to mankind as well as a lesson to the angels respecting sin, its penalty and respecting divine love in providing redemption and resurrection. He tells us further that this recovery from death and punishment of sin and destruction of Satan wait until a due time, which divine wisdom has appointed. He assures us that in the interim since the redemption has been accomplished, he is calling out first of all a Church, to be his joint-heir and associate in the great work of spreading the blessings of restitution and resurrection to every creature, with the knowledge of God and the assistance necessary to attain life eternal if they will. He informs us that even for the incorrigible he has no eternal torment in store, but that for such the penalty shall be “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power” — without hope of a further redemption or resurrection or recovery in any manner. (2 Thess. 1:9) As we come to see the reasonableness, the justice, the goodness, wisdom, the love of the divine plan, we come to know him whose character is represented in that plan, whom to know thus is to love as the most just, the most wise and most gracious one, far above our highest natural ideal and yet the ideal of which our hearts approve. And this is the testimony of the Scriptures, too: “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans than your plans.” Isa. 55:9

DRUNK WITH BABYLON’S WINE

In the Book of Revelation, which is a book of symbolical pictures, the Lord represents all the civilized world as becoming intoxicated with the wine of Babylon—intoxicated with false doctrine. (Rev. 18:2, 3) And here in connection with our text the same figure is brought to our attention. Christendom is represented (v. 8) as being hungry and dreaming of satisfaction, but on awakening to thought finding only emptiness and thirst. “They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink,” the Prophet declares (v. 9). We can see this staggering, this uncertainty of

mind in every direction, not merely amongst Christian professors in general, but also amongst the ministry. They know not what to think, they are confused, addled, as the Prophet points out. He declares that a spirit of stupor is upon them, especially upon the teachers and prominent ones of Christendom. (v. 10) He declares that their vision of the future, their understanding of divine revelation, the Bible, “is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed.” So much is this so that few any longer expect to be able to understand the Bible or to find in it anything reasonable, logical, satisfactory. He declares that when men deliver the book to one that is learned, saying, ‘Read (explain) this, I pray thee: he saith, I can not; for it is sealed.’ (v. 11)—I do not understand it. How true to the facts of the case! How few are able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, or to quote the Word of the Lord on any subject in a connected, logical and reasonable manner! Then through the Prophet he points out the attitude of the common people. If the Book, the Bible, is delivered to them and they be asked for an explanation of it, they reply that they cannot be expected to understand or expound the Scriptures, since they are unlearned—that the exposition of the Bible should be left to the Doctors of Theology. (v. 12) Then our text follows, saying that the result of this neglect of the Word of God is the cause for the formality which prevails in Christendom, many drawing nigh to the Lord whose hearts are far from him, honoring him with their mouth and their lips, but with their hearts out of accord, and full of fear because of their having accepted the precepts of traditions of men instead of the Word of God, which is so generally neglected. (v. 13)

Let us, dear brethren, resolve that whatever others may do or say or believe or teach, we will hold fast to the Word of God which is able to make us wise unto salvation and give us an inheritance amongst the saints in light. Let us resolve, as expressed in the succeeding verse (v. 23) that we will be indeed God’s children, God’s workmanship, who will sanctify, honor his name and reverence our God and that as our dear Redeemer suggests we will thus come to a clear knowledge of the Father and of the Son and of the glorious plan of salvation which they are working out, and in which, as the glorified Elect Church, we may have a share during the Millennium — that all the families of the earth may thus be blessed with the knowledge and with opportunity for restitution and eventually eternal life, as they render obedience to that knowledge.

2H765

The Clinton Courant, February 19, 1910

WHAT GOD REQUIRES OF US

“What doth thy God require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”
Micah 6:8

Norfolk, Va., Feb. 13—Are the words of our text true? Is it possible that the true religion of the Bible demands nothing more of us than is expressed in this text? What about the Jewish Law? What about its sin-offering, its burnt-offering, its thank-offerings? What about the ten commandments? What about the digest of those commandments approved by our Lord Jesus, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself”? What about Church attendance? What about study of the Bible to know God’s will? What about our responsibility for the heathen? What about baptism and the Lord’s supper?

Indirectly, dear brethren, all the matters included in our questions and many more are included incidentally in the provisions of our text. Sometimes a whole sermon is preached in a few words. No one will dispute the reasonableness of the Divine requirement as stated in our text. Our Creator could not justly or with self-respect ask less than this of his creatures who would enjoy his favor. The interests of all demand that these principles should be required of every creature permitted the enjoyment of Divine favor to the extent of eternal life. Whoever fails to come up to these conditions would thus evidence his unworthiness of life eternal; his prolonged existence would merely be a prospering of sin and a menace to the happiness and righteousness of others.

But now let us see the scope of this Divine requirement, whose justice we have already acknowledged. We note the natural division of our text into three parts:

- (1) Doing justly;
- (2) Loving mercy;
- (3) Walking humbly.

The requirement of *justice* in all our dealings with our fellows, commends itself to every rational mind. It includes the whole Law of God. A brief statement of that Law which had our Lord’s approval reads, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy mind, all thy being and all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two propositions hang all the Law and the Prophets. It is but just that we should recognize our Creator as first; that we should glorify the One who gave us our being and all the

blessings that come therewith: that we should be obedient to his righteous requirements that make for our own happiness and that of others. It is also but right that we should recognize the rights of others, as we would have them recognize our rights. The Golden Rule is the barest of justice. Not a hair's breadth less would come within the requirements of our text, Do Justly. Come, then, let us reason together. How many of us do justly in all of life's affairs — in our relationship to our God and to our neighbor?

Begin at home. Let each one criticize his words and his deeds toward his parents; toward his children; toward his brothers; toward his sisters; toward husband; toward wife. Do we in all of our relationships of life treat these who are so near and so dear to us according to the standards of *justice*, according to the Golden Rule? Do we do toward them as we would have them do toward us? If not, after making a beginning with the Lord, striving to render to him our homage and obedience, let us closely scrutinize every word, every act of the home life and see to what extent these can be improved upon and made more nearly just. The majority of people, we feel sure, will be surprised to know how unjust they have been toward those who are of the very nearest and dearest of fleshly relationships.

Follow the matter up and consider the justice or injustice of your words and deeds in daily life with your neighbors and daily associates. Do you invariably speak to them in the same words and with the same tone and gesture that you would approve if they were in your place and you in theirs? In matters of business do you drive a closer bargain with them than you would think just for them to make with you? Or, on the other hand, do you ask of them higher prices for the services or materials you furnish them than you would consider just and right if you were the purchaser and they the vendors? Do you watch your chickens that they do not commit depredations upon your neighbor's garden as carefully as you would wish your neighbor to watch his chickens as respects your garden, if you had one? Do you blow no more tobacco smoke in the face of your neighbor than you would like to have him blow in your face? Are you as careful about wiping your feet when entering his house as you would like him to be when entering your house? Do you treat all men, women, children and animals as kindly, as gently, as properly every way as you think would be just and right if you were in their place and

2H766

they in yours? Do you speak as kindly of your neighbors as you would have them speak of you? Or do you hold up their imperfections to ridicule, as you would like to have them hold up yours? Do you guard your tongue so

that you speak only things you would think proper for your neighbor to speak respecting you, if you changed places?

SIMPLE JUSTICE — NOTHING MORE

Do you not begin to see, dear friends, that what God requires of us is much beyond what the majority have been rendering? Do you stand appalled and tell me that it would be impossible to live fully up to that standard? I agree with you. And St. Paul agrees, saying, “We cannot do the things which we would.” The Scriptures again agree and declare “There is none righteous, no, not one. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”

What shall we do? Shall we say that because we are unable to live up to our own conceptions and standards of justice we will make no attempt to do so, but abandon those standards entirely? God forbid. We are weak enough and imperfect enough as it is. To ignore our best ideals of justice would be to take off all the brakes and permit the downward tendencies of our depraved natures to go rapidly from bad to worse—to carry us further and further from God and the standards of character which he approves. We can surely be content to do nothing less than our very best to live up to our own ideals and to raise those ideals as nearly as possible to the Divine standard.

WHAT WOULD BE THE USE?

Suppose we do our very best daily to measure up to our highest conceptions of our God-given ideals and standards, would God accept of this and count us worthy of his favor and of eternal life? Surely not. The Law of the Lord is perfect. Justice is Justice. Not the hearer of a law, not the well-wishing, receives the reward, but the doer, the obedient! Here, then, we find ourselves in difficulty. With our hearts, our minds, we approve God’s Law and desire to be obedient to him, but find, as St. Paul says, that many things we wish to do we fail to accomplish; and many of the things we do not wish to do we cannot avoid. “We cannot do the things that we would.” We approve the excellent demands of God’s Law. We disapprove the imperfections of our own flesh. Like St. Paul, we cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this dead body?”—this body that is imperfect through inherited sin and weaknesses. With our minds we serve God’s Law and approve it; but with our bodies we come short. What is our hope? How shall we be delivered? Can we prevail upon God to change the reasonable requirement of our text so that it shall read. What doth God require of me but to will justly and do imperfectly? We can not hope for such a change in the Divine Law. Are we then hopeless as respects Divine approval and eternal life? (Romans 7: 17-24)

THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE

In our moment of perplexity we hear God's message "speaking peace through Jesus Christ our Lord." The message of peace is that what we could not do for ourselves in the way of lifting ourselves up to Divine approval God has provided shall be done for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Our failure to keep the Law marks us as unworthy of eternal life, and worthy of the wages of sin — not eternal torment, but death. God in mercy concluded to offer us eternal life as a gift — because of our not actually meriting it under his legal requirements. Thus we read, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23) What we could not obtain legally under the Divine requirements God proffers to us as a gift. But the gift is a conditional one as expressed in the words, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." Only those who accept Jesus Christ as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" may have God's gift of eternal life. Hence it will be seen that it is wholly a mistake to suppose that the heathen at home or abroad can get eternal life, the gift of God, in ignorance of Christ. All the Scriptures confirm this and declare not only that we cannot save ourselves by obedience to the terms of God's Law, but that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" — through faith in his name — through faith in his blood (Acts 4:12).

But how is this done justly? and, why does God so limit his gift of eternal life?

God's Law represents himself and cannot change. He cannot require less than perfection. To do so would be to fill the Universe to all eternity with depraved and imperfect beings. God has a higher plan than this and declares, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways (Isaiah 55:9). He explains that his ultimate purpose is that there shall be no imperfect creature in all his Universe. All whose hearts are loyal to him and the principles of his government shall be perfected, and all others shall be destroyed in the Second Death. Thus, eventually, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God. Then every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth and under the earth, shall be heard saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the

2H767

Lamb forever (Revelation 5:13).

YOU ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

Possibly God could have arranged some other way of dealing with sin and sinners which would not have

required the death of Jesus as the Ransom price, the purchase price, the redemption price for sinners. But the fact that this method was adopted by our great Creator assures us that no other method would have been so wise, so just, so beneficial. No other method would have so fully demonstrated God's Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power.

In brief, then, God's arrangement is that all of his human creatures shall have opportunity of full return to harmony with himself, provided they wish to do so, provided their hearts, their wills, are fully responsive to the letter and spirit of his Law — the requirements set forth in our text. God has provided in Jesus for the satisfaction of Divine Justice as respects all of the condemned race who desire to return to his favor.

We agree with all the orthodox creeds of Christendom that only repentance from sin and an endeavor to put it away from our thoughts and words and deeds, combined with faith in the Redeemer's sacrifice and a full consecration of heart and life to do the Father's will — nothing short of this attainment will gain the salvation which God is now holding out to mankind. To such the Apostle explains that the righteousness, the full demands of the Law of God, his full requirement, "is fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:4). From the moment of our consecration and begetting of the holy Spirit God deals with this class as with sons. He trains them in the School of Christ, disciplining, chastening, proving them, testing the sincerity of their consecration Vows and the loyalty of their hearts. To those who prove faithful the great reward is promised—glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with the Lord Jesus Christ in his Millennial Kingdom and its work of blessing all the families of the earth. (Galatians 3:29; Revelation 3:21)

Our *disagreement* with all "orthodox creeds" is in respect to what shall be done with the unsaintly —with those who do not present themselves to God and who are not begotten again of the holy Spirit. Our creeds of the dark ages misrepresented the teachings of the Bible in respect to these and told us that they are all to be consigned for hundreds or thousands of years to Purgatory or for all eternity in hell torment. Not such is the teaching of God's Word, but the very reverse, as we have previously shown, the Scriptures do not declare, in thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be *damm*ed; but the reverse of this — that they shall all be *bles*sed. All the sin-blinded eyes will be opened. All the deaf ears of ignorance shall be unstopped. For the blest thousands years of Christ's reign the world's uplifting or resurrection will proceed, while the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. The angels on the plains of Bethlehem did not declare to the shepherds, Fear greatly! for behold, we bring you bad tidings of great misery which shall be unto all people. Their message

was the reverse of this: “Fear not; behold we bring you *good tidings* of great joy which shall be unto *all people*” [for God who had a “due time” for calling natural Israel and who had also a “due time” for calling spiritual Israel, has a “due time” for making known the riches of his grace to the non-elect world of mankind. And the “elect” of spiritual Israel and of natural Israel are to be the channels of this Divine grace and mercy, which, during the Millennial Age, will flow as a river of salvation, to which all mankind will be invited to come and drink freely.

LOVE MERCY AND WALK HUMBLY

It may astonish some that God requires even more than *Justice*, which is his legal standard. In his permission of sin and its wage of death he has shown the sinner his own mercy or love. And it is for the sinner’s benefit and for the good of all, that God requires that all who will have the full benefit of his mercy shall be required to cultivate this mercy quality in their own hearts. As the sinner attempts to conform his life to the perfect standard and finds himself unable to keep God’s Law and obliged to come for mercy to the Throne of Grace, he is informed that he can have that mercy only upon condition that he will exercise similar mercy toward those who trespass against him, his ideals and interests.

Humility is a quality very necessary to every creature. Pride is a foe which besets not merely the weak and imperfect, but which overcame the great angel of light, Lucifer, and transformed him from a faithful servant of Jehovah into Satan, the Adversary of God. We are glad, therefore, that Divine Wisdom requires humility as one of the conditions of our acceptance with him. This requirement assures us of the security of the Divine Empire against all treason in the future; for none will be admitted to the eternal life conditions either now or in the Millennial Age, except the humble. Let us hearken then to the lesson of our text and conclude, with the words of the Apostle, “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” (1 Peter 5:6)

2H768

[Tippecanoe County Democrat, February 25, 1910](#)

THE TWO SALVATIONS

“God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

“Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any

such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Tampa, Fla., Feb. 20—Pastor C. T. Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle preached twice here today in our largest auditorium to the “Bible Students’ Convention.” The large audience seemed deeply interested. He said:

Some apply the first text only and think of the Divine Program as being merely an endeavor to rescue mankind from sin and death to righteousness and eternal life in the present time. Such as hold this view are much confused, because it must be acknowledged that comparatively little has been done, or is now being done, for man’s uplift. After six thousand years it is still true that “The whole world lieth in the Wicked One;” “Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen.” In order to have any confidence at all in this theory those who hold it are obliged to greatly lower their standards. They are forced to hope that God will admit millions of unfit people, crude, rude, ignorant and wicked to eternal life and happiness, or perchance provide for them Purgatorial experiences, to make them fit, righteous and acceptable for life eternal. As a whole, Christian people are greatly bewildered. The tendency of their bewilderment is toward doubt, skepticism, atheism.

The other view briefly stated is that God never intended the salvation of the world, but merely the salvation of the Church, “elect according to the foreknowledge of God through sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the Truth.” Those who hold this theory have great confusion also, because it seems incomprehensible that God would make no provision for “thousands of millions” of Adam’s race, but arrange for them to be born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and to go down to the tomb (or worse) without a clear knowledge of God and his purposes and will respecting them.

As we have already frequently set forth, both of the described theories are erroneous. The Scriptures set forth two salvations, entirely separate and distinct. They are different as respects time, in that the one “salvation began to be spoken by our Lord” at his First Advent, and began to be applicable to his Church at Pentecost, and will wholly cease at his Second Coming in the end of this Age. The other salvation neither applied before our Lord’s First Advent nor during this Gospel Age, but will apply to all mankind, except the Church, during the Millennium—the thousand years of the reign of Christ and the Church, specially designed for the blessing of the world and its uplifting out of sin and death conditions.

These two salvations are distinctly different as to kind, as well as respects their plan of operation. The salvation of the Church during this Gospel Age—since Pentecost—means not only a deliverance from sin and death conditions to eternal life, but provides that the eternal

life will be on the heavenly or spiritual plane and not on the earthly or human plane of existence. Thus the Apostle declares that our “inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away and is reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation” (1 Peter 1:4, 5). Our Lord also told that in the resurrection we shall be like unto the angels. The Apostle also declares that ultimately we shall be partakers of the divine nature and like our Lord and Redeemer.

Hence, all who participate in this salvation of this Gospel Age are Scripturally spoken of as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, whose “citizenship is in heaven.” These are assured that at the Lord’s Second Coming they will constitute the First Resurrection class. They are guaranteed that only the blessed and holy will have part therein, and that all participating in that First Resurrection will be Royal Priests unto God and unto Christ, and reign with him a thousand years (Revelation 20:6). They are assured that the transformation of minds which they now experience through the begetting of the holy Spirit will, in their resurrection, result in a complete transformation, providing them with *spirit bodies*. Thus it is written of their resurrection, “It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; It is sown an animal body; it is raised a spiritual body” (1 Corinthians 15:42-44). Of those who will share in the Church’s salvation the Apostle says, “We shall not all sleep, but must all be changed,” because “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15:50, 51).

The world’s salvation which will follow will be

2H769

wholly different from this. It will not include a change of nature from earthly to spirit nature. It will mean a rescue from sin and death to the earthly perfection of the original man, in the image and likeness of his Creator, and surrounded by every necessary blessing for his comfort. Human perfection and the Eden home were lost through disobedience to God. The Divine arrangement is that the merit of our Lord’s obedience unto death, when ultimately applied for mankind, shall fully cancel the death sentence upon him. More and better than this, God has promised that the same Sin-Offering shall seal a New Covenant between himself and mankind. The blessings of that New Covenant arrangement will then immediately begin. The great Redeemer will thenceforth be the great Mediator of that New Covenant. The whole world of mankind will be fully under his supervision and government for their blessing, their correction in righteousness, their uplifting out of sin and death conditions—back, back, back, to all that was lost in

Eden. All of this was the original design of the Great Creator. All of this will be outworked through the Great Redeemer. All of this was secured or *sureties* by his death, finished at Calvary (Hebrews 7:22)

St. Peter, pointing down to that glorious time of the world's blessing, calls it "times of refreshing and times of restitution." He tells us that all the holy prophets described the blessings of those restitution times —the thousand years, the Millennium (Acts 3:19-21). When once we get the eyes of our understanding opened, we find the Apostle's words thoroughly corroborated by the Divine records, which describe the wonderful blessings that are to come when the earth shall yield her increase. Then Paradise Lost shall be Paradise Regained. Then God will make his earthly footstool glorious. Then the blessing of the Lord shall make rich and he will add no sorrow therewith. Then streams shall break forth in the desert and the wilderness and solitary places shall be glad. But most glorious will be the change in humanity. The Lord promises to turn to the people a "pure message" —instead of the contradiction of creeds of heathenism and Churchianity. He promises that Satan shall be bound for that thousand years, that he may deceive the nations no more. He promises that then all the "blinded eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped" (Isaiah 35:5; 2 Corinthians 4:4)

TWO SALVATIONS — ONE SAVIOR

Both of these salvations, according to the Bible, result from the death of Jesus our Redeemer, who died in obedience to the Divine will, "Died, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18). The Scriptures clearly show not only the two salvations, but also two parts of the Redeemer's work, distinctly separating his work for the Church from his work for the world. In his death there was a Divine general provision for the sins of the whole world and a special provision for the sins of the Church. The two thoughts are frequently brought out in the Scriptures. One text distinctly declares, "He is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the Church's sins], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." His death constituted the satisfaction price. The Redeemer applied that merit for the Church's sins, "for us," long ago, eighteen centuries before we were born. Only when we became believers and entered into a Covenant of sacrifice did we obtain our share in the merit of that great sacrifice. The world has not yet received its share of that promised blessing, but the operation of the Divine Plan is sure and will bring it to them "in due time," as St. Paul declares (1 Timothy 2:6).

The drawing and calling of the Church has not been along the lines of human perfection, for all are sinners and none righteous or perfect. And many of those drawn of the Lord were by nature much more fallen and

depraved than some who give no evidence of the work of grace in their hearts. The Lord's calling and drawing seem to be along the lines of justice, love of righteousness, faith, humility and obedience. These qualities will all belong to the perfect man. But all have lost them in varying degrees. Such as respond to the Lord's call now are accepted as being in the right heart attitude which, if they had perfect bodies, would constitute them perfect men. In other words, they have qualities of heart which, if brought to a knowledge of the Truth, would prove some of them to be pure in heart and such as the Lord would desire should have eternal life and all of his favors. But more are called and drawn by God's providences and the preaching of his message than he designs to save in the present salvation. He is choosing a very select class for a very special purpose and therefore makes the terms and conditions of their salvation extremely difficult. As a consequence we read, "Many are called, but few chosen" —under this "high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

TERMS OF SALVATION DIFFER

Of course, these different salvations imply different terms or conditions. God's requirement of Adam, that he might continue to live forever and everlastingly enjoy Divine favor, his Eden Home, etc., was obedience to reasonable, just requirements. It was his violation of the Divine Law that brought upon him the sentence of death— "Dying thou shalt die" —with all that this has implied . to him and his posterity of

2H770

mental, moral and physical decline, weakness, death. The requirement of God for the world of mankind during the Millennial Age will similarly be —obedience to God's just, reasonable regulations, laws. Whoever then will render obedience may with proportionate rapidity go up on the highway of holiness toward perfection at its end. Whoever refuses obedience to the extent of his ability will fail to make progress and ultimately die the Second Death, from which there will be no redemption and no resurrection.

Such obedience as will be required of mankind in the great Mediator's Kingdom will include their cooperation in the resistance of their own fallen weaknesses. It will include the exercise of patience and kindness towards their fellow-creatures, fellow-sufferers. The Divine Law of love to God with all the heart, mind, soul, strength and for the neighbor as for one's self they must learn fully. As they will realize their own blemishes and strive to overcome them and ask, not the Father, but the Mediator for forgiveness, they will be obliged to follow the Divine rule of exercising towards others similar

mercy and forgiveness to that which they desire for themselves. But they will not be required to enter into the covenant of self-sacrifice, self-denial, etc. All the blessings of God on the earthly plane will be for them fully and freely to use and enjoy, in harmony with the Divine regulation.

The conditions governing the salvation of the Church are wholly different from those which will appertain to the world. The Church is called out of the world under a Divine invitation to suffer with Christ in the present life and during this Gospel Age and then to reign with Christ during the Millennial Age, participating in his Mediatorial Kingdom for the blessing, uplifting, salvation of the world. It is not in vain, therefore, that our Lord and the apostles, in setting forth the call of the Church during this Age, specified particularly and frequently the necessity for all who would share in this salvation to participate with the Redeemer in *his sacrificing*, in *his death*, and consequently participate in *his resurrection* and in his reign of glory. Hark to the words, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life;" "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my Throne;" "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27). Let us remember our Lord's words to the disciples James and John, respecting a place in His Millennial Throne. He intimated that the getting to the Throne at all, in any place, would imply great humility and self-sacrifice. He asked the disciples, "Are ye able (willing) to drink of the cup that I shall drink of and to be baptized with the baptism (into death) that I am baptized with?" (Mark 10:38) Harken again; This cup of which he tells us we must drink, if we would sit in his Throne, is his *communion cup*. It is offered, not to the world, but to his consecrated followers. It is not another cup, but "My Cup." The invitation was, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Drink ye all of it" (Matthew 26:28, 27) It must all be drunk before the many, the world, can get their share of the intended blessing through the New Covenant, which this blood seals. And only the disciples of Christ, only those who desire to walk in his steps, are invited to drink of that cup. All of them are so invited and they will drink all of it. None of it will be left for the world during the Millennial Age to drink. It is a special privilege to drink of this cup. With the drinking of it goes the special blessing of the special salvation of this Gospel Age. Except we eat of his flesh (appropriate the merit of his sacrifice), and unless we drink his blood (join in sacrifice with him), we have no life in us—inherent life, immortality.

So far as our hearts and minds are concerned at the time of our consecration they must be fully given up to the Lord ere he will accept them. We could be no more fully consecrated if we had absolutely perfect bodies and were absolutely free from all the entailment of Adam's condemnation. But God's requirement is that no sacrifice may come upon his altar, except such as is

without spot or blemish. Hence he could not accept our offering, our consecration, even though it were as completely and fully made as was our dear Redeemer's. Hence his first provision was that the righteousness of Christ should be imputed to us on account of our faith and obedience, in order to permit us to offer sacrifices holy and acceptable to God (Malachi 3:3; Romans 12:1).

This view of our participation in the Redeemer's merit separately and apart from the world's participation in it —by faith and imputation of merit and not actually — the Bible declares to be a "mystery," which not many are able to discern — only the spiritually-minded —only the spirit-begotten. Those who *can* see and hear and understand the terms and conditions of this great salvation of this Gospel Age are specially blessed — "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear" (Matthew 13:16). To see, to hear, to understand, that glory, honor, immortality, eternal life on the spirit plane, are the rewards of a few years of self-denial and self-sacrifice, is to hear of a pearl of great price, of which few know. And to know of that pearl and not to be willing to sell all that we have to obtain it would demonstrate to the Father our unworthiness of life on this high plane. We exhort so many as see and hear and appreciate, in the words of the Apostle, "Let us make our calling and

2H771

election sure" by a full and hearty compliance with the gracious high calling of which we have learned and which our hearts have accepted. (2 Peter 1:10)

A FAMINE IN THE LAND

With the exception of the three end paragraphs printed below, this discourse has been republished in the Overland Monthly, pages 259-262, entitled, "A Famine in the Land."

With shame of face we must all acknowledge that "we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and there is no health in us." The proper thing for us to do, dear Christian friends, is to get down upon our knees before the Lord and in contrition of heart acknowledge that we have wrought no deliverance in the earth (Isaiah 26:18); that our sectarian differences are our shame; that the ignorance in which we have all been respecting the word of God is humiliating.

"When once the eyes of our understanding are opened we can comprehend as never before the harmony of God's message from Genesis to the Revelation. Daily the word of God

becomes more precious to us. More and more we realize that it is our duty to fly to the assistance of our dear brethren in Christ and to call upon them to join us in a determined stand for God and His word of truth. We must show them that our God has been dishonored by misrepresentations of His character and of the real teachings of His word. We must point them to the fact that the Bible does not teach that all mankind except the elect will be consigned to an eternity of torture at the hands of demons.

“We must also show them that the election of the church during this gospel age does not mean injury to the non-elect; but that on the contrary it is the divine purpose that the elect saints with the greater Redeemer shall constitute God’s kingdom, which will bind Satan, put down sin, banish ignorance, error and superstition, and uplift mankind by resurrection processes to all that was lost in Eden by Adam’s disobedience, but secured for him and all his race through the great transaction accomplished on Calvary. All mankind shall see that the divine purpose shall be accomplished; that the word which has gone forth out of Jehovah’s mouth shall prosper in the thing whereunto He sent it.”

[Tippecanoe County Democrat, March 11, 1910](#)

DOCTRINES OF CHRIST VS. DOCTRINES OF MEN

Whosoever will do the will of My Father which is in heaven shall know of My doctrine. Ye do make void the law of God through your traditions—the traditions of the ancients (John 7:17; Mark 7:13; 1 Peter 1:18).

Brooklyn Tabernacle, March 6— Pastor Russell preached twice here today. His discourse on “Inferno” was delivered in Brooklyn’s largest Auditorium, the Academy of Music, which was overcrowded. It was estimated in advance that this subject would draw a larger crowd than the Tabernacle would accommodate. The other meetings of the day were held in the Tabernacle. We report Pastor Russell’s discourse from the text foregoing, as follows:

It is difficult to please everybody. The duty of a Christian minister is to seek chiefly to please the Lord. “Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer” (Psalm 19:14). Our ministerial friends seem to be annoyed because we preach the “doctrines” of Christ. In substance, their sentiment is: Brother Russell, Do you not know that in the fashionable topics of our day *doctrines* are tabooed by the great ministers of all denominations? Instead, as you perceive from the newspaper announcements, it is now quite the thing to discuss political, scientific and sociological doctrines. You should give the public lectures on subjects. like these: Social

Democracy; Rapid Transit in Brooklyn, from the text, “Many shall run to and fro;” Female Suffrage; The Boys’ Brigade;

2H772

Bicycle Rider; Will the Comet Sweep the Earth With Its Tail; Can Football Survive, etc.; or occasionally, for effect, gently rake the rich on better housing for the poor, or belabor the Trusts for soaring prices of food. Such topics as these, Brother Russell, interest the Christian public in our day. And the public constitute our principal congregations when we lift our largest collections. The only people who will be interested in the *doctrines* you are preaching are the old foggy, out-of-date folk, and you will find the majority of them poor in this world’s riches. For pity’s sake stop teaching the “doctrines of Christ!” Doctrines were good enough in the days of Jesus and Paul and Calvin and Luther and Wesley, but the people are not accustomed to them nowadays.

I have no fault to find with my Christian brethren in the ministry of the various denominations. It is not to me, but to the Lord, that they must give an account of their stewardship —of their grand opportunities for declaring the Gospel of Christ. To their own Master they must stand or fall. It is not for me to forbid them because they follow not with us. It is for each one who stands as an ambassador of Christ and of God to follow his own convictions faithfully. Besides, I am assured that many of them are loyal to the core.

It is my understanding that, as a minister of the Gospel, I should take for my guide in this matter the instructions of my ordination. Like St. Paul my ordination to preach the Gospel was from the Lord. I must preach the message which I believe he has given me (1 Timothy 2:7). As his ambassador I must preach the Word, following the example of the Lord and the Apostles. As they avoided politics, so must I. As they avoided vain philosophy and “science falsely so called,” so must I. As they preached the *doctrines* of Christ, so must I — whether men hear or forbear to hear. I remember the words of St. Paul to Timothy:

“Preach the Word, . . . with all long-suffering and *doctrine*, for the time will come when they will not endure *sound doctrine*; but after their own preferences they shall gather teachers to themselves; having itching ears they shall turn away their ears from the Truth and shall be turned unto fables.” (2 Timothy 4:2-4).

THERE IS A REASON

There must be a reason why Christian preachers and their hearers have abandoned the study of the “*Doctrines of Christ*” set forth by the Apostles and Prophets. Is it not because they

no longer believe those *doctrines*? Is it not true that the College and Seminary Professors have led the majority of the ministry afar into unbelief in the Bible, and that these ministers are gradually leading their confiding flocks into other “pastures green” than those which the Great Shepherd and his appointed mouthpieces, the Apostles, approved? Is not the Higher-Criticism infidelity of the colleges gradually penetrating even into the Sunday School Lessons and even into the High Schools of our land — undermining all faith in God’s Book? But what led to this departure from the Word of God — into Higher-Criticism infidelity and into the Evolution theory; which makes void the Word of God; and into Christian Science, which puts a premium on falsehood; and into Theosophy and Spiritism, the deceptions of the fallen angels — demonism? How comes it that all these unscriptural theories now flourish, whereas only a century ago God’s Word was respected and its *doctrines* were studied by Christian people of various and conflicting creeds? The answer is that with the increasing light of our day the creeds of the past are seen to be fallacious, irrational, by all who use their thinking apparatus. The leaders in the various Churches discovered this in advance of their flocks. They promptly and reverently set their creeds on a high shelf where the people might not so particularly notice their flaws, but might continue their reverence for them, until gradually their attention would be drawn aside and their hope and faith transplanted to Evolutionary soil or Theosophistic and Spiritualistic child’s play.

With the decline of Christian doctrines, including heart union with Christ and an understanding of its terms and conditions, Churchianity came in, to take the place of Christianity. Today the pride of all denominations centers, not in their doctrines, but in their institutions. The people are no longer exhorted to hold fast to the doctrines of Methodism, Calvinism, etc., but to hold fast to the System. They are no longer encouraged to think of their system as being the only one, outside of which there would be no salvation, but they are encouraged to cultivate a partisan spirit, which takes pride in their organization, its wealth, the value of its church property, the largeness of its collections, the grandeur of its music, the wisdom, learning and ability of its preachers, and the fashion and wealth of its constituency.

It is not our wish to offer a single unkind or unbrotherly criticism. It is our duty and privilege, however, to point out that the creed doctrines of the various denominations, now set on the shelf as too frail and imperfect to stand handling and investigation, are not and never were the doctrines of Christ and the Apostles. It is our duty and pleasure to show forth to Christian people to the extent of our ability that the teachings of the Bible, the doctrines of Christ, are grand, noble, reasonable, “worthy of all acceptance.” To the extent that we succeed in doing this we are

bringing back straying Christians from the deceptive bogs of Evolution and Higher-Criticism to the firm foundation, the solid rock of Truth — God’s Word.

“THE WOUNDS OF A FRIEND”

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend” is the Divine assurance. We cannot, therefore, better show our friendship and Christian love to our brethren than by pulling down from the shelf their revered creeds and allowing them to fall in pieces beyond repair. If every church could be thus induced to pull down its creed-idol, the present Laodicean stage of the Church would speedily come to its senses, as suggested by our Lord. Then, instead of feeling themselves rich and increased in goods and having need of nothing, our dear Christian brethren of all denominations would realize the meaning of our Lord’s words —that Churchianity as a whole today is poor and naked and miserable and wretched and blind (Revelation 3:14-22). As Christians of all denominations we have cause of rejoicing that we have outgrown the trundle-bed creeds of the past and that we can no longer wrap ourselves comfortably in the narrow bigotry of error. The Lord caused this to be written in the long-ago through the prophets, saying, “For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it” (Isaiah 28:10). If in connection with this growth which has come to us and by which we have nobler conceptions than had our forefathers of the rights of man under the Golden Rule, it is a cause for rejoicing. Even though the transition has been accompanied by a great falling away into Higher-Criticism, Infidelity, Evolution, etc., nevertheless even these errors are in many respects preferable to the blindness and bigotry. Happy are we, dear friends, if, the eyes of our understanding being opened, our hearts are led to a closer walk with God, a more careful and prayerful study of his Word, and to a subsequent growth in grace and in the fruits of the holy Spirit.

Do some inquire for clearer specification respecting the features of the creeds put upon the shelf, which we think should be no longer cared for, but allowed to fall? We answer that of course there are good features in all of our creeds — truths which will never fail. But with these truths are mixed the errors which are, as the Proverb says, “Dead flies [that] cause the ointment to stink” (Ecclesiastes 10:1). There is plenty more of the ointment in God’s Word. It is indeed the “balm of Gilead” and pure —without the corroding fly of error. This is what we all want, whatsoever our denominational name, and

the sooner we get it the better for us, for the Cause and for “the brethren,” whom we love to serve.

I give an illustration: Those of us who are Calvinistic may well hold fast to some of the precious Scripture teachings so long revered, but we want to cast out quickly and effectively the gross error which teaches that all the non-elect, instead of having hope for a blessing through “the elect,” are to be everlastingly tormented. Those of us who are Arminian in doctrine have much that is precious, but need also to cast away from us the thought that our heavenly Father is merely good-intentioned and lacks the power, the ability, to make his benevolent desires effective towards any except a small handful of humanity. Our Disciple friends should cast aside the thought contained in their teachings that only the water-immersed experience forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to God and salvation from eternal torment. Similarly those of us who are Baptists, while holding to the precious truths which so long have comforted and strengthened us, should insist now on casting away as unscriptural and irrational the thought that has long perplexed us, namely, that no others than the water-immersed could be members of the Church of Christ, heirs of glory, and be saved from damnation. Once we get these absurdities removed, not only from our professions, we shall be ready and anxious to have the doctrines of Christ on these subjects. Then we will search the Word and have God’s blessing in finding its harmonies. “He that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened” (Matthew 7:8). But so long as we hold to the fallacies how can we seek or pray for or find the Truth?

THE VALUE OF DOCTRINES

The word *doctrine* signifies *teaching*. The doctrines of Christ, therefore, are the teachings of Christ; the doctrines of men, the teachings of men. What the Church needs today is, to receive into good and honest hearts afresh the doctrines of Jesus and the Apostles — allowing these to displace the doctrines which Christendom now holds but disesteems, and which were formulated in a time of less light than the present. Instead, therefore, of discouraging each other in respect to the study of the doctrines of Christ, we should, as Christians, become more earnest in the study every day, hoping and expecting that in the wonderful light of our time God would be able to make clear to our understanding the harmonious interpretations of his Word. We should study to find the relationship between Election and Free Grace. We should clearly understand what is meant by *baptism* and what kind of baptism is necessary for our induction into the Body of Christ as members. On every line we should be looking for the

harmonies, instead of rejoicing in the errors which have long divided us into

2H774

hundreds of sects and parties.

However, in some respects sectarian energy is better than federated death. Might we not even say that if all the creeds were dashed to pieces and each Christian stood forth unshackled as respects denominational bonds, the result would be a great improvement so far as individual thought, study, and relationship to God would be concerned? In a word, each Christian should have his own creed, his individual faith; and none should do more or less than to assist his mind to a full understanding of the Word of the Lord in respect to every subject.

DOCTRINES OF MEN

All doctrines which cannot show a foundation and full authority in the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles and Prophets, are doctrines of men. The teachings from above come to us through heaven-appointed channels. The jargon which prevails in Christendom in respect to Christian doctrines proves that they are of human origin. The Scriptures alone furnish to us

THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST

Briefly stated they declare, "To us there is one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 8:6). To us there is one Holy Spirit; to us there is "one Church of the Living God, whose names are written in heaven;" to us there is one Lord and one faith and one baptism; one God and Father of all" (Ephesians 4:4-6). However impossible these statements may have appeared during the "dark ages," they are no longer so. The light of Divine Truth is now shining. God has not only put into our possession wonderful Bibles, and wonderful helps for Bible-study, but has also given us the ability to read, to study the Word critically. And he is pleased now to assure us through the prophet that we are living in the time when "the wise shall understand" the "mystery hidden from past ages and dispensations," which could not be understood previously without working an interference with God's eternal purposes.

What, then, dear friends, shall we do? Shall we float on ingloriously, daily, hourly coming closer and closer to the great cataclysm which is swallowing up so many now in infidelity, called Higher-Criticism? Or shall we accept God's Helping Hand, the doctrines of Christ, and know the Truth and be made free from the error and be brought into fellowship with our Redeemer on the highest plane? Let us, as the "wise virgins" of our Lord's parable, wake from sleep and trim our lamps, and, in the light thereof, see God's wonderful riches of glory as they

stand revealed on the threshold of the New Dispensation—the Millennial reign of Christ!

In conclusion: Our Lord admonishes us along the lines of this discourse as follows: “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. (Revelation 3:18)

THE DIVINE PLAN AS SEEN BY PASTOR RUSSELL

PROFITING BY PAST ERRORS

Whilst Catholics are returning to the Bible, and the present Pope has directed that their people be encouraged in Bible study, Protestants are drifting rapidly into Infidelity under the modern designations of Higher Criticism and Evolution. Our fathers during the Dark Ages got away from the Bible by supposing an apostolic succession.” Gradually the Creeds usurped the Bible’s place under the supposition that they agreed. Now having outgrown those Creeds, in rejecting them many are rejecting the Bible also. This is a mistake! The Bible is the most wonderful book in the world when allowed to interpret itself. It furnishes the only rallying ground for human brotherhood and Christian brotherhood. The world otherwise is facing anarchy. A lost religion will soon mean a lost God, and a lost future hope, and a selfish strife for the present life only. The hell-torture theory is nauseating people. They are rejecting the Bible because they erroneously

2H775

think that it teaches it.

MAN’S FALL FROM PERFECTION

Let us not mourn our errors of the past unduly, but at once, now, get right with God and His Book! Its presentation is logical from Genesis to Revelation. It tells of the perfection of our first parents, of the test of their loyalty, of their failure, and its penalty, death—not eternal torture. (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12) It tells that all of present imperfections, mental, moral and physical, are incidental to the death penalty. 20,000,000,000 have been born dying and soon toppled over into the tomb. They are not being tortured in hell or purgatory, but, according to the Bible, are unconscious until their resurrection.

GOD'S MERCY MAN'S ONLY HOPE

God's mercy cannot allow sinners to live in sinful pleasure to injure themselves and others and to mar creation; nor could it permit sinners to live in torture to blaspheme the Holy Name. But one thing could be done under the plan arranged. Man could be redeemed by a Savior—dying “the just for the unjust” (1 Pet. 3:18) to square the demands of Justice against the race through Adam's disobedience. God purposed this remedy for all the race “before the foundation of the world.” “In due time Christ died for the ungodly” — “He tasted death for every man” —not eternal torture. Rom. 5:6; Heb. 2:9

SETTING FREE THE PRISONERS

The Bible also teaches that men die when they seem to die; yet it calls this a “sleep” because there is to be “an awakening, a resurrection of the dead, both just and unjust.” (Acts 24:15) The Prophets and Apostles all “fell asleep,” as well as all others of Adam's race. They are sleeping in a great prisonhouse, the tomb, unconscious until it shall be opened and they shall be called forth. (Isa. 49:9; John 5:28, 29 Revised Version) This is shown by many other Scriptures also. The Bible hell is the tomb.

THE DELIVERER—THE RANSOMER

It is not sufficient that Jesus came and died for man's sin. Such satisfaction of Justice is preliminary to their recovery from the prison and from the hereditary weaknesses which led them to the prisonhouse, the tomb. Hence the Redeemer is also to be the Restorer and Lifegiver. The time for that deliverance or “restitution” is still future, though near. It will begin at Jesus' second advent, says St. Peter. Acts 3:19-23

“MESSIAH'S KINGDOM THEORY EXPLODED”

So say some good people; but they err. It was Jesus himself who told of His future reign of a thousand years when His Bride-Church, the “elect,” will be associated with Him in His Kingdom and work; and when Satan shall be bound. Revelation 20:1-5

The loss of this hope by our forefathers led onto all the grievous errors from which we are now seeking to escape. Do we not still pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven?” The coming Messiah's Kingdom is the key to human perfection in a world-wide Eden.

“HIGH-CALLING” OF THE “BRIDE”

While waiting for His “due time” to come for the blessing of mankind God is not idle. He made one election during the Jewish Age from amongst that people of a saintly few, for his future work. And during this Christian Age God has been making another election—the Church, “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife.”

These elections do not spell torture to the non-elect masses of mankind, but the reverse, blessing. Through these “elect” saints God’s favors and mercies will be poured upon Adam’s race for a thousand years—for their full uplift to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.

EVERY SINNER TO BE PUNISHED

This does not mean that there is to be no punishment for sin. Quite to the contrary—every wrong act, word or thought has its degrading influence and will bring its “stripes.” (Luke 12:47) It does mean that none are now in torture. All are “asleep” in “sheol,” “hades,” the tomb, and all will be blest and reasonably dealt with by their Redeemer. Therefore every good endeavor now will bring proportionate uplift of character and fall on the future favorably—even in those not of the saintly elect class.

The parables and dark sayings of Jesus and the Prophecies and Revelations are now, in “due time, being understood, and are in full harmony with Divine Justice and Love.

2H776

[Orange Enterprise and Journal, March 18, 1910](#)

CHOOSE YE THIS DAY BETWEEN TRUTH AND ERROR

“Choose you this day whom ye will serve. .. If Jehovah be God, serve Him.” (Joshua 24:15).

Washington, D. C., March 13— Pastor Russell of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached here twice today to splendid audiences. One of his discourses was entitled, “The Overthrow of Satan’s Empire.” We report the other one from the text above quoted. Pastor Russell said:

As Christians in the light of this wonderful Twentieth Century we stand at the parting of the ways and must decide for right or for wrong, for truth or for falsehood,

in respect to our religious convictions. Without questioning the sincerity of our forefathers, we all object to their theology. It is in vain that ministers and Bible class teachers no longer deny the facts of the case. Nor will intelligent and honest people agree that it is right that through their creeds they should profess one thing, and in their lives and general conversation they should ignore or absolutely deny the teachings of those creeds. Yet this is the position of practically all the thinking people of Christendom. Their consciences will not stand for this much longer. If they refrain from telling the Truth and taking their stand for it, they will not only sear their consciences (1 Timothy 4:2) and correspondingly separate themselves from God's favor, but additionally their course will sooner or later bring upon them the disapproval and contempt of all honest people. For although the masses are not yet aroused on the subject, they are rapidly getting awake.

Do you wish me to illustrate what I mean? Do you wish me to show in what respect all denominations are ashamed of their creeds and anxious to hide the fact that they ever professed them or were anxious to give them some new interpretation more consistent with the broader thought and more generous sentiment common to civilized man in this Twentieth Century? I will do it.

Our Methodist friends are ashamed of that feature of their creed which declares that the Almighty is now doing everything that Divine Wisdom and Power can accomplish on behalf of our poor race to bring all to a full knowledge of Christ and to opportunity of faith and obedience. They realize that there is a weakness in this argument. And when they protest that God must work through men, and hence that the responsibility lies at the door of Christian believers to carry the Gospel to the heathen, they realize that this is an illogical argument too. For why should our Great Creator send to eternal torment millions of his creatures, because of an insufficiency of zeal on the part of some of their more enlightened fellow-creatures? Acknowledging the inconsistency of such a theory our good Methodist brethren tell us that they hope that God has some other way of saving the ignorant of heathen lands and, perhaps, of civilized lands.

We appreciate the loving heart which prompts this answer and we agree that it is true—that God has another way for these. But when we attempt to point out what that other way is, some of these dear friends inquire, Is it Methodism? Did John Wesley preach it? Our answer is, No. Brother Wesley did not preach it and did not know of it. Not because it is new, but because it is so very old and was lost sight of during the “dark ages” for fifteen centuries before Brother Wesley was born. He was feeling after it, yearning for it, hungering and thirsting for it, but the “due time” for it to be made known to God's people had not yet come' in Brother

Wesley's day. He preached the eternal torture of all mankind, except the sanctified believers in Jesus the Savior. But in his preaching of the love of God he was used of the Almighty to wondrously prepare the hearts of Christendom for the broader message of the Bible now due to be seen and understood. Wesley's Gospel of the love of God has mellowed the heart of Christendom, which once was frigid under the cold teachings of Foreordination, Predestination, etc., of the Westminster Confession of Faith — once the basis of nearly all Protestant Communion.

If we and our Methodist brethren could maintain the same degree of spiritual warmth that Wesley and their forefathers enjoyed we might do without further instruction. But we cannot do this! None can stand still! Christians today are losing their holiness, their sanctification — their zeal for God is giving place to zeal for a sect.

The light of the Millennial morning which for a
2H777

century has been gradually breaking upon the world, stimulating thought in every direction, makes it necessary for our Methodist brethren, as well as for us all, to awaken to the wonderful privileges of our day for Bible study: to ascertain the real teachings of God's Word, which, in the dark past we all seemingly misunderstood and misrepresented. Already the most intelligent one-fourth of Methodism not only rejects Brother Wesley's theory, but alas, repudiates the Bible also! It accepts instead of Salvation that most dangerous form of infidelity known as Higher Criticism and that most un-Scriptural proposition of human Evolution, which denies the fall of our race and makes void Christ's *redemptive* work and the glorious result thereof — human restitution. (Acts 3:19- 23)

BURY THE DEAD PAST

God forbid that we should bury any of the doctrines of Christ and his twelve apostles! On the contrary let us strive to resurrect these from the rubbish of human traditions which eighteen centuries have piled upon them. Let us instead bury our man-made creeds, of which we are all ashamed. Our Presbyterian friends some years ago set a noble example to all Christendom in the burial of their Confession of Faith and their substitution instead of a much simpler and much more rational statement.

But, No, I must correct myself here. This is what they should have done but did not do. Instead of burying the old creed, not only from sight, but also from odor, they have merely covered the corpse which is admitted to be dead and placed the briefer and better Confession atop

the winding-sheet. They assuredly declare that it is *not a substitute* but merely a representative statement.

“ALL HAVE NOT THEIR SENSES EXERCISED TO DISCERN”

Hence every time we read the re-statement, we must hold our noses to avoid contamination from the odors of the carcass beneath. Not all must do this, for, as the Apostle suggests, all have not their senses exercised to discern. But all intelligent Presbyterians are being rapidly driven not only away from Calvinism, but, alas, away from the Bible also, because of their erroneous supposition that the teaching of Calvin and the teachings of the Bible are one and the same.

These bright minds are not merely lost to the Christian forces. They become active agents in the promulgation of anti-Biblical teachings. They are engaged in pulling down the Bible and substituting for its teachings Darwin's Evolution theory. These sincere men are to be found in the faculties of all of the Colleges, in the highest pulpits throughout the land and in the most prominent positions in business and social life. Their loss of faith in the Bible has not made them murderers or thieves. Their noble inheritance from the past preserves in them an uprightness of character which the loss of a fear of hell-torment has not undermined. While they are no longer Christians from the Bible standpoint — no longer believers in Jesus as a Redeemer — they are still believers in Jesus as a great Teacher and a noble Leader of men. They fail to discern the fact that if he posed as the Son of God and the Redeemer of men, and was not such, instead of being a noble example, his life and teachings were most stupendous frauds and deceptions.

BAPTISTS AND DISCIPLES AWAKENING

When we say that this awakening is also reaching our Baptist and our Disciple brethren, let it not be understood to mean that all of these have been asleep until now. Perhaps it would have been better for them if some who have gotten awake during the past thirty years had slumbered longer. Those long awake have principally gone off into Darwinism and Higher Criticism. Baptist and Disciple schools and Colleges and Theological Seminaries, like those of other denominations, are manned with the brightest minds of the denominations, and all with one accord teaching Higher Criticism, Infidelity and Darwinian Evolution. With one accord all are engaged in overthrowing the Christian Faith of the rising generation. They are doing this intelligently, wisely, cunningly, but not with evil motive. Having gotten awake to the inconsistencies of their creeds these scholarly men, concluding that the creeds truthfully represented the Bible, abandoned faith in the Scriptures to the same degree that they have abandoned faith in the creeds which their intellects have repudiated. Now they are seeking to gradually help

Christian people of all denominations to what they consider the higher plane of Truth. What they have — almost anything in fact — is better than the “creeds” they have repudiated. They are working hard and succeeding well in introducing their faith-destroying theory into the minds of the rising generation through the school books. From these they not only have eliminated everything sympathetic with Bible faith, but in the stead have introduced the subversive doctrine of Evolution.

As for the rank and file of Baptists and Disciples, probably three-fourths of them still hold vaguely and indefinitely to the Bible and their Confessions of Faith though both of these denominations in their innocency of mind think that they have no creeds — that they take

2H778

the Bible only. As these dear friends awaken to the inconsistencies of their Confession and teachings they are in great danger of following their leaders into a repudiation of everything pertaining to the past—into Higher Criticism-Infidelity and Darwinism.

**“CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY
WHOM YE WILL SERVE.**

Joshua’s words to the Israelites, after they had come into Canaan, constitute our text. Joshua perceived that the Israelites were in a trying position and that it was their duty to decide promptly and thoroughly which course they would take. So we may see today that Christians of all denominations are in a trying position and that a prompt decision to stand by God and the Bible is the necessary thing for those who would be delivered from the darkness of the past and avoid falling into the Adversary’s great deception of the present — into which their leaders are guiding them. Unless they heed speedily, the blind leading the blind will fall into the ditch of Darwinism and the mire of Higher Criticism. There are not many ways to escape this threatening calamity! There is only one way — the Bible way. Many Baptist and Disciple ministers are becoming awake to the inconsistencies of their positions and drifting without foreknowledge of where their course will end. For instance, I have before me the words of the Rev. Dr. MacDonald of my own city, Brooklyn, on February 27th. This gentleman speaks of the Baptist Confession of Faith as *“these swaddling clothes of an ancient dogmatism.”* And respecting the Baptist doctrine which recognizes only immersed persons as members of the Church of Christ and heirs of salvation, he says, *‘2lenceforth it can be regarded to be as dead as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and as worthily buried.’* The gentleman rejoiced that recently a Baptist minister

had been ordained to the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church of Brooklyn who affirmed in advance that he would invite all to communion and Church membership who loved the Lord Jesus. He urged that “associate members” should be received into Baptist communions “without imposing baptism upon them.”

This courageous brother fails to see wherein the course he advocates is illogical. What he needs to see is the real teaching of the Bible on the subject of Baptism — that it is baptism into Christ’s death, and thus into the real Church of Christ—not the Baptist Church, nor any other human organization, but the Church of God — “The Church of the firstborns, whose names are written in heaven.” That roll contains the names of all the saintly, faithful, consecrated believers in the Redeemer — of all denominations and outside of all denominations.

SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH

It is not sufficient that we get rid of the errors and superstitions of the past. We must supplant those with the Truth, that “We may be able to withstand in this evil day” (Ephesians 6:13). It alone will constitute the armor of God. Christian people hold much precious Truth, but hold it in so illogical and confused a manner that it fails to give them the needed strength. God permitted us to come to this very hour and has permitted the present tests for the purpose of developing the characters of the “Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile,” and for the purpose of gathering out from them all the tares, all the chaff, and all not at heart copies of his dear Son. Let me now briefly summarize the errors of our creeds and briefly indicate the Bible remedy.

None of our Creeds were too strict in defining the saintliness of the Church class, invited to become the Bride of Christ and his Joint-heirs in his Kingdom. On the contrary, in many respects they were too loose — they were not nearly up to the standard of the Master’s word, “If any man will be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me.” “Strait is the gate and narrow the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.” (Matthew 7:14) Jesus taught that his followers must drink of his *cup of suffering* and be *baptized into his death* —and not merely into water. Our too-low standards have admitted to membership in all denominations millions who are far below the Master’s standards.

Our error and deception was the supposition that all who are not saintly, all who would not become the Bride of Christ, all who are not baptized into his death, all who do not drink of his cup of ignominy will be *eternally tortured*. This great mistake common to all Protestants (and in the much modified form of Purgatory shared also

by Catholics) must be displaced by the Bible teaching that as soon as the elect Church shall be completed and glorified the antitypical Year of Jubilee will begin; that then for the thousand years of the reign of Christ and the Church as the spiritual Seed of Abraham, the *non-elect*, of all the families of the earth will be blest by the elect. (Galatians 3:16, 29; Acts 3:19-23). Let us, dear brethren, choose this day to stand by the Word of God, to reject all human traditions contrary to it and to hold fast the things that are true, just, loving, good.

If occasionally a thoughtless friend asks, Why do you believe in a Millennium? answer that it is one of the oldest doctrines of Christendom and, above all, the Bible doctrine. Answer that he who does not believe in the Millennium and the resurrection then of the world of mankind — “All that are in their graves” — must account for the dead in some other way — must claim

2H779

that they have been experiencing pain or pleasure for thousands of years, or must claim that they are extinct as the brute beast and will have no resurrection or must believe in universal salvation regardless of a knowledge of Christ or obedience to him. On next Lord’s Day, we will discuss the Millennium and show its absolute necessity, not only from a Bible standpoint but also from a scientific standpoint. “Choose ye this day” — to stand for the Bible and reason and to oppose the creeds of the dark ages and their unreason!

[The Clinton Courant, March 26, 1910](#)

PALM SUNDAY THE LOST OPPORTUNITY

“If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.” (Luke 19:42)

Little did the Jews understand the momentous importance to them of the event which Christians commemorate on Palm Sunday. It will be remembered that the incident occurred at the close of our Lord’s ministry—three and a half years after his baptism at Jordan and five days before his crucifixion. The Jewish Sabbath had been spent in rest at Bethany. Lazarus, whom Jesus awakened from the sleep of death, with his sisters Mary and Martha, prepared for Jesus a banquet, and when the Sabbath closed the supper was eaten. It was at that time that Mary brought forth the box of perfume, spikenard very valuable, and therewith anointed our Lord’s head and feet. It was the same occasion on which Judas, in a wrong spirit, had murmured against this expression of her loving

devotion; that it was a waste; that preferably the money should have been given to the poor. It was then that the Master defended Mary and announced that the anointing was for his burial (which occurred later the same week), and suggested to the disciples, "The poor ye have always with you; but me ye have not always." (Matthew 26:11-12)

The next morning, the first day of the week, corresponding to our Sunday, Jesus made ready for his triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem as the Jewish King, according to the custom of the Jewish kings riding upon an ass and hailed and acclaimed by the populace. The incident had been foretold by the Prophet Zechariah in great detail, saying, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass. (Zechariah 9:9)

PROPHECY MUST BE FULFILLED

When the apostles had brought the ass and Jesus sat thereon, the large concourse of people (which had come from Jerusalem to see Jesus because of his awakening of Lazarus) shouted aloud. They were filled with enthusiasm and, after the manner of the time, some broke off palm branches for the ass to step upon; others laid their garments in the way and thus formed, as it were, a carpet in the road leading to Jerusalem near by. The shout of the people was just as the prophet had declared. They hailed Jesus as the promised Son of David, the Messiah long waited for. On previous occasions, when they sought to make Jesus a king, after witnessing his marvelous works, he withdrew himself from them, to wait for their ardor to cool, knowing that the Father's time was not yet due. But now he knew that his hour was come and hence, instead of hindering, he helped on with the enthusiasm by sending for the ass, etc. Prominent sectarian Jews present, although unable to account for the miracle, were unprepared to think of Jesus as the true Messiah, or anything short of an impostor in that role. When these heard the multitude shouting and addressing Jesus as the Messiah they were offended and sent word to Jesus that he should restrain the ignorant people who were thus acclaiming him.

But instead of forbidding the ovation Jesus intimated that it was the proper thing, that because the Prophet Zechariah (9:9) said, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!" therefore there must be a shout. If the people had not shouted, rather than have the prophecy go unfulfilled, Jesus said the very stones would have cried out.

Enroute to Jerusalem Jesus halted the ass and the procession at the top of the Mount of Olives and, overlooking the Holy City, wept while he pronounced his sentence upon it —Unworthy! Unappreciative! As the evangelist declares, "Israel knew not the time of her visitation." The time for Israel to receive the King had

come and they were not only ignorant of the matter collectively, but they were not in the heart condition to understand or appreciate. Jesus cried, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a

2H780

hen gathereth her chicken under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37) For three and a half years he and his faithful apostles had been declaring that the Kingdom of God was at hand; that the people should repent and believe the good message. And even six months in advance of this John the Baptist and his disciples had similarly preached.

After those four years of faithful preaching throughout the length and breadth of Palestine, the nation was apparently as unprepared for Jesus as at the first. Hence our Lord's following words, "Therefore I say unto you, Your house is left unto you desolate! Ye shall see me no more until that day when ye shall say —Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" That day has not yet come. Meantime the Jewish nation was there cast off from fellowship with God, as the prophet declares, "Because they knew not the time of their visitation."

Israel has been outcast from national favor for more than eighteen centuries. Thank God the day is near at hand, when, at the second coming of Messiah, his Kingdom shall be turned over to them. And then, as he declares, they will be glad to say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The long centuries of persecution and separation from God's favor will have brought that people to a humbler condition of heart, where they will be glad to receive of Divine grace upon Divine terms. To this great event St. Paul refers us in Romans 11:27-34.

Although God foreknew all that had happened the offer of the Kingdom to Israel was just as bona-fide, just as genuine, as though he had not known it. God always does his part! Whatever failure there is in any matter of contract belongs to humanity.

If thus we have before our minds the origin of Palm Sunday and what it signified as the climax of the test of natural Israel in respect to Messiah, we are prepared to go further and to note that in God's providence there is a similar test for us Christians.

"ENEMIES FOR YOUR SAKES"

St. John emphasized particularly the fact that the rejection of the Jewish nation, because of their rejection of Messiah, did not apply to all the individuals of that nation. As the Prophet Isaiah had foretold (Romans

9:27-33) there was a small, faithful section or “remnant.” This remnant accepted Christ and were by him accepted and became the nucleus or foundation of Spiritual Israel on the Day of Pentecost. Thus we read, “He came unto his own (nation) and his own received him not (as a nation); but to as many as received him, to them gave he liberty (privilege) to become sons of God, even to them that believed on his name; which were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” —at Pentecost (John 1:11-13)

Thus so far as the *spiritual* part of God’s great promise to Abraham is concerned it has passed from the Jewish nation; but there still remains for them a glorious earthly portion, to which they will be introduced at our Lord’s second coming. Then their sins will be cancelled, and as a people the Hebrews will return to Divine favor and will inherit the earthly features of the promise made to their fathers. Then, through them, God’s blessing will be extended to all nations and peoples under Israel’s New Covenant, which will then become operative at the hands of their great Mediator —the Christ, the Messiah in glory. But by that time the election of the saints of this Gospel Age will be complete and the Messiah in glory will include Jesus the Head and the Church his Body — joint-heirs with him in his Kingdom —joint-heirs with him in the spiritual features of the great Abrahamic promise (Galatians 3:29).

All this is clearly stated by the Apostle in Romans 11:25-32. But somehow our eyes of understanding as Christians have been holden so that, until of late, we have not seen these lengths and breadths, these heights and depths, of Divine Love and Wisdom and arrangement. The fact that we now see these things is a corroborative evidence that they are nigh at hand. Just so it was at our Lord’s first advent. Many things pertaining to that time were completely hidden until the time of their fulfillment came, and then only the “Wise Virgins” were so blessed, so assisted, that they trimmed their lamps effectively and were enabled to see these beauties in the Divine Plan.

THE TIME OF OUR VISITATION

Apparently very few of God's people, until recently, have noted the fact that Spiritual Israel has had a parallel history to that of Natural Israel. Few have seen that these are dealt with all through the Scriptures as type and antitype. Few have noticed that from the death of Jacob to the death of Jesus finds its exact parallel of 1845½ years between the death of Jesus and our day. Few have noticed that in both cases there is a nominal and a real Israel. The nominal Jewish system was tried and all but the "Israelites indeed" failed. Likewise will be the experience of Spiritual Israel. The nominal Christian systems will be tried, and all will fail except the spirit-begotten and faithful. As only a remnant or small number were found in the proper condition at the first advent, so the Scriptures clearly intimate that only a small number will be found sufficiently saintly and zealous and loyal to the Lord and the principles of his Truth in the end of this age, to graduate with first honors.

As there was a special period of testing and trying at the close of the Jewish Age, lasting for forty years, so, the Scriptures clearly indicate, there is a special sifting and testing due to come to Christendom during the

2H781

closing forty years of this Gospel Age before the inauguration of the glorious Millennial blessings. As the trials and tests came upon the Jews in a subtle manner, to test their faith and obedience, so even more subtlety must we expect will be connected with the trials and testings in the harvest time of this Gospel Age. Of this time the Lord through the prophet said, "Who may abide the day of his presence, and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord acceptable sacrifices" (Malachi 3:2, 3)

BOTH HOUSES OF ISRAEL

Natural and Spiritual Israel are contrasted. The Lord through the Prophet foretold that Messiah would be "for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel" —to Natural Israel and to Spiritual Israel. We have seen how the first house stumbled on that Palm Sunday—celebrated today. They stumbled "because they *knew not the time* of their visitation" — they did not know that the time had come for the establishment of the Kingdom; hence they were not alert to their privileges and failed to be in the proper condition of heart to receive the blessings. Or, we might state the matter reversibly and say that those who did not know

and did not accept Messiah, were those whose hearts were not in the right condition, else they would not have been left in darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:4).

Many things indicate to us, now, that we are living in a time corresponding to that Palm Sunday! Many things imply that Christendom is now undergoing its great test and that only the fully consecrated of heart and life will be accepted of the Lord as his ‘jewels’ and be granted a share with Christ in his Kingdom. Many things imply that we are now in the time when the true people of God are being divided into two classes, as pictured for us by our Lord in the parable of the Wise and the Foolish Virgins. As only the Wise Virgins were prepared to enter into the marriage, so only the consecrated ones, the polished jewels of the Lord, will be accepted as fit for the Kingdom and be granted a share in the glorious resurrection change which will precede the great time of trouble, in which the Foolish Virgin class, although not of the world, will participate with the world.

True, that great time of trouble will usher in the glorious Millennial dispensation, in which the Church in glory with the Great Redeemer will pour out upon all mankind the wonderful restitution blessings which God has promised by the mouth of all the holy prophets (Acts 3:19-23). True, the Foolish Virgins may subsequently get the oil and subsequently have a glorious future, but they will lose the choice place of Divine favor and blessing. They cannot be of the “Bride” class, but will receive their blessing under the figure of “the virgins her companions that follow her” (Psalm 45:14).

It is in order for all of God’s people who now get awake from the slumber of worldliness which has long stupefied them, to join hearts and voices in a great shout — the shout that the Kingdom is at hand! The shout of Hosanna to the Son of David! And that the time is at hand for the fulfillment of the passage, “Gather together my saints unto me, saith the Lord! those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up my jewels”(individually) (Malachi 3:17).

“SEE THAT YE REFUSE NOT HIM”

As the Jewish nation was not *ready* to receive Jesus as its King, on that first Palm Sunday, neither is Christendom now ready to receive him at his second advent. As it was, only the “Israelites indeed,” in whom was no guile, that then knew the voice of the Shepherd, so it will be here an individual matter. The Laodicean period of the Church’s history is upon us (Revelation 3:17). The Nominalism of our day is fully portrayed by our Lord’s words. Christendom boasts that she is rich and increased in goods and has need of nothing; and knows not that she is poor and miserable and blind and naked. The Lord now stands at the door and knocks. He offers himself to the “Israelites indeed.” Ours is Palm Sunday in the highest sense of all. How are we receiving the great blessings

which betoken the *parousia* of the Master? Do we hear his knock? Have we opened our hearts? Are we searching his Word and listening for his voice and seeking to know and to do his will in all things? To all such very shortly, we believe, will come the greater and fuller Pentecostal blessing — the resurrection “change,” from the glory of character merely, to the glory of person as themselves to him and his service; ; not waiting for the share his glory. As St. Paul says, “See that ye reject not him that speaketh from heaven!” Greater light, greater privilege, greater blessing every way are ours than were those enjoyed by the Jews at our Lord’s first advent. These privileges and blessings are our tests. Let us be faithful. Let us present our bodies living sacrifices and with renewed zeal seek to glorify our Lord in our bodies and our spirits, which are his (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Those who have the eyes to see and the ears to appreciate the voice now speaking from heaven should be alert to hail him Lord of all — to accept him as their Redeemer and King and voluntarily to present themselves to him and his service — not waiting for the time when he shall reveal himself in power and great

2H782

glory to the world in general. The Lord is now looking for saints, for overcomers, valiant, faithful, persevering, and thoroughly devoted to him, to his Cause of Righteousness, and thoroughly opposed to sin and especially active in overcoming its domination in their own hearts, in their own minds, in their own bodies. Such the Master pictures as his joint-heirs, priestly kings, sitting with himself in his Throne of glory and world dominion.

[The Clinton Courant, April 2, 1910](#)

CHRIST'S ASCENSION FROM HADES

“He led forth a multitude of captives and gave gifts unto men.” (Ephesians 4:8)

Boston, March 27— As Christendom celebrates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is appropriate that our hearts and minds should intelligently grasp the significance of the event commemorated. St. Paul laid great stress upon the resurrection of the dead, declaring that if there be no resurrection of the dead all those whom we counted as asleep would never have an awakening, and consequently would be as dead as are brute beasts. Note his emphatic statement to this effect. (1 Corinthians 15:12-18) For here as elsewhere his words contradict the thought that the saintly dead pass immediately to glory and the unsaintly to Purgatory or to eternal torture.

According to the Gospel of Christ, of which St. Paul declares that he was not ashamed, the dead are to be esteemed as though they were asleep — at rest from all the commotion and turmoil and strife, ignorance and superstition and sin and trouble incident to the present reign of sin and death. They have truly entered into rest, whether they were saints or sinners. When the time for their awakening shall have come in the Millennial morning of Christ's reign of righteousness, surrounding conditions will be very different from what they are today, thank God! Then Satan will be bound, the Bible assures us (Revelation 20:1-3), and the ignorance and superstition, selfishness and crime, which have for centuries marked his reign will gradually draw to a close, for the glorious Messiah-King will not permit them. His reign, on the contrary, will be marked with the true enlightenment of all mankind; and the result will be, as foretold; namely, “Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God.” (Isaiah 45:23).

Gradually the world will be brought to an Edenic condition, in harmony with the Divine promise. Indeed, this work may be said to be already beginning. Already, by artesian wells and irrigation processes and highways of travel and good roads and intelligent cultivation of fields, the earth begins to bloom and the wilderness and solitary place to be glad, as foretold by Isaiah the prophet (Isaiah 35:1).

Under these blessed conditions “All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth.” (John 5:28, 29)—not all at once, but “Every man in his own order” (1 Corinthians 15:23) The saintly believers, who alone are fully pleasing to God, will come forth in the First, or chief, or preferable,

Resurrection —come forth perfect, on the spirit plane, like unto the angels and like unto their glorified Redeemer, to be his joint-heirs in his Millennial Kingdom and its great work of resuscitating, instructing and ruling and uplifting all the “groaning” families of the earth (Romans 8:22). Thus will be fulfilled God’s promise to the spiritual Seed of Abraham, “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Galatians 3:29) Gradually, after dealing with the living nations to some extent, the sleeping world will be awakened, “Every man in his own order.” (1 Corinthians 15:23)

Our Lord assures us that all except the saintly few will come forth from the tomb that they may have a resurrection — a raising up out of sin and death conditions to righteousness, to the image of God that was lost by Adam; and that eventually, if willing and obedient, they will receive God’s gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. But the rebellious under those favorable conditions, we are assured, will be cut off from life entirely in the Second Death. (Acts 3:19-23)

In speaking of the world’s resurrection our Redeemer designates it a resurrection by judgments (Rev. Ver. John 5:28, 29) Messiah’s righteous judgments will then be abroad in the world. The light of knowledge will be as clear as the noon-day sun. Every good deed and endeavor will receive its reward and every wilfully evil deed will receive chastisements, corrections, to the intent that they may learn the advantages of the way of holiness and go up thereon to life eternal, which the willing and obedient may reach by the close of the Millennial Age.

Through the prophet Daniel. the Lord declares that

2H783

many of the worldly who now sleep in the dust of the earth shall come forth unto shame and lasting contempt. We can readily realize the shame that will be theirs when the light of full knowledge shall prevail and all of their past shall stand revealed to themselves and to others in its true colors. We can well understand that this will bring contempt to many now highly esteemed amongst men. But we can rejoice in the thought that the Millennial Kingdom then to be in power will deal graciously with all. The stripes of punishment will be tempered with mercy; and gradually by their change of character the contemptible ones will cease to be contemptible. The transforming power of grace and Truth now operating in the Church will be equally forceful then, operating upon the world of mankind. As perfection is gradually attained the shame of the imperfection will gradually abate, while all of the shameless will be destroyed in the Second Death. Thus we see the Divine Purpose of the resurrection of the dead and our glorious hope, far different from all the fears that

were taught us by the musty traditions of men, from the “dark ages.” And thus we see the force of the Apostle’s words that if there be no resurrection of the dead our hope is vain, our faith is vain. (1 Corinthians 15:14-19)

“BUT NOW IS CHRIST RISEN”

The Apostle argues, “If the dead rise not,” if that is an impossibility so far as the world in general is concerned, then it is an impossibility so far as Christ is concerned. And “if Christ be not risen,” then all hope, all faith, is vain. And all preaching is not only foolish, but worse. (See 1 Corinthians 15:14) “But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept.” The mere awakening from sleep, as in the case of Lazarus, Dorcas and others, is here left out of the question. Nothing is counted as resurrection except the full, complete raising up out of death. Our Lord was the “first that should rise from the dead” (Acts 26:23), in this full sense. And he was a first fruits, or proof, that others still sleeping will come forth by Divine Power to be exercised by him in the resurrection morning — the Millennial morning. The Church will be the next in order—she is to be the Bride-Consort of the Great King and to participate with him in his glorious work of uplifting the race which fell from the Divine image into sin and death through father Adam. The redemption-price has been provided in the death of Jesus; and the time for beginning the great work of “restitution of all things” merely waits until the completion of the election of the saintly Church (Acts 3:19-21).

CHRIST AROSE FROM HADES

Preaching on the Day of Pentecost, St. Peter declares that God raised Christ from the dead. Then in proof that this was the Divine intention from the beginning, he quotes from the prophetic Psalm of David, “Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell.” The Apostle’s quotation (Acts 2:27) is in the Greek, in which the word *hell* is *hades*. His quotation is from the Hebrew, in which the word *hell* is *sheol* —the only word rendered *hell* throughout the entire Old Testament.

I am not stating this as something new, although I am confident that it is new to many of my hearers and to many of the eighteen millions who will read my discourse in tomorrow morning’s papers. For the sake of such, I note the fact that in the morning of our Lord’s resurrection, he said to Mary, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father and your Father; to my God, and your God.” (John 20:17) I remind them further of the language of the so-called Apostles’ Creed, which is coming more and more into vogue with all denominations and which declares, “He descended into hell and rose again the third day.” In a version of this

creed published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication of Philadelphia, a footnote very properly explains that the word *hell* here used is, in the Greek, *hades*, which signifies the state or condition of death.

I consider this a very important matter, which should be made widely known, because of the false conception of *hell* handed down to us through our creeds formulated in the “dark ages,” and since a misinterpretation of *sheol* and *hades* has been given to the public mind — the impression that these words signify a place of torture. All this is wholly false, as every Greek and Hebrew scholar knows, and, if cross-questioned, will admit. It is an important question to the public because this misconception of the meaning of the word *hell* is driving hundreds, yea, thousands, away from God and away from the Bible. They correctly reason that the teaching that our Creator foreknew and intended a *hell* of torture for his creatures is beyond conception, beyond belief, and manifestly untrue, as no holy being could be so unjust, unkind, unloving. It is time that all such should see that the fault lies with the creeds and not with the Bible—that the Bible teaches a *hell*, *sheol*, *hades*, into which all go, both good and bad, and from which all will be called forth in the resurrection morning by the great Redeemer.

“LEADING CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE”

A better translation reads, “Our Lord ascended on high leading a multitude of captives.” These words are a picture representing a great King as a Conqueror returning from a victory over an opponent. The victor rode in a chariot at the head of the procession, surrounded by trumpets and acclaimers, and behind him followed the evidences, the proofs of his victory —either those whom he had captured and

2H784

enslaved or, as in this case, those who had been captured and enslaved and whom the Conqueror had set free.

The picture is graphic and wonderful, notwithstanding the fact that a considerable space has intervened between our Lord’s triumphant resurrection and ascension and the evidences of his victory, which are following after him. Of the great King of Glory himself, let us remember that after he had suffered by the will of God, “the Just for the unjust,” that he might set mankind free from sin and death, he was “highly exalted and given a name above every name.” He was made “partaker of the divine nature.” He was no longer a man, for “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15:50). True, he still has as one of his many titles, The Son of man, which identifies him with our

race and the work which he is in the process of accomplishing for it and which he will finish during his Millennial reign. We are reminded by the Apostle that he was put to death in the flesh and made alive in spirit — a spirit-being. He died as a man this side the veil. He arose a New Creature the other side the veil — a spirit being. He was ‘sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body.’ As the Church’s Head and Fore-runner he passed beyond the veil; and now shortly, as participants with him and as the second battalion of the glorious triumphal procession, will follow “the Church which is his Body,” sharers with him in the First Resurrection, his Bride.

Next in processional order following the Bride class, the “very elect,” will come the “great company” from every nation, people, kindred and tongue, the honored servants of the heavenly Bridegroom and Bride. “The virgins her companions” (Psalm 14:14), will follow after the Bride into the presence of the great King Jehovah. Next in processional order will come the Ancient Worthies from faithful Abel down to John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets. But these will come forth from the tomb in human perfection and not in the spirit perfection of those preceding (Hebrews 11:38-40; Matthew 11:11). In their human perfection similar to that of Adam before his transgression, plus their development in faith and obedience, these will constitute a firstfruits of Israel and of the world of mankind. Under their ministration, supervised by the glorified ones beyond the veil, the work of restitution and uplifting the captives of sin and death will progress until, at the close of that thousand years of the reign of righteousness, every human being of loyal character will be completely freed from the bondage of sin and death and imperfection and, with the Ancient Worthies, will march in the grand procession into the presence of Jehovah God.

Thus the great Redeemer and Deliverer will not only present the saintly Church blameless and irreproachable before the Father in love but likewise will liberate all who will of Adam’s race, now asleep and degraded. No wonder the Scriptures declared of the end of his triumphal procession, “He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.” Isa 53:11

“AND GAVE GIFTS UNTO MEN”

All the blessings which, in God’s providence, are not coming to the Church during this Gospel age, and all the blessings that in the millennial age will flow to natural Israel, “the rebellious also,” and all the blessings that will flow through Israel and its New Covenant to all the families of the earth, proceed directly or indirectly from

the great victory which our Lord Jesus gained over sin and death. Our text and context, as well as the Psalm from which the quotation is made, bears out this thought. It is because our Lord descended, because He left the heavenly glory, and because, in harmony with the Father's will, our Redeemer left the courts of heavenly glory and humbled himself to become a man, and then "humbled himself to death, even the death of the cross," that his exaltation came as a reward of his loyalty to the Father's will.

And in the Divine plan it is because his resurrection body and glory were a reward, a blessing—his earthly body and nature and rights had not been forfeited through disobedience — that he had the latter with all its privileges to bestow upon Adam's dead and dying race. He gave the merit of that sacrifice, first imputedly, on behalf of all desirous of walking in his steps of self-sacrifice even unto death that these might be in the Father's good pleasure counted as his members and companions on the heavenly plane. To this end the first gifts were bestowed at Pentecost, and all of similar class throughout this age have had opportunity for participation therein. Additional gifts of helpfulness and assistance were provided through the apostles, orators, pastors and teachers of the Church — for the qualification of these saintly footstep followers for the work of service in building up the Body of Christ until the elect Body shall be complete. Eph. 4:11-13

Soon these gifts and blessings and privileges now granted and imputed to the Church will be no longer needed by the class being prepared for the heavenly joint-heirship. Then the gift of the Millennial Kingdom, and through Israel the gift of the new covenant (Jer. 31:31) will be bestowed upon the blood bought world, granting to them individually the opportunity of recovering out of all their defilement and imperfection.

2H785

Let us then hail this great Redeemer and Deliverer Lord of all!
Let us bow our hearts to him now and voluntarily put on the yoke of his service and suffer worthy of sharing with him in the glorious work of his millennial kingdom as his bride and joint-heir. Heb. 13:11-13

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, April 7, 1910](#)

THE NECESSITY FOR THE MILLENNIUM

Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was

preached unto you; whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:19-21

Brooklyn, N. Y., April 3—Pastor C. T. Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached here twice today to splendid audiences. One of his discourses was entitled “The Overthrow of Satan’s Empire.” The other, which we quote, was on the necessity for the Millennium from the text above quoted. Pastor Russell said:

Respecting two matters there can be no question:

1. That the early Church thoroughly believed in a Millennium Kingdom, hoped for it, prayed for it —“Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.”

2. It is equally certain that today the doctrine of the Millennium is tabooed as “out of date”—out of harmony with the views of the Higher Critics and Evolutionists, who are filling practically all the chairs in our colleges and the majority of the pulpits of Christendom. What has led to this radical change on the part of the religious wise men of all denominations? Have they taken a step in advance, or are they departing from the path—from the teachings of the inspired Word of God? That they have left the Word of God; that they make light of it; that they profess far more wisdom and ability than the writers of the Bible and a higher intellectual inspiration than they, is indisputable. The question for us is, Will Christians in considerable numbers follow these leaders away from God, away from all Divine revelation? Will we put our trust in literary princes who claim the right to instruct the world, not by Divine appointment or authority, but by virtue of their large amount of self-esteem? We believe that the masses are following these leaders into the ditch—to the ruination of their faith! Thank God, we do not understand this to mean that they are following them to eternal torture. But their loss is sad enough anyway. It is a serious matter for a man to lose all knowledge of God, all faith in a Divine revelation, of a Divine purpose, and to be carried about by the winds of doctrine and cunning craftiness of men who state their views very positively, while generally they hold them very lightly, very tentatively, and change them very frequently.

As illustrating our subject—the departure of the Church of today from the faith of the Church in the day of the apostles—we quote from Rev. Dr. Browns Review of Prof. Briigs’ book on Church Unity, as follows:

Dr. Briggs does not really go to the bottom of the subject. He does not thoroughly discuss the matter of the Church. His emphatic insistence that in the New Testament the idea of the Church and of the Kingdom of God is the same indicates that the subject is not fully treated. For that statement is true only because the New

Testament concept of the Church is not that of a permanent institution destined to last for thousands of years, but is looked on entirely in the light of the immediately expected second Coming of Christ. Thus the problem as to what constitutes the nature of the Church as a permanent organization in society is not so easily solved.”

This draws the issue squarely, and it is well that all Christians should comprehend it. The present-day concept of the Church of Christ is that God planted it among men as leaven in a batch of dough, with the intent that it should propagate itself until the entire mass would be leavened. But the Bible apostolic concept of the Church’s message is the very reverse of this — that it is planted in the world, not with a view to converting the world, but, on the contrary, to keep itself separate from the world and to draw to itself “as many as the Lord your God shall call” of the pure in heart — to sacrifice earthly interests for Divine interests, unto death, and later, as by the First Resurrection, to enter into the heavenly glory of the Redeemer as his “Bride,” his “Wife,” his “Joint-Heir” in the Kingdom glory and the Kingdom work. And the work of that Kingdom is set forth to be the blessing of all the families of the earth.

2H786

The two views are so radically opposite that none should confuse them in their minds. If one is right, the other is wrong. If one is Scriptural the other is unscriptural. In the above item Dr. Brown admits that the Scriptural view entertained by the early church contemplated the church in suffering and in a temporary or tabernacle condition in the present life, and promised a share with Christ in His reign in power and great glory, as God’s kingdom during the millennium.

“AS A MAN THINKETH, SO IS HE”

Our thoughts, our ideals, control our lives. Otherwise we would be dishonest. If, then, as Christian people, we have lost the proper conception of the Divine purpose in our call to be members of “the body of Christ which is the church,” this misconception most certainly would produce misdirected effort. It is this misconception which led the Church of Rome to consider it her mission to conquer the world for Christ and to use the sword and spear and fagot wherever necessary to help forward what she believed was her divinely appointed mission. Both Catholics and Protestants today see that the course followed was wrong. Neither Catholics nor Protestants would stand for it today. But it was logical. And if the same erroneous theory continues to dominate the mind it is only a question of time when the logic of the matter will again lead to similar excesses. The safe, the proper,

the right course is to go back and take up afresh the doctrine of the millennium — the doctrine that the faithful of the church now being tried and tested will constitute the glorious Kingdom of God's dear Son after their change from earthly to spirit conditions in the First Resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:42-44

THE LAYMEN'S MOVEMENT

God bless the Christian Endeavor and Epworth League and Students' Missionary League and the Laymen's Movement, all intent on "Storming the world for Jesus." We bear them witness that they have a zeal for God which we greatly admire and would encourage. But their zeal is "not according to knowledge," and is therefore considerably misdirected. To any one of logical mind, who will reason from statistics, the thought of converting the world by singing a few rousing hymns or holding a few enthusiastic meetings for the collection of money! money!! money!!! would be childish. We do not despise childishness. We have all had our share. But we all should say with the Apostle, "When I was a child I spake as a child, and understood as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." 1 Cor. 13:11

"Christian people have been fooling themselves long enough!" Yes, it is as absolutely irrational to think of converting the world as it is unscriptural to believe that God ever gave us that impossible commission. The United States Census reports show that there are twice as many heathen today as there were a century ago. The word heathen carries to many a very wrong impression. Many noble-hearted Christians have gone as missionaries to the heathen wholly unprepared for what they met — intelligent, reasoning ability, etc. They found that the heathen were full of questions, logical questions, too, which they, as Christians, had never thought of and which they were wholly unprepared to answer. Comparatively few of the missionaries are able to hold their own in argument with intelligent people in India, China and Japan. There is no danger of their converting those people. There is more danger of their losing their own faith in the Bible, because of their misapprehension of some of its teachings — respecting the mission of the Church and the hope of the world!

Missionaries are thus handicapped! Full of commendable zeal they leave our shores to tell the heathen that their forefathers have gone to eternal torment and that they are going there, too, unless they accept Christ. It is a rude awakening to be asked where hell is and why God should have condemned them and their forefathers to such a horrible eternity, and how this could be true and yet he be a God of pity, compassion, love. The heathen ask, why the different denominations — the different theories of the terms of salvation—by Water, by Election, by Free Grace, by joining the Church, etc.? The missionary, wholly unable to answer the adult native, gathers children about him, starts a school and

does all he is able perhaps to justify his presence in a foreign land —helping the sick and doing many other acts of kindness which are very commendable, whether from a religious or humanitarian standpoint.

PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL NATIONS

Our Lord's instruction was that His people should preach the Gospel in all the world for a witness —not to convert all the world, but for a “witness” to all the world. The mission of the Gospel is to select the Kingdom class, a “little flock.” The first opportunity to become members of this Royal Priesthood was offered to the Jews, and, after the gathering of a remnant from them, and, after their national rejection, the message was to go to the whole world irrespective of national lines, boundaries or language — anybody, everybody having the “hearing ear” was to be instructed respecting Christ and the opportunity of becoming his disciples by a full consecration of mind and body, time and talent, even unto death. These were to be promised the reward of a share in the First Resurrection to be members of the Royal Priesthood which, during the Millennial

3H787

Kingdom of Messiah, will bless all the remaining families of mankind — all the nonelect.

We are not complaining about the failure to convert the heathen! We are not faulting the missionaries! We are taking the Bible stand that all of God's purposes are being accomplished; that God's Word is accomplishing “that whereto it was sent” (Isa 55:11); that it was not sent to convert the world, but to gather an elect” sample or “first fruits” from all nations (Rev. 14:4). Let civilizing influences continue in heathendom, as well as in Christendom. But, let all Christians, missionaries and others know assuredly that their labor is not in vain if they are seeking for the Lord's jewels to the best of their ability. I am in touch continually with laborers in India and Africa, and well know that the pure Gospel of Christ is not greatly affecting their teeming millions. But the Gospel of the Kingdom is seeking out, blessing, sanctifying, happifying, encouraging some here and there; some who have ears of faith to hear, eyes of faith to see, and obedient hearts to obey the “call” to suffer with Christ, and by and by to reign with Him for the effectual blessing of all the families of the earth, by uplifting the willing out of their present conditions of sin and degradation and death.

THE MILLENNIUM A NECESSITY

We have shown the value and necessity for the doctrine of the millennium — that all Christians who would hold

fast to their Bibles as a faith anchor, and who would make progress in their study of the Word and be co-laborers with God in the gathering of the elect need to see that the elect only are now called to be heirs of the Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom Come." They need to see that that Kingdom is God's provision for the future blessing of the non-elect. They need to see that the Bible does not teach, as many of them suppose, that the saints are called of God to sit in the heavenly balcony and look over at the non-elect in eternal anguish, and hear their cries.

Next let us note that the millennium itself is an absolute necessity for the world, according to the statistics of the worldly-wise. Many college professors and D.D.G's are inclined to speak glibly of the second coming of Christ being far in the future — "50,000 years yet," say some. But evidently these learned gentlemen have not used their educational advantages in connection with such statements. Any schoolboy can figure up what the population of the earth would be one thousand years from now, taking the present population as per the census at sixteen hundred millions and the ratio of increase as shown by the census at 8 percent in 10 years. The total would show 3,375,325,000,000 population for the year 2900 A. D. —more than 2,000 for each person now living.

What would humanity do if the earth were crowded and clothing be found? Computing all the tillable portion of the earth at 25,000,000 square miles, or 16,000,000,000 acres, would give but one acre for the support of 210 people, or less than five square yards each. At the close of a second such period —3,900 A. D. —at the same rate, there would be 10 persons for each square foot of standing room. In other words, they would stand 15 deep on each other's heads. What shall we think of the wisdom that tells us that the millennium is 50,000 years off? The answer is found in Isaiah's prophecy, 29:14.

"THE EARTH WILL YIELD HER INCREASE"

Are we asked how the millennium, if at once introduced would avert the difficulties of the first statement, 218 people for each acre of the habitable earth? We reply that the Scriptures clearly intimate that the rapid increase of our race is associated with man's fallen condition, as our Creator declared to Mother Eve after her disobedience, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrows and thy conception." (Gen. 3:16) The Scriptures also intimate that with the return of humanity toward perfection the average increase will be less, and that eventually the human family will come to the condition where there will be neither marriage nor giving in

marriage, and where sex conditions will be lost in a uniform standard of humanity embodying the qualities at present displayed in the two sexes. Further, God's promise for the millennium is that under His blessing the earth will yield her increase, and the waste places be reclaimed, springs breaking forth in deserts. Furthermore, recognizing the Divine power in connection with the matter we can readily see how vast continents can be raised in the Atlantic and in the Pacific Oceans. But aside from these miracles, which properly enough could accompany the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, what can the world who ignore the Bible expect? In other words, what shall they expect who claim that the present order of things is to continue, saying, "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the world?" (2 Pet. 3:4)

Some may inquire: What about the resurrection of the millions who have died? We reply that the world has been only gradually working up to its present dense population. The people living in the world for the past 6,000 years, according to what we believe are trustworthy evidences, would number altogether about 20,000,000,000. But more than twice that number could be buried in the State of Texas in separate graves and more than eight times that number could find standing room in Texas, as a school-boy with his pencil could readily demonstrate.

But we need not look a thousand years ahead. The world will find itself in great trouble very shortly unless

2H788

the Millennium be ushered in. Already there is a shortage of timber. What will be the condition of things one hundred years from now? Already our capitalists are buying up the coal deposits on speculation, realizing that its rapid consumption is making it more valuable every year. Already geologists are calculating the number of tons of coal not yet mined and telling us that with the present average of increase in the consumption of coal the entire supply of the world will be exhausted in *less than two hundred years*. What will be the price of coal as the vanishing point is neared? and how will mankind do without it, and without wood for fuel unless the Millennium come promptly with its miraculous provisions? — the taking of fuel from our atmosphere, and from water, by methods which will, no doubt, be simple, when mankind come to understand them fully, but which at present are so expensive as to be of little service.

Other scientific men have been studying the increase of insanity and telling us that progress in this direction is terrific. Some have estimated that in less than two hundred years the entire world, at the present rate, will be insane. How

opportune it would be for the Millennial Kingdom of the great Life-Giver to be ushered in with its uplifting influences, mental, Last but not least the combination of wisdom and selfishness in our day, known as Unions and Trusts, is so influential that prices in every commodity are rising. Yet the trusts are not quite ripe yet. Their managers have not fully learned their power. Gradually the upper and the nether millstones will apparently be drawn closer together, while necessity will force the masses through the hopper. How great would those “giants” become within another century or so, if the Millennium be not ushered in in the interim to “lift the poor and needy out of the dunghill” —using the scriptural figure of the work of the Kingdom! Psalm 113:7.

My friends, let us stick to the Bible and its Millennial theory. So doing we will be guided by the wisdom from on high and enabled to pray with the spirit and the understanding also, “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven,” and to labor intelligently as co-workers with God! Let us prepare as pupils in the School of Christ for the great work whereunto God has called us by the Gospel Message.

“Even so, Come, Lord Jesus; Come quickly!”

“Thy Kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth, even as in heaven.”

Tippecanoe County Democrat, April 15, 1910

MOUNTAINS SWEEP INTO THE SEA

“We will not fear though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.” (Psalm 46:2)

April 10— Pastor Russell, accompanied by Dr. Jones, who will serve him as stenographer, and by a representative of this Journal, sailed from New York April 5th for Jerusalem —via Paris Berne Naples, Alexandria, Cairo and the Pyramids, Jaffa, to Jerusalem and vicinity. His return will be via Rome, Vienna, Warsaw, Berlin, Elberfeld and London. Meetings have been arranged for enroute. His longest stay will be in Great Britain, where about twenty appointments in the principal cities await him. He will be speaking practically every day. His Sunday discourses will be specially reported in these columns. Special interest will center in the discourses at Jerusalem and Rome. The many readers of his sermons will follow the Pastor in his journey with great interest. He is scheduled to be back in Brooklyn June 5th, when his topic will be “Jerusalem.” In anticipation of a large audience on that occasion Brooklyn’s largest Auditorium, the Academy of Music, has been secured. His sermons now reach six million families weekly, and assuredly many of these wish him God-speed.

ON THE ATLANTIC APRIL TENTH

I have chosen for my text a sea topic, a symbolical prophecy which, I believe, is rapidly nearing fulfillment. All Bible students recognize the fact that many of the Psalms are Messianic; that is to say, they apply to the time of the inauguration of Messiah’s Millennial Kingdom. Some of them detail the peace and joy and blessings which will then prevail amongst men, when the great leveling processes of that time will raise all the worthy poor and degraded and will humble all the proud, establishing Society under such new conditions that the new order of things is symbolically styled in the Scriptures “a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13). Others of the Psalms describe in highly figurative terms the work of the Millennial Age. For

2H789

instance, we read:

“Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King’s enemies; whereby the people fall under thee” (Psalm

45:3-5). Here the great Redeemer is pictured as the glorious conquering King of the Millennial Age, and his victory over every opposing influence is emphasized — “Unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess” (Isaiah 45:23). His right hand that will teach terrible things is the symbol of the Divine power which will be exercised at the inauguration of the Kingdom. The sharp arrows which will pierce the enemies to the heart and cause them symbolically to fall before him slain represent his message of Truth and Grace which then will conquer as they do not now, except in the hearts of the few. A sample of those now slain after this manner by the Word of Truth is furnished us in the account of St. Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost. He preached the Truth plainly, thrusting in the “Sword of the Spirit” up to the hilt. He told his hearers how they and their rulers had crucified the Prince of Life. They were “cut to the heart,” and it was the greatest blessing that could have possibly come to them. (Acts 2:23) Similarly during the Millennium, the “arrows” of Truth will smite down all opposition; and mankind, cut to the heart with proper appreciation of their own sinfulness and God’s mercy, will fall before the great King, accepting mercy upon his gracious terms—full surrender.

THE DAY OF TROUBLE PICTURED

The Psalm of which our text is a part is one of the Messianic Psalms. Prophetically and symbolically it tells about the trouble incident to the passing away of the present order of sin and selfishness and the inauguration of the new order of righteousness and love under the great Mediatorial Kingdom of Christ. Whether the events which the Scriptures predict shall come in our day or not, we hold that they will come and be in full comportment with these prophetic pictures. They were surely written for our instruction (2 Timothy 3:16). And as Bible students we do well to take heed to every item of the Divine revelation, that thus we may keep ourselves in touch with the Infinite One and in sympathy with all the features of his great and wonderful Program. Let us note the particulars of the Psalm in detail.

THE REFUGE OF HIS SAINTS

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1). How beautiful! How comforting! How strengthening! Those who have entered into covenant relationship with God through Christ, in his love, may feel serene in any trouble—in every trouble—not merely in the final trouble, with which sin and sorrow will be brought to an end. Not merely when Satan shall be bound will God be the refuge of his saints, but in all times and under all

circumstances “the peace of God which passeth all understanding” will keep the hearts and minds of his faithful.

“Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.” Fear is the great torment of the majority of our race. It is the lash which the Adversary frequently uses to drive away from God those who need his sympathy and love and succor. To such the Lord speaks tenderly saying, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” And again, God declares his name to be Love and says, “Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men” —not by his Word (Isaiah 29:13). He would have us trust him as a great, loving, generous Father, saying, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord compassioneth those who reverence him.” (Psalm 103:13). As love, more love, perfect love, comes into our hearts it more and more casts out the fear which the Adversary would inculcate and which has burned into men’s minds and consciences the “doctrines of devils,” to which the Apostle refers (1 Timothy 4:1).

“Fear not their fear, neither be afraid,” says the Lord to those who are his people. “Let the peace of God which passeth all understanding rule in your hearts!” Be faithful! Be trustful! Accept the assurance that “All things shall work together for good to those who love God — to the called ones according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). This class will not *fear* when the earth shall be removed and when the mountains shall be carried into the midst of the sea. They might indeed be astonished and in trepidation if these were literal mountains; but they are symbolical. The people of the Lord, under his instruction, will not be in darkness that that day shall overtake them as a thief, although it will come as a thief and as a snare upon the whole world (Luke 21:35). In the symbology of the Bible the term *earth* is used to represent the social structure, as the mountains which constitute the backbones of the earth symbolize the kingdoms of the world supported by the social order. As the earth represents the fixity of the social order, the sea represents the restless, turbulent, dissatisfied classes which lash against the earth and continually seek to swallow it up. The removal of the earth symbolizes the disturbance of the social order. The swallowing up of the mountains in the seas represents the overwhelming of some of the great kingdoms of the earth by the uprising of the people in anarchistic rebellion against social order.

“THE POWERS THAT BE ORDAINED OF GOD”

The fact that the Scriptures prophetically describe the overwhelming of the social order and the great governments of the earth must not be understood to signify that the Bible counsels revolution or anarchy. On the contrary, all of God's people throughout the Scriptures are counseled to live peaceably with all men, so far as possible. They are counseled not to use carnal weapons, not to take to the sword for the settlement of disputes, but rather to suffer injury. They are counseled that God is the great Overlord, and that although he is not now ruling directly amongst men he is fully the Master of the situation in that he could at any time overthrow all opponents. He does not acknowledge that his will is now done in the earth, but tells us that it will be done by and by and encourages us to pray and to hope and to wait for it. He tells us that Satan is now the “Prince of this world” by virtue of the fact that he deceives the minds and hearts of the majority. God would have his people understand something of his great Program, but he would keep this hidden from all others; hence the impossibility of explaining spiritual things to a carnal mind (1 Corinthians 2:14). “None of the wicked shall understand.” (Daniel 12:10)

The great Creator has contented himself with such a supervision of human affairs as leaves much responsibility in human hands. He merely interferes to raise up or to cast down on occasions when the interest of his Cause and Program may demand. For instance, the case of the Pharaoh, raised to the throne of Egypt, in Moses' day. God there raised to the Throne a man of great determination, and hindered from reaching the throne other men not so favorable to the carrying out of the Divine Purposes. Thus, without interfering with the free moral agency of the king, God used the wrath of man to praise him and the remainder he restrained. Similarly, God previously raised Joseph to the Governorship of Egypt for his own purposes.

The Prophet describes the tumult of that day of overwhelming trouble, when God's Kingdom will be established, saying of the sea that will swallow up the mountains, “The waters roar and be troubled; the mountains shake with the swelling thereof” (Psalm 46:3). It is probably true that such socialistic and anarchistic roarings have many times in the past caused the kingdoms of earth and their rulers to tremble. But some day, according to the Scriptures, the final catastrophe will occur. How near that day may be who can tell? Quite a good many earnest Bible students concur in the thought that such a climax is indicated in the prophecies, for the year 1915. But be the date as it may, the fact remains. The prophecy we are

examining is nearly three thousand years old, but it is as good, as sure, and as meaningful today as ever it was.

We are not of those who would harass the minds of our fellows with fear. Rather we would point them to the fact that behind this cloud of trouble there is a glorious silver lining of Millennial joy and blessing for all the families of the earth. Rather we would encourage all who have the hearing ear to zeal and faithfulness in their consecration, that they may “make their calling and their election sure” to a share in the Kingdom glories and “escape those things coming upon the earth.” (Luke 21:36). In a word, the Gospel of Christ is not a message of damnation and fear and torture, but, as the angels declared, “Good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people.” (Luke 2:10)

DELIVERANCE OF THE CHURCH PICTURED

In the fourth and fifth verses following our text the Church is symbolically pictured as the City or Kingdom of God, his dwelling-place. And the stream of Truth is represented as a river making the City clean and fresh and glad. The proclamation is made, “God is in the midst of her! She shall not be moved! God shall help her early in the morning” —early in the Millennial morning. The Church is to be “a first-fruits unto God.” Her salvation as the Bride of Christ will be accomplished early in this Millennial morning. Oh, how glad will be all those accounted worthy of a place in that elect Church — “the Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in heaven !”“She shall not be moved,” is in agreement with the first verse in assuring us that God’s people will be preserved from fear and doubt and misunderstanding of the events of that “time of trouble” and that their faith will enable them to triumph at a time when others will be in great distress and perplexity (Luke 21:26).

THE GENTILES RAGED

Beginning with the 6th verse the Prophet gives a brief synoptical picture of the time of trouble and its consummation and the inauguration of universal peace. “The heathen (Gentile peoples) raged!” These words describe the tumult which will prevail amongst humanity in the great time of trouble before the climax is reached. “Raging,” angry voices arise from public meetings, and in the more private meetings of the lodges of Labor and Capital, and through the columns of the Press to the extent permitted. In Germany the “raging Press for some time has been muzzled. The same is true in other nations. In Great Britain, in the United States and in France there is a fear of tumult through public Press “raging,” and everything possible is done to restrain it.

Whoever sees that anarchy is the most dreadful terror confronting Civilization must realize the wisdom of reasonable restraints upon his own tongue and upon the tongues

2H791

of others. Nevertheless the Scriptures show us that all effort to suppress the tumult and the angry voices of men selfishly “raging” out against each other will fail.

The prophetic picture continues — “God uttered his voice; the earth melted.” The unfaithfulness of humanity, the clamor of greed, both in rich and in poor, will be answered by the Almighty, “Giver of every good and perfect gift.” He will “utter his voice,” or, as another prophet declares, “He will speak to the people in his anger,” for their correction, for their reproof. The result will be that the symbolical earth (society) will melt — the social structure of civilization will disintegrate. Another Scripture declares that that disintegration will be so great that “every man’s hand will be against his neighbor.”

But the Prophet hastens to assure us that in the midst of all this tumult the Lord will be with his consecrated people. We read, “The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.” This promise applies primarily to the consecrated Church of Christ — Spiritual Israel. But it also secondarily applies to fleshly Israel, the Jewish nation, which will participate in this time of trouble, but be saved out of it, as the Scriptures declare (Jeremiah 30:7). In this time of trouble the Lord’s jewels, his saints, will be gathered to their heavenly home, after which Divine favor will begin to return to Israel. (Romans 11:25-30)

The Psalm closes with a picture of the devastation which will prevail throughout the world as a result of human selfishness and blindness. Capital and Labor will rise up to a terrible cataclysm of anarchy, awful for rich and poor alike. Only God’s saints will then have peace, and that because of their knowledge of the grand outcome; because of their faith in God and their willingness to accept whatever his providence should send. Mark the grand symbolic apostrophe with which the Psalm closes! May its lesson draw us nearer to the Fountain of Grace and give us rest, peace and joy through obedience of heart to him, “He (Immanuel) maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth; he breaketh the bow in sunder; he burneth the chariot in fire. Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the heathen (Gentiles); I will be exalted in the earth.”

[The Tippecanoe County Democrat, April 22, 1910](#)

OUT OF THE BELLY OF HELL CRIED I

"I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I." (Jonah 2:2)

On the Mediterranean Sea, April 17. We are not far from the place where poor Jonah long ago had his sad experience in his attempt to run away from the Divine commission to the Ninevites. We are nearing Jaffa, the port from which he sailed, then called Joppa. Some, intent on disproving as much as possible of the Bible, have attempted to make light of Jonah's experiences, claiming that there was no fish in the world of such capacity as could swallow a man entirely. We are to remember, however, that the Scriptures do not say that it was an ordinary whale that swallowed Jonah, but rather they specifically declare that God "specially prepared" a great fish for the occasion. Nor is this all. We have our Lord's own testimony to the truthfulness of the matter, and whoever denies either his truthfulness or his intelligence is thereby denying also his Messiahship and repudiating him as a Savior, because neither a falsifier nor a dupe could possibly be recognized as the great Redeemer and Savior, the Sent of God, the Messiah.

Additionally our Lord informs us that the Jonah incident was in the nature of a type, especially designed of God to foreshadow the fact that Jesus himself would be dead for parts of three days and arise from the dead on the third day, even as Jonah was buried alive for parts of three days and on the third day the great fish vomited him upon dry land. There is nothing difficult about the narrative to one who has proper faith in God. To those who have not faith, nothing connected with Divine revelation is reasonable, commendable or satisfactory. Let us maintain our stand with those who hold fast to, and hold forth for others, the Word of Life.

THE BELLY OF HELL DESCRIBED

But what have "the belly of hell" and the poor soul crying from it to do with the story of Jonah? And how does the story associate itself with our journey today over the Mediterranean Deep? Jonah was the man who was in the belly of hell and whose cry unto the Lord from there constitutes our text. When a boy I heard this text, and my imagination conjured up what hell would be like, and especially what the belly of hell, or what I supposed the middle part of it, would be like. I had the opportunity of looking into blast furnaces through what is called the glory-hole or peep-hole. There I noted that the center of the fire was at white heat. I tried to imagine people in such a condition in the very middle or belly of

hell. I could not imagine how they could survive such an experience a single moment, let alone for all eternity. I sought theological expositions of the matter and learned that some theologians of the hoary past, admitting the

2H792

destructive effect of fire, claimed that God would specially vitalize all the poor creatures consigned to this torment, so that they would never die, but would keep on suffering forever and forever and forever, untellable tortures. I found that other theologians explained that those consigned to such a fiery ordeal would gradually become adapted to it and assume an asbestos-like shell which would measurably protect them from the fire. But these theologians went on to explain that, wishing them to suffer horrible tortures, God would scale off the asbestos shell, causing them to suffer still more excruciatingly every time the operation was performed. As a child I tried to imagine that this was the just desert of sinners, and that the Heavenly Father was really kind and loving—that he did not give them worse, though I could not think of anything worse that they could suffer.

“When I was a child, I spake as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.” (1 Corinthians 13:11). I asked for the proof that anybody could endure such sufferings and yet live. I asked for the proof that our God is as unsympathetic as any devil could be. My mind rejected as irrational the whole proposition. I said: The God whom I shall worship must be a greater being than myself—greater than any human being, not only in power to execute his will, but also in wisdom to make a wise arrangement for his creatures, and also perfect in justice to do to them as he would have them do to him, if he were the creature and they the God. He must also be perfect in love, the noblest feature of any character. I said to myself, Such must be the God who was the Creator of our race, for he has produced in humanity certain degrees of these various qualities and he could not give to man what he does not himself possess, nor can we suppose that he would create man with more justice, wisdom, love and power than he himself possesses. To that great God I bowed my heart and mind and every power that I possess. To him I still bow, and give thanks that by his grace I have come to see his character, his Plan and his Word more clearly than in the past. I thank him that now I can see in what way ultimately Jesus will be the “Light of the world” — not merely the Light of the Church. (John 8:12)

In abandoning the doctrine of eternal torment my disposition was to abandon the Bible also, because I believed that the Bible was the foundation of the irrational theory which had pictured God to my mind as a demon of the worst imaginable type. But, thank God, dear friends, the Lord heard my prayer

for light, for knowledge respecting himself. After I had made a search of heathen creeds, as well as those of Christendom, and had found them all illogical, unreasonable, unsatisfactory, I turned to the Bible again, saying, Perhaps I have not done the Bible justice; perhaps I have unconsciously attributed to the Bible the teachings of the creeds. Perhaps I have read it through colored spectacles. Praying to God for guidance I took up Bible study in a very different way from previously. I began to study the Bible as I should have done at first — without reference to any of the creeds. I began to let God teach me. I ceased to say, It read, “*Thus*,” “but it must mean otherwise. It says “So and so,” but cannot mean that, but the reverse. In other words I ceased to try to teach God and endeavored to be taught of God through his Word, guided by his holy Spirit.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

That was thirty-eight years ago. Under the Lord’s blessing I found the Key to the interpretation of the Scriptures —not because of ability, but, I believe, because it is now due time for the Bible to be understood — in the closing of this Gospel Age and the dawning of the Millennial Day. Having found the Key and used it myself I have spent my best endeavors since to put the Key into the hands of God’s consecrated people the world over. I have nothing to boast of, dear friends, but have much to be glad for. First, I am glad on my own account with a joy unspeakable, that now I know my Heavenly Father and can have confidence in him and can have love for him, as never before. I am thankful that, to some extent, I have been enabled to convey similar joys, similar blessings, to others of his dear people of all denominations in all parts of the world. The Lord has gradually enlarged my opportunities year by year. I am not building a sect —not making a new denomination— not founding a Church! We have had too much of that sort of thing already. Not only have we Wesley’s Church and Calvin’s Church, etc., etc., but it has become the custom for each minister to be spoken of as the proprietor of the Church; as, for instance, The Reverend Dr. A.’s Church. It has become a custom, too, for the preachers to speak of the people as “My people,” “My Church.” This is all wrong. I wish to have neither part nor lot in it. I have no Church, and wish for none. There is but the one Church — the Church of Christ —“the Church of the Living God” — “the Church of the First-Borns, whose names are written in heaven.” That Church includes in its membership every true saint of God who trusts in the merit of Christ and wants to walk in his footsteps. Whatever earthly systems such may be identified with are without Divine authorization. Their standing in God’s sight is merely because of their identification with Christ as “members of his Body.”

In God's providence I was led to publish six volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures," or Bible Keys. These were taken up by the Bible and Tract Society, and published at cost price, to enable all of God's people

2H793

everywhere to procure them. They are now published in ten of the most prominent languages. The first Volume, "The Plan of the Ages," has passed the three million mark. I have received not one cent of royalty. My life is a very simple one. My expenses are small. I accept no salary and take up no collections. Voluntary donations from those who have been blessed by my labors supply my needs and the surplus goes to the Bible and Tract Society for the general forwarding of its work— "The Promulgation of Christian Knowledge."

Each earnest Christian who obtains the assistance of these Bible Keys and enters into the treasures of God's Word and becomes rich himself in spiritual knowledge and in joy and peace of heart is glad to call the attention of others to these Bible Keys. Thus the International classes of Bible Students of all denominations in all parts of the world are springing up and a blessed light, we believe, is going forth from these, assistful to all who love righteousness and hate iniquity. Although I am the regular Pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle congregation, there are several assistants and I am privileged to speak to thinking Christians of various parts of the world, especially in the United States. Only the Lord knows how I thank him for this privilege of service, and for the still larger opportunity afforded me through the columns of some of the principal newspapers of the United States.

My sermons are handled by a Syndicate, and I am advised that now they appear in nearly five hundred newspapers, aggregating a circulation of six million copies, or, according to newspaper count, thirty million readers. All of these dear people of every denomination who do any thinking at all, I am sure have had similar difficulties to those which I experienced —difficulties in appreciating how our Heavenly Father could be a good Father, a good God, a loving Creator and yet provide for his human creatures such terrible destinies as all the creeds of the "dark ages" set forth. There is not a thinking Christian in the world who does not need the correct understanding of the Bible in order to be able to stand in the evil day that is upon us. All need to give heed to St. Paul's words, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6:13) Our day is a blessed one in respect to its wonderful opportunities and privileges, but it is an evil one in the sense of being a time of great trial and testing of faith to Christendom.

Thinking minds are rejecting the Bible and denying that it is the inspired Word of God. These dear friends are stumbling into infidelity and think that Higher Criticism and Darwin's Evolution theory are new light. What they need is to see that the true light is in the Bible and that, wearing our grandfathers' spectacles, we inherited the Word of God and wrested it to our own injury and to the loss of our peace of mind and fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with the holy Spirit.

THE KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES

Whoever gets the proper understanding of our text has in his possession the Key to the Bible. If he will use it, passage after passage will open for him and the whole Word of God becomes a new and glorious revelation of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power Divine. Jonah was in the fish's belly—he was buried alive. It is this that is referred to in our text. The words *hell-belly* signify *grave-belly* or *belly-grave*. The context shows all this, telling us additionally that sea-weeds were wrapped about the Prophet's head and that God heard his prayer and delivered him from the *hell-belly, or belly-grave*, on the third day by causing the fish to vomit him up. If you have a reference Bible note that in the margin there is a reference to the words of our text, saying, "Hebrew, the grave." Ah! says one, The translators merely made a mistake and translated it *hell* when they should have translated it *grave*. Yes, I answer, and they made the same mistake in every case in which they used the same word *sheol* throughout the Old Testament. As it is, *sheol* is translated *grave* more times than it is translated *hell* in our Common Version; but it should be translated *grave* every time. There we have the Key to the Bible, The hell of the Bible, the penalty for sin, is death, the grave, the tomb. It is not an everlasting hell, for special Scriptures declare that *sheol (hell)* shall be destroyed. "I will ransom them from the power of the *grave (sheol)*; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O *grave (sheol, hell)* I will be thy destruction." (Hosea 13:14) St. Paul quotes this prophecy in conjunction with his great discourse on the resurrection, "O death, where is thy sting? O *grave (hades)* where is thy victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55)

We see, dear friends, what our dear Redeemer suffered on our behalf to release us from the penalty for sin. He did not go to eternal torment for our sins. He did go into *sheol*, into *hades*, into the *grave*. "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3) Thus God has provided for the resurrection of the dead — all mankind, "both of the *just* and of the *unjust*." The *just* are the Church, the saints. The *unjust* include all others. The blood of Jesus will avail for the release of every member of the race from the great penalty of

death. Now it operates under a special call to the saintly few who are invited to become joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his great Kingdom which shortly is to bless all the families of the earth—not only those then living, but also all who have gone down to the tomb. The general resurrection

2H794

will not be an instantaneous one, as in the case of the saints. It will be a gradual one in two senses.

(1) All will not come forth at once, but, as the Apostle declares, “Every man in his own order,” company or band. (1 Corinthians 15:23)

(2) It will be gradual in the sense that the awakening from the tomb will be but the beginning of the resurrection of the world. During the thousand years of Christ’s reign all who will give heed to his instructions and assistance may rise gradually—up, up, up — and by the close of the Millennium they will reach the full perfection and image of God lost by Father Adam through disobedience. The unwilling, those rebellious after the light has fully come upon them, will be destroyed in the Second Death, from which there will be no recovery. They will perish as the brute beasts.

So, then, let us learn a lesson from Jonah’s words, not forgetting the other lesson mentioned by our Lord when he declares that Jonah’s experiences in the grave — the belly of the fish, and his release therefrom — foreshadowed his own experiences in the tomb and his resurrection in power and great glory on the third day.

[The Orange Enterprise and Journal, April 29, 1910](#)

THE UPPER ROOM AT JERUSALEM

Jerusalem, April 24—My friends, we meet today for the worship of God in traditionally one of the most renowned meeting places in the whole earth. Tradition has it that this is the same “upper room which was owned by one friendly to our Lord and his disciples and who granted it as their meeting place on several occasions most intimately associated with the inauguration of Christianity. Tradition also has it that this is the room mentioned by St. Mark in our text, where the disciples with the Lord partook of the last Jewish Passover Supper, after which Jesus instituted the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper as an antitypical memorial, taking the place of the Passover to all who accept Jesus as the Passover Lamb — ‘The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;’ (John 1:29) ‘Christ

our Passover is slain, therefore let us keep the feast.” (1 Corinthians 5:7, 8)

Tradition assures us that this is the same room mentioned in the Book of Acts (1:13) as the place where the Apostles resided and assembled for worship during the ten days following the Lord’s ascension—the same “upper room,” therefore, in which was manifested the acceptance of all the consecrated followers of Jesus into Covenant relationship with God as members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church.” Of course, our permission to use this room for a public service today was obtained only by prearrangement with those having it in charge. True, traditions are not always reliable. Surely, in almost every other part of the world it would be absurd to think of the preservation of the identity of a house like this for more than eighteen centuries. But here we have most peculiar conditions. The inhabitants of this land seem to have been content to leave things just as they found them from generation to generation, merely making such slight repairs as were from time to time found necessary. Here visitors come, look and depart, filled with a sacred awe, and have done so for centuries, and the inhabitants, each intent upon his own business, have ignored this in a manner hardly imaginable by Europeans. It is possible therefore that tradition in this case and in other instances hereabouts, has located correctly, just as in Rome the prison in which Paul was confined is indicated by tradition with apparent accuracy.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER

We are favored not only in respect to the use of the room, but additionally in respect to the time of our visit and our use of it. This, according to Jewish reckoning, is the first day of Passover Week—it began last evening at 6 o’clock. The three hours preceding that marked the time of our Lord’s death and the begging by Joseph of Arimathea for the privilege of burying his body in his new tomb and the hasty taking of our Lord from the cross and getting him only partially embalmed and the tomb closed and sealed before 6 o’clock—this day beginning at 6 o’clock being amongst the Jews, as the Apostle declared, an “high day,” a Sabbath day of special sacredness as the beginning of the Passover Feast-Week.

As we look back to that memorable occasion we can sympathize with the Apostles and early believers in the blighting of all of their hopes by the apparent failure of Jesus to make good his claim of Messiahship. We can imagine better than we can describe their dejection, their disappointment. On the next day, corresponding to tomorrow, the two with whom Jesus met on the way to Emmaus said sadly, “We had trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel.” (Luke 24:21)

They had hoped that his miracles, corroborating his teaching, when he “spake as never man spake,” were

evidences that he was the Messiah. They had built their hopes, as Jews, that now finally God's promises to

2H795

their nation would be fulfilled —that Israel should be exalted in the earth in name and fame and power and authority to bless and to instruct “all the families of the earth.” They had hoped that Messiah would be the great King under whose beneficent reign, as the great Mediator between God and men, the long-promised blessing would come to the earth. They had hoped also for a personal share with him in the glories of his Kingdom, according to his own words — “Ye shall sit with me on twelve thrones, judging (ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Matthew 19:28) His death as a malefactor, as a blasphemer against God, seemed to cast a shadow over every hope and to leave them not only desolate in heart themselves, but despised by their neighbors as deceived fanatics. This is the anniversary, dear friends, of a day that was very sad to our brethren of 1877 years ago.

“MOSES AND ALL THE PROPHETS”

How different is our attitude of mind that we are able to see, to praise God and to rejoice that Jesus died; that he suffered, “the Just for the unjust,” that his death might constitute the Ransom-Price for Adam and all his race. This light upon the sufferings of Christ began to shine into the hearts of the Apostles on the day of our Lord's resurrection, corresponding to tomorrow. The oil for that light lay hidden in the words of Moses and all the Prophets of Israel. But it was necessary that our Lord, having risen from the dead to be the great antitypical High Priest, should trim the lamp of Divine Truth that the light might shine out to all of his people, all of his “members,” all of the “Royal Priesthood,” all who are in the consecrated condition of heart, symbolically represented by the “holy” of Israel's Tabernacle.

Mark how gently and how wisely the Lord permitted the light to shine in gradually upon his faithful few. The eyes of their understanding must not be blinded by an instantaneous flash. Gradually, as they were able to bear it, the good tidings of his resurrection from the dead to glory, honor and immortality on the divine plane must be made known to them. The first intimations were from the women of the company who had gone with spices, after the “high day,” on the morning of the third day to complete the work of embalming the Lord. They reported first, that he was gone from the sepulchre, and secondly, that they had seen some angels who told them that he was risen from the dead. And later Mary had reported that she had seen the Lord and clasped him by the feet and that he had said to her, “I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and

your Father; and to my God, and your God.” (John 20:17)
Jesus said to tell the disciples that he would meet them in Galilee, as he had said to them before. These bewildering experiences were merely leading gradually on, preparing the disciples for the fuller knowledge of the facts.

It was the same day (corresponding to tomorrow afternoon) that the Lord overtook two of the sorrowing disciples as they walked into the country to spend the night. Here again he would not shock them and overpower them by a vision of his glorious presence such as smote down Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus, “shining above the brightness of the sun at non-day;” on the contrary he assumed a body of flesh and traveler’s clothing and talked sympathetically with the two sorrowing ones. After hearing their woes and sorrows he must have astonished them with his knowledge of the Scriptures, as well as by his sympathy, saying to them, “O foolish and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!” (Luke 24:25) They had been willing to believe something of what the Prophets had spoken — the glorious things, the happifying things pertaining to Messiah’s Millennial glory. But they had been slow to believe the prophets’ other testimonies to the effect that the Redeemer must be “led as a Lamb to the slaughter,” must be the sin-offering, must be despised and rejected of men, must be lifted up on the cross as the antitype of the “brazen serpent,” and must be raised from the dead by the power of the Father to the glory, honor and immortality of his great station as Prophet, Priest, Mediator, King, the antitype of Melchizedek, for the fulfillment to Israel and the world of all of God’s great promises.

Then said Jesus, in view of these expositions, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?” What else should be expected? Did he not foretell his own death? And did he not foretell his own resurrection? And were you not too confused to understand his teachings to the full? Did not your minds run more to the coming glory than to what he said to you respecting the necessity that you should “watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation” and lose all your part and hope under these trying conditions? A little later, in the same day, he appeared in the “upper room,” traditionally this very room — the doors being shut for fear of the Jews — barred, we may be sure, because the poor disciples felt that the envy and hatred which had led to the crucifixion of the Master might easily be transferred now to them because of their sympathy with him and their relationship to his work. Here Jesus materialized in their presence and spoke a few words. He told them that he was really present with them and that it was not merely a phantom which they saw. And then he ate with them, honeycomb and fish, as evidencing the fact that

they were not being addressed by an illusion, but by a corporeal being. While they still wondered with astonishment, he proved to them that their risen

2H796

Lord was no longer merely a man, but that he had experienced a change in his resurrection, so that now he was a spirit being and could go and come like the wind — appearing in a body of flesh when his purposes so demanded. He gave proof of this by vanishing out of their sight, dissolving the body of flesh and bones and the clothing as easily as he had created them and by the same Divine power.

THE PENTECOSTAL BLESSING

The glorified, resurrected Jesus remained with the infant Church for forty days, watching over their interests. On four or five occasions he appeared to them again in different forms and for the further inculcation of the great lesson that he was risen and changed, henceforth a spirit being. Then he ascended up on high to appear in the presence of God on behalf of his faithful ones first, as later on he will appear in the interest of the world. The Father's recognition of the merit of his sacrifice, applied "on our behalf, "was manifested by the impartation of the holy Spirit on Pentecost day. Traditionally this same wonderful upper room" witnessed that outpouring of Divine blessing and favor, which came only upon consecrated believers and has come upon the same class, and upon none other from that day unto this —begetting them individually by the holy Spirit to the divine nature with its promises of glory, honor and immortality to the faithful, in association with the Lord Jesus in his Millennial Kingdom.

That blessing was a partial fulfillment of the Lord's word through the Prophet Joel, namely of that portion which says, "In those days will I pour out my Spirit upon my servants and upon my handmaids." (Joel 2:28) We are glad, dear friends, that what occurred at that first Pentecost and what has continued all through this Gospel Age, of Pentecostal blessing upon each individual member of the Body of Christ, is merely a foretaste of God's great favor towards Adam's race. As St. James declares (1:18) the Church is merely "a kind of first-fruits unto God of his creatures." True, the first-fruits in this case is the very choicest —our Lord, the glorious Head and High Priest, and his saintly followers the antitypical under-priests of the Royal Priesthood. But a great blessing is yet to come, for there shall come a still greater outpouring of God's Spirit as mentioned in the same prophecy in the words, "After those days, saith the Lord, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall seek for me, and your

young men shall see actually what your ancients dreamed of.”

This will have its fulfillment during the Millennial Age, not that the world in general will be begotten of the holy Spirit to a spirit nature like unto the angels and like unto Christ, as in our case, but the Lord has promised to take away the stony heart and to give a heart of flesh to all the willing and obedient of mankind during that Millennial Day. In such, a right spirit shall be renewed as they become obedient to the gracious arrangements of Messiah’s universal Empire and that right spirit in man, that right disposition, will be the holy Spirit—God’s Spirit or disposition. It was given to man originally when he was created perfect, upright, in the image and likeness of God. It was lost by sin and displaced by a spirit of selfishness and sometimes by a spirit of devilishness. It will be the great work of that thousand years of Messiah’s Kingdom to lift mankind out of sin and selfishness and death and to restore the willing and obedient to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by the merit of the sacrifice at Calvary. With the close of the Millennial Kingdom, God shows us that all who will not have attained to the possession of his holy Spirit will be destroyed in the Second Death. Then there shall be no more sighing, nor crying, nor dying, no more sin, no more sorrow, for all the former things of sin and death shall have passed away. It will be Christ on the throne who will make all things new.

SUPPER IN THE UPPER ROOM

In closing we ask that in connection with what we have just said respecting this “Upper Room” and the blessings here conferred, you do not forget the special privilege which some twenty or thirty of us enjoyed in this same room on Friday evening last. We remind you afresh that that evening,, after six o’clock, corresponded to the night in which our Lord with his disciples first celebrated the memorial of his own death with the loaf and with the cup, traditionally in this same “Upper Room.” Incidentally we remark that the early Christian Church used this same Jewish reckoning in the annual celebration of our Lord’s death and resurrection, but that, later on, the method of calculating the date was slightly modified so that this year Good Friday and Easter, according to the revised Episcopalian Calendar, occurred nearly a month ago—March 25-27. I feel sure that as long as I live I shall not forget the blessed experiences of Friday evening and its memorial celebration, in this “Upper Room,” of the great event which means so much to the Church and to the world — which symbolizes the precious sacrifice of Christ and also, as the Apostle explains, symbolizes the participation of all the faithful members of Christ in his sacrifice—in the broken loaf and in the cup of which we partake antitypically. May we, dear friends, prove so faithful to our consecration Vows that we will be

included by our glorious Lord amongst those who shall be counted worthy to share also his cup of joy and glory—participation in his Millennial Kingdom and his glorious work of blessing all the families of the earth!

2H797

The Christian Globe, Thursday, May 5, 1910
(London)

PASTOR RUSSELL

Since the days of Henry Ward Beecher and Dr. Talmage, no preacher has occupied so prominent a position in the United States of America as Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, holds today. Now, we on this side of the Atlantic are to be privileged to listen to the man, the announcement of whose name fills to overflowing the largest halls in the States, whose converts are numbered by the thousands, and whose sermons appear regularly in the newspapers in America. Pastor Russell will be the guest speaker at gatherings of the International Bible Students Association's meetings, which are to be held at the Albert Hall on the evening of Sunday next and the two following Sundays. He will, in addition, visit during the next three weeks the principal cities and towns in England, Scotland and Ireland, delivering addresses, and endeavoring to bring about in the British Isles some such awakening to Bible truths as has marked his career in America. Like Beecher and Talmage, both of the same "city of churches," Pastor Russell is an independent teacher, not allied to any particular denominational organization, giving his time, his strength, and his great powers of oratory to the moulding of public thought "with charity toward all and malice toward none." Above all, the Pastor may be described as strictly orthodox, evidenced by his close adherence to the Bible as the inspired Word of God. In reference to this, an old American friend of his, now visiting England, remarked to the writer: "After all, if the Bible is to be man's only chart and compass as respects God and the future, it is impossible to give too earnest heed to its teaching." Although Pastor Russell holds to the Bible tenaciously, he claims to have proved that on some points it has been misunderstood by friends as well as foes. He has called attention to a few faulty translations, and has offered preferable interpretations of some of the parables, and altogether has thrown a new light on the Scriptures. There is nothing in the Bible that he either denies or doubts, but there are many texts on which he throws a flood of light that seems to uncover their meaning. As Pastor Russell is to play an important part in the May Meetings, a brief sketch of his life will be of interest to our readers. He is of Scotch-Irish parentage, born in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1852. He was brought up and educated as a Congregationalist, being a very devout, earnest, and zealous Church and Sunday School worker in his youth. In his endeavors to persuade an infidel friend into a belief in the Bible as being God's inspired Word,

he himself was driven into infidelity by questions which he could not answer. In his search for a basis upon which to build his hope for future bliss, he undertook a lengthy investigation of the claims of Confucius, Mahomet, Buddha, and other founders of religion; these he found to be unsatisfactory to either heart or head. Almost without hope, he took up the claims as presented by the various Christian denominations, also the systematic study of the question of the punishment for sin. His findings upon the latter were such as to restore perfect confidence in the Bible as God's inspired Word and revelation of His purposes towards mankind. Pastor Russell in 1877 began to come prominently before the public eye in connection with Bible lectures delivered in various cities in New England, his work centering at that time in Boston. Intervening years have been full of activities along the line of Biblical interpretations through religious journals, magazines, newspapers, books, tracts, etc., and the speaker's platform. As previously stated, now are Pastor Russell's sermons weekly reaching approximately ten million homes. He is also author of works entitled, "Studies in the Scriptures," over three million copies being in the hands of readers. The fourth million is now in the press. This is a remarkable testimony to the popularity of his writings. Pastor Russell is now on his way to London, having just re-visited the Pyramids and Palestine. It is expected that his recent investigations will have much to do in still further unsealing the mysteries which for centuries have been kept secret by that "Stone Witness." The Great Pyramid is the subject of an important chapter in one of his books, in which he makes some most interesting applications of the published measurements made by the late Piazzi Smyth, formerly Astronomer Royal for Scotland. Dr. John Edgar, within the last year has verified all of Prof. Smyth's measurements, which have been used by Mr. Russell. The return of the Jews to their promised land, as prophesied in the Scriptures, has been elaborately treated by Mr. Russell, and he will now be in position to speak with added knowledge regarding the work of the Zionists, he having been in Jerusalem during the recent Passover week. Pastor Russell was the principal speaker at the four Christian Mass Meetings recently held in the Academy of Music in New York for the 2H798

consideration of Church Federation, a question now exciting interest both here and in America. Details of the subjects to be treated of at Albert Hall will be found on our Leader page. No tickets are required. All seats free.

[The Tippecanoe County Democrat, May 6, 1910](#)

“NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST”

Rome, May 1—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached here today to a large and attentive audience.

Speaking through an interpreter, he was heard by all. His address was delivered under the auspices of the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION. A profound impression was evidently made, and Bible study surely received a considerable impetus. Many inclined to scoff at religion and the Bible, as interpreted in the past, said reverently, "If this be the 'Gospel of Christ,' it is worthy of all acceptance." The speaker said:

We, dear friends, are living in a day in which the leading minds of the world are rejecting the Bible and its message in all the great colleges of the world; yea, in the theological seminaries also, the Bible is classed as antique. Professed faith in the Bible, as the inspired Word of God, today calls forth sneers of ridicule and the comment that such believers are "unlearned." But, my hearers, I am before you today to contend that it is not the "Gospel of Christ" that is being rejected by the intelligence of the world, but another Gospel that came, not from Christ, neither from the Apostles, neither is it taught in the Bible. I am here to claim, and to endeavor to prove that the Bible is eminently logical, thoroughly reasonable, and that the message it bears to those who have "ears to hear," is the most wonderful message that could possibly be presented to human heads and hearts.

We are not here to claim a new revelation, making void the Word of God through Jesus and the Apostles; we are not here to twist and turn their words to make them appear to mean what they do not say. We are here to show that the Bible taken in its simplicity, and allowed to interpret itself, is the most wonderful book in the world, and that the Divine Plan Of Salvation therein set forth is soul-satisfying and, as the Scriptures declare, sufficient, "that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work."

THEORIES OF THE "DARK AGES"

We are not here, my friends, to set forth any sectarian views of the Scriptures, nor to advocate a new theology. By no means; we have already too many theologies; we have already too many sects or divisions of Christ! We want no more! Christendom is awakening to the fact that the various conflicting creeds cast discredit on the Bible. The creeds of Christendom universally discredit each other by their interpretations, and universally they discredit the Bible, which would be surely a most ridiculous book, if it taught all the various conflicting dogmas.

However, I should not be misunderstood as making an attack upon any creed, or upon the adherents of any creed. Rather, I suggest that we may well look with sympathy upon all the various creeds and sects, realizing that God's people have been in Babylonish confusion for now many centuries. Did not the Apostle tell that a great

falling away would come? (2 Thessalonians 2:3) Should we then be surprised if we find his words have come true, that for fifteen hundred years the Church of Christ has been deeply entangled with errors and superstitions, which make void the Gospel of Christ? Let us not then stop to find fault with our forefathers, and to upbraid them; let us rather, so far as possible, assume their honesty, their sincerity. Let us take the Bible standpoint, and realize that the difficulty has been the power of our Adversary, the Devil, and that he has deluded and ensnared, not only the heathen world, but to a considerable extent Christendom.

Mark St. Paul's words, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the glorious light of Divine goodness should shine into their hearts" (2 Corinthians 4:4). The intimation is that our great Adversary, Satan, is interested in deceiving mankind, respecting the glorious character of our God, and his wonderful Plan of Salvation through Christ. Satan uses as his tools the very best of humanity that he can bring under his control, and nothing is more evident than that he has completely deluded the heathen world with what the Apostle terms, "doctrines of devils." Not only so, but to the extent that he was able to do so, he has evidently worked mischief with the various reformations and creeds of Christendom. Thank God that he did not gain entire control of any of these! Thank God that there is a center or nucleus of truth in each of these creeds, and around that kernel of truth, germinating

2H799

power may be felt in every denomination, but the Adversary has wrapped these creeds with layer after layer of mistranslation and misinterpretation.

In the light of our day, many are able to discern more clearly than did our forefathers, the monstrous and God-dishonoring fallacies of the creeds, and, aroused to disgust, they have rejected the irrational dogmas; but they have frequently rejected also the central truth, which that dogma, to a certain degree, misrepresented. Thus we are in the day of the rejection of the creeds by the people of all denominations, Catholic and Protestant, and equally we are in the day of Bible rejection, because it is assumed that the Bible, having been studied by the formulators of these creeds, must be in accord with these, and hence, must be responsible for the unreasonable teachings and must be rejected when these are rejected.

Some of us ran away with the doctrine of "election," thinking it the whole Gospel of Christ; whereas, our fragment was incomplete, unsatisfactory, and misrepresented the Gospel, when taken alone. Others

grasped the doctrine of “free grace, and ran away with that, claiming that it was the entire Gospel —ignoring the Scriptures which referred to “election” etc. These made a similar mistake, and similarly misrepresented the Gospel of Christ in its wholeness, its solidarity. Others grasped those Scriptures which assure us of a universal opportunity for salvation, and interpreted them to mean that all mankind will attain eternal salvation, regardless of their wills and cooperation. Others found difficulty in harmonizing the relationship between the heavenly Father, the heavenly Son, and the holy Spirit, and this contention led to Unitarianism on the one hand, and to Trinitarianism on the other. Others of us caught the doctrine of “baptism,” and made of it the entire Gospel, and thus did violence to the lengths, and breadths, and heights, and depths of the true message, the true Gospel, of which St. Paul in our text declares that he was not ashamed.

Noting the logical mind of St. Paul, who can doubt that he would be ashamed, as we ourselves are, of the fragmentary presentations of the various creeds which more or less oppose and contradict each other? We may be sure that what the Apostle would endorse, as the “Gospel of Christ,” we need not be ashamed of. Hence our determination should be to search the Scriptures, and to find that one reasonable message of the Divine Plan which centers in Jesus our Redeemer.

THINGS AT WHICH WE GAGGED

Men and women do not find it difficult to believe in a wise, just, loving and powerful Creator; just such a God our hearts and heads tell us we should expect; just such a God rational people find no difficulty in worshipping. Indeed, while some of us in the past may have believed in the “total depravity” of the race, may we not realize that notwithstanding the fall, there is still in the human mind and heart something which has “longings infinite,” something which cries out for the living God, and which commands our reverence and worship, in proportion as he is recognized?

Spiritually we gagged at the suggestion that a God of all wisdom, love, justice and power ever created our race with the foreknowledge and foreordination that practically all of these thousands of millions must suffer either purgatorial torture for several centuries, as our Catholic friends present the matter, or at the still more irrational theory of us Protestants that eternal torture is to be the fate of all except the elect few, the saints, who now follow in the footsteps of Jesus — a course contrary to the world and all the tendencies of life around us. Well may we gag, and the sooner we reject and eject this entire mass of unScriptural dogmas, the better. As a whole it comes to us from our honest, but unenlightened forefathers, who verily thought they did God service in

torturing one another, even to the extent of burning one another at the stake, because of little differences along the lines of these “doctrines of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1).

The rich spiritual food and the strong faith, which we, dear friends, as Bible students, should desire and seek for, are to be found only in the Bible itself. We should not spurn suggestions from one another, but we should receive such suggestions tentatively, and the Word of God should be searched, so that our faith should not stand in the teachings of men, but in the power of God, as set forth in the Word of God. From this quarter only can we expect information respecting

THE “GOSPEL OF CHRIST”

of which St. Paul was not ashamed. That Gospel has two distinct features. Primarily it relates to the world of mankind, and instead of telling us that either centuries of purgatorial suffering, or an eternity of torture awaits the world, its message is that, in God’s due time, a great blessing awaits the world through the glorified Christ, and as a result of the sacrifice which he finished at Calvary.

This great blessing will not be universal salvation, but it will be a universal *opportunity* for salvation. It will not be a salvation in ignorance and heathen superstition, but a salvation *from* such conditions, with full opportunity to return to the image and likeness of God, lost in Adam, and redeemed by our Savior. This is the same Gospel that was heralded by the angels on the night of our Lord’s birth in the words, “Behold we bring you good tidings of great joy,

2H800

which shall be unto all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior [Life-Giver], which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10). This version of the Gospel, a good message, and for all mankind, corresponds exactly with the first statement of the Gospel made by God to Father Abraham, saying: “In thy Seed shall *all* the families of the earth be *blessed*.” (Gen. 22:18)

Nor should this surprise us —that a loving and gracious Creator, who knew the end from the beginning, created the human race with the full foreknowledge that Father Adam would be disobedient, and that his life would be forfeited, and that all his children would share in his mental, moral, and physical decline, even unto death! Why should it seem strange that this God, this All-Wise Creator should plan an opportunity for the complete recovery from the effects of sin and death for all mankind? Why have we allowed our minds to refuse the message sent to us through the angels respecting the

“good tidings of great joy to all people?” Why have we allowed the Adversary to make us think for one moment that our God, instead of being gracious, loving, and kind, and helpful to his creatures, has, on the contrary, made provision for their eternal misery? Why have we allowed ourselves to believe from this standpoint that our Creator was the greatest demon of all demons —not only that he has power, but that he chooses to use that power for the eternal torture of his creatures, who were not even given a choice as respects their creation?

Ah, my dear friends, with tears and in sack-cloth, we should confess to our blindness in the past respecting the true character of God. Humbly should we beg forgiveness for having misrepresented the Holy One of Israel. But he knows that we did this in ignorance, and he is both gracious and generous to forgive us our trespasses, and to cleanse us from all iniquity according to his gracious arrangement for us, which centers in Christ Jesus our Lord.

WHY THE LONG DELAY?

Some, perhaps, would answer, Surely, if the “Cross of Christ” means the blessing of all the families of the earth, the fact would have been demonstrated somehow during the nineteen centuries since. The fact that only a comparatively small number have accepted Christ and been blessed is therefore the ground for the belief that God is merely seeking out of the world an “elect” “little flock.” Surely, if he had been seeking to convert the world, he could and would have made much more progress in that direction than has been made, in all this time.

We reply that this is no argument whatever. The same God delayed to send his Son, delayed the sacrifice on Calvary for more than four thousand years after sin had entered the world. And yet, according to the Scriptures, the merit of the sacrifice of Christ is not merely intended to bring blessing to those who have lived since Calvary, but also to all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues from the day of Adam to the end of the Age.

According to the Scriptures, the death sentence was pronounced against Father Adam, and all of his children have shared in the blighting effect of that sentence through heredity. Not only has our race been growing weaker, mentally, morally, and physically, but by the thousands of millions, they have dropped into the tomb, the great prison-house of death, from which there is no escape, except by and through the Son of God. His sacrifice for the sins of the whole world secures to him the right to the control of Adam and his race. This control, the Scriptures assure us, Christ will assume and

exercise during his Millennial reign. During that thousand years all the families of the earth will be blessed, as promised.

Meantime, in the grave (*sheol, hades*, the hell of the Bible), where the “dead know not anything,” they merely wait, or as the Scriptures declare, they “sleep in the dust of the earth.” The Redeemer’s authority over them is beautifully symbolized in his own words, “I am he that was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of death and of the grave. (Revelation 1:18) He will exercise his keys of authority and deliver all of the prisoners from the power of the tomb, and additionally from all the weaknesses and imperfections incidental to the sentence. He will bring the willing and obedient back to full human perfection, and to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by Jesus. This, we declare, according to the Scriptures, is the Gospel in its primary sense — a message of “good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people,” that in the “Seed of Abraham, all the families of the earth shall be blessed” —not only the living at the time of the establishment of the Kingdom, but all that are in their graves who shall come forth, “every man in his own order.”

As I beheld in your city the great amphitheater which once witnessed the terrible sufferings of some of God’s faithful ones in the past; and again, as I viewed the room once used as a torture-chamber, in the days of the Inquisition, I said, Thank God for the blessings of light and liberty, which belong to our day, and yet I reflected that even though they be different in form, there must needs be “fiery trials” for every true child of God, for it is the will of God that all should be thoroughly tested, as respects reverence, loyalty, and devotion to principle, that they may be counted worthy of a share with Immanuel in the glories of his Empire.

2H801

[The Weekly Enquirer, May 12, 1910](#)

HEREAFTER

*With the exception of the three end paragraphs, printed below, this discourse has been republished in **Pastor Russell’s Sermons**, pages 538-545, under same title.*

London, Eng., May 8—Albert Memorial Hall, the largest and most renowned auditorium in the world, having a capacity of ten thousand, was crowded this evening to hear Pastor Russell, of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, who delivered an address on “HEREAFTER” under the auspices of the “International Bible Students Association.” Taking the text, Rev. 21:4.

The following paragraph occurs at the end of the article.

“THY KINGDOM COME”

We are not to understand that the glorious work of human reclamation from sin and death conditions will be left to human option, as is the “high calling” of this Gospel age. Now God is inviting so many as desire to be in accord with Him and to share with the Redeemer in His glory, that they may present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is their reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1) He does this because He is seeking such to worship Him as will worship Him in spirit and in truth. But when this age shall have ended and the millennial age shall have been introduced the work will no longer be left to what the apostle designates as “the foolishness of preaching.” The preaching work will have accomplished its purpose—the selection of the Church.

Then will begin a reign of force, of law, of rewards and punishments following promptly—instructing mankind for their highest welfare and uplifting. That condition of the future the Lord designates “the Kingdom of God,” and “the Kingdom of His dear Son.” For a thousand years the great Redeemer, having bound Satan, will reign as King over the earth, for the blessing of His subjects, every one of whom is purchased with His own precious blood. The kingdom class will be composed of those who follow in His footsteps now, sincerely desirous of doing His will. His reign will be glorious, and the whole world will be enlightened with the knowledge of the truth. It will be a universal reign; “every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God.”

It will be during the reign of God’s kingdom, as represented in the Great King, that all tears shall be wiped from off all faces, as is stated in our text. The word “wiped” carries with it the thought of a gradual process, and this is the general tenor of the Bible on this subject. It will require the entire thousand years of the millennium to deliver and thoroughly bless all of our race, but God is quite able to do all that He has promised. It is for us to wait patiently for Him, and meantime to comply with His gracious invitation, that we may show our loyalty now by our faithfulness to Him and to His truth, that by and by we may be counted worthy to share with our Redeemer in His throne, in harmony with His promise, “to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father in His throne.”

Orange Enterprise and Journal, May 20, 1910

PENTECOSTAL BLESSINGS

London, Eng., May 15th —Albert Memorial Hall, recognized as the largest modern auditorium in the world, was crowded today to hear Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, on “Pentecostal Blessings.” Many of the most prominent stalls and boxes are owned by the nobility, many of whom occupied them, while others, unable to attend, graciously granted permission for their occupancy by others; but hundreds were turned away. The meeting was held under the auspices of the “International Bible Students Association.” The speaker said:

It is appropriate that on this day, celebrated and recognized as the anniversary of Pentecost, we should consider the import, and have well in mind what we celebrate. I therefore take as my text, the words of St. Peter explanatory of the occasion: “This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my

2H802

Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall have the vision which your ancients dreamed of; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days my Spirit, and they shall proclaim.” (I give you a preferred translation.) Acts 2:16-18

St. Peter declares that the outpouring of the holy Spirit upon the waiting believers at Pentecost was mentioned by Joel the Prophet, but he does not say that all of the prophecy was fulfilled there and then. As a matter of fact we know that the holy Spirit was not then poured out on all flesh; it was poured out merely upon God’s servants and hand-maidens. A careful inspection shows us that there are two parts to the prophecy—(1) All flesh, and (2) God’s servants and hand-maidens. The order of the blessing is also stated. It will come upon all flesh *after* those days, but upon the servants and hand-maidens *in* those days. The days mentioned evidently refer to this Gospel age —from Pentecost to the second coming of Christ.

In this period, of now nearly nineteen centuries, God’s holy Spirit has been granted to his faithful ones, and to these alone. Only the fully consecrated have been accepted of the Lord as living sacrifices, and only such have been begotten of the holy Spirit, that they may be “new creatures in Christ.” During all this time, the world has been unrecognized so far as the holy Spirit is concerned. Indeed, the Apostle after Pentecost went still

further and declares that “the whole world lieth in the Wicked One.” The only action of the holy Spirit must be, as in the case of Felix, to “reprove the world of sin and righteousness, and of a coming judgment.” Our text declares, however, that the time is coming when the world will receive a share of the great Divine blessing, which was fully assured by the death of Christ. But its time of favor will be “*after* those days” — after this Gospel Age shall have come to an end; after the New Dispensation, the Millennial Age, shall have come. Let us note first the blessings belonging to this Gospel Age, in which we are specially interested, and subsequently let us notice the blessings that God has promised shall come to all mankind.

THE CHURCH'S PENTECOST

It is not sufficient that we say that a Pentecostal blessing came upon the followers of Jesus in the upper room at Jerusalem, totally different from anything that had been known in the world before! We want to know why it was so; and if a blessing, why it did not come sooner to God's people? We remember Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Daniel, the Prophets; we recognize the fact that they were grand characters, and, as St. Paul said, “They had this testimony that they pleased God.” Yet there was no Pentecostal outpouring in their day, nor until the age of man in the world was more than four thousand years. Why was this? We answer that God has his own times and seasons for the various features of his work.

We recall the words of our Lord Jesus, respecting his forerunner, “Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he” (Matthew 11:11). Why could not John, and others of the prophets preceding him, enter in and enjoy this Gospel favor? We answer, in the language of St. Paul, “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” (Hebrews 11:40) Our Creator has great gifts to dispense to our race through the Redeemer, and it is for him to determine the times and the seasons for the dispensing of these blessings, and to whom they shall go. According to the Divine arrangement, the Redeemer had first to die as man's Ransom-Price, before any of the race could come back into full relationship with the Creator. It is true that by faith Abraham and others of the past did enjoy certain of God's favors, and much of his fellowship, but none could be received into full sonship and joint-heirship with Christ, until first their sins had been cancelled.

Then they could be accepted in Christ on the terms which the Father has appointed.

Those very disciples who received the blessing in the upper room on Pentecost, had forsaken sin, had become Jesus' disciples, had made full consecration of all their earthly hopes and interests, had been accepted by the Lord Jesus, and he had put his Spirit upon them, enabling them to do many mighty works in his name. However, it was one thing to do mighty works through his spirit, or power, and another matter to possess that spirit inherently—to act directly as agents of Divine favor instead of indirectly. It is in harmony with this thought that we read that after our Lord breathed upon them the holy Spirit, symbolically imparting his Spirit, and commissioning them as his representatives to preach the Gospel, he told them, nevertheless, to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power—the holy Spirit—until the Father should recognize them directly as his ministers and ambassadors.

From the standpoint of Divine Justice, the Apostles and believers were still under the sentence of death as sinners at the time of our Lord's death, at the time of his resurrection, at the time of his ascension. Then he said to them, "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." (John 16:7) After the forty days, invisibly present with his disciples, except on a few occasions for a few moments each, our Lord ascended, and after ten days

2H803

the holy Spirit from the Father came upon the waiting household of faith. It evidenced to them the fact that their sins had been forgiven for Christ's sake, that they were justified freely from all things through his sacrifice, and that their consecration to sacrifice themselves had been accepted of the Father, and that henceforth they might count themselves as 'joinsacrificers with Christ,' "members of his Body," members of "the Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven," members of the "Seed of Abraham." (Galatians 3:29)

KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

The Master in speaking to St. Peter assured him that to him were committed the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, which signified that the way into the Kingdom at that time had not yet been opened, and that Peter would be honored by being the Lord's servant to do the opening work. There were two of these "keys," and therefore there were two opening works to be accomplished.

The Church, under Christ her Lord, is God's kingdom, not yet set up or established "in power and great glory"

—not yet finished or inaugurated. The work of this Gospel Age is to “call” or invite such as have a hearing ear to become joint-heirs in this Kingdom, for which he taught us to pray, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” So many as genuinely accept this heavenly calling, this “high calling” to glory, honor, and immortality, are probationary members of the Kingdom of Heaven. Such are Scripturally exhorted to continue faithful to their vows of consecration, and thus make their calling and election sure to a place in this glorious Kingdom, which will be inaugurated at the second coming of Christ. But the Lord instructs all saying, “Sit down first and count the cost;” (Luke 14:28) “but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” (Hebrews 10:38)

All who are thus spirit-begotten (by the holy Spirit, John 1:13) during this age are promised a spirit birth, to spirit-being in the resurrection. We read, “It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown an animal body; it is raised a spiritual body. . . . For this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption” (1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 50). The entire period between the first advent and the second advent of our Redeemer is set apart in the Divine Program for this great work of selecting from amongst men the “little flock,” such as shall be counted worthy of these honors on the spirit plane, and the privilege of participating with Messiah in his great work of the next age.

TO THE JEW FIRST

Only Jews received the Pentecostal blessing. The Gentiles were excluded for three and a half years thereafter, in harmony with a Divine promise made to the Jewish nation. Then came the time for a similar privilege to be extended to the Gentiles, and the record informs us that Cornelius was the first Gentile to be received into spiritual relationship with God. He was a good man, and had been a good man for years; he prayed often, and gave much alms to the people, but until then, the middle wall of partition separated between Jew and Gentile. Even then he could not be received of God because of his works, or prayers, or alms, but must first be instructed respecting Christ and his redemptive work, and must believe and accept the same. “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” (Acts 4:12) either in this age or in any other.

Thus it was that, in harmony with our Redeemer's promise, St. Peter used the "key" which introduced the Gentiles to the Pentecostal blessings. As he used the first key on the Day of Pentecost in explaining to the multitudes of Jews the meaning of the Pentecostal blessings, and the privilege that they had of entering into the Divine favor thereby, so, at this later date, the Lord instructed Cornelius to send for Peter, saying, "Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodging in the house of one Simon a tanner by the seaside; who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee." (Acts 10:32; 11:14, 15) Thus were the two "keys" used by St. Peter, and thus were the doors of the Gospel favor—the high-calling of joint-heirship with Jesus—thrown open, both to Jews and to Gentiles, through faith in the precious blood. The doors thus thrown open are not yet closed; but, as we sometimes sing, "That gate was left ajar for me.

I rejoice with you today, fellow-students of the Word of God, that this great gift of God is still obtainable, that the time has not yet fully come when the door of opportunity to this high-calling must close. Close it will, so soon as the full number of the "elect" shall be completed. Thank God that another door will then open; the door of *Restitution* to human perfection and to earthly life, grand beyond the power of description.

But the blessed opportunity of this Pentecostal favor is still granted. As St. Peter declares in his epistle, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter 1:4) The door to this

2H804

divine nature is the one that will soon shut, as our Redeemer illustrated in the parable of the "Wise and Foolish Virgins." When a sufficient number of "wise virgins" shall have entered to complete the bride class, forthwith the door of opportunity to that station, to that class, to that honor, to the divine nature, will be closed, and the elect of God will be neither one more nor one less than the number originally foreordained.

"MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH"

St. Paul speaks of this Gospel age saying, "Now is the *acceptable* time; today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Not all hear his voice in these days. The great mass of mankind have not even heard of the name of Jesus, and consequently could not harden their hearts against him, nor against the terms now offered for return to fellowship with God. This is the *acceptable time* or period of salvation, in the sense that God is now willing to *accept* the offerings of believers if they

present their bodies living sacrifices. St. Paul declares that this is a reasonable service, holy and acceptable to God. (Rom. 12:1)

The testimony to the Church and the high-calling have been open during this Gospel Age. The testimony to the world and the blessings under that testimony will be during the Millennial Age. The death of Jesus is “the propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins (the Church’s), and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” —in due time, during the Millennial Age (1 John 2:2). For, as the Apostle Paul declares, “there shall be a resurrection, both of the just and of the unjust” (Acts 24:15). That will be the time for the precious merit of Jesus’ sacrifice to be made known, to be understood, to be appreciated, and to bring its blessed results of restitution to whosoever will receive the same.

Then God’s holy Spirit — holy power, will, through Christ, be outpoured upon all flesh—upon all mankind. Messiah will inaugurate the new dispensation by sealing with Israel the New Covenant in his blood; as says the Lord through the Apostle Paul, “This is my Covenant with them when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes.” (Romans 11:27, 28)

This out-pouring of the holy Spirit is not merely for Israel, nor God’s blessing merely upon Abraham’s natural seed outside the Church class. It will include all of every nation desirous of coming into accord with God, after they shall have come to a clear knowledge of the Truth. All nations shall be privileged to enter into and enjoy Israel’s great Covenant, by becoming children of Abraham through faith. And all rejecters of God’s grace having been destroyed in the Second Death, the world of mankind will constitute the promised seed of Abraham, whose number shall be as the sands of the seashore, even as the spirit-begotten ones of this Gospel Age are likened to the stars of heaven.

The Ancients, the Prophets, St. Peter declares, have all spoken of these glorious “times of restitution,” and it will be during these times when the Lord shall pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, that the people may realize What the Ancients had seen in vision and in dreams — “the wilderness blossoming as a rose , “the solitary place being glad,” “fountains in the desert,” “the knowledge of the Lord filling the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep, and none needing to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know him from the least to the greatest.”

Orange Enterprise and Journal, May 27, 1910

THE OVERTHROW OF SATAN'S EMPIRE

London, Eng., May 22—Albert Memorial Hall was again crowded to hear Pastor Russell. The discourse, on "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire," was in the nature of a religious lecture. It was marked throughout by deepest reverence for the Bible, many of the passages of which shone out with a new meaning under the searchlight of his message. He asserted, and seemed to prove, the personality of Satan. But according to his showing it is a great mistake to suppose the Archenemy of mankind to be afar off stoking furnaces and torturing the dead. Instead, he is the cunning Deceiver who for centuries has been hood-winking humanity, including the Church—putting darkness for light and light for darkness. God did not create him a devil. He became such by self-perversion through ambition. Originally his name was Lucifer —Morning Star. He beheld our first parents in Eden, noted their power to produce a race in their own likeness and coveted an empire with them as his subjects.

For six thousand years God has permitted Satan to exercise a measure of deceptive power over the race and to display to both angels and men the terrible results of sin, as exemplified in what the Apostle terms

2H805

the "reign of sin and death," and the mental, moral and physical degradation resulting.

Satan has not been alone. Not only is he "the Prince of this world" or age, but additionally he is the "Prince of devils" — demons. The speaker showed from the Scriptures (Genesis 6; Jude 6) how these subordinate demons had once been holy angels, too — and when and where they sinned, and how.

"The Apostle Peter gives the key to the real solution of the matter when, in reciting the events connected with the flood, he tells us of the fall of the angels at that time, who 'in the days of Noah' 'kept not their first estate.' (1 Peter 3:19, 20) Those angels who were permitted to have a measure of control of the fallen race, with a view to helping them as much as they might be able, and who, for the purpose of rendering such assistance to mankind, were permitted to appear in human form, became enamored of the human female, and preferred the human form to their own state as spirit beings. They thus left their original estate, as Jude also explains (Jude 6). These angels are the ones denominated the 'sons of

God,' none of the human family being given that name after the fall. The angels who fell from their noble work and condition, and became groveling and sensual, manifested clearly in their own course the downward tendency of all transgressions of the divine law.

“The Apostles Peter and Jude clearly mark out the punishment visited upon those ‘sons of God’ who thus betrayed their trust and fell into sin, ‘leaving their own habitation,’ their own nature, and affiliating with the human nature. Their punishment has been their deprivation of all such liberties, and their separation from God and from the holy angels: and this restraint is called, by the Apostle, ‘chains of darkness,’ while the restrained ones themselves, instead of being recognized as ‘sons of God,’ or angels of light, were thenceforth known as ‘angels of darkness,’ ‘demons,’ ‘wicked spirits.’ Incidentally we remark that these are the ‘spirits in prison’ mentioned by Peter (1 Peter 3:19), and that although restricted as respects their powers of fellowship with the holy angels, and with mankind, being no longer privileged to appear as men, they still seek human fellowship, endeavoring to gain possession of human beings who yield up their wills, and who are then said to be possessed of devils or ‘obsessed.’ It is but a preliminary step toward thus getting possession of the individual that these wicked spirits appeal to humanity to become their mediums (spirit mediums), through whom they to some extent communicate. And they personate dead human beings, because they know well that humanity would shun them and fear them if their real identity were discovered.

“Satan and his subordinates have maintained a system of human deception,” the speaker declared, and it must be confessed that he gave Biblical proofs for his every claim. He asserted that the communications believed by Spiritualists — Dr. Funk, Prof. Hyslop, Editor Stead and others — to be communications from the dead, are really deceptive communications from these fallen angels. So far from claiming that these professors and mediums practice deception, his claim is that they themselves are deceived and are unintentionally leading others onward into a terrible Spiritualistic maelstrom, which, he declares, we are nearing, according to the Bible. He warned against hypnotism, mind cures, etc., practiced by well-meaning but deceived physicians, ministers and others. He declared that all these tended to break down the human will, the God-given barrier and defense of mankind against the encroachments of these fallen angels, who seek continually to intrude themselves into the mind, thoughts and will of men. He warned all against occult influences of every kind, urging that the human will should be preserved and should be submitted

only to the Almighty, and to him only— intelligently in accordance with his instructions in the Bible.

OVERTHROW OF SATAN'S EMPIRE

“Satan, through false doctrines — ‘doctrines of devils,’ has entrenched himself in the superstitions and prejudices, not only of the heathen, but also of the civilized. The creeds of the Dark Ages evidenced the fact that he had much to do with their formulation. His false doctrines, antagonistic to the Bible, have been palmed off upon us as veritable Bible truths —just as Satan endeavored to twist and misapply the Bible to Jesus in his wilderness temptation (Mark 1:13). Thus Satan has caused gross darkness to cover the heathen and considerable darkness to cover the civilized earth. But we are in the morning of the New Dispensation, which is to bring so much blessing to the world of mankind in the opening of the eyes of man’s understanding, and in physical blessings and comforts. As a result we have the wonderful conveniences and appliances of steam and electricity, the printing press and the electric light, as instead of the tallow candle and quill pen of the past. ‘Whatsoever doth make manifest is light;’ and special light is due also at this time to God’s consecrated people. The illumination now granted to the eyes of our understanding as Christians, through Bible study helps, is intended to be for the Christian what the arc-light is in nature.

“Man’s subserviency to Satan is an unwilling captivity. Even those who realize their bondage do not

2H806

generally recognize by whom they have been enslaved. But gradually the bonds are breaking as we near the time of Satan’s overthrow. According to the Bible our Lord at his Second Advent will bind the Adversary for a thousand years that he may deceive mankind no more. Meantime all the blessed influences of light and Truth and grace will be let loose in the world and as a result, ‘the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth.’ Instead of the darkness of the night of sin and death there will be the ‘morning of joy,’ and gladness and restitution and blessing. ‘The sun of righteousness will arise with healing in his beams.’ Of that glorious day Saint Peter spoke, saying, Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the Times of Restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.’ (Acts 3:19-21). Satan’s destruction, according to the Bible, will not be consummated until after the MILLENNIAL KINGDOM OF CHRIST shall have accomplished its glorious work

of uplifting humanity out of sin and death conditions to full human perfection and the image of God. All the unwilling and disobedient will be counted as servants of Satan and will, with him be destroyed in the Second Death —extinction —from which there will be no redemption or recovery.

GREAT MISSIONARY WORK

“The missionary work of blessing and uplifting ‘all the families of the earth’ is appointed of God for the Millennial Kingdom — and, thank God, the evidences are that it is very near, yea, in a sense, already beginning. Its blessings are intimated by the wonderful progress of our day. Everything waits until the predetermined number of Missionaries shall have been called and schooled and tested and found worthy of the great and honorable work. The qualification is that each must be a ‘copy of God’s dear Son’—so far as heart intention is concerned. Then these Missionaries will be glorified like their Lord, on the spirit plane and with him they will constitute the ‘Kingdom of God’s dear Son,’ which for a thousand years will bless the world and bring to pass all that the Lord our God has spoken, and more than we could have asked or thought.

“Christian people have no need to upbraid themselves on the score that the missionary efforts of eighteen centuries have accomplished comparatively little. They have no need to be discouraged with the fact that the census returns show that in the past century of the greatest missionary endeavor the proportionate numbers of the heathen have doubled (six hundred millions a century ago — twelve hundred millions today). This is all as God foreknew and intended. God did not purpose the conversion of the heathen during this age, but commissioned his people to preach his Gospel to every nation for a *witness*, that the Elect Missionaries for the future work might be gathered from every country, people and tongue. God’s will has been done. The Adversary temporarily misled the Church into a misunderstanding of her mission. He sought to have us lower our standard of saintship, in order to increase the Church far and near. He sought to oppose the Divine will by lowering the standards of saintship so as to include the masses of mankind. He thus worked against Divine arrangements. But he has not succeeded. God has merely allowed him to prove, test, separate and manifest the saints — the ‘very elect.’

A GREAT TIME OF TROUBLE

“The coming of the light, the loosing of the fetters of ignorance and superstition from the minds that are not submitted to God, the Scriptures show us, will result in a great time of trouble, in which the passions of men but partially enlightened will do great violence to the entire social fabric. We see the preliminary steps already being taken, and, in the light of the Scriptures, we see the awful catastrophe which will result. The world is rapidly resolving itself into two mighty powers, selfishly and with semi-enlightenment, preparing for a headlong collision which will mean wreck and ruin, tribulation and anguish, to practically the whole world. The Bible, in calling attention to this great time of trouble, warns the people of God, so far as possible to avoid both sides of the controversy, saying, ‘Seek meekness; seek righteousness, it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger. (Zephaniah 2:3) With the wreck of present institutions comes the end of Satan’s regime. So terrible will be the heat of passion and strife engendered at that time that the Scriptures declare that if it were not for the ‘Elect’ there would be no flesh saved. (Mark 13:20) The interposition of the Elect as the Kingdom of God under Jesus, the great King and Head of the Elect, is the silver lining to that dark cloud. The moment of man’s extremity will become the moment of God’s opportunity.

“So terrible will be that time of trouble that the Scriptures symbolically represent it as a whirlwind; as a flood; and as a fire. Some have mis-interpreted these Scriptures and are expecting a literal burning of the earth, but the Lord denominates it the ‘fire of his jealousy,’ which will devour Society. And then he tells us that following the fire of trouble he ‘will turn to the people a pure message that they may all call upon the

2H807

name of the Lord to serve him with one consent. (Zephaniah 3:9) Satan has had much to do with corrupting the message originally given to the Church by Jesus and the Apostles. The jarring creeds have made discordant sounds which have driven many noble and logical hearts away from the Bible. God’s assurance is that the completion of the Church is near; that her change to the heavenly glory in ‘the First Resurrection’ will soon be accomplished and that then the reign of SIN and DEATH will end under the Kingdom of Jesus. Then the bondage of the world to ignorance, superstition, etc., will terminate; then ‘all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears will be unstopped’ and the Lord’s pure message of Divine Justice, Divine Love, Divine

Wisdom and Divine Power exerted on man's behalf shall be made known to every creature.

“Fellow-Christians, what an incentive to become more and more loyal and earnest as the servants of so great and gracious a Sovereignty—that of our Father and our Redeemer! And what an incentive we have to seek first, in preference to all earthly interests, a share with our Savior in his Millennial Kingdom and its gracious work of human uplift — from the depths of sin and degradation to the heights of earthly perfection and eternal life! Let us, as the Apostle exhorts, ‘lay aside every weight, and the sin that does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us (Hebrews 12:1). This race is for the ‘crown of glory,’ as members of the Elect Missionary Church and for the glorious opportunities then to be afforded for the realization of the most glorious dreams of service for the King of kings and Lord of lords.

“We cannot suppose that Satan's Empire is entirely satisfactory to himself. Undoubtedly his original thought was the organization of a realm resembling that of the Almighty. But the course of sin is ever downward. To obtain control of our first parents they were misled into steps of disobedience—sin—and the Adversary himself, having started upon the wrong course, can maintain his own standing and kingdom only by determined opposition to Jehovah. This is the significance of the name given him in the Scriptures —‘Adversary.’

“The Scriptures set forth that all humanity must, either now or some time, come to the point of decision between obedience to God and disobedience. The obedient will be guided back to ultimate harmony with the Creator and obtain the reward of life eternal. On the contrary, the disobedient, the wilfully rebellious against God and his righteous arrangement, taking the course of Satan, will ultimately share his fate — destruction.

“Responsibility and the decision as to life eternal and death eternal, come to each member of Adam's race as soon as he is brought into a clear knowledge of the Truth. This privilege of coming to a knowledge of the Truth, the opportunity of eternal salvation, is secured to all the families of the earth, to Adam and every member of his race, through the great Redeemer's sacrifice finished at Calvary. While thanking God for the length and breadth and height and depth of his glorious provision for the world in general, we who now hear this message and heed it have the special blessing and opportunity of jointheirship with Jesus the Redeemer in his great work of the Millennial Age. Let us not only accept the Divine favor, but let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and the

one who shall be the Finisher of our faith, seeking for needed aid to make our calling and election sure!”

Orange Enterprise and Journal June 3, 1910

AS THE WATERS COVER THE GREAT DEEP

Pastor Russell is returning to America in good condition after having addressed the public of Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Warsaw, Russia; Rome and Jerusalem—in all, forty times. His largest audiences were at London, about 7,000, with Glasgow a good second.

Mid-Ocean, May 29—As I look abroad and see water, water everywhere, without a speck of land in sight, and as I reflect that we are passing over varying depths, some of which are as great as five miles, I am reminded of the promise in the Lord’s Word that ultimately the whole earth, the world of mankind, shall have such an abundant knowledge of the Creator and the Redeemer, as to be fitly illustrated by the depths of the sea. I have therefore chosen as my text the words, “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” I remember also the very similar promise by the Lord through the Prophet (Habakkuk 2:14), “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as

2H808

the waters cover the sea.” I am reminded also of the Prophet’s declaration that the time will come when “Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess” (Isaiah 45:23). And again “That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” And I am also reminded that in that day, “They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:34). The question properly arises, To what extent shall we consider these statements literally true? What kind of fulfillment should we expect them to have?

If we look out upon the heathen world, however sympathetic we may be in respect to foreign missionary work, doing all in our power to make known to the heathen the grace of God and the great Redeemer we are nevertheless compelled to admit that there is absolutely no hope of our ever causing every knee to bow, and

every tongue to confess Christ in heathen lands, even as we have long ago given up hope of accomplishing such work in civilized lands. The work is too great for us, and the errors of heathendom are too deeply seated to be quickly eradicated. Government statistics show us that there are twice as many heathen today as there were a century ago. If, therefore, any of us had been flattering ourselves respecting our ability to accomplish the conversion of the world, it is time for us to acknowledge our error and to look to the Lord, realizing that in him alone is the world's hope. Doubtless this is just the lesson that the Lord wishes us to learn. He does not wish us to give up our efforts to "Do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially the household of faith," for our own blessing is associated with such activity on behalf of others. But God does wish us to realize that of ourselves we are unable to cope with the situation. He wishes us to realize that only through the establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son can the glorious blessings of the Millennium ever be hoped for. Alas! We must admit, and should feel deeply humble by the admission, that even in civilized lands, the number of footstep-followers of the Lamb of God is very few. The number who are "walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" in civilized lands is very few, in comparison with the population as a whole. We are not in this setting ourselves as judges of the hearts of our fellow-creatures — remarkably few make any pretention to walking in the "narrow way," which alone now leads to life everlasting. (Matthew 7:14)

THE NECESSITY FOR KNOWLEDGE

Many dear Christian people, desirous of thinking well of the heavenly Father, are so befogged with the teachings of the past, that they try to imagine that the way to eternal life is not so narrow as the Master said; they try to imagine that somehow the heathen will be saved in their ignorance, notwithstanding the Apostle says, "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard." (Romans 10:14) And again, his assurance that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

The error from the past which led to this inconsistency is the teaching that all of the heathen are going to eternal torture, and that they never will have an opportunity of accepting Christ in the future. They rebel against the thought which has come down from the dark ages that God foreknew the ignorance of the heathen and predestinated their eternal torture; that they should not hear of the only name under heaven or given among men whereby they might be saved and fixed their environments so that they never heard. The whole difficulty, we see, lies in the fact that God's people in

the past have not studied his Word as they should have done. Some of us subscribed to one creed, and some to another, saying to ourselves, Our creed is not satisfactory, but it is probably as free from error as other creeds. We consoled ourselves with the thought that all Christendom was considerably befogged, and we no more than others. Some of us probably tried to satisfy our minds by saying that those features of our creeds, which dishonored God, and implied his lack of wisdom, or worse, his willingness but lack of justice, or lack of power — that these things were mysteries which must be believed, although they could not be reconciled with human reason and common sense. Some of us even tried to persuade ourselves that we were exercising extraordinary faith in these matters, but in reality we were merely ignorant of God's Word, and credulous of the wisdom of our creed-makers of the past.

TRUE LIGHT NOW SHINING

But, thank God, "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand" (Romans 13:12). "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed." (Romans 13:11) The evidence that we are in the morning of the new dispensation multiplies on every hand! We are evidently in the period which the Bible declares as "The day of God's preparation." God is preparing to usher in the long-promised period of blessing and refreshment, which he has foretold through all the

2H809

holy prophets. The wonderful inventions of our day along the lines of chemistry, steam and electricity are fulfillments of the wonderful "Day of Christ," which is nearing. God's people have failed of great blessings in not sooner noticing this fact. We stood, as it were, with our backs toward the East, looking for the sun to rise in the West; we were looking to our own efforts to convert the world, rather than looking to the Lord from whom alone must come the help. Hence the glow in the East had assumed considerable proportions before we noticed it — and many of our brethren are still looking to the West, and angrily refuse to turn and follow the dawn of the New Dispensation, which now may be so clearly seen by the eye of faith.

Let us note well the Apostle Peter's words, assuring us that the vision he had on the Mount of Transfiguration made a deep impression upon him. He tells us, nevertheless, that "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" — the "*parousia*" (presence) of Christ, the "Morning Star."

KNOWLEDGE A NECESSITY

But admitting the promise of the Scriptures that the knowledge of the Lord shall be worldwide and ocean deep—that every creature shall be brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth, in due time (1 Timothy 2:4-6), wherefore is the necessity for this? Is knowledge really indispensable to salvation? Is it not written in the Scriptures of the Apostles Peter and John, that “The people perceived that they were ignorant and unlearned men?” If their ignorance and lack of learning did not hinder them from having God’s favor, and obtaining salvation through Christ, and even obtaining Apostleship, why should so much stress be laid upon knowledge? Does God really care for knowledge? Has he predetermined that all who would be in his favor must be educated, and that he cares naught for the ignorant? Do we not read to the contrary that, “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.” (1 Corinthians 1:26, 27) “Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?” (James 2:5)

Very true, we answer. With God the wisdom of this world is foolishness, and with this world, the wisdom of God is foolishness. Knowledge may therefore be viewed from two standpoints. So far as worldly knowledge commending any man or woman to God, or making any man or woman more fit for divine favor, we believe the contrary to be true. Unwillingly we are forced to the conclusion that the great colleges of the world are the most destructive agencies in the earth, as respects the Divine revelation, the Bible, and the true knowledge of God, which is essential to salvation and eternal life. We therefore sharply discriminate between earthly knowledge and heavenly knowledge, and between the wisdom of men and the wisdom of God.

Our Lord Jesus gave us the key to this question of the importance of knowledge in relationship to our attainment of eternal life. He said, in praying to the Father, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) Only such as attain to this knowledge may have eternal life. Consequently we see at a glance that remarkably few of our race have thus far attained to the degree of knowledge which God would be pleased to recognize. At first this might seem peculiar to us; we might say to ourselves or to others. Why does not God give it out freely to all? The reply of the Scriptures is that God is giving his knowledge freely now to a certain class, and that by and by he will give it to all the families of the earth. This essential knowledge

is promised to the faithful in the world, He that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. “The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his Covenant.” “Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.” Such as thus abide in covenant relationship with the Lord Jesus are indeed taught of God in the School of Christ, and may truly grow in grace and knowledge.

A distinction should be observed in knowing about God, and knowing God himself. It is not sufficient that we should recognize God as the Almighty Creator, for devils also believe that. On the other hand, to be intimately acquainted with God means that we must come into intimate fellowship with him, and this means that we must come unto the Father through the Son, by faith. By thus coming to our heavenly Father by an acquaintance with his Word, and through an appreciation of his glorious work, past, present, and future, we get a view of the lengths, and breadths, and heights and depths of “love divine, all love excelling.” In proportion as we behold the outline of the Divine character, we perceive our own deficiencies and try the more to rid ourselves of them, and at least manifest to the Lord that our hearts are in harmony with the principles of righteousness.

THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Very appropriately the Scriptures speak of the present as a night-time. They tell us that now “Darkness covers the (civilized) earth, and gross darkness the people (Heathendom).” They assure us

2H810

that now God’s people need the lamp of Divine revelation to guide their footsteps until the day dawns. They assure us, however, that the morning will be ushered in by the great Sun of Righteousness —the Christ, the Messiah, Prophet, Mediator, King of Glory.

Now is the Church excluded from this work of shining upon and enlightening the world and scattering its darkness. The Master gave us to understand that the Church with himself will constitute the Sun of Righteousness, which will then arise with healing in its beams. Thus in the parable of the Wheat and Tares, he pictures the entire work of this Gospel Age and its consummation, which he styles “The harvest —the end of the age.” His word respecting the separation of the wheat from the tares is that the wheat shall be gathered into his barn—changed from the earthly to the heavenly nature, and he adds, “Then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.” “He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.”

The figure of the rising sun scattering the darkness, ignorance and superstition of the world harmonizes with the other picture, which represents the Kingdom of God superseding the kingdom of Satan, and those deluded by Satan, styled in the Scriptures, the kingdoms of this world.

BE GLAD AND REJOICE

We may well sympathize with our forefathers, to whom it was not granted to see as clearly as we may now see the glorious fullness of the Divine purpose to eventually enlighten the whole earth, by causing the knowledge of the glory of God to fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. To us, therefore, is especially applicable the prophetic words, "Be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create. For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isaiah 65:18, 17) Thus does the Lord picture the new dispensation in graphic language. The new heavens symbolically represent the Church in its new and glorified condition, exercising superior control over the affairs of mankind. Likewise, the new earth symbolically represents the new state or condition of society — the new social order of things which will be introduced as a part of the New Dispensation. Imperfection is now written upon everything with which men are associated, partly because of our fallen condition through heredity, and partly, as the Scriptures declare, through Satan, the god of this world or age, who now works in the hearts of the children of disobedience —prompting to sin and selfishness, pride and ambition, and in every sense of the word tending to alienate the hearts of men from the ways of righteousness. Moreover, the Adversary is largely responsible for the gross errors of misconception of the Divine character, which during the centuries past have been creeping into the minds of those who were feeling after God, if haply they might find him. All who are of the right spirit, truth-seekers, and truth-lovers, will be glad to abandon the errors on this subject, which so long have hindered a proper appreciation of the glorious character of our heavenly Father. By teaching us through false doctrines to dread the heavenly Father, the Adversary has implanted in our minds a fear which constitutes a barrier. The Lord speaks of this saying, "Their fear of me is taught by the precepts of men." (Isaiah 29:13) Let us then use more diligently than ever before the wonderful Bible which Divine Providence has placed within the reach of all of God's people, that we may know him, whom to know aright will mean to us life eternal.

[The Tippecanoe County Democrat, June 10, 1910](#)

JERUSALEM

This discourse was republished in its entirety in the Convention Report Sermons, pages 103-105, under same title.

Brooklyn, N. Y., June 5—Pastor Russell returned from his European trip just in time to keep his appointment to speak in Brooklyn's largest auditorium, the Academy of Music. His topic was 'JERUSALEM,' from the text, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. (Isaiah 60:1, 2) As had been anticipated, the crowds were too great for accommodation at the Tabernacle. The spacious Academy of Music was crowded, with a large number of ministers and other men on the platform.

2H811

[Orange Enterprise and Journal, June 17, 1910](#)

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION

Philadelphia, Pa., June 12— Pastor Russell of The Brooklyn Tabernacle preached here twice today to large and attentive audiences. We report his discourse from the text, "I, the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments." (Deuteronomy 5:9, 10) A report of the discourse follows:

No one of experience can question the fact that our text is corroborated by all our experiences in life. However unjust some may claim it to be that the children should inherit the weaknesses resulting from parental dissipations and violations of the Divine law, the fact remains that however atheism may question the existence of a God or infidelity doubt the inspiration of his Word, no one can question the two facts of this text, (1) that sin and its penalty can be inherited and (2) the fact that God is merciful to such as renounce sin and turn to him and seek to walk according to his direction. However these blessings upon evil-doers and their children and these blessings upon well-doers and their posterity may be termed natural laws and laws of heredity, it does not alter the fact, because the Almighty is the one who made these laws of heredity.

Under the delusion handed down to us from the “dark ages” — that God had condemned to eternal torment all the children of Adam because of his sin —we are all inclined properly enough to feel rebellious against any such matter and to assert that from the standpoint of human reasoning it would be entirely unjust to torture the posterity of Adam eternally for his transgression — “original sin.” But as we get the eyes of our understanding opened to see what is the real penalty for sin, that it is death, extinction, and that our perfect parents, fully informed respecting the divine will, were culpable, worthy of death, and when we learn further that whatever is enjoyed by Adam’s posterity in the way of life, however disadvantageous the conditions, is so much of divine leniency and mercy and comes so much short of being the full penalty, death, extinction—then we begin to see that life under any conditions and disadvantages is still a boon, better than extinction.

IN WRATH HAVE MERCY, LORD

Recognizing the wrath of God as manifested in the death penalty (not in an eternity of torture) we can see that the Scriptures everywhere declare that the wrath of God is resting upon our race; that every member of it is subject to this very penalty which came upon father Adam and has been entailed upon all of his posterity.

The Almighty Creator did not wait for us to cry out for his pity and compassion, but from the very beginning, foreknowing our fall into sin, he had the plan arranged for our redemption and ultimate recovery from this condition of wrath, curse, death. We are informed that our Lord Jesus was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world—in the Divine purpose and arrangement — though only now being made manifest to the Church and shortly to the world. Thus viewed there has been no injustice practiced against our race in permitting the children to share with their father Adam in his penalty. Rather they had esteemed it and do esteem it better than the sentence itself, and furthermore in the Lord’s providences the world’s present experiences in the fall and later on in the recovery from the fall in the hands of the great Redeemer during the Millennial Age, is to prove a lesson, a schooling, in the exceeding sinfulness of sin, which the race as a whole will never forget and out of which many (now the Church, later on the world) will draw lessons of wisdom and grace.

Looking still more deeply into the Divine Plan as it is revealed in the Lord’s Word for those who are his (Psalm 25:14), we find a particular reason why it was not only advisable but necessary that this law of heredity should operate in our race, even though it brought in its

train a terrible list of experiences to our race. The reason for this is based upon one element of the Divine character —Justice — the very element which at one time we supposed was violated by this law of heredity. As our eyes open to the teaching of the Scriptures we perceive that if God had not permitted his law of heredity to operate, but had permitted each individual of the race to come forth to perfection and to stand an individual trial such as father Adam was subject to, it would doubtless have meant that at least one-half of the race, possibly more, would have deliberately chosen a course of sin as father Adam chose it. To expect more than one-half to be obedient would be unreasonable. Rather, from what we see about us in the experiences of life, we would have been liable to conclude that only a very small majority,

2H812

perhaps one-tenth, would have been obedient to God, while the remaining nine-tenths would have been disobedient.

Some might ask, Would not even that have been better than the Divine arrangement as we see it operating now, that the whole race should suffer for one man's disobedience? We answer, No! Not according to the testimony of the Scriptures. The Bible shows us that while this law of retribution has worked such terrible havoc in Adam and his race for now 6,000 years—while 20,000,000,000 have been born in sin and sorrow and pain and after a few years of trouble have died in sorrow and pain, nevertheless in God's due time all of these shall have more favorable opportunities of knowing of God's true character and of attaining to a full character development in his likeness during the Millennial Age. This means that probably more will gain eternal life and blessing under the divine arrangement as we have it than we could reasonably expect would have been saved had the Lord not provided this law of heredity and condemnation of all, but on the contrary had permitted each to be born in perfection and to stand his trial as between loyalty to God with the reward of eternal life or disobedience punished with death. But we shall see that it means much more than this.

CONDEMNED IN ONE—REDEEMED BY ONE

A great economic law is connected with the divine arrangement: The condemnation of a race in one man's loins because of his transgression made possible the divine arrangement that a Second Man should pay the penalty for the first and redeem both him and all who were in him at the time of his condemnation. This is at once a demonstration of Divine Wisdom and of Divine Justice. Suppose, for instance, that the law of heredity

had not prevailed, had not been instituted by our Lord, but that each individual had come forth perfect and had been personally placed on trial and been personally condemned to death. Would it not have required an individual savior for each one condemned under such an arrangement? Surely it would. Hence, had one-half of the race proven themselves sinners and been personally condemned it would either have been necessary to avoid redemption altogether or to redeem the sinner half of the race, by giving a life for a life — a perfect being's sacrifice for or instead of each imperfect life. Estimating the total number of our race at 20,000,000,000. Justice would have been obliged to require 10,000,000,000 of perfect beings to be offered as the ransom price for the 10,000,000,000 of sinners. Under the very best estimate that we can possibly make, this would have required the death of all the perfect ones of the race as redeemers for all the imperfect members of the race, and what a havoc that would have implied —with just as many dying as under present conditions, namely, one-half as sinners and the other half as redeemers, ransoms. Besides, we perceive that it would not have been just on the part of the Almighty to compel the righteous ones to suffer for the unrighteous as their redeemers, hence there would have been no assurance even then that any but a fraction of the sinner race would have been redeemed. On the contrary, how wise, conservative and economical was the Divine arrangement that by one man's disobedience under the laws of heredity the many would be born sinners and sharers in his penalty, death, and that then in due time one Savior, one perfect one, the "man Christ Jesus," might redeem Adam and, redeeming him, redeem all of his race from the death sentence, the curse, the wrath of God, and as a result of the redemption obtain the right, the authority, the power during his Millennial Kingdom and in association with his glorified Church of the Gospel Age, to bless all the families of the earth and to uplift as many as would be willing out of all their ignorance, weakness and sinful and dying conditions to all that was lost in Adam.

We have seen that in harmony with the Divine law it would not have been just for the Heavenly Father to obligate the righteous to die for sinners and that hence the redemption of the sinners would have been problematical —very doubtful. But on the contrary the Heavenly Father well knew in advance the loyalty of his First-Begotten, his only Begotten, who is declared to have been the "beginning of the creation of God." (Revelation 3:14) He knew not only of Jesus' loyalty but that his experiences with him in glory would every way qualify our Lord for the tests and the sacrifices necessary

for the redemption of the race with his own precious blood. The Scriptures assure us furthermore that the Father set before him some certain joys, certain blessings, certain promises, in connection with this work of man's redemption; as we read, "Who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of the majesty on high." (Hebrews 12:2)

RETRIBUTIVE JOYS AND REWARDS

We are to remember, too, that the Scriptures distinctly teach that the condition of the affairs of our world — sin, retributive punishment, the redemption through Jesus, the call of the Church and their sufferings with their Redeemer and the promises of future blessing and glory both for the Church and for the world — are subjects in which the angels of God are interested. As the Apostle Peter says, "Of which salvation the prophets have Enquirer and searched

2H813

diligently. . . . Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. - . . . Which things the angels desire to look into." (1 Peter 1:10-12) They wondered when all the sufferings of Jesus and the Church would be completed and when the glory time would come and recovery from sin and death conditions; when God's purpose would thus ripen and bear fruit in the recovery of those who fell from his favor in Adam's disobedience but were redeemed by the precious blood.

The great lesson of what constitutes disobedience, and how serious a sin it is, and what it would lead to if allowed to take its course, was illustrated in man's experiences; and all the hosts of angels looked on with amazement, no doubt. God's Justice was fully demonstrated in the infliction of the death penalty and the permission of its inroads upon the mental, moral and physical perfection of his creatures, bringing many of the race down almost to brutality. God's Love was manifested in the gift of his Son, in the arrangement of his plan by which for the joy set before him, Jesus might become Adam's Redeemer, and the Bridegroom of the Elect Church and ultimately the great King of Glory who, during the Millennial Age, is to restore, revive and bless and test Adam and all his race.

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH CRUCIALLY TESTED

We cannot wonder if all the holy angels looked on in amazement as they beheld the Only Begotten Son of God leave the “glory which he had before the world was and humble himself to take human nature — to be born a man that he might redeem Adam and his race. It must have seemed wonderful to them not only that the Heavenly Father would arrange such a plan but wonderful also that the glorious “Only Begotten,” “First-Born,” should be the one to whom the proposition would be made to show his faith and love for the Father, to do his will to the extent of such a sacrifice, not only of glory, but, eventually, of life. They had yet to see a further operation of the divine law of retribution operating in Jesus for his blessing and honor. So intent were they in looking at the humiliation of the Only Begotten, and then at his death, that apparently they did not so carefully note the fact that the Heavenly Father had set before him great joys, great blessings, great exaltation, when he should finish his work.

Already the Only Begotten was next to the Father in glory and dignity, honor and power; what more of divine honor could be bestowed upon even the FirstBorn of every creature? The Only Begotten himself appears not to have thought particularly of the promised glory: The joy set before him, however, seems to have been that he would do the Father’s will and thus demonstrate his absolute loyalty even unto death. While, no doubt, it was a joy to the Lord to be the Father’s Agent in the rescue of Adam and his race from sin and death, nevertheless we believe that his chief joy in connection with the matter was that thus he might demonstrate to the Father his absolute love by his submission and obedience. Our Lord’s own words were, “Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” (John 17:5) He knew of the Father’s proposed exaltation of him as a reward, but he did not mention this; he would merely ask of the Father that when he had accomplished the Divine purpose he might have back the same honor and position and divine favor which he had laid aside when he humbled himself to become Adam’s redemption price, the world’s Savior. Such modesty and loyalty are difficult for us to comprehend because of our fallen, imperfect conditions.

But the Apostle explains to us, speaking under the power of inspiration, that because of our Lord’s obedience in leaving the glory and becoming a man and dying for our sins, therefore “God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth.” (Philippians 2:9, 10) Elsewhere in the Scriptures we are assured that our Lord became partaker of the Divine nature in his resurrection; that thus he attained a reward far above anything that could have been thought, not only above angels, but also far above his own prehuman condition. If thus rewarding the faithful the Lord is carrying out the spirit of our text—he has been exemplifying what is otherwise taught in the Scriptures — “whatsoever man soweth that shall he also reap.” (Galatians 6:7) Adam sowed disobedience and he and his race have reaped a terrible harvest of degradation, suffering and death. The Only Begotten sowed obedience, as prophetically expressed of him at the time of his baptism, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart.” (Psalm 11:8) Laying down his life in harmony with the Divine program was his sowing and the reaping at the resurrection was glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature. How richly Jehovah rewards every demonstration of loyalty to himself and the principles of righteousness.

2H814

[The Weekly Enquirer, June 23, 1910](#)

WORKMEN NEEDING NOT TO BE ASHAMED

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.” 2 Tim. 2:15

Louisville, Ky., June 19—Pastor Russell, of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, today addressed the International Bible Students’ Association here, using the above text. He also gave a public address under the auspices of the association. He had crowded houses and earnest attention. On the above text he said in part:

“I address you, dear friends, as Christians; students of God’s Word, and not as sectarians. Although the world is full of denominations, each claiming to be the Church of Christ, we all admit that there is but the one “church of the first-borns, whose names are written in heaven.” (Heb. 12:23) This conviction is being borne in upon us more and more as the days go by and as the eyes of our understanding open more widely to the teachings of God’s Word. We realize increasingly that our division means our shame in the eyes of the world and that our creedal contradictions imply that we are not all led in all things by the holy Spirit, whose teachings can not be yea and nay upon the same subject. It is this sentiment which is taking hold of the ministry of all denominations and making them anxious for an outward show of unity in

church federation, which will shortly be effected. The Christian public, however, and especially Bible students, are not deeply sympathetic with the federation idea. They realize that at most it would be a gloss of deception so far as doctrinal oneness is concerned; and that otherwise it is but a business or worldly combination.

Bible students are more and more coming to prefer the Lord's way —the Scriptural way. They are coming to realize that what God's people need is not more organization but less organization, not more explicit creeds but the standard of fellowship which the Bible sets up. They are learning that this simple test is: A turning from sin and acceptance of the Lord Jesus as the Redeemer from sin and death and the full consecration of the believer, mind and body, to know and to do the Lord's will to the best of his ability under the Lord's providential guidance. We all see that this simple bond of fellowship is the only one laid down in God's Word and that whatsoever is more than this is injurious bondage to men and to systems. We all see that "the Church of the Living God, whose names are written in heaven," is composed exclusively of such as conform to the terms of this simple creed — that these alone will constitute "the body of Christ which is the Church, the bride, the Lamb's wife," whom he will accept and unite to himself in the end of this age. We all see that this class alone is referred to in the Scriptures as "the elect," who are to be associated with the Savior in His glorious spiritual kingdom, which, invisible to men, is now shortly to be established in power and great glory for the blessing of natural Israel and through her blessing all the families of the earth —living and dead.

"WORKMEN NOT ASHAMED"

Let us consider the latter part of our text first. The Apostle's suggestion is that Timothy and all the ministers of the Gospel of Christ are professedly workmen, laboring under the guidance of God's Word. In the larger sense every Christian is a minister of the Gospel, or, as St. Peter declares of all the consecrated, "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy people, a peculiar treasure." In the end of the age will come a reckoning time, a showing of results — "every man's work that he hath wrought shall be made manifest." (1 Cor. 3:13)

Our text urges that Timothy and every faithful servant of God should be so loyal to God and His message that in the great time of examination in the end of this age preparatory to the introduction of the kingdom the showing shall be one of which we need not be ashamed. Let us then, as Christian Bible students, of all denominations, gathered here today ask ourselves

respecting our own work in the world, and how it must appear to God, to ourselves and to our fellow men — yea, how it must shortly be made manifest to all!

Let us call the roll! Baptist brethren, what have you to show “as workmen who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth?” Methodist brethren, what say you? Presbyterians, next. Congregationalists, Lutherans, Catholics — all!

The answer of one is practically the answer of all. We have—so many hundred churches. They cost—so many millions of dollars! Their steeples are —so high!

2H815

Their cost of maintenance is — so much. The number of ministers is—so many. The church collections amount to —so much! The amount expended in foreign missions is —so much! The amount expended in fine choirs and elegant organs—is so much! The aggregated debts of all our churches is—so much! The unpaid interest on many of these debts is—so much! The time and energy expended in fairs, bazaars, etc., to help pay the indebtedness is—so much! The number of church membership is—so much! The number in Sunday schools is—so many!

“WHAT LACK I YET?”

Many of our dear Christian friends say: “What lack we yet?” Have we not really attained the goal of our church ambition? Should we build finer edifices or pay larger salaries? Are we not straining ourselves at every turn with collections? What more could God ask of us? “We are rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing.” (Rev. 3:16-19)

In reply we may suppose the Lord to ask: “Where did I give you instruction respecting these things? Where in my Word did you find the suggestion that what I desired you to do in the world was to erect great church edifices, piles of stone and iron and mortar, polished woods and stained glass? You are not rightly reading my Word. However good in intention, you have failed to rightly divide the Word of Truth. The temple respecting which I gave instruction is the spiritual one, the temple of the Holy Spirit —the body of Christ, which is the church. I fear that you have forgotten the true temple of God while rearing so many temples of earthly materials. Concerning the true temple. I instructed you that ‘the Temple of God is holy, which temple ye are, living stones being shaped and polished for the habitation of God through the Spirit.’ Show me what you have accomplished in this way. Show me to what extent you have rightly divided my Word and properly instructed mankind respecting my glorious character and my great

divine plan of the ages. Show me fruitage of the glorious message.

“How many in all the millions that you report are new creatures in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?’ Let me hear the message of my love and grace in Christ as you are proclaiming it. What mean these sectarian divisions among you? Why are there so many church edifices and so few saintly worshipers? Who authorized you to put these fences between my people to divide the flock? Know ye not that I said there is one flock and one Shepherd? Why have ye so neglected the spiritual interests of my flock and their instruction in righteousness? Why are ye so unable to rightly divide my Word?

“Instead of coming together as one church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven, ye have divided into hundreds of sects and parties. Instead of taking my Word as a whole and rightly dividing its teachings as between the different ages and dispensations of my work, ye have divided my Word in a sectarian manner. One sect has made one selection from my Word and another sect has made another selection. Thus ye array one part of my Word against another part of it and hence get into confusion and conflict. What have you to answer for these things?”

With shame of face we must all acknowledge that we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no help in us. The proper thing for us to do, dear Christian friends, is to get down upon our knees before the Lord and in contrition of heart to acknowledge that we have wrought no deliverance in the earth (Isa. 26:18); that our sectarian differences are our shame; that the ignorance that we have all been in respecting the Word of God is humiliating. Now that our eyes are open so that we can comprehend as never before the harmony of God’s message from Genesis to Revelation, it means a rich feast and blessing to our souls. The Word of God becomes more precious to us daily as we become able to comprehend it. Our duty is to fly to the assistance of our dear brethren and sisters in Christ of all denominations, and to call upon them to join with us in a determined stand for righteousness, for truth, for God and for His word.

We must show them that ignorantly we and they have dishonored our God by misrepresentation of His character and misrepresentations of the real teachings of the Bible. We must point them to the fact that the Bible does not teach that all mankind except the “elect” saints will be consigned to an eternity of torture at the hands of

fireproof demons. We must show them that the election of the Church during this age — a saintly little flock — does not mean injury to the nonelect. That, on the contrary, it is the divine purpose that the “elect” saints with their great Redeemer in glory shall constitute God’s kingdom. That kingdom, when established, will bind Satan, put down sin, banish ignorance, error and superstition and uplift mankind by “restitution,” by resurrection processes—up, up, up, to all that was lost in Eden by disobedience and to all secured for Adam and his race through the great transaction at Calvary. (Acts 3:19- 21)

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

Alas, how many intelligent people have turned aside from following Christ, and from hearing the voice of God through the Bible! Alas, how many are looking to

2H816

Theosophy, to Spiritualism, to Christian Science, to higher criticism, to evolution—wandering farther and farther daily from the “faith once delivered to the saints.” (Jude 3) We fault them no more than we fault ourselves. As a whole we have been workmen who need to be ashamed. We have dishonored God through misunderstanding and misrepresenting His word and His character. We have driven away from God and the Bible some of the most intelligent of our fellows by reason of the contradictory nonsense of our creeds. It is high time that we should awake and, as Bible students, join hands and hearts and heads in the study of God’s Word along the line laid down by inspiration in our text.

The Apostle urges, “Study to show thyself approved unto God.” We are not to suppose, therefore, that the highest of all science, that which pertains to the divine purpose and the divine plan, can be acquired without study. We are not in this claiming that study alone would bring the desired results of proper knowledge. We heartily agree in the Scriptural proposition that “the world by wisdom knows not God.” We are not, therefore, to study along the lines of worldly wisdom, but along the lines of “that wisdom that cometh from above” — along the lines of the inspired Scriptures. We must study! Whoever will not study will not know! “The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him.” And reverencing Him means the giving of our best thoughts and talents to the study of His Word, that we may “know the things freely given to us of God.” (1 Cor. 2:12)

We should note further as Bible students that we must not study to be approved of men, but to have the divine

approval. This will bring to us, as it did to the Master and his Apostles, the disapprobation of the worldly-wise and nominally religious. It was the Chief Priests and Scribes and Pharisees, and not the common people of the Jews, nor the Roman soldiers, who were guilty of the crucifixion of our Lord. And we must expect similar conditions, because, as the Apostle says, "As He was so are we in this world." The class who called the Master Beelzebub is the same class which will oppose His footstep followers.

God permits all this with wise and loving fore-intention. Nothing connected with the opposing forces is in any sense of the word interfering with His great program. He set apart with divine wisdom this gospel age of nearly nineteen centuries for the sole purpose of selecting from the world the Church of the firstborns — the antitypical Priests and Levites. The restriction of His message, the darkening of counsel, the clashing of creeds, the opposition of the world, the flesh and the Devil, are all wisely permitted with the foreintention on God's part that thus all through the ages the way of the cross —in the footsteps of Jesus —should be a "narrow way," so that comparatively few finding it would care to walk in it.

It is those few, that little flock zealous for God, for His' Word, for righteousness, that He is now marking out as the prospective joint-heirs with Jesus in His glorious Kingdom, which is to bless the world with full opportunities for earthly salvation — "restitution."

The trials of the faith, the patience, the love, the devotion of this little flock, is all designed, and not through accident. Satan and his hosts may think to thwart the divine plan and may mislead and use humanity as their tools. But it shall yet be seen that all of the divine purposes shall be accomplished. The Word that has gone forth out of Jehovah's mouth shall prosper in the things whereto He sent it.

*"God's purposes will ripen fast
Unfolding every hour
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."*

*"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
With blessings on your head."*

*"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His work in vain
God is His own Interpreter
And He will make it plain."*

St. Paul declared of earthly Israel, that they enjoyed “much advantage every way, because to them were committed the oracles of God.” So now, dear friends, it seems to me that you and I and all sincere Christians the world around enjoy much advantage every way. Looking to the past we find great excuse for our dear forefathers who, with sincerity of heart, so misunderstood the divine word and so misinterpreted the spirit of the master that they burned one another at the stake. We should not think so harshly of them for this as though they lived today under the greater advantages which we possess. We should sympathize with them. We should consider them as blinded by the great adversary as was Saul, of Tarsus, when he, as a member of the Sanhedrin, authorized the stoning of St. Stephen. We should think of them sympathetically as St. Peter spoke of the Jews who crucified the Lord. He said, “I wot brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.” So also we should kindly, lovingly cast a mantle of benevolence over similar conduct on the part of John Calvin and others of our forefathers. But as we would not go to the Jewish rulers, nor to Saul, of Tarsus, for the religious instruction, neither should we go to Brother Calvin or others of our

2H817

forefathers who were blinded, as he was, respecting the true character of God and the true spirit of his word.

Only within the past century have the masses of God’s people been able even to read the Bible, if they had possessed it. And only within the same time have they had the Bible to read. Our great hindrance has been that with Bibles in our hands and with ability to use them we looked for instruction to our well-meaning fathers instead of going to God’s word itself. Now, by God’s grace, the eyes of our understanding are opened. The wonderful Bibles of our day with their marginal references, their concordances, etc., and other assistances in Bible study are bringing us in touch with the whole message of God’s word. Now, one passage of Scripture throws light upon another, and thus with increasing brightness the word of the Lord as a lamp gives light upon the pathway of His church.

And this is in full accord with the Bible declaration that the path of the just shall shine more and more unto the perfect day, or, as St. Peter says, “Until the day dawn.” (2 Peter 1:19) This very fact that God’s word is now opening to his people who scan its pages in its own light is but another proof that we are in the closing days of the Gospel age, and that the light of the new age of Christ’s

Kingdom is accountable for the great blessings that are coming upon the Bereans of our day, as well as upon the whole world of mankind in temporalities. Surely not in vain did our Master pray, “Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth.” (John 17:17)

[The National Labor Tribune, June 25, 1910](#)

ZIONISM, THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

*With the exception of the opening paragraphs, printed below, this discourse has been republished in the **Convention Report Sermons**, pages 156-157, under same title.*

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., June 25— Pastor Russell addressed large audiences twice at the Golden Gate. He addressed a Convention of the “International Bible Students Association” in session here. He has been making a sort of continental tour, including Indianapolis, St. Louis, Kansas City, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Denver, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles and Santa Cruz. In all these cities local branches of the “I. B. S. A.” invited him and made arrangements for public addresses. Notwithstanding the strain of continuous travel and continuous public speaking, the Pastor seemed in excellent health and vigor. He spoke enthusiastically of the warm receptions and attentive hearing which he had enjoyed. He was specially pleased with his California experiences and the glorious climate noted at his several stopping places.

The Pastor’s visit is unique in another respect. Learning of his intended program, some of his friends asked permission to make up a party to accompany him. He gladly assented. As a result a train-load of Bible Students are with him — about one hundred and sixty in all.

While the Golden Gate Convention is the goal of the tour, it is but the turning point of the excursion party. Meetings are to be held on the return journey at Sacramento, Portland, Tacoma, Seattle, Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Duluth, Buffalo and Toronto, the latter being reached July 16th. The Pastor’s scheme is a novel and a benevolent one; for surely what he has undertaken and is carrying out is not a lazy man’s burden. From the evidences here we surmise that the Bible Students along his course of travel will be blessed, stimulated, energized. Pastor Russell and his party bear

with them from the Golden Gate, the good wishes and Christian love of many friends.

[The Weekly Enquirer, June 30, 1910](#)

THREE MEN AND TWO WOMEN WHOM CHRIST LOVED

*This discourse has been republished in **Overland Monthly**, pages 331-335, under the same title, with the exception of the following paragraph, which should appear immediately before the last paragraph there.*

2H818

We remember that it was this same John who was so full of zeal for the Master that he asked permission to call down fire from heaven to destroy the men of Samaria because they refused to sell food for the Master's company. Jesus reprovved him and said: "Ye know not what spirit ye are of. The son of man came not to destroy men but to save them." Nevertheless this earnest, active disciple was specially loved of the Master, and doubtless he himself was very loving. He it was who with two other Apostles, was taken with Jesus on several important occasions when the other Apostles were not invited. For instance, to the healing of Jairus' daughter, and up into the Mount of Transfiguration; and especially apart from the other disciples in Gethsemane's agony—nearer to himself.

[The National Labor Tribune, July 9, 1910](#)

FATE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

WINNIPEG, Canada, July 9—Pastor Russell delivered two addresses here which will never be forgotten, even by those who did not commit themselves fully as endorsing his every utterance. We report one of his discourses from the text, "*And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom.*" (Luke 16:2 3) Addressing the public under the auspices of the International Bible Students Association, the speaker said:

I am not choosing my topic for this occasion according to my own preferences, nor do I wish to do so. Realizing that a great cloud of superstition and erroneous

interpretation of God's Word acts as an earth-born cloud to hide the heavenly Father from our eyes of faith, I am continually addressing myself to the removal of this barrier, to the intent that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord may shine into the hearts of all of God's dear people more effulgently than heretofore; to the intent that, with the clouds removed, our eyes may behold the King in His beauty, and our hearts be drawn to Him as to a Father, as to a God of love, as to an Almighty Saviour.

Time and again as I have delivered an address setting forth the Divine Plan of the Ages from the Bible standpoint, I have been approached afterward by Christian brethren who said, "What you say, Pastor Russell, is cheering, is God-like, is just what our hearts are hungering for and crying for, but — but I cannot accept it because of the Lord's Word respecting the "Rich Man and Lazarus," and His description of their fates."

What I say to these privately never reaches the ears of others who have the same query and the same obstacle to meet, hence I take this as my topic on this occasion, not only for the benefit of this audience, but for the benefit of the larger audiences to whom I speak weekly through the columns of the press of this land and Great Britain and Australia—numbering millions. All need to have this stumbling-stone removed from their pathway, and by God's grace we will remove it. He will remove it, using our stammering lips for the purpose.

LITERAL OR PARABOLIC—WHICH?

It is not sufficient that I declare that in the Scripture under consideration the great Teacher was giving a parable. It is not sufficient that I quote, "Without a parable spake He not unto the people." Some dear, earnest children of God would object, saying, "It reads, there was a certain Rich Man, etc." I must, therefore, prove that it is a parable and not a literal statement by showing that, considering it as a literal statement, it would be untrue and absurd. After thus proving it to be a parable I will discuss it as such.

If it be a statement of literal facts then all the facts must be taken literally. This would mean that because a certain man was rich and fared bountifully every day and was clothed in purple and fine linen he would go to an eternity of torment, without a single charge being made against him along the lines of murder or injustice or blasphemy, for in the account nothing of the kind appears. Furthermore, nothing is said of the poor man as being a good man, a saint, but merely that he was poor,

full of sores, which the dogs licked; and that he ate the offal from “The Rich Man’s” table.

If these be the grounds and conditions upon which any of us have had hope for eternal bliss, surely a comparatively small number could claim it. Did we ever have such experiences? If not, what ground have we, according to this teaching, for a hope of reaching Abraham’s bosom? And additionally, if the statement is a literal one, Abraham and his bosom must be considered literal also, and if only two or three who were beggars like Lazarus were before us, what hope

2H819

would we have for room in Abraham’s bosom. But enough of this! We see clearly that the statement is parabolic and we must look for such an interpretation as will fit all conditions. And here it is!

VIEWED AS A PARABLE

Viewing the matter as a parable, our difficulties all disappear as soon as we get the key. The great Teacher in this parable was criticizing the leaders of the Jewish nation and foretelling their fate. He Himself was an outcast, so were His disciples and so have all been since who have become His followers. “As He was so are we in this world.”

“The Rich Man” of the parable represented the Jewish nation. The fine linen he wore represented the typical justification granted to that nation under the Law Covenant made with Israel at Mt. Sinai. “The Rich Man’s” purple raiment pictured the royalty which belonged to Israel as God’s typical kingdom in the world. Thus we read, “Solomon sat upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord, in the room (or stead) of his father David.” Jesus recognized this kingdom dignity as still belonging to that nation when He said, “The Kingdom shall be taken from you and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” (Matthew 21:43)

The Rich Man’s bountiful table represented the glorious promises of God which were theirs primarily, and granted to no other people until after they had rejected Jesus and crucified Him. St. Paul refers to this table in this way and quotes David the Prophet saying, “Let their table become a trap and a snare and a recompense to them.” This was because they did not rightly appreciate their glorious promises and live up to the conditions which they required. The death of The Rich Man represented the cutting off of national Israel from all those special privileges and advantages every way which had been theirs for centuries. “The Rich Man” (the Jewish nation) began to sicken from the time of the

crucifixion — from the time that Jesus said, “Your house is left unto you desolate; henceforth ye shall see Me no more until that day when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

The saintly few were gathered out of Judaism into relationship with Christ at Pentecost, and “The Rich Man,” the nation continued to be sick and finally died in the year A. D. 70, when Titus, the Roman general, captured Jerusalem, the entire land of Palestine being laid waste.

The Jewish nation has been a dead nation since the year A. D. 70. It is in *hades*, in the tomb. But this implies its resurrection in due time, for the figure of the tomb, *hades*, does not represent a perpetual condition, but a temporary one, from which Messiah will grant a release, and *hades*, in every sense of the word, will be destroyed.

DIVES IN TORMENT

But the parable declares that Dives was in torment! How could this be, seeing that the word *hades* signified the death state, the unconscious condition? We answer that the Jewish people have a double aspect, in the parable and out of it. Nationally, they are dead or asleep, but as a people they are very much alive —no other people more so. It is as a people that they have been suffering the tortures of persecution during the past eighteen centuries, while as a nation they have been dead, buried, in *hades*, they are awaiting a resurrection, of which the present Zionism is an advance token. Soon Israel’s persecutions will end, when Messiah’s glorious Kingdom shall take its power; and then will come their national resurrection, for they are to be actively and specially identified with the Messianic Kingdom shortly, as its earthly and visible representatives.

As the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin were represented in “The Rich Man” in a very special sense, the other ten tribes, scattered amongst the surrounding nations, would, at a like-proportion, represent his five brethren. God’s dealings with the Jews will be the same wherever they are —no preference will be shown — “They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them.” This could not be applicable to any except these two tribes and the other ten tribes of Israel, for they alone had Moses and the Prophets.

THE RICH MAN TORMENTED IN HADES

All scholars will concede that the Greek word *hades* and the Hebrew word *sheol*, rendered hell in our common version, really signify the death state, the tomb. Various Scriptures tell us of the silence of *sheol* and *hades* and that there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device

there; that the dead know not anything. Scholars, therefore, have been perplexed greatly at the statement of this parable that the Rich Man lifted up his eyes in *hades*, being in torments.

The difficulty dissolves as soon as we have the proper interpretation to the parable and see that the Jewish people died as a nation and were buried as a nation, but did not all die individually. The people of Israel, outcast from their own land among all the nations of earth, are very much alive, socially and personally, having suffered for all these centuries.

Only very recently we have had an exhibition of how this Rich Man (Israel) dead as a nation, but alive as a people, has appealed to Father Abraham to have

2H820

Lazarus cool his tongue with a drop of water. Of course, the thought would not be that a spirit finger would take a drop of literal water to cool a literal tongue. A drop of water on the tip of a finger would not afford much relief anyway.

The interpretation must be looked for along the lines of the parable. The fulfillment came when the Jews of this country in a general petition requested the President of the United States to co-operate with other “Christian nations” and intercede on behalf of their people in Russia that they might have more liberty and less persecution, that their torments might be cooled.

FINDING THE LAZARUS CLASS

If we have found The Rich Man, let us now seek for poor Lazarus. He represented a God-fearing and God-seeking class outside the pale of official Judaism—not *all* the Gentiles, but certain ones concerning whom Jesus said, “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel!”

The Jews were in the habit of speaking of the Gentiles as “dogs.” The great Teacher Himself used this expression (Mark 7:25-30). Lazarus had no fine linen garment granted to him because he was outside the pale of Israel, for whom alone the typical sacrifices were offered. Lazarus had no purple robe for the same reason—because the kingdom of blessing, for the time, belonged exclusively to the seed of Abraham. The dogs (other Gentiles) licked his sores, in the sense of considering the Lazarus class upright and godly and in some sense showing sympathy for them. His eating of the crumbs that fell from the children’s table signifies that Jesus did, on a few occasions, allow some special blessings of healing, which were for the Jews, to go to this worthy class of Gentiles.

For instance, the daughter of Jairus, raised from death, was a crumb from the children's table to one noble-minded Gentile who feared God and who had built a synagogue for the Jews. The healing of the centurion's servant was another crumb from "The Rich Man's" table to one of the Lazarus class. Healing the daughter of the Syro-Phenician woman was another crumb from "The Rich Man's table" to a member of the Lazarus class. In answer to her request Jesus answered, "It is not proper to take the children's bread and give it to dogs" —Gentiles. Accepting the suggestion the woman replied, "Yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the children's table." Her faith in God marked her as one of the Lazarus class, outside "The Rich Man's" household. She was a companion of dogs (Gentiles), and for the time could merely have a crumb from "The Rich Man's table."

As the death of "The Rich Man" represented a change in his affairs, so the death of the Lazarus class indicated a change in the affairs of this outcast class. But, instead of being buried, these were carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom —not to heaven, not to purgatory, not to some intermediate state. As Abraham in the parable represents God, the receiving of the faithful of the Lazarus class into the bosom of Abraham figuratively represents the acceptance of this class as the true children of Abraham — true children of God. As Jesus went outside "the camp" bearing the reproach of His nation, before He died, so did all of His followers who belonged to that nation. They were all recognized as outcasts with the Gentiles; these the Lord received as His children by the begetting of the holy Spirit. And so St. Paul tells us that we who were by nature Gentiles were not of the stock of Israel. But, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed (children), and heirs according to the promise —joint-heirs with Christ, members of the great Messiah (Galatians 3:29).

Here, dear friends, we have a consistent interpretation of this parable, and it relieves our minds greatly. It assists also in illustrating to us the special relationship of the Jews under the Law Covenant and how this special relationship was lost by reason of their unbelief and how their unbelief alienated them from the Divine favor of this Gospel Age and constituted a deep and wide gulf between them and the spiritual Israel class represented in Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.

We thank God that the promise of the Scriptures is that with the end of this Gospel Age this gulf of unbelief and consequent separation from Divine favor will be done away and Israel will be delivered from the torments of these centuries and experience a national resuscitation or

resurrection under the glorious privileges, favors and advantages of the New Covenant.

HOPE FOR THE MANY NATIONS

Since God's favors are thus marked out for the heavenly and the earthly Seeds of Abraham — the earthly through the heavenly—it follows that the blessing of the other nations will come about through their affiliation with these. In other words, we may understand that the Divine Government established in Israel in the hands of the Ancient Worthies will be the center of Divine favor, and the people of other nationalities must come to this center for their supplies of truth and grace. Thus the Prophet represents the matter, saying, "Many nations shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain (Kingdom) of the Lord, and to the house of God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for

2H821

the Law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the spiritual Kingdom) and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the center of the earthy Kingdom) (Micah 4:2)."

And thus all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues shall be brought gradually to an appreciation of the Divine Plan, they shall all be blessed with Restitution privileges and opportunities and with an enlightenment from the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, which then through the appointed channels will be flooding all the earth. Thus will the original Covenant have its amplified fulfillment; first, in The Christ, the spiritual Israel; secondly, under the New Covenant with Israel after the flesh; and through these, bless all the families of the earth, so that all the willing and obedient may gradually attain to the standards of the children of God and be possessed of the "liberties of the sons of God"—freedom from sin, sorrow, pain and death. As the Old Law Covenant was with Israel only, so the New (Law) Covenant will be with Israel only. Other nations will share it by becoming Israelites, "Proselytes of the gate," not under the Old but under the New Covenant (Ezekiel 16:60, 61) "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

[The Clinton Courant, July 16, 1910](#)

BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD

“You that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”
Colossians 1:21

Sunday, July 10—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached today from the above text. He said in part:

In order to use a telescope to advantage we need first to obtain a proper focus on the object to be examined. And so it is with the Divine Plan and Purpose. Looking at it with the eye of faith through the Telescope of God's Word, adjustment of the focus is necessary. This focusing of the Word, Christian people in the past have very generally overlooked. As a result the Divine Plan has a blurred and indistinct appearance to our sight. The various word-pictures, symbols, types, allegories and plain statements of the Scriptures without this focusing together, make a very unsatisfactory and nondescript matter of the Gospel of Christ, one that is unsatisfactory to everybody, one that the learned of our day have repudiated entirely—an ambiguous collation that is a source of vexation to millions of God's consecrated people. The difficulty is that the Telescope was tampered with during the dark ages and the proper focus was lost. Since then Christian people have feared to readjust it. They have gloried in the fact that they never changed the focus. However, they have overlooked the fact that some one else did change it for them long ago and that the unsatisfactory view we have gotten is the result of this and is entirely out of accord with the clear and beautiful vision of God's Grace and Truth and Mercy and Love and Wisdom and Power as seen by the Apostles in the early Church.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Some of us, dear friends, instead of throwing away the Telescope of the Word of God, are taking pleasure in cleaning the lenses of the dust of the dark ages and adjusting the focus by a careful endeavor to speak where the Word of God speaks and to be silent where it is silent, and to bring, as the Apostle suggests, our every thought into captivity to the will of God in Christ as outlined in the Bible. The result, we all can testify, is not only comforting, but happifying; not only enlightening, but refreshing. Truly as the Apostle suggests, we have come to “Times of Refreshing from the presence of the Lord.” And all this, we perceive, is exactly what the

Scriptures foretold, namely, that a falling away and darkening of the understanding would follow the death of the Apostles, but that in the end of the age the darkness would begin to scatter before the oncoming light of the Sun of righteousness, in the morning of the New Dispensation of Messiah's reign.

In accord with all this, note the fact that for centuries we have been overlooking certain Scriptures while accepting others. We accepted the Apostle's statement in our text respecting the reconciliation of the Church, but we overlooked entirely other Scriptures which speak of a still different reconciliation — "God through Christ reconciling the world unto himself." (2 Corinthians 5:19) We should have noted the difference between the Church and the world in this and many other passages of Scripture. We should have remembered the Lord's words "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

2H822

We should have seen that the salvation and reconciling of the Church is one thing and the salvation and reconciling of the world is quite another thing; that these are two different salvations — the first to heavenly, spiritual conditions and joint-heirship with Christ in his Kingdom; the other to an earthly inheritance, to earthly perfection and life everlasting and an Eden that is to be world-wide—Paradise restored, God's footstool made glorious.

GOD'S PURPOSE TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

Nevertheless nothing has been lost. No feature of the Divine Plan has been thwarted, for these two salvations do not progress at the same time. During this Gospel Age none are saved, nor desirous to be saved, except those "drawn of the Father," "called of God." These have been privileged to approach God through the Son, whose name is "the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) Only those who take up their cross and follow the Lamb through evil report and good report, faithful unto death, can now be spirit-begotten; in the resurrection, these will be spirit-born, members of the Bride of Christ, the Lamb's Wife and joint-heir with him in his Kingdom. It does not matter to the remainder of mankind that they have been allowed to remain in ignorance of the great fact that God is about to pour out upon humanity a great blessing; about to pour out his holy Spirit upon all classes; about to establish the Kingdom of his dear Son for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come;" about to cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth; about to give to every son and daughter of Adam one

full, fair, righteous opportunity to come to a knowledge of the truth that they may be saved.

If the knowledge of God's grace has proven to be a grand, glorious, inspiring message to the sanctified in Christ Jesus, the Church of this Gospel Age, called to the heavenly calling, will not the message of reconciliation to the world, in due time, likewise bring to the world comfort, joy, blessing as they shall be invited to the earthly portion—to full restitution to human perfection—to all that was lost by Adam and that is to be recovered by the sacrifice of Jesus? No wonder the Scriptures assure us that the night of weeping is nearly over and the morning of joy already dawning! No wonder the Apostle declares that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together," and that they are "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:22, 19)

The work of this Gospel Age has been the calling, the testing, the proving, the fitting, the polishing of these sons of God for the glorious heavenly state to which they have been called. The Apostle urges that however humble the position of God's saints in the present life, "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." When he shall appear in his glory we also shall appear with him. When he shall reign as the King of kings and Lord of lords, when to him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, the elect Church, his Bride, will be with him in his Throne, sharers of his glory and participants in his work—the work of blessing and uplifting the world—reconciling the world to God.

CALVIN AND KNOX WESLEY AND WHITFIELD

Calvin, Knox and others of the reformers, we may then see, were quite right in their insistence that none at the present time are in a reconciled condition toward God except the comparatively few of our race—the saints. These turn from sin to righteousness, turn from disobedience to faith and consecration, and in and through the merit of the Redeemer are acceptable as probationary members of the elect Church. If faithful they will shortly, in the "first resurrection," constitute the Church of glory, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife and Joint-Heir.

Brothers Wesley, Whitfield and others were also right in their proposition that God was not content with electing merely a saintly handful, but surely loved the whole world and would surely give to every member of the race a full opportunity to come to a knowledge of Christ

and to seek a share in the merit of his sacrifice for sins and an opportunity for life everlasting.

Those dear brethren contended earnestly with each other over their differences, the one upholding the doctrine of Election, the other contending for the doctrine of Free Grace. Now we see that both were right! Now we see that the election belongs to this Gospel Age and to the High Calling to the divine nature and that in an age following this, Free Grace toward all of the race of Adam will prevail. “The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth,” every knee shall bow and every tongue confess.” Then those who, under the rule and assistance and uplifting influences of the “elect” will come into harmony with the Divine Law, will be blessed with full reconciliation to God and eternal life on the human plane—in Paradise restored—while the intelligently perverse, instead of being everlastingly tortured, as we had supposed, will, as the Apostle says, be punished with everlasting *destruction*. (2 Thessalonians 1:9)

“HALLELUJAH, WHAT A SAVIOR!”

From this viewpoint the glory of our Redeemer and the glory of our heavenly Father are multiplied a

2H823

million times. Our Redeemer not only is to be the Savior of the “little flock,” his Church, his Bride, on the spirit plane of glory, but additionally, through the agency of his Millennial Kingdom, he is to be the Savior of the world. He “tasted death for *every man*,” as the Scriptures declare, and, as they express it, “He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.” (Isaiah 53:11) Who could suppose that the Savior would be satisfied with the result of his labor if only about one in a million, as members of his Church, reach the heavenly glory-land?

Who in our day could for a moment believe the suggestion of Brother Jonathan Edwards, the great New England preacher, who declared that the Lord and his saints would, together, look over the battlements of heaven at their neighbors and friends and children suffering an eternity of untellable torture at the hands of demons, and turn around and praise God the louder on this behalf? Poor Brother Edwards had, we believe, but a small conception of Divine Justice and Divine Love. And his difficulty was that he did not see what is now so distinct and clear to Bible students, namely, that the Bible Hell to which all humanity goes is not a place of torture nor of consciousness at all, but the grave, sheol, hades, the tomb.

Instead of Christ and the saints praising God because of the tortures of the poor groaning creation, the Divine

program shines resplendently, showing us that the Redeemer and his Church will for a thousand years be engaged in a missionary work of the sublimest and most gigantic character—a work not only for a living remnant of the race, but one which will include in its blessing all the thousands of millions of humanity under the Divine sentence, “The wages of sin is death.” Truly the Scriptures declare, As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God’s ways higher than man’s ways and God’s plans loftier than man’s conceptions.

Notice next the context. St. Paul, after mentioning Christ as the Head of the Body, the Church, who is the first-begotten, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, adds, “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell,” and that (after) having made peace through the blood of his cross by him to reconcile all things unto himself—both the things in earth and things in heaven.” (Colossians 1:18-20) The Apostle indicates the great scope of Christ’s work as it shall be eventually when finished. He is appointed of the Father to establish peace and righteousness throughout the Universe. But he has not yet accomplished all of this. He has only begun. He has died for the sins of the world, as well as for the sins of the Church. But he has not yet offered to Justice the satisfaction for the world’s sins: He first appears before God as the great Advocate for the elect Church, “called” of God in advance to be “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife.” Note how the Apostle expresses this thought in our text, verse 21.

THE CHURCH FIRST RECONCILED

“And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouable in his (the Father’s) sight, if ye continue in the faith,” etc.

Who are these and why are they reconciled in advance of the remainder of the world — brought in advance into fellowship with the Father by the Redeemer as his Bride? These were by nature “children of wrath even as others.” By nature they were alienated and enemies in their mind by wicked works. They were unlike the Redeemer, who was “holy, harmless and undefiled and separate from sinners.” Why then did God’s grace specially come to this class — to us who are of the Church of Christ, “accepted in the Beloved” one? What did we do or could we do to contribute to this favor of God bestowed upon us? The Apostle assures us further along the same line, that the elect Church by nature was not superior to the world from which it was selected. He

declares that it contains not many great, not many learned, not many rich, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, many of them ignoble as respects birth and natural advantages of heredity. The difference between these and others was, first, that they had “an ear to hear” the Divine message. Sometimes this hearing ear came to them through sorrow and tribulation. In their weariness and heaviness they heard the Master’s voice, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28) They heard this voice, while some of their neighbors more favorably situated heard it not. But a still further blessing came to them as they responded and drew near to the Lord by faith and prayer.

Desiring to come nearer and nearer they strove to put away all filthiness of the flesh—sin in its every form — the while realizing that they could not cleanse themselves. Then it was that the Master informed them of the terms upon which they might join his Church — “The Body of Christ which is the Church.” They must make a full consecration of themselves to God and to righteousness, even unto death. They must do this with a full understanding that it would take them out of touch with the world and the spirit of the world, while bringing them into closer relationship with the Father and with the Son. They were assured that if they thus presented their little *all* to God in the

2H824

Redeemer’s name and merit, this great Redeemer would serve them as their Advocate with the Father and impute to them a sufficiency of the merit of his sacrifice to make good the deficiencies of their flesh. Thus only could the Father accept their sacrifice of the earthly nature and all of its rights and beget them with his holy Spirit to joint-heirship with their Redeemer in all the glories and honors and blessed services for the world in his Kingdom of Glory which is to be set up as soon as this Gospel Age shall have finished its work of gathering out of the world the elect.

Let it not be forgotten in this connection that when the world shall be reconciled to God in the future, the blessings of that reconciliation will come to them while still in their fallen state, to assist them to the recovery

of all that was lost in Adam. Hence our influence even with the worldly should be to encourage them towards as high standards of righteousness as possible, knowing that whatever they may attain in the present life will be that much of an advantage to them in the future life, and that in proportion to their degradation will be their difficulties in connection with their restitution to perfection. So then godliness is profitable, not only for

the life that now is, but also for that which is to come; not only for the saints who hope to be of the “little flock” and associated with Christ in his Kingdom, but also for the world of mankind, whose hope is to be blessed under that reign of righteousness and its uplifting influences.

[The Weekly Enquirer, July 21, 1910](#)

PUT AWAY ALL FILTHINESS

*With the exception of the first three paragraphs and the concluding paragraph, printed below, this article has been republished in **Pastor Russell’s Sermon**, pages 388-395, under same title.*

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. —Pastor Russell, of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, delivered Sunday two addresses to the International Bible Students’ Association, in the Auditorium. He had fine audiences and excellent attention. We report one of his discourses from the text, 2 Corinthians 7:1. He said in part:

Although the words of our text were not addressed by St. Paul to the worldly they would, nevertheless, be excellent advice and very profitable to all. In a general way all civilized people recognize that “cleanliness is next to godliness.” In a general way the pure, the clean, are recognized as the beautiful. And impurity and filthiness are detested even by the impure and the filthy. Outwardly, at least, we are in a time when water is plentiful, when soap is cheap, and when filthiness of the flesh is almost inexcusable as respects the outward man. But filthiness of the spirit cannot be touched, cannot be cleansed, with the ordinary soap and water, and this is undoubtedly the reason why the Lord and the Apostles have not addressed these words to the world. The great lesson for the world is the example set by the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The shining of one honorable upright life (even though it be not perfect — and none are perfect) is sure to have its effect in the midst of the darkness of sin and degradation which prevail in the world—mental, moral and physical degradation.

The world does not parade its defilement of mind and body where the bright light of Truth and Righteousness and Purity shines. It prefers to hide. For degenerate humanity to take pride in parading its own blessing in the light of better knowledge would be a horrible condition of things, such as was illustrated in Sodom. Let us be glad that the things of sin and depravity are at least nominally under the ban of public sentiment, even though the public in general have not taken their stand on the side of righteousness, even though only a small

minority have enlisted under the banner of Christ to fight against sin in themselves and “to conquer though they die.”

The following paragraphs are added to the end of the discourse.]

“IN THE REVERENCE OF GOD”

The Apostle in our text sums up the results we may hope to attain by our Christian warfare against sin — especially against its domination in our flesh. He gives us to understand that by following this process of cleansing mind and body, thought, word and deed, God’s consecrated people will “perfect holiness in the reverence of God.” What a glorious consummation to be hoped for, to be attained—perfection in holiness and in reverence of the Lord! Let this be our aim, our object, as Christians.

As for those who have not yet taken the step of becoming Saints of God, let them hearken to the Master’s words and sit down and count the cost of

2H825

discipleship and the reward of glory, honor and immortality attaching thereto. And let them seek to make a wise choice, now to suffer with Christ, that they may be glorified with him and share in his kingdom and its work of blessing Israel and the world.

[The Weekly Enquirer, July 28, 1910](#)

ALL IN ADAM, ALL IN CHRIST

“Since by man came death, by man also comes the resurrection of the dead; for as all die in Adam, even so all in Christ shall be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ, the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s during his presence.” 1 Cor. 15:21-23 (R. V.)

Once we considered most unkind, unjust, the Bible declaration that our Creator condemned all of Adam’s race with him on account of Adam’s “Original Sin.” But now, in the light of the clearer unfolding of God’s Word, we are privileged to see differently. Now we perceive, not only that God did no injustice to Adam’s children, but, contrariwise, that in this very particular, he did them a kindness—that it was in the interest of humanity in general. We are aware that this statement appears paradoxical to those who have not yet got the proper focus upon the Divine Plan. The key which unlocks the

difficulty is the proper appreciation of the penalty upon Adam and his race.

The erroneous, unscriptural view of this penalty, which came down to us from the “dark ages,” teaches that God damned Father Adam, Mother Eve and every child born to them to an eternity of torture at the hands of devils. It is this unscriptural and irrational view of the wage of Original Sin which caused all of our difficulty. Indeed, it is safe to say that no other false doctrine held by God’s people ever drove away from God, from the Bible and from the fellowship of the church so many intelligent minds. Thousands of bright, honest minds, after seeing this teaching of the Christian creeds, formulated in the dark ages, have quietly withdrawn from them in heart, if not outwardly, saying to themselves: Evidently my reasoning faculties are of a different kind from those of many others prominent in the church: Without disputing the point, I simply conclude that I must think for myself, and that, in so doing, I am forced out of sympathy with the majority of fellow Christians on this basic doctrine.

Can we find fault with such people? Surely not. Indeed, in our day matters have come to such a pass that, if this question be propounded in any congregation of Christian people anywhere, not one in ten would confess to believing it. And it is to their credit that their hearts and heads have outgrown this theory of the dark and musty past. How is it, then, that we see the creeds of the past revered, almost worshiped, while some of their most important features are denied, disbelieved, by the most intelligent of their adherents? Does not common honesty call out in thunder tones to every Christian to clear himself of the shame of believing such creeds, and, above all, to clear the character of the God of all grace from the foul stain of association with such a diabolical proposition? When will Christian people display the courage of their convictions and cast from them this pernicious doctrine, which has already done so much to dishonor their Creator, to dishonor the Bible and to dishonor the name of Christians?

WHERE LIES THE DIFFICULTY

The difficulty is that while the majority of Christian people heartily repudiate these misrepresentations of God and His Word, nevertheless the subject is not dear to them and they fear that to repudiate this doctrine would be to repudiate the Bible and to become open infidels. And just here is their mistake. The majority of them are not Bible students. Even among ministers of the gospel comparatively few have any degree of knowledge of God’s Word. They know what they think about the Bible; what they believe it teaches; what they

have been told that it teaches; what the catechisms say it teaches; but they have never made critical investigations of the Bible themselves to ascertain its teachings. It is a part of our endeavor to arouse Christian people everywhere to search and study the Scriptures and to assist them with Bible study helps, Bible keys, etc. And, thank God, there are thousands in spiritual Israel who are not bowing their knees to Baal, but who are anxious to know, to rightly understand, the Word of God. Classes in Bible study are springing up all over the world. These have recently adopted the name of “International Bible Students’ Association.” God is blessing them, not only with the opening of their own eyes more and more widely, but also in using them to bring others “out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9

The Scriptures speak of a “famine, not for bread nor for water, but for hearing of the Word of the

2H826

Lord.” This famine is upon us now. Not only are Christian people hungry and thirsty for the bread of life and the water of life, but many of the worldly are feeling a longing for something better than the husks which they have. We do not know that all church members, nor all of any one church membership, are thus hungering and thirsting for truth. But we do know that everywhere in all the various churches of all denominations there is a hungry class which cannot be satisfied to dishonestly misrepresent itself as in harmony with their creeds. These bewildered sheep are, of late years, finding the green pastures and still waters of Divine truth and grace—near to them—in the Word of God — hidden under the rubbish of ignorance and superstition, mistranslation and misinterpretation.

But, as for the masses of all denominations, alas, they are falling into unbelief! The popular form of infidelity, known as higher criticism, has already swallowed up more than one half of the ministry and of the most intelligent part of the laity. The only hope for any of these is in leaving the chaff and husks of mediaeval misinterpretations of God’s Word and in finding its true meaning, in which is refreshment, strength and new life.

THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH

However we read our Bibles in the past we read into them from the creeds of a darker time the mischievous error that when the Bible declares a death penalty for sin it really means the reverse of this — life, eternal life in eternal torture. Who had the right to twist the inspired words in such a devilish fashion? Who had the right to add to the Word of God and to make void its true teaching in this manner? Hear the words of the Apostle:

“The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23) What statement could be more simple? The wicked will not be granted life at all, either in pleasure or in pain. They are under sentence of death —destruction. Eternal life is a gift. And it will be given only to those to whom it will be a blessing— to those who will accept it through Jesus Christ our Lord. All others shall experience the very death penalty which God pronounced against Father Adam and his race when sin first entered the world.

Let us turn to Genesis and note the statements made to our first parents respecting sin and its penalty. Let us note that, without the twistings of theology, we should have no difficulty in understanding the Divine sentence, as our first parents evidently had no difficulty. The sentence upon Father Adam for disobedience was: “Dying thou shalt die;” “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;” “Cursed is the ground for thy sake;” “Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee until thou return unto the ground from which thou wast taken.” (Gen. 3:2, 3, 16-19, 24) How beautifully simple and clear and rational! God took from our first parents the privilege of living because they did not continue to exercise their blessings in harmony with His law.

Thus we see that the penalty for sin upon Adam and his race was that they should return to the dust. As we read again, “Thou turnest man to destruction” (Psalm 90:3) And this penalty is sufficiently awful when we think of what it means to die, to lose mental, moral and physical perfection and gradually go into the tomb — into the Bible hell (sheol, throughout the Old Testament). And this sheol, the grave, the tomb, to which the Bible says all go, good and bad, rich and poor, holy and unholy, were the only hell known among any of the people of God for the more than 4,000 years represented by the teachings of the Old Testament. Then came the New Testament times and the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles to the same effect. In the New Testament the Greek word hades, representing the tomb, the death state, takes the place of the Old Testament sheol in every passage translated from the Old Testament into the New Testament.

It was nearly 300 years after Jesus and the Apostles, after the writing of the New Testament, before the doctrine of purgatory was invented. And for this reason neither the word purgatory nor the purgatory thought is expressed in the Scriptures. But Bibles were few, and the people could not have read them even if they had possessed them, hence for long centuries the teachings of the clergy were accepted without Bible proof, and the doctrine of purgatory spread all over Christendom. All of our forefathers believed in it. It became the teaching

of Christians everywhere that the mere handful of saints, instead of dying when they seemed to die, went to heaven, and that the great mass of humanity, instead of dying when they seemed to die, went in some mysterious manner to a mysterious place called purgatory, of which nobody knew anything except what they were taught. The teaching is that practically all of humanity go to purgatory, there to be roasted and otherwise tortured for centuries — ultimately to gain release from the torture when fitted for heaven. Upon this doctrine in turn sprang the doctrine of saying “masses for the dead,” who were believed not to be dead, but intensely alive. The fear of purgatory drew the people very close to the priests as the supposed counselors of the Almighty, and the mass money drew the priests very close to the people. They were all honestly intentioned, but all deceived by the great deceiver, Satan.

2H827

A BAD MATTER MADE WORSE

By and by a Catholic theologian and teacher in one of their colleges, by name Martin Luther, accidentally ran across a copy of the New Testament in the Latin language. Being an educated man he was able to read it, for there was not a copy in the German language anywhere. Luther tells us of his perplexity in not finding purgatory in the New Testament. He tried to interest the Pope in Bible study, but failed, and instead was branded a heretic. He protested and others protested, hence the name Protestants.

These Protestants were undoubtedly as sincere before their protests as they were afterward, hence their protest was against the very doctrines which once they had proclaimed as the truth. Their minds were full of the thought that a dead person is not dead, but more alive than before he died, and that some of these at death went to heaven, while the great majority went to purgatory. They did not see the teaching of the Bible that “the wages of sin is death” — that all go into death, good and bad, and that this death state is the sheol and hades of the Bible. Instead of getting this true light upon God’s Word they went from darkness into greater darkness on this point. Here we wish to emphasize the thought that all these noble men, Catholics and Protestants, in their day, like all true people today, held a measure of truth in combination with errors. It is the measure of truth possessed and enjoyed that has given any power and force to our various Christian systems, and that to some extent has neutralized the effect of our errors.

Starting from their misunderstanding of Bible teachings respecting the wages of sin, Brother Luther and his noble companions battled bravely for many truths, but made

one great blunder. When they concluded that purgatory was contrary to the Scriptures and threw it away, and not seeing the Bible hell, the tomb, they adopted another hell and thereby went from bad to worse on this subject. They said, about heaven — that the masses of the civilized are surely not saints —surely they do not follow in the footsteps of Jesus —surely, therefore, they cannot be of his spiritual flock. Concluding that these could not be taken to heaven, they said, we must take them out of purgatory anyway, wherever we put them, because we have found out that there is no such place as purgatory.

After conferences, seriously disliking to make out God's character worse than they formerly supposed, they said, under their breaths, we must take them out of purgatory and quickly put them into hell of eternal torture and say as little about the matter as possible. They were greatly relieved when long-headed Brother John Calvin explained to them about the mere handful going to heaven and the great mass going to eternal torture. He explained that God had foreordained and predestinated these awful results —that he might show his wisdom and his power. As to a "Love Divine, all love excelling," Brother Calvin seems never to have thought of that. Brother Wesley and others since, though less logical and theoretical, did stand up for and declare the love of God, even though rather absurdity, they claimed that he was neither wise enough nor powerful enough to do more than rescue a mere handful of Adam's race from the eternal torture to which they thought God damned them all because of the disobedience in Eden.

"ALL IN ADAM —ALL IN CHRIST"

In the light of our better Bibles and Bible study helps and minds freed from the ignorance and superstitions of the past we may understand the Apostle's words and find in them, not only justice and love, but harmony and beauty. Instead of all mankind going to eternal torment for Adam's sin, all go into the Bible hell, the grave, on account of his sin — and all of the mental, moral and physical blemishes of our race are a part of this heredity.

There would have been no hope of a future life, good or bad, had not God in His mercy provided the Savior — the "Life-Giver," as the Syriac renders the word. In God's due time He set before His son the opportunity of becoming man's redeemer. The Logos was made flesh (John 1:14) and obediently gave Himself in death — "tasted death for every man." As by one man's disobedience the sentence of death passed upon all of the race, even so by the obedience of the man Christ Jesus unto death, justification to life passed for all of that race.

Now we see the wise reason for permitting the sentence to pass through one man's disobedience to all of his posterity. It was in order that one sacrifice for sin might make possible the reconciliation of the entire race.

Now read our text and drink in its depths and beauty and force. The resurrection of mankind from the sin and death and tomb condition to the full perfection and image of God, from which the race fell, is the salvation which God has provided for all. Whoever will fail to attain the full recovery from sin and death conditions will have himself to blame because of rejection of the glorious arrangements which God made in and through Christ.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION

God divides the salvation of mankind into two parts — the church to spirit nature and the world to perfected human nature. The first He is accomplishing during this gospel age; the second He will

2H828

accomplish through Christ and the church during Messiah's reign of a thousand years.

The church, the "little flock" of saints, called, tried, tested, in the narrow way, during this age are to constitute the "First Resurrection" class and to become "the Bride of Christ," "the Church of the First-Borns." These are to be associated with the Great Redeemer in His future work. These shall be, like Him, changed from earthly to heavenly nature and made sharers of His glory, honor and immortality. The kingdom of God under the whole heavens will be inaugurated after the glorification of the church, and then will begin the blessing, the salvation, the uplifting, the resurrecting, of mankind in general — from sin and death conditions — not to spiritual conditions, but to perfect earthly conditions. Only the church is promised life on the spirit plane.

All the willing and obedient shall be blessed by the great Life-Giver who, 18 centuries ago, died, the just for the unjust, and who, during the period since has been selecting the Bride class. With his Bride he will reign to bless the world, to make the whole earth beautiful. As it is written, "I will make the place of my feet glorious." The whole earth will then be as the Garden of Eden and the restored race like our perfect first parents. And as for the wicked, we read: "All the wicked will He destroy." (Psa. 145:20) He will not preserve them in torture or otherwise. They will die the second death. But none will die the second death for Adam's transgression. Christ died for that transgression and will release Adam and all

his race therefrom, even while He still holds them responsible for every willful transgression and gives stripes or punishment therefore to teach them to love righteousness and to hate iniquity.” (Acts 3:19, 23)

[The National Labor Tribune, July 30, 1910](#)

WHERE ARE THE DEAD NON-ELECT?

GALFSBURG, Ill., July 30— Pastor Russell of Brooklyn, and now also of London, delivered addresses to large audiences at the Galesburg Chautauqua. His topics were, “Where are the Dead?” and “The Judgment of the Great White Throne.” We report the former. Each address lasted for nearly two hours, but so deeply interested were the audiences that they seemed not to note the flight of time. He said:

No other question could be of deeper interest to thinking people than the one now before us — “Where Are the Dead?” Our ancestors, our neighbors, our friends, are dead or dying, and ourselves with them. What will be our condition when the spark of life flickers out? I have no new revelation on this subject. I have merely for my guide what is recognized by all Christians as the Divine revelation on this subject —the Bible. I hold that there is no other source of information comparable to it.

Before presenting his own findings on the subject, in the Bible, Pastor Russell reviewed the findings of others — Christians in general. The agnostic view, that there is no life beyond the tomb, he could not entertain. He believed that man’s organism, so much higher than that of the brute, implies not only an all-wise Creator, but His benevolent intention for man s future. He examined the Catholic view, and, while according full liberty to every Catholic to believe what to him seems reasonable respecting the dead, Pastor Russell could not agree with Roman Catholic teachings. He summarized their view to be that a very saintly few were fit for heaven and that they went thither. He complimented the justice of their intentions; that a comparatively small number of humanity were worthy of eternal torture.

For his own part, he could not imagine any human being, on account of any human weakness or depravity, as meriting endless torture. The Catholic. view, that all heathen and practically all Protestants and Catholics go in death to purgatory, he could not agree with for two reasons. First, he finds no Scriptural authority for such a view, and secondly, his mind cannot accept the thought that an all-wise, all-just, all-loving and powerful Creator

will torture His creatures for centuries in any such manner as Catholics generally believe, and as Dante's great poem, "Inferno," so graphically depicts.

OUR PROTESTANT VIEW IS WORSE

Pastor Russell declared that he was a Protestant, in large measure because his parents were such. But he declared that while he sees many truths both in Protestant and in Catholic teachings he considers that the Protestant view respecting the hereafter of the dead the most diabolical conception to be found on the face of the earth, the grossest blasphemy against the Divine character and provision for humanity. Had he nothing better to offer he would not be addressing his audience on the subject.

2H829

Perplexed and disconcerted by his early teachings, he had, when a youth, discarded all human creeds, and the Bible as well—believing that the latter was the basis for the former. It was a happy day for him when he learned that this was a mistake —when he learned that the creeds of the Dark Ages are diametrically opposed to the teachings of God's Word. Now his Bible has become to him a new book — the most wonderful book in the world. Its teachings he now sees to be, beyond all comparison, the most logical —the only rational presentation, and a most glorious one respecting man — explaining his past, present and future as prearranged by a wise, gracious and all-powerful Creator.

TWO PROTESTANT VIEWS

Protestant views respecting the hereafter are various, but two in particular represent Protestant thought in general. (1) The Calvinistic theory; (2) the Armenian theory.

Five centuries ago there were no Protestants — all were Catholics and believed in three places for the dead—heaven for the saintly few; Purgatory for the general mass of mankind; and hell, everlasting torture, for the incorrigible. Luther and coadjutors got to studying the Bible, and, finding nothing there respecting purgatory and mass for the dead, they threw these out. Figuratively, they smashed completely the idea of Purgatory. A little later they were perplexed and said to each other: We have smashed Purgatory, but now what shall we do with all these thousands of millions who have been there in our imagination for centuries — roasting, sizzling, and hoping some day to attain an eternity of bliss.

The thought of their responsibility in connection with the thousands of millions blanched their cheeks and made their hearts quail. They looked at each other in terrified bewilderment. Their noble generous hearts led them to

desire to put the whole mass directly into heaven, but, as they searched the Scriptures on the subject, they found, as they had always believed as Catholics, the Bible teaching that only the saintly, the footstep followers of Jesus, the “overcomers” of the world, are fit for the Kingdom of Heaven. In despair they said to each other, This leaves nothing for us to do but enlarge hell many times and stuff the entire mass therein, writing over the doorway, “Who enters here abandons hope.” They did it, but it was a sorrowful matter, quite contrary to their generous hearts.

GREATEST THEOLOGIAN—JOHN CALVIN

It was when the Reformers were feeling very sad for what they felt they had been obliged to do with the heathen and with their neighbors and friends and the vast majority of their own families, that Brother Calvin appeared. “Cheer up,” said Calvin. “Of course we all are sorry but it is not our fault. The shame of such a conclusion is not ours. I will show you the way out of the dilemma; charge the whole terrible business upon Almighty God! Say that He foreordained and predestinated things thus, and that we cannot help it!”

Pastor Russell said that these good men hesitated for a time about charging against God what they had been ashamed to acknowledge as their own plan and doing; but seeing no way out of the difficulty they finally agreed, and then extolled John Calvin as the greatest theologian the world had ever known. Calvin arranged the entire matter into a philosophy and his doctrine became the basis of all creeds of the Reformation period, including the Westminster Confession of Faith, which is generally acknowledged by Presbyterians, Baptists, etc. Thus said Pastor Russell, we Protestants got our diabolical theory respecting the dead. We “must confess that it is much worse than the theory of our Catholic friends. If we could not accept theirs because it was unloving, unmerciful, unjust and ungodly, surely we cannot accept any longer our own.

BROTHER WESLEY’S GOSPEL OF LOVE

The blessings of the Reformation were considerably overshadowed and handicapped by the great Calvinistic error of an all-powerful God, destitute of love, vindictive and devilish to a degree never approximated by any human degenerate. Centuries later that good man, John Wesley, appeared. His soul cried out against the injustice and lovelessness of Calvinism; and his claim that *God is love* has permeated Christendom to such an extent that even those denominations which profess the Westminster Confession of Faith and Calvinistic theories

do not really believe it. We must love Brother Wesley for his largeness of heart even though we must confess that he had a less logical head than had Brother Calvin.

Brother Wesley and the majority of his followers failed to see the inconsistency of his claim that God is love, and yet that nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand are to be eternally tormented —because the mass of them had never heard of “the only name whereby we must be saved;” and because others who had heard did not live contrary to their tendencies; did not live saintly lives!

Pastor Russell declared that Wesley and Calvin put exactly the same saintly few into heaven, and put all the remainder into eternal torment. Hence it was a mere question between these two men as to *why* this was so, and not as to the fact. Calvin said, “It is God’s will and He foreordained it thus.” Wesley said, “No,

2H830

God is love, and love would never do thus, it was the result of Divine lack of wisdom in their creation, and lack of power to help after their creation. Hence the fate of the masses.”

BRETHREN, WE DO NOT SO BELIEVE

Pastor Russell said, There is a great mistake. None of these theories satisfy your heads and hearts, nor mine. The difficulty is that we have been trying to accept the errors of the Dark Ages instead of going dear back and making our theology afresh from the words of Jesus, the Apostles and prophets. Let us do this now and find the beauty of the Divine Plan in the Bible, and a glorious Divine character such as we know it should have — far beyond human wisdom, justice, love and power. So the Lord says: “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My plans higher than your plans.”

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

The Bible confirms the ablest findings of science when it tells us that the dead are *dead* and not alive at all, anywhere. The Scriptures declare, “The dead know not anything;” “their sons come to honor and they know it not; they come to dishonor but they perceive it not of them.” Again the Bible says, “There is neither wisdom nor device nor knowledge in the grave (*sheol*, the Bible hell) whither thou goest.” (Ecclesiastes 9:10)

Where, my dear friends, is the key to the whole problem? The Bible hell is the grave, *sheol*, *hades*, the death state. The salvation which God has provided is the salvation from sin and from death. The hope set before

us in the Gospel is — the resurrection of the dead. If nobody is dead there can be no resurrection of the dead. It is not the body which dies that God has promised shall be resurrected, but the soul. It was not Adam's body merely that was punished with death, but it was his *soul*, which involved the body and every power Adam possessed. All of his children have shared with him in his fall, in his death.

God's provision for the salvation of mankind is that "As by man came death (not eternal torment), by a man (the man Christ Jesus) comes also the resurrection of the dead. For as all in Adam die, so all in Christ shall be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22)

THE REDEMPTION PRICE GIVEN

Not only do the Scriptures clearly set forth that the wages of sin is death and that thus death passed upon the entire human race (Romans 5:12), but they also set forth that the redemption price which Jesus gave was death—"He poured out His *soul* unto death;" He made His soul an offering for sin. (Isaiah 53:10,12)

As a result, "in due time," there will come a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. By *the just* is meant those justified and brought into harmony with God through faith in Christ. By *the unjust* is meant all others. Thus the Church will share in the First Resurrection with Christ; these are the Elect of the Scriptures. Their resurrection and complete change of nature has already begun in them through the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

They will be like the angels and like Christ, who is the express image of the Father's person. Like God and the angels they, as spirit beings, will be invisible to mankind. These with their Lord and Head will set up the Kingdom of God—the Messianic Kingdom. "They will live and reign with Christ a thousand years. These are the saintly ones, a class recognized by Catholics and Protestants, by Luther, Calvin and Wesley. All are agreed respecting such a class. The entire point of discrimination is respecting the masses of our race for whom Christ died and for all of whom the various creeds provide torments untellable, unthinkable.

THE NON-ELECT TO BE BLESSED

Brothers Luther, Calvin and others, when they smashed purgatory as unscriptural, should have said, "We do not know where those poor creatures are whom we so long supposed were in purgatory." They should not have felt it incumbent upon them to enlarge hell and to put the thousands of millions out of purgatory into it. But, as a matter of fact, they all are in hell; the difference is that it

is the hell of the Bible —the grave, the unconscious state of death, and not a place of suffering and torture.

Do not the Scriptures repeatedly tell you that the deadfall *asleep*? St. Paul writes of those who fell asleep in Christ; and again, of those who “sleep in Jesus;” and again that all would sleep except those saints who would be changed in a moment, at the second coming of Messiah. Do not we read that St. Stephen, stoned to death, *fell asleep*? Did not Jesus say, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth,” and subsequently explain his meaning saying, “Lazarus is dead!” do we not read that “Abraham slept with his fathers,” and so of the kings and prophets and all, good and bad? Abraham’s fathers, being heathen, none will claim that they sleep in heaven. Our Catholic friends will not claim that they sleep in purgatory, and surely nobody would claim that they could sleep in eternal torture. Where, then, *do* they sleep, and for how long? The Bible answers, “They that sleep *in the dust of the earth* shall awake.” (Daniel 12:2) The Bible tells us that the weeping, sighing and dying of the present time will give place to a glorious morning of better things, the resurrection morning.

2H831

NOT UNIVERSALISM, BUT UNIVERSAL OPPORTUNITY

Pastor Russell disclaims Universalism; he cannot find it in the Bible, else he would preach it. He finds the Bible to teach a universal opportunity for salvation and everlasting life, but that the gift of God, eternal life, will be given only to those who will avail themselves of the opportunity. Upon all others will come the wages of sin, namely, death. Those who sin wilfully, preferring wrong to right, after being granted full opportunity for reformation, will be destroyed in the Second Death, utterly, as St. Peter declares, “like natural, brute beasts.” (2 Peter 2:12)

HEAVEN ON EARTH BY AND BY

It was not in vain that the Redeemer taught us to pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” That glorious time will come when, as the Prophet declares, “Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess Messiah; and when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep; and when none shall need longer to say to his neighbor and his brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know Him.” Then “they shall build houses and inhabit them, and plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them, and long enjoy the work of their hands.” Then “the wilderness shall be glad and blossom as the rose;” and

“the earth shall yield her increase;” and the Lord will make His earthly footstool glorious (Isaiah 9:13). This is the hereafter which God has provided for the world of mankind in general.

But this long-promised restitution blessing to the world, lifting them up out of sin and death conditions, cannot come until first the Royal Priesthood shall have been selected. The election of the Church, in progress during this Gospel Age, is God’s preparation for the blessing of mankind. The elect saints will be kings and priests, judges, etc., in association with Jesus for the uplifting of the thousands of millions of humanity — “in due time.”

[New York American, August 1, 1910](#)

THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS

*This discourse has been republished in its entirety in the **Convention Report Sermons**, pages 112-114, under same title.*

Celoron, N. Y., July 31—Today at this place Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, addressed the International Bible Students’ Association— about 4,000 attended.

[New York American, August 1, 1910](#)

PREACHING TO THE DEAD

*With the exception of paragraph three and the two paragraphs which precede the subtitle, “We are Saved by Hope,” printed below, this discourse has been republished in the **Convention Report Sermons**, pages 130-132, under same title.*

*“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy
Like the wideness of the sea.”*

We are seeing more clearly as the days go by the meaning of the Scripture which declares that eventually the Redeemer “shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.” We perceive now that the little handful of saints walking in the Master’s footsteps from Pentecost to his Second Advent and sharing in the “First Resurrection” is not the end of Divine Love for our race, but merely its beginning— “A first-fruits unto God of his creatures.” (James 1:18) We are now seeing that, according to the Divine purpose, the calling and election of the Church to the spirit nature, to the divine nature,

must be completed before the second step in the great Divine Plan of Salvation begins — the recovery of the world from sin and death conditions, to human perfection and Paradise restored.

So we read of them:

“He came unto his own (nation—Jews) and his own

2H832

received him not; but to as many as received him, to them gave he power (liberty, privilege) to become sons of God even to them that believe on his name (his greatness as Messiah) who were begotten not of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God.” (John 1:11-13)

A similar procedure has been in progress throughout all this Gospel Age from Pentecost until now amongst the world of mankind judicially dead. It has reached a considerable number; but not many great, however, not many wise, not many rich, not many noble, not many learned, chiefly the poor of this world and the mean things, the ignoble things. (1 Corinthians 1:26-28)

[Orange Enterprise and Journal, August 19, 1910](#)

THE VENGEANCE OF ETERNAL FIRE

Lynn, Mass., August 14—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle spoke here twice today to large and attentive audiences. We report one of his discourses from the text, Jude 7. He said:

My text is one of the strongest of those which once we erroneously misunderstood to teach the eternal torment of the non-elect. Coming to the text with our minds filled with the wrong impressions respecting the character of the Almighty Creator and respecting his purposes toward humanity it is easy for us to misunderstand the words of St. Jude. So deeply were the erroneous thoughts impressed upon our minds from childhood that, irrational though they were, we considered them fundamental theology. In like manner we wrested to our own confusion and injury many Scriptures, reading into them what they do not say and ignoring what they do say. As, for instance, the messages of Holy Writ to the effect that “all the wicked will God destroy;” that “the wages of sin is death;” that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die;” that there is no eternal life out of Christ. All these and others we warped and twisted away from their beautiful and simple teaching, and made out of them “doctrines of devils”

with which we alarmed ourselves and those committed to our instruction.

We thank God that gradually the eyes of our understanding are opening to discern the great Truth that the testing of the Church in the present Age and the testing of the world at large in the coming Age will be as to worthiness for eternal life or worthiness of eternal death — everlasting destruction — the Second Death from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery. As St. Peter declares: Those who enter into it will be, like brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed — annihilated.

SODOM'S GUILT AND PUNISHMENT

Sodom and surrounding cities were profligate and licentious to the extreme and Divine Justice decreed that their course must not continue, but that they should be made an example of— a lesson to others of the Divine displeasure against all such licentiousness. Accordingly we read that fire and brimstone were rained from heaven to the utter destruction of those cities, the place of which is now marked by the Dead Sea. The Sodomites were obliterated and only their name and history have come down to us. Their utter destruction by eternal fire, heavenly fire rained upon them was a complete destruction. Their experience pictures forth the utter destruction of all whom God will finally reject as unworthy of eternal life. Not that fire and brimstone would be rained upon all, but that utter destruction will come upon all disapproved by the Almighty. Who thinks that St. Jude meant that the fire that destroyed the Sodomites was an eternal one? Whoever thinks that it is still burning as a literal blaze, should take a look at the picture of the Dead Sea and note that there are no fires there. The thought is that the fire, which is a symbol of destruction, did its work thoroughly, completely, leaving not a vestige of these condemned to destruction.

The Sodomites all went to hell — to the Bible hell —to the state of death. But they did not go to the hell which was manufactured by our forefathers during the dark ages—a hell of eternal torture. We have Bible testimony on the subject, which we will produce. They are unconscious now like the remainder of the dead, waiting for the resurrection. And the resurrection opportunity will come to them, as well as to all the remainder of Adam's race; because they, as well as all others, are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ—by the sacrifice which he finished at Calvary. This is not speculative. We have the words of the Master himself on the subject. Let us take our information, our wisdom

from the proper quarter. Then our doubts and fears will speedily flee away.

NOT A SECOND CHANCE

We will produce the Bible testimony showing that the Sodomites will be released and come forth during

2H833

the mediatorial reign of Messiah to enjoy a share of the blessings then to be poured out upon Israel and the world; and to have an opportunity of coming into harmony with God and gaining eternal life. But we know that straightway somebody will say, No, Pastor Russell, that would be a second chance, and God has nowhere promised a second chance to any. Furthermore it would be belittling to the Divine Government to suppose that God, after giving one fair trial to a man and reaching a decision would conclude to give him another trial, as though Divine Justice were unable to determine the worthiness or unworthiness of the individual for eternal life in one trial or testing. We fully agree with this sentiment, but call attention to the fact that the Sodomites did not enjoy one trial for life. They and all mankind were “born in sin, shapen in iniquity; in sin did their mothers conceive them.” They were born under the sentence, “Dying thou shalt die.” Neither they nor anyone else, therefore, could be placed upon trial for a future life everlasting or death everlasting, until released from the original sentence of death under which all were born. And no release from that death sentence was granted to anybody until the Redeemer came and died, “the Just for the unjust,” that, “as by a man came death, by a man also might come the resurrection of the dead.”

Only those, therefore, who have been born since Jesus' day could be released from the original penalty, or could be placed on trial for life or death eternal. Only the Church, therefore, accepts this proposition. To this agree the words of the Apostle, “If *we* sin wilfully after that *we* have come to a knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin (such having enjoyed and misused their share of the original sacrifice) — nothing but a fearful looking forward to of judgment (sentence) and fiery indignation, which will devour the adversaries of God — in the Second Death (Hebrews 10:26). The Sodomites, therefore, did not enjoy any chance of eternal life. They knew not “the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved.” Not only so, but the majority of mankind since Jesus' day have never heard the Gospel in the true sense of the word *hearing* — They have never understood, never appreciated, it fully, rightly.

MORE TOLERABLE FOR SODOMITES

It may astonish some to know that Jesus, speaking of the judgment or trial of the world during the coming age, during his Mediatorial Kingdom, declared that that trial would be less severe upon the Sodomites than upon some of those people to whom he preached, who would also have a share in the opportunities of that great epoch—an opportunity, with the Sodomites, of reconciliation to God and the attainment of eternal life. His words were, Woe unto you Chorazzin and Bethsaid, for if the mighty works which have been done in you had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Therefore I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment [the world's trial time, the Millennium] than for you (Matthew 2:22, 23). What more could we ask upon this subject? What higher authority could be invoked than the Great Judge himself?

It will not do to say that Jesus did not refer to the same licentious Sodomites mentioned by St. Jude in our text. It will not do to say that Jesus meant some Sodomites living in his day, because there were none. The Master distinctly tells us that “the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained down fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.” (Luke 17:29) When our Lord declares that “it shall be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for Capernaum” and the other cities in which he preached, he implies that it will still be tolerable for those people who heard him and who rejected his message.

“THUS IT IS WRITTEN”

This Gospel Age which began with our Lord's sufferings and trying experiences, and which has continued those experiences with his followers, has for its object the preparation, the qualification, of those who will be the Judges of the world in the coming Age. They must all be developed in the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit — “meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, love,” else they will not be fit to be the Judges of mankind by and by. It is required that all become copies of the Redeemer, God's dear Son. St. Paul tells us this, saying, “Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?” and that God has foreordained that all of these judges must be copies of his Son? (Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 6:2)

Come back with me to the Old Testament Scriptures and note how the Divine Spirit dictated this matter of the future trial of the Sodomites to one of the prophets and caused it to be written for our instruction. Alas! as Jesus

said, we have been “slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.” (Luke 24:25) Through Ezekiel the Prophet, the Lord explains that when the restitution time shall come at the Second Advent of our Lord in the glory of his Kingdom, then the Divine blessing will come upon Israel now cast off. Nor will the blessing of Messiah’s Kingdom come upon Israel only! It will extend to all the families of the earth. Through the Prophet, the

2H834

Lord specially emphasized to Israel her two sister nations, Sodom and Samaria. The Lord pointed out that in the day of their pride and prosperity they disdained these sister nations as being far beneath them and unworthy of their notice in every way. But in the restitution times (Acts 3:19) they will be glad to have a share of the Divine favor in conjunction with those nations formerly despised.

The Lord declares that it is not because of the worthiness of any of these that he proposes their restitution, but because of his glorious character, for his namesake. Let me quote to you this remarkably clear statement of the Divine purposes future; and let us notice that it is emphatically declared that the ones to be restored and blessed are the very ones who perished in the days of Lot. We read —“Sodom thy sister hath not done . . . as thou hast done . . . Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her, .. - neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and the needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away as I saw good. [God did not see good to take them to a hell of eternal torture; but he did see good to destroy them and to make them an example of the destruction of all ultimately displeasing to him after enjoying a knowledge of his grace and an opportunity for eternal life.]

“Thou also which hast condemned thy sister nations bare thine own shame for thy ‘sins. They are more righteous than thou (as Jesus declared). When I shall bring again their captivity [bring them from the prison-house of death].., then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them: that thou mayest bear thine own shame and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them. When thy sisters Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate . . . I will remember my Covenant with thee in the days of thy youth and I will establish unto them an everlasting Covenant [the New

Law Covenant of which Messiah is the Mediator and which, under his Mediatorial Kingdom shall bless Israel and all who will come into Israel under the glorious terms of the New Covenant]. (Jeremiah 31:31)

“Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy Covenant [not under your present Law Covenant, but under the New Law Covenant and its better Mediator] . . . that thou mayest remember and be confounded and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.” (Ezekiel 16:48-63)

LENGTH AND BREADTH HEIGHT AND DEPTH

How wonderful it at first seems to us to find that we really have a good, kind, loving God, and not an unmerciful and vengeful one! So grossly were we deceived respecting his character, by the traditions handed down from the past, that we gave him the reverence of fear, rather than that of love and devotion. The clearer light comes to us as a fresh revelation of the meaning of the Apostle’s words when he wrote about “lengths and breadths and heights and depth of the love of God, which passeth all understanding.”

The words of the Lord through the prophet come to our minds, “Tear not their fear, neither be afraid.” “Their fear of me is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of man.” “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans.” Oh! Thank God that it is so! To all eternity we shall praise God that he did not allow our forefathers to make him to change his character. Yes, and he is the same yesterday, today and forever. He changes not. The great, wise, just, loving plan for the salvation of mankind which he is now carrying out was the very one “which he purposed in himself before the world was created.” The plan of selecting the Church through fiery trials, through the straight gate and narrow way, for nineteen centuries, was what he purposed in advance; for the Apostle says that he foreknew the Church in Christ.

Likewise the times of restitution soon to come for the world of mankind he foreknew and predestinated, and made all the arrangements for, just as they are being carried out now. The end will be glorious. His name will shine resplendently when the mists have cleared away, and when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with

healing in his beams, scattering all the darkness and degradation of sin and superstition.

*“Then we’ll see what God hath wrought!
Then we’ll praise him, praise him as we ought.”*

“TO YOU IT IS GIVEN”

We are well aware that only the few can see the beauties of this subject as we see them. We are aware that only those to whom “it is given to know” will understand in the sense of fully appreciating the depth of the Divine message. But we are sure that all such will rejoice more and more in the God of our salvation,

2H835

as they come to appreciate his worthiness of our love and confidence and devotion.

As for those who shall under Divine tests prove themselves sympathetic with iniquity, we are glad that the Divine sentence is that they shall have from the Eternal One a destruction total, complete —one from which there will be no recovery, no redemption, no

resurrection. “They shall be as though they had not been.” But all the willing and the obedient shall have the blessing of the Lord unto life eternal —either on the spirit plane as members of the Church of the firstborns or on the human plane as members of the saved Israel restored to human perfection.

[The Cincinnati Weekly Enquirer, August 2.5, 1910](#)

THE MOST COMFORTING WORDS OF LIFE

Utica, N. Y., August 21 —Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, preached here twice today to large audiences. We report one of his discourses from the above text. He said in part:

One of the wonderful things about the Bible and the Christianity founded upon the Bible’s teachings is the fact that it contains so much sympathy — comfort for the bereaved, the sorrowing, the troubled. This is not true of any other book or any other religion in the world. And who is there that does not at some time in life need sympathy, need encouragement, need a powerful and loving friend such as our Bible assures us our God is to all who will accept his favor?

But our great adversary, Satan, seeks to make the light appear dark and the darkness light. He seeks to negative the testimonies of God’s Word, and, to a very great

degree his deceptions have been successful, as is witnessed by the creeds of Christendom. Practically all of our creeds, even though they assert that God is gracious, careful, kind and loving, contradict this description of Him and His plan for humanity in monstrous terms, fiendish in the extreme. The majority of creeds tell us of His foreordination and pre-arrangement of whatsoever comes to pass, and that this signifies that a saintly handful will gain eternal life of joy in heaven and that the unsaintly thousands of millions of heathendom and Christendom are equally foreordained to spend an eternity of torture foreknown, foreintended and provided for before their creation. Is there comfort in this? Is such a plan God-like or Satanic? Could any intelligent and good being rejoice in such a plan of damnation or sincerely worship an Almighty God who would so misuse His unlimited power to distress His creatures? "Born in sin, shapen in iniquity; in sin did their mothers conceive them."

The majority of Christian creeds declare the same results, but that they were not designed of God, not foreknown by Him, not predestinated. They tell us in other words that we have an incompetent God, well-meaning, but deficient in wisdom and in power. Is there any comfort in this? Would it assuage the grief and pain of those suffering in eternal torment if they could be assured that their lot was such, not because of Divine premeditation and design, but because of Divine incompetence? Surely there is no comfort to be had from such a view.

After all, we Protestants did not make much of an improvement upon the theory held by our forefathers against which we protested in the sixteenth century. Surely purgatorial tortures of a few centuries are no worse, no less comforting than our Protestant conceptions of an eternity of torture for all the non-elect. Our Catholic forefathers manufactured Purgatory without a shred of Scripture upon which to base the theory. They built it in their imaginations; they invented its fires and tortures. Our Protestant forefathers, using their imaginations, gave us an eternal torment hell—not more tangible, not more Scriptural than Purgatory. They did indeed use a Scriptural term—sheol, hades, hell—but, overlooking the fact that these words all signify the state of death, the condition of the dead, they wrested the language and warped it in an unscriptural manner to signify torture. The penalty or "wage of sin is death." They made of it torture everlasting, without the slightest authority of Scriptures except a misunderstood and misapplied parable, which rightly understood, teaches a totally different lesson.

THE FALSE GOSPEL

Our contention is that during the dark ages the church lost sight of the true Gospel message of comfort, rest, help, held out by the Lord as a special boon and reward for the weary and heavy laden, to

2H836

attract them. During the dark ages we substituted another Gospel containing no comfort, and therewith we sought to drive men to love, serve, worship, adore, a God we erroneously pictured as meaner and in every way worse than the worst of his fallen creatures. Is it not time for us to get back to the Gospel of our text, the Gospel of comfort, of sympathy, of gracious promises? The false Gospel has surely lost its power. People are becoming too intelligent to endure it. As a consequence attendance at churches is decreasing and reverence for God is diminishing. Infidelity, called higher criticism, etc., is increasing.

The need of the hour is the Gospel of comfort. St. Paul declares what we all know, namely, that “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.” Here we see the necessity for this Gospel of comfort. We see also that God has provided it and that it is coming to the world in the end of this age, in the dawning of the new age. It will come to the world in general as soon as the elect church shall have been selected, and, by the “First Resurrection” power, glorified with her Lord as His kingdom class, as the glorified sons of God, whose mission it will be to bless all the families of the earth.

“FATHER OF MERCIES— GOD OF ALL COMFORT.”

When St. Paul says, “Knowing the terrors of the Lord” he evidently refers to the fact that our Creator has declared that “the wage of sin is death” (not eternal torment); that “all the wicked will God destroy” (not preserve in fire); and that only such as come into vital relationship with the Redeemer can have everlasting life. Knowing these things respecting the Divine government we persuade men everywhere, “Be ye reconciled to God” — and thus attain the only eternal life which He promised.

But, on the other hand, note the kindly description of our God which the Apostle furnishes, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all of our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any tribulation, by the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of

Christ abound in us, so our comfort also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation, . . . or whether we be comforted, it is for your comfort and salvation, . . . knowing that ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the comfort.” 2 Cor. 1:3-7

What a wonderful statement respecting the divine intentions for the comfort of the world and the comfort of the church, all proceeding from “the God of all comfort!” Nothing written in any sacred books of any people at any time reveals such a God as the God of the Bible — a God infinite in justice, wisdom, power and love. It is He that is working all things according to the counsel of His own good will, for the ultimate comfort and salvation of as many of his creatures as will accept his favors, after being brought to a knowledge of the truth respecting them. The church is now comforted during this Gospel Age (saved to the highest plane of the heavenly nature) and during the coming age the world is to be comforted and saved to the human nature — as many as will. For the world this means the glorious opportunity of the mediatorial reign of Christ which will constitute their time of restitution, uplifting, resurrecting, to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Acts 3:19-21

“COMFORT—WITH THESE WORDS”

Our text not only tells of comfort, but that this comfort is to be attained and enjoyed through words —through instructions, through God’s teaching, through human channels and agencies. Thus, as the Apostle declares, “God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.” And God’s Son used His twelve apostles as His special mouthpieces to declare the Father’s will, the word or message of comfort. And in turn God is pleased to use human instrumentality’s for the explanation of His gracious message — for the enlightenment of His people — that the faithful and obedient may have the necessary words of life, for their comfort.

In order to appreciate the meaning of our text we must consider the words of the apostle preceding it, beginning with the thirteenth verse. He declares, “I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” All Christian people agree that the word sleep here refers to those who died. They are not asleep in heaven, of course, for there all is wakefulness and intelligence and joy. They are not asleep in purgatory, of course, for, according to our Catholic friends, sleep there would be an impossibility. They are not asleep in an orthodox hell, for, according to the description given by

Protestants, none could sleep there. Where, then, are those who are “asleep?” St. Paul says that we should not be ignorant concerning them. Have we not been ignorant in the past — foolishly ignorant? We have ignored the apostle’s words entirely. We have refused to believe that any are asleep and claim that all are awake,

2H837

alive — a few in heaven or joy, the many in purgatory or eternal torture. But St. Paul was right! The entire Bible teaches that all who die fall asleep. Thus we learn of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, that he “fell asleep” (stoned to death). We read of the good and the bad, Kings and peasants, falling asleep in death. We read that King David slept with his fathers —some of them heathen. The Bible tells us where they sleep and that they will all be awakened from the sleep of death in due time —in the resurrection during Messiah’s reign of a thousand years. The Prophet declares that “many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to life everlasting and some to shame and lasting contempt.” (Dan. 12:2)

Those who will be awakened from the sleep of death unto resurrection of life will be the blessed and holy, the saintly, who will be associated with the Messiah in the kingdom work for the blessing and uplifting of the non-elect. Those who will be awakened from the sleep of death to shame and age-lasting contempt will be the non-elect world. Their shame will be in proportion as they have enjoyed light, knowledge and opportunity and have failed rightly to appreciate and use these. They will have contempt from their fellows, in proportion as their shortcomings of the present time will be shown up. Many highly esteemed among men will be awakened to that shame and age-lasting contempt. But their case will not be a hopeless one. Much of their weakness and dereliction were the result of Adam’s transgression and the sinful conditions which have resulted, including unfavorable environment. God has provided in Christ redemption for all from the sins and weaknesses resulting from Adam’s disobedience, and thus the entire race of Adam is guaranteed an individual trial under favorable conditions for life everlasting or death everlasting.

All who will render obedience to the laws and regulations of Messiah’s kingdom will begin to rise up, up, up, out of their fallen, degraded condition of sin and be brought back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. In proportion as they will retrace their steps and come back into divine fellowship their shame will decrease and their contempt also. Finally, in the consummation of that age all who will may have attained full restoration and regeneration and freedom

from shame and contempt. The unwilling and disobedient and rebellious will be destroyed in the second death — “twice dead, plucked up by the roots” —without hope of any further resurrection or restitution.

“COMFORT WITH THESE WORDS”

St. Paul urges that Christians should not be ignorant concerning those who are asleep —that they that “sorrow not even as others who have no hope.” It is bad enough to think of millions of heathen as being totally extinct, hopelessly dead, without any prospects of a resurrection. The same would be true respecting our neighbors and friends, parents and children, brothers and sisters, who are not saintly, who are not in “Christ Jesus,” who are not walking after the Spirit, who are not heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. And if it would be a sore trial to think of them as utterly destroyed in death and without hope of resurrection, how much worse would it have been when, in our misunderstanding of God’s plans, we thought of them as even worse than to believe them without hope and extinct.

The Apostle proceeds to point out the basis of this hope in these words, “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring (from the dead) with (by) Him.” (1 Thess. 4:14) So, then, the Apostles declare, the resurrection hope is the Christian hope, and the basis of the hope of this resurrection is that Jesus died that He might be man’s Ransomer —that He arose from the dead that He might be the great Deliverer of mankind, the Prophet, Priest and King of God, and that He might gather to Himself the elect, Church, the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife, as His joint-heir.

Christians, of course, in thinking of the resurrection of the dead, would primarily, chiefly, consider their dear ones of the household of faith; hence the Apostle continues his argument, saying, that those of the church living at the present time of the Second Advent will not precede or hinder those members of the Church who have died during the past centuries, for the dead in Christ shall arise first —shall be awakened first from the sleep of death.

“THEM THAT SLEEP IN JESUS”

We cannot think that the Apostle refers merely to the Church in this case, for uniformly, in speaking of the resurrection of the dead, he refers both to the Church and the world, the “resurrection of the just and of the unjust.” So in this case he evidently refers both to the Church and the world as, “asleep in Jesus.” The expression will be

noted as different from another one of his respecting those who “sleep in Christ.” The latter expression evidently refers to the Church as the glorified members of the Christ. But in speaking of those asleep in Jesus he evidently has reference to the whole world of mankind. The whole world died in Adam without having a voice in the matter of their birth or trial or condemnation. “Condemnation came upon all because of one man’s disobedience.” Likewise justification is to pass upon all

2H838

of our race through the precious merit of Christ’s sacrifice. The fact that He “died, the just for the unjust,” constitutes His death a satisfaction price for the sins of the whole world.

From this standpoint, therefore, the whole world not only died in Adam but now sleeps or waits unconsciously for a resurrection of the dead through the merit of our Redeemer’s sacrifice. If we believe that Christ died for our sins and laid the foundation thus for His great work of blessing the world of mankind, including the Church, the first fruits, let us believe also that God who began His work will not stop until He shall have brought forth judgment unto victory —until all the redeemed world shall be brought to a knowledge of the Redeemer and of the Heavenly Father and to an opportunity for life everlasting through obedience. The world died in Adam — “in Adam all die.” Jesus is the Redeemer of the world. “Even so all in Christ shall be made alive.”

The message has reached the Church only, as yet. In due time it will reach every member of the race. The Church is already reckonedly quickened from the dead by the holy Spirit, and will shortly be born from the dead in the “First Resurrection.” The world, therefore, from the divine standpoint, is not dead in Adam now, but merely asleep in Jesus, waiting for the glorious time when, His Kingdom established, He shall call all mankind from the prisonhouse of death, from the tomb, that each may learn to the full of the grace of God in Christ, and have opportunity for attaining life everlasting.

These are the words in which we are to comfort one another —words of hope respecting the resurrection of the dead, both the just and the unjust—words of sympathy, words of assurance, words that show that God is better than all our fears; that yet in a little while He that shall come will establish His Kingdom —first the Church in glory, and, secondly, Israel and all the families of the earth through them. Everything connected with the divine message is full of hope, full of encouragement, full of blessing, to those in the condition to receive it.

IMMORTAL WORMS AND UNQUENCHABLE FIRE

These words from the lips of our Master, the Great Teacher, have been grievously misunderstood. The teaching of our Protestant childhood was to the effect that only the saintly elect would go to heaven, and that others would not only lose heaven, but gain an eternal life in torment. Thus our text was understood to portray what practically the whole world of mankind would be compelled to endure. This hell was pictured to our childhood minds from outside the Bible as heated to a white heat. If we expressed wonder or surprise that any human creature could endure such conditions so long, the answer was that God would exercise his omnipotent power to make us fireproof and also pain-sensitive. Some theologians of the Thomas a' Kempis school of thought went so far as to picture the poor creatures in their sufferings, and to show that the heat would form a kind of an asbestos covering which would shield them from a measure of its intensity. But these deluded theologians proceeded to explain that these outer coverings would crack and shell off every little while, leaving the poor victim freshly tender that his suffering might be the more intense.

Of course, these theologians of the past had their difficulty in dealing with the worms. They could imagine devils who would oversee the torture as being made immune to pain by the chief torturer, the Almighty God. But just how to imagine the worm getting along in so great a heat, and how they would in any wise increase the torture of the poor sufferers, was to many a perplexity. But patient thoughtfulness along these cruel and devilish lines enabled some to formulate the theory that the worms would be fiery ones, living in fire, delighting in fire —worms that would bore through the incrustations and add still further to the horrible sufferings of the world of mankind.

WAS THIS WHAT JESUS MEANT?

Did the Great Teacher intend that such conclusions should be drawn from his language? And did He stop short of the description from reasons of sympathy or modesty or shame? Is this the general teaching of God's Word or has a great and terrible mistake been made? And have we mistaken a figure of speech and treated it as literal? We erred. We misunderstood. The Great Teacher who rebuked His disciples, James and John,

when they desired to call fire from Heaven upon the City of Samaria, because the people thereof refused to sell them food for the Master—the sympathetic

2H839

One who said to them, “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,” could that Son of man in any wise intend to tell us that our great Heavenly Father had less of the spirit of love and righteousness than the two impetuous disciples? Did He mean to intimate that while the disciples impetuously might have been willing to destroy the earthly life of the Samaritans, the Heavenly Father, of still more demoniacal disposition would treat practically all mankind 10,000,000 times worse than that and use divine power to all eternity to perpetuate the sufferings of His earthly creatures which His own Word declares were born in sin, shapen in iniquity, in sin did their mothers conceive them? — earthly creatures, too, whose environment was unfavorable and whose adversary the devil, God neither destroyed nor bound?

Such an interpretation, my dear hearers, is not supposable. We must look for some explanation of the Master’s words more consistent with His own character and with the Heavenly Father’s character, and more consistent with our conception of what a just, loving, wise and powerful creator would do. It does not answer the purpose to say, as so many do, “Bosh, do not discuss such a matter. Nobody now believes such things!” This one Scripture repudiated would shake our confidence in the whole Bible. But rightly explained and understood it would settle and increase our faith in the Scriptures as a divine message. This, then, must be our object — not merely to cast from us the devilish interpretation of the dark ages, but to ascertain the true interpretation — to get the true lesson from the words of the Great Teacher. Thousands are drifting off into more or less open infidelity simply because of the irrational interpretation given to this text and two or three others. And these errors have become so fastened in our minds from childhood days that they have become part and parcel of our very lives, so that many of us would have been inclined at one time to dispute the very existence of a God as much as to dispute such slanderous misrepresentations of His glorious character.

ENTERING INTO LIFE

Let us go back to Jesus’ day and in mind place ourselves with those who heard Him utter the words of our text and context. The Teacher had just said: “If thy hand offend thee, cut it off—it is better for thee to enter into

life maimed than, having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

Where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched.” He said the same in the following verses respecting the foot and the eye. Was He speaking literally or figuratively? Does any sane person suppose today that Jesus advised a literal cutting off of a hand or a foot or the plucking out of an eye? Assuredly not. And the person who would follow His counsel in that way would be considered unbalanced in mind. We all recognize what He did mean, namely, that if any who desired to have eternal life found that they had hindrances of appetite or pleasure or what not, as dear to them as an eye, foot, hand, these precious, but disqualifying sins or wrong-doings, should be put away, no matter how precious they were, no matter how highly esteemed. By way of contrast the Master suggested that if the retaining of these things would hinder them from entering into life they could not afford to retain them — that even if they were to carry the figure further and suppose that in the future life they would be deprived to the extent of being maimed to all eternity it still would be preferable to them to practice the self-denial now and to enter into life.

Be it noted that the reward here indicated is in the entering into life, and the intimation is that those who fail will not have life at all—that they will fail to attain life; that they will have no eternal life, either in pain or in pleasure. Let us examine our text further and see this.

GEHENNA TYPED THE SECOND DEATH

The word hell in our text is from the Greek word gehenna, which in turn was a corruption of the Hebrew word geh-hinnon, which signifies valley of death. There are two other words in the New Testament Greek translated hell in our common version. One of these, tartarus, has no reference to humanity whatever, but merely signifies our earth’s atmosphere — the place where Satan and the fallen angels are restrained in chains of darkness. (2 Peter 2:24) The other Greek word rendered hell in the New Testament is hades, which corresponds exactly to the word rendered hell in the Old Testament, namely sheol. And all scholars know that both of these words signify the same thing. They are used interchangeably in the Scriptures to designate the state or condition of death — the tomb. No person, of even slight education, would for a moment attempt to claim that eternal torment is taught by sheol, hades or tartarus. The great stress of all who teach eternal torment falls, therefore, upon the word hell found in our text — in the original Greek, gehenna.

What we have to say respecting it will undoubtedly be news to but few of this congregation. But since this sermon will be reported in more than 700 newspapers of the land, our explanation will probably eventually reach 10,000,000 people to whom the truth of the subject will be new. What we have to say is not new to

2H840

educated ministers, however, and why, as pastors, they have kept the sheep of their flocks in the dark on the subject is for them to explain. They certainly cannot plead ignorance. At very most they can apologize that they hoped that the misunderstanding would do more good than the truth. They seem to forget entirely that this terrible misunderstanding is not only wrecking the faith of thousands, but dishonoring our Creator — blaspheming His holy name, His holy character, by misrepresenting it and the Divine Plan.

A VALLEY OUTSIDE JERUSALEM

I wish that those of you who have modern Bibles with maps at the back, would turn to the map of the city of Jerusalem, and there notice on the southwest side of the city, just inside the wall, the Valley of Hinnom. That is the valley that, in brief, was called Geh-hinnon, the Greek of which is gehenna. All of our Lord's uses of the word gehenna stand related to the valley. For the sake of my larger congregation it will be worth while for us to take a glance backward at the history of that valley during many centuries before Jesus' day.

The first mention of this valley in the Bible is found in Joshua (15:8), where it is given as one of the boundaries of the tribe of Judah, according to the lot cast by Joshua in the division of the land that had come into possession of the Israelites. It is again mentioned similarly in Joshua 18:16. The next reference to this valley is found in 2 Kings 23:10. There we read how Josiah, the good King of Judah, instituted a great reform in the nation and abolished idolatry, one of the most heinous forms of idolatry having been practiced in this Valley of Hinnom, which had got a new name, namely, Topheth. History tells that the Israelites built in this Topheth, the Valley of Hinnom, a great brass image to the heathen god Moloch. In various places they had groves in which a licentious form of worship was enacted, and then they resorted to this Valley of Hinnom to offer sacrifices of the most revolting kind to the heathen deity. Sometimes it was a boy and sometimes it was a girl that was placed naked in the arms of the great image after it had been fired to a red heat with fuel piled underneath the image, and passing through it was a flue. The cries of these infants so horribly sacrificed were drowned by the cheers of the worshippers and music of various instruments.

All of this, indeed, everything akin to suffering, was strictly forbidden by the Divine Law given to Israel. And they had been specially warned against this very form of idolatry. (Lev. 18:21; Deut. 18:10) It is a gross mistake and slander of the Divine character and law to suppose that it ever sanctioned torture. And it is a still worse slander upon God to suppose that He would Himself do, and that for all eternity, what He condemned in His fallen creatures.

The Lord declares all this through the Prophet Jeremiah (7:31-34). Here God particularly forewarned the Israelites that their wrong course would eventuate in the terrible time of trouble which came upon Jerusalem in the year A. D. 70, when it was estimated that over 1,000,000 died at the siege of Jerusalem. In fulfillment of this prophecy the Jews cast the dead bodies over the wall of Jerusalem into this very valley. Thus we read, "Behold, the day is come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be called Topheth, nor the Valley of the son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; for they shall bury in Topheth till there be no place. And the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth."

After the reformation made by King Josiah the Valley of Hinnom was desecrated to the intent that it might never afterward be considered fit for any kind of religious worship, sacrifice or ceremony. It became the valley of defilement. It was used at certain times for the burning of the offal and rubbish of the city. It became the dumping place of dead cats and dogs, etc. If any of these fell upon the ledges of the rock no one thought worth while to interfere, and the maggots and worms destroyed them. Fires also were lighted occasionally to burn the combustible rubbish, and brimstone was added so that the fumes might destroy any malarial tendency, in the interest of the health of the city.

THE LESSON JESUS TAUGHT

We have before our minds now the gehenna fire, which no one ever attempted to quench, but which was designed to consume utterly everything cast into **it**. We have in mind also the worms of which he spake — worms which were permitted to feed on the carcasses undisturbed until the carcasses were consumed and the worms themselves died.

Another item here should be noticed, namely, that a saying among the Jews was, Whosoever commits such a misdemeanor will be in danger of going from bad to worse until he will be brought before the tribunal of the Sanhedrin, a culprit. Jesus took the same line of proverbs, and declared that any one violating the Golden

Rule to the extent of calling his brother a fool would be in danger eventually of such digression from righteousness as to bring him under sentence of the greater tribunal of Messiah's Kingdom, and "Whosoever shall say unto his brother, Thou art a fool, shall be in danger of gehenna fire." (Matt. 5:22)

What the Great Teacher meant was that the earthly

2H841

Jerusalem was a picture or type of the heavenly Jerusalem, which represents the Divine Government or Kingdom—the New Jerusalem which, by and by, will come down to earth—when God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. That New Jerusalem stands for or represents in pictorial language the great salvation of all who will come eternally into harmony with God through the merit of Christ's sacrifice and the various agencies which God will use for bringing the willing and obedient back to harmony with himself and his laws—back to the full human perfection and everlasting life. The elect church of this Gospel Age, the Bride of Christ, will constitute the nucleus of that New Jerusalem, through which eventually all shall come into the Divine blessing.

As gehenna lay outside of the wall of Jerusalem, so our Lord intimated there would be an antitypical gehenna outside the New Jerusalem. As the trash and offal of the typical city were consumed in the Valley of Hinnom, so the offal and trash of humanity who will refuse all of God's favors, mercies, blessings and opportunities, will be treated as disgraceful wretches and be consumed, destroyed, in the antitypical gehenna—which is the Second Death. Concerning this antitypical gehenna, the Second Death, we are definitely informed of the characters which will there be destroyed utterly, as St. Peter says, "as natural brute beasts." 2 Pet. 2:12

We have a description of this symbolical New Jerusalem or Divine Kingdom, composed primarily of the church, and secondarily of all from the world who, during the Messiah's reign, will enter in through its gates and enjoy the blessings of Divine favor and life eternal. And then we read, verse 8, "But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, the murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the Second Death." Note that this lake of fire and brimstone, into which all the offscouring of humanity will be cast, is a symbol, and the meaning of the symbol is plainly stated in the words, "Which is the Second Death." The first death passed upon all mankind on account of father Adam's disobedience. Our Lord Jesus was appointed the Savior of Adam and his race, and

gave his life a ransom for all, to rescue all from death, to give to each and every member of Adam's race one full, fair opportunity for a test of loyalty to God and righteousness, and to secure life eternal in the New Jerusalem. Contrariwise all who will reject that full opportunity will die the Second Death, from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery of any kind.

[The New York American, September 5, 1910](#)

THE COMING KINGDOM

This discourse has been republished in the Overland Monthly, pages 318-321, entitled, "Messiah's Fast Approaching Kingdom."

"Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." (Isaiah 32:1).

Brooklyn, Sept. 4—Pastor Russell preached today in the Academy of Music, our largest Auditorium, the "Tabernacle" being of insufficient capacity. He had a very attentive hearing. There were many Hebrews in the large audience. He said in part:

[The Weekly Enquirer, September 15, 1910](#)

WHICH IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Romans 1:16

Portland, Me., September 11, 1910—The International Bible Students' Convention is in session here with an excellent attendance and deep interest manifested. Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, delivered two addresses today, one of them in Jefferson Theater. We report one of them, from the text foregoing:

"Three weeks ago today Christendom was startled by a communication which announced that the Christian Alliance had lifted a collection of \$60,000 in a few minutes —\$30 cash, the balance in promises. Then followed the startling announcement that Brother Simpson, its President, stated that the

2H842

collection lifted would probably be the last at Old Orchard, because the Camp Grounds Directors had rented its Auditorium for three days for the use of our association. He declared that he disagrees with our

theology. This, of course, was a veiled threat that the Directors of the camp ground must break their contract with the Bible students. This they promptly did and we accepted back the money paid in advance rather than go to law. It is for this reason, dear friends, that we are having our convention “outside the camp.” We are glad that its fence does not separate us from our great redeemer and teacher, the joy of whose blessing I see in your faces.

Secular editors were astonished. They had been congratulating Christian people that the days of the rack, the thumbscrew and the stake were past, and that from every quarter were coming appeals for Christian Union which, it was hoped, might even ultimately include all denominations of Catholics and Protestants. Yet here they had to listen to the contrary — a suggestion that Christian people in alliance, were so opposed to Bible students that even a year would not be sufficient to purify the air of Old Orchard and to permit them to meet here next year to take up another collection. It seemed funny to them, too, that anything could drive a Christian Alliance meeting away from a \$60,000 collection.

EXPLANATIONS SURELY IN ORDER

Since Brother Simpson may not care to tell the whole truth about the matter, and since the Christian public is interested and ought to have the facts, I must tell them. The unpleasant duty, however, will not necessitate my saying an unkind word concerning Mr. Simpson and the Christian friends who are in alliance with him.

There are two reasons why Brother Simpson thought it doubtful if he could come next year following our three days of this year.

1. He knew instinctively that his collections would be smaller —hardly worth coming for, if the people should begin to get the eyes of their understanding more widely opened respecting what really constitutes the gospel of Christ.

2. The \$60,000 “raised” was not cash and a large proportion of it never will be. Some of it is promised over and over again and telegraphed over and over, as was the case with the young woman who in the spectacular manner offered her jewels from time to time and had it mentioned in the papers. Such repetitions of charitable work are considered entirely proper by many in connection with religious work in various denominations, “for the good of the cause.” Subscriptions are given publicly without hope of payment, to influence others who are more sincere—some of whom in the excitement give more than they can afford.

CHICAGO STOCK YARDS METHOD

This same method is illustrated in the Chicago stock yards. A fine, large, trained bull gallops out to meet the cattle designed for slaughter. He waltzes before them and becomes their leader. Following him in a grand rush for a narrow passage they crowd one another to the executioner, who knocks them senseless. A special place just large enough for himself is provided for the decoy bull, who, later, goes out to lead another herd for the slaughter.

We do not mean to say that those who give their money are slaughtered or otherwise injured. We believe that they are blessed—that everyone is blessed who sacrifices anything heartily unto the Lord, or to what they suppose to be His service, whether it is such or not. It is the method of getting the money from the people and the deception practiced which we deplore. However, the Alliance has plenty of company in this method in larger Christian denominations. It is part of the “business” method of recent years. Some who did not understand this “business” method wondered where all the money apparently contributed to the “Christian Alliance” work was spent. An investigation of its financial accounts was made, which revealed the fact that they were chaotic, and other “business” were advised.

“THE DARKNESS HATETH THE LIGHT”

Someone may inquire why the Christian Alliance should fear us and whether or not we have ever done them harm. We reply, never have we injured them in the slightest degree, not even even publicly mentioned their name before. Their opposition to us is on the lines of general principles mentioned by the Great Teacher, “The darkness hateth the light,” “All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light.” (Eph. 5:13) Our work is to proclaim true Gospel — to incite Christian people to Bible study in the light of the Bible’s own testimony and without sectarian spectacles, which, in the past, have so distorted the Word of God and set it forth in false colors.

As Christian people come to see the grossness of the errors by which they have been blinded, the light not only has a blessed and transforming effect upon their minds, but it influences their pocketbooks also. They no longer appreciate the “business” methods of the Alliance nor the brand of Gospel which it sets forth. The more God’s people come to a correct understanding of the teachings of His Word, the smaller will be the collections of the Christian Alliance. That

2H843

is the real secret of their opposition. I would that it were true that they would never take up another collection at

Old Orchard! The heathen have already had too much of their Gospel of damnation. God's name has already been slandered and blasphemed enough by the false Gospel message — that 999 out of every thousand of humanity ever born are to suffer eternal roasting because of father Adam's sin and the ignorance, stupidity and meanness which have resulted.

LET THE TRUTH PREVAIL

If the intelligent men connected with the Alliance really believe the horrible nightmare of the Dark Ages which they are proclaiming as the Gospel of Christ, then, of course, they are excusable for preaching it. It is not for others to judge of their honesty in this matter, but it is for others to decide that they will no longer assist or cooperate in the spread of such horrible travesties upon the Divine character —no longer assist financially or otherwise in binding upon the poor heathen at home and abroad increased ignorance and superstition.

Everybody knows that the word Gospel signifies “good tidings.” And everybody ought to know that, as Christian people, we have for centuries mis-used the word, applying it to the bad tidings of great misery to all people except the mere handful of the elect. We did this because it was handed down to us by our forefathers. What Jesus said to the Jews has been true of us as Christians, “Ye do make void the law of God through your traditions.” Thank God that, as in the natural world He is sending us now the electric light instead of the tallow candle, so through Bible study helps, concordances, etc., His word, (the lamp to His people's footsteps until the day dawn), is now shining brighter than ever before. But, alas, those believing the Bible to have been properly interpreted by the creeds of the past, have abandoned every thought of a revealed religion. They have no longer hope of any Divine revelation of a Divine purpose. They have become agnostics and are searching for truth in the opposite direction as higher critics, evolutionists, etc.

WHICH IS TRUE GOSPEL?

Catholic and Protestant orthodoxy have set forth for centuries two general views of the Gospel of Christ. To whatever extent they now disagree with these they should publicly disown and abandon them. Until then they are besmirched with whatever odium attaches.

The Catholic Gospel (Good Tidings) is that all the heathen, all Catholics and all Protestants, except a mere handful, go to a Purgatory of awful suffering, terrible anguish, lasting for decades, centuries and thousands of years, roasting, boiling, agonizing, and thus purging

away their sins and dross that they may ultimately attain to heavenly bliss for the remainder of eternity. If that is good tidings it can be considered such only in contrast with something more horrible, if that be imaginable. Whoever can have any joy through believing this Gospel we may surely congratulate as being very easily happified. We surely would not wish to take from him one molecule of his comfort.

OUR PROTESTANT GOSPEL

Our Protestant Gospel, of which we are so proud that we want to thrust it upon Jews and Catholics and heathens everywhere, we should thoroughly understand, enjoy and appreciate before we waste good time and money giving it to others. Four centuries ago our forefathers were not Protestants, but Catholics, and believed in Purgatory, etc., as above. Then what was known as the Reformation movement set in. Catholics, Jews and infidels will admit with Protestants that a great blessing of enlightenment and civilization has come to the world in the train of the Reformation Movement. But none of us is prepared to admit that the Reformers were perfect, nor their work perfect. We give thanks to God for the greater light of our day and that we have more light than the Reformers had on many subjects.

The Reformers criticized the Catholic teachings which they had formerly believed. They examined their Bibles and found nothing there to the effect that Mary was the mother of God, nor that we should pray to saints, nor that we should use pictures or images in our worship, nor that their sacrifice of Christ in the mass was proper, nor that there was a Purgatory anywhere. The Reformers threw out these things as unscriptural. They completely demolished Purgatory in their minds, declaring that it had never been anything more than imagination. Then came another thought, viz.: What must we do with the thousands of millions of mankind that we and our fathers for centuries supposed were in Purgatory roasting, stewing, tortured, but hoping for heaven? They looked at one another in consternation. They had hearts and sympathies and felt that as it had devolved upon them to smash Purgatory, it must also devolve upon them to relocate all those thousands of millions whom they had on their hands. They felt the weight of the responsibility. Could they demand of God that they should be put into heaven? Surely not! Surely only the saintly few are fit for heaven! They, as well as all, recognized that fact. Then, with blank consternation they determined that they must crowd the entire mass into a hell of eternal torture and shut the gates upon them forever, and write upon the gates, "Who enters here abandons hope."

2H844

Taking from practically all humanity all future hope made the Reformers for the time heartsick. It would be awful to do that for one person, but to thus “do” all humanity seemed terrible. And then to be obliged to label the Gospel “good tidings” must certainly have been a trying experience for the Reformers.

But Brother John Calvin helped them amazingly and took from them their burden. He told them that they should not worry, because it was all God’s fault and not theirs. God had predestined them to that awful future long before He created man. Now they should merely try to think of themselves as the “elect” and try to forget everybody else. Of course, it seemed horrible to charge all these things against the God of all justice, wisdom, love and power. But it was the only solution which occurred to them. John Calvin’s theories were afterward embodied in the “Westminster Confession of Faith.” And that confession of faith became the foundation of nearly all Protestant creeds. Brother Wesley afterwards objected, but admitted that only the saintly went to heaven and everybody else went to eternal torment. His protest was that, instead of this being by Divine foreordination and intention, it was on the contrary, because of Divine unwisdom and incompetency. Of course to the poor sufferers, it matters not how they got there.

“GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY”

Surely no sane person can any longer defend any of the above “Gospels” as the true one, of which St. Paul was not ashamed! Surely St. Paul never preached any of those Gospels, nor did any of the Apostles —nor does the Bible support such theories, except by the turning and twisting of language, mistranslations of the original and misinterpretations of some parables. The plain statements of the Scriptures are all directly to the opposite.

The Bible teaches that “the wages of sin is death,” not Purgatory nor eternal torment. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Adam, the perfect, was placed on trial for life eternal or death eternal. He sinned and the sentence against him was, “Cursed is the earth for thy sake; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread thereof until thou return unto the ground from which thou wast taken.” (Genesis 3:17-19) St. Paul declares the same: “By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world, and thus death passed upon all men, because all are sinners.

Looking about us we find this true. Everybody who is not dead is dying. As the Bible says, we are living under

a reign of Sin and Death. Nothing that man can do can either eradicate sin or lift us out of our dead and dying condition. God alone can help us! He proposes to help us and the message respecting that help is, in the Scriptures, called the Gospel. Its announcement by the angels on the night of Jesus' birth is full, complete, satisfactory, viz.: "Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people; for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior (life-giver) which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10)

Ah, now we have the Truth! The penalty of sin is death. And the "good tidings" is that God has provided for our recovery from sin and death. The Savior gave his life for the cancellation of our sin, for the satisfaction of Justice, that in due time Adam and all his condemned and imperfect race might be released from the condemnation and be lifted out of the sin and death conditions which now prevail. That uplifting is Scripturally called the resurrection of the dead. Hence the preaching of the early Church was, "Jesus and the Resurrection" — the Redeemer and his work.

STILL MORE GOOD TIDINGS

The good tidings for the race in general is that the Redeemer in God's due time *will become* King of kings and Lord of lords —the Messiah of glory, God's glorious Representative. For a thousand years the regenerating work for Adam's race will progress. (Matthew 19:28; Acts 3:19-23) God's Chosen People, Israel, will be the earthly agents of the heavenly and invisible King of glory. By the close of his reign the whole earth will have been transformed into the Paradise of God. "He will make the place of his feet glorious." And mankind will all be perfect again, in God's image. There will be no more sin, no more sickness, no more dying, because all the things of sin and death will have passed away and he who sits upon the Throne will have renewed all things (Revelation 21:5). All who, after coming to a full knowledge of the Truth of God's love and gracious provision, still love sins and hate righteousness, will be destroyed in the Second Death, from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery; as St. Peter says, "They shall perish like brute beasts."

* * * *

*This, too, our need—a Christ within,
A life with God, afar from sin,
A Christ whose love our hearts shall fill,
And quite subdue our wayward will.*

[St. Paul Enterprise, Sept. 18, 1910](#)

NATIONS OF EARTH TRANSFERRED TO GOD'S ANOINTED

This discourse has been republished in Pastor Russell's Sermons, pages 730-738, entitled, "The Lord's House Over All."

(Detroit, Mich., Sept. 18, 1910)

Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, preached twice here today to the local branch of the International Bible Students' Association. He had an excellent hearing and large and intelligent audiences. One address was entitled, "The Great Hereafter." The other from the text, Isaiah 2:2, we now report.

[The National Labor Tribune, October 4, 1910](#)

BLOOD ATONEMENT FOR SIN IS A NECESSITY

Brooklyn, N. Y., October 2—Pastor Russell of the Brooklyn Tabernacle addressed a large and very attentive audience today at the Academy of Music from the following text: "*The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls. For it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*" (Lev. 17:11) He said:

Ours is a day in which, more than ever before, the statement of our text is disputed—disbelieved —by Jews, Gentiles and Christians. The great Christian author, St. Paul, agrees exactly with the words of Moses in our text, saying, Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. (Heb. 9:22) The orthodox Jew and the orthodox Christian, therefore, are in substantial agreement as to the foundation of things and the unorthodox are in agreement of opposition. The latter agree that there is no necessity for Sin Atonement—that the later thought of all the wise men of the earth, the greatest ministers and rabbis, is that there is no such thing as Original Sin; hence could be no such thing as necessity for canceling it —of making an atonement or satisfaction to Justice on behalf of it. Two things have contributed to these unorthodox, unscriptural views.

(1) The agnostic Jew not only disputes the Bible as an authority on the subject, but, in addition, admits to

himself that if the shedding of blood, if the sacrifices commanded by the Levitical code for Sin Atonement be admitted to be right and necessary, it would involve the thought that the Jewish people have had no sin atonement in any sense of the word for more than eighteen centuries, because sin atonement must be made according to certain specified conditions or else it could not be made at all. The loss of the Ark of the Covenant containing the Law, as covered by the Mercy-Seat, was one of these disasters. The destruction of Jerusalem, the City of the great King, was another, and, above all, the Law required that the sacrifices should be killed, and the presentations sacrificially made to God, only by a priest who could show his lineage as a son of Aaron.

Since the destruction of Jerusalem A. D. 70, the Jewish nation has been so scattered and devastated by their foes—some of these, alas, claiming to be Christians and dishonoring the name of Jesus! As a result all official records and genealogies of the Jewish people are broken, vitiated, destroyed. Undoubtedly there are numerous descendants from Aaron living today; but, since they cannot prove their descent, they are absolutely forbidden to attempt to make a sin atonement on the Atonement Day. Viewing the matter from this standpoint the unorthodox Jew feels all the more inclined to repudiate the necessity for any Sin Atonement. Alas, indeed many of them seem not only to have lost confidence in the Mosaic arrangement, but to have lost faith entirely in a personal God. We hope and believe that many of these are sincere and will be blessed and assisted back to faith shortly and to a better understanding of the holy Scriptures and of God's dealings with their nation.

2H846

JEWISH ATONEMENT A FARCE

In view of what we have said, all must see that it would be impossible for the Jews to observe the Atonement Day, having no priest nor other facility necessary to requirements of the Law. Nevertheless, an outward show of ceremony is kept up. On the proper Atonement Day of their year, the Tenth Day of the Seventh Month, the Jew figuratively acknowledges that the merit of the previous sacrifice has expired. He fasts. He prays, according to the original program. But he has no priest. No bullock is slain for the sins of the tribe of Levi. No goat is slain for the sins of the other tribes. And no blood is taken into the Most Holy to make an Atonement. Not only have they no priest to officiate, but they have no mercy-seat. Some of them wring the neck of a rooster, swinging it over the head three times. But this was not

the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement and could not take its place.

We should not be misunderstood as holding up the Jew to ridicule--Quite to the contrary, we sympathize with him--We appreciate his reverence for the Divine Law and his desire for fellowship with God in the cleansing of his sins. We would, however, suggest to them that nothing is to be gained by deceiving themselves and each other into the supposition that their Atonement Day brings them any relief or harmonizes them in any sense of the word with the Almighty. What they do is a mere farce. The sooner this be acknowledged the sooner will their honesty in the matter bring them into the proper condition of heart to recognize that the sins of more than eighteen centuries rest upon them uncanceled and that this is the explanation of the calamities that have befallen them.

When Israelites come properly to understand the situation, they will see that all their hopes center in Messiah's Kingdom. Messiah is not only the great King typified by David and Solomon, but he is also the great priest typified by Aaron and more particularly by Melchisedec, who was a priest upon his kingly throne. So Messiah will not only be the great King over Israel and the world, but he will be the great Priest whose application of his own merit will effect the cancellation of sins forever. He will not re-introduce to them sacrifices of bulls and goats, but will make known to them that those sacrifices were mere foreshadowings of better sacrifices — so much better that they will not need repeating yearly, but work a perpetual cancellation of the sins of Israel and of all the children of Adam.

HIGHER CRITICS REPUDIATE THE BLOOD

All the worldly-wise of Christendom have reached the point of repudiating the testimony of the Old Testament and the New respecting the need of a sacrificial death for the satisfaction of Divine Justice, the cancellation of sin and restitution of the sinner to Divine favor. The claim of the so-called, New Theologists repudiates the fall, repudiates the Ransom and repudiates a restitution to all that was lost —claiming that nothing was lost and that all we have is gain. Thus the world and its wisdom know not God and appreciate not his arrangement that, as death came upon mankind through the sin of one man (Adam), even so a restitution to life should come to all men through Christ —that “as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive.”

These worldly-wise men cannot deny the fact that there is sin in the world and that there is death in the world and that the tendency of all sin is towards death. They

cannot deny that death is gaining a greater hold than ever before upon our race. Insane asylums, prisons and reform schools show that, notwithstanding our educational facilities and wonderful achievements under the lightening influence of the New Dispensation now dawning — nevertheless the insanity statistics and the prison statistics and the physical statistics show that, in spite of everything, our race is becoming mentally, morally and physically weaker day by day. It is for them to explain how these facts fit to their theory of Evolution.

THE CHRISTIAN'S VIEW OF SIN-ATONEMENT

By the term Christian we refer to those who intelligently believe the explanation of the Bible respecting sin, that it is a violation of the Divine Law and carries with it a penalty—that Father Adam was created as sinless as are the angels and as perfect as they, only on a little lower plane of being. Obedience was required of him as the price of Divine favor and everlasting life. Disobedience thrust him from Paradise into the unprepared earth to wrestle with the thorns and thistles, where the decree, “Dying thou shalt die,” accomplished his execution. His race was in his loins and naturally shared by heredity his weaknesses and their death penalty, so that the entire race is a dying race. But the Creator was unwilling that Adam and his children should die as brutes. God did not revoke his decree of death nor give any intimation that he had done unjustly in condemning his creatures. He did, however, provide a way for their relief. He provided that, as the first man alone had sinned actually, so one Redeemer alone would be necessary for the race. And to him he offered a great reward, so that his sacrifice for sins would work out to his own advantage, as well as to the sinner's. A part of the reward was the high exaltation to the heavenly

2H847

nature — far above angels, and the gift of the Kingdom of earth necessary for the overruling and subduing of the spirit of rebellion in the world and for the exaltation and uplifting from sin and death conditions of all the willing and obedient of Adam's entire race.

"THE BETTER SACRIFICES"

From the Divine standpoint “the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all,” for Adam's entire race, “to be testified in due time.” He antityped the bullock of Israel's Atonement Day, as well as antityped the priest who slew the bullock—because he offered up himself. Rewarded by the Almighty, he was raised from death to

the spirit plane, higher than the angels. Applying his merit to the antitypical Levites, “the household of faith,” “the Church of the Firstborns,” he then began a work little understood by either Jews or Christians, but nevertheless clearly outlined in the Word of God. His work throughout the age has been the gathering of the elect class —which is chosen because of faithfulness to him (and obedience in walking in his steps in the narrow way). These composed both of Jews and Gentiles, have for centuries been in course of development — their sacrifices being typified by that of the Lord’s goat on the Atonement Day. Their sacrifices are small and lean like that of the goat, in comparison to the bullock. But they are accepted by the Great High Priest, and the offering of their sacrifice is counted as his sacrifice. Thus eventually the High Priest will complete his work of sin-atonement (we believe very soon) and then his second application of the blood-upon the Mercy-Seat will be made, just as it was written in the Law, “On behalf of all the people,” only that all the people on the larger scale will not mean merely the Israelites outside of the Levites, but will mean the whole world of mankind outside of the household of faith, the antitypical Levites. Forthwith the whole world will be turned over to Messiah, the antitypical Prophet, Priest, King, Mediator, Judge. Then for a thousand years the world will receive the blessed, uplifting influences. It will not be sufficient that satisfaction be given to Justice for their sins and that they shall be turned over to the glorious Messiah, they will still need his work of uplifting to bring them back to all that Adam possessed and lost through disobedience.

There will come in Israel’s share in the great work of recovering the world to God. They are still beloved for the fathers’ sakes and the gifts and calling of God to them are things he will not repent of. At that time the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King will begin his work as a Mediator. At that time he will mediate by bringing into operation the New Covenant which God promised he would make with Israel and Judah, “after those days” — after the days of their humiliation and being cast off, they shall be reclaimed and uplifted and blessed and used of the Lord. This is God’s Covenant with them when he will take away- their sins —when by virtue of the “better sacrifices” their sins shall be absolutely and forever cancelled by the antitypical Priest, of whom the Prophet David wrote, “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for the age after the order of Melchizedec” — a kingly priest on the spirit plane. Psa. 110:4

WHAT ATONEMENT SIGNIFIES

The word Atonement, or At-one-ment, signifies the bringing of persons alienated or estranged back into harmony, sympathy, union. Many are perplexed at the doctrine of blood-atonement so prominently set forth in the Bible. The shedding of blood is naturally revolting and properly so. It seems strange, therefore, to those who do not understand the philosophy of the Divine Plan of Salvation, why God should have required a blood-atonement for sin. Sometimes the very people who object to blood-atonement believe something much more awful — that an atonement for sin can be effected by hundreds or thousands of years of most terrible torture. Some believe even worse than this — that an everlasting torment penalty for sin will be exacted of all except the saintly few of humanity. How inconsistent and illogical we have been in our reasoning upon religious subjects!

In Scriptural usage blood stands for, or represents, the life. In harmony with this is our ordinary use of the word. We read, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ our Lord cleanseth us from all sin.’ Here the word blood stands for death, or rather, for the merit of the sacrificial death of Jesus. His death would have been equally efficacious as man’s Ransom-Price if his side had not been pierced. It would have been equally meritorious if he had died in any other manner, except that he was to take the place of the sinner to the very last degree —as the Mosaic Law declares, “Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree,” thus branding crucifixion as the most ignominious form of death.

But why should God require the death of a victim as a basis for the forgiveness of the sins of Adam and his race? We reply that God’s Law was intended to be an illustration of the exactness of Divine Justice. Justice could not punish Adam nor his children with everlasting torture or any other of the horrible things we once imagined. The severest penalty of the Divine Law is represented in our common law, which, as an extreme penalty, requires the death of the transgressor. Adam, having been sentenced to death, would have had no future opportunity to life —neither by resurrection nor otherwise. Adam’s children,

2H848

sharing his weaknesses, would have had no opportunity to regain life, because Justice is unchangeable. If it was just to condemn sin, it would be injustice to rescind the penalty and set the culprit free. Divine Love has provided a way by which Adam and his children are all to be freed from death and have an opportunity of eternal life — not by violating the requirements of Divine Justice, but by fulfilling them. Hence in due time, the

man Christ Jesus died for the man Adam, to cancel his sin, to satisfy his penalty. And since his sin and penalty have been inherited by his children, the one sacrifice for sin is sufficient for all.

But did not this course do an injustice to the Son of God, some one may ask? No, we reply, the matter was not compulsory so far as the Redeemer was concerned. It was a privilege and gained him a great blessing and reward. As we read, "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame," and, as a reward, he is set down at the right hand of Divine Majesty as Prince and Savior, the Messiah, the King of Glory, the "Priest after the order of Melchisedec."

The work of atonement is not completed. The first half of atonement is the satisfaction of Justice. But even this part is not yet completed. The Redeemer presents his sacrifice in two parts, according to the type. The first effusion of his blood spoke peace to believers who now have the ears to hear and the heart to obey; the second effusion, as shown by the Law (Leviticus 16:15) will make reconciliation for the sins of all the people —the whole world of mankind. Then the other part of Atonement begins.

After the Divine reconciliation comes human reconciliation. The great Messiah will not require sacrifices of humanity, but, on the contrary, will open the blind eyes and cause the knowledge of the grace of God to reach Adam and every member of his race. Then all willing for reconciliation will be helped by the great Mediator of the New Covenant and by Israel, his Chosen People and early representatives. The object to be accomplished during Messiah's reign is the bringing to all the willing and obedient the restitution which God has promised — restitution to all that was lost. Ultimately Messiah will transfer the allegiance of the whole world (perfected by him) to Jehovah God, that he may be all in all. 1 Cor. 15:28

The "little flock," gathered from both Jews and Gentiles during the past eighteen centuries, will have been accepted. A little flock has been called and tested and tried in respect to faithfulness to God even unto death. These will be on the spirit plane with Messiah, his joint-heirs and assistants in the glorious work of raising humanity back to at-one-ment with the Father.

October 16, 1910

Originally Republished from the St. Paul Enterprise,
October 23, 1917

THE MAJESTY, POWER, AND GREATNESS OF JEHOVAH GOD

This discourse has been republished in Pastor Russell's Sermons, pages 467-474, entitled, "The Seas in the Hollow of God's Hand."

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His Hand, and meted out heaven with the Span? Isaiah

On the Ocean, October 16, Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle is enjoying good health, enroute for London. His Sundays in Great Britain will be given to London, filling appointments with as many as possible of the smaller cities, weekdays. His discourse for today from the foregoing text follows:

* * * *

*WITH me there walks a Presence
Unseen to mortal view,
Hearing each word I utter,
Looking at all I do,
Watching to see what power
The Truth to me will impart,
Longing to see His image
Growing within my heart.*

2H849

The Titusville Evening Courier,
Monday, October 24, 1910

GOD'S MESSAGE OF COMFORT TO THE JEWS

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Isaiah 40: 1, 2

London, October 23— Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle today addressed an immense audience in the world's greatest Auditorium, the Royal Albert Hall. Many of his audience were Jews, attracted by the liberal extracts from Pastor Russell's sermons which have been appearing in the Jewish papers all over the world. The discourse was full of comforting assurances (both to Jew

and Gentile) of the glorious outcome of the Divine Plan, as respects our world and its inhabitants. We report the address only in part, as follows:

There can be no doubt that the words of our text apply, not to Spiritual Israel and the heavenly Jerusalem, but to the Seed of Jacob, for many centuries travailing in pain—a nation without a land, people possessing most wonderful promises, yet enjoying none of them—a people scattered amongst all other peoples; yet, in harmony with the Divine promise made at the beginning of their organization, they have been preserved separate and distinct from all other nations! The Jews are a miracle in themselves. They witness to the civilized world God's promises and the power thereof in the human mind. As foretold in the Scriptures, for long centuries they have had no Prophet, no Priest, no ephod, no vision from God, no revelation. The people to whom at one time belonged the honor of being the only people to whom the Divine purposes were revealed have for more than eighteen centuries been left destitute of any evidence of Divine favor, except in this one fact, *that their solidarity as a people is preserved.*

We are not of those who rail against the Jew; who cry out, "Christ-killers; the vengeance of God is upon you, and what you have suffered is only a foretaste of more awful sufferings for all eternity!" Thank God, No! We have no such evil sentiment in our heart. We have nothing for the Jew but sympathy, even while in him, as in others of Adam's children, we may see much to reprehend; nevertheless, we also see his commendable qualities. Among others, we see the quality which God so greatly appreciated in Abraham; namely, faith in his God and in the Divine promises. Such a faith has inspired "God's Chosen People" to wait for his promised Messianic Kingdom, lo, these many centuries—through all kinds of discouragements, disappointments and persecutions.

The long-promised time of Israel's exaltation as the channel of Messianic blessing to mankind is near—it hasteth greatly. What though there shall be another and great spasm of tribulation in conjunction with the birth of the New Order of things! Beyond the sighing and the crying, the morning dawns—the glorious day in which the Sun of Righteousness shall chase from the world all the shadows of death and despair, which sin and its penalty have brought upon mankind! What though the Scriptures tell us that Israel is yet to have "The time of Jacob's trouble" in connection with the world's great time of trouble impending. None of these things shall hinder us from rejoicing in the New Heavens and the New Earth, which God declares he is about to create and

put into control of our world — “Be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create.” (Isaiah 45:18)

The New Heavens and the New Earth are but symbolical terms for the consideration of that New Era, in which there will be a new social order, as well as a new ecclesiastical system, eternal in the heavens.

The time has come when our text is having its fulfillment. The shining of the lamp of Truth upon the prophetic page shows us that the great clock of the Universe is marking the hour when he whose right it is shall take to himself his great power and reign. Ah, yes! We remember that it is written that then the nations shall be angry, and God’s wrath shall be manifest, and then the time shall come for the judgment of the dead and the reward of all, both small and great. But we are glad, nevertheless, that the “times of the Gentiles” are nearly at an end and the time of Messiah’s theocratic government is at hand —For he must reign until he shall have put down all unrighteousness and insubordination, until he shall have caused every knee to bow and every tongue to confess to the glory of God the Father.

First in order of the Kingdom work will be the binding of Satan —the work of a heavenly, and not of an earthly king. Gradually, in the judgments, decrees, rewards, punishments of mankind and the banishing

2H850

of sin and death will the great King of Glory reveal his own gracious character and the Father’s righteousness to the children of men. Gradually all will have the eyes of their understanding opened to see, not only the Father of all in his true character, but also the Son in his glorious majesty—the Conqueror, “who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame,” and hence is at the right hand of Divine majesty and entrusted with the pouring out of the Divine blessing upon Israel, and, through Israel, extending that blessing to every nation.

ONE KING, BUT TWO KINGDOMS

It has escaped Christendom in general until now that the Divine promise to Abraham is to be fulfilled through two Seeds — one a heavenly class, the other an earthly class, with Messiah the Head over all. For eighteen centuries God favored the Seed of Abraham, the nation of Israel. Chastisements they had, reproofs in righteousness; yet in all that time they had also Divine favor, as represented in their Law and in the Prophecies and in the privileges which came to them under the Law Covenant, in that they had an annual Atonement Day, which continued to them Divine favor. That period of favor, explain it how we may, began to wane about the

time of Jesus' death. It was completely removed from them in the desolation of their land by the Roman army A. D. 70. Now a parallel time has been reached, as stated in our text. Hence it is time for the return of God's favor, as herein mentioned. The favor already is returning.

The Jew has not been so comfortable, nor so favorably fixed as he is today, in more than eighteen centuries. But his blessing is only beginning. Shortly Divine favor, in God's due time, will accomplish for his Chosen People all the precious promises of the Law and of the Prophets. Already the Jew is awakening to a realization of this great Truth. Zionism, which started as a political movement, is about to bud and blossom into a religious movement and the blessing of Divine Providence will so order their affairs. The words of the Book, the words of Divine promise, so long read ignorantly and blindly, are about to become luminous and constitute the light which will direct them in the ways of the Lord—leading on to the rehabilitation of Jerusalem and to the attainment of loftier ideals amongst the Jewish people. A voice is sounding from the wilderness, and the Jews everywhere are hearkening to it. It does not call them to become Christians, but to remain Jews and to realize, as Jews, the ideals set before them by the Lord in the Law and by the Prophets. To all those exercised thereby a great blessing is near which will more than compensate for the sorrows of the past. Neither by sword, nor guns, nor dreadnaughts, neither by flying air-ships, nor torpedoes will Israel's great victory be won, neither by money power and worshipping of the golden calf of finance, nor by trusting in the arm of flesh, but by looking to the Lord, from whom will come their help.

Messiah's Spiritual Empire, about to be established, will bind Satan, restrain every evil and lift up a standard for the people, blessing Israel and establishing with them the New (Law) Covenant instead of the Old Law Covenant—under the better Mediator, still more capable than the great Moses; under the greater King, still more wise than Solomon and still more beloved of God than David. This great Celestial Empire will be established with great authority in the world by a time of trouble, a time of earthly distress, which the prophecies picture as terrible—a short reign of anarchy. Jews and Gentiles will be responsible, rich and poor, for the bringing to pass of this awful trouble, by reason of the selfishness which at present is governing the world and which will be used of the Lord to wreck our present grand civilization—grand at least on its *surface* and in its aspirations and pretensions. A Socialistic artillery of words and ecclesiastical bonds of similar nature will only aggravate the strife. Financial weights and levers will have much to

do with the great crash of the forces of civilization in this near-approaching cataclysm of trouble, in which the reign of sin, inequity, injustice, selfishness, shall forever fall, to rise no more; and the present religious systems also shall be found wanting and pass away. For these old systems, symbolically the heavens and earth of the present time, will be substituted the New Heavens and the New Earth —the Church glorified beyond the veil as the Bride of the great Messiah, and, Society on earth reorganized, will constitute the New Earth, wherein will dwell righteousness. The transition will be but a momentary ordeal, as compared with the glorious eternity of blessing under Messiah's righteous supervision. "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth."

ISRAEL'S HOPES —WHY SO DELAYED?

The perplexing thought with our Jewish friends, as well as with Christians, is, If these things be so; if Messiah's Kingdom is yet to be established, as the Jews contemplated, only on a spiritual plane instead of an earthly one; and if God's purpose is to use those anciently favored people as the channels of his blessing in the future, why has there been so long delay?

We answer, This is what the Scriptures term *The Mystery* — the matter which God did not reveal directly, either to Abraham or through any of the Prophets. Indirectly he hinted at it, saying to Abraham, "Thy Seed shall be as the stars of heaven,

2H851

and as the sand of the seashore for multitude." But Abraham did not discern, nor did others, that these two illustrations belonged, not to the same people, but to two different Israel's. The earthly promises belonged to natural Israel. Eventually all mankind, blessed under the Messianic reign, will become Israelites — of the Seed of Abraham. Thus Abraham's "Seed shall be as the sand of the seashore for multitude." And they must all have the faith of Abraham and his obedience, ere they can reach perfection as members of his Seed. First in the order of blessing will come the Ancient Worthies —Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the Prophets and holy ones of the past. These will be raised from the dead by the power of God—not imperfect and fallen, but perfect; fully up to all the glorious ideals of their minds aforesaid. This will be their reward for having walked by faith and not by sight. Thus we read, Instead of being the fathers, they shall be the children, whom Messiah will make princes in all the earth — his representatives in power, in rulership, in authority. (Psalms 45:16) At that time the blessing shall return to Israel that has been taken from them for more than eighteen centuries — God's special

favor. Under their New Covenant they shall be blessed; their eyes shall be opened; “they shall look upon him whom they pierced;” they shall mourn for him; they shall rejoice in him. They will say, This is our Ruler. We have waited for him, and he will save us. Zechariah 12:10

CRIMES COMMITTED IN JESUS’ NAME

With shame true Christians must admit that most atrocious crimes were committed in the name of Jesus during the ‘Dark Ages.’ Worse than that! The horrible misrepresentation of all that the name of Jesus stands for still continues. Witness, for instance, the injustices practiced in the name of Christianity against Russia for years past, and in various nations in remoter times. Witness the fact also that only a few years ago the so-called Christians of Romania acted like veritable demons toward their Jewish neighbors. Well-authenticated accounts tell that a Jewish cemetery was despoiled. Many of those buried were dug up and the putrid and mangled corpses thrown on the steps and in the door-yards of their families. Can we wonder that the Jew has come to have a hatred for the word Christian and for the name Jesus?

The name Jesus, as is well known, is but another form for Joshua, which signifies Deliverer. The name Christ is the Greek equivalent for the word Messiah. Every Jew, rightly informed respecting the character and the teachings of Jesus is bound to respect him and his immediate followers as among the grandest Jews that ever lived. They must not be judged according to the perversion of their teachings, so common among Christians. And it should not be forgotten that while the masses of Christendom have misrepresented their teaching, doctrines and practices, there have been throughout the entire age a saintly few who have closely followed in the footsteps of Jesus.

We would not urge upon Jews to become Christians; but we seek to hold forth the Divine standard for them and to assist them to get ready for the fulfillment of the glorious promises which are theirs. That the due time for the fulfillment of these is at hand is the comfort we offer them, in harmony with our text. The Prophet declares that it will be after their return to their own land, and after the great time of trouble which is now upon Christendom, that the Jew will recognize that the great Messiah of glory, the great Michael of Daniel 12:1, for whose Kingdom they have been waiting, is none other than the “Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all men” eighteen centuries ago. God will then blessedly open their eyes of understanding. As the

Prophet declares, “They shall look upon him whom they pierced;” they will then see the identity between *the Jesus* who was sacrificed for the sins of Israel and the world and *the Messiah* of Glory, whose Kingdom will use Israel in the blessing of the world.

Meantime, what has God wrought? Ah, this, again, we say is the Mystery! Here and there from Jew and Gentile, saintly characters have been sought and found by the preaching of the message of Christ, even though that message frequently was dimmed by earthly imperfections and blemishes — by erroneous representations. Those saintly ones will be sharers with Messiah in Divine blessings on the spirit plane, mentioned to Abraham under the figure that his “Seed shall be as the stars of heaven.” But under what conditions do these attain a spiritual inheritance like unto the angels and far above them? We answer that the spirit nature is the divine reward of a special obedience. Our race was not created on the heavenly plane nor for a heavenly nature; but of the earth earthy. And its salvation from sin will bring it to the full perfection of human nature and to the full enjoyment of a world-wide Eden. The Spiritual Seed of Abraham is to be composed of Messiah and the Elect Little Flock of saintly footstep followers. The price of their exaltation is their consecration unto death and faithfulness to that Vow. These are the Jewels mentioned by the Lord to the Prophet — “Gather together my saints unto me, saith the Lord; those who have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice;” “They shall be mine, in that day when I make up my jewels.”

The New York American, October 30, 1910

Originally Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
November 6, 1917

GOD'S MESSAGE OF THE HOUR TO THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. . . . And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. . . . The voice said, proclaim, all flesh is grass, and the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Surely the people are grass.”
Isaiah 40:3-7

London, Oct. 30— Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle today addressed an audience of nearly 4,000 people from the above text. His hearers were of all classes and very intelligent appearing. He had closest attention. He said in part:

God has messages for those who have hearing ears at each great Dispensational change in earth's affairs. These messages have generally been in the nature of forewarning of coming distress and the reasons therefore. Such a message was given to our first parents when they were expelled from Eden — accursed would be the ground for their sakes. Thorns and thistles it would bring forth unto them. In sweat of face they should eat bread thereof until they should return to the ground, from whence they came. Another great message went forth at the time of the flood; another before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; another at the close of the Jewish Age when Jesus and His Apostles called attention to the prophecies which foretold the Divine rejection of the nation of Israel for a time and declared that all things written in the Law and the Prophets concerning them would have fulfillment, quoting the prophecy which declared that their house would be left desolate; that they would have neither prophet, nor vision, nor priest, nor ephod for many years, but that eventually God's favor would return to Israel —that He would gather them again and fulfill to them everlastingly the blessings promised both to Abraham and to his descendants — “the sure mercies of David.”

A week ago we considered the prophetic message, “Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God.”

(Isaiah 40:1). We noted then that the due time has arrived for the fulfillment to Israel of this comforting message— that as a people the appointed time for the return of favor to them is accomplished because their two-fold disciplines for sin have been fulfilled. Thus our present day is clearly marked and the words of our text following imply that now is the time for a special message to all, in proportion as each may have the hearing ear.

It is the voice of God which calls now through various channels and agencies. It cries not from the “City Babylon the Great.” It cries not from the citadel of Christendom; but from the wilderness, from those who are more or less separated; from those who have heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Rev. 18:4

PREPARE THE LORD’S WAY

The message of the hour to every hearing ear is, “The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple.” (Malachi 3:1) For centuries you have been praying, “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven.” Now your prayer is about to be answered, whether you prayed in sincerity or in hypocrisy. The glory of the Lord is about to be revealed. “All flesh shall see it together.” It will not be revealed merely to one nation, nor merely to one holy class. His glory will be revealed in flaming fire—in judgments. All flesh shall see it—the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the holy and the unholy. But, as the Prophet Malachi declares, “Who shall abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth; for he is like Fuller’s soap (in its attack upon grease and dirt), and he is like a refiner’s fire,” as it melts and separates the dross of sin and iniquity. Malachi 3:2

The coming of a great earthly king to a city is the signal for a general cleaning up everywhere. And so the Lord declares that the message of his fast-approaching Kingdom should influence all who have the hearing ear to make preparation. To each nation it means, Set your house in order. An inspection is at hand. See that your laws are just and equitable and that they are administered justly. The same message comes to each self-governing city, and, lastly, and most important of all, this message comes to each

2H853

individual, and especially to all who have named the name of Christ. Or, as St. Peter declares, this inspection of the King of kings and Lord of lords must begin with the house of God. (1 Peter 4:17) And if the inspection be

so searching that it must begin with God's saints, what could we expect of it when it reaches those who are merely nominal Christians and then the world in general? Ah! we may expect just what the Bible advises us will come— "A time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" (Daniel 12:1). The message of this hour, dear friends, elsewhere stated in Holy Writ, is, "Seek meekness: seek righteousness. It may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

HIDDEN THINGS TO BE REVEALED

The greatest Teacher the world has ever known, a Jew, eighteen centuries ago, declared prophetically of our day that every hidden thing shall be revealed. (Matthew 10:26) We see his prophecy fulfilling. The secrets of nations are being exposed. Injustice in its every form is being brought to light as never before. Inequity in financial institutions and in politics and in private affairs is being remorsefully muckraked and brought to light. Expediency and policy might say, Hide these things from public gaze. But under Divine Providence the light is being turned on everywhere and hidden things of darkness are being exposed, sometimes in the evil and sometimes in the good. And sometimes, perhaps, the Adversary succeeds in making the good to appear evil. We are merely noting the general tendency — the great fact so peculiar to our day. We are not saying that every charge of fraud is bona fide.

LEVELING PROCESSES ARE AT WORK

The great leveling processes mentioned by the Prophet may be seen at work everywhere in society — in politics, in finance, in religion. A straight path is certainly being marked out in the wilderness. The people are coming to see gradually what constitutes Justice from the Divine standpoint — the path that Jehovah God will take when coming to mankind to require an accounting for the blessing of religion and of enlightenments granted to humanity in this, our day. Those who point out to mankind the straight paths do not always walk therein themselves. Nevertheless, the great purpose of the Almighty is being accomplished in the exposures of sin and injustices, whether made from the Christian pulpit or from the socialistic platform or in the public press. The Divine edict is, "Make straight in the desert a highway for your God" (Isa. 40:3)—show his path of righteousness; make it known to all the people.

We should remember, however, that it is one thing to know the path of righteousness, of justice and of equity, and another thing to walk therein. Let us, my dear hearers, see to it that we not only recognize the Divine standards of righteousness and that we proclaim these to

all who have the hearing ear, but let us also take heed that we practice what we preach; that we be not condemned in respect to those principles which we allow and acknowledge and proclaim as the Golden Rule to others. Alas for the hypocrites who proclaim the way of the Lord to others, yet ignore that way in their own dealings. We have every reason to believe that honesty is one of the qualities which our God most highly appreciates in his creatures; hence we may be sure that hypocrisy is one of the most abominable qualities in his sight. Hearken to the words of the Great Teacher, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! . . . for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers." Luke 11:44-46

Let all who have named the name of Christ; all who in any sense of the word profess to be God's people, put far from them the hypocrisies which appear so abominable in others. Let us be honest. Let us practice even more than we ever preached. Let all who belong to the Lord be indeed burning and shining lights in the world—examples of justice and righteousness in their homes, in their neighborhoods, in the workshop and in the markets. Let us not only proclaim and assist in making straight before our feet the pathway of our God, but let us conform our words and deeds and thoughts thereto. The general result of the uncovering of the hidden things of darkness, and the bringing of them to light, and the proclamation of the straight way of the Lord, will have a great effect, and that effect is declared by the Prophet. It will mean a revolution—in symbolical language, an earthquake. Note the picture given: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places smooth." Not in one instant will all this mighty transformation of society be accomplished. Not at once will all the degraded members of the human family be brought to the general standard or level. Not at once will the mountains and hills (the kingdoms and princedoms of the world) be brought down to the common level. Not at once will thus a general equalization of society be effected. But it will be effected. "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

The leveling process already is begun. In Germany, for instance, one-fourth of the Reichstag is composed of Socialists, notwithstanding the fact that the wealthy have several votes to the poor man's one. Already we

2H854

see the great mountain (or nation) of Russia yielding to the demands of the people and granting them a measure of civil rights. There we see a practical illustration of the lifting up of the valleys and the bringing low of the

mountains. In Great Britain we see another wonderful illustration of this principle; for here, more than in any other Kingdom of Europe, perhaps, the distance between the mountain tops of autocracy and the depths of social degradation have been lessened, so that in Great Britain the change demanded by the new Kingdom, Messiah's Kingdom, will be less than in many other countries. Here it has come gradually.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD REVEALED

A well-known American authoress (Henry Ward Beecher's sister) once wrote some words which seem prophetic:

*"I can see his coming judgments,
as they circle all the earth,
The signs and groanings promised,
to precede a second birth;
I read his righteous sentence,
in the crumbling thrones of earth —
Our King is marching on.*

*"'The Gentile Times' are closing,
for their kings have had their day;
And with them sin and sorrow
will forever pass away;
For the tribe of Judah's Lion
now comes to hold the sway —
Our King is marching on."*

*"The seventh trump is sounding,
and our King knows no defeat,
He will sift out the hearts of men
before his judgment seat.
O! be swift, my soul, to welcome him;
be jubilant, my feet—
Our King is marching on."*

The exposure of the frailties of poor humanity, of the shame of society and of religion and of business and politics, all are constituting a great black background, against which the glories of the Lord are being revealed in striking contrast, as the critics of the world mercilessly hew to the line and lay bare the cankers in politics and the pollutions of our social system. The effect of this primarily will be the arousing of the masses against the classes of privilege. Their human idols and ideals will crumble. Their confidence in men will melt. They will give vent to what they will esteem to be a righteous indignation. And so doing they will forget that the masses are equally as unrighteous, unjust, as the more favored classes, in proportion to their opportunities. Wherein they judge others they should also

condemn themselves, and the result should be that mercy which the Lord enjoins.

Only those who forgive others their trespasses—who thus manifest a spirit of love and sympathy —need expect to have mercy, consideration, shown them by the new King. He will surely punish injustice and unrighteousness of word and deed and thought in the poor as in the rich, in the ignorant as in the learned, in the outwardly religious as in the outwardly profane. The message of the hour to Christian, Jew and Gentile is what it was eighteen centuries ago, “Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” Repent and reform respecting public injustices, no matter of how long standing, no matter by whom practiced and approved. Repent of and reform from and disown the rank errors to be found in so many Church creeds, dishonoring to our Creator. Repent as respects wrong practices which have crept into your Churches, quite out of harmony with the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles.

Let us return to the simplicity of the early Church. Let us repent of the God-dishonoring statements we have put forth in the name of God and religion and the Bible, by which we palmed off bad tidings of great misery, as instead of the true Gospel of Good Tidings of Great Joy which shall be unto all people. Let us repent of and abandon the falsehoods and misrepresentations so common in business life —the subserviency of the Truth to money. Let us repent of and put away the dishonesties of the Stock Exchange, through which the weak and ignorant financial lambs are deceived and impoverished. Let us repent of the iniquities which abound in nearly every home, even those where Christ is claimed to be the Head —injustices of husbands toward wives and of wives toward husbands, the strong-minded toward the weaker-minded —failing to observe the Golden Rule. Let us repent of the injustices practiced by parents upon children, in violation of the same Golden Rule. Let us repent of the dishonor and disobedience to parents practiced by many children. Let us repent of the selfish ambitions of our own hearts, and let us pray earnestly to the Lord, “Create within me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a right spirit within me.

THE TIME IS AT HAND

True, these and similar exhortations have been made by the Lord’s people from time immemorial. And yet the present proclamation is different from all others in that it proclaims, “The time is at hand;”

2H855

“The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!” Not an earthly kingdom with an earthly king; not a papal kingdom exhorting the world to righteousness in the name of the Lord! Not a Protestant ecclesiastical empire exhorting to godliness! But the real Kingdom of God’s dear Son so long promised, so long prayed for, is at hand! It will be a Spiritual Empire, replacing and displacing Satan’s empire in the world and using as its earthly agency Israel restored to Divine favor. Men will not say, Lo here, or, lo, there but Behold, the Kingdom of God will be in the midst of mankind — everywhere present empowered to bless and empowered to punish. The Great Prince of Light, the King in his glory, with the elect as his Bride on the heavenly, spiritual, invisible plane, will soon take the scepter of earth. His great power and the glorious majesty of his righteous rule will be manifest in the judgments which will prevail — rewards and punishments. “When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness.” Isaiah 26:9

[The New York American, November 7, 1910](#)

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE AND ITS BLESSINGS

London, England, Nov. 6—Pastor Russell, of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached here today. Royal Albert Hall held a vast audience of deeply interested hearers. The speaker chose his text from Revelation 20:11:

“I saw a great White Throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.” He said:

Sin made moral cowards of our race. From early infancy fear and apprehension, especially in respect to things future, have been impressed upon us. We realize our imperfection, and that our God is perfect, and that perfection is the only standard which He could approve, and that some kind of punishment for sin must be expected. The Adversary, taking advantage of our forefathers, misrepresented the Almighty and has used our fears to alienate us from Him and to wrest and distort His message to us in the Bible. St. Paul assures us that this is Satan’s general procedure; that he puts light for darkness and darkness for light. Thus it comes that our text, which is really one of the most beautiful and comforting in the whole Bible when rightly understood, has to many become a lash in the hands of their fears.

It is needless to say that our text is one of the symbolisms of a Book filled with symbols. God's people, guided by His holy Spirit, in due time will appreciate these symbols. For many of them the due time is already here. The Throne is Messiah's. It represents His Mediatorial Dominion of earth for a thousand years. Its whiteness symbolizes the purity, the justice, of His Kingdom of righteousness under the whole heavens. The heavens and earth which will flee away from the presence of the great Emmanuel will not be the heavens of God's Throne, nor the earth which He has given to the children of men. The heavens and earth which will flee away, and for which no place will be found, are, of course, the symbolical ones. In Bible symbology the earth represents established civilization; the sea represents the restless, dissatisfied masses of humanity. The mountains symbolize human governments, kingdoms, which constitute the backbone of present spiritual influences — Ecclesiasticism, Churchianity. Thus interpreted our text declares that when Messiah shall assume control of the world, when He shall sit upon His Throne, when He shall exercise rulership amongst men, the result will be that the social system of today, as well as the present day ecclesiasticism, will flee away, will pass out of existence—no place will be found for them.

SATAN NOW THE PRINCE

Some persons may be inclined to ask, Has not Christ been the great Ruler of the world for these past nineteen centuries? And whatever may be said of the four thousand years before the coming of Christ, may it not be claimed that He has been reigning ever since His ascension to the right hand of the Father? We answer that if this be true; if the Redeemer of men has been reigning as the king of earth for these nineteen centuries, there should be something in the Bible to so teach. But we find nothing. On the contrary, we hearken to the Master's own words, telling us that Satan is the Prince of this age. (John 14:30) We hearken to Him again telling us, "My kingdom is not of this world (this age)." (John 18:36) Again he says, "I will come again and receive you unto myself." (John 14:3) Again He tells us that he went into a far country to receive the title to His kingdom, then to return to

2H856

take possession of it, (Matthew 21:33; 25:14) and that at His second coming He will be the great King of Glory. He tells us the same thing in Matthew 25:31, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy

angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.”

On the other hand, as we scan the pages of history during the past eighteen centuries, we are convinced that Messiah has not been the King of the World. To think of Him as such, with the omnipotent power which we accredit to Him, would be to charge Him with responsibility for bloody and atrocious persecutions and wars and famines and pestilences. Surely no right-minded person, after mature consideration, can rationally accept the theory that the glorious Messiah’s reign of righteousness for the blessing of the whole earth, the uplifting of the whole race, the enlightenment of every creature, and the bringing of all possible into accord with God—none of us could think that that reign of the great Mediator between God and men is in the past. We must agree with our text that it is in the future, and that, when established, its effect upon the institutions of the present—political, social, financial, religious—will be such that they will flee away; no place evermore will be found for them. Ah! from this standpoint there is hope, but from no other standpoint. We are living today at the very climax of civilization. Yet today we behold more clearly than ever before that the deeply ingrained selfishness of humanity is a blight upon all the blessings and conveniences and advantages of our day.

THE CURSE OF SELFISHNESS

I need not do more than remind you that selfishness is to be found in every one of us, and that a semblance of righteousness is insisted upon by us all and adhered to, and violators of it are styled criminals. Nevertheless it seems impossible to legislate equity, justice. The keen intellects of men find opportunities for circumventing the laws and for committing theft and murder and sin in the face of laws and without danger of being punished.

Let us illustrate this: We have heard of the famines of India and how the British Government has spent millions of “pounds sterling” for irrigation purposes to compensate for irregularities in the rainfall. Undoubtedly the famines are, to some extent, due to water scarcity. Nevertheless one of the ablest of our engineers informs the world that there has not been in fifty years such a scarcity as should have created the famines. The famines of India, which have cost the lives of millions, are to be accredited to greed—selfishness which has flourished under the shadow of the law. Wealthy milling concerns purchase the rice from the natives and grind it into flour. By agreement between themselves they do not compete, but press the market price of rice lower and lower, until the poor native, unable to make a profit, declines to

plant, care for and harvest the crop. As a result there is famine. The poor natives suffer, but the managers of the milling properties pay large dividends of from 50 to 150 per cent on invested capital to the wealthy owning them.

As an illustration of the exorbitant profits I will relate a case: Two young men whose accumulated savings amounted to thirty thousand rupees (about two thousand pounds, or ten thousand dollars) invested it in rice milling. Their profits for the first year were eighty thousand rupees — about five thousand pounds, or twenty-five thousand dollars. They were not in the combine to depress the price of rice, but they profited by what the combine accomplished. These inequities of our present social order are beyond the reach and correction of the comparatively few men of ability not directly or indirectly interested in them.

THE WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

Neither Jehovah nor His great representative, Messiah, can, in any sense or degree, be a party to injustice or inequity. The fact that injustice has been permitted, and that inequity has been the rule for centuries, is to be accounted for by the other fact that during all this period the world has been under the reign of sin and death, and not under the reign of righteousness and life: it has been under the reign of Satan, “the prince of this world,” and of the darkness of selfishness and evil — all of which his name represents — and not under the dominion of Messiah,, the representative of Jehovah and His righteousness; not under the King of glory, the anti-typical David and Solomon, the anti-typical Aaron and Melchisedec. The New Dispensation which Messiah’s Kingdom will usher in is pictured in our text. It will be the dominion that will be world-wide—pure, holy, righteous, just, truthful, Godlike—a great White Throne. No wonder we read that the symbolical heavens and earth, representing the old order of things—social, ecclesiastical —will all vanish away.

But let no one think for a moment that ecclesiastical princes, financial princes and political princes will voluntarily acknowledge that the hour has come for a full surrender to Messiah and to all the principles of His absolute righteousness. On the contrary, these privileged members of our race will more and more be drawn together for mutual protection — for the preservation of the special privileges which have come into their possession. Even now we see the prophecy of the Second Psalm fulfilling. We are in the very time

2H857

when the Lord, through the Prophet David, calls the great ones of the earth to recognize the true situation of

our wonderful day—that it means that the Day of Messiah has arrived, and that He should be recognized and His principles of righteousness obeyed.

The call is recognized. “Salute the Son, O ye kings of the earth, while ye are in the way with Him, before His anger be kindled and ye perish by the way.” (Psalm 2:10-12) But no, the prophecy declares that we are in the day when the people, the masses, will have foolish imaginations —when they will think that by their own strength they can inaugurate a reign of righteousness along the lines of socialism or by anarchy. The people must learn that their help is in the Lord and not in their own frail arm. The people must see the force of the statement, “Blessed are all they that put their trust in Messiah.” (verse 12) The Lord is about to establish the great White Throne of absolute justice in the world.

On the other hand, the money kings and earthly rulers and ecclesiastical princes are taking counsel together today for the preservation of the present inequities of the world, by which they are profiting. The Lord declares that in this they are banding themselves against Him and against the newly appointed King, Messiah. For over a century human liberty has been making progress, in spite of every endeavor to restrain it. The potentates of earth perceive the rising tide of human intelligence and demands for equal rights. They perceive that unless something be done to counteract this general movement the special privileges of the privileged classes will disappear. They are even now taking counsel together how the restraints which the people are putting upon them may be broken and a reign of autocracy—political, financial and religious—be reinaugurated.

“BE INSTRUCTED, YE JUDGES!”

Would that the cultured and influential princes of earth could take the proper view of the situation and realize the fallacy of their counsels, the impossibility of averting the great changes which are upon us by reason of the time having come for Messiah to take unto Himself His great power and reign! Harken to the Lord’s words through the Prophet, “Be wise, now, therefore, O ye kings! Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son.” (Psa. 2:10-12) Could the wise of earth realize the situation and fully submit themselves to the Divine requirements of absolute justice and truth, what a blessing it would be to the world! If these princes would turn their attention from the grasping of power and money to the enlightenment and uplifting of the people they would become ministers, servants, of the New Dispensation, which would be ushered in with rejoicing.

But the Lord informs us that this will not be the case, and that, as a result, Messiah's Kingdom will be ushered in by "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Daniel 12:1) The Psalmist tells us the same—God will have in derision the puny efforts of the worldly wise and great, to re-establish autocracy. He will speak to them in His wrath the lesson which they refuse to hear by loving exhortation. The new King and His Empire will be established in the earth, and the declaration is that amidst such Divine displeasure He shall "break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalms 2:4-9; Revelation 2:27)

SMALL AND GREAT TO BE JUDGED

God is no respecter of persons. Hence, before His Judgment Throne punishments will be meted out to the little, as well as to the great, when found to be violators of the principles of justice. Would that I could impress this upon many of the lower classes who are crying out against the injustices in high places while practicing similar injustices themselves. Let it be remembered also that the great White Throne speaks blessings, Divine favor and uplifting to all who love righteousness and hate iniquity.

If in the past a certain retributive justice has seemed to proceed along national lines, blessing the nations which take the more righteous course, and frowning upon those which take the more evil course, this will no longer be the case in the not distant future. The testing imposed by Messiah's Kingdom will be along individual lines. He that eats the sour grape of sin will find his teeth on edge, and his alone. "justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet," and all the refuges of lies, by which mankind in high places have sought to fool themselves and others, will be swept away. The hidden things of darkness will be brought to light and the glorious things of light will be everywhere recognized. Ultimately "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" to the enthroned Messiah.

"THE BOOKS WILL BE OPENED"

The Master said, "My word shall judge you in the last day." Happy has it been for the comparatively few who have heard the Master's word in this present life, and have judged themselves thereby, and submitted themselves to His righteous precepts! These blessed ones will share with Messiah the glories of His Spiritual Empire, invisible to men. But during the Thousand Year Judgment Day of the world (2 Peter 3:7, 8) the same words—the "wonderful words of life" to those

2H858

who will obey, and words of death to those who will refuse obedience —will be the standards of justice for all mankind. The books then to be opened to all will include not only the words of the Master and of the Apostles of the New Testament, but also the Divine message through the Prophets of old. Then all shall see the oneness and harmony of the Divine message of righteousness. According to those standards, each who would have eternal life must conform his living and his thinking. The approved, at the end of Messiah's reign, will be delivered over to the Father perfect as human beings. The disapproved will be destroyed in the Second Death —without hope. (2 Peter 2:12; Jude 12; Acts 3:23)

Another book of life will be opened—another besides the one that is now open, which is styled the Lamb's Book of Life, in which is written the names of His faithful followers of the present time — “members of His Body,” “the Royal Priesthood,” “the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.” The new book of life will be for those who will be on trial during Messiah's reign. By its close it will include all of Adam's race found worthy of eternal life.

The judgment of the Church in the present time is not according to works, the perfection of which, under present conditions, would be impossible. Hence the Church's judgment is according to faith and the obedience of faith possible. But the world's judgment will be according to works, for the knowledge then will be so great that faith will no longer be at a premium. The great Mediator will accept of imperfect works according to the ability of the people, but as they rise out of degradation, more and more will be required of them, until in the end they will be perfected, and absolute perfection of works will be required.

[St. Paul Enterprise, November 13, 1910](#)

JESUS SPAKE AS NO OTHER MAN WILL EVER SPEAK

This discourse has been republished in Pastor Russell's Sermons, pages 749- 754, entitled, “Even the Winds and the Waves Obey.”

(On the Atlantic, Nov. 13, 1910)

Pastor Russell of the Brooklyn Tabernacle is homeward bound. He declares that he greatly enjoyed his visit to

Great Britain, where he preached in twelve of the principal cities, including three Sundays in London. His address for today was from the text, Matthew 8:27.

The New York American, November 20, 1910

**Originally Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
February 26, 1918**

FLIES IN THE OINTMENT CHANGE THE ODOR THEREOF

The Wise Man declared that a fly in the precious ointment would cause it to stink. We apply this suggestion to the Word of God, the precious ointment which God has supplied. Certain flies (falsehoods) crept into it during the Dark Ages, which are now causing a loathing and repudiation on the part of many of the best and wisest people in the world. All will admit that it is sinful to tamper with the Word of God — to either add to or take from it or to wrest or twist or pervert its meaning. Why is it, then, that ministers of the Gospel, who know that certain passages of the Scriptures are not to be found in the older manuscripts, fail to show the people the truth on this subject? And if these ministers are not fully informed whose fault is it? Would it not be preferable that they should absent themselves from some of the fairs and festivals and social functions, in order to inform themselves?

On what pretext are the clergy a specially privileged class, except for the purpose of giving their flocks reliable information along religious lines? And what is their commission from the Lord, except that they

2H859

“should feed the flock of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own dear Son?” If the flock have been feeding upon certain Scriptures supposed to be genuine, and if they have been made sick thereby, and if their Shepherds now know that these Scriptures are not a part of the Divinely inspired Word, why should not God’s people be informed of the facts and be stopped from eating poisonous elements introduced by the Adversary.

POISON IN OUR BIBLES

The more others are silent, the more *we* must speak. We cannot see God’s sheep spiritually sick without warning them respecting their spiritual food. Not only have we received many misinterpretations of the parables and

symbols of the Bible, but into our Bibles themselves certain false statements have been injected — long centuries ago. All well -informed ministers of the Gospel know that our New Testament was not translated from the writings of the Apostles, but from copies thereof. These, copied over and over again, no matter how carefully, were liable to errors. And, in addition, as we might expect, occasionally, a bold transcriber would add a few words to make the record conform the better to his conception of what it ought to be. This went on for centuries before the art of printing came into use.

The New Testament was translated from the Greek into the Latin language, and was known as the Vulgate. From that Latin translation sprang our various English translations — the Douay or Catholic edition, published in 1609 A. D., and the King James Bible, or Common Version, published in 1611 A. D. The latter was merely a revised translation, to assist in which revision other previous translations were used, and we are assured that the text was diligently compared with the Greek text. But until lately there were no ancient Greek manuscripts with which to compare it. The Greek manuscripts with which it was compared numbered only eight, none of which dated earlier than the tenth century. Today, however, we have three very old Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, namely, the Alexandrian MS., the Vatican MS. and the Sinaitic MS. Of these, the Vatican MS. was the first to come to the attention of modern scholarship. It is in the Vatican library, appearing on its catalogue as far far back as 1475 A. D., which manuscript scholarship accredits with having been written in the fourth century. Next came the Alexandrian MS., which is supposed to have been written about the middle of the fifth century. It is now on exhibition in the British Museum. Finally, we have the Sinaitic MS., which is in possession of the Russian Government. It was found by Constantine Tischendorf in a Mt. Sinai convent, from which it takes its name. It is accredited with a date of about 350 A. D. Of these three oldest MSS. of the New Testament known in the world, the Vatican and Sinaitic are the older.

Assuredly nothing should be considered as part of the original Scriptures that is not found in any of these three oldest MSS. Why should we not tell this to the people? Why should we not inform them that some of the most confusing texts of the Bible are not found in these old manuscripts? Is it not a sin to preach doctrines as from God which have no part in these early MSS.? This is our thought. From time to time it will be our pleasure, as well as our duty, to teach the common people what the clergy already know on this subject.

CONSIDER NOW OUR TEXT

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.” Mark 16:15, 16

One of the most important of these interpolations or poisonous additions engrafted upon the Word of God is in the 16th chapter of Mark, all of which, from the 9th verse to the end of the chapter, is spurious —fraudulent. It is additional to anything that St. Mark wrote, as evidenced by the fact that these verses are not found in any of the three oldest Greek MSS.

Of course, some of the items of these verses are found in other Gospels. It would never do to add a lie without a certain amount of covering of Truth to sugarcoat it! But notice our text and what a wrong thought it gives — inconsistent with the remainder of the Scriptures. Its intimation is that the preaching of the Gospel to every creature will result either in his believing it and being baptized, and thus being saved, or in his disbelieving and being damned. And this word *damned* carries with it, in the light of other misunderstandings, fire and blazings, roasting and torture, shrieking and woes indescribable. This is all wrong— contrary to the authentic Scriptures.

The authentic Scriptures inform us that this Gospel Age is one in which God is gathering from the world a “Little Flock” of footstep followers, saintly and elect, to constitute the Bride of Christ —his joint-heirs in His coming Kingdom. They showed that not all are expected to *hear* this message at the present time—not many wise, great, learned or rich, but chiefly the poor. They assure us that to have the hearing ear is a special favor, saying, “Blessed are your ears, for they hear, and your eyes, for they see.” St. Paul tells us that the world in general is blind and deaf to the message now sent forth (Romans 11:7), and the experiences of 18 centuries corroborate this. St. Peter tells us (Acts 15:13) that God’s work in the present time is not the

2H860

conversion of the world (which certainly is not being accomplished) but that he is now taking out of the world a people for his name (to bear the name of Christ, as His Bride). The authentic Scriptures everywhere teach us that the poor, blind, deaf world, which has never yet heard fully and clearly of “the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we may be saved,” is not, on this account, condemned or damned. They tell us that the whole world was *born* condemned, because children of Adam and sharers in his condemnation, but that God has provided in the sacrifice of Jesus a redemption for Adam and all his race. They tell us that,

as a result, in God's due time, Christ, as the true Light, the Sun of Righteousness, shall enlighten every man that cometh into the world. They explain that God is now calling out a special class while the darkness is upon the earth and the gross darkness upon the heathen, and that the Sun of Righteousness, which is to enlighten the whole world, will not arise until the elect Church shall first have been gathered out. They tell us that in the New Dispensation yet to dawn, all the families of the earth will be blessed through the Christ—Jesus, the Head, and the Church his Body or Bride. They tell us that then “all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. (Isaiah 35:5) They tell us that then the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams, flooding the whole earth with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. They assure us that that will be the period of Messiah's reign, for which we pray, “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven.” They tell us that the object of that reign will be that the world in general may have a trial to determine whether, with the light and knowledge and experience then granted, they will choose God and righteousness and the reward of eternal life, or will choose sin and its penalty, the Second Death.

UNBELIEVERS DAMNED ALREADY

Our word *damned*, from misuse and the bad theology of the Dark Ages, has a sulphurous odor, whereas its plain, simple meaning is the same as the word *condemn*. Adam was damned or condemned 6,000 years ago, because of his disobedience. (John 3:17; Rom. 5:12) And all his children, by heredity, share his weaknesses and thus share his condemnation. But Adam is not condemned or damned to eternal torture nor to Purgatory. The Bible distinctly says in so many words that his sentence, his condemnation, his damnation, is to *death*. “In the day that thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die.” (Genesis 2:17, margin). After his disobedience, God said, “Unfit (cursed) is the earth for thy sake. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou return unto the ground from which thou wast taken; for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.” Gen. 3:17-19

This general sentence has rested upon all of Adam's race from that day until now. As St. Paul declares, By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death (not eternal torment nor Purgatory) as a result of sin, and thus death (not eternal torment nor Purgatory) passed upon all men, because all are sinners. (Romans 5:12) Jesus came to redeem two classes—the Church and the world—the Church class to be his “Bride” and to share

His heavenly, spiritual Kingdom with Him; the world to be blessed and restored to human perfection and to an earthly Eden, world-wide — God's footstool made glorious. The Church and household of faith, willing to walk in the footsteps of the Master in the dark, have been called and chosen during the past nearly 19 centuries. Soon the worthy ones, the "Little Flock," will enter into the joys of their Lord, at His Second Coming. The marriage of the Lamb shall come, for his Wife will have made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)

Then the world's salvation will be due to begin. The Times of Restitution will be the thousand years of Messiah's spiritual reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. Fleshly Israel, we are assured, will then be restored to Divine favor and become the special and active agents of the Messianic Kingdom in the distribution of the Divine favors to all the families of the earth. In the end all the incorrigibly wicked, who love iniquity rather than righteousness, will be destroyed.

Thus, as the Apostle declares, the sacrifice of Jesus constitutes a satisfaction for our sins (the Church's sins), and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2)

NONSENSICAL, SPURIOUS CONTEXT

Let us briefly notice the absurdity in the addition to God's Word found in the last 12 verses of St. Mark's Gospel, fraudulently added and not found in any of the oldest Greek MSS.

Notice the statement, These signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." (verses 17,18) The majority of Christian ministers and their congregations seem not to be troubled by the fact that they do not have these evidences of their relationship to the Lord, and they do not attempt to heal the sick, to speak with tongues, and would not dare to drink any poisonous thing. But

2H861

there are certain conscientious people, the very cream of all the churches, who are greatly perplexed by these words because they know that they are not true in their experience. With them, therefore it is a matter of feeling doubtful about their own salvation, or a question as to the reliability of the Bible as a whole. They need to have the relief which we now seek to give them. They need to know that these are not inspired words, but poisonous and injurious additions made during the Dark Ages. They may, consequently, look elsewhere in the

Scriptures and find the proper assurances of their relationship with God being demonstrated by the fruits of the holy Spirit in their lives and in their hearts — “meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.”

MIRACLES IN THE EARLY CHURCH

This spurious passage of our text is used by many ministers who know, or ought to know, of its falsity. But they have a certain theory in their minds to the effect that the miracles and unknown tongues of the early Church were lost by reason of unfaithfulness to God, and that Christians today should seek for their recovery. Not having any Scriptures to support their claim, they use this interpolation and allow their hearers and readers to believe it to be the inspired message. To what length have people gone in support of human theory! The first principle of preaching should be to preach the Truth, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth. Every theory which requires bolstering up by spurious passages should be abandoned, and *will* be abandoned by those who are honest truth-seekers, “Bereans.”

Our Lord performed miracles. So did His Apostles. And so did those of the early Church upon whom the Apostles laid their hands. But no others have this gift. Consequently, when the Apostles were dead and when all those upon whom they had laid hands of blessing were dead, these miracles in the Church were at an end. We all see the propriety of this. Miracles were appropriate at the beginning for the establishment of the Church, and, for a time, were necessary for their encouragement. In their early meetings they had no source of information aside from the Apostles, whom they rarely saw or heard. They had no Bibles —no copies of the Gospel, nor of the Epistles. They needed the very arrangement which God provided — tongues and interpretations of tongues, etc., to draw them together and to instruct them until, in due time, the canon of Scripture would be completed that, through it, the man of God might be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

By the time the Apostles died the Church had become established, had regular meetings, pastors and teachers, the Gospels and Epistles, and some of them had begun to develop the fruits of the Spirit. Thus the early Church naturally outgrew the tongues and miracles and entered a larger sphere, just as a child loses its swaddling clothes in favor of more suitable attire. For God’s people today to desire to go back to speaking with tongues, etc., such as was practiced and very profitably, in the early Church, would be like an adult person desiring to be dressed and

treated as a babe. It is our understanding that the speaking with unknown tongues in religious meetings, which is gradually spreading over the world, is a deception being practiced upon earnest children of God, who are deceived by the fallen angels—the *demons* of the Bible. They are thus enslaved to error and have their attention drawn away from the Truth. To what extent the ministers of Christ of today are responsible for the delusion of these poor people is not ours to determine. Had the spuriousness of the last verses of St. Mark's Gospel been duly pointed out from every pulpit, as soon as the old MSS. were known, some, at least, might have been spared from this snare.

The New York American, November 27, 1910

**Originally Republished from The St. Paul Enterprise,
November 27, 1917**

GIVING THANKS WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.” Psalm 100:4

Oklahoma City, Nov. 27— Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle addressed large audiences here twice today in our principal Auditorium. We report one of his addresses from the following text:

“O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever.” Psalm 107:1

Thanksgiving Day appeals to all of us, and we are glad that the Pilgrim Fathers long years ago started

2H862

the custom. They placed it at the end of the harvest and in recognition of the same. The keeping of such a day appeals to all civilized mankind in a considerable degree, because our Great Creator so organized us that the quality of reverence, of worship, lies prominently on the top of our heads. The man or woman, rich or poor, educated or ignorant, bond or free, who has not this organ of veneration developed in considerable measure cannot be appreciative and deferential toward his Creator, and hence would not enjoy Thanksgiving Day. We are glad that these are comparatively few. We are glad to suppose that the majority of this great nation of civilization looked up to God with grateful hearts and rendered Him thanks for blessings manifested.

HINDRANCES TO TRUE REVERENCE

Nevertheless, the numbers increase yearly of those who are losing their reverence for the God of the Bible and vaguely turning toward a God of Nature, of whom they profess to know comparatively little. These irreverent and unthankful fellow creatures are not generally the most ignorant of our race, nor the least favored in temporal mercies and blessings. Among them are many learned, wealthy, influential. Their condition is well represented by that of a young woman who called at my study recently. In substance she said, "I have lost my God. I am unhappy. I am hoping that you will be able to assist me in finding him again." Thank God, we were able to assist her, and now she is able to give thanks to God in all sincerity.

I am not referring to the irreverent in this audience, nor to those of this class in my larger audience of millions all over the world, to whom I speak through the public press. I am speaking to others who, while not yet fully in the faith, are still disposed to give thanks. I speak to these because I realize that each day is bringing to the world greater intelligence, more independent thoughtfulness, in a wider use of reason. I speak because my experience teaches that unless these be fully armed with the Truth and awakened to independent thought, they are almost certain to fall into unbelief—Evolution, Higher Criticism, and a mere form of godliness which denies the real power thereof.

THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE

The Great Teacher prayed for his followers, "Sanctify them through thy Truth; thy Word is Truth." (John 17:17) To be forearmed with the Truth is to be safeguarded against the error. To be ignorant of the Truth is to fall a prey to the error—especially in this "evil day," when "a thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand." (Psalm 91:7) The difficulty with us has been that many have supposed that the conversion of the world and its sanctification can be better accomplished by misrepresentation of Divine Character and Justice. Unconsciously we have learned to twist and interpret our Bibles to fit the erroneous creeds which were handed to us by our well-meaning forefathers. The Day of Judgment upon these false creeds is upon us. Unless we learn that they do not properly interpret the Bible we will reject the Bible when we reject the creeds—and that must be very soon for all thinking people. "To the Law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20

CAUSES FOR INGRATITUDE

“Come, let us reason together, saith the Lord!” If our creeds tell us truly that we were all born damned, either to Purgatory or to eternal torment, should we give thanks on this account? If our creeds tell truly that an elect handful of saints will escape the torture, how do we know whether or not we belong to that elect handful? Have we sufficient information on this subject to give thanks therefore? If our creeds tell truly that nearly all the members of our families, nearly all of our neighbors and friends, being unsaintly, not “sanctified in Christ Jesus,” not followers in the footsteps of Jesus, not of those “who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit”—these all, except a mere handful, are doomed to more horrible torture than the worst earthly sufferings we could possibly imagine for them, and are doomed to these for centuries in Purgatory, according to the Catholic; or for all eternity, according to our Protestant theories. Can we honestly thank God for any of these conditions, if we believe them to be true? Can we “worship in spirit and in truth” a Creator who would make such an atrocious plan? And could we respect his honesty if he labeled it “good tidings of great joy to all people”?

If the foregoing things, which have come down to us from the “Dark Ages,” be true, of what consequence, in comparison, would be the material harvests of earth, which would merely encourage and stimulate the bringing into being of larger numbers of our race to experience those tortures? If these things be true, rather should we give thanks for famine and pestilence, which would obliterate our race entirely and thus save future thousands of millions from the horrors of eternal torture.

These thoughts will come to all intelligent beings sooner or later. We bring them forward now, in order that we may offset them with the Truth—that we may show the fallacy of these “doctrines of devils,” as St. Paul designates them. (1 Tim. 4:1) We bring them to your attention so that we may not only demolish them, but give you instead the true, satisfactory portion, the Truth, the Bread that came down from heaven to give

2H863

life eternal, not merely to the saintly few of the Church, but to mankind in general.

Those who get the proper view of our Creator and of his glorious Plan for human salvation will be forever protected from such fears and doubts respecting Divine goodness. Getting the proper view of the Heavenly Father’s character through the discernment of his Plan of the Ages for spiritual Israel, natural Israel and the world in general, they will hereafter be able to celebrate every

Thanksgiving Day much more abundantly, much more intelligently, much more happily than any in the past. More than this, to these every day will be a happy day if, rightly exercised by the goodness of God, they shall give him their hearts.

GOD'S MERCY ENDURETH FOREVER

In the Psalm from which our text is taken the Prophet David repeats this sentiment of Thanksgiving to God because of the ever-continuance of his mercy, twenty-six times. Our English translation does not give us the exact thought, however. Properly translated it would read, "O give thanks, for his mercy endureth ever." The word evermore nearly represents the thought of the Hebrew, which signifies not forever, but to a completion. As long as there is any use for mercy, God's mercy will continue. When the Great Divine Program shall have been accomplished, when "every creature in heaven and in earth, and under the earth, shall be heard saying, Praise and glory and honor, dominion and might be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne and unto the Lamb forever" (Revelation 5:13), then there will no longer be need for mercy; mercy will have accomplished its work.

Mercy signifies the setting aside of justice in some manner, for some reason. Justice is the foundation of God's throne—the foundation of the Divine Government. Justice had control of Father Adam and offered him eternal life in an Eden home, as a reward for obedience; or death, extinction, as the penalty for disobedience. As Divine Wisdom had foreknown, man disobeyed and the penalty of Justice, "Dying thou shalt die," was executed. Through heredity all of Adam's race became involved — all inherited sinful tendencies and dying constitutions.

For more than two thousand years death reigned under the edict of Justice, and our race as a whole were subject to it. A little later the Law Covenant was made with Israel—one nation out of many. It seemed to offer mercy, but did not. They were placed under the Law and were merely offered eternal life if they could keep the Law—which they could not keep, because of inherited blemishes, moral and physical.

It was over four thousand years from the time Justice struck the fatal blow until Divine mercy stepped forward with the healing balm. God's mercy is his love in active operation for the relief of the condemned. Although God is Love, and hence must always have been loving and kind and merciful of disposition, yet this quality of his character was held in restraint as respects condemned men for more than 40 centuries. So the Apostle explains, saying, "Herein was manifested the love of God, in that

he sent his only begotten Son into the world” “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” 1 John 4:9; John 3:16

But meantime the darkness of sin and the misrepresentations of Divine character by the Adversary had so operated upon the fallen race that —eyes had they, but they saw not; ears had they, but they understood not; hearts had they, but they comprehended not, the message of Divine mercy. They fulfilled the Scriptures in slaying the One sent for their relief. And they have misunderstood, slandered, maligned, “killed” his followers — the few blessed with the hearing ears and the understanding hearts and the eyes of faith. These few constitute what the Scriptures designate the true Church of God, including the Apostles and all the faithful throughout this Age —the household of faith, “the Church of the First-Borns, whose names are written in heaven.” Hebrews 12:23

MERCY REJOICETH OVERJUSTICE

Man’s necessity became God’s opportunity for the display of his glorious character—perfect in Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power. While love could not clear the guilty, it could provide a Redeemer to suffer, “the just for the unjust.” But Divine Justice could not allow this, unless with the consent of the sufferer. Hence we read that God set before his only-begotten Son a glorious Plan and invited his co-operation therein. The Son assented, left the heavenly glory, was made flesh and “offered himself” an acceptable sacrifice, “the just for the unjust” —for the redemption of Adam and his race. The Father honored him by raising him from the dead to a still higher glory and honor than he had before, to immortality— the divine nature.

Now, from his glorious station, he is empowered to be the Mediator between God and men — between Divine Justice and fallen humanity. He is empowered to give the earthly rights which he sacrificially laid down for Adam and his race —to so many of them as will accept the perfection of human nature and its rights and privileges upon terms in harmony with the Divine Law—the remainder he will destroy, annihilate as brute beasts.” 2 Peter 2:12; Acts 3:23

As though all this were not sufficiently wonderful; as though with all this the Heavenly Father’s Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power would not be sufficiently

2H864

illustrated, exemplified, God added another feature. Before beginning to deal with the world as a whole, to give back to the willing and obedient of the race human perfection and an earthly Eden Paradise and eternal life;

before commencing this work of restitution (Acts 3:19), the Father made known to the Son another feature of his Plan. He would give to the Son a Bride, a class selected from amongst the fallen race—called, chosen, faithful overcomers. These, as the joint-heirs of the Second Adam, will share with him in the uplifting of those of Adam's race who will become the children of Christ through obedience and adoption.

REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

The trials and testings of all those who will become the Bride of Christ must be similar to those of the Redeemer. They must suffer with him if they would reign with him. As he sacrificed his earthly life and rights and interests, so must they. He exhorted them, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, a reasonable service." (Romans 12:1) True, there is a difference between these followers of Jesus and the Captain of their salvation. He was brought into the world holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners; hence his sacrifice is a perfect one. Those accepted as his members, as his Bride, belong to the race of sinners. They were "children of wrath even as others." (Ephesians 2:3) Their acceptance as sacrifices, therefore, was not possible except as the great Captain of their Salvation imputed to those sacrifices a sufficiency of the merit of his sacrifice to compensate for their defects and to make their sacrifices acceptable to the Father with his and as a part of his—they being counted in with him as "members of his Body."

My dear friends, those of us who have the eye of faith and the hearing of faith to appreciate this, the Message of God's Word, may surely be thankful to the last degree. What more could our Heavenly Father do for us than he has done — redeeming us, inviting us to a new nature, giving us the aids by the way, and making us sharers in the Kingdom glory of His Son? More than this, he has been blessing our friends, our children, our parents, our neighbors, the heathen — all of mankind, of one family.

THANKS BECAUSE GOD IS GOOD

"O, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever!" During this Gospel Age his mercy has been manifest to all those who take up their cross and follow Jesus. By and by these will be glorified by the "First Resurrection." Then his mercy will return to natural Israel under the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31), of which Christ and the Church are "Able Ministers," Servants, Priests and Kings. Could all the world discern, through the trials and tears and sorrows and imperfections and dying of their present experience,

the glorious outcome which God is providing the whole world, they would be filled with praise to him who loved us and bought us back from the penalty of death and who ultimately will complete his glorious work through Messiah's Kingdom.

Have we not, as followers of the Lord, as Christians, misrepresented the facts of the case and endeavored to have people give thanks to God for unkindness, in justice, lovelessness—to a God whose mercy never reached us and would never reach any but a small proportion of our race through the knowledge of Christ; to a God whose mercy, even to the one-tenth of those who had ever heard of him, he said, would endure only for the present life, and even among these bring a blessing only to a mere handful of the elect!

Let us go back to the Word of God and free our minds of the prejudices of superstition and misinterpretation handed down from the Dark Ages. Let us see the glory of our God, as revealed in the Bible. Let Christians give thanks that, by the grace of God, their eyes and ears of understanding are opening to a better knowledge of him. Let them give thanks, not only for redemption from the death sentence but also for their calls to saintship and its consequent suffering in this present time and its promise of reward of glory on the spirit plane by and by!

Let the world give thanks in proportion as it is able to discern God's goodness and mercy for Adam's race — that eventually through the channel of the glorified Church the Divine blessing will be extended to every member of Adam's race, giving opportunity to all to attain life everlasting with full human perfection and an everlasting Eden upon this now sin-cursed earth.

* * * *

*I CANNOT do without Thee;
I cannot stand alone;
I have no strength or goodness,
No wisdom of my own;*

New York American, December 11, 1910

GOD'S GREAT PLAN HIDDEN IN ABRAHAM AND FAMILY

The Mystery Covered so Long t~ now made Plain

"This discourse has been republished in Pastor Russell's Sermons, pages 200-207, entitled, "Divine Plan Hidden in Abraham's Family."

Omaha, Neb., Dec. 11—Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn Tabernacle, visited our city yesterday as the guest of the International Bible Students Association. He gave two public addresses, which were heard by large and intelligent audiences. We report his address from these words of Scripture:

"And Isaac brought Rebecca into his mother Sarah's tent, and she became his wife and he loved her." Genesis 24:67

THE SWEET-BRIER ROSE

BESIDE my cottage door it grows,
The loveliest, daintiest flower that blows,
A sweet-brier rose.

At dewy morn or twilight's close,
The rarest perfume from it flows,—
This strange, wild rose.

But when the raindrops on it beat,
Ah, then its odors grow more sweet
About my feet!

Ofttimes with loving tenderness
Its soft green leaves I gently press
In sweet caress,—

A still *more wondrous* fragrance flows,
The more my fingers firmly close,
And *crush* the rose!

Dear Lord, oh, let my life be so,—
Its perfume when the tempests blow,
The sweeter flow!

And should it be Thy blessed will
With crushing grief my soul to fill,
Press harder still,

And while its dying fragrance flows,
I'll whisper low, "*He loves and knows
His crushed brier-rose.*"