LIFE OF CHRIST

ARTICLES OF SEVENTH ANGEL

The Life of Christ

A collection of writings about Jesus Christ
from the pen of Pastor Charles T. Russell.

Printed and Distributed by:
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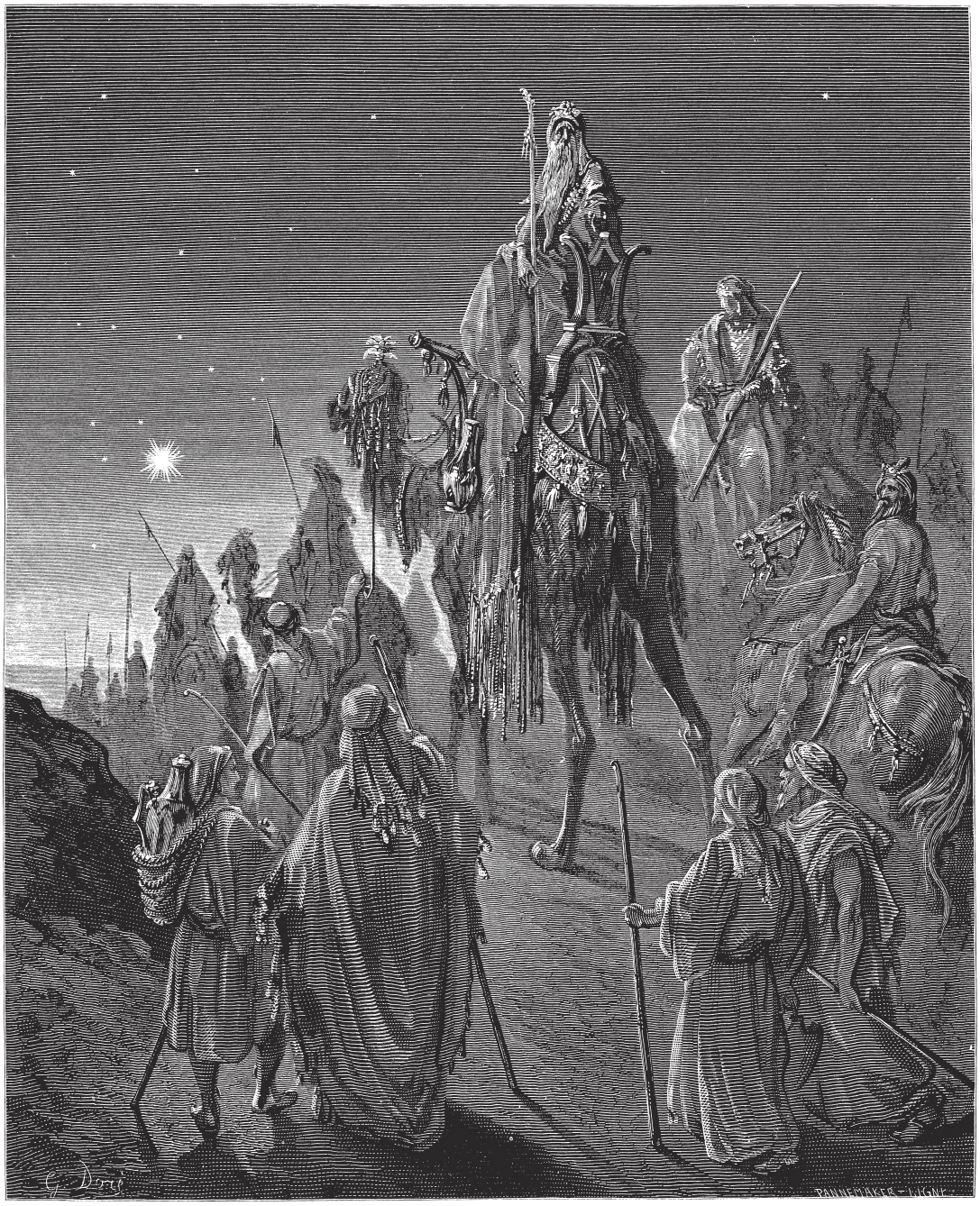

THE WISE MEN GUIDED BY THE STAR
And, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them,
till it came and stood over where the young child was. (Matthew 2:9)

PREFACE

When Jesus invited his first disciples to become his followers, they were to experience an amazing change in lifestyle. They were to give up their lives as fishermen and tax collectors for lives of personal sacrifice. Sitting at the feet of the Master and learning directly from him must have been a wonderful experience. Studying his mannerisms and the way he dealt with people became a model for the apostles as they grew to become leaders of the early Christian church. It was important for them not only to hear the words of Jesus, but to also witness the way that he lived his consecration. Even the tone of his voice must have made an impact on the hearts and minds of these early brethren.

How can anyone today hope to have the life of Jesus affect them in the same way that it affected those who lived with him? We can only read the words that describe the tender way he interacted with the sick and needy. But we miss the atmosphere and the specific circumstances surrounding each event. Our information is second hand, at best. As a result, devotion and sacrifice for the Lord's cause may seem more difficult for the modern Christian. But here we are at the end of the Gospel Age, trying to know and understand our Savior the best we can. We are deeply grateful that the Lord has made special provisions for his saints. Our returned Lord has released a flood of truth from the pen of that "Wise and Faithful Servant." Though we do not have first hand knowledge of Jesus, we are more than compensated with deeper insights into his redemptive work. This knowledge should invigorate us to the same sacrificial lifestyle as those early Christians who served so faithfully.

As we attempt to understand the Divine Plan more thoroughly we come to the realization that no meaningful knowledge of God would be complete without a study of the life of Jesus. Because of this, it would be wise for each of us to become thoroughly familiar with every detail of his life. The apostle admonished the church to "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds" (Hebrews 12:3). There is no nobler study, and practical guide to living, than such a consideration of our Lord. He taught us how to live, how to serve, and how to develop God-like qualities. It is our hope that this compilation of articles will be helpful to the New Creation, and to the entire Household of Faith, as together we "consider him."

On the following pages you will see a "Harmony of the Gospels," outlining a chronological order to the four Gospel accounts. We present the accompanying articles in this same sequential order. As you examine the selected articles note that not all scriptural passages have a companion article. However, we would encourage the brethren not to skip over these passages, but to utilize the *Expanded Biblical Comments*, or additional helpful resources. In addition, we have included a CD with this book. The CD contains an Adobe pdf file, as well as Microsoft Word files consisting of every article contained in this book. This can be helpful to those who prefer to use a laptop computer. Single articles can also be printed out in preparation for individual studies. Whichever way you choose to use the CD we hope that it proves useful.

Your Brethren in Christ,

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THE LIFE OF CHRIST CHRONOLOGICALLY ACCORDING TO THE BIBLICAL RECORD

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
3 B.C.	Jerusalem, temple	Birth of John the Baptist foretold to Zechariah			1:5-25	
~2 B.C.	Nazareth; Judea	Birth of Jesus foretold to Mary, who visits Elizabeth			1:26-56	
2 B.C.	Judean hill country	Birth of John the Baptist; later, his desert life			1:57-80	
2 B.C. Oct.	Bethlehem	Birth of Jesus (the Word, through whom all other things had come into existence) as descendant of Abraham and of David	1:1-25		2:1-7	1:1-5,9-14
	Near Bethlehem	Angel announces good news; shepherds visit babe			2:8-20	
	Bethlehem; Jerusalem	Jesus circumcised (eighth day), presented in temple (fortieth day)			2:21-39	
1 B.C. or 1 A.D.	Jerusalem; Bethlehem; Nazareth	Astrologers; flight to Egypt; babes killed; Jesus returns	2:1-23		2:39,40	
12 A.D.	Jerusalem	Twelve-year-old Jesus at the Passover; goes home			2:41-52	
29, spring	Wilderness; Jordan	Ministry of John the Baptist	3:1-12	1:1-8	3:1-18	1:6-8,15:28
29, fall	Jordan River	Baptism and anointing of Jesus; born as a human in David's line but declared to be the Son of God	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-38	1:32-34
	Judean Wilderness	Fasting and temptation of Jesus	4:1-11	1:12,13	4:1-13	
	Bethany beyond Jordan	John the Baptist's testimony concerning Jesus				1:15,29-34
	Upper Jordan Valley	First disciples of Jesus				1:35-51
	Cana of Galilee; Capernaum	Jesus' first miracle; he visits Capernaum				2:1-12
30, Passover	Jerusalem	Passover celebration; drives traders from temple				2:13-25
	Jerusalem	Jesus' discussion with Nicodemus				3:1-21
	Judea; Aenon	Jesus' disciples baptize; John to decrease				3:22-36
	Tiberias	John imprisoned; Jesus leaves for Galilee	4:12; 14:3-5	1:14; 6:17-20	3:19,20; 4:14	4:1-3
	Sychar, in Samaria	En route to Galilee; Jesus teaches the Samaritans				4:4-43

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Galilee	First announces “The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near”	4:17	1:14,15	4:14,15	4:44,45
	Nazareth; Cana; Capernaum	Heals boy; reads commission; rejected; moves to Capernaum	4:13-16		4:16-31	4:46-54
	Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum	Call of Simon and Andrew, James, and John	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11	
	Capernaum	Heals demoniac, also Peter’s mother-in-law and many others	8:14-17	1:21-34	4:31-41	
	Galilee	First tour of Galilee with the four now called	4:23-25	1:35-39	4:42,43	
	Galilee	Leper healed; multitudes flock to Jesus	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-16	
	Capernaum	Heals paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
	Capernaum	Call of Matthew; feast with tax collectors	9:9-17	2:13-22	5:27-39	
	Judea	Preaches in Judean synagogues			4:44	
31, Passover	Jerusalem	Attends feast; heals man; rebukes Pharisees				5:1-47
	Returning from Jerusalem (?)	Disciples pluck ears of grain on the Sabbath	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5	
	Galilee; Sea of Galilee	Heals hand on Sabbath; retires to seashore; heals	12:9-21	3:1-12	6:6-11	
	Mountain near Capernaum	The twelve are chosen as apostles		3:13-19	6:12-16	
	Near Capernaum	The Sermon on the Mount	5:1–7:29		6:17-49	
	Capernaum	Heals army officer’s servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
	Nain	Raises widow’s son			7:11-17	
	Galilee	John in prison sends disciples to Jesus	11:2-19		7:18-35	
	Galilee	Cities reproached; revelation to babes; yoke kindly	11:20-30			
	Galilee	Feet anointed by sinful woman; illustration of debtors			7:36-50	
	Galilee	Second preaching tour of Galilee, with the twelve			8:1-3	
	Galilee	Demoniac healed; league with Beelzebub charged	12:22-37	3:19-30		
	Galilee	Scribes and Pharisees seek a sign	12:38-45			
	Galilee	Christ’s disciples his close relatives	12:46-50	3:31-35	8:19-21	
	Sea of Galilee	Illustrations of sower, weeds, others; explanations	13:1-53	4:1-34	8:4-18	

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Sea of Galilee	Windstorm stilled in the crossing of the lake	8:18,23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
	Gadara, SE of Sea of Galilee	Two demoniacs healed; swine possessed by demons	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	
	Probably Capernaum	Jairus' daughter raised; woman healed	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	
	Capernaum (?)	Heals two blind men and a mute demoniac	9:27-34			
	Nazareth	Revisits city where reared and is again rejected	13:54-58	6:1-6		
	Galilee	Third tour of Galilee, expanded as apostles sent	9:35–11:1	6:6-13	9:1-6	
	Tiberias	John the Baptist beheaded; Herod's guilty fears	14:1-12	6:14-29	9:7-9	
32, near Passover	Capernaum (?); NE side Sea of Galilee	Apostles return from preaching tour; 5,000 fed	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-13
	NE side Sea of Galilee; Gennesaret	Attempt to crown Jesus; he walks on sea; cures	14:22-36	6:45-56		6:14-21
	Capernaum	Identifies "bread of life"; many disciples fall away				6:22-71
32, after Passover	Probably Capernaum	Traditions that make void God's Word	15:1-20	7:1-23		7:1
	Phoenicia; Decapolis	Near Tyre, Sidon; then to Decapolis; 4,000 fed	15:21-38	7:24–8:9		
	Magadan	Sadducees and Pharisees again seek a sign	15:39–16:4	8:10-12		
	NE side Sea of Galilee; Bethsaida	Warns against leaven of Pharisees; heals blind	16:5-12	8:13-26		
	Caesarea Philippi	Jesus the Messiah; foretells death, resurrection	16:13-28	8:27–9:1	9:18-27	
	Probably Mt. Hermon	Transfiguration before Peter, James, and John	17:1-13	9:2-13	9:28-36	
	Caesarea Philippi	Heals demoniac that disciples could not heal	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
	Galilee	Again foretells his death and resurrection	17:22,23	9:30-32	9:43-45	
	Capernaum	Tax money miraculously provided	17:24-27			
	Capernaum	Greatest in Kingdom; settling faults; mercy	18:1-35	9:33-50	9:46-50	
	Galilee; Samaria	Leaves Galilee for Festival of Booths; everything set aside for ministerial service	8:19-22		9:51-62	7:2-10

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Jerusalem	Jesus' public teaching at Festival of Booths				7:11-52
	Jerusalem	Teaching after Festival; cures blind				8:12–9:41
	Probably Judea	The 70 sent to preach; their return, report			10:1-24	
	Judea; Bethany	Tells of neighborly Samaritan; at home of Martha, Mary			10:25-42	
	Probably Judea	Again teaches model prayer; persistence in asking			11:1-13	
	Probably Judea	Refutes false charge; shows generation condemnable			11:14-36	
	Probably Judea	At Pharisee's table, Jesus denounces hypocrites			11:37-54	
	Probably Judea	Discourse on God's care; faithful steward			12:1-59	
	Probably Judea	Heals crippled woman on Sabbath; three illustrations			13:1-21	
	Jerusalem	Jesus at Festival of Dedication; The Good Shepherd				10:1-39
	Beyond Jordan	Many put faith in Jesus				10:40-42
	Perea (beyond Jordan)	Teaches in cities, villages, moving toward Jerusalem			13:22	
	Perea	Kingdom entrance; Herod's threat; house desolate			13:23-35	
	Probably Perea	Lessons from the home of a Pharisee			14:1-24	
	Probably Perea	Counting the cost of discipleship			14:25-35	
	Probably Perea	Illustrations: lost sheep, lost coin, prodigal son			15:1-32	
	Probably Perea	Illustrations: unjust steward, rich man and Lazarus			16:1-31	
	Probably Perea	Forgiveness and faith; unprofitable servants			17:1-10	
	Bethany	Lazarus raised from the dead by Jesus				11:1-46
	Jerusalem; Ephraim	Caiaphas' counsel against Jesus; Jesus withdraws				11:47-54
	Samaria; Galilee	Heals and teaches en route through Samaria, Galilee			17:11-37	
	Samaria or Galilee	Illustrations: importunate widow, Pharisee and tax collector			18:1-14	
	Perea	Swings down through Perea; teaches on divorce	19:1-12	10:1-12		
	Perea	Receives and blesses children	19:13-15	10:13-16	18:15-17	
	Perea	Rich young man; illustration of laborers in vineyard	19:16–20:16	10:17-31	18:18-30	
	Probably Perea	Third time Jesus foretells his death, resurrection	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34	
	Probably Perea	Request for James's and John's seating in Kingdom	20:20-28	10:35-45		
	Jericho	Passing through Jericho, he heals two blind men; visits Zacchaeus; parable of the pounds	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35–19:28	

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 8	Bethany	Arrives at Bethany six days before Passover				11:55 to 12:1
Nisan 9	Bethany	Feast at Simon the leper's house; Mary anounts Jesus; Jews come to see Jesus and Lazarus	26:6-13	14:3-9		12:2-11
	Bethany-Jerusalem	Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem	21:1-11,14-17	11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
Nisan 10	Bethany-Jerusalem	Barren fig tree cursed; second temple cleansing	21:18,19,12,13	11:12-17	19:45,46	
	Jerusalem	Chief priests and scribes scheme to destroy Jesus		11:18,19	19:47,48	
	Jerusalem	Discussion with Greeks; unbelief of Jews				12:20-50
Nisan 11	Bethany-Jerusalem	Barren fig tree found withered	21:19-22	11:20-25		
	Jerusalem, temple	Christ's authority questioned; illustration of two sons	21:23-32	11:27-33	20:1-8	
	Jerusalem, temple	Illustrations of wicked husbandman, marriage feast	21:33–22:14	12:1-12	20:9-19	
	Jerusalem, temple	Catch questions on tax, resurrection, commandment	22:15-40	12:13-34	20:20-40	
	Jerusalem, temple	Jesus' silencing question on Messiah's descent	22:41-46	12:35-37	20:41-44	
	Jerusalem, temple	Scathing denunciation of scribes and Pharisees	23:1-39	12:38-40	20:45-47	
	Jerusalem, temple	The widow's mite		12:41-44	21:1-4	
	Mount of Olives	Prediction of Jerusalem's fall; Jesus' presence; end of system	24:1-51	13:1-37	21:5-38	
	Mount of Olives	Illustrations: ten virgins, talents, sheep/goats	25:1-46			
Nisan 12	Jerusalem	Religious leaders plot Jesus' death	26:1-5	14:1,2	22:1,2	
	Jerusalem	Judas bargains with priests to betray Jesus	26:14-16	14:10,11	22:3-6	
Nisan 13	Near and in Jerusalem	Arrangements for the Passover	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Passover feast eaten with the twelve	26:20,21	14:17,18	22:14-18	
	Jerusalem	Jesus washes the feet of his apostles				13:1-20
	Jerusalem	Judas identified as traitor and is dismissed	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21-30
	Jerusalem	Memorial supper instituted with the eleven	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:19,20, 24-30	[1 Cor. 11:23-25]
	Jerusalem	Denial by Peter and dispersion of apostles foretold	26:31-35	14:27-31	22:31-38	13:31-38
	Jerusalem	Helper; mutual love; tribulation; Jesus' prayer				14:1–17:26
	Gethsemane	Agony in the garden; Jesus' betrayed and arrested	26:30,36-56	14:26,32-52	22:39-53	18:1-12

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
	Jerusalem	Trial by Annas, Caiaphas, Sanhedrin; Peter denies	26:57–27:1	14:53–15:1	22:54-71	18:13-27
	Jerusalem	Judas the betrayer hangs himself	27:3-10		[Acts 1:18,19]	
	Jerusalem	Before Pilate, then Herod, and then back to Pilate	27:2,11-14	15:1-5	23:1-12	18:28-38
	Jerusalem	Delivered to death, after Pilate seeks his release	27:15-30	15:6-19	23:13-25	18:39–19:16
~3 pm Friday	Golgotha, Jerusalem	Jesus' death on the cross and associated events	27:31-56	15:20-41	23:26-49	19:16-30
	Jerusalem	Jesus' body removed from the cross and buried	27:57-61	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:31-42
Nisan 15	Jerusalem	Priests and Pharisees get guard for tomb	27:62-66			
Nisan 16	Jerusalem and vicinity	Jesus' resurrection and events of that day	28:1-15	16:1-8	24:1-49	20:1-25
	Jerusalem; Galilee	Subsequent appearances of Jesus Christ	28:16-20	[1 Cor. 15:5-7]	[Acts 1:3-8]	20:26–21:25
Iyyar 25	Mount of Olives near Bethany	Jesus' ascension, fortieth day after his resurrection	[Acts 1:9-12]		24:50-53	

JESUS WITH THE DOCTORS
And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me?
wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? (Luke 2:49)

PRIOR TO JESUS' MINISTRY

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
3 B.C.	Jerusalem, temple	Birth of John the Baptist foretold to Zechariah			1:5-25	
~2 B.C.	Nazareth; Judea	Birth of Jesus foretold to Mary, who visits Elizabeth			1:26-56	
2 B.C.	Judean hill country	Birth of John the Baptist; later, his desert life			1:57-80	
2 B.C. Oct.	Bethlehem	Birth of Jesus (the Word, through whom all other things had come into existence) as descendant of Abraham and of David	1:1-25		2:1-7	1:1-5,9-14
	Near Bethlehem	Angel announces good news; shepherds visit babe			2:8-20	
	Bethlehem; Jerusalem	Jesus circumcised (eighth day), presented in temple (fortieth day)			2:21-39	
1 B.C. or 1 A.D.	Jerusalem; Bethlehem; Nazareth	Astrologers; flight to Egypt; babes killed; Jesus returns	2:1-23		2:39,40	
12 A.D.	Jerusalem	Twelve-year-old Jesus at the Passover; goes home			2:41-52	
29, spring	Wilderness; Jordan	Ministry of John the Baptist	3:1-12	1:1-8	3:1-18	1:6-8,15:28

Luke 1:5-25

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained

speechless. And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST.—*Reprints*, p. 1915

Luke 1:5-17.

"And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest;
for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways."—Luke 1:76.

IN considering this familiar narrative we are reminded of the Lord's great care in preparing his chosen instruments for the various parts of his great work. Abraham's life was a long discipline of faith and patience; for he was to be the father of the faithful, a type of the fatherhood of God, and a worthy example to all his children, both those under the Law and those under the new covenant of grace.—Rom. 4:11-17.

Moses was specially prepared to be a leader, lawgiver and judge to Israel. Born under the humiliating conditions of bondage and the imperial sentence of death, he was providentially protected, preserved and adopted into the royal family, where he received a measure of that education necessary for his future service; and after that he had forty years more in the retirement of domestic life, which, under the operations of divine grace, hardened his virtues and mellowed the ardor of his temperament. Thus God gave to Israel a trained and experienced character as a leader. Similarly, suitable preparation for the positions they were to occupy or the work they were to do is very noticeable in other cases, both of Bible record and of subsequent history. Mark the case of Samuel, a child of prayer, devoted to the Lord from his infancy, and trained in the service of the Lord under the care of Eli; and of Paul, called from his infancy, instructed in the law, and zealous toward God even while ignorantly persecuting the saints, verily thinking he did God service.

John the Baptist was another illustration. The preparations in this, as in most of these cases, began before he was born, in the hearts of his parents,—"They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." (Verse 6) Consider also subsequent reformers known to all through the pages of history, and mark the providential leadings in their preparation for their work long before they could have any knowledge of the work that was before them. Consider also how the Lord has been preparing the Gospel Church for its Millennial work; and how he prepared the ancient worthies for their Millennial work in the earthly phase of the coming Kingdom; and so on through all the list of his "chosen vessels." The "chosen vessel" is always a prepared vessel for the service intended; and that the preparation is of God, and not of himself, is manifest from the fact that in every case it began long before the chosen one knew of the ends to be accomplished or the significance of the providential circumstances or the measures of discipline.

The principal preparation which God requires for every part of his honorable service is holiness of heart—devotedness to God and to his righteousness and truth, and abhorrence of all that is unholy, unclean. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." There are, however, some parts of the Lord's service which reflect no honor upon those engaged in it, though they do reflect honor upon the wisdom and power of God who is able to make even the wrath of his enemies to praise him, by his power to out-general and overrule their evil for good to his cause. For instance, Satan, and every other evil worker, whose evil devices are, by divine power, overruled for good of God, unwittingly serve some of the purposes of God—sometimes for the discipline of the children of God and sometimes for the revolutionizing of affairs in the world.

The prenatal influences upon John the Baptist were such that, from his birth, his heart was inclined toward God and holiness (verse 15); and the training and discipline of his life were such that at maturity he was ready for the

work of introducing to Israel the long-promised Messiah. Of him it was foretold, "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord." Yes, he was a great man, a great preacher and a great prophet. Jesus said he was the greatest of all the prophets. (Matt. 11:11.) But he was not great in the eyes of men. He was never a guest at the palace of Herod, but he was a prisoner in his prisons. He was not an esteemed orator in the Jewish synagogues, but he was "a voice crying in the wilderness." He was not arrayed in purple and fine linen, nor did he fare sumptuously every day, but his raiment was of camel's hair and a leathern girdle, and his meat was locusts and wild honey. And though, for a time, the multitudes were attracted by his preaching, he was soon abandoned by the people, imprisoned by the king, and finally beheaded in prison.

And yet John was truly a great man; for he was "great in the sight of the Lord." He was great in the sense that he that ruleth his own spirit according to the principles and precepts of the divine Word is greater than he that taketh a city. (Prov. 16:32.) All the natural aspirations and human ambitions were made subservient to his one mission of introducing his cousin, Jesus of Nazareth, a man of humble birth and circumstances, as the Messiah, to whom he knew the gathering of the people would be after he had accomplished his mission of introducing him. (Gen. 49:10.) But John was pleased to have it so, and declared that in performing this service for his cousin according to the flesh, and thus accomplishing his part in the divine purpose and prophecy, his joy was fulfilled. (John 3:29.) And, by the eye of faith discerning in the humble Nazarene the Son of God, he said to the people, "One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" "He must increase, but I must decrease."—Luke 3:16; John 1:29; 3:30.

It was this meekness, this complete self-abnegation and singleness of purpose to accomplish the righteous will of God, that constituted the moral greatness of John. And because he was in that attitude of heart where the Lord could use him he was privileged to be the greatest, the most highly honored, of all the prophets, in that he was chosen to introduce, to Israel and the world, the Anointed Son of God, the Redeemer and future King of the whole earth. Thus he became a great man, a great preacher of righteousness and truth, the greatest of all the prophets, and one of the heirs of the earthly phase of the Kingdom of God.

What a profitable lesson is in this for all who would seek true greatness—to be "great in the sight of the Lord." It calls to mind that wise admonition of the Apostle, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet. 5:6.) The way of the cross, the way of humiliation and self-abasement, is the way to the crown, to that true honor that cometh from God only. Where now is the honor of the great ones of earth who have passed away—the Caesars, the Herods, the Alexanders and Napoleons; the Jewish scribes and Pharisees and doctors of the law and Rabbis? and where all the reverend Popes and Cardinals and Bishops and Priests of the great Apostasy who proudly flourished in their day? They have all come to naught, and in the Millennial judgment they will come forth to shame and confusion of face, stripped of all their honors. But those truly great ones—"great in the sight of the Lord"—are reserved unto honor and glory and power at the appearing and Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Let the lesson come home to each of our hearts,—"He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." Patiently submit to the humbling now, and hopefully and joyfully wait for the glory to be revealed by and by in all the faithful. This is not the time nor place for rewards, but for discipline and service, for the development of character, for making ready for the future exaltation, that we may appear without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, joint heirs of our Redeemer.

For an exposition of verses 16 and 17 see *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 2, chapter 8.

PREPARING FOR THE KINGDOM—*Reprints*, p. 4939

LUKE 1:5-23.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God."—Hebrews 11:6.

OUR BEREAN STUDY course for the year has been mapped out by the International Committee. It constitutes a very thorough investigation of our Lord's earthly life, from His birth to His ascension. Today's study very appropriately calls for investigation of God's dealings and promises up to the birth of John the Baptist, the Redeemer's forerunner and herald.

Four thousand years before the birth of Jesus, God declared that the Seed of the woman would bruise the Serpent's head. This dark saying we now see signifies that sin with all its work of havoc in the world is to be offset and destroyed in due time and that the power of God to this end will operate through a wonderful Son of the disobedient Eve. Centuries passed with no sign of a fulfillment of this promise. Our race became more degraded and lapsed more and more into unbelief. Then Enoch was born, of the line of Seth. "He walked with God" and was used as a Divine mouthpiece to give a further prophecy, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with myriads of His holy ones, to execute judgment (justice) in the earth."—Jude 14,15.

Another thousand years elapsed before God made any further suggestion of His benevolent intention of giving the world a fresh trial or judgment. Then to Abraham, the friend of God, He made known more fully still the hope of the world—the Gospel. God declared to Abraham His intention to bless all the families of the earth, and secondly, that this blessing upon mankind would come to them through Abraham's posterity: "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 12:3.

This statement to Abraham, St. Paul pronounces the first Gospel message, because the other statements were so vague as not to make certain human recovery. Sin and the Serpent might have been destroyed without the seed of the woman being specially blessed, and the judging of mankind mentioned by Saint Enoch implied, but did not positively say, that human blessing would result. The message to Abraham, however, was explicit—"All the families of the earth shall be blessed." See Gal. 3:8.

St. Paul reminds us that God not only declared His coming blessing, but that He made oath to the same. God's oath was not necessary to Abraham. He confidently believed; but, as St. Paul said, the oath was for our sake. The fulfillment of the promise would be so long deferred that we, who are so specially interested in it, might have feared some change in the Divine Program. St. Paul assures us that the oath was in order that, "by two immutable things (God's Word and God's oath), we might have strong consolation (we, the Church), who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us (in 'the good tidings', the promise), which hope we have as an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, within the veil, whither our Forerunner has for us entered." (Hebrews 6:18-20.) We see, then, by the Apostle's words, that the Abrahamic promise or Covenant has not yet been fulfilled—it is still an anchor for our faith.

Seeking Abraham's Seed

Ishmael was not the heir of the promise, but Isaac was; Esau was not, but Jacob was. Finally, all of Jacob's family were accepted as Abraham's seed, and in due time they were all baptized into Moses in the sea and the cloud and became heirs of the promise, on condition that they would keep the Law given at Mt. Sinai. Obedience to the requirements of that Law would give them eternal life, and forthwith the approved ones would be God's agents in fulfilling the promise—in "blessing all the families of the earth."

But, imperfect like all the remainder of our race under the death sentence, the Israelites were unable to keep the perfect Law of God; hence they all died, like the remainder of the race—because they were sinners. As Jesus said, none of you keepeth the Law; as St. Paul said, "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight." Nevertheless, the endeavor of the Jews to obey their Law brought a great

blessing upon them; though some were hypocritical and said prayers, not from the heart, others were "Israelites indeed in whom was no guile."

The heart-loyalty of the "Israelites indeed" God appreciated, and they were granted the privilege at Pentecost of stepping from the house of Moses, as faithful servants, into the house of Christ, as faithful sons. (Heb. 2:5,6.) "To as many as received Him (Jesus), to these gave He liberty to become sons of God." (John 1:12.) They were accepted into this sonship after Jesus had laid down His life sacrificially, had been raised from the dead to the divine nature, and had ascended far above angels, principalities and powers to God's right hand of favor and had appeared as the Advocate for all "Israelites indeed," all willing to walk in His steps.

Other Gracious Promises

All of God's promises were to Abraham and his seed (his natural seed primarily). Consequently all through the Jewish Age, while they as a people were trying to commend themselves as worthy to be the Seed of Abraham, by endeavoring to keep the Law, God spoke to them prophetically. He informed them that it was His intention ultimately to make a New Covenant with them, still better than the one which Moses mediated. Under that New Covenant He would take away their sins and iniquities; but He did not tell them how these would be cancelled; that they would be cancelled through the merit of "better sacrifices" than those which they offered through the Law year by year.

God assured them that this New Covenant would have a Mediator who would be higher than Moses. Of that Mediator Moses prophesied, saying, "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from amongst your brethren, like unto me (I am a type of Him); Him shall ye hear in all things—and whosoever will not obey that Prophet shall be destroyed." (Acts 3:23.) That greater Mediator would be the One by whom they would be really helped up to a place where they could keep the Divine Law perfectly and be used of God in blessing all the earth.—Jer. 31:31.

How the Israelites longed thereafter for the New Covenant with the better Mediator, whom they styled Messiah, or the Anointed of God! Hearken again to God's message respecting this glorious Messiah, the Mediator of the New Covenant; He says, "Behold, I send you the Messenger of the Covenant, whom you delight in (the One whom you have been so long praying for, the One through whose assistance you will be enabled to keep My Law and to become My agents in the instruction and blessing of the world); but who may abide the day of His coming and who shall stand when He appeareth, for He is like fuller's soap and a refiner's fire? And He shall sit to refine the sons of Levi that they may offer an acceptable sacrifice."—Malachi 3:1-3.

Thus the Israelites had the precious promise respecting the coming of the Messiah—and not only so, but intimations that there would be special trials and difficulties on those living at that time. Naturally every mother amongst the Israelites longed for the birth of a son, hoping that she might be honored as the parent of the Seed of the woman, who would bruise the Serpent's head—the great One of Abraham's seed through whom, by some unknown arrangement or process, a great blessing would come upon the sons of Levi, upon Israel and through these upon all the nations of the earth.

These promises led up to and culminated in the birth of John the Baptist, the incidents of which constitute the study of today. He was not to be Messiah, but His herald. He was not born of a miraculous conception of the Holy Spirit and without human father, but He was announced by a special messenger of God, as our lesson most beautifully tells. If Zacharias' faith was tested, it was found strong and was assisted by his nine-months' experience of dumbness. Thus did God prepare the way before sending His only begotten Son to be man's Redeemer.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
~2 B.C.	Nazareth; Judea	Birth of Jesus foretold to Mary, who visits Elizabeth			1:26-56	
	Judean hill country	Birth of John the Baptist; later, his desert life			1:57-80	

Luke 1:26-80

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and 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. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever. And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house. Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marveled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited

and redeemed his people, And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.

THE VERY GREATEST PROPHET—*Reprints*, p. 4940

LUKE 1:57-80

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people."—Luke 1: 68.

OF JOHN THE BAPTIST Jesus declared, "Verily I say unto you, of those born of women there hath not risen a greater Prophet than John the Baptist; and yet I say unto you that the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he." (Luke 7:28.) These words are valuable as showing us that John was the last of the Prophets announcing the coming of Messiah and the beginning of the great work of selecting from amongst sinners a loyal class, to be associates with the Redeemer in His Messianic Kingdom and glory. John could not be of the Kingdom class. His grand work terminated before the Redeemer's sacrifice was finished—before Pentecostal blessings came accepting some as joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom. John himself seemed to understand this, for he declared, "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom," but I am the Bridegroom's friend and rejoice to hear His voice.—John 3:29.

John—"The Favor of God"

In harmony with the message of the Angel Gabriel, John the Baptist was born. On his eighth day he was circumcised and named. The family relatives urged the name of his father, but the father and mother named him John, and immediately Zacharias' dumbness departed. His faith had been helped. He had triumphed over all doubts and manifested this by giving the name mentioned by Gabriel. The name John has a beautiful signification—"The favor of God."

As a man John was peculiar in that he had no other aim or object in life than to be God's messenger—to proclaim His Anointed One and to prepare the people for the trying experiences and character-test which Malachi had declared would come with the revealment of Messiah, who would "sit as a Refiner, to purify the sons of Levi, that they might offer to God an acceptable sacrifice." So it was that John in his ministry declared, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." Believe the good news. Repent, reform. Get ready for a share in that Kingdom.

The trials came in a way not expected. Messiah was not born an heir to earthly wealth or name or fame, and His experiences as well as His teachings were different from any that the Doctors of the Law had anticipated. The opposition of sinners and Jesus' opposition to the errors and hypocrisies of His time produced a burning which had a refining effect upon some and made of them antitypical Levites, consecrated people, many of whom became antitypical priests, presenting their bodies living sacrifices, walking in the footsteps of the Redeemer.

The Prophecy of Zacharias

St. Peter distinctly tells us respecting the Old Testament Prophets, that "Holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." He intimates that frequently they uttered deeper and broader truths than they themselves comprehended—truths which only

the future would fully reveal. This is true of the prophecy of Zacharias, in this lesson. Verses 68-70 constitute the first division of this prophecy; praise to God, the Fountain of every good and perfect gift, comes first. To Him all honor and praise are to be given for the fulfillment of His gracious promises of old, "for He hath visited and brought redemption to His people; He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David," in harmony with the promises. Here, after the usual manner of prophecies, the thing about to be accomplished is spoken of as though it had been done.

As John the Baptist was born but six months before Jesus, it follows that the begetting of Jesus had already taken place at the time of this prophecy. The Holy Spirit spoke of the things begun, but not yet accomplished, as though finished: "He hath visited and brought redemption for His people." This word redemption applies not only to the redeeming work accomplished by Jesus in the consecration of His life at baptism and down to the completion of His sacrifice at Calvary, but it is comprehensive enough to take in the entire work of reclaiming humanity.

A small section of our race, the "elect," is being reclaimed during this Gospel Age; but the Scriptures assure us that the Messianic reign of a thousand years will all be for the purpose of redeeming or bringing back from the power of sin and death Adam and so many of his children as shall be willing to accept the Divine favor, when brought to their knowledge. The import, therefore, of this first strophe or section of the poetic prophecy is, The Lord be praised that the time has come beginning the great blessing which He long ago promised.

Deliverance From Enemies

The second section or strophe of this prophetic poem runs from verse 71 to 75. It relates to the deliverance of God's people from the power of their enemies. One important thought here is that none but God's people will ever be delivered from the enemies here referred to. However, there have been many in the past, as there are at present, enemies through wicked works—not because of intentional wickedness, but because blinded by the god of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, the weaknesses of their fallen flesh, etc.

During Messiah's reign of a thousand years, when all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears will be unstopped, and when the knowledge of the glory of God's character will be clearly revealed and the horribleness of sin be fully manifested—then many, now led captive by Satan at his will, will bow the knee to Emmanuel and confess to the glory of God. In other words, as Jesus said, His consecrated followers are His "little flock" of the present time. But during His glorious reign He will gather another flock. As He said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold—them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd."—John 10:16.

"One fold and one Shepherd" does not signify that all of the sheep will be of the same nature. On the contrary, the Apostle tells us that God's Plan is ultimately to "gather together under one Head (Shepherd) all things, both in heaven and in earth." (Ephesians 1:10.) Of these "all things" the Church, the Bride, will be chief, on the plane of divine nature. The Great Company, cherubim and angels will follow in order, and redeemed and restored mankind in human perfection will be the lowest order in the Divine fold.

St. Paul tells us about the enemies from whom ultimately all of God's people shall be delivered. Satan is an enemy. He shall be bound for a thousand years and ultimately shall be destroyed. Sin is an enemy, which will be stamped out in its various phases during Messiah's Kingdom. And we read, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"—and with it will go the tomb. Adamic death will be no more. None will be under its power. The resurrection power will release all. Only those who sin wilfully, deliberately, will die the Second Death, which is not an enemy.

The Preparatory Work

The third section or strophe of this prophetic poem tells us of a work to be accomplished before the grand consummation of the destruction of all enemies and the lifting up of all accounted worthy to be sons of God. This is recorded in verses 76-79. It tells how John the Baptist would be the forerunner of the Lord's

special Servant, Jesus, to pave the way for His great work. That great work would be to give the knowledge of salvation to thousands who were already God's people, to show them the "high calling" of this present Age. Thus in God's tender mercy the Church sees and is enlightened by the "Morning Star" or "Day Star" before the Sun of Righteousness arises to scatter the darkness of mankind during Messiah's reign. This lesser light of the present time shines into the hearts of believers with sanctifying power and sets them afire with zeal for the Truth. They in turn shine forth upon those who are sitting in the shadow of death. This "Day Star" guides the feet of the saints in the way of peace, even while still in the time of trouble and before the New Dispensation is ushered in.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
2 B.C. Oct.	Bethlehem	Birth of Jesus (the Word, through whom all other things had come into existence) as descendant of Abraham and of David	1:1-25		2:1-7	1:1-5,9-14

Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Tamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; And Salmon begat Boaz of Rahab; and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Uriah; And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; And Asa begat Jehoshaphat; and Jehoshaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josiah; And Josiah begat Jechoniah and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechoniah begat Shealtiel; and Shealtiel begat Zorobabel; And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

Luke 2:1-7

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because (he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

John 1:1-5,9-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. … That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power 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. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

"THE TRUE LIGHT THAT LIGHTETH EVERY MAN."—*Reprints*, p. 2408

JOHN 1:1-14.

"In him was life, and the life was the light of men."—John 1:4.

REACHING far into the past, to the beginning of earth's creation as mentioned in Genesis, our lesson informs us that even then the Logos, the Word, existed, with God. "The Word" is a very good title for our Lord Jesus in his prehuman condition: it is the translation of the Greek word *Logos*, which might more literally be rendered, "the Expression:" for the great and honorable one, the heavenly Father's companion "before the world was" made, who is declared to have been "the beginning of the creation of God," was in every sense of the word a full and complete expression of the divine will, mind, purpose, character. Of this First-begotten-one the Apostle writes that he was "in the form of God"—a likeness of Jehovah (Phil. 2:6), but he does not claim, as our common version would appear to make him say, that the Logos thought it not robbery to be equal with the Father, Jehovah God. The Apostle's argument is to the very contrary of this: he is showing that the Logos was fully subservient to Jehovah; and that it was a proof of this subserviency and obedience and humility, that the Logos became flesh, the "man Christ Jesus." And further, in harmony with the same humility and obedience to the Father, he became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; and on this account ("wherefore") Jehovah God highly exalted him by a resurrection to the divine nature, far above angels, principalities, powers, and every name that is named,—to a position higher than any other, higher than his prehuman condition, next to the Father, and an associate of his throne, his glory, his power, his nature.

What the Apostle does say is to the very contrary of the statement of our common translation. A good translation is furnished in the *Emphatic Diaglott:*—"Who, tho being in God's form, did not meditate a usurpation to be like God, but divested himself, taking a bondman's form." This is in agreement with the rendering of the passage by various Greek scholars, thus: "Who … did not think it a matter to be earnestly desired,"—Clarke; "Did not earnestly affect,"—Cyprian; "Did not think of eagerly retaining,"—Wakefield; "Did not regard … as an object of solicitous desire,"—Stewart; "Thought not … a thing to be seized,"—Sharpe; "Did not eagerly grasp,"—Kneeland; "Did not violently

strive,"—Dickinson; "Did not meditate a usurpation,"—Turnbull; "Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize [margin, a thing to be grasped] to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." —*Revised Version*.

But altho the Scriptures nowhere place the only begotten and well-beloved Son of God on an equality with Jehovah himself, either while he was here on earth, nor while he was the Logos, before he was "made flesh," they do assure us that now, in his highly exalted condition, the Logos still, Christ Jesus still, he is partaker of the divine nature, glory and all power in heaven and in earth; and accordingly we are instructed that "all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." (John 5:23.) However, our lesson introduces us to our Redeemer in his prehuman condition, a spirit condition, higher than the angels, and assures us that all things were made by him: literally, "Without him was not one thing made that was made." Thus we see that in all of Jehovah's creative work on every plane the Logos had preference—"that in all things he might have the preeminence."—Col. 1:18.

The number of Bible students who are noncritical is very large. It is not, therefore, surprising that many have fallen into the error of supposing that this first verse of John's Gospel is a declaration that the Logos was the full equal of Jehovah—that the Word, the message, was the full equal to the one who sent the Word, the expression, the message. Yet this is contradictory to reason, as well as contradictory to the testimony of our Lord Jesus himself, who unequivocally declared, "Of mine own self I can do nothing; as I hear I judge;" and again, "The Father is greater than I."—John 5:30; 14:28.

Scholars are all aware that the word that is translated God in the Old Testament is not equivalent to the word Jehovah. Altho its significance is "mighty one," it is frequently used for others besides the All-mighty, Jehovah: it is used for angels; it is used for great men; it is used for false gods. The word Jehovah is the specific name for the All-mighty One, to whom all other *elohim* (gods—mighty ones) are subject. So in the New Testament, the word *theos* is the equivalent to *elohim*, and signifies mighty one. It is used in the New Testament most frequently in reference to Jehovah himself, but sometimes, in referring to man, and to false gods, and several times in referring to our Lord Jesus. The first verse of John's Gospel is a marked instance of the use of *theos* in referring to Jehovah's Logos, his Only Begotten Son, "the beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. 3:14.) But the critical Greek student should find no difficulty in distinguishing between these two Gods, and noting that the one is distinctly referred to as the superior of the other, for this distinction is clearly shown by the use of the Greek article before *theos* in referring to Jehovah, and the absence of that article when *theos* is used in referring to the Logos. The effect of this, expressed in our English language, would render the passage thus"

In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with the God, and the Logos was a God. The same was in the beginning with the God."

This translation will not be disputed by any Greek scholar; and it sets at rest all ground for dispute respecting the primary relationship between the Father and the Son. Indeed, the expressions, "Father" and "Son" imply what is elsewhere stated,—that the Son "proceeded forth and came from God" (John 8:42). Otherwise these terms, Father and Son, are meaningless. A son can never be his own father, nor can it be claimed that a son never had a beginning, for the term, son, implies a life, existence, being, which had a beginning, and which was derived from a father. The Scriptures, when permitted to interpret themselves, are beautifully consistent, and harmoniously reasonable. But when warped and twisted by preconceived ideas and false doctrines, the light of truth becomes darkness, and mystery is written upon everything connected therewith—not the mystery of God, however, but "the mystery of iniquity," of darkness, of error.

"In him was life." Our Lord's separateness from the human family is thus pointed out: in no other man than "the man Christ Jesus" was there life. In all the race of Adam, the entire human family, aside from Jesus, death was working; it thus reigned in the entire race from the time father Adam became disobedient and

forfeited the life that was in him originally, and was able to impart to his posterity only dying conditions. It was this life in Christ—the fact that he was separate from sinners, holy, harmless, undefiled, that constituted this Savior, whom the Father sent, a beacon light of hope for our race. Had he in any manner forfeited his rights to life, either before he came to human conditions, or while he was the man Christ Jesus, our light of hope would have been extinguished: but possessing his rights to life he, according to the Father's program, laid down his life on our behalf—a corresponding price for the life of Adam, which had been forfeited through sin;—a corresponding price, therefore, for all who had a share in Adam's death penalty.

Having thus bought us with his own precious blood, he thus became light-giver, hope-giver, to the world of mankind, and also its life-giver. Praise God for this great light and life provided for a dying world; and altho it is true that the light shone amidst the darkness of human depravity without being generally comprehended or appreciated, it is also true, nevertheless, that "that was the true [antitypical, the real, genuine, not counterfeit or typical] light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It matters not, therefore, that this true light was not comprehended and appreciated by the Jews in the days of his flesh, and that he is not comprehended even today by the world of mankind; he, nevertheless, is **the true light**, and in the Father's due time he shall accomplish the great plan of God, of which he is the center, the expression, the Logos;—he shall enlighten every man born into the world. Nor shall any be permitted to languish in darkness, or to fail of eternal life by reason of lack of knowledge; in due time all the blind eyes shall be opened, all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the blind shall see out of obscurity the great Light which God has raised up, to be a prince and a Savior for whosoever cometh unto the Father through him.—Isa. 35:5; John 8:12; 14:6.

True, only a minority have yet seen this light, for still "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." (Isa. 60:2.) We are waiting, however, for the glorious Millennial Day in which this great light, this true light, shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of the Father, and when his faithful ones, his jewels, chosen and polished during this time of darkness, shall be glorified with himself, and be associated in the great work of enlightening mankind, and as the Seed of Abraham, in blessing all the families of the earth with this enlightenment, and with accompanying opportunities for harmony with God, and eternal life.—Matt. 13:43; Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:16,29; Gen. 22:17, 18.

Nothing in this, however, offers excuses for those catching even a glimpse of this great light in the present time. Blessed are their eyes if they see, and their ears, if they hear, and such will have the graver responsibilities and "stripes," if they do not walk according to the light which they have received.—Luke 12:47,48.

The Apostle carefully distinguishes between the messenger of the light and the Light itself. Subsequently (John 5:35) our Lord speaks of John the Baptist as a burning and a shining lamp (mistranslated light). A totally different Greek word is used when our Lord is spoken of as being the Light, but this same Greek word, *phos*, is used with respect to the Church which is the Body of Christ, and with her Lord partaker of the holy spirit. Respecting these members of his Body, members of the **ecclesia**, the elect, our Lord expressly says, "Ye are the **light** of the world," using the very same Greek word that in this lesson is used with respect to himself. It is this same word, *phos*, that is used in the following Scriptures: "If the **light** that is in thee become darkness;" "The children of the **light**;" "What union hath **light** with darkness?" "Put on the armor of **light**;" "Now are ye **light** in the Lord;" "Walk as children of the **light**;" "Out of darkness into his marvelous **light**;" "Walk in the **light**, as he is in the **light**." A similar distinction, as between John and Christ, is to be noted in the fact that our Lord is the Logos, the Word, while John the Baptist was not the Word, but was merely "A voice crying in the wilderness."

When the Logos was made flesh, became the man Christ Jesus, altho he was in a world which he had created by the Father's power vested in him, yet the world did not recognize him, and even his own nation, to whom he spe-

cially presented himself, received him not. Nevertheless, some of them received him, and as many of them as did so were blessed—blessed with the power and privilege of becoming sons of God, whereas previously their highest possibility had been to be God's servants and friends. Here we note the change of dispensation from the Jewish to the Christian, and that this change was made possible by something which our Lord did or offered. What he did was to redeem the Jews from the sentence of the Law Covenant, under which they rested, and to redeem all mankind from the death sentence which came upon all through Adam's disobedience.

Until this ransom had been paid to divine Justice, the condemned ones could not be received back to the condition of sonship primarily enjoyed by father Adam, but forfeited for himself and posterity when he became a sinner. The mission of the great Light into world was not only to redeem man's life, but also to enlighten him and to restore as many as may be willing to accept sonship, and this work has not yet been accomplished. Nay, it may be said scarcely to have begun, for only a remnant of his own nation received the true Light; and only a little flock in all, from every kindred, nation or people, have received him and his blessing, as now offered to mankind,—the vast majority being blinded by Satan, and thus hindered from seeing the true Light, as the Apostle explains.—2 Cor. 4:4.

Those called during this time of darkness, when gross darkness covers the people, are called to what the Scriptures denominate a "high calling," a heavenly calling—not merely to a restoration to human nature, and its privileges and blessings lost through sin: they are called to special fellowship with the Logos himself—called to be partakers of his light, and sharers with him in the future work of enlightening and blessing the world. These are sons of God in an especial sense—in a sense different from Adam even in his state of innocence. (Luke 3:38.) These are invited to be sons of God on a plane of sonship higher than the angelic sons; viz., as heirs of God, joint-heirs with the Logos, partakers with him of the divine nature, which is far above angelic and all other natures.—2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:17.

This power to become sons of God is not granted to sinners, but to the justified—to those who have been justified by faith, by believing on his name. These are begotten, not after the ordinary manner in which fleshly children are begotten, not by blood, nor has the will of the flesh anything whatever to do with their begetting, as it always has to do with the begetting and character in a fleshly begetting. In their begetting of the spirit of the truth, altho that truth may be presented through human agencies, the begetting cannot be accomplished by the will of man, but only in proportion as the natural will is rejected and ignored, and the will of God received instead. The Apostle James (1:18) explains this begetting, saying, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." These "new creatures in Christ Jesus," sons of God and prospectively joint-heirs with Christ, are expected to receive of the Father's spirit so fully (through the word of his grace) that they will be willing to suffer reproach for his cause and his truth, and like the Logos himself be willing to lay down their lives for the brethren, in harmony with the divine arrangement of this age, as living sacrifices to God, holy, acceptable through Christ. And it is only upon condition that they suffer with Christ that they may hope eventually to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom and glory and power promised him by the Father.—Rom. 8:17; John 1:11,12.

The fourteenth verse goes back to take up the subject at the same point as verse five, and to repeat the narrative from another standpoint. "The Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us." This does not teach what is ordinarily called the doctrine of the Incarnation, which is understood to signify that the only begotten of the Father, the Logos, came as a spirit being, and inhabited a fleshly or human body for a time, and was again liberated from that body at or about the time that the body was crucified. This view of the incarnation of the Logos makes nonsense of much of the Scripture, and beclouds and mystifies the minds of many Bible students. From this standpoint they think of

our Lord as really a spirit being, who never ceased to be a spirit being, and who never was in any sense of the word a man, a human being, but who merely appeared to be a human being, but actually was not. From this standpoint of view our Lord's prayers to the Father, his temptations in the wilderness, and his tears and dying cry are all made to appear as so much clever acting; because this false claim makes it appear that he really was so far above human conditions that he could not be tried, tempted, suffer, etc. Furthermore, it implies that he did not really die, but merely appeared to die, and that at the moment the flesh was crucified the Logos merely stepped out, and became a silent invisible spectator of the tragedy of Calvary.

But it was no such farcical sacrifice for sins, and pretended death without dying, that God had typified during the preceding sixteen hundred years, in the sacrifice of bulls and of goats, etc., year after year continually. Adam's death-sentence was a real sentence, a genuine penalty, and the ransom by which we are made free from sin was a no less real sacrifice, which our Lord—"the man Christ Jesus"—gave on our behalf.—1 Tim. 2:5,6.

The Apostle assures us that he who was rich for our sakes became poor: he did not merely pretend to be poor, by merely putting on an outer coat of a lower nature, but he actually became poor, actually left the glory and honor of a higher nature, he actually humbled himself and took human nature;—not, however, fallen human nature, not sinful flesh, but the human nature unfallen, the likeness of humanity free from its blemishes through sin and death.

This is in exact accord with the Scriptures under consideration, "He was made flesh:" literally, "he became flesh." Nothing less than this great stoop or humiliation enabled him to be our Redeemer, and qualified him to give to God the ransom price for man's transgression; as it is written, "By a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection." It was a man that was sentenced to death, and neither an angel's life, nor the archangel's life, nor any other life than a man's life could be the "corresponding price" which would release Adam and his posterity from the death penalty. Just so the sacrifice of lower animals could never take away sin; because, altho innocent of sin, they were not of the same identical nature as the sinner, and therefore could not be accepted of divine justice as man's ransom price. The Logos did not die in his change from spirit nature to human nature; but when "the man Christ Jesus" died, it was the full giving up of life in every sense of the word—nothing was retained; "He gave all that he had" (Matt. 13:44,46),—he gave his life, the life of the man Christ Jesus, which had previously been the life of the Logos. His being ended: "He poured out his soul [being] unto death; he made his soul [being] an offering for sin." This is further testified to by the Lord himself who, after his resurrection, declared, "I am he that liveth and was dead—behold, I am alive forever more." "Christ dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."—Isa. 53:10,12; Rev. 1:18; Rom. 6:9.

"We beheld his glory," his grandeur, his perfection, his nobility; it shone out clearly to those who had eyes to see it—those who were not blinded by the prince of this world. These very glories of the man Christ Jesus attest fully that he was not of the sinner race of Adam, but that he was indeed an exception to all mankind; giving evidence of having been begotten of the heavenly Father, in that he was full of grace and truth. "As he was so are we in this world," says the Apostle: and altho we are by nature sinners and children of wrath even as others, yet by grace we have been begotten again to a new nature, and this grace of God operating in our hearts, enlightening, purifying, sanctifying, should, gradually at least, transform us, change us "from glory to glory," bringing us more and more to the likeness of God's dear Son, our Redeemer and Lord, to whom, with God the Father, be praise and thanksgiving now and forever, for "so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."—Heb. 2:3.

"THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH."—*Reprints*, p. 2555

LUKE 2:1-16.

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matthew 1:21.

JESUS is the topic of the International Sunday School Lesson course for the entire year 1900. It should be a very profitable study, for the more intimately we know our dear Redeemer in the light of the Scriptures the more we shall appreciate him, love him and seek to copy him. No other life than his could bear so continual and close a scrutiny, yet always be full of fresh revelations of moral dignity and character—any other life similarly studied and criticized would reveal its seamy side of weakness, sin and ignobility.

Of the four records, only John's attempts to trace our Lord's genealogy to the heavenly source, and to show us that before he was made flesh he was a spirit being with the Father and a sharer of his glory—a god with the God. But all of the Evangelists are clear in their statement that he "was made flesh"—not that he remained a spirit being, and assumed flesh as clothing in which to appear to men, but, however explainable, that the life power of the spirit being, the Logos, became the life power of the human being, born of a woman and under the Law, subject to all the conditions and circumstances of the Jews. Matthew traces Joseph's genealogy; for altho the statement is clear that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, nevertheless, being adopted by him as his son, he might, without impropriety, inherit through him. Luke shows the genealogy of Mary, by which our Lord was actually related, according to the flesh, to our race and to the royal family of David through the line of Nathan.

The time of our Lord's birth was an auspicious one in several respects, and very evidently divine wisdom had exercised itself in respect to the world's affairs by way of preparation for this important event: (1) The spirit of world-conquering that began with Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was favorable to it, in the sense that it brought the various families or nations of mankind into closer contact with each other, broadening their ideas. (2) This policy had resulted in the transplanting of peoples from one land to another, and thus had made them more cosmopolitan in their sentiments. (3) Israel and Judah, thus transplanted in their captivity to Babylon, became so attached to the new conditions that comparatively few of them availed themselves of the offer of Cyrus to return to their own land, only about fifty thousand of all the tribes, out of several millions. The Jews among the Gentiles were by no means lost and had by no means abandoned all of their hopes in the Abrahamic Covenant nor all of their faithfulness to the Mosaic Law—altho they were lax in these matters and too full of a love of gain and ease to cultivate the spirit of Israelites indeed. Nevertheless, they had their influence amongst all the nations with whom they dwelt, and were witnesses to the hopes of Israel in the one God and in a coming Messiah, the Son of God, to be the world's Deliverer. (4) The triumph for a time of the Greek Empire had brought to the civilized world a highly developed literature—the Greek language had reached its zenith, and was the literary language of the civilized world. (5) The Roman Empire had conquered the world and was in the height of its power, and as a result there was a time of universal peace, and hence a more favorable time than any before for the announcement of the Gospel and for the safety of its representatives in passing from nation to nation. (6) Israel itself had reached probably its highest development, intellectually, morally and religiously, and additionally we are told in the Scriptures that "All men were in expectation" of the Messiah's coming.—Luke 3:15.

It was just at this most appropriate time, as divinely arranged for, that Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, issued his decree respecting the taxing of his worldwide empire. The decree was not merely an assessment of taxes, but was rather a census, or enrollment for taxation. But instead of sending assessors to the people, according to the present custom, the arrangement then was that every male citizen must report himself at the headquarters of his own family line. This was the occasion for the coming of Joseph and his espoused wife, Mary, the mother of Jesus, to Bethlehem, their native city or family city, for they were both of the

house of David (tho through different lines), and Bethlehem was "the city of David." Thus in a providential manner and by a decree over which they had no control whatever, Joseph and Mary were brought to the very city in which most appropriately the great heir of David should be born, as had been foretold by the prophet.—Micah 5:2.

The noting of these little incidentals by which divine providence prepared for our Savior's birth and for the sending forth of the Gospel message, are strengthening to the faith of the Lord's people. Realizing God's care in the past over even the little things, gives a foundation for confidence in his wisdom and provision for the features of his plan which are yet future —the fulfillment of all the exceeding great and precious promises which centered in him who was born in Bethlehem. And so also a realization of the divine providence in the larger affairs of the divine plan stimulates faith also in the Lord's providences as respects the personal and more private affairs of his people. Let us more and more realize that, as even the smallest incidents connected with the birth of our Savior were ordered of the Lord, so also he is both able and willing to order all of the affairs of his spiritual children. Let us reason with the Apostle that, if God loved us while we were yet sinners, so as to make such careful provision for our redemption, much more now that we are no longer rebels, aliens, strangers, foreigners, but have become his sons, fellow-heirs with Christ and all the saints, we may have confidence in his love and in his providential care, that according to his promise all things shall work together for good to them that love him—to the called ones according to his purpose.—Rom. 5:8-10; 8:28.

The same decree that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem brought many others of the numerous family of David, and as the inns or hotels of that time were comparatively limited in numbers and in capacity, it is not surprising that the inn proper was full of guests when Joseph and Mary arrived. Indeed, it was rather the custom for many travelers to carry with them their own lodging outfit, and to provide for their own conveniences in the courtyard connected with the inns. And hence the experiences of Joseph and Mary were by no means exceptional. When therefore the Babe Jesus was born, a manger became his most convenient cradle.

The city of Bethlehem still exists, and probably is not so dissimilar to what it was in that day, for in that land customs seem to have changed but little in centuries. A certain grotto is claimed to be the one which nineteen hundred years ago was the stable of the inn, and a certain stone manger is shown which, it is claimed, was the one in which the Babe Jesus was laid. Over this has been erected a Catholic church, and various ceremonies are continually performed in and about and connected with "the sacred manger." With such ceremonies we can feel little sympathy, believing them to be rather of the nature of idolatries. To us the center of interest is not the holy ground on which our Savior trod, nor the holy manger in which he lay as a babe, nor his holy mother; yea, tho we reverence his flesh, and are deeply interested in all that pertains thereto, especially in all its experiences, from the time of its consecration to death, at baptism; nevertheless, our still greater interest is in our risen Lord, the new creature perfected, the spiritual One, far above manhood, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named—next to the Father, and exalted to his right hand of power. The Apostle voices this sentiment well, saying, "Tho we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more"—our knowledge of him as the risen and glorified Lord and Savior thoroughly outshines all of our interest in his earthly life. (2 Cor. 5:16.) And yet his earthly life is interesting and profitable to us, as we have seen and shall see.

Had the people assembled at Bethlehem realized who this was that had come to their city—that he was from the heavenly courts, that he was the Logos made flesh, that he had come to "save his people from their sins"—how gladly they would have welcomed him into the inn and have given to his use and comfort its choicest apartments! But they knew him not, and hence lost this great privilege of ministering to him. Similarly, in every city and town where the Lord's people are (his true saints), there are

many who would make them welcome and give them the best at their disposal, did they but recognize them as the messengers of Jesus and of the Heavenly Father; but as the Apostle says, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 John 3:1.) The disciple must not expect to be above his Lord, and hence, even when going upon missions of mercy and benevolence and as ambassadors for God, we should expect that the Lord's providence would furnish for us, not the most palatial conditions, but more probably very humble conditions. And when we find it thus we should rejoice that to some extent at least we have experiences which harmonize with those of our Lord. The Lord's people will obtain a blessing in proportion as they are prepared to receive all opportunities for God's service as divine favors and to appreciate them, no matter how humble the conditions: and it is noteworthy that neither Joseph, nor Mary, nor Jesus, nor the disciples, nor the Evangelist who recorded the incident, offers the slightest complaint or suggestion of dissatisfaction with the arrangement provided by divine providence. In proportion as they would have felt dissatisfied with the arrangements provided, in that proportion the divine plans would not have worked for their good.

The vicinity of Bethlehem is a pastoral country, and today is covered with flocks. It was the custom at that time for the shepherds to remain with their flocks by night as a guard against thieves as well as against wild beasts. It was in this vicinity that David (afterward king), when a shepherd-boy protecting his flocks, slew on one occasion a lion and at another time a bear. The shepherds as a class were not particularly well educated people as respects schools, and yet many of them were thoughtful and thus secured, in their leisure time while watching their flocks, by reflection and by conversation, considerable knowledge, so that they might be termed an intellectual and thinking class of people—their minds being turned more to reflection on large subjects than are the minds of some who are constantly immersed in trade and mechanics. The shepherd whom God honored in making him king of his typical kingdom, was a great poet, and evidently much of his time while shepherding was given to the muse, and one of his most beautiful poems (Psalm 23) represents Jehovah himself as the Shepherd of his people,—his flock, for which he cares. It was to men of this thoughtful class, and no doubt men familiar with David's Psalms, and with the Messianic hopes therein set forth, that the Lord sent the first message respecting his Son made flesh.

The description of the appearance of an angel, and of the fear which the brightness of his countenance engendered, is both simple and natural. All mankind more or less feels instinctively a fear of the supernatural, a trepidation at the very thought of being in the presence of the holy angels. And this is proper as well as natural, for all realize their own imperfections through the fall, fearing more or less that the results to themselves would be unfavorable if divine justice were laid to the line and to the plummet in respect to their affairs. All seem instinctively to realize their need of mercy at the hands of him with whom we have to do. And so it was with these shepherds; they were affrighted as they beheld the heavenly visitor in their midst; but his message was not one of justice nor in any sense of condemnation, but of divine mercy. He soothed them with the words, "Be not afraid; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." Can we wonder that joy took the place of fear in their hearts as they heard the gracious words? Surely not. And so it is with all who from that day to the present time have heard this true Gospel message, not merely with the outward ears, but truly, with the ears of their understanding—comprehending it.

How false and how sad has been the understanding of this message by many of God's people as it has echoed to them down the ages! How few have heard it gladly, appreciatively! How remarkable that nearly all of the different churches and their thousands of ministers and hundreds of thousands of Sunday School teachers should unite in a **complete contradiction** of this message of the angels—a contradiction which not only wounds their own sentiments and grieves their own hearts, but which robs our dear Savior's mission of nine-tenths of its majesty, and thoroughly dishonors and maligns the name of our gracious Heavenly Father by

its misrepresentation of the salvation which he has provided in Christ Jesus.

Some perhaps may be surprised, and even shocked, at such an arraignment of the message which they and other well-meaning but blinded Christians are delivering in the name of the gospel—for the word "gospel" is derived from the words "good tidings." We are quite ready to believe that the vast majority of those who promulgate the bad tidings of eternal misery, as being the divine message and sentence to the vast majority of mankind, are wholly unaware of how seriously they misrepresent the divine character and government in the message which they carry to men;—they misstate the Gospel, not of intention, but of blindness, the very blindness mentioned by the Apostle as originating with the great Adversary—the blindness by which he blinds the minds of the vast majority, to hinder them from realizing the glorious light of God's goodness revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.—2 Cor. 4:4.

Oh, if we could only get all true Christians to study this tenth verse of our lesson, and to see the depths of its significance, it would quickly revolutionize the teachings of Christendom! But as our Lord declared, some of the deep things of the divine plan are hidden from many of the wise and prudent according to the course of this world, and are revealed only to the humble—the babes. Nevertheless, the testimony of God standeth sure, and all whose understandings have been opened and who have been enabled to comprehend some of the lengths and the breadths, and the heights and the depths of God's love, may rejoice that the ignorance of the world in general on this subject and the opposition of the great Adversary who is blinding them, cannot continue forever, but must soon give place, when the Lord's due time shall come;—when he who died on Calvary for the world's redemption shall begin his glorious reign by binding that old serpent, the devil, Satan, that he should deceive the nations no more for the thousand years of the Millennial reign. Then all shall see out of obscurity; then all shall discern what at present is the privilege of only the favored few to see, respecting the divine character and plan—that the message of the angel was true, every word of it—that the grand results to flow from the birth of the Savior in Bethlehem justified the message sent by the great Jehovah,—a good message of great joy which eventually shall be to all people—whose enlightenment and blessing shall have no hindrance, no restriction, and as a result all shall come to a knowledge of the truth and to an opportunity of availing themselves of the grace, mercy and peace provided for all in the great salvation secured by the ransom-sacrifice of our Lord Jesus.

The angel further explained his great Gospel message, showing its basis, and declaring that all the good things mentioned should come to pass because the Savior, Messiah, had been born—the one so long looked for in Israel, the promised seed of Abraham in whom not only Israel should be blessed and exalted to honor, dignity and cooperation, but in whom also "all the families of the earth should be blessed." And let us here remark that the order of presentation used by the heavenly messenger, and evidently divinely ordered, is the proper presentation of this subject which should be adopted by all who seek to be used of the Lord as his ambassadors in the calling of the elect Church. First, there is the grand pronouncement of divine favor and blessing, that it is a cause for joy, and that ultimately it shall extend to every creature; secondly, there is the specific explanation of how all this is to be accomplished—through a Savior, a Deliverer, who, as stated in our Golden Text, in order to deliver his people from the wages of sin, death, into eternal life and blessing, must first of all save them from their sins. And we see from other Scriptures that this salvation from our sins signifies not only the payment on our behalf of the penalty for Adamic sin, but also, subsequently, man's instruction in righteousness and lifting out of sin; in which uplift each one is required to cooperate to the extent of his will and of his ability.

So all teaching of the grace that is to come to mankind should be coupled with the philosophy of the salvation—the Savior made flesh and the flesh devoted or sacrificed for our sins, and the Savior glorified, that in due time after the selection of his Church he might, with her, according to the divine plan, establish his King-

dom of righteousness for the uplifting of the world of mankind out of ignorance, superstition and general degradation into which the great Adversary has gotten them through the fall and through his subsequent blinding and misleading. In this connection it is well to remember that our Lord's name, **Jesus**, signifies **Savior**, and that all who would be of the elect Church must have the spirit of the Bridegroom (as well as by faith be covered with the garment of his imputed righteousness): and that his spirit is one of **opposition to sin to the extent of self-sacrifice.** We also are to "resist unto blood [death] **striving against sin**."—Heb. 12:4.

Then the angel gave the shepherds an intimation of the humble conditions under which this great King of earth was born into the world —as a babe, wrapped in swaddling bands and lying in a manger. This was necessary, not only to their identification of Jesus, but necessary also to bring down their thoughts from the great and grand **results** to its humble beginnings, lest they should be misled in their expectations. And as it is with every part of the divine plan, so also it should be in respect to all of our proclamations of the same. We are not only to tell of the future glory and greatness and grandeur, but we are to tell also of the present humiliation—not only of our Savior who humbled himself to take a low estate amongst men, and to die for our sins, but also to point out that the "elect" are called to walk in his footsteps, under similarly humiliating circumstances—to suffer with him, if they would reign with him; to die with him, if they would live with him. And thus also the prophets spoke not only of the glory that should follow, but also of the sufferings of Christ (head and body) which must precede the glory. (1 Pet. 1:11.) The lesson to every one who has ears to hear it is, "No cross, no crown." Let us, then, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and rejoice in every step of the humiliation, that he may exalt us in due time to share the glories of his Son our Lord, and to share with him the grand work of blessing all the families of the earth.

It was a fitting climax that, after the one angel had told the surprised shepherds of the good tidings of great joy for all people and was ready to depart, he should be joined by an angelic host, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This was but a reiteration of the Gospel message already delivered. It declared that the work which should be accomplished by the babe just born, should redound to the highest glory and honor of Jehovah God, his Father. It declared also that through this work to be accomplished by Jesus should come to earth divine good will and consequently peace,—and all that these would imply in the way of blessings of restitution and privilege of attaining everlasting life. But how much in conflict with all this are the erroneous theories which have gained credence in Christendom, which teach that, notwithstanding the ransom which our Lord Jesus gave, and notwithstanding the turning aside of the original sentence upon our race as the result of the propitiation for our sins accepted by the Father, the vast majority of the human family will nevertheless, to all eternity, be in rebellion against God, and in torture will continually blaspheme his name;—and that without ever having had a full, reasonable opportunity to know the Savior or to accept his salvation. How strange that any should think that such a plan would be glory to God in the highest!

How strange that any should **refuse to see** the very plain statement of the Scripture that God has provided through Christ that every member of the human family shall have a full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the truth, and then of relinquishing sin and of accepting new life of righteousness under the New Covenant—and that then whoever still refuses and will not submit himself to this righteous arrangement shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people—in the Second Death, —that none will be suffered to live in sin and opposition to God to blemish any part of God's dominions, but that all the incorrigible shall be as tho they had not been. In no other way can we possibly imagine that the time will ever come when there will be full peace among men. "There is no peace for the wicked, saith my God."

The only solution which God offers respecting the establishment of peace is in connection with

the establishment of his Kingdom, for which our dear Redeemer taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." That will mean peace in its fullest and most absolute sense. The Scriptural proposition does not include the violation of any man's will, but merely the offering through Christ of an opportunity for his everlasting blessing and peace, or his cutting off in the Second Death if he fails to appreciate the divine offer.

The shepherds having heard of God's grace manifested their interest by visiting and paying their homage to the Savior: and so each one who has heard of the grace of God with an appreciative heart can do nothing less than seek the Lord and do him reverence and serve his cause by proclaiming the gracious message with which he has been favored. Let us each do so, and thus more and more increase in our hearts the joys of the Lord and our appreciation of his grand gospel.

Respecting the date of Jesus' birth, we hold that it was about Sept. 25th to Oct. 1st B.C. 1, and that the annunciation (Luke 1:28) was nine months earlier, namely Dec. 25th B.C. 2. The evidences re this position are given in detail in *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 2, pages 54-62.

Time	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
2 B.C., Oct.	Near Bethlehem	Angel announces good news; shepherds visit babe			2:8-20	

Luke 2:8-20

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And 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. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

THE GLORIOUS PROCLAMATION.—*Reprints*, p. 3700

LUKE 2:1-20.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David
a Savior which is Christ the Lord."

THE message of the angels to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains sounds more and more precious to each child of God in proportion as he grows in grace and knowledge. As his eyes and ears of understanding open more widely to the lengths and breadths of God's great plan of the ages, that prophetic message is the more highly esteemed as an epitome of the entire Gospel. Nor can our attention be too frequently called to the great event which lies at the foundation of that message—our Savior's birth. It matters not that December 25th is not the real anniver-

sary 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 born nine months later on the calendar, or about October 1. One so great, whose birth, death and resurrection from the dead means so much to the human family, may be remembered and celebrated any day, every day, by all who appreciate what he has done for our race. Since, then, the majority of Christian people have become habituated to the celebration of December 25th 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 four thousand years and more the promises 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 amongst 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 amongst every people the faith in the one God and the hope of Israel through a Messiah were 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 thirty 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 cities 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 late comers, 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 rung down the ages and 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 its 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 and 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 imperfection 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 professed people misrepresent his character and his Word, and apply the term "gospel" to their various messages from the dark ages, teaching purgatory and eternal 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 should 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 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 that 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 praises 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 thirty 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 forty 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 true or 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 amongst 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." (Romans 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 that the best of the Lord's people have received is 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 incident to the curse which still rests upon the race.

A Prophecy of Good Things

Yes, the angelic message was a prophecy of good 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 fulfillment, 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 had 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 age blessings to know that the trials and difficulties of this present Gospel age are subject to the divine supervision in the interest of the little 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 then they shall be privileged with their 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 and 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 is not yet true, 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 amongst 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 another. God be merciful to us, for at some time or other every one of us doubtless has 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 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 amongst men, in whom he is well pleased." However, 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. 10:26.) 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 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, up to all that was lost in Adam—not until then will there indeed be glory to God in the highest, not until then will there be peace amongst 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 amongst 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, him that sitteth upon the throne, and 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.

From Glory to a Manger

The time of our Lord's birth is quite clearly fixed. We have gone into the subject in detail in *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 2, and will not here repeat. The notable census made by order of Caesar Augustus included the civilized world of that day, and according to Jewish custom each family and tribe were enrolled therein. Both Joseph and Mary, being of the Davidic line, went to the city of David—Bethlehem. The city is a small one on a hillside. Nearly all of it appears to good advantage. The inns or hotels of that land are very different from ours: they are neither hotels nor drinking saloons, but entered from a court-yard. Various large unfurnished rooms are at the service of the traveler, who carries with him his wraps, in which he sleeps, and his food and utensils for such light housekeeping as he may choose to do. Stalls for horses, camels, etc., are provided on the ground floor, and in the event of a crowd, as on such a census occasion, it is no uncommon thing for people, finding the upper large rooms all crowded full, to make themselves nearly as comfortable in the stabling department. Thus it came that the Lord was ushered into the world, which as the Logos he had made (John 1:2), in a most humble manner. It was there that the shepherds found the babe, as predicted by the angels, and went forth proclaiming the fact; but Mary made no boasts but waited for God's due time.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
2 B.C.	Bethlehem; Jerusalem	Jesus circumcised (eighth day), presented in temple (fortieth day)			2:21-39	

Luke 2:21-39

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marveled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher: she was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

CONSECRATION IN THE TEMPLE—*Reprints*, p. 4942

LUKE 2:22-39.

"For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people."—Luke 2:30,31.

WHEN JESUS was forty days old, Joseph and Mary took Him to Jerusalem and presented Him in consecration in the Temple. This was in accordance with the custom which related specially to the first-born in each family. Although the first-born of the entire nation were passed over at the deliverance from Egypt, they had been exchanged for the one tribe of Levi, which had been specially devoted to God's service; nevertheless, the same principle was exemplified in respect to the first-born of each mother. It was to be devoted specially to God and His service.

The significance of this we see when we remember that the elect Church, being gathered during this Gospel Age, is styled the Church of the First-borns. Again, St. James tells us that we are "a kind of first-fruits unto God of His creatures." The clear intimation of all this is that after the Church shall have been gathered to heavenly glory by the power of the First Resurrection, the Kingdom then to be established will bring blessings to all the families of the earth, giving them also the opportunity of becoming sons of God, on the earthly plane, by restitution processes.—Acts 3:19-21.

Incidentally we remark that it is the custom of some parents to make a formal consecration of their children to God in the presence of believers. The influence upon the children cannot be other than beneficial, as in future days they shall look back and realize the parental care and love and devotion thus manifested in the giving of the very best they possessed to the Lord (the fruit of their bodies). Doubtless very many children will thus experience a beneficial influence upon their minds as respects their own consecration to their Creator.

Furthermore, we believe that the parents who thus give their best to the Lord are really bringing to themselves great blessings. Trials and difficulties are sure to come, but in all of these their children belong to God. And if they can pray, Thy will be done, then they may have a peace and receive a joy in the Spirit which others cannot know. Of course, this does not take the place of the child's personal consecration when it reaches the age of discretion and judgment, but we believe that the blessed influence will be helpful to the child in mature years, assisting to a right decision for God, for Truth and for righteousness.

At the time of the consecration ceremony at the Temple, an aged Prophet came forward and took the babe Jesus in his arms and praised God. The record is that in some manner God had revealed to him that the accomplishment of the gracious promises made to Abraham was nigh, and that he should not die until he had seen the Deliverer of Israel. By some power Divine this aged Prophet recognized Jesus, and, after saying, "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation"—the way in which Thy salvation shall come to Israel and to all the families of the earth—he proceeded to say, "which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all people—the Light of the world and the Glory of Thy people Israel."

"Set For The Fall And Rising Again of Many In Israel"

Simeon, addressing Mary, declared prophetically that the Child was "set for the fall and the rising of many in Israel, and for a sign [mark or standard], which shall be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." How wonderful a prophecy! It reminds us of the words of St. Paul, that our Lord is "a stone of stumbling and rock of offence" to many in Israel, that many stumbled, being disappointed. And St. Paul told also of the rising again of many who stumbled. He declares, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded"—stumbled—turned aside from Divine favor. (Rom. 11:7.) Nevertheless he

assures us that as soon as "the elect," the Church of Christ, shall have been completed, by the power of the First Resurrection, then Divine favor shall return to natural Israel, through Elect Spiritual Israel: "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy."—Romans 11:25-33.

Not a sufficient number of "Israelites indeed" were found to complete the foreordained elect, and hence the invitation went beyond Abraham's natural seed to gather during this Gospel Age the saintly of every nation, people, kindred and tongue. These must all be found before the blessings shall go to Israel and to the remainder of our race, offering to them restitution and human perfection.

A saintly woman, Anna, a Prophetess, over a century old, resided in Jerusalem and in the precincts of the Temple courts. She, also, moved by the Holy Spirit, recognized the Babe and gave praise to God and mentioned the matter to the saintly ones who were waiting for the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise—"for the consolation of Israel."

If the seeing of Jesus as a babe was worthy of praise and thanks, still more was it a cause of gratitude to God for those who beheld Him at the age of thirty, consecrating Himself a living sacrifice even unto death, and who realized that He had been begotten again by the Holy Spirit to be a New Creature, of the divine nature. Those who saw the Master's faithfulness in performing the sacrifice of His consecration during the three and a half years of His ministry beheld still more for which to give God praise. And when He had finished His course at Calvary and was raised from the dead the third day, and forty days later ascended up on high where He was before, happy were they who recognized that further development of the Divine Plan for man's salvation—the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Still more blessed were those who at Pentecost received the Holy Spirit as a begetting power and those who since have received the same, evidencing that they are the children of God, and, "if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ" their Lord to the great inheritance—to the oath-bound promise made to Abraham, that through them all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

The Fall And Rising Again

The entire nation of Israel stumbled over Jesus, failing to recognize Him as the Sent of God—except the comparatively few who became His disciples—probably ten or fifteen thousand, according to the records. Of the nation in general the Prophet Isaiah declared, "They shall fall backward and be snared and taken." St. Paul, quoting Isaiah's prophecy, proceeds to show the recovery of Israel to Divine favor as soon as the elect class of this Gospel Age shall have been completed from amongst all nations. Then will come the time for Israel's rising again to Divine favor.—Isa. 8:15; Rom. 11:9-11.

Continuing his argument, St. Paul assures us that blindness happened to Israel, not permanently, but merely for a time, until the full number of the "elect" from the Gentiles should come in. He declares that then all Israel shall be saved from their stumbling. This is the very "rising again" referred to in our lesson. St. Paul declares that this is God's Covenant with natural Israel and that their sins shall be taken away and they shall obtain mercy, through the Church's mercy. In other words, when the Church shall be glorified in the First Resurrection, Divine blessing shall proceed forthwith to Israel and shall then extend to all the families of the earth. God hath concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all.—See Romans 11:25-32.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1 B.C. or 1 A.D.	Jerusalem; Bethlehem; Nazareth	Astrologers; flight to Egypt; babes killed; Jesus returns	2:1-23		2:39,40	

Matthew 2:1-23

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Luke 2:39,40

And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

GIFTS TO OUR KING.—*Reprints*, p. 3702

MATTHEW 2:1-12.

"My son, give me thine heart."—Prov. 23:26.

OUR lesson is concerning the wise men of the East, who came seeking the new-born Jesus, the King of the Jews, with presents of myrrh, frankincense and gold, and doubtless we shall be able to gather from this incident some valuable suggestions respecting our obligations to the great Messiah, and the propriety of renewing these and increasing them now at the beginning of another year.

The wise men—according to tradition, three in number—arrived in Jerusalem and began making inquiries respecting the newly-born Jewish King. The news soon spread, and the holy city was in commotion because, according to the prophets, Messiah, promised for centuries, was due to appear about that time; and we read again, "All men were in expectation of him." This expectancy naturally would be heightened by the coming of the wise men or magi from a far country—supposedly Persia—to show homage to Messiah. The news spread, and finally reached the royal palace and King Herod himself. The latter, doubtless on his own account, felt a kind of jealousy toward any being who would be likely to share in any measure the royal honors and dignities and thus to detract from his own importance. But additionally, no doubt, he felt that as the representative of Caesar's government, the protege of the Roman Empire, it was his duty to see to it that no king should arise in the land under his jurisdiction, whose title or claims would in any measure conflict with those of the Caesars.

The Bright Morning Star

Herod, therefore, sent for the wise men. Feigning a deep interest in their quest, he made a critical inquiry of them how they knew about Messiah in their far-off country, how they knew where to look for the babe. They replied that they had seen his star in the east. The eastern magi were astrologers, and affected to read in the stars the history of nations and individuals—they were astrologers rather than astronomers. To what extent the Lord may have written the history of nations and of men in the arrangement of the stars, we will not attempt to decide, but assuredly for the world in general the starry heavens have been the great book of God, as the Psalmist explains, "Night unto night showeth knowledge." With the written Word of God in our possession now we neither have need of traditions of men nor of old wives' fables nor of astrologers' guides, because "we have the more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you 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 Pet. 1:19.

Without attempting to determine how much or how little truth attaches to astrology, we have the assurance that there was a truth connected with the manifestation of a special, peculiar star which guided the wise men of the east to know of Messiah's birth and to know to which country he belonged, so that they came to the capital city of that country. Moreover the Lord may have given them some additional explanation of the matter, even as he subsequently warned them in a dream. Herod cunningly affected to be deeply interested in the wise men in their search for Messiah. He called the wise men of Judea to assist. These were not astrologers, but men learned in the Law and in the prophets—chief priests and scribes. Thus he put the wise men of Israel into conjunction with the wise men of the east, inquiring where the prophets had foretold that the Messiah should be born. They promptly answered, "Bethlehem of Judea," and for that city, only six miles distant, the eastern magi set out, with the promise that they would return again and identify to him particularly the babe king and where he might be found, ostensibly that the king might also go to worship at his feet, but really that he might improve the opportunity and use such knowledge for the destruction of the babe Jesus.

En route for Bethlehem the miraculous star which they had seen in the far east appeared to them again, apparently as a ball of light or of fire travelling near the earth, and serving as a guide until they had rejoicingly reached the

very house and found the babe and his mother. Professor Charles A. Young, LL.D., of Princeton University, asserts that it is not a rare occurrence for stars to suddenly blaze up in the heavens and for a time to be the brightest, and then suddenly fade in a year or two; and that such a star was observed in 1901. Our thought, however, is that the latter was merely the appearance of a star, a bright electrical luminous spot

Wise Men of The East

"We are informed by Tacitus, by Suetonius and by Josephus that there prevailed throughout the entire east, at this time, an intense conviction, derived from ancient prophecies, that ere long a powerful monarch would arise in Judea and gain dominion over the world."—Farrar.

"Virgil, who lived a little before this, says that a child from heaven was looked for, who should restore the Golden Age and take away sin."—Jacobus.

"Confucius had prophesied the appearance of such a deliverer; and a deputation of his followers going forth in search of him were the means of introducing Buddhism into China."—Abbott.

"But the clearest of all these prophecies was one by Zoroaster. The Nestorians say that Zoroaster was a disciple of Jeremiah, from whom he learned about the Messiah and talked concerning him to his disciples."—Persian Missionary.

In this connection we should remember that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were at this time princes of Persia and intimate with the wise men of that country, which was at that time the principal nation of the world. It is easy to see how traditions would be handed down through that channel, and especially may we suppose that Daniel's prophecy respecting the time of Messiah's birth would be well known to the disciples of Zoroaster, Persia's wise men. Furthermore, there were Jews scattered abroad throughout that country who still more or less kept alive the thought of Israel's hope for the great Messiah so long promised of God, prophesied of as the bringer of blessings not only to Israel but through them to all the families of the earth.

Myrrh, Frankincense and Gold

God chose as messengers of his good tidings not only wise men but reverential men, men of faith; and his choice of these messengers from the east to arouse the people of Judea and Jerusalem and to be heralds of the great King was not an exception to the rule. Although heathen men, in the sense of not being of the nation with which God had thus far dealt and to whom he had thus far confined his gracious promises, they were, nevertheless, good men, reverential men, who delighted to know of the coming blessing of peace on earth and good will amongst men through whatever channel or nationality the Lord should be pleased to find his representative and messenger.

In one respect many of Christendom could learn numerous important lessons from these wise Gentiles. No false patriotism stood in their way to hinder their appreciation of any manifestation of divine favor to the children of men. And when they found the Savior they were nothing daunted by the fact that his home surroundings were of the humbler sort. They worshiped him in three senses of the word: (1) They fell before him, prostrated themselves, thus physically expressing their reverence. (2) They worshiped him in their hearts and with the tongue gave expression to their rejoicing and confidence. (3) They opened their treasure-box and presented to him three gifts appropriate to royalty: the myrrh representing submission, frankincense representing praise, gold representing obedience.

"Present Your Bodies Living Sacrifices, Holy, Acceptable Unto God, Your Reasonable Service."

The reverent spirit of these noble heathen men who had so little light, so little knowledge respecting the great Messiah and his work, will bring to our cheeks the blush of shame as we reflect that, favored with still brighter light to guide us to the Lamb of God, having seen his star in a still better and truer sense, having been guided to him by the prophecies, having found him not only a babe, but one that in prospect would bear our sorrows and carry our griefs and make his soul an offering for sin, that we by his stripes might be healed, what

manner of oblation should we pour at the feet of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood? With what deep reverence have we bowed the knee, prostrated ourselves, given outward evidence through our bodies of full submission to our great King, of whom we not only know but of whose gracious provisions for us and for the world of mankind we have heard, not uncertainly, but with the voice of him who speaketh from heaven? Have we offered our myrrh? Have we shown a willingness for service even to the extent of bitterness, a joy to honor the King to the extent of suffering with him? Have we worshiped him in heart, not with an outward form of godliness without the power —in other words, have we offered him the frankincense of heart adoration, appreciation, and gratitude?

Have we laid at his feet our earthly substance—our gold? Have we realized that all that we have and all that we are are offerings far too small to be worthy of acceptance by the great King Immanuel? Is this our present attitude? and will it be our attitude through coming days even until the end of the present pilgrimage?

The Apostle's words, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, your reasonable service," apply not only to the primary consecration of our hearts to the Lord, but are, as the Scriptures express it, a covenant of sacrifice, an agreement to die daily to self and to be alive daily more and more in the Lord's service, to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his. If this has not been our attitude in the past shall it not be our future course? Shall we not in any event continue to grow in knowledge, to grow in love, in service, in worship and in the privilege of laying our little all at the feet of him who is our gracious heavenly King, whose Kingdom is so soon to be established and who has invited us to sit with him in his throne, to share his glory, to be participants as spiritual Israel in the great work of pouring out blessings upon the world of mankind, every kindred, people, nation and tongue?

"My Son, Give Me Thine Heart"

Our Golden Text is well worthy of our remembrance here. It is not applicable to sinners, who are not sons in any sense of the word. There is a message to sinners, namely, a call to repentance, to the forsaking of sin and to the acceptance of the justification secured by the precious blood. But it is only to those who have repented of sin and who are seeking to live a repentant life and so far as possible to make restitution for wrongs of the past, and who are trusting to the precious blood of Christ—reconciled to God through the death of his Son—it is to these that this Golden Text is applicable, "My son, give me thine heart."

When we give our hearts it includes all that we have and are in the highest and noblest and fullest sense—that which was illustrated by the three gifts of the wise men is all represented in this brief statement, "Give me thine heart." Whoever gives his heart to the Lord fully and unreservedly, gives his body, gives his worship and reverence and praise, and gives his earthly treasure, time, talents, influence, money—all—to be used in joyful service for the glory of the King.

To those who have never taken this step we urge a prompt acceptance, irrespective of the gracious hopes we have of a transcendent reward of glory, honor, immortality. As the Apostle declares, it is our reasonable service. Reasonable people ought to be glad of the knowledge that God is willing to accept our service, and of the opportunity to present themselves under the covering of the merit of the dear Redeemer's robe of righteousness.

To those who have already accepted the Lord's favor, who have already presented their bodies living sacrifices, who have already given the Lord their hearts, we urge a remembrance of the fact that the sacrifice once put upon the altar must remain there, and that the longer it remains the more joyful should be the service, the more appreciated every opportunity for sacrifice, the more thankful should be the heart and the more rich should be the experience in the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts and preparing us more and more through the graces of the Spirit for the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that so love him and so reverence his Son.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.—*Reprints*, p. 1681
MATTHEW 2:13-23
"The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in."—Psa. 121:8.

THERE ARE five points in this lesson worthy of special notice; viz., (1) The foresight and providence of God. His fore-knowledge is past our comprehension: the finite cannot fathom the depths of the infinite mind. But it is our privilege to know the comforting fact that Jehovah's knowledge and wisdom are superior to all the exigencies of his universal empire; and that the wrath of man and of all the combined powers of darkness cannot in the slightest degree frustrate the divine plan. The same power that was able to transform the spiritual Son of God to the human nature was able also to protect him against all opposers, from helpless infancy up to the appointed time of his sacrifice for the world's redemption.

(2) We note again the ministry of angels—"Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14.) Yes; and gladly are they ready for any service.—1 Pet. 1:12.

(3) The faith and prompt obedience of Joseph and Mary to the warning and counsel of the angel of the Lord is notable. They did not hesitate nor question, but immediately acted upon the command of the Lord; and his blessing and protection went with them, both in departing for Egypt and in returning to Palestine. In seeking to avoid the power of the new king Archelaus (Herod's son and successor, who even surpassed his father in oppression, cruelty, egotism and sensuality) and going to Nazareth instead of to Bethlehem which was near to Jerusalem, Joseph and Mary did not disregard the Lord's directions which were to go into **the land of Israel**—in any part of which they might settle.

(4) In the circumstances here recorded we see the fulfilment of several prophecies—viz., (a) "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." This, like many other prophecies, was one of double significance, applying originally to the exodus of Israel from the bondage of Egypt (Hos. 11:1; Exod. 4:22,23), and subsequently to the return of the infant Son of God from Egypt after Herod was dead. (Matt. 2:15.) And on a still larger scale Egypt represents the **world**, and Christ and the entire Church of God are the called-out promised seed. (b) The circumstances which led to the settlement in Nazareth thereby led to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Matt. 2:23, "He shall be called a Nazarene." (c) The slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem was also prophetically mentioned. See Jer. 31:15; Matt. 2:17,18. It should be remembered, however, that in these cases the events were not made to fit the prophecies; but the prophecies were made to foretell the events, and become indications of the foreknowledge of God.

(5) It is also worthy of notice that in protecting the infant Redeemer God's course did not interfere with the existing order of things. Although all power was in his hand, he did not strike Herod dead, nor overturn nor interfere with his authority and power. The time for such radical measures had not yet come. The lease of power had been granted to the kingdoms of this world until the "Times of the Gentiles" should be fulfilled; i.e., until A.D. 1915. Consequently, they must (according to his plan) be permitted to take their own course for good or for evil, except in so far as their actions would interfere with the divine plan. And in such cases God always either overrules or prevents them.

In the case here mentioned God interfered only so far as to protect his Son in whom the plan of salvation centered. But when the appointed time came for the sacrifice of that Son for the redemption of the world, then the rulers of darkness of this world had their way. They were then permitted to crucify the Son of God, because for this purpose came he into the world—to give his life a ransom for many; and because his hour was come.—Matt. 20:28; John 2:4; 7:6; Luke 22:53.

The weeping and lamentation for the slaughtered infants who did not escape the wrath of the king, was but another note of the long wail of distress of the groaning creation, of which the Lord has not been unmindful, but which his far-sighted wisdom permits for wise and benevolent ends, until "the times of restitution of all things."

The promise of the **Golden Text** has special reference to the spiritual life of the Lord's consecrated people—spiritual Israel. As new creatures they are always safe in God's keeping, while they abide in Christ.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
12 A.D.	Jerusalem	Twelve-year-old Jesus at the Passover; goes home			2:41-52	

Luke 2:41-52

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

"JESUS INCREASED IN WISDOM AND STATURE."—*Reprints*, p. 2558

LUKE 2:41-52

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

MUCH peculiar speculation has been indulged in respecting the childhood, boyhood and young manhood of our Lord Jesus, with which we have no sympathy whatever. The Bible student should confine himself to the Bible record, and not give loose rein to imagination and speculation more likely to be untrue than correct. Had the Lord foreseen necessity for information respecting this period of our Savior's career he undoubtedly would have provided for it in the inspired record. This does not imply that there was nothing noteworthy or commendable in our Lord's earlier life, but rather that by comparatively ignoring this the Lord would point us more particularly to the three and a half years of public ministry following his baptism, in Jordan, and by the holy spirit. In a word, the Lord thus points out that it was not the **man** Jesus whose words and acts were valuable to us and lessons for our emulation, but the words and acts of **Christ** Jesus, the **Anointed** Jesus—Jesus after he had been anointed with the holy spirit without measure. Nevertheless, keeping strictly within the lines of the little that is written in the Scriptures we may draw some valuable and helpful lessons from the boyhood and young manhood of our Master.

Nothing is known respecting the first twelve years of our Lord's life, except that under divine direction his mother and foster-father took him down into Egypt, out of the reach of Herod, where they remained with him for a few months until after Herod's death, returning then to their home city, Nazareth in Galilee. It will be remembered that the occasion of the flight into Egypt was Herod's fear that a king should arise in the family of David, in harmony with the Jewish traditions, and that thus Herod's own family would be ousted from the kingly position. Herod was not of the family of David, nor a Jew at all—he was of the family of Esau, Jacob's brother. The story of the wise men coming from the East seeking a new-born king of the Jews will be remembered, and now Herod, learning of their mission, urged that when they had found the infant they sought they should inform him, Herod feigning that he also desired to do homage to the new king. But the wise men, under divine direction, ignored Herod's request. Subsequently, learning some

of the particulars respecting the birth at Bethlehem, Herod caused the death of the male-children of that city of two years old and under—thus endeavoring to insure the death of the newborn king. It is not at all probable that the number of babes slaughtered under this decree was great; as the population of Bethlehem was small the number of male children of such an age would necessarily be few.

The Golden Text informs us that Jesus grew like any other boy—that his development was gradual, both as respects physical and intellectual stature. We are not, therefore, to think of Jesus in boyhood's days as a sage a teacher, a healer, etc., as we find him subsequent to his anointing with the holy spirit. Nevertheless, we may properly suppose that the **perfect** boy would in many respects be keener and brighter than the average boy who inherits sundry imperfections from the fall.*

The testimony respecting Mary and Joseph leaves no doubt that they were pious people, and this is confirmed by the first verse of this lesson, which informs us that it was their custom to go every year to the Feast of the Passover: this requirement of the Law was observed by the most devout Jews only. It is as unnecessary as it is improper for us to go beyond the Scriptural declarations on this subject, and to assume, as some do, that Mary herself was miraculously conceived and born free from sin. Indeed, if we had no record testifying to Mary's piety the fact that she was honored by the Lord above all other women, in that she was chosen to be the mother of Jesus according to the flesh, would prove her nobility of character and purity of heart;—for it is not even supposable that the Lord would so specially honor, bless and use any other than a noble character. Whom the Lord uses we may safely esteem honorable.

Altho the Jewish Law does not so stipulate, tradition informs us that it was the custom to consider every boy who had fulfilled his twelfth year as "a Son of the Law," and to a certain extent from that age amenable to the requirements of the Law: and the narrative of our lesson seems to confirm this tradition, telling us that when Jesus was twelve years of age (in his thirteenth year) he accompanied the family to the Passover Feast at Jerusalem. Is there not a lesson here for all godly parents, suggesting that the training of the infancy period should be of such a character as to prepare the child for the consideration of sober and religious matters at the very threshold of boyhood? We think there is. And we think it a serious mistake made by some well-intentioned parents when they conclude that their children of twelve years have sufficient mind to have grasped the elementary principles of a secular education and to be prepared for higher studies of a secular character, but unfit for higher religious studies. The children who are ready at that age for higher secular studies have already been carefully instructed along elementary lines; and if any are unprepared for higher studies in religious matters it is at least possible that their elementary religious training may have been neglected by their divinely appointed instructors—their parents. No Christian parent can avoid this his natural responsibility toward his children—in moral and religious training as well as in the secular and physical.

The Feast of the Passover continued seven days, but it was the custom for many of the pilgrims from distant parts to remain over only two days, until after the principal ceremonies. It is probable that Joseph and Mary, in company with their kinsfolk, started on the return journey on the third day of the feast. It was customary for the women of a caravan to move on ahead, the men coming after, and a boy of Jesus' age might be with either of the parents and not be missed until nightfall; and so it seems to have been in this case. As one day had been spent in the journey, so another day was spent returning, and a third day in searching throughout the city; finally they found Jesus in the Temple, sitting with the teachers of the Law, the "Doctors." This was not so unusual as might at first appear; for at that time information was gained less from books and more from oral teaching, and the Doctors of the Law were supposed to be ready to instruct all who desired information, especially during the holy Passover week. Many young men availed them-

* See *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 5, chapter 4.

selves of such opportunities, and the custom seems to have been for the Doctors to sit on a special semi-circle of seats, while before them were low benches for the older students: the younger boys sat on the ground, literally "at their feet." Thus Paul, as a youth, was a pupil to Gamaliel, or, as the record reads, "sat at the feet of Gamaliel," to learn of him. Gamaliel was one of the chief Doctors of the Law in his day.

We are not to understand that the boy Jesus was bold, and that he went before the learned men of his day to denounce them as ignorant and as incapable teachers, and to show himself off, as some precocious but ill-trained youth of today might attempt to do. On the contrary, we are to suppose the boy Jesus to have a well-balanced mind, which probably recognized the fact that he had lived but few years in the world and had comparatively small experience in life, and that he by no means knew all, but recognized many questions upon which he would like to have further information, and that he asked his questions honestly, with a desire and hope of obtaining satisfactory answers from the teachers who "sat in Moses' seat."

The nature of the questions is not stated, but the time and surroundings would seem to indicate that they were of a religious character, and that the mind of Jesus was already grappling with the great questions which properly belonged to him as a member of the Jewish race to which God had made certain great and precious promises as the Seed of Abraham;—promises of divine blessing under Messiah, of exaltation to be the chief nation of the world, and of the subsequent privilege of blessing all nations and of being the mediaries through whom all mankind might be brought to the knowledge of God and to his service. From what we know of the operations of our own minds at the age mentioned, we may presume that Jesus was brimful of questions respecting the hopes of Israel, and no doubt from his mother he had received some intimation at least that divine providence had indicated that he himself was to bear some important part in connection with the fulfilment of the Scriptures; and he was seeking to know the part marked out for him by the Heavenly Father in the testimony of the Law and the Prophets.

Altho he did not have a Bible in his home, that he could consult respecting the divine testimony, he did have the common privilege of the youth of his day of attending meetings in the one little synagogue of Nazareth, which was but a small country town. There, from Sabbath to Sabbath, he heard the Law read and to some extent commented upon, sometimes also the psalms and prophecies. With these sources of information the eager mind of the boy had grappled, and now, on the occasion of his first visit to the great city of Jerusalem, nothing attracted him so much as the Temple and its symbolical services, and happening upon a court or chamber in which the great questions of the Law and the Prophets were being discussed by the ablest teachers of the time, Jesus became so deeply interested and enthused in the Bible study that seemingly he forgot all earthly things, so intent was he in studying about the Heavenly Father's business—the plan of God, in which he himself was to be so principal an actor.

Naturally his questions would be deeper and more logical than those of other boys of his age, and naturally the Doctors of the Law would be deeply interested in him because of this in conjunction with the modesty which we may be sure accompanied it. And as during these feasts great hospitality was exercised, especially toward strangers from a distance, Jesus was probably entertained by one and another of these new-found friends.

The narrative records that, when found by Joseph and Mary, Jesus was both **hearing** the Doctors and **asking** them questions. There is a valuable lesson here for all young persons respecting their conduct toward their elders and instructors. How different the thought we get from this statement than we would have gotten had it read that they found Jesus **instructing** the Doctors, or attempting to teach them. We do not doubt for a moment that the Doctors were as much instructed by Jesus as he was by them, possibly more so on some points at least; nor do we doubt that if they were truly great men they would be humble-minded enough to receive instructions from any one—even from a child; and it is even intimated in the context that they asked Jesus certain ques-

tions, "and were astonished at his understanding and his **answers**." In both cases the proceeding was that of deference to the other, as implied in the asking of the questions: Jesus having deferred to the Doctors and asked them questions which manifested his depth of mind and clearness of understanding and logical reasoning, led them in turn to ask questions of him.

This question plan we commend to all of the dear friends of the truth as a wise and proper one, no less to us of today than to the boy Jesus and to the Doctors of the Law. We have seen instances in which some of the Lord's dear people have greatly injured their influence in the truth by display of too large a degree of self-confidence, **self-assurance**, in speaking of the divine plan to others—especially to the learned. Meekness is a jewel wherever found, and is especially desirable as an adjunct and sling for the truth. Let the truth be shot forth with all the force **it** can carry, but always with meekness and humility; and the question form of suggesting truth will often be found the most forceful.

Naturally Joseph and Mary were astonished to find their little son in the company of and receiving consideration from the greatest teachers of their day, and probably nothing was said to Jesus publicly respecting their disappointment and their subsequent search for him: probably when alone Mary upbraided him for his neglect to be with the caravan: yet she did this in a very kind and moderate manner, which seemed to indicate that it was a very unusual occurrence, which in turn speaks to us of parental obedience on the part of Jesus.

Mary's expression, "Behold, **thy father** and I have sought thee sorrowing," has been questioned by some as being a confession that Joseph was the **father** of Jesus, but we answer, Not so; it would be unreasonable to suppose (1) that Luke would particularly trace the genealogy of Jesus through Mary, and ignore Joseph, and subsequently imply that Joseph was the father of Jesus; (2) Joseph having accepted Mary, accepted also her son, Jesus, and became his foster-father, and under just such circumstances today the child would be taught to consider such an one a parent, and to call him "father." (3) It is not at all probable that the story of the immaculate conception of Jesus was ever made known to any but the closest members of the family, and it is highly improbable that the subject had ever been discussed with the boy Jesus, only twelve years of age,—nor would it have been proper to do so. Mary's language, therefore, is entirely consistent with all the facts set forth in the Gospel narrative.

Quite possibly the mind of the boy Jesus, while investigating the subject of his own responsibilities toward the Heavenly Father and his plan, had wondered whether or not his mission might not in some degree begin with his thirteenth year, since at that time he was recognized as a "son of the law." Quite possibly some of his questions before the Doctors of the Law were along this line, and quite probably he had finally about reached the conclusion that the types of the priestly office indicated clearly that his mission would not begin until he was thirty years of age. His reply to Mary's chiding was along this line: Did you not expect me to be about my Father's business? Did you not know that I had reached the age when I am a "son of the Law," and that therefore certain responsibilities have come upon me in respect to the Heavenly Father and his Word and his plan? And then, as tho remembering the conclusion that he had just reached in discussing the subject with the Doctors, he broke off the conversation, yielded himself to their wishes, and accompanied them to Nazareth, making (so far as recorded) no further suggestion of any other than the ordinary course of life until he had attained the age of thirty years. This is expressed in the words, "And he was **subject** unto them." Joseph and Mary realized clearly that the boy was more than ordinary, very extraordinary indeed, yet they did not fully comprehend the situation nor fully grasp the import of his words. Nevertheless, Mary treasured this with the other peculiar testimonies respecting him in her heart, and doubtless it was from her lips that Luke received the information contained in our lesson.

Tradition declares that Joseph died while Jesus was yet young, and that the latter took up the carpenter's trade and became the support of the family. This finds some support in

the Scriptural testimony where Jesus himself is called a carpenter, and his mother and brethren are mentioned, but Joseph is ignored. (Mark 6:3.) Furthermore, no reference is made to Joseph in connection with our Lord's ministry, tho his mother and his brethren are several times mentioned. It is quite probable, then, that the long period of eighteen years of our Lord's life, from the time of the incident of this lesson to the time of his baptism, was spent in the performance of the ordinary duties of life. What a thought this gives us with respect to our Lord's development of **patience**—patiently waiting until the Father's time should come and he should begin his ministry; patiently studying meantime, as best he could, to know more and more of the Father's will and plan; patiently waiting for the baptism of the holy spirit, which would enable him to fully comprehend the situation and his own personal relationship to it. What a lesson there is here for all his followers, and everyone of us may well realize the truth of the words, "Ye have need of patience," and again, "Let patience have her perfect work." What a lesson there is for us also in the thought that we are not to attempt to hasten the divine plan, but to wait patiently for its unfolding—not to attempt to begin any work for the Lord unless we are sure that his time has come, and that he has called us to do it; then, like our Lord, to be instant in season and out of season, when convenient and when inconvenient, under favorable and unfavorable conditions; to do with our might what our hand has found to do,—what the Lord has called us to do. And we gather the further thought that the most humble forms of labor are honorable when they are ours in harmony with God's providence.

Happily for us, we are not born under the Law nor under the limitations which hinder us from receiving the call and responding to it before thirty years of age. On the contrary, under the New Covenant of **grace** it is our privilege to present our bodies living sacrifices to the Lord's service at as early an age as our knowledge of divine things and our enlightened judgments will permit. We, instead of waiting to grow to the fulness of stature mental and physical, are permitted to begin at once, as members of the Royal Priesthood, and to be growing at the same time we are serving. But let us not forget the necessity for growth,—adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness love.—2 Pet. 1:5-8.

"In malice be ye **children**, but in understanding be ye **men**."—1 Cor. 14:20.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
29, spring	Wilderness; Jordan	Ministry of John the Baptist	3:1-12	1:1-8	3:1-18	1:6-8,15:28

Matthew 3:1-12

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to

our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

Luke 3:1-18

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

John 1:6-8,15-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. … John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of

whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER.—*Reprints*, p. 2562

LUKE 3:1-17.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

DOUBTLESS many commenters on this lesson will claim that John the Baptizer's ministry began with the year A.D. 26, and by positiveness of assertion seek to make up for their lack of evidence on this subject. Let all therefore bear in mind that such a dating of John's ministry will be purely arbitrary, to make it conform to the erroneous view which prevails among scholars in respect to the date of our Lord's birth. It should not be forgotten, however, that, altho it is well established from the Scriptures that our Lord was six months younger than his second-cousin, John, there is no other Scriptural date which so closely and definitely connects the history of our Lord and of John the Baptizer with general history, as does the statement of this very lesson, that John began his ministry (when he was thirty years of age) in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. Those who claim that Jesus began his ministry A.D. 27, instead of A.D. 29, claim that John's ministry began in A.D. 26; and in order to make this fit with the statement of the first verse of this lesson, they are obliged to count the reign of Tiberius Caesar two years before its admitted date. For a particular discussion of this subject, however, we must refer our readers to *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 2, p. 54.

Of John it is written that he was filled with the holy spirit from his birth. But we must not misunderstand this to mean that he was begotten of the holy spirit, in the sense that Christians are begotten of it, for he lived before the time of spirit-begetting—in the Jewish age, not in the Gospel or Christian age. Thus our Lord said of him that, altho there had not arisen a greater Prophet than John, nevertheless, the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he—the least one in the house of sons is on a higher plane than the greatest one in the house of servants. (Matt. 11:11; Heb. 3:5,6.) The Apostle again explains that "the holy spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." —John 7:39.

In harmony with this we must understand that John was filled with the holy spirit, holy power or influence from God from his birth, after the same manner that the other prophets throughout the Jewish age had been under that holy spirit. The expression would lead us to understand that, altho John was not borne immaculate, as was Jesus, he nevertheless was well born, under holy influences, which tended to develop in him natural characteristics suitable to the mission he was intended of God to fulfill. This does not involve the thought of divine interference with the free will of the

individual, for Paul tells us that he also was chosen of God from his birth to be a special servant to do a special work. (Gal. 1:15.) Nevertheless, the Lord did not interfere with his exercising his own free will, even permitting him to go so far into blind error as to become the persecutor of the Church. And even when the Lord rebuked him in the way to Damascus, that was not an interference with his **will** or nature, but merely a removal of his blindness, his ignorance, permitting his true will to come into exercise. And so no doubt others of the Lord's people from time to time have been from earliest childhood special subjects of divine Providence which has guided and shaped their experiences without interfering with their wills, so as to make of them special instruments for the accomplishment of divine purposes.

Of John's life from infancy to manhood we know nothing except the bare record, "The child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert until the day of his showing unto Israel" (Luke 1:80)—not in the sandy deserts, but more properly in the wilds, the uncultivated regions, perhaps in the "hill country," where his parents resided at the time of his birth. Possibly a part of the Lord's providence in respect to John's training for his work consisted in the ordering of the affairs of his parents, so that possibly they were forced by circumstances to reside in such a wilderness-home, where they would have comparatively little intercourse with others, and where John, probably as a forester, would have the experiences which the Lord saw would best fit him for the work intended. All Christians should learn to trust to the Heavenly Father's guidance, remembering his special promise, which is applicable to each one who is in Christ, viz., that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God," and remembering this they should be content with the lot which Providence seems to mark out for them—not indolent, but content, when they have done all that their hands find to do,—not restless, peevish, dissatisfied, complainers against God and his providence. "Trust in the Lord and do good." It may be that the Lord is fitting and preparing us individually for some special service, and that the permitted experiences alone will prepare us for that service. Indeed, we know from the Word that God designs his "elect" for joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer in the glorious Millennial Kingdom; and we can well realize that because of our imperfection we need much moulding and fashioning, chiseling and polishing to make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." We are to remember also that we are incompetent to judge of our own imperfections, and hence incompetent to judge of the experiences which would be most helpful to us. It is difficult for us sometimes even to see ourselves as others see us; much more difficult, undoubtedly, it would be to see ourselves from the divine standpoint. Here faith in God comes to the front—"This is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith."

The time of John's "showing" or presentation to Israel was undoubtedly the time when he reached the legally required thirty years of age; and then it was that the word of the Lord came unto him, causing him to begin his mission. We are not to think of this expression as having to John the same signification as it has to us who are of this Gospel age. The word of God came to John as a prophet, for our Lord declared,—"There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist." The Lord made clear to John that the time had come for the beginning of his ministry, not merely by an impression or surmise, but with positiveness, as in the case of all the prophets. In harmony with his commission he went to the thickly settled regions in the vicinity of the River Jordan, preaching repentance—that the people should reform—and baptizing in the Jordan those who professed a reformation. For this reason John sought the pools or deep places of the river;—for instance, he went to Enon, near to Salem, "because there was much water there"—a pool sufficiently deep for the purposes of immersion.

We are not to fall into the too common error of supposing from the record that John preached to the people that **repentance and baptism** would work for them **a remission of their sins**. To so interpret these words would put them in direct conflict with the entire testimony of the Scriptures, which is to the effect that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. The usual representation of

this subject is therefore clearly in error. To the contrary, we are to understand this verse to mean that John preached a baptism signifying repentance **unto**, or **preparation for**, a remission of sins. The time had not yet come for the blotting out of the sins, and John neither had nor could have obtained authority to declare sins remitted because of repentance and baptism. Had it been possible for him to have made such a proclamation, truthfully, it would have proven that there was no necessity for the coming of our Lord Jesus to give himself a ransom for Israel and for all the families of the earth. If repentance and immersion in water would bring the forgiveness of sins, the "Savior and a great one" whom God had promised to Israel for so long would have been wholly unnecessary. But when we view John's work and preaching as merely a preliminary one, to make ready a repentant people, desiring to have their sins forgiven, desiring full at-one-ment with God, and expecting a Savior to accomplish all this,—then all is harmony.

And this thought, that the remission of sins was a work future from John's day, a work to be accomplished by Christ, is fully borne out by the succeeding context, a quotation from Isaiah the Prophet, which has not even yet been fulfilled, but includes the entire work of the Millennial age. That age will be one for remission of sins and **blotting out of sins**, and the full reconciliation of so many as will accept God's grace in Christ under the New Covenant. (Compare Acts 3:19-21.) In that time, under those favorable conditions, and not before, will the statement be fulfilled, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God."

We are to bear in mind that John's work as a messenger was exclusively to Israel, and had nothing whatever to do with any of the Gentiles. To Israel he acted as the Elijah or Forerunner of **Messiah in the flesh**, seeking to induce that nation, in its "harvest" time, to accept the formal offer of God's Kingdom by accepting Jesus as the King. But John's mission was not successful to his nation, and profited only a few of the people; those few who believed John's testimony, and received it into good and honest and repentant hearts, were prepared to receive Jesus and to appreciate and receive the remission of sins offered by God through him. The remainder of that nation, rejecting John's teaching, and being in an unrepentant condition of heart, were not properly exercised, were not ready for Jesus, and did not appreciate the offer of remission of sins through his blood as a consequence, and as a nation were rejected of God and wholly overthrown.

While John thus acted as the Elijah in introducing Jesus in the flesh to fleshly Israel, and gathered out a certain class who were ready to receive Jesus, and who were blessed by him, so we see that in God's plan there is a greater antitype of Elijah than was John, as there is a greater Christ than was our Lord Jesus. The greater Christ is the spiritual one, "The Lord from heaven"—"Now the Lord is that Spirit." And this glorified spirit Lord is the Head of "the Church which is his body," and this body of many members will, in "the first resurrection," be made like him and to share his glory, and with him and under him constitute the **great Messiah**, who shall take unto himself his great power and reign, establishing God's Kingdom amongst men, and causing his will to be done "on earth as it is done in heaven." (Matt. 6:10.) The coming into power of this great Christ, the spiritual Christ (head and body) constitutes the Second Advent to mankind—"the manifestation of the sons of God" for the deliverance of the groaning creation. (Rom. 8:17-19.) Thus the Second Advent of Christ the Head (with the Church his body) will be seen to be on a very much higher plane than was the first advent of our Lord in the flesh, altho the first advent was all-important in that without it and its sacrifice for sins there could have been no Second Advent of Jesus, the Head, in the glory of Kingdom power, and there could have been no glorified members of his body to be associated with him.

After thus noting the relationship of the two events, it is proper for us to note also that as the blessings of the first advent were offered to nominal fleshly Israel so the presentation of the blessings of the Second Advent will be to nominal Spiritual Israel ("Christendom"), and as a Forerunner or herald was appropriately sent to fleshly Israel, to prepare them for the first advent, likewise it would be appropriate that a

proportionately greater Forerunner should precede the Second Advent, and seek to make ready therefor all nominal Spiritual Israelites. As we have already shown, this greater Elijah, who heralds the spiritual Christ, is composed of many members; Jesus in the flesh was himself the Head of this Elijah class, and all of his true followers, who will be, when glorified with him, members of the glorious Christ, will have previously been in their earthly lives members with him of the Elijah class, whose mission it is to show forth the principles of righteousness and true holiness, and to exhort both by word and conduct all men to repentance and to preparation for the Second Advent—the glorious appearing, the setting up of the Messianic Kingdom, the actual blotting out of sins, the straightening of every crooked way, the leveling up of deep crevices of character, the leveling down of the hills of pride to the proper level of humility; and in every sense of the word **seeking to prepare all flesh** to see the salvation of God.

Nevertheless, we are to remember that the Scriptures distinctly indicate that the testimony of this greater Elijah will be equally unsuccessful with that of the lesser antitype of Elijah, John the Baptizer. The Church in the flesh has not succeeded in making straight the paths of the Lord for a triumphal entry to his Kingdom upon the earth. A few have heard, but the message has utterly failed as respects the vast majority, even those who profess respect for and to be waiting for the Kingdom. Nevertheless, all God's good purposes will be ultimately accomplished, tho necessarily introduced by troubles, calamities, distress upon "Christendom," in the end of this age or "harvest" time, similar to those troubles which came upon fleshly Israelites who were unready for the Savior, and "knew not the time of their visitation," at his first advent. All this unreadiness, however, shall not hinder the work of the Messiah. As at his first advent he gathered all Israelites indeed to the new dispensation, so now he will gather his elect "little flock" to himself; his Kingdom will be established; it shall rule over all; it will accomplish the straightening of every crooked path; it will level up the path of righteousness and holiness, and make of it "a highway" freed from stumbling blocks of error and from Satan's deception. (Isa. 35:8,9.) All mankind then brought to a knowledge of the truth will have the privilege of progressing through the times of restitution up this grand highway of obedience to the grand perfection lost for himself and his race by father Adam's transgression, but redeemed for Adam and his race by the precious blood of Christ. All flesh indeed shall see the salvation of our God, and so many as will may share therein, for this is the blessing which God has provided for all the families of the earth, through the true spiritual Seed of Abraham—Christ and his elect Church.—Gal. 3:16,29.

It would seem that John's ministry at first was somewhat popular, notwithstanding his probably uncouth "backwoods" appearance and great plainness of speech; so that great multitudes came to him: amongst these were some who seemed to John to be so vile that he could not properly accept them until they had given some proofs of reform. These he denominates "children of vipers"—very harsh language, we would be inclined to say. We are not to understand that such language is proper to be copied by the Lord's people of today. We are rather to suppose that there were special conditions at that time which made this language appropriate, and that John, as a prophet, was divinely guided into giving this sharp reproof. The Lord's people of the Gospel age are instructed on the contrary to speak with meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, etc.,—"in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves" —"reproving with all long-suffering." The Lord's people of today are under general instructions of God's Word, as regards all their conduct, and are not to depart therefrom unless it would be under special divine direction, as were the prophets of old—such as is not given to any at the present time so far as we are aware.

When John speaks of his hearers "fleeing from the wrath to come," we are not to get the thought that he preached, or that the people believed in, the doctrine of eternal torment, and that the words referred to this. Quite to the contrary, there is no such teaching in the Scriptures. The "wrath to come" referred to by John

prophetically was the trouble that was about to come upon that nation unless they would receive Messiah, who had not yet been offered to them, but who would shortly appear, and for whose appearance they were to make ready by true repentance and baptism. The "wrath to come" did come upon the nation because of its rejection of Messiah, as our Lord and the Apostle Paul specially testify. (See Luke 21:23; Rom. 9:22; 1 Thes. 2:16.) It burned fiercely against them in the great time of trouble which led to the collapse of their national polity in A.D. 69-70, and they have been under that wrath and unable to reestablish themselves as a nation from that day to the present time. We shall find confirmation of this interpretation of the "wrath to come" further down in this lesson.

In John's preaching he found one difficulty, and that was that his hearers were imbued with the thought that they were God's specially chosen, "elect" people, whose glorification had been foretold in the prophets, and that since there were no better people in the world it was unreasonable to suppose that God would pass by the very best. They reasoned that he must take some, in order to fulfill his promises; and that they were not only the most obedient to his Law outwardly, but also were the natural seed of Abraham, to whom the promises were made. Likewise the principal opposition to the teaching of holiness, entire consecration to the Lord, today throughout "Christendom," is the same error. A false theory has gotten into the minds of Christian people, which leads them to reason that holiness cannot be essential to the Lord's favor. Their process of reasoning is this: Out of the sixteen hundred millions of the world's population there are only about three hundred millions that make the slightest profession of Christianity, and this includes all the Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, and what Bishop Foster (M.E.) designated the "ring-straked and speckled" of Protestantism—infants and all. Now, say they, God must certainly intend to have some, and if he takes all kinds of Christians he will have only comparatively few, and if merely an ambition to be ahead of the devil were to move him, he could scarcely reject any who claim to be Christians, and who are even half-way decent. Consequently they reason that holiness to the Lord, sanctification of thought and word and deed, cannot be essential to divine favor, and is therefore rather carrying matters to an extreme. The declaration that only "the pure in heart shall see God," and that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," are, to them, extreme statements, and must be passed by, or else the word "holiness" must be considered as used in olden times in a very restricted sense, as meaning not openly or violently wicked.

Thus we see that the antitypical Elijah to the Jews encountered the same difficulties that are encountered now by the antitypical Elijah ministering to nominal spiritual Israel. But note John's answer; he laid down the conditions very strictly: Do not permit yourselves to be deceived into thinking that God is under compulsion to accept such as you, and that otherwise his word would become void; do not think that he could not get children of Abraham that would be purer than you, and therefore that he must take you; God is unlimited in power and unlimited in resource, and, if necessary, he could raise up children to Abraham out of these stones—out of some that you consider as far from the possibilities of being Abraham's children as tho they were these stones at your feet. And similarly we answer "Christendom" today, that God utterly rejects hypocritical Christianity, as represented by the vast majority of its professors, still blinded by the god of this world, and ignorant of the true character of God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent; because not pure in heart, not consecrated fully to the Lord. Would that we had a trumpet voice that we might tell the millions of nominal Christendom the true state of the case, and would that they had circumcised ears to hear and reform, and be prepared for the glorious events now due to be ushered in,—without being obliged to pass through the great trouble time. All we can assure them is that God will find the full number of his elect, and that the full number is nearly complete now, and that in all it is but a "little flock" to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom; and that soon these will all be glorified with their glorious Head and Lord, and that then the Kingdom established will be revealed to bless all the

families of the earth. Nevertheless, we deeply sympathize with them in the fact that their condition necessitates that the introduction of the Kingdom shall be with a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, and, thank God, shall never again be.—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.

John, proceeding with his discourse, points out to his Jewish hearers that the time of judgment had come upon their nation. The axe was laid at the root of the trees; every Israelite who was not an Israelite indeed was to be overthrown, and to be cast into the "fire" of trouble with which that age and national polity terminated. The three and a half years of our Lord's ministry to the Jewish nation, and their final rejection by him, are represented by the barren fig tree parable, in harmony with the statement of John foregoing.—See Luke 13:6-9.

John evidently struck the chord of fear to some extent, but he struck it properly. There is a proper presentation of the truth, and a proper fear of God and his retribution, which may properly be kept before the mind of the transgressor; but this is wholly different from the terrorizing fear of eternal torment, which plays so important a part in all the theological teaching, directly and indirectly, today, and which has driven some to insanity, some to skepticism and infidelity, and has hindered the great majority even of saints from appreciating the true character and plan of our God. Let us present the wrath to come, truthfully, not misrepresenting the character of our God; for assuredly God will not hold them guiltless who blaspheme his holy name.

Under John's preaching the people began to inquire what course they should pursue, and summing the matter up John's instruction was that they should practice justice, mercy, love, generosity; they should avoid violence, extortion, etc.; and should seek to be content with such things as they had. This was excellent advice, and undoubtedly those who followed it would be in just the right condition of heart and mind to welcome the Lord Jesus, and his good tidings of **remission of sins through his blood** and thus to become reconciled with the Father. And similarly if any now inquire respecting the coming trouble, the wrath that is to come in the end of this age upon "Christendom,"—What must we do? We answer them,—Practice righteousness, truth, godliness, kindness, benevolence, justice, trust in the Lord, seek to walk in his ways. Or we may quote them the words of the prophet, specially bearing upon this time, viz., "Seek meekness, seek righteousness; it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) And furthermore, we may rely upon it that those who thus seek righteousness, etc., will be the ones most ready to welcome our King, and his Kingdom, and we may be sure that when in this harvest time some fail to make their calling and election sure, and prove themselves unworthy of the crowns apportioned to them, the Lord will be pleased to select from among such penitent seekers of righteousness some as substitutes to complete his elect Church.

So powerful was John's presentation of the truth, that the people began to wonder whether or not he might be the Coming One, the Messiah, but he set the thought at rest speedily, assuring him that he was so inferior to the Messiah that he would be unworthy the honor of doing toward him the most menial service of removing his sandals. Then, having given them a little glimpse of the character of Messiah, he proceeded to tell them respecting his work, that it would be higher than his own, and that those who received him would receive a higher baptism also: "He shall baptize you with the holy spirit and with fire"—some of them (the few) with holy spirit, the remainder (the mass) with the fire,—judgments, the great time of trouble which destroyed their national life and many individual lives.

He gave them an illustration of the matter, showing them that they had reached the harvest-time of their age, and that now a separating was to be expected—the separating of the true wheat from the chaff; and he represented our Lord's work with Israel as being that of a reaper winnowing the "wheat," freeing it from the "chaff" element. How forceful was the figure! how true the facts! Our Lord indeed gathered from that nation all the true "wheat," we may be sure that not a solitary grain was lost. All that wheat was gathered into his barn, into a place of safety, into a higher dispensation,—

they constituted the beginning or first members of the Gospel Church. It was upon this wheat class that the holy spirit came at Pentecost, and it has abode with this true Church since. After the separating (winnowing) of the "wheat," and the gathering into the barn, and its baptism of the holy spirit, in due time, the "chaff" of that nation was burned up with **unquenchable fire**—a time of trouble which nothing could stop or hinder. It will be remembered that various steps were taken to hinder the destruction of the nation of Israel, but all failed: even the Roman Emperor was desirous of preserving the nation, and of establishing order there, and the Roman army went not to destroy them but to establish peace in their midst; but the Lord had declared that the fire of trouble which he enkindled should not be quenched by any power, that it should do its work to the full; and it did.

Likewise it will be with the great "fire" of trouble with which this Gospel age shall end, and into which the "tare" class of Christendom will be cast; it will not be an utter destruction of life (altho many lives will perish in the great trouble of this Day of Wrath), but it will completely consume earthly governments and Churchianity in a fire of anarchy. Nothing shall quench that fire, or hinder that utter destruction of present systems. But praise God that when this fire shall have consumed the stubble and the falsities and deceptions of present institutions, it will have but prepared the way for the great blessing which he has designed and provided for in his coming Kingdom. This "fire," and the blessing to follow it, are particularly referred to in Zeph. 3:8,9.

BUYERS AND SELLERS DRIVEN OUT OF THE TEMPLE
My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. (Luke 19:46)

THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
29, fall	Jordan River	Baptism and anointing of Jesus; born as a human in David's line but declared to be the Son of God	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-38	1:32-34
	Judean Wilderness	Fasting and temptation of Jesus	4:1-11	1:12,13	4:1-13	
	Bethany beyond Jordan	John the Baptist's testimony concerning Jesus				1:15,29-34
	Upper Jordan Valley	First disciples of Jesus				1:35-51
	Cana of Galilee; Capernaum	Jesus' first miracle; he visits Capernaum				2:1-12
30, Passover	Jerusalem	Passover celebration; drives traders from temple				2:13-25
	Jerusalem	Jesus' discussion with Nicodemus				3:1-21
	Judea; Aenon	Jesus' disciples baptize; John to decrease				3:22-36
	Tiberias	John imprisoned; Jesus leaves for Galilee	4:12; 14:3-5	1:14; 6:17-20	3:19,20; 4:14	4:1-3
	Sychar, in Samaria	En route to Galilee; Jesus teaches the Samaritans				4:4-43

Matthew 3:13-17

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Mark 1:9-11

And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Luke 3:21-38

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph, Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge, Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Judah, Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Shealtiel, which was the son of Neri, Which was the son of Melchi,

which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er, Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Judah, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim, Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David, Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Boaz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson, Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Judah, Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Terah, which was the son of Nahor, Which was the son of Serug, which was the son of Reu, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala, Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Shem, which was the son of Noah, which was the son of Lamech, Which was the son of Methuselah, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

John 1:32-34

And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

CONSECRATION FOLLOWED BY TEMPTATIONS.—*Reprints*, p. 2565

MATTHEW 3:13-4:11.

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

AFTER JOHN had been preaching and baptizing for about six months, about September, A.D. 29, Jesus, who had been residing in Galilee and was nearing his thirtieth birthday, set out to find John and to be baptized of him and to begin his public ministry at the earliest possible moment. He was to be a Priest as well as a King for his people, "a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec," and the Law required of a priest that he be at least thirty years of age. Hence Jesus' ministry was hindered from beginning until this age was attained, but he was free to begin it at the earliest possible moment after that time.

He was of course acquainted with his second-cousin, John the Baptizer, who evidently well knew of his upright life and unimpeachable character, and who was astounded to have him apply for baptism, whereas the class John was seeking was the renegade and sinful. According to the original reading, John "would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Realizing that Jesus had no sins to wash away, it seemed to John inappropriate that this ceremony should be performed upon Jesus, for we are to remember that John's baptism was merely a baptism unto repentance—reformation—and not Christian baptism.—See Acts 19:4,5.

Our Lord did not attempt to explain to John that he was introducing a new baptism, not for sinners but exclusively for holy ones, and not, therefore, in any sense of the word symbolic of the cleansing from sin, but symbolic of a **sacrificial death** for the sins of others. It was not then due time to explain Christian baptism, and to have done so would merely have confused John and those who might have heard, without profiting him any, because the new baptism belonged to the new dispensation which did not begin until Pentecost, except in the person of our Lord Jesus himself. And in any case the force and meaning of the symbol is

merely what is understood by the baptized one. It is perhaps well that we call special attention to this point, in view of the fact that a large and influential body of Christian people* are even today practicing John's baptism, "for the remission of sins," wholly failing to realize the import of the new baptism—Christian baptism—first symbolized by our Lord Jesus himself.

Our "Disciple" friends will not dispute the Scriptural statement that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and hence that he had no sins to wash away, and consequently that for him John's baptism of reformation would have been worse than meaningless; it would have been a contradiction of fact and contrary to faith; and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Hence it would have been wrong for our Lord Jesus to have been baptized for the remission of sins—John's only understanding of baptism. We may be sure, therefore, that since "in him was no sin," his act of baptism was the first of a new order of baptism—practiced by his followers after Pentecost. (Acts 19:4,5.) We here note the fact that Christian baptism is only for believers in Christ —not for unbelievers, not for sinners. Faith in Christ is the justifying power; we are justified through faith in his blood. When justified we are ready for Christian baptism, and not before, but when justified we have no sins to wash away, being "justified freely from all things." To the Christian believer, baptism symbolizes precisely the same thing that it did to his Lord, viz., **consecration**—the full surrender of his will, his life, his all, to the Heavenly Father's will. By such a surrender of his will he becomes **dead to the world**, to earthly hopes and aims, and becomes alive toward God, to walk in newness of life, and by and by to have that newness of life actually, as a sharer with Jesus, his Lord, his Redeemer, in the "first Resurrection." All this is symbolized in the proper Christian baptism.

Our Lord, being free from sin, required no justification by another, and when he had reached manhood's estate presented himself wholly, unreservedly, to do the Father's will. At the moment of consecration his earthly life was yielded up as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world,—and this was symbolized by his immersion in water. The remaining three and a half years of his life were already on the altar, and he merely waited for his sacrifice to be consumed, crying with his last breath, "It is finished!" Likewise he has invited all of his faithful, elect Church to become **joint-sacrificers** with him, and ultimately to become also his joint-heirs in the Kingdom to be given to the Royal Priesthood. As Jesus' baptism, therefore, signified his death sacrificially for sins, so the baptism of Christians symbolizes their participation with the Lord in his sacrifice (after they have first been justified by faith freely from all things by the merit of his blood). In our Lord's case the consecration was quickly followed by the symbol, and with his followers the consecration should be followed by the symbol as quickly **as they recognize the meaning of the symbol,**—which for centuries has been beclouded and obscured.

Quickly following our Lord's consecration and its symbolization came the evidence that his sacrifice was accepted of God: the heavens were opened unto him. This probably signifies that he was granted a vision of heaven, confirming to him his relationship to the Father, and connecting up the interim of his experience as a man with his prehuman experiences: and there came a voice declaring him to be God's well-beloved Son, and he as well as John (John 1:34) witnessed a manifestation of the divine blessing descending upon him like a dove. We are not informed that the people saw the heavens opened, heard the voice and saw the dove; on the contrary, the records seem to indicate that only Jesus and John saw and heard, and that the latter was granted the privilege to the intent that he might bear witness to the fact.

A dove was a favorite figure with the Jews as an emblem of peace and salvation. Indeed, Noah's dove, with its olive branch, seems to have become a symbol to all civilized peoples. It was most appropriate, therefore, that since some figure was to be used as an outward evidence of divine blessing, the dove should be that figure. Yet we are not to suppose that the

* The Christian denomination, otherwise termed "Disciples."

holy spirit is a dove, nor that it has bodily shape like a dove, but as instructed in all the Scriptures, that it is a divine power or influence. The dove represented fittingly the meek and quiet spirit which is one of the striking ornaments of all those who possess the spirit of holiness unto the Lord. Such experiences as these which our Lord enjoyed are not granted to his followers nor to be expected today,—neither the voice nor the opened heavens, nor the dove. The coming of the holy spirit to the Church at Pentecost was signalized by an outward demonstration, **which serves the entire Church** throughout the age. Such outward demonstrations were essential at the beginning, as assurances to us that we are not following some vain imaginations of our own or other men's minds in respect to the holy spirit, and now we merely have the realities, which at first were symbolized or represented in tangible form. All who, after believing unto repentance, are justified from their sins, and subsequently present themselves to the Lord to be baptized into his death (Rom. 6:3), receive an opening of the heavens before them in the sense of an opening of their minds to see heavenly things, to appreciate spiritual matters; as the Apostle declares, "God reveals them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,"—things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of [the natural] man." (1 Cor. 2:10.) They also by faith hear the voice of the Father, speaking unto them, saying that, having thus come unto him through Jesus, and having thus consecrated their lives to him, they are now beloved sons, accepted in the well-beloved One. They also receive the blessing of the holy spirit, in the shedding abroad in their hearts of the peace-giving, meek and gentle spirit of holiness, and this becomes more and more a reality with them as they become more and more "filled with the spirit."

Jesus was led of the spirit—his own spirit, illuminated by the spirit-baptism which he had just received—to go apart from John and the concourse of people into quiet solitude, and for this purpose he chose a wilderness place. Mark says he was impelled or "driven" of the spirit into the wilderness. The thought we get is that there was a great pressure upon our Lord's mind at this time. In a previous lesson we noted his study at Jerusalem at an early age respecting the "Father's business," and how he should go about it. We found the Law instructing him that it would not be proper for him to engage in the Father's business until he was thirty years of age, and that in consideration of this fact he desisted and served his parents. The momentous time for which he had been waiting for eighteen years had come. He hastened to present himself at the earliest moment, that his service should not be delayed; but now, under the enlightenment of the holy spirit, instead of beginning his ministry precipitately, he felt that he must know definitely the proper course to pursue: he must not make a mistake at the very out-start of his service; he must know the Father's will, that he might render his service in harmony therewith. Such motives impelled him to seek solitude for thought and prayer, and for reviewing the various Scriptures which hitherto he had studied and but imperfectly comprehended, but which now began to be luminous under the influence of the holy spirit which he had received.

How proper it would be that all of the Lord's people, when they have made a consecration of themselves to the divine service, should be impelled by the new mind, the new spirit, to go apart first and to commune with the Father, and to study his Word respecting how they should render their lives most acceptable in his service! Were this course pursued how many lives would be totally different from what they are; how many failures and changes and turnings, hither and thither, would be avoided! Our Lord expressed the matter in one of his parables, when he said that anyone taking up his cross to follow him should sit down first and count the cost—learn what the Father's will would be, as well as the results to be sought. And if any of God's dear children have neglected thus to seek the right path at the beginning of their consecration, we refer them to the example of our dear Master, who was wise in this as in all things, having not only the spirit of a sound mind, but a sound mind itself, through which that spirit operated perfectly. However, our study of the divine will need not

be so completely alone as was our Master's—we have "brethren," he had none, being himself the forerunner. We may profitably take counsel of such as give evidence of faith in and consecration to God, that we may learn the more quickly and the more thoroughly the Father's will concerning us: especially may we have the aid of the words and example of our elder Brother, Jesus. We must never forget, however, that our consecration is to the Father's business, and that brethren can only be really helpful to us as they assist us in understanding the Father's plan and our part therein: otherwise they might become hindrances by substituting their own or sectarian plans and seeking our consecration thereto.

Our Lord's temptations may be said to have begun at this point—those temptations in which "he was tempted like as we are, yet without sin." It was not the boy Jesus, nor the youth Jesus, that was tempted "as we are." And our Lord's temptations after his consecration were not like the temptations which beset the world, but like the Church's temptations. In other words, our Lord was reckoned a new creature from the time of his consecration at Jordan, as we are counted new creatures in him from the time of our consecration; and it was the **consecrated** Jesus who was tempted and tried like as his consecrated followers are tempted and tried. We shall see further evidences of this as we proceed to notice the character of our Lord's temptations, and to compare them with the temptations which come to his consecrated "brethren." Many have wondered why their temptations seemed to commence after their consecration to the Lord, rather than before: seemingly they expected that after consecration the Adversary would flee from them, and they should have little or no temptation—totally misunderstanding the divine arrangement. Such temptations or tests of character as come to the consecrated are not appropriate to the unconsecrated: the present is not the judgment day of the world, but the testing time for the Church.

It would appear that our Lord's temptations progressed throughout the entire forty days, but that the three temptations specifically described were the culmination of that period of testing. We may imagine our Lord in the wilderness solitude, intently thinking over the various prophetic references to himself, and linking these together, as an architect would first draw the outline of a building and subsequently fill out feature after feature of its internal arrangements. The outline before our Lord's mind from the Scriptures, beyond any peradventure, was the Kingdom. He was to be the King, the Seed of Abraham, under whose gracious government and wise instruction all the families of the earth were to be blessed. This, the profile, was already clearly delineated in his mind, but other features needed to be properly adjusted. How was he to fulfill the type of the Law which represented the priest as giving up his life for the sins of the people? Where would come in the type of the everlasting priesthood? Where would come in the class of Israelites represented by Rebecca, as he himself was represented by Isaac, and the Father by Abraham, in the type? And if Israel would receive him, and become the Rebecca, where would come in the sacrifice, and how? And then other prophecies no doubt pressed his mind for a place in the plan, viz., the declaration that altho Israel were as the sand of the sea only a remnant should be acceptable, and how then would the predestinated number of the "elect" be found, to complete the glorious royal priesthood; and by what process would the blessing come to all the families of the earth, if himself, as the High Priest, and his true followers, as the royal priests, were all to suffer and to die for righteousness' sake, as sacrifices?

We may well suppose that adjustment and readjustment, fitting and refitting, with much reflection and prayer, occupied many of the forty days, and there may have been temptations intermingled with these all; as for instance, questionings respecting the necessity of those features represented in the types and specified in the prophecies of the sufferings of Christ which must take precedence to the glories that would follow. There may have been temptations, too, to deal dishonestly with the records, to "wrest the Scriptures," and thus self-deceived, to choose a way not in fullest conformity to the divine outline; but we may safely suppose that as soon as such suggestions, one

after another, presented themselves, they were promptly rejected,—our Lord being fully determined that he would be absolutely obedient to the Father's will and accomplish the work which he had sent him to do in exactly the manner prescribed.

So intent had been his study, and so earnest his desire for quiet fellowship with the Father and his Law, that forty days were spent under such conditions, and apparently so deeply absorbed was our Lord that he did not even think of food. Nor does this appear so strange to us, when we remember that he was perfect, while we are imperfect, physically as well as otherwise. "He afterward hungered."

It was at the close of this period of Bible study and prayer, when our Lord was weak from fasting, that the Adversary assaulted him with three temptations particularized in our lesson.

The word here translated "devil" is *diabolos*, and is used with the definite article—the devil. The arch-deceiver is thus Scripturally distinguished from the fallen angels, who throughout the Scriptures are spoken of in the plural, designated by another word signifying demons. Here, then, is one place in the Scriptures where the personality of the prince of devils is definitely affirmed, and his person and power acknowledged by our Lord himself. It is not necessary for us, however, to assume that Satan appeared to our Lord in a human form; he may or may not thus have been personally manifest. If personally manifest, we may rest well assured that he presented himself in his very best appearance, as an angel of light. Indeed, we may well remember that our Lord, in his prehuman condition, had, as the Father's agent, been the Creator of Satan, and we remember that Satan was an angel of very high order, whose sin consisted in an attempt to usurp authority and to become the potentate of earth, by stealing the sympathy, affection and obedience of humanity, and that on this account he fell under divine reprobation. We can imagine that a visit from him to Jesus would not be at all inappropriate, as he undoubtedly knew the facts of our Lord's consecration, and to some extent knew of the work which the Father had given him to do in the redemption of the fallen race of men. We can imagine him even presenting himself in a friendly manner, and assuring our Lord Jesus that he felt a great interest in him and in his work; that he himself had been painfully surprised to note the penalty of sin upon mankind, and the dreadful degradation which had resulted; and that now he would be glad indeed to have something done by which poor humanity might be delivered from its groaning, travailing, dying conditions. As a friend, thoroughly versed in the situation all around, and interested in its success, and thoroughly conversant with the mental moods and foibles of humanity, he was in a place where he felt qualified to offer some suggestions respecting the very work which our Lord Jesus wished to perform, the plan for which he was now considering.

Temptation to Use Spiritual Favors for Personal Profit

First, he manifests his personal interest in our Savior by suggesting his weakness from lack of food and the necessity for taking proper care of his physical health if he would do the great and noble work he had undertaken. He reminded him also of his present power—that he had just been imbued with divine power, and that he had now full ability to supply his wants, and need only to speak the word and have the stones turned into food. Thus also, he suggested, he would be demonstrating to himself the verity of the new power which he witnessed coming upon him, and had subsequently felt. What more cunning temptation could be devised than this? Compliance with it evidently meant, not only the relief of his hunger and the strengthening of his physical frame, but additionally it apparently meant the conversion of Satan, who now seemingly was in a repentant attitude, and desirous of cooperating with him in the undoing of the evil work of the long ago. It was a strong temptation.

Such temptations come also to all the consecrated; not in exactly the same form, nor in the same language, but somewhat similarly—suggestions that the new relationship with God, and the strength which it brings, may be used to some extent at least in creature comforts—may be utilized for our temporal advancement; may be made to make us shine before men as

very honorable and favored of God; may be used to command large salaries, or at least as a means for seeking them, even if never found. We may then all note carefully how our Lord resisted his would-be friend and his worldly-wise suggestions. He flatly refused the suggestion of using his spiritual power to serve his temporal wants. The spiritual gift could no more be used to procure temporal comforts than it could be sold for money to Simon (Acts 8:18-24); but without going into details, and without boasting that he was too holy to think of such a sacrilegious use of the power entrusted to him, Jesus simply answered the Adversary in Scriptural language, that a man's life was not wholly dependant upon what he should eat, but that obedience to the Word of God would be a surer guarantee of life. And after this manner each of the Lord's followers should answer every question which in any manner proposes the acquirement of earthly blessings and comforts at the sacrifice of the spiritual. To quite a number of the Lord's "brethren" the Adversary has presented this same temptation in this form: If you follow too closely to the truth, and permit the holy spirit of the truth to make you very zealous in its service, you will soon have no bread, no food, for the world's people with whom you must deal do not appreciate such things. They will discharge you from their employ, or they will cease to deal at your store, or they will dismiss you from being their pastor, or they will withdraw from you their fellowship, their society, etc., and you will starve for all the good things of this present life. The proper answer is that God is able to take care of all those who respect his spiritual blessings too much to sell them for a mess of pottage, as did Esau in the type; and that we are convinced that whoever lives according to the Word of God, tho he may lose some of the comforts of the present time, will eventually gain the far better, the life eternal with exceeding glory.

Our Lord's positiveness of reply shut off the temptation quickly, and discouraged the Adversary from further proceeding along that line; and so it is with us, his followers: if we are positive in our rejection of temptation it increases our strength of character, not only for that time, but also for subsequent temptations; and it disconcerts to some extent our Adversary, who, noting our positiveness, knows well that it is useless to discuss the matter with persons of strong convictions and positive characters; whereas, if the question were parleyed over, the result would surely be the advancing of further reasons and arguments on the Adversary's part, and a danger on our part that we would be over-matched in argument, for, as the Apostle declares, the Devil is a wily adversary, and "we are not ignorant of his devices." Prompt and positive obedience to the word and spirit of the Lord is the only safe course for any of the "brethren."

Tempting God by Unauthorized Efforts

Disappointed in his first effort, the Adversary quickly turned the subject, not even dissenting from our Lord's judgment in the matter. The second temptation he presented is like all others that came to our Lord and that come to his consecrated followers, viz., not a temptation to gross wickedness—to steal, to kill, etc.—but a temptation to do the Lord's work in another way than that which the Lord had planned—the misuse of the divine powers given him by endeavoring to accomplish good results in an improper manner.

Satan took our Lord Jesus to Jerusalem and up to the flat roof of one of the wings of the Temple—not physically, but mentally, just as mentally we can go to various places and do certain things without change of physical location. The suggestion now made was this: I (Satan) can give you a good suggestion respecting a way to bring yourself quickly into prominence before the people of Israel, and you will be pleased with it, because it is a Scriptural way; indeed I have found that it is foretold in the prophecy that Messiah at his coming will do this: and the people will readily recognize it as a fulfillment of the words of the Prophet David, and thus they will embrace your cause quickly, you will become the leader of the people, and your work will go on most grandly: and as I said before, I will rejoice in seeing the prosperity of the work, for I am heartily sick of the degradation which I have witnessed for now four thousand years. My suggestion is that you go to the roof of the southern wing of the Temple which on its rear part overlooks the Valley of Hinnom, towering

above it six hundred feet, and which also overlooks the court of the Temple, in which there are hundreds of devout Jews: then leap from this eminence, and arise unhurt by the fall. This will demonstrate more quickly than anything else you could do or say that the power of the Highest is upon you, and that you are the Messiah. This, I say, is referred to in the Scripture which says,—"He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."—Matt. 4:6.

Similar are the temptations which Satan presents to the consecrated followers of Jesus:—Make a great show before the world and the nominal church; attract their attention by any means, and not simply by the preaching of the cross of Christ; use the spiritual powers and blessings that you have received for doing some great and striking work, which will appeal to the natural man, and thus secure quick and great success; do this instead of doing the quiet and less conspicuous work of presenting spiritual things to the spiritual class, which work the vast majority can in no wise appreciate, but will only shun you, consider you peculiar, and which not only will lose you the sympathy of the mass, but will bring you specially the hatred of some of the principal professors of Christendom.

Again our Lord answered promptly and correctly: "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Satan would like to have us walk by sight, not by faith; he would like to have us continually tempting God, and demanding some ocular demonstrations of his favor and protection, instead of accepting the testimony of his Word, and relying thereon implicitly in faith. In the light of the unfolding of the Scriptures we see that Satan, probably unwittingly, quoted a passage of Scripture wholly out of its proper meaning and interpretation, a passage which referred, not to the literal feet of Jesus, and to literal stones, and to literal angels, but to the symbolic feet-members of the body of Christ today, and to the stones of stumbling, doctrinal and otherwise, which are now permitted in the pathway of the faithful, and to the angels or ministers of divine truth who in the present harvest-time would be commissioned to bear up the feet members with such counsels, admonitions and expositions of Scripture as would be necessary for them.—Psa. 91:11,12.

Temptation to Obtain Desired Good Results by Compromise

Satan's third temptation we may presume was presented likewise in a friendly and sympathetic manner, indicative of a desire for cooperation in our Lord's great work. He took him to a high mountain—not literally, but mentally. Indeed, there is no literal high mountain near Jerusalem, nor anywhere in the world, from which all the kingdoms of the world and their glory could be seen. Satan took our Lord mentally to a very high symbolic mountain (kingdom). He pictured before him the immensity of his (Satan's) own power throughout the world, his control of all the nations and peoples to a large extent, and this our Lord subsequently acknowledged when he referred to Satan as "the prince [ruler] of this world." This panoramic presentation of Satan's power and influence throughout the world was designed to impress upon the mind of our Redeemer the thought that Satan's friendship and assistance would be most valuable—nay, almost of vital importance to the success of his mission, and hence that it was very fortunate indeed that at this juncture Satan had called upon him in so friendly a mood, and that he apparently so sincerely welcomed his efforts and was ready to cooperate therewith.

Satan possibly pointed out to our Lord that Messiah was specially referred to as the King of Israel, and to bless Israel, and he may have admitted that a light of influence would extend to all nations through him, but the center of his argument would seem to be that he proposed to Jesus a still larger kingdom than Israel.

He proposed to him a kingdom embracing all the nations of the earth, and that he should have the control of all these, and be able to bring in the blessed reforms which were designed of God, only one condition being insisted upon, viz., that whatever kingdom or rule or authority might be established must recognize Satan. The Adversary thus seemed to see what he thought a favorable opportunity for consummating his original plans, for we cannot

suppose that his original intention was to gain control of a dying and depraved race, but that he much rather would be the lord or ruler of a highly enlightened and well-endowed people. He was willing, therefore, to see carried into effect all the gracious work which God had designed, and willing to reform himself and to become the leader of reform, provided only that he should be recognized as having the chief place of influence in connection with mankind. It was after this manner that he wished our Lord to do worship or reverence to him—to recognize his influence and cooperation in the work, and not for a moment can we suppose that he expected him to kneel before him and to worship him as God.

Our Lord's reply to this last temptation shows that it fully awakened him to a realization of the fact that there was no real reformation at work in Satan's heart; that he was still ambitious, self-seeking, as at the beginning of his downward course; and he realized that to even discuss the matter further with one who had thus avowed his real sentiments would be disloyalty to the Father, and hence his words, "Get thee hence, Satan"—leave me; you cannot cooperate with me at all; my work is in full accord with the absolute standard of the divine will; I can be a party to no program contrary to this, however alluring some of its features might be in promising a speedy conquest of the world, and a speedy establishment of a reign of righteousness and blessing and an avoidance of personal suffering; I cannot serve two masters; I can only recognize the one supreme Jehovah, as Lord of heaven and of earth, and therefore could not recognize you in any position of authority except as the great Jehovah would appoint you to it, which I know he would never do, so long as you are of the present ambitious spirit. I am operating along the line of the declaration, "Thou shalt worship [reverence] the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

We may readily discern that this temptation of our Lord was but a sample illustration of such as beset his followers all along the narrow way, from the same source, directly or through agencies. Satan, through his various mouthpieces, is continually saying to the saints, Here is a more successful way of accomplishing your object than that which you are pursuing, a more successful way than the Lord's way. Bend a little; make compromise with the worldly spirit; do not hew too close to the line of the word of God and the example of the Lord Jesus and the apostles; you must be more like the world, in order to exert an influence—mix a little into politics, and a good deal into secret societies; keep in touch with the fads and foibles of the day, and above all things keep any light of present truth under a bushel,—thus alone can you have influence and accomplish your good desires toward men. But our dear Master assures us that we are to be faithful to the Lord and to his plan, and let things work out as best they may along that line; and that we may rest assured that in the end the Father's plan not only is the best but really the only plan for accomplishing his great designs, and that if we would be associated therein with him as colaborers, it must be by recognizing him as our only Master, and with an eye single to his approval.

Our Lord's utter refusal of every other way of carrying out his mission than the one which the Father had marked out, the way of self-sacrifice, the narrow way, was indeed a great victory. The Adversary left him, finding nothing in him that he could take hold of or work upon, so thoroughly loyal was he to the very word and the spirit of Jehovah. And then, the trial being ended, we read that holy angels came and ministered to our Lord—doubtless supplying him with refreshment such as he had refused to exercise the divine power to obtain for himself. And such we may recognize as being the experience of our Lord's followers: with victory comes a blessing from the Lord, fellowship of spirit, refreshment of heart, a realization of divine favor that makes stronger for the next trial.

Another lesson here is that temptation does not imply sin. As our Lord was tempted "without sin" so may his brethren be if they follow his example and with purity of heart, purity of intention, seek only the Father's will. Sin could only come through yielding to the temptation. But let us not forget that hesitancy after the wrong is seen increases the power of the temptation. And we may note here that while Satan is a tempter, endeavoring to ensnare us into

wrong paths and wrong conduct, God is not so; "he tempteth no man" (Jas. 1:13), and even tho he permit the Adversary and his agents to beset his people, it is not with the object of ensnaring them, but with the opposite object, that they may by such trials and testings be made the stronger, developing character through exercise in resisting evil. Let us remember too for our strengthening, the Scriptural assurance that God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to resist and overcome but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape.

To avail ourselves of this provision requires merely faith, and the more we exercise our faith in such matters the more of it we will have, becoming stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might; and thus by divine grace and under the Master's assistance we may come off overcomers—conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.—2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor. 10:13; Eph. 6:10; Rom. 8:37-39.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
29, fall	Judean Wilderness	Fasting and temptation of Jesus	4:1-11	1:12,13	4:1-13	
	Bethany beyond Jordan	John the Baptist's testimony concerning Jesus				1:15,29-34

Matthew 4:1-11

Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward hungry. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Mark 1:12-13

And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

Luke 4:1-13

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be

the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

John 1:15,29-34

John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. … The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. … And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

PREPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD—*Reprints*, p. 4112

JOHN 1:19-34.

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

OUR Lord declared of his forerunner, "Verily, I say unto you, there hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist." The signification of the word prophet is "proclaimer"—not necessarily a proclaimer of future things, however. For instance, the Scriptures refer to the prophets and seers, the latter-named referring particularly to the seeing of visions and the foreseeing of coming events. Strictly speaking, a prophet is one who teaches or proclaims, though in many instances the two qualities are combined in one individual. This was so in the case of John the Baptist. He was not only a prophet declaring the important message to the people that they should repent, etc., but he foretold coming events—as, for instance, in this lesson he foretold that our Lord was the Lamb of God which should take away the sin of the world. He declared also that the Lord would baptize people with the holy Spirit and with fire. There was no greater prophet than John, because none of them was entrusted with a more important service of the Lord. Others had foretold the coming of Messiah, his birth of a virgin, his being led as a lamb to the slaughter, his crucifixion, his resurrection, etc., but to John was given the very honorable service of being the first direct announcer or herald of the Son of God, the man Christ Jesus.

While thinking of this honorable position occupied by John, let us remember the Master's word on the subject—"Nevertheless I say unto you, he that is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11.) What a thought there is here respecting the honor that God has conferred upon the apostles and upon all who since their time have believed on the Lord through their word and come into vital relationship with him through faith and consecration. In proportion as we realize this honor of being ambassadors for God, let us be faithful in the use of the opportunities and privileges afforded us. It was for John's honor to be the herald of the Lord in the flesh; it is our distinction to be permitted to proclaim the *parousia* of the Son of man and his glorious reign, about to be inaugurated for the blessing of all the families of the earth. Let us be faithful even unto imprisonment, even unto death, even unto beheading, should such be the providence of God.

John's proclamation was, "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand, repent"—reform, get ready for it. He foretold that our Lord would treat the people of Israel as a reaper, that he would winnow the wheat and cast the chaff into the fire. The same thought he expressed again, saying, "He will baptize [some of you] with the holy Spirit and [others of you] with fire." These prophecies were accurately fulfilled. Our Lord

did a reaping work in that nation, as he said to his disciples, "I send you forth to reap that whereon you bestowed no labor." For three years and a half the Lord reaped and gathered the first-fruits of that nation as his disciples, and upon these at Pentecost he poured out the holy Spirit. Subsequently the apostles gathered others before the time for the burning of the chaff, the "baptism of fire" which occurred in the closing of their national history, which culminated in A.D. 70 with the utter destruction of the city, the temple, and their entire polity. Similarly we who are living in the harvest time of this age, and who are declaring the presence, *parousia*, of the Son of man, are aware that a reaping work is now being accomplished in Christendom, nominal Spiritual Israel, and that all the wheat will be gathered into the garner, beyond the vail, and that speedily there will come upon the world, especially upon the tare class, a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation—the divine preparation for the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom in power and great glory for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

"We Be Abraham's Children"

John's announcement that sin would bar any from a share in the Kingdom, and hence that all should repent and seek divine reconciliation and turn over a new leaf, came as a shock to some who had been passing as God's holy people—the Pharisees and the worldly-wise Sadducees, higher critics, unbelievers. While some of these hearkened and confessed their sins and reformed, others disputed, claiming that John's teachings were extreme and unreasonable. Their argument was that God had promised the Kingdom to the seed of Abraham. There is no other nation of Abraham's seed and none other as holy or as worthy as we, and the promise of the Kingdom belongs to all Jews irrespective of their sanctity. So those who really embraced John's testimony were chiefly of the poor, confessedly sinful. We have the Lord's word for it that if the nation at large had heeded, had accepted John's message, they would have believed in Jesus. Hence we may well suppose that of the 500 brethren who became our Lord's disciples before his crucifixion, and who were privileged to see him after his resurrection, many of them were of those who had heard and heeded John's message. We may suppose also that considerable numbers of those who believed on the day of Pentecost and afterward were of those who heard John and were baptized by him for remission of sins and reformation of life. Thus do divine arrangements and agencies cooperate for the blessing of the honest-hearted, whatever may be their station in life, high or low, rich or poor.

Our Lord's Forerunner

In the East in olden times, and still, great personages in their travels are preceded by heralds or forerunners who clear the way. Dr. Trumball describes the streets of an oriental city, "well filled with half-naked cripples, blind beggars, vain women, and men in bright-colored garments, donkeys trotting through the crowded ways. Suddenly out of all this confusion a sharp, clear voice was heard, 'O ah! O ah!'—meaning, Take care—from a young Egyptian, gaily dressed, coming on the run, swinging a light staff in his hand and repeating his cries to the throng in the street to make way for those who are to follow. Close behind him came an open carriage drawn by a span of showy horses, containing an official of the government. During my stay in Cairo one of the commonest sights was the carriage of a pasha, preceded through the crowded streets by one or more forerunners, calling aloud for the clearing of the way."

John the Baptist was to be the forerunner of our Lord in the flesh—to clear the way, to make the announcement—that he might be properly received, etc. But John did not fulfill all of the prophecy relating to this clearing of the way and preparing for Messiah's Kingdom, which reads: "Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord, Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, And every mountain shall be made low, And the crooked places shall be made straight, And the rough places plain."—Isa. 40:3,4.

The Antitypical Elijah

We remind our readers that in the second volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*, chapter 8, we have set forth the evidences that as John in the flesh introduced Jesus in the flesh and thus

fulfilled the work of forerunner, so the Church in the flesh during this Gospel Age has been the antitypical Elijah, whose business it is to announce the second coming of Christ, the King of glory, and to call for the clearing of the way for his Millennial reign. As you all have this presentation we will not enter into a discussion of it here.

Let us note the foregoing prophecy: We perceive that John's ministry accomplished comparatively little of this; it lasted less than two years and reached a very small proportion of one generation, of one nation. But this is the very message that the antitypical John, the antitypical Elijah, the Church of Christ in the flesh, has been witnessing to the world. Its message as voiced by the Apostle is that the world is in a wilderness condition and needs the presence of the great King to bring order out of its confusion. Its message is that those who hear should walk circumspectly, should make a straight pathway in the desert, a highway for the coming King. More than this, it shows that the entire reign of Jesus and the Church during the Millennium will be to prepare the world for the presence of Jehovah, that the earth may again become his green footstool instead of being a desert, rejected and condemned by him because of sin.

Not only is the work of the Church in the flesh pointed out in this prophecy, but also the work of Christ and the Church in glory during the Millennial Age is foretold—"every valley shall be exalted," signifying that the humble shall be lifted up out of degradation, and those who have reached high positions of influence and affluence under the reign of sin shall be humbled under the reign of righteousness, and thus symbolically "every mountain shall be brought low." The great things which belong to the present time of sin and imperfection will all be straightened out, and the incongruous things will all be smoothed over; so that eventually the world of mankind, as a result of the work of the "Times of restitution of all things," shall again be in harmony with the divine will and the divine law of love, be ready for a return of the divine presence, as represented by the prophets in the words, "He shall make the place of his feet glorious."

"Who Art Thou, Then?"

This was the question asked of John the Baptist—"Art thou the Messiah?" No. "Art thou Elias?" No. "Art thou that prophet mentioned by Moses?" (Acts 3:21,23.) No. "Who art thou, then? Why do you come in this manner, speaking as with authority?" John's answer was, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. … I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose." (Luke 3:4,16.) Thus did John announce the greatness of Messiah and his own insignificance in comparison. Surely we who antitype him may feel very humble in respect to all of our privileges in connection with the announcement of the glorious Kingdom. Any other attitude would be unworthy of us as his representatives and ambassadors. The poet expresses this matter, saying:

> "Rather be nothing, nothing
> To him let their voices be raised;
> He is the fountain of blessing,
> Yes, worthy is he to be praised."

How similar is this announcement to the one made by John. There Jesus was present in the flesh, offering himself to fleshly Israel. Now he is present a spirit being and equally unrecognized. There he was eventually recognized by all the Israelites indeed; here we expect that his presence, *parousia*, will be recognized by all Spiritual Israelites indeed before the "harvest" closes. It is not advisable to cast this pearl of precious truth before the world nor before the unconsecrated. The facts of the Lord's presence, that the harvest work is now in progress, that the wheat will soon all be garnered and that the fire of trouble upon the tares will soon be kindled are only for those who are "Israelites indeed," hungering and thirsting for righteousness. But these truths are indeed meat in due season for all the wise virgins.

"Behold The Lamb of God"

While our Lord's strength and majesty are symbolically referred to when he is styled the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," thus picturing his mighty power as the Millennial King, the picture of a lamb is certainly very appropriate to him in connection with his earthly ministry and

sacrifice for our sins. His submission to the Father's will in every particular and ultimately even unto death, even the death of the cross, was very lamb-like. Furthermore, he was God's Lamb in the sense that his offering for our sins was the divine arrangement, the Father's plan. The Scriptural declaration is that God gave his only begotten Son to be man's Redeemer, that he sent his Son into the world—the Son delighting to do the Father's will. All these thoughts beautifully blend together in this expression, "The Lamb of God." Moreover, it brings to our minds the thought of the necessity for a sacrifice for our sins. In no other way could a lamb take away or bear the sin of the world. How glad we are that by the Lord's grace we not only have eyes of understanding to see him as our great Teacher, Shepherd, but also eyes to see and minds to understand that he was indeed the Lamb of God, whose sacrifice on our behalf is to cancel our sins, their penalty, etc. Only those who can recognize Jesus as the Lamb of God, the Sin-Bearer, can have the justification by faith proffered to believers in this Gospel Age. Let us never lose sight of this feature of the Truth, Whoever loses his robe of righteousness through faith in the blood, loses all so far as the Scriptures reveal.

Taking Away The Sin of The World

How wonderful are the statements of the divine Word!—how exact! John, as a Jew, would not be expected to understand all that his words declared, for the Jews were especially expecting Messiah to take away the sins of the Jews, and that then they, as God's Royal Priesthood, would correct the world in righteousness. But John's declaration goes farther than this, and includes all the Gentiles as well. The wisdom from on high which guided this prophetic utterance is beyond that which the majority of the Lord's people today can appreciate. The general thought today seems to be that the sin of the world is never to be taken away—that the world will sink down into eternal torment under the weight of sin—the Adamic condemnation, supplemented by personal transgressions. Christendom, Churchianity, today knows nothing about a Savior that, as the Lamb of God, shall take away the sin of the world. Alas! alas! poor, blind Christendom! It has read these words and other similar declarations of the Scriptures without getting from them the real blessing which they contain. We remember in this connection the Apostle's statement that "the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all," and we remember his further statement that Jesus' sacrifice was "a propitiation 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.) Truly, as the Lord declared, As the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans than your plans. How glad we are that we find God to be neither little, mean nor revengeful, but a great God whose wondrous plan so far transcends the thought of man. As we look with the eyes of our understanding we realize a measure of the fulfillment of the Apostle's prayer, which, no doubt, included us, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, … that ye 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 that passeth knowledge."—Eph. 3:14,18,19.

His Work Is Before Him

John the Baptist spoke of the Lamb as being present, but of the cancellation of the sin of the world as being a future work. And this work is still incomplete. Our Lord did die as the Lamb, his sacrifice was indeed fully meritorious and satisfactory to the Father, as evidenced by his resurrection from the dead and exaltation to glory and power. But in harmony with the divine plan, the taking away of the sins of the world is divided into two parts: (1) The taking away of the sins of those whose hearts long for reconciliation with God and forgiveness, and to be in harmony with that which is right and true and just and good. These, called believers, have their sins taken away reckonedly; or rather, as the Apostle and the Prophet express it, their sins are "covered" from God's sight by the robe of Christ's righteousness—to be entirely blotted out or taken away when, by the Lord's grace, they shall have finished their course and as faithful ones been counted worthy to enter into life eternal. In that new body then to be granted there will be no blemish, no sin to cover, all will have been blotted out. Then will begin the reign of Christ and his glorified Church, his Bride,

the blessing of the world—the Millennial reign, the Kingdom of the heavens, the rule of righteousness. (2) But before that reign shall begin, the Lamb of God—who redeemed the world more than eighteen centuries ago—will present the merit of his sacrifice and the sacrifice also of the Church, his Body members [made worthy, acceptable through his merit], to the Father as the second offering of the great Day of Atonement sacrifice—for all the people.—Lev. 16.

As the Lord's presentation of his sacrifice when he ascended up on high was accepted of the Father and the blessing came upon the Church, the household of faith, so surely will the second presentation in the end of this age when offered by the great High Priest be acceptable to the Father for the sins of the whole world—all the people. Divine forgiveness for all, the obliquity of Adamic guilt and weakness, will then be made applicable to every creature, and only for such portions of transgressions as have been in the nature of wilful wrong doing will receive "chastisements," "stripes." (Luke 12:47,48.) All the influences of that Millennial Kingdom will be exercised for the blessing, uplifting and assistance of all who will then be brought to a knowledge of the Lord and his gracious plans. Even stripes, chastisements, judgments are amongst the assistances for the world and their correction in righteousness. So, then, by the end of the Millennial Age, the blessing of God—through the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world—shall have accomplished such wonderful, gracious blessings for mankind that all shall have reached the full perfection of restitution to human nature except the incorrigible, who will be "utterly destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:23.

John's Faithful Witness

We see in John's message an utter absence of selfishness, that stumbling stone which has kept so many of the Lord's people from themselves progressing and from being used of the Lord as a blessing to others and witnesses to the truth. John's confession was that Jesus was far greater than himself, and should be preferred before him because he was before him. He was not only before him in the sense of having had a preexistence with the Father, but he was before him in the sense of always having had a higher station and being perfect, while John himself was compassed with imperfections of the flesh like other men.

The declaration, "I knew him not," should not be understood to mean that he was not acquainted with Jesus, for the record shows that they were full cousins. Rather the thought is that he knew not that Jesus was the Messiah: he knew him as his cousin, he knew him as a wonderful boy and a wonderful man, he knew him well enough to at first protest that he was not one of the kind that should be baptized—he was not a sinner. But after Jesus had insisted that by his baptism he would be accomplishing the Father's will—"fulfilling all righteousness"—then John baptized him in water. There, he tells us, at that moment he received from God the evidence that Jesus was the Messiah. He had already been informed that he was to announce Messiah and the Kingdom, and that he would know the Son of God by beholding the descent upon him of the holy Spirit as a dove, but he had not expected that this demonstration should take place in connection with any whom he baptized. He himself, then, was astonished when he beheld the descent of the Spirit upon the Lord, and he announced then to the people that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, the Lamb of God. John did not announce that Jesus was the Father, but that he was the Son of God. This was our Lord's own declaration, the declaration of the apostles, and our testimony must be in harmony with this. We are not to ignore the Father nor the Son nor the relationship between the two, nor the oneness which exists between them, which our Lord explained in his prayer, when he prayed for the Church that they all might be one even as he and the Father are one—not one in person, but one in unity of heart and purpose.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
29, fall	Upper Jordan Valley	First disciples of Jesus				1:35-51

John 1:35-51

Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

FINDING THE LORD'S JEWELS—*Reprints*, p. 4115

JOHN 1:35-51.

"We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth."

OUR last lesson showed us Jesus at the time of his consecration and its symbolization by baptism, when he received the holy Spirit, which to John the Baptist was the token that he was the Messiah. It was after this that Jesus was for forty days alone in the wilderness studying the divine plan, and particularly his own share therein, under the enlightening influences of the holy Spirit which he had just received. This, we see, brought also testing and temptation from the Adversary, suggestions of other and different ways from that which the Lord's Word indicated and which the holy Spirit now showed. Our Lord having passed through those temptations successfully, a victor, began his ministry of three and a half years of self-sacrifice even unto death. Naturally enough he went back to where John had been baptizing and preaching. How much fellowship he enjoyed with John is not stated, or how long he remained in that vicinity. Only the most perspicuous incidents are noted.

It was while Jesus was away in the wilderness that the Pharisees and Scribes asked John whether or not he was the Messiah and received bold testimony that he was not, and was not even worthy to be the menial servant of the great Messiah, who was to accomplish the fulfillment of the prophecies. This was just before our Lord's return, and on the next day (v. 29) Jesus—having returned from the wilderness—mingled amongst the people listening to John's

preaching, etc., and it was at that time that John said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and acknowledged him publicly, and that he had the witness of the Spirit in seeing the dove resting upon him at his baptism. It was on the following day, as we read in our lesson, that John, standing with two of his disciples, pointed to Jesus in the distance walking and said, "Behold the Lamb of God."

"There Cometh One After Me"

The beautiful simplicity and honesty of John the Baptist is remarkable because it is rare. The majority of even the noble-minded seem to have such a selfish, grasping disposition as to unfit them for a service of this kind committed to John. Apparently the majority would find it absolutely impossible to avoid the extolling of their own position and service and dignity in connection with whatever they would say in respect to another, but John seems to have been utterly oblivious of himself—he thought only of his responsibility as the Voice that should cry in the wilderness to them, announcing Messiah. Disowning all honor and distinction for himself, he directed the reverence of all hearts toward Jesus. Let us emphasize this, each in his own heart, as being the proper attitude for all of the Lord's honored servants. We are not to honor ourselves, but to honor him whom the Father has honored, our Lord and our Head. In proportion as we shall be faithful in this service and seek not our own but our Master's praise and honor, pointing him out as the one in whom is centered the divine plan—in this same proportion will we be exhibiting the spirit, disposition, which our Lord can approve and reward with a share in the heavenly Kingdom and glory. If we did not cultivate this spirit and have it in our hearts we would be unfit for the Kingdom—unfit to be entrusted with so great power, honor and glory and with immortality. "He that honoreth me I will honor," "He that is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed," "He that exalteth [praises] himself shall be abased; he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—John 5:23; Luke 9:26; 14:11.

"All Men Were in Expectation"

The Scriptures inform us that at this time the whole Jewish nation was in expectation of Messiah. The records show this in connection with the time of our Lord's birth, the solicitude of Herod, the killing of the babes of Bethlehem, the journey of the wise men, etc. Doctor Farrar remarks on this same line:

> "We are informed by Tacitus, by Suetonius, and by Josephus, that there prevailed throughout the entire East at this time an intense conviction, derived from ancient prophecies, that ere long a powerful monarch would arise in Judea, and gain dominion over the world."

It was in harmony with this general expectation of the people that John's preaching drew such large crowds when he announced that the Kingdom of Messiah was nigh, and that all those prepared for a share therein should confess their sins, repent of them and reform—inviting them to symbolize this by baptism, but applying it only to Jews, and not in reference to their original sin—which under the Law was atoned for year by year with the blood of bulls and goats— but referred to repentance for all personal transgressions, misdeeds against the Law. We have our Lord's testimony for it that in proportion as the people believed John's message and acted thereon, in that same proportion they were ready for his ministry and the further truth of the Gospel. Hence we are not surprised that those who became the Lord's disciples were in some manner intimately and sympathetically acquainted with John and his preaching. Is it not a rule in divine providence that one step of knowledge and devotion leads to another? It was in harmony with this that the disciples of John the Baptist had the Messiah first pointed out to them, and thus the door was opened for their becoming Jesus' disciples.

Seeking Fellowship With Jesus

The two disciples to whom John the Baptist made the remark, "Behold the Lamb of God," at once concluded that if they had found the Messiah whom John was introducing it was time to seek his fellowship, and if possible identify themselves with his ministry. Nor does John the Baptist seem to have offered the slightest

remonstrance against their leaving off cooperation with him. The name of one of these is given in the narrative, Andrew; the name of the other is omitted, but it is presumed that it was John, the writer of this Gospel, whose modesty in such matters is indicated by the withholding of his name on another occasion also—when he refers to himself as "that disciple whom Jesus loved." How beautiful this modesty, how much it endears the character of John to all of us. A less modest man in writing of the matter would probably have told of how he first thought of following Jesus and invited Andrew to accompany him. But we can not only have much more love for John because of this characteristic of humility, but it gives us correspondingly more confidence in all he has written—that ambition did not warp or color any of his descriptions of the matters recorded by him.

The modesty of the two men is further exemplified by their course of conduct in following the Lord instead of approaching him boldly and saying, "Sir, we have the honorable distinction of being amongst the most prominent disciples of John the Baptist, and now introduce ourselves to you." On the contrary, they followed quietly, wondering where our Lord resided and how they might have an opportunity without obtruding themselves to become acquainted with him. Their reverence for him and their modest opinion of themselves restrained them from improprieties. However, after they had followed the Lord probably a considerable distance on his journey toward his abode, he turned to them saying, "What seek ye?" or, as we might translate it into the form of today, "Is there anything I can do for you?" Taken by surprise, they merely answered the Master, "Rabbi, we are wondering where you reside." Our Lord answered, "Come and see," and they went with him and spent the remainder of that day (for this was about four o'clock in the afternoon) in his company. Their queries and our Lord's answers during that afternoon and evening are open for our imagination, for no record is given us. Doubtless they explained to the Lord what they had heard respecting him from John the Baptist, and made inquiries regarding his future work and Kingdom. We may be sure that our Lord told them only part of the truth, in harmony with his subsequent statement to all of the disciples, "I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now."—John 16:12.

Lessons For The New Creation

There are several lessons here that may profit us: (1) The humility of the disciples in their approach; (2) Their proper ambition to have all that God had provided for them and to make use of their opportunity—to progress from being the disciples of John to the discipleship of Jesus; (3) Their seeking in this unobtrusive manner to have fellowship with the Lord and to become better acquainted; (4) Our Lord's generous reception of them and hospitable invitation to his home; (5) His wisdom in not telling them the whole truth—neither about the heavenly things nor about the earthly trials and difficulties. Meat in due season is the Scriptural order—milk for babes, strong meat for those who are more developed, as the Apostle recommends.

How much need all the Lord's dear followers have for applying these various lessons each to his own heart and experience and practice! How many of us have had a zeal without wisdom, and have fed new beginners with strong meat, which has troubled and hindered them if it did not choke their interest. But we are all pupils, and let us all learn more and more to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, as earnest in showing the pearls to those ready for the sight as in withholding them from those who are swinish and unprepared.

"What Are You Seeking?"

There is peculiar force in this query, and no doubt our Lord used it with the intention of awakening this very thought in these two who first sought his companionship. It is a good question for each one of us to put to himself, and for us to suggest at a proper time to all others who are manifesting any interest in Present Truth. What are we seeking? What are we looking for? We know what the world is seeking—wealth, honor, fame, ease, etc.—and we know that many who turn toward the Lord still have the spirit of the world. They would like to be the Lord's disciples and still have and cultivate and enjoy the hopes and ambitions that are more or

less worldly. It is appropriate that we should give heed to the Master's words as though they were addressed to each of us individually. What are you seeking? Let us answer our Master in our own hearts and in prayer; and before we make answer, let us consider well that it may be a truthful one, for we might indeed deceive ourselves, but could not deceive him with whom we have to do. It is right that we should seek the Kingdom and that we should know that there is a great honor and glory and dignity associated with it by divine arrangement, and that thus we should "seek for glory, honor and immortality." But in conjunction with this seeking of the Kingdom we should remember our Master's words on another occasion, that we should seek chiefly the Kingdom of God and **his righteousness.**

We are to remember that the Kingdom is not to be reached by an unrighteous path, that injustice, iniquity, lawlessness, self-indulgence, selfishness in any form are paths which lead in other directions. We are to remember that the Master by word and by example indicated to us that to live godly in this present time would involve us in a measure of persecution, as it did him, and that the servant must not expect to be above his lord in the world's favor. Hence to say we are seeking the Kingdom means that we are taking the path leading thereto—the narrow way of self-denial. It means that we have enlisted under the banner of the Lord, with a full knowledge that our loyalty to him will mean to us opposition from the world, the flesh and the Adversary, as we seek to be good soldiers of the cross and to endure hardness in fighting against sin. It is those who seek the Lord with sincerity, with honesty, without guile and without selfishness, who find him, have fellowship with him and become his true disciples, and eventually will have joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.

"First findeth His Own Brother"

One of the two who heard John and followed Jesus was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter —"He findeth first his own brother Simon." The revised version may be understood to imply that both disciples sought their brothers, but that Andrew found his brother first. If, as is supposed, John was the other disciple, we know that he had a brother, James, and that the latter also was brought to the Lord. The particular thought we wish to emphasize here as worthy of special commendation, embodying a proper lesson for us, is the fact that these disciples in beginning the service of the Truth went first to their own brethren. This implies that they had brotherly love in their hearts, as we should properly expect all would have who would be found worthy to be disciples of Jesus. It implies that they had influence with their brethren along religious lines, which probably would not have been true if they had not been recognized by their relatives as men of character and principle. If, therefore, any of the Lord's people should feel impelled to first go to strangers with the good tidings it would be a less favorable sign as respects the esteem in which they are held. However, let them not feel discouraged if they have not this favorable evidence to begin with. Let us remember the Apostle's assurance that amongst those the Lord is choosing for his disciples there are not many great, noble, influential—that they are mainly the ignoble.

The very fact that the Lord has granted us the privilege of his fellowship is an assurance that there was something in us that he did not despise, and was willing to take over, that he might mould and fashion it by his truth and grace, and finally present it beautiful and irreprovable before the Father through the glorious change of the First Resurrection. Again, however, let us emphasize the propriety of loving those who are our kin to the extent that we will do all in our power for their assistance. As this is a rule that should prevail amongst brethren it should also be a rule as between husband and wife, parents and children. If a wife should receive the Truth, her first joy should be, if possible, to bring the matter to the attention of her husband. If a husband receive the Truth it should be his first joy and privilege to bring the matter to the attention of his wife, and so between the parents to the children. We confess that we have been surprised at times to find that this course, which seems so natural and so proper, has not always suggested itself to those who have come into the light of Present Truth.

We advise that where a different course has been followed it is time for a change. Let the

husband plan for the welfare of the wife and assist her in arranging the home matters, so that she may have time for studying the Truth, attending meetings, etc. Let the wife coming into the Truth give diligent attention to arrange matters most favorably for her husband, that he also may enjoy the blessings, the privileges of study, etc. The old adage, that "Charity begins at home," is as true of religious charity as of other kinds. "Husbands, love your wives"—do all in your power to bless them, especially in their highest spiritual interests, and to bring to them this highest of all joys. "Wives, reverence your husbands"—appreciate them, and desire that they shall have all of the good things obtainable, and use your best influence for their assistance.

"We Have Found The Messiah"

With this message they greeted their brethren, and, as explained in the text, the Hebrew word *Messiah* corresponded to the Greek word *Christ*. They knew that for long centuries Messiah had been promised, and that their whole nation, through varying vicissitudes, had been looking, hoping, praying for his coming and for the blessings which he would bring to their nation as their king, delivering them from all evil and exalting them with the power of God to be the light of the world, and thus through them shedding blessings upon all nations. The afternoon spent by these two with Jesus had convinced them that the words of John the Baptist were correct, that Jesus was "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

It is not explained how Peter received the message, but judging him from his subsequent course of conduct, we must assume that he came with haste to see, to know, to judge for himself on the subject. The nature of the evidence given him by Jesus is not related, but he believed, became a disciple, received a new name—an added name. He was Simon Bar-Jona, or Simon, son of Jonah; now, henceforth, he would be more particularly known as a disciple by the name of Simon Peter, that is, Simon, a stone. Thus early did Jesus indicate his knowledge of the man, recognizing him as one of the living stones for the glorious Temple of the future, as this Apostle himself afterward explained.—1 Pet. 2:4,5.

"Go Forth Into Galilee"

On the day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and en route found Philip, whom he personally invited to become his follower, and then speedily Philip found Nathanael, known also in the Scriptures as Bartholomew.

This finding of the disciples is described to have been at Bethabara, where Jesus was making his home, and which by the revisers is called Bethany—thus giving the suggestion that our Lord was acquainted with the family of Lazarus and Martha and Mary before he began his ministry, and that it was to this point that the disciples followed him from the fords of the Jordan, where John had been baptizing. Evidently our Lord tarried in the vicinity of John's mission for a time, there to find some of the most earnest ones whom John's preaching had gathered together.

It will be noticed that the disciples here mentioned all came from Galilee, John and James, Andrew and Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanael. (Judas alone was a Judean.) What were these men doing so far away from their homes? We can only suppose that they were amongst the masses who heard of John and his preaching, and who were so deeply interested in the coming Messiah that they came what was considered in those days a considerable journey, leaving their business that they might hear what John had to say, and join with him as his disciples in helping to prepare the way for Messiah. How the Lord does use one ministration of the Truth to prepare our hearts for a later and fuller illustration of it! This corroborates the statement of our Lord's prayer to the effect that these disciples were true, God-fearing consecrated men before they came to Jesus. In the prayer Jesus says, "Thine they were and thou gavest them to me." (John 17:6.) A lesson to us in this is that if we are faithful and zealous to every portion of truth that comes to us, according as we receive and act upon this we will be prepared for another. Had these men not had the spirit of consecration they never would have left their affairs to join with John in his ministry, and then they might not have been so well prepared to be the honored apostles of Jesus.

"Whence Knowest Thou Me?"

The story of the call of Nathanael is a specially interesting one. Our imaginations have little difficulty in filling in the items omitted by the narrative. Philip himself had come within the charmed circle of our Lord's influence, and had realized that it was a blessed privilege to become his disciple and that he must be indeed the long-looked-for Messiah. Full of this confidence he looked for his friend Nathanael, whom he recognized as being of one mind and heart with himself in the desire to serve the Lord and to be ready for Messiah's Kingdom. Finding him his salutation was, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write—Jesus of Nazareth, [adopted] son of Joseph." Nathanael was apparently a man of keen intellectual power. He felt that his friend Philip had accepted something too hastily, and that he was being deceived by a pretender, and his prompt objection was, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" As though he had said, "That is a mean city of itself; no great people of any reputation would ever come from thence; no prophecies, so far as we know, make any reference to that city. What you tell me of your Messiah rather tends to prejudice my mind against him."

And so it is today with some of the Lord's true followers who are expecting the second coming of the Lord as the great King of glory. When we tell them that we have found the truth on this subject and that the Law and the prophets all corroborate the fact that we are now living in the harvest time, in the *parousia* of the Son of man, they are disposed to sneer at our zeal and enthusiasm and to bid us be very careful lest we be deceived. They ask, Whence comes the message of the *parousia*? and when they are told that it is not from the great, the wise, the mighty of this present time, not from the Doctors of Divinity, but from humble sources that the message reaches them, they ask, "What could you expect from such a source?" intimating that rather we should look to the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law today.

Let us answer such doubting brethren as Philip answered Nathanael, "Come and see!" Investigate, test the matter by the Word of God. Apparently Nathanael would not go with Philip. The latter may have gone his own way dejectedly, because one whom he esteemed to be a true servant of God was apparently unwilling to hearken and to investigate. But Nathanael had his own reasons for not at once complying with the invitation. He felt that the matter was one of great importance; that it affected not only his own interests but the interests of his friends and of the Lord's cause in general. He must be cautious. He had already heard of Jesus, and had been considering and praying about this very subject before Philip came to him; he had asked to be kept from delusions and snares—that his judgment might be guided of the Lord, that he might not be deceived by a pretender. He would follow a little later, and, free from all prejudice, would endeavor to judge of the merits or demerits of the case, relying upon the Lord's blessing, which he had sought.

How glad we would be if all our dear friends who give evidence, so far as we are able to judge, of being true, loyal servants of the Lord, were to take the course that Nathanael took to seek the Lord and his protection and guidance, and then to investigate, proving all things by the Word of God! And while we may be sure that though some may not as promptly take this course as did Nathanael, all who are of the truly overcoming class will ultimately take it and ultimately be guided, that they may indeed come in contact with Present Truth and realize the *parousia* of our Lord and his work of harvesting the Church and gathering the ripe grains into the garner preparatory to their shining forth with him in the glory of the Kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth.—Matt. 13:43.

Blessed Are Your Eyes And Ears

As we notice in this lesson the reception that our Lord gave Nathanael, we are forced to contrast it with the very different reception he gave to some of the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law when they approached him in a caviling spirit. To these he spoke in parables and dark sayings which he did not expect them to appreciate or to understand, but to such as Nathanael our Lord was most gracious, because knowing the hearts of all he could

wisely discriminate. We may not exercise such a liberty because such a knowledge is not ours; it is for us to be patient and courteous to all, and to do our best to assist all to an understanding of the Truth, whether they shall hear or whether they shall forbear—convinced, however, that only the Israelites indeed will hear effectually, will receive the call and be profited thereby to the attainment of the prize.

Before Nathanael had quite reached Jesus and those who were with him, the Master said, in his hearing, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." A wonderful tribute this! No wonder Nathanael was fit to be of the Little Flock and one of the apostles! No wonder Philip wrestled with him, praying him to come and see. His honesty of heart made him worthy of the blessings of which the mass of his nation were not then worthy. As we read in John 1:11, 12, Jesus "came unto his own and his own received him not; but to as many as received him to them gave he liberty [privilege] to become the sons of God." And he helped those who were in the right attitude of heart to receive him; he assisted their faith and encouraged their confidence, saying to one, as we remember, "Be not faithless, but believing."—John 20:27.

But Nathanael, although he realized that he was an honest, true Israelite, seeking for whatever God had to give to his faithful, was not satisfied with this testimony—such an expression might be given by another in flattery. He would cross-question the Lord, and he said, "Whence knowest thou me?" You have made a statement; what is your authority for it? I do not know that we have ever met before. Jesus replied, "When thou wast under the fig-tree, before Philip called thee, I saw thee." Ah, well did Nathanael remember how he had crept under the low-spreading boughs of the fig-tree and how he had prayed to the heavenly Father for wisdom and for the proper evidences on the subject of concern. Here he had the very answer to his prayer. The one who could know about that prayer and could thus answer it and reveal himself must indeed be superhuman—all that he claimed, the Messiah. Nathanael's faith operated quickly, and he responded, "Rabbi [Master], thou art the Son of God: thou art the King of Israel."

And is not our Lord's dealing practically the same today? Is it not true that those who now in faith and prayer seek for enlightenment respecting the times and the seasons and the features of the divine plan, and information respecting the harvest work—is it not true that these are specially helped of the Lord? that the Truth is made specially clear before their minds? whereas others coming to the subject through idle curiosity perhaps, or with a half faith fear a coming trouble and are desirous of knowing how to escape it, are left comparatively in darkness? Let us who have discerned these beautiful traits and qualities in the class of disciples whom the Lord chose at his first advent, see to it that we cultivate similar characteristics, and that we expend our special energies to bring the Truth to the attention of others who give evidence of meekness and faith and loyalty to God.

"Thou Shalt See Greater Things"

As soon as Nathanael had confessed his faith our Lord assured him that what he had already come to appreciate was insignificant in proportion to the still greater things which as his disciple he would gradually come to know and to understand. And is not this true with us today? The joy, the confidence, the hopes which filled our hearts at the beginning, as we came to recognize the Lord and to have a clearer understanding of the divine plan—have these not continually been added to by the Lord, so that what we first saw and enjoyed seems but small in comparison with the riches of grace and loving kindness and tender mercies revealed to our eyes of understanding. As our mental vision widens we behold lengths and breadths and depths and heights of the love of God surpassing all of our expectations.—Eph. 3:18,19.

And by faith we can see Jesus as the antitypical Jacob's ladder, as our Lord intimated to Nathanael. As Jacob in his vision saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven and communications carried on thereby, so we, in the light of the divine plan now unfolding, see that our Lord Jesus and the Church associated with him constitute the ladder of communication between God and the world of mankind, which, during

the Millennial Age, will serve as the channel of favor by which all the families of the earth shall be blessed—by which the glory and blessing of the Lord shall be brought down to earth, even as now the Elect, firstfruits of his human creatures, are being gathered from amongst men, that they may ascend to God as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord by means of the glorious change which shall come to them in the First Resurrection, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
29, fall	Cana of Galilee; Capernaum	Jesus' first miracle; he visits Capernaum				2:1-12

John 2:1-12

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

FILLED AND TRANSFORMED.—*Reprints*, p. 3484

JOHN 2:1-11.

"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

CANA of Galilee was the home city of Nathanael, one of the latest additions to the number of our Lord's disciples. He was one of six who had now given their adherence to Jesus as the Messiah. Apparently Nathanael had invited our Lord and the other disciples to be his guests at Cana, where a marriage feast was about to be held. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was present at the feast, doubtless as a very close friend of the family, as indicated by her knowledge in advance that the wine supply was running short. The customary hospitality of the Jews on such occasions would make it a serious breach of etiquette not to supply an abundance for their guests, as well as for neighbors and passers by, who, in the name of the bridegroom, would be urged to enter and partake of the hospitalities freely. Jesus and his disciples were amongst the specially invited guests.

Our Lord's mother brought to his attention the shortage of wine, and from this it has been assumed that she anticipated the miracle. We cannot agree to the reasonableness of this suggestion, because it is particularly stated that the miraculous creation of wine on this occasion was the beginning of Jesus' miracles. We must suppose, therefore, that Mary's long acquaintance with and dependance on her son had made her aware of his superior judgment and resourcefulness in all events and on all occasions. The matter was beyond her control, and, as was often the case with those in moderate circumstances, the bridegroom had probably spent all that he could afford to expend in prep-

arations. Probably also, in anticipation of our Lord's presence at the marriage feast, a larger number of neighbors called on his account—to see the stranger of whom they had heard more or less through Nathanael and others.

Jesus Sociable in The Home.

This narrative gives us a little glimpse of the social side of our Lord's character, and convinces us that the asceticism illustrated by monks and nuns was not a part of his teaching either in word or example. His consecrated life was lived in the midst of the ordinary social conditions bearing upon any member of a moral and religious community. There is no suggestion of revelry or foolishness in our Lord's conduct, but it is reasonable to assume that he participated in the proper joys and fellowships and social amenities of such an occasion. This was in harmony with his own injunction to his followers, "Rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with those that weep."

What every home needs is not only a visit from Jesus, but that it should be his home, his abiding place. It would be a safe rule of life for all of the Lord's followers to desire to go to any place they would have reason to believe the Lord would go if he were again present in the flesh; it would be a safe rule for us to do or say such things as we would have reason to expect that our Lord would do or say were he present in our stead. Blessings, we may be sure, went with the dear Master wherever he went, specially to those who like Nathanael were Israelites indeed, in whose hearts there was no guile.

When we remember that the word disciple means pupil or learner, and that all of the Lord's people are his disciples (though not all apostles), it gives us a suggestion that each disciple represents the Lord—that where we go he goes, that we are his representatives or "ambassadors." With this thought before our minds how careful we each should be to properly represent our glorious Lord;—to "show forth the praise of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." To this end how we need to pray, not only with our lips but also with our hearts, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." Verily "as he was so are we in this world." (1 John 4:17.) "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not," but our duty on all occasions is just the same: his message is that we shall let our light shine before men, that they seeing our good works may glorify our Father in heaven.

"Peace Be To This House."

A suggestion respecting the influences accompanying the Lord's disciples—which influences, we believe, surely accompanied his own presence on all such occasions—is represented by his commission to his apostles when he sent them forth. They were to say, "Peace be upon this house," before entering. We do not take it that this is a command that we should openly and formally make such a declaration before entering any building, but we do believe that this should be the heart sentiment of every one of the Lord's consecrated people—their desire, their effort, their aim—that peace and blessing may accompany them wherever they may go, resting, refreshing and uplifting the hearts of the poor groaning creation with whom they come in contact.

There are plenty of strife-breeders in the world whose entry of the portals of any home means, Strife be within these walls, whether they realize it or say it or not. Full of anger, malice, hatred and strife, their hearts speak forth of the abundance within, breeding discontent and unhappiness. With others who have passed that condition of bitterness of soul in malice and strife, and who have set their faces to walk in the Lord's footsteps, after the Spirit and not after the flesh, and who therefore are putting away those works of the flesh and the devil, some time will surely elapse before they are filled with the spirit of love: and in that interim, before they are so filled with peace and joy and the fruits of the Spirit as to overflow these in blessings wherever they go, there is apt to be a period in which evil speaking, backbiting, evil insinuations, evil surmisings, unkindnesses, ungentleness of word and conduct, impatience, etc., will be manifested.

The influence of such, even though they be pupils in Christ, is a carnal influence, highly injurious to spiritual development, calculated to stop growth in the various graces and to disturb the peace and joy of their own hearts and

the hearts of others who are seeking the right ways of the Lord. The lesson for us of the Lord's followers is not only to turn from sin to righteousness and from anger and envy and malice to love, but to keep the heart fully filled with the latter, so that out of its abundance of love and joy and peace our mouth may speak and our conduct may show our relationship and likeness to our Lord, that men may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and have learned of him.

"Honor Thy Father And Thy Mother."

Our Lord's reply to his mother's suggestion appears rather cold and harsh, but this is largely the result of the translation. While the word "woman" is a proper translation, it does not give the elegant shading of the Greek original, which would more nearly signify lady. The word is the same, for instance, that the Emperor of Rome used in complimentary address to the Queen of Egypt, "Take courage, O woman." We may be sure that neither by word nor act did our Lord violate the commandment of the Law, "Honor thy father and thy mother." We may be sure that in all his words and conduct he was a very model of the meekness and gentleness, patience and love which his doctrines inculcated.

The expression, "What have I to do with thee?" would seem more properly to signify, "Do not attempt to dictate to me—I will know what to do when the appropriate time comes." Mary probably was intent upon hiding the fact of the shortage of the wine: Jesus on the other hand recognized that the miracle he was about to perform was less for the assistance of the bridegroom of the occasion than for a great lesson which, through the servants, probably became known to the entire company. Jesus therefore waited until the supply was not only running low but exhausted, until there was no wine, so that the miracle would not be minimized by the admixture of the new with the old.

Mary's word to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it," was a further evidence that she was on terms of very close intimacy in that home. The servants properly enough would need such instructions, for otherwise they would not be prepared to take orders from one of the guests. Mary probably had no knowledge of what the Lord would command the servants to do, but, as before suggested, she had confidence in her son's resourcefulness and wisdom, and that as one of the guests whose entertainment had helped to exhaust the wine he would be pleased to take some steps to assist in replenishing the supply.

Here a question arises respecting the kind of wine provided by the bridegroom of which Jesus and his disciples evidently partook, and also respecting the kind of wine which the Lord subsequently produced and of which he probably partook. We know of nothing to indicate that this was merely grape juice unfermented. Everything seems to teach the reverse of this, that it was slightly alcoholic—the alcohol being produced in the wine through the processes of fermentation, resulting in what is known as "light wines." The remark of the governor of the feast that the wine which Jesus made was better than that at first supplied would, we think, support this theory, but it would not imply that the people were drunk, intoxicated, and that they had thus lost their taste or judgment.

In our view there is a great difference between present conditions and those of our Lord's time. Those people of a warmer country were accustomed to drinking light wines, in very much the same manner that we today drink water, tea, coffee, etc., and they had no deleterious effects, and the same may be said of the people of some parts of Europe today. Besides, it was in a slower age and amongst people more moderate in every way. In our day, with everything done under pressure and nervous excitement, alcoholic stimulants of every kind seem to be poisonous to very many; it seems to be next to impossible for people to use such stimulants moderately.

It is for this reason alone that total abstinence may be recommended—because of the "present distress," because of the increased expenditure of nervous energy and consequent increased danger of inebriety, and not because the Scriptures specially enjoin total abstinence. It is our conviction that if the Lord were present in the flesh today under our present conditions, circumstances, etc., he would rank amongst the most abstemious, because if such

abstention were not necessary for himself, we believe that his love and sympathy for the weak, fallen race would impel him to avoid being anything like a stumbling-stone in the way of any of them.

Water-Pots Filled Full.

In those days they did not have hydrants, pumps, etc., but kept the water for family use in large earthen vessels called water-pots. On such an occasion as this an extra quantity would be needed, and quite probably water-pots had been borrowed from neighbors. They were of different sizes but all quite large, two firkins represented by eighteen gallons and three firkins by twenty-seven gallons, or nine gallons each firkin. It was the custom to use this water supply specially for washing the vessels of the household and the hands and feet of the guests, hence the need of so great a supply.

When the proper time came for the performance of the miracle our Lord instructed that water be fetched and that these six water-pots be filled to the brim. This use of the ordinary water-jars would prevent any suspicion of their containing any powders or mixtures that might constitute a basis for the miracle, and the filling of them to the brim would likewise hinder anyone from thinking that something was added to the water by our Lord. Besides, the water thus rising to the surface where it could be seen would show its own clearness and purity.

The change from water to wine was evidently instantaneous, for our Lord at once directed them to draw the wine and serve first the governor of the feast, who would thus have a knowledge of the fresh supply. The latter commented upon the new wine as superior to the first, and remarked to the host that usually the best was given first, when the palate would be the more keen to detect the quality. This was a testimony to the excellence of the wine which Jesus made. We cannot think that at an ordinary feast simple grape-juice would be regarded as superior wine, nor on the other hand need we suppose that the wine which Jesus made contained such a proportion of alcohol as would make it injurious to the users.

But there was another reason why the vessels were filled to the brim with the pure water: they were symbolical, they represented the Lord's people in this present time. Water is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of life, the "water of life." It particularly figures or illustrates natural or human life, as, for instance, in Revelation 22:17, where the symbol is given of the Spirit and the Bride during the Millennial age saying to the world of mankind, "Come, partake of the water of life freely." It represents the restitution work, the revival of mankind from the power of death, the infusion of the restitution life.

Our Treasure in Earthen Vessels.

In these earthen vessels the water had been considerably exhausted, there was very little remaining in each vessel. So with us as members of the human family, our life forces are well exhausted through the fall. The Jews, as God's favored people under the typical Law Covenant, were justified to a certain extent, but not in the full sense of the word—not justified to life—and the filling up of the water-pots with water to the brim represented or foreshadowed the full and complete justification to life, to all human rights and privileges reckonedly granted to all who become the Lord's followers. As the Apostle expresses it, "Being justified by faith we have peace with God."

But the figure or illustration goes further and shows us the transforming of these justified lives, the impartation of a new nature by miraculous change. The thought is expressed by the Apostle when he says that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds, we become New Creatures.

The change of the water to wine, therefore, represents the change of the justified being, constituting him a new creation in Christ Jesus. As the water will represent the justification, so the wine will represent the superior joys of the Spirit granted to those who through faith and a full consecration attain to the begetting of the Spirit—an adoption into the spiritual family. True, these joys at present are not as real as they will be by and by—they are joys of hope, of anticipation, which we have in earthly vessels, as the Apostle declares. By and by, however, according to the Lord's promise, a share in the Lord's resurrection will give us the new vessels, the golden vessels, the perfect con-

ditions in which our joys and favors will be realized and appreciated to the full. There is a hint of this in our Lord's declaration at the last supper that those who would drink of his cup of suffering and self-sacrifice in the present time would by and by share with him the new wine, the divine nature and life and joys in the Kingdom.

This discernment of a spiritual signification in the wine is in full accord with the statement of our last verse of the lesson, which assures us that our Lord's miracles, etc., manifested forth —that is, beforehand—his coming glory and the blessings which he will then bestow upon his faithful.

"The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was planned."

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30, Passover	Jerusalem	Passover celebration; drives traders from temple				2:13-25

John 2:13-25

And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said. Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

JESUS CLEANSING THE TEMPLE.—*Reprints*, p. 1695

JOHN 2:13-25.

"Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise."—John 2:16.

THE SEVERAL accounts of this action of our Lord by the other evangelists place the occurrence unmistakably near the close of his ministry, while John here mentions it in connection with events at the beginning of his public work. It would appear, however, that the one event was referred to by them all, the last verse of John's account, like the others, showing the hostile attitude of numerous opponents who sought his life, which disposition did not make its appearance in the very beginning of his ministry.

This authoritative action of Jesus had a peculiar fitness as a type near the close of his ministry. It immediately followed his triumphant entry into Jerusalem in fulfillment of the prophecy—"Behold thy king cometh unto thee, etc." (Zech. 9:9); and this course in the temple was an assumption of authority consequent upon this rightful claim to be the king of Israel—a claim, however, which was rejected by the Jews. "He came unto his own [people], and his own received him not." (John 1:11.) Then, seeing they put away the favor of God from

them and proved themselves unworthy of it, he turned to the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name, which selection has required the eighteen centuries of the Gospel age; and that fleshly house of Israel and this spiritual house, the Gospel Church, stand related to each other as type and antitype; both as to circumstances and time. As an event shortly preceding his crucifixion, this cleansing of the temple finds its antitype in a similar work here, beginning at the corresponding date—1878 (See *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 2, page 239); viz., the casting out (from the spiritual temple—his body, the consecrated Church) of such as are unworthy to be of that body, while the worthy ones, the pure in heart, are being correspondingly blessed.

The scourge of small cords was a fit emblem of the harmonious doctrines of Christ, which are accomplishing the cleansing work here.

When asked for a sign of the authority by which he did these things, Jesus pointed forward to his future power—after his death and resurrection. (Verses 18-21.) He had no authority to begin the actual work then; that which he did being only typical, and for our profiting, not theirs.

VERSES 23-25 (*Diaglott*). Though the people at this time seemed greatly impressed by his miracles, and, shouting Hosanna! before him, seemed ready to accept him as the Messiah and to proclaim him king at once (See also Matt. 21:9-11), Jesus did not trust them; for he knew the fickleness of their hearts, and having the gift also of discerning of spirits, he needed not that any man should testify of them, for he knew what was in them.—Luke 20:41-47.

The Golden Text—"Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise"—should have the most careful consideration of all those who profess to be of his consecrated house,—the true temple. In this time of cleansing, sifting and purifying of the temple of God, none will be permitted to remain in it whose purpose is in any way to make merchandise of God's holy things.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30, Passover	Jerusalem	Jesus' discussion with Nicodemus				3:1-21

John 3:1-21

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

REGENERATION AND THE KINGDOM—*Reprints*, p. 4124

JOHN 3:1-21.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

THIS lesson well illustrates the wrong, unscriptural trend of thought and of Biblical interpretation which has come to prevail so generally throughout Christendom. The peculiar, the strange thing connected with the matter is that people of apparent capacity for reasoning on other subjects seem to abandon all logic in the study of God's Word. The usual interpretation of this lesson is that Jesus taught Nicodemus that he was about to establish a Church, which he called the Kingdom of God, without its having any likeness to the Kingdom or bearing any rule in the world. It is claimed that our Lord meant Nicodemus to understand that his Church was to be considered the Kingdom because eventually it would so prevail throughout the earth that God's will should be done on earth even as it is done in heaven. Then, to make this interpretation the more absurd, they acknowledge that our Lord here declared that no one could appreciate this Kingdom or enter into it except he were first begotten of the holy Spirit. Now note the absurdity of all this:

After nearly nineteen centuries the total number of both Catholics and Protestants in the world is about four hundred millions, including the ring-streaked, the speckled and the black—the rough, the scuff, the tough of all civilized lands—improperly styled Christendom. The remainder of the race, twelve hundred millions, either never have heard of the Lord Jesus at all or, having heard, repudiated him. The number of the heathen, therefore, today is many times as large as the entire population of the earth at the time when the Lord conversed with Nicodemus. If the world is the Kingdom is it conquering itself in any sense of the word? Surely not! But now let us look at the four hundred millions called "Christendom," and judge as best we may be able who and what they really are, aside from their profession. How many of them make the slightest profession of having been born again, begotten again, born from above, and to have the renewing of the holy Spirit? Practically none—surely, as in our Lord's day, only a "Little Flock."

If any one is in doubt on this subject let him inquire amongst his Christian friends and neighbors on the subject of the new birth, the begetting of the holy Spirit. Let him explain what he means by a full consecration or devotion of time, strength and all that we possess to God and his service, and the change of heart signified by the begetting and anointing of the holy Spirit, and then ask how many of his friends and neighbors have either made the consecration involved or have received the holy Spirit. He will not have gone far into this inquiry until he be fully convinced that there is a great mistake in this ordinary view of the Kingdom—that it is thoroughly untenable and cannot be our Lord's meaning.

Thus satisfied that the general concept of this lesson is radically wrong, let us note carefully and prayerfully every word of our lesson with untrammeled minds, that we may know the truth and the truth may make us free from

error, from superstition, and may bring to us light, joy and assistance.

Nicodemus And The Great Teacher

Nicodemus, an influential man amongst the Jews, a member of the Sanhedrin, and widely known as a professor of holiness—of full consecration to God—a Pharisee, came to Jesus by night; not necessarily from fear, possibly wisdom guided him, a prudent recognition of the interests of others as well as of his own. Possibly he came by night because then he might have a better opportunity for private conversation with the Master. In any event we find him very reverential and courteous. He addressed our Lord as Rabbi, or Teacher, and declared his belief that he was from God, a servant of God, in whom God evidently delighted, as manifested by his miracles. Only a mere portion of the conversation of the evening is given. We may reasonably presume that Nicodemus came to ask questions respecting the Kingdom of God, which he knew John and his disciples had been preaching, and which Jesus and his disciples subsequently also preached. As a student of the Scriptures he knew to expect the Kingdom, and that it was God's provision for the blessing and uplifting of Israel and ultimately the fulfillment of a promise to Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Having confidence in Jesus he wished to learn particulars respecting this Kingdom, for neither John the Baptist nor Jesus had manifested anything to indicate how the Kingdom was to be brought about—where the soldiers were to be obtained, how drilled and officered, where the implements of warfare were to come from and the large amount of money necessary to equip and provide for an army. Such a question is implied by our Lord's statement, "Verily, verily I say unto you, except a man be born again [anew] he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

We can imagine the perplexity of Nicodemus, who was looking for a King and a glorious retinue, more grand than any monarch of the past, inasmuch as the Messiah King expected was to represent heavenly authority and power amongst men. Judge now of his perplexity on being told that no one could see this Kingdom unless he were born again—born over. The chaos of his thoughts is shown by his rejoinder, How can a full-grown man, advanced in years, be born again? With our Lord's answer he began to get a little light on the subject: Jesus said, "I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of Spirit is spirit."*

Nicodemus got some very "strong meat" in very few words. From this statement he would understand that the Kingdom would not be a fleshly or earthly one, but a spirit Kingdom, a heavenly Kingdom. He could perceive that the natural birth of the flesh is a figure or symbol illustrative of a new birth, a spirit birth, and that our Lord meant that the Kingdom of God would be on a higher plane than any earthly Kingdom—it would be a spirit Kingdom which mankind in general could not see and could not enter into or become members of. The only ones who would really see the spiritual Kingdom or enter into it would be those begotten of Spirit and born of Spirit. But our Lord added, "Born of water and of Spirit." The reference to water would probably, in the mind of Nicodemus, recall the water baptism for the remission of sins, and as a sign of repentance which John the Baptist and his disciples had been preaching.

To us who live since Pentecost—and who may, therefore, have a clear conception of the deep things of God under the guidance and instruction of the holy Spirit—our Lord's mention of water may have a still fuller significance. We see that symbolical water represents Truth, and that our begetting of the holy Spirit is said by the Apostle to be also a begetting "through the Word of truth." (Jas. 1:18.) We remember also that the same thought is expressed by the Apostle Paul, who declares (Titus 3:3-5), "his mercy saved us through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the holy Spirit." Putting these matters together we have the thought that our regeneration or begetting again of the holy Spirit and our renewing by it come to us in conjunction with the washing or cleansing which is effected in us by the opera-

* We have quoted this correctly, for the article "the" does not appear in the Greek text.

tion of the Truth—the divine message. This is beautifully symbolized in Israel's Tabernacle service, in which the priests, before entering the Holy and thus typically becoming New Creatures, first washed at the laver which represented the Word of God, the Truth, the water of regeneration, by which we come into that condition of consecration to the Lord in which he is pleased to accept us, to grant us the spirit of adoption into his heavenly or spiritual family.

"So Is Every One That Is Born"

Nicodemus was astonished at such a presentation of the Kingdom and of the methods and conditions upon which it could be seen and entered into. Our Lord rejoined, Marvel not at the words, Ye must be born again. Then he gave him an illustration of what one would be like who would be born of the Spirit. He drew his attention to the invisibility of spirit beings and yet their reality. He took as an illustration the wind—invisible, we know not whence it comes, we know not whither it goes; but we do know of its power, we can hear the sound, can see its effects. This, our Lord declared, would give Nicodemus an illustration of those born of the Spirit; they would be intangible, invisible, while present and powerful. Such would be the Kingdom when it should be established. We must notice very carefully our Lord's language, else ere long these erroneous thoughts will bring us into confusion. We must not allow any of them to twist and turn the Scriptures, and to say that our Lord said something here that he did not say. We must repel the suggestion that he meant that the Spirit of which we would be begotten is invisible, for although that is true enough it is not what our Lord is saying. Neither must we allow our minds to be misled into supposing that the Lord means that the holy Spirit passes hither and thither throughout the world, begetting some and passing others by, and that we know not who may be begotten of the Spirit and who not. All this is confusing and wholly out of accord with what is written. Whoever would have clear, proper conceptions of the Master's teaching must give strict heed to the Word. We have been in darkness long enough through our inattention and through our allowing other people to read into the Word of God what is in no sense of the word there. We are neither to add to nor to take from the Word of God, and whoever does so adds to his own confusion, and is as well an unfaithful minister of the Truth, and an unfaithful ambassador, spokesman, for the Lord.

Astounded at what he had heard, Nicodemus exclaimed, "How can these things be?" Is it possible that those who have been studying the Law and the Prophets for centuries have erred so egregiously? Our Lord replied that as a master in Israel he should be able to discern these matters when once they were brought to his attention. As a thoughtful student of the Law and the Prophets Nicodemus should have seen that there were insurmountable difficulties connected with the prevailing thought that God's Kingdom would be an earthly one. He therefore should have been quite prepared for the announcement that the Kingdom of God would be a spiritual one which, as the Lord on another occasion explained, would come not with outward show, and of which the people would not declare, "Lo, here it is," or "Lo, there it is," but it would be in the midst of mankind, invisible but all-powerful.

We have elsewhere shown* that there is a particular fitness to our Lord's words in this connection when he declares that that which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of Spirit is spirit. As there cannot be any birth of the flesh without first a begetting of the flesh, so there can be no birth of the spirit without first a begetting of the Spirit. The begetting of the Spirit comes in connection with the washing of regeneration through the Word, and belongs to this present life. As New Creatures we develop spiritually until we reach the quickening stage of activity in the Lord's service; and those thus begotten and quickened, in whom the new will remains faithful unto death, in the resurrection are born of the Spirit—raised from the dead spirit beings. Thus our Lord was begotten of the holy Spirit at the time of his baptism, but in his resurrection he was born of the Spirit—the first-born from the dead—the

* *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 5, pp. 189, 192.

first-born from among many brethren. Similarly his brethren and joint-heirs in the Kingdom are now begotten of the holy Spirit at the time of their washing of regeneration and begetting, and their birth, if faithful, will be in the resurrection change, when that which is sown in weakness will be raised in power, sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body—sharers with our Lord in the First Resurrection to spirit nature, glory, honor, immortality. It is proper to notice here that confusion has come to many because of their failure to notice that the same Greek word *gennao* is used in referring to both the begetting and the birth.

"We Speak That We Do Know"

In answer to Nicodemus' doubts our Lord assured him that this testimony respecting the Kingdom, that it would be a spirit Kingdom, was no idle speculation—that he knew what he testified to be true, that the trouble with Nicodemus was that he was not ready to be taught. He had called our Lord Master, Teacher, and declared that he believed him to be sent of God, and yet he was so bound to his preconceptions that he was unready to receive the testimony of the only one who was capable of giving him the instruction. Our Lord intimated that he could tell much more about the heavenly Kingdom, but it would not be proper to do so, since his hearers were not in a condition to appreciate spiritual things. "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how could you believe if I explained to you heavenly things?" In the light of the Apostle Paul's exhortation we see that our Master's words were not chiding, but rather a declaration of facts, because, as the Apostle declares, it is impossible for the natural man not begotten of the holy Spirit to understand spiritual things. The most, therefore, that Jesus was able to teach either to his disciples or others during his ministry were earthly things. He left the explanation of the deeper things of the divine plan until after his followers at Pentecost received the begetting of the holy Spirit and were thus fitted and qualified, prepared, enabled to understand the spiritual things, the heavenly things.—1 Cor. 2:14.

Undoubtedly this is the trouble with the great majority of the people today also—they have not been begotten of the holy Spirit, they have not been begotten again, and hence are unable to understand spiritual things. We reiterate, therefore, our recommendation, frequently made, that when any are found who have not the hearing ear for the Truth we should not seek to pound it into them, but rather should take a different tack and seek their consecration—present to them the reasonableness of a full consecration to the Lord and his service in view of what they have already seen and are able to grasp. If they make the consecration and receive the begetting of the holy Spirit the deep things of the Lord will then be for them and may be understood by them. Hence the wisdom of not casting the pearls of divine Truth, the deeper, spiritual things before the unregenerate—the wisdom, on the contrary, of preaching merely the outlines of the divine plan of the ages to the world in general, of exhorting them to receive not the grace of God in vain, and assuring them that wisdom from on high and an ability to appreciate the deeper things come only to and are only for those who have come into the spiritual covenant relationship of the sons of God as New Creatures.

"No Man Hath Ascended Up To Heaven"

This statement by our Lord would cause no particular surprise to Nicodemus, for nothing in the Law or in the prophets or in the teachings of orthodox Judaism ever held to the idea prevalent amongst the heathen that the dead were alive—more alive than ever before. They knew that the dead were dead and that the hope for them lay in the resurrection, when Messiah should come forth for the banishing of the curse and the establishment of the Kingdom of heaven amongst men for their uplift and reconciliation to God. But today the heathen error, Plato's philosophy, that the dead are more alive than the living, with all the absurdity that is implied in such a statement, has fastened itself upon Christendom. People otherwise sane and logical will tell us that they believe in the resurrection of the dead, and in the same breath tell us that the dead are not dead. They fail to tell us how the dead could be resurrected if none is dead. Let all who study this lesson with a desire to learn from the Master rather than to instruct him, take heed to the

words, "No man hath ascended up to heaven." (The last four words of this verse 13, "which is in heaven," are not found in ancient Greek MSS., and evidently were no part of this conversation.)

"The Serpent in The Wilderness"

The remainder of this lesson, in our judgment, was not spoken to Nicodemus, but combined various of our Lord's teachings which the writer here brought together conveniently.

The reference of verse 14 to the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness and the declaration that it was intended to be a type of the crucifixion of our Lord is a very important item. We remember the story of the Israelites bitten by the fiery serpents because of sin, and how they were suffering great pain and were dying in large numbers until Moses by divine direction erected on a pole a serpent made of brass. Thenceforth every Israelite, looking toward that serpent, by faith was healed. The antitype of this we see. The whole world has been bitten by sin, and, as the Apostle declares, all are groaning and travailing in pain, all are dying. (Rom. 8:22.) Eighteen centuries ago Jesus the Son of man was lifted up on Calvary, he was treated as a sinner, our sins were laid upon him that he might thus have the right to impute his righteousness to all who desire it, and to grant them healing and life eternal.

Our Lord, in explaining the matter, declared that the Son of man would be lifted up, to the intent that everyone believing on him should not perish but have eternal life. Only the few have yet had the opportunity of believing in him—the great mass in our Lord's time and ever since have been in utter ignorance of the Redeemer and his sacrifice, and of the blessings secured by looking to him. But will they never see? Will they never know? Will they never gain eternal life? Will only the Church, the specially favored of this Gospel Age, the Elect, have this great opportunity? Surely not! In due time God will cause the knowledge of his grace to reach every member of the race. Surely this is the import of our Master's words following, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life." (v. 16.) Ah, yes! This is a blessed assurance. We are glad that by the grace of God Jesus "tasted death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.) We are glad that he was a propitiation for our sins, the Church's sins, but we are also glad that he is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2), and that eventually the whole world shall have the privilege, opportunity, of having their eyes and ears opened that they also may see and understand the riches of God's grace in Christ.

With what pleasure we read that "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." The world had already been condemned, for it had shared in Father Adam's condemnation as his race. It needed no more condemnation but it did need salvation from the Adamic condemnation resting upon it;—it did need to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, mental, moral and physical, and it was this that Jesus came to accomplish. How different the story as the Master gives it from the way in which it is told in the creeds. The theory claimed during the "dark ages" was that all who were not of the Elect Church were condemned to eternal torment. It was recognized that the race as a whole had as yet received none of God's grace, nor opportunity for the same, because of blindness and ignorance and superstition; and it was claimed that it never would have favor—that God never meant the world to be saved, and that Christ did not die for the world but for the Church, the Elect. How glorious the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of divine love and wisdom as now displayed through the divine Word in this harvest time!—showing us that the election of the Church is merely the prelude to the great work of blessing and enlightening, uplifting and restoring the world in general—all who will—"in due time." Nevertheless there is a measure of increased condemnation in proportion as the light is seen by any one and rejected; as our Lord said, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19.) The meaning is evident: Our Lord's first advent was not with a view to increasing the Adamic condemnation but the reverse of this, to effect the sacrifice by which it

might ultimately be canceled. Nevertheless his presence then in the world, and the light which then shone and which has since shone through his followers, has carried with it a measure of responsibility—a measure of condemnation to all who have resisted the light.

This condemnation, however, is quite separate and distinct from the Adamic condemnation, which was inherited, and which because of Christ's sacrifice for our sins will ultimately be completely canceled; this condemnation, resulting from an intelligent rejection of light, bears an individual penalty, which will bring the unfaithful one stripes either in the present or in the future. In the giving of these stripes we are assured that full allowance will be made for inherited weaknesses, temptations, etc.—everything that can be justly charged up to the Adamic fall will be canceled through the merit of the sacrifice of Christ. The stripes merely represent the individual's own perversity, and should the opposition to the light of Truth be persisted in to the full degree, the penalty would be the Second Death.

The Selective Process

From the foregoing we perceive that wherever the light of the Gospel shines there is proportionately responsibility and more or less of a selective condition. As our Lord declares, all who do evil intentionally, in the light, thereby manifest their hatred of the light, and such will avoid the light, realizing that it makes manifest the error, the sin with which they are identified and which, to some extent, at least, they love. They hate and avoid the light because it reproves their darkness, their error, their sin. On the contrary (v. 21), all who would serve the Truth, the light, are glad to come to more and more light as they may discern it. They desire that their course in life shall become manifest, that all shall know that to the extent of their ability they are seeking to do the Lord's will. And if, perchance, something contrary to God's will may be exposed in their own conduct or theories, they are glad of this also that they may have an opportunity for correcting the same.

This selective, separative work is not going on amongst the heathen but in Christendom, nor is it specially going on amongst the masses of Christendom, but chiefly amongst those who have professed to be God's people, who profess to have turned from darkness to light, as did the Jews of our Lord's day. Realizing the true situation, let us be very zealous for every ray of light which can be shed upon the divine plan or upon our own hearts and lives. Let us more and more desire to know the Truth, that it may make us free from every bondage and bring us more and more into captivity to the will of God in Christ. Children of the Light, we can have no fellowship with any of the unfruitful works of darkness, doctrinal or otherwise! Let us maintain our stand more and more loyally as the divine Word increasingly clarifies our vision and distinguishes for us between light and darkness, truth and error, righteousness and sin!

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30, Passover	Judea; Aenon	Jesus' disciples baptize; John to decrease				3:22-36
	Tiberias	John imprisoned; Jesus leaves for Galilee	4:12; 14:3-5	1:14; 6:17-20	3:19,20; 4:14	4:1-3

John 3:22-36

After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. 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 4:1-3

When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

Matthew 4:12

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee. [14:3-5] For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

Mark 1:14

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. [6:17-20] For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

Luke 3:19,20

But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison. [4:14] And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

THE PROPHET OF GALILEE—*Reprints*, p. 4556
MATTHEW 4:12-25.
"The people which sat in darkness saw a great light."—Matthew 4:16.

PALESTINE at the First Advent consisted of four provinces. Judea was the principal one, with Samaria to the north and Perea to the east and Galilee further north, beyond Samaria. While Jesus preached in Judea and did some mighty works there and in Perea, his principal ministry was in Galilee; so much so that he and his disciples were known as Galileans. Although born in Bethlehem, he was reared in Nazareth, "that he might be called a Nazarene"—that he might not have the honor of the "City of David," but the odium of "a mean city." Compare Luke 23:5,6, 49,55. Thus the vast majority of our Lord's miracles and teachings were to the Galileans. And his principal ministries in Judea were in connection with his annual visits to the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. As for Samaria, its people were Gentiles with an admixture of Jewish blood. Jesus warned his disciples not to preach in that province, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5,6.) The Galileans, disesteemed by the Judeans as inferior members of their race, the expression, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" applied to all Galilee.

That the light of the Gospel should first shine in Galilee was intimated through Isaiah's prophecy, "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region of the shadows of death a light sprang up." The prophet mentions the boundaries of Zebulon and Naphtali, two of the twelve tribes of Israel, on the Sea of Galilee. The word Galilee signifies circle; hence the prophecy implied that this land would be encircled by the Gentiles. And so it was; the Samaritans to its south cutting it off from Judea. Its people, thus separated from the great religious center of their day, were in greater darkness than their brethren, in the very shadow of the death-darkness that was upon the Gentiles. Nevertheless on this very account they were more amenable to the teachings of Jesus than were many of their more religious, more enlightened and more priest-ridden brethren of Judea.

The great light which flared forth in Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin and Nazareth, the chief cities of Galilee, exalted these places to heaven figuratively, in the sense of bestowing so great honor and privilege upon them. But they were in turn cast down to hades, the grave, because they received not the message. (Matt. 11:20-24.) The light shined in darkness and blessed and gathered some, "the elect," and passed onward to bless and gather others, as it has continued to do throughout this Gospel Age. The time for the still greater enlightenment of the whole world is yet future. In the Millennial morning the Redeemer and his elect Church (Malachi 4:2) will shine forth as the Sun of Righteousness with healing in its beams for the enlightenment and blessing of Israel and the whole world of mankind—including the millions who have gone down to the darkness of hades, the grave.

The Kingdom Is At Hand

The Galilean Jews, in close contact with the Gentiles, could readily see the need of the long-promised Kingdom of God, and they were more ready to give heed to it than the Judean-Jews. The latter, in contact with the showy formalism of the temple service and an earthly priest with gorgeous garments and a magnificent temple more grand than that of Solomon, were less inclined to hearken to the offer of a spiritual kingdom. To the latter the outward and showy prosperity of their system was a delusion and a snare which hindered them from seeing. Thus it has always been. The message of God's grace finds some of its most earnest friends amongst the poor and despised. Moreover Capernaum was more closely in touch with the Gentile world—its good and its evil—than was Jerusalem.

The Kingdom of Heaven was at hand in the sense that Jesus was present to make a formal tender of the Kingdom to Abraham's natural seed. When they rejected the King they rejected the Kingdom. He nevertheless blessed all who accepted him and as pre-intended and promised they became the nucleus of his spiritual King-

dom, to complete the number of which consecrated believers from the Gentiles have since been "called." In a word, God's arrangement is first to elect a spiritual class, a "Royal Priesthood," to be associated with Jesus in his Kingdom and then at the end of this age to establish that spiritual Kingdom in power and great glory and to bless Israel with the great light and opportunity, and through her to bless all the families of the earth.

Peter and Andrew, James and John, fishermen, were invited by the great Prophet to be his followers, to be associated with him in his work of calling the "elect" and, if faithful, subsequently to sit with him in his throne as part of the "elect." They left all to follow him. These were his terms, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." The Lord does not open the door of opportunity to all of his disciples throughout this Gospel Age to become prominent ministers of the Truth after this manner. Yet he accepts none as his disciples except those who forsake all to follow him. In their hearts they must give up all else. They have the spirit of discipleship and self-sacrifice, and would gladly forsake all actually if the door of opportunity opened to them.

The preaching of Jesus was that of his apostles also—"the Gospel (good news) of the Kingdom." To his apostles he gave the same power over disease that he himself exercised—even to the casting out of demons. These miracles were merely to attract attention to the Prophet and his message. It was not the intention to heal all the sick, nor to awaken all the dead. But those miracles manifested forth beforehand the glorious blessings which the Kingdom, when established, will exercise amongst men.—John 2:11.

Thus the fame of Jesus spread. The sick were brought to him and healed, and amongst his followers were to be found devout men from every province of Palestine. Truly the benighted Galileans were blessed in the great light which shone in their midst. But it tested them as Truth, Light, always does. The few children of the light were manifested and separated from the children of the darkness, the children of disobedience. And similarly we of today, living in the great light now shining as an arc-light upon the Word of God, have increased responsibilities and are taking our stand either as children of Light and its advocates, or as children of darkness in opposing it.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30, Passover	Sychar, in Samaria	En route to Galilee; Jesus teaches the Samaritans				4:4-43

John 4:4-43

And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I

shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. And upon this came his disciples, and marveled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him aught to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world. Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

NOTHING TO DRAW WITH AND THE WELL IS DEEP.—*Reprints*, p. 2574

JOHN 4:5-26.

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

SAMARIA was the name of a stretch of country lying between Judea and Galilee; we might call it a county, and say that its chief city, of the same name, was its county-seat. Its inhabitants were known as Samaritans, and the Jews, while dealing with them commercially, would have no intercourse with them socially and religiously, but treated them in every respect as they treated Gentiles in general, as being outside of divine favor, "aliens and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, without God, and having no hope in the world." (Eph. 2:12) The ancestors of these Samaritans were Gentiles, and were transported to Samaria centuries before, as the Israelites were transported to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar. (2 Kings 17:24-41.) These Gentiles, through contact with the Jews, and through intermarriage with certain renegade Jews, obtained a smattering of knowledge of the Jewish hopes and worship, combining these to some extent with false ideas of their own. As a people they are described by the

Apostle's words as feeling after God, if haply they might find him. (Acts 17:27.) But the time had not yet come for God to reveal himself to the world, or in any sense of the word to accept Gentiles: thus far all divine favor had been concentrated upon Israel, the seed of Abraham, and upon only such of those as maintained their covenant relationship by circumcision; hence the Jews were right in not acknowledging the Samaritans, and in having no dealings with them religiously, nor intermarrying with them socially. This was not a matter of bigotry, but of divine regulation and prohibition.—Deut. 7:1-6.

It will be remembered that our Lord distinctly set the seal of his approval to this course, when sending forth his disciples to declare the Kingdom of God at hand. He said to them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and **into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not**; for I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the **house of Israel**." We remember, too, the city of the Samaritans concerning which the Apostles James and John said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire from heaven, to consume them?" To whom Jesus answered, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Nevertheless, we remember that Jesus would not perform his miracles in healing the Samaritan sick, and that it was for this reason that the Samaritans resented and would not receive him, or permit him to pass through their city on his journey.—Luke 9:51-56.

It was during one of these numerous journeys from Judah through Samaria, en route to Galilee, that our Lord, wearied from the exhaustion of preaching and from the further exhaustion of his vitality in healing the sick, and from journeying, rested at Jacob's well, while his disciples turned aside to a village to purchase provisions.

Jacob's well had a great reputation throughout that region, because of the purity of its waters; that being a limestone country most of the water found was brackish, but Jacob's well, sunk to a depth of over a hundred feet, and about eight feet in diameter, struck a crevice in the rock, which yielded a large supply of desirable water. We are to remember, too, the scarcity of water in that part of the country, especially at some seasons of the year, which accounts for the fact that the Samaritan woman of our lesson had quite a distance to come to obtain her supply at this good and never failing well-spring. When she arrived, Jesus, who was sitting on the curb of the well, resting, was at once recognized by her as a Jew, and she was at once recognized by him as a Samaritan, not merely by facial lineaments, but also by distinctive features of dress—the Jews having a white fringe on their garments, while the Samaritans used blue.

For a Jew to make a request, to ask a courtesy, of a Samaritan, was unusual; and consequently when Jesus asked for a drink of the water the woman was drawing she was astonished enough to inquire how it came that he, a Jew, would make such a request of her, a Samaritan, and her question has in it the element of boldness, which is explained later on by her acknowledgment that she was not a virtuous woman. All this, however, makes it the more remarkable that our Lord would condescend to have any intercourse with her. There is a lesson in this, however, along the line of the Apostle's words, "Condescend to men of low estate." We cannot avoid supposing that the reason why many Christian people would utterly disdain to speak to such a woman is that they have almost unconsciously to themselves imbibed the spirit of their religious teachings, which would declare that God would so abominate such a person that he would deliver her over to the devil, to be eternally tormented, as soon as she came into his hands at death. They reason, almost unconsciously, that one so despised of the Lord should be shunned and spurned by humanity. They need a clearer knowledge of the divine Word respecting God's attitude toward sinners, his unwillingness that any should perish, and his provision that the wilfully wicked, who reject all his mercies, shall not be tormented, but be blotted out of existence. (2 Pet. 3:9; Acts 3:23.) True views of the divine character and plan are very helpful to God's people in shaping their course properly.

Had there been a company of Jews to whom the Lord could have talked at this time, we are bound to suppose that his energies would have been expended on their behalf, to the neglect of

the disreputable Samaritan; but there being none of the "children" to be "fed" at the time, he let some of the crumbs of knowledge and blessing fall to the Samaritans, who, like the Gentiles, were not "children," but in comparison were "dogs." (See Matt. 15:27.) Our Lord's course here is an instruction for his followers, an illustration of the Apostle's words that we should "**do good unto all men as we have opportunity**, especially to the household of faith." Further, it illustrates our Lord's own declaration, that it was his meat and drink to do the Father's will, to be engaged in the Father's business. Altho he was weary, and knew that further talking would interfere with his rest and refreshment, he was ready to sacrifice his own convenience that he might be helpful to another, even to a social outcast. So the Apostle exhorts all of the Lord's people to be "instant in season and out of season," in preaching to willing ears.

There was wisdom in our Lord's method of introducing himself to the woman. He made a request that would not be difficult for her to comply with, and at the same time he laid himself under obligation to her; and experience shows that this is one of the best methods of approaching all—condescension and an expression of confidence in their generosity, with the implication which it gives of willingness to return the favor in some manner.

Not heeding the rudeness of the woman's reply to his request, our Lord proceeded to teach a lesson respecting the grace of God, using the good water of Jacob's deep well as an illustration, telling the woman that if she understood the privilege she enjoyed she in turn would be asking him for "living water"—flowing water, not stagnant, always fresh. She perceived that there was some deep meaning to our Lord's words. He could not refer to Jacob's well, for he had no leather bucket and cord with which to draw from it; hence her inquiry, Whence hast thou living water? Father Jacob provided this well, and knew of no better water for himself and family. Are you able to provide better water than this? Are you greater than he? Our Lord then led another step in the exposition of spiritual things, assuring her that the water which he had to give was of a different kind; that it would not only satisfy thirst for the time being, but would be a continual wellspring within, ever giving satisfaction.

Water, living water, pure water, is a wonderful symbol, very expressive to everyone: and thirst is another. Thirst is desire, craving, longing. Physical thirst is said to be much more painful than physical hunger. The latter loses its powers gradually in weakness, but thirst continues and intensifies hourly until the very last breath. Water is that which quenches, which satisfies this demand of nature: and so there is also a soul-thirst, and a water of life which alone can satisfy it.

Every ambition and desire is a thirst. A man's greatness, his individuality, is measured (1) by the number of his thirsts or desires; (2) by the character or quality of those thirsts or desires; (3) by the capacity and intensity of those thirsts or desires. And true education is the instructor of men as respects proper and improper desires, or thirsts: and respecting which should be gratified, and how to do so most wisely. He who has no desires has nothing to satisfy, and is practically a nonentity. The lesson of life is not that we should be without desires and plenty of them, but that these desires should be transformed from sinful desires to righteous desires, from sinful cravings to holy cravings. Thus the followers of the Lord are to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and are to be filled—satisfied—not by losing their desires, but by realizing them—by appropriating the Lord's provision, which is abundant and continuous, satisfying all proper longings. Improper longings are to be resisted, controlled, rooted out, while proper longings are to be built up, cultivated, to be supplied and to be enjoyed forever.

This satisfying water of life can be obtained from no other source than our Redeemer, and all who have received it well know it and can never be sufficiently thankful for it; for in it they have the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts. Instead of thirst for honor amongst men, they have the thirst for fellowship and honor with the Heavenly Father and the Redeemer. Instead of a thirst for earthly wealth, their transformed desires now thirst for heavenly treasures.

Instead of thirst for sensual pleasures, their desires are transformed so that their chiefest joys and desires are for spiritual pleasures. And all these thirsts are abundantly and continually satisfied through the refreshment of the Word of Truth, and the holy spirit of the Truth—the water of life which is communicated to us by our Redeemer, and is in each one a perennial living fountain.

Of course the Samaritan woman did not grasp the meaning of our Lord's words, nor could we, under the same circumstances, for we are to remember that the well from which our Lord gives us to drink is deep, and that neither the Samaritan woman nor we have anything to draw with. We however, living under the new dispensation of the holy spirit, have been abundantly supplied, for, as the Apostle declares, "The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God … That we might know [appreciate, be satisfied with] the things that are freely given unto us of God."—1 Cor. 2:10,12.

Our Lord did not answer the woman's request for the true water of life, (1) because the time for bestowing the holy spirit of the Truth had not yet come, and did not come until after the great sacrifice at Calvary—until Pentecost. (2) Because she was a Samaritan, and as such could not receive divine favor and the holy spirit until the appointed time which was not until the door of favor would be open to all Gentiles,—not until three and a half years after Pentecost: nevertheless the woman's interest and faith and the faith of her townsmen seem to indicate an honesty of heart pleasing to the Lord, on account of which he let fall to them some "crumbs" of comforting truth which may have prepared them for the Gospel when later it was fully opened to them and to all Gentiles. (3) Because the woman was not yet in the condition of heart to receive the water of life. It was unnecessary to explain to the woman the first two reasons, since the last was a barrier which she could more readily understand, and hence our Lord called her attention to the fact that she was living in sin. She perceived that he was gifted with a prophetic insight which permitted him a stranger to know of her sinful course of life, without asking.

It may be queried, why our Lord would thus confer with a woman unprepared to receive the blessings he had to give, and one to whom he could not have given the blessing then, even if she had been prepared. The answer is (1) that he was making use of an opportunity to its fullest possible advantage; (2) that despite her sinful course of life the Lord saw traits of honesty in the woman's character, evidenced from the narrative; (3) he might reasonably hope that the influence of this discourse might tend toward righteousness and toward a true thirst for the water of life, which six years later, under the general preaching of the Gospel (without restriction to the Jews) might bring some of these Samaritans to a realization of the fact that the well of the water of life is deep, that they had nothing wherewith to draw, and that if they would have this satisfying portion they must receive it as a gift from him who laid down his life that he might have the privilege of supplying the water of life to whosoever wills. And should the poor Samaritan woman never have come under the influence of the Gospel, with an opportunity to drink of the water of life, we have the assurance of the divine Word that such an opportunity will be granted to her in the future, together with all who do not now have an opportunity.

We praise the Lord for the information afforded us in his Word, that altho the water of life is now given individually, and enjoyed only by the "elect," "even as many as the Lord our God shall call," yet the time is coming that it shall no longer be thus a well of water springing up within the Lord's people, but during the Millennial age will be a river of water of life, broad and full and clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and of the Bride the Lamb's Wife and joint-heir, to all the families of the earth: and that then there will not only be trees of life, whose leaves will be for the healing, restitution, of the nations, but that the Spirit and the Bride (then glorified) shall say, Come, and he that heareth may say, Come, and whosoever will may come and have the water of life freely.—Rev. 22:17.

The Samaritan woman seemed anxious to avoid any discussion of her own character and life, and skillfully turned the question to a theological one—whether the Jews or the Samaritans were right in their different views respecting divine worship and its proper place.

And in this we see that human nature is much the same today. Men and women of today would rather discuss theological problems and denominational controversies, than turn their glance inward, and note the inconsistencies of their own lives, with a desire to reform them. Nor did our Lord too closely press the moral question he had so promptly touched and to some extent made sensitive, and his course in this should be a lesson to his followers. It is sufficient that attention be called to a wrong, and often this is more efficacious than if they be teased and angered, and put on the defensive, by disrespectful "nagging."

Our Lord summed up in few words a great lesson respecting the proper worship of God. He told the woman most pointedly that the Samaritans had neither part nor lot in the matter, and worshiped they knew not what, while the Jews, on the contrary, were following the divine instruction. Nevertheless, he pointed to the fact that a great dispensational change was imminent, in which all distinctions and barriers of place and manner would pass away, and that under the new dispensation of this Gospel age, any and all having ears to hear and eyes to see God's grace would be permitted to worship God anywhere, but only in spirit (with the heart, sincerely), and in truth, in harmony with the divine arrangement, in the true way—through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and by whom alone there is access to the Father —the Messiah, the procurer and dispenser of the water of life.

An Oriental fable tells of a fountain whose waters were infused with a peculiar power, so that wherever a drop of this water fell on a barren plain it caused a new fountain to gush forth, so that provided with this water the traveler might pass through any desert, however wide or dry, and be always refreshed.

"Wild and fanciful the legend; yet may not meanings high,
Visions of better things to come, within its shadow lie?
Type of a better fountain, to mortals now unsealed,
The full, free salvation of Christ our Lord revealed!

"Beneath the cross those waters lie, and he who finds them there,
All through the wilderness of life the living stream may bear;
And blessings follow in his steps, until where'er he goes
The moral wastes begin to bud, and blossom as the rose!"

"GIVE ME TO DRINK"—*Reprints*, p. 4130

JOHN 4:19-29.

"If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."—John 7:37.

JOHN the Baptist had testified of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:30.) It is in harmony with this that we read that Jesus (at the hands of his disciples) baptized more than did John and his co-laborers. (John 4:1.) The growing popularity of Jesus aroused to bitter opposition the Scribes and Pharisees, and they sought to kill him. Hence, we read that "He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." (John 7:1.) They had greater animosity toward Jesus than toward John, for in him they recognized a superiority over themselves, and because the ignorant, common people heard him gladly and said, "Never man spake like this man." Thereafter we hear little of Jesus being in Jerusalem except on festival occasions, when great multitudes gathered in accordance with the requirements of the Law.

En route to Galilee, the home country of the majority of his apostles, the journey took them through the country of the Samaritans, concerning whom we remember that our Lord charged the disciples, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5, 6.) The Samaritans are thus classed with Gentiles—aliens, strangers, foreigners from the commonwealth of Israel. We recall their his-

tory—that at the time when the king of Babylon took the Israelites captive into Babylonia, he planted some Gentiles in the land of Israel—immigrants. Cut off from their former idolatries, these people became interested in their new home country, its theology, traditions, religious sentiments, etc. Furthermore, some of the careless, ignorant and vicious amongst the Jews, disregarding their divine Law on the subject, intermarried with the Samaritans. Thus an element of Jewish blood was intermingled amongst them. They called themselves the children of Jacob, and trusted that this meant some special blessing for them.

A sharp religious controversy was thus established between them and Jacob's natural progeny, the Jews. The latter, following the Law given by Moses, recognized Jerusalem and the Temple as the centre of all acceptable worship to God. The Samaritans, being thus excluded, claimed that they had something better—that right in their own country they had the very mountain in which Jacob worshiped God, and towards this mountain they went or looked in their worship of God, esteeming it as a great natural temple and superior to anything else on earth. These facts account to us for some of the Lord's expressions connected with this lesson, and also show us why his message excluded the Samaritans, as well as all Gentiles, from the call which he was giving, the Kingdom invitation, which was exclusively for the Jews. It was not until the Jews had as a people neglected their opportunity that the special privileges of the Kingdom were taken from them and subsequently tendered to such as would have an ear to hear in every nation, people, kindred and tongue of the earth—including the Samaritans.

"Give Me To Drink"

The road leading to Galilee branched off at Jacob's well, and the disciples went to the nearby Samaritan village, Sychar, to purchase food, while Jesus rested at the well, which was 75 feet deep and whose mouth was so walled up as to form a circular seat at its top. A Samaritan woman, laboring in the fields nearby, came to draw water, and was intensely surprised when Jesus asked her the favor of a drink. So tightly were the lines of social etiquette drawn that under ordinary circumstances no self-respecting Jew would ask a Samaritan for any favor, and especially for a drink of water. A gift of water or of food, extended or received at that time, signified fellowship, a covenant of good will. The woman asked an explanation of the Lord's peculiar conduct, but he gave none. We perceive in the entire Gospel narrative the humility of our Lord, that he was quite ready and willing to mingle with any class, that he shunned no opportunity for doing good to any class, publicans or sinners—and that he reproved and rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees for their aloofness. One of his parables was especially directed towards the self-righteous sentiment which feared even to touch garments with the outwardly more degraded. Our Lord, without approving of the outward degradation, showed that God looketh upon the heart, and that some of those highly approved amongst men were more abominable in his sight than some despised of men.

Tactfulness Exemplified

Our Lord displayed great tactfulness. Instead of replying to the woman's query, he attracted her attention to a deeper truth. This lesson of tactfulness many of the Lord's people need to learn. We know some who mistakenly believe that they must use no tact—that to do so would be dishonest. Hence, they are frequently blunt to the extent of injuring the feelings of others, and hindering their own usefulness. Such should note in this lesson, and in many others, our Lord's tactfulness. He did not feel that it was necessary for him to answer the woman's question. On the contrary, he said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." (John 4:10.) Similarly, let us in all the affairs of life try to turn the attention of those with whom we have contact towards the heavenly, the spiritual things—not that we should obtrude religious matters on every occasion, nor that we suppose our Lord would have done so. Quite probably he saw something in the way of honesty of character in the woman he addressed, else he would not have conversed with her. So we should be on the lookout for every opportunity to speak a word in season, to be helpful to others, to honor the Lord.

The woman understood the expression "living water" to mean fresh water, as distinguished from stagnant water. The woman perceived that our Lord was not provided with the necessary lowering bucket and camel's hair cord, and said, If you had ever so much desire to give me to drink, it would be useless for me to ask you, since you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep, and there is nowhere else that you can hope to procure better water than this. Where would you get it? "Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children and his cattle?" (John 4:12.) Again our Lord tactfully ignored the question in the woman's interest—not to deceive her or take advantage of her, but for her benefit. He was instructing her, and leading her mind up from the natural water to the spiritual, and from the natural foundation to the spiritual. He said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst," for that water "shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (v. 14.)

That our Lord talked to no ordinary woman is evidenced by the quickness with which she grasped his presentation, and her earnestness to get the living water he had described. She said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." (v. 15.) Again we note our Lord's tactfulness. He turned the subject. It was necessary that the woman should appreciate the fact that she was a sinner and under the death sentence and needed water of eternal life, which God alone could give, and which he has provided only in Jesus, the Fountain. Our Lord turned her thoughts inward very quickly by saying, "Go, call thy husband." (v. 16.) The answer was, "I have no husband" (v. 17), and with that reply came a flood of thought, which our Lord riveted upon her by declaring, You have well said that you have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband. The woman was now thoroughly aroused. She perceived that she was in the presence of one who knew her very deepest heart secrets. Yet she feared him not. She fled not from him. His kindliness, his gentleness, his willingness to talk to a Samaritan woman, indicated that she had "found a friend, oh, such a friend." Her answer was, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet."

Shrewdly then the woman led the conversation away from matters too personal to herself, and too solemn and too tender for discussion, and our Lord did not follow up the subject, but left it. Many of his followers need to learn this lesson of first awakening in the hearts of their hearers a consciousness of sin, and then leaving it to work for them, at greater leisure, sorrow and repentance and reformation. It is not for us to break the hearts of those around us, but to find those who are broken-hearted. The command is, "Bind up the broken-hearted." (Isa. 61:1.) In many instances, as in this one, the broken heart needs to be touched in connection with the binding-up process, in the application of the healing balm of grace and truth, but the touches should be gentle. If more breaking of the heart is necessary, it is not for us to do.

Salvation Is of The Jews

Not only would the woman escape a discussion of her personal character and affairs, but she would embrace this opportunity of settling in her own mind, with the aid of this one whom she had proven to be a great prophet, a question which had long troubled her—were the Jews or were the Samaritans right as respected religion and worship? Before her was a proven prophet, and one in whose words she could have great confidence; hence her inquiry, Who are right—our fathers, who claim that this mountain is the place of worship, or you Jews, who say that Jerusalem is the only place? Our Lord was not bent upon making of her a Jewish proselyte: the time for that was past; the harvest time had come. He would tell her something that would be to her advantage, and through her to the advantage of others in the near future, when the middle wall of partition would be broken down which still separated the Jews, in God's favor, from all others. His answer, therefore, applied to the Gospel dispensation in general, and this was already beginning so far as some of the Jews were concerned, and would later reach Samaritans and all Gentiles. He said, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father."—v. 21.

That hour began after the Jewish house had been left desolate, after the new dispensation had been inaugurated, and it still continues. Believers do not have to go to a certain place, a certain mountain, a certain city, a certain house, but may approach the living God, through the great Redeemer, at any place and find him. That coming hour had already begun, since our Lord himself was the first of the Spirit-begotten ones; and his disciples, accepted of the Father through him, were taught to pray, to seek, to knock, to find. Those who worship under this Spirit dispensation will not be accepted along the lines of former worship and places—not in families, or nationally. Their acceptance will be as individuals, and because they come unto the Father through his appointed way, the Redeemer, and come "in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." (v. 23.) During past times he did indeed prescribe forms of worship and times and places, but now all that come unto the Father "in spirit and in truth" through Christ are accepted.

While it is most absolutely true that forms and ceremonies are not commanded, but the true worship of the heart, nevertheless we feel that some still maintain too much of a relationship to forms and ceremonies, and thus lose much of the spiritual blessing of prayer and communion. But, on the other hand, we seem to see a danger into which some of the Lord's dear people fall, through ignoring all regularity in prayer, and sometimes through too little formality in approaching the throne of heavenly grace, without a sufficiency of humility and reverence for him who has granted us so great a favor as to receive us into his presence and to hearken to our petitions. While thankful that we can call upon the Lord in every place and at any time, let us approach his courts with reverence, with an awe of heart befitting to us in our humble, lowly condition, and to him in his great exaltation. Thus we enter into the real spirit of prayer, which should recognize our complete dependence and the greatness of the Almighty.

"We Know What We Worship"

Very pointedly, though we are sure in no rude manner, our Lord declared the truth to the woman when he said, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." (v. 22.) The Samaritans, not being of the stock of Israel, were in no sense of the word heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant. Not discerning this cardinal truth in its true light, they were confused as to every feature of the divine plan. The Jews, on the contrary, understood that they were the natural seed of Abraham, and that from them must come the great Messiah, and that eventually, through him and some of their nation associated with him, all the families of the earth should receive a blessing. Our Lord said, "Salvation is of the Jews." He did not say, For the Jews, nor, To the Jews, exclusively. It was of them in the sense that the Master was of that nation according to the flesh. It was of them in the sense that the promises were exclusively to that nation, so that Messiah could not have been born of any other nation and yet inherit those promises. It was of that nation also, in that from them our Lord selected the earliest members of his Church, his Body, through whom the invitation to membership in that Body has during this age been extended to every nation, people, kindred and tongue.

We would not say that the Samaritans were typical of a certain class of people here—typical would be too strong a word. We would see, however, that as there were true Israelites there in the type, and a class of people somewhat resembling them, who were not of them, so here in Spiritual Israel we find some like the Samaritans, who are strangers from the Covenant and promises, because not of the same family—not begotten again of the holy Spirit. Some of these are estimable people, honorable, and with a form of godliness, but denying its power. Then amongst the true Israel, all begotten of the holy Spirit, all therefore related to the Lord and the promises, there are two classes: the Little Flock of Israelites indeed, whose love and zeal the Lord approves, and a Great Company whose love and zeal are not sufficient to gain them the distinguished title, "More than Conquerors"—joint-heirs.

In our conversation on religious subjects with those corresponding to the Samaritans, it may not be using the wisdom of serpents for us to say, "Ye worship ye know not what," even

though this be strictly true. Nevertheless, to those of this class who give evidence of desire to know the Truth, it would be proper for us to kindly attempt to show them this matter—to show them how different are the hopes and aspirations and promises which apply to the consecrated saints of Spiritual Israel from anything they have ever known or thought. In all of our dealings with the Israelites and others, let us remember the Master's words, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves."—Matt. 10:16.

When Messiah Cometh

The mind of the Samaritan woman swept forward in thought. She recalled the expectation of her own people and of the Jews that God would provide a great Messiah, an Anointed One, who would be all-wise and all-powerful to the relief of all perplexity and to lift out of all difficulty. She wondered whether the Messiah could be more wonderfully wise than the prophet, the teacher, to whom she talked. She did not like to ask the question direct, but suggested it sidewise, saying, "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things." (v. 25.) Seeing her readiness of mind, our Lord expressed to her—more plainly, perhaps, than to any other person during his ministry—the great fact that he was the Messiah: "I that speak unto thee am he." (v. 26.)

The disciples, returning at this time, marveled that he talked with the woman, but had too great respect for him to question him; and many since, all through the Gospel Age, reading the account, have marveled at the Master's humility thus displayed. It has brought a good lesson to many of the Lord's followers—that they are not to despise opportunities for service, for preaching of the Truth, even though they have an audience of but one. And indeed the opportunity of speaking to one earnest listener should be esteemed far greater than that of addressing a thousand inattentive ones. Doubtless our Lord saw in this woman something that indicated her worthiness of the time and energy thus bestowed upon her.

But from another standpoint, what worthiness could she have? what worthiness do any of us possess by nature? Fallen and imperfect, the only thing remaining that could in any way be pleasing to the Lord would seem to be our honesty of heart. Honesty this woman evidently had, and hence we believe she was favored, and many of the Lord's dear people have received this message since. Here, too, we have another illustration of the importance of using every opportunity that may come to us. Time and energy spent in the assistance of some worthy one may, as in this case, flow out in widening influence to many. Eternity alone will show the value of some of the little things, the feeble efforts put forth in the name of the Lord; and this reminds us that our Lord is judging us by our faithfulness in little things and small opportunities rather than by our great achievements. His own words are, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in that which is least is unjust also in much." (Luke 16:10.) Remembering this, let us be careful in the little things, little opportunities, the hours and the moments, that we may show ourselves zealous for the Lord and his cause, and have his eventual approval, as well as his present blessing.

The Missionary Spirit

The character of this woman is further displayed in the fact that, leaving her waterbucket, she hastened to the city to tell her friends and neighbors that she had found a great teacher, possibly the Messiah, and to ask them to come and share the privilege of hearing him. The selfish spirit, which would have bidden her to keep the information to herself, or the slothful, careless spirit, which would have led her to say, I would be pleased if my friends might know, but will not bestir myself to inform them—either of these would have marked the woman as unworthy of the Lord's favor; and had such been her disposition, we doubt if the Lord would have entered into conversation with her. And so it is with those who have been reached with Present Truth; they are, as a rule, not only the honest and sincere, but the generous, who love to give the good things to their neighbors, and who, having heard now of the second presence of the Son of man, and the Kingdom about to be established, and having come to a clearer knowledge than ever before of the truth of the Divine Plan—these rejoice to

lay down their lives in its service—the promulgating of "good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people." (Luke 2:10.) This is the true missionary spirit, and home missions come first.

"Come Unto Me And Drink"

Our Golden Text is quite in line with the lesson intimated—that before anyone can come to the Lord he must thirst, he must have an appreciation of that which the Lord has to give—the water, the refreshment, of eternal life. This means that he must learn that he is a sinner, and under sentence of death, and that there is no hope for a future life except through Christ. The coming to the Lord is the approach of faith. Our thirst is our desire. We drink, or appropriate to ourselves the divine message. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth" (John 17:17)—and water is the symbol of truth. The promise of a blessing to those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness" is in full accordance with this. And the promise is, "They shall be filled." This, too, is in harmony with our Lord's statement in our lesson, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."—v. 14.

In the present time our thirst is in one sense of the word insatiable—we are never satisfied—in the sense that the Lord's blessings are so great and so good that we can never in the present day and in present conditions have enough of them. We shall be satisfied thoroughly when we awake in his likeness (Psa. 17:15)—when the "change" of the First Resurrection shall have completed our transformation as New Creatures into our Lord's likeness—"from glory to glory." (2 Cor. 3:18.) Nevertheless, there is a measure of satisfaction to our drinking, even in the present time—just as with a thirsty one at a fountain, he drinks with relish, with appreciation, with satisfaction, only to take more and more. So with those who are the Lord's. He pours into their cup blessings rich and satisfying, and fills the cup repeatedly, even while they are in their present tabernacle. Let us appreciate more and more the Truth, the water of life, and let us see to it that we get it pure from the fountain, and that we recognize no other fountain than the Lord Jesus, however much we may appreciate the channels through which the supply may have come to us.

JESUS AT THE HOUSE OF MARTHA AND MARY
Martha, Martha, thou art careful 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)

JESUS' GREAT MINISTRY IN GALILEE

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Galilee	First announces "The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near"	4:17	1:14,15	4:14,15	4:44,45
	Nazareth; Cana; Capernaum	Heals boy; reads commission; rejected; moves to Capernaum	4:13-16		4:16-31	4:46-54
	Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum	Call of Simon and Andrew, James, and John	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11	
	Capernaum	Heals demoniac, also Peter's mother-in-law and many others	8:14-17	1:21-34	4:31-41	
	Galilee	First tour of Galilee with the four now called	4:23-25	1:35-39	4:42,43	
	Galilee	Leper healed; multitudes flock to Jesus	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-16	
	Capernaum	Heals paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
	Capernaum	Call of Matthew; feast with tax collectors	9:9-17	2:13-22	5:27-39	
	Judea	Preaches in Judean synagogues			4:44	
31, Passover	Jerusalem	Attends feast; heals man; rebukes Pharisees				5:1-47
	Returning from Jerusalem (?)	Disciples pluck ears of grain on the Sabbath	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5	
	Galilee; Sea of Galilee	Heals hand on Sabbath; retires to seashore; heals	12:9-21	3:1-12	6:6-11	
	Mountain near Capernaum	The twelve are chosen as apostles		3:13-19	6:12-16	
	Near Capernaum	The Sermon on the Mount	5:1–7:29		6:17-49	
	Capernaum	Heals army officer's servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
	Nain	Raises widow's son			7:11-17	
	Galilee	John in prison sends disciples to Jesus	11:2-19		7:18-35	
	Galilee	Cities reproached; revelation to babes; yoke kindly	11:20-30			
	Galilee	Feet anointed by sinful woman; illustration of debtors			7:36-50	
	Galilee	Second preaching tour of Galilee, with the twelve			8:1-3	
	Galilee	Demoniac healed; league with Beelzebub charged	12:22-37	3:19-30		
	Galilee	Scribes and Pharisees seek a sign	12:38-45			
	Galilee	Christ's disciples his close relatives	12:46-50	3:31-35	8:19-21	
	Sea of Galilee	Illustrations of sower, weeds, others; explanations	13:1-53	4:1-34	8:4-18	

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Sea of Galilee	Windstorm stilled in the crossing of the lake	8:18,23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
	Gadara, SE of Sea of Galilee	Two demoniacs healed; swine possessed by demons	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	
	Probably Capernaum	Jairus' daughter raised; woman healed	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	
	Capernaum (?)	Heals two blind men and a mute demoniac	9:27-34			
	Nazareth	Revisits city where reared and is again rejected	13:54-58	6:1-6		
	Galilee	Third tour of Galilee, expanded as apostles sent	9:35–11:1	6:6-13	9:1-6	
	Tiberias	John the Baptist beheaded; Herod's guilty fears	14:1-12	6:14-29	9:7-9	
32, near Passover	Capernaum (?); NE side Sea of Galilee	Apostles return from preaching tour; 5,000 fed	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-13
	NE side Sea of Galilee; Gennesaret	Attempt to crown Jesus; he walks on sea; cures	14:22-36	6:45-56		6:14-21
	Capernaum	Identifies "bread of life"; many disciples fall away				6:22-71
32, after Passover	Probably Capernaum	Traditions that make void God's Word	15:1-20	7:1-23		7:1
	Phoenicia; Decapolis	Near Tyre, Sidon; then to Decapolis; 4,000 fed	15:21-38	7:24–8:9		
	Magadan	Sadducees and Pharisees again seek a sign	15:39–16:4	8:10-26		
	NE side Sea of Galilee; Bethsaida	Warns against leaven of Pharisees; heals blind	16:5-12			
	Caesarea Philippi	Jesus the Messiah; foretells death, resurrection	16:13-28	8:27–9:1	9:18-27	
	Probably Mt. Hermon	Transfiguration before Peter, James, and John	17:1-13	9:2-13	9:28-36	
	Caesarea Philippi	Heals demoniac that disciples could not heal	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
	Galilee	Again foretells his death and resurrection	17:22,23	9:30-32	9:43-45	
	Capernaum	Tax money miraculously provided	17:24-27			
	Capernaum	Greatest in Kingdom; settling faults; mercy	18:1-35	9:33-50	9:46-50	
	Galilee; Samaria	Leaves Galilee for Festival of Booths; everything set aside for ministerial service	8:19-22		9:51-62	7:2-10

Matthew 4:17
From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mark 1:14,15
Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Luke 4:14,15
And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

John 4:44,45
For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country. Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

FAITH REWARDED—"THY SON LIVETH."—*Reprints*, p. 2424

JOHN 4:43-54.

"Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house."—John 4:53.

TWO days were spent preaching to the woman of Samaria and completing the journey into Galilee, etc., ere the nobleman's son was healed. Galilee was a part of the territory which formerly belonged to the ten-tribe Kingdom of Israel, and the district called Samaria lay between Galilee and Judea. It will be noticed that, while our Lord journeyed hither and thither, he never went outside the territory occupied by the twelve tribes. It will be remembered that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, not far from Jerusalem, and that his parents, shortly after his birth, fled into Egypt, under the Lord's direction, before the slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem: and on the return from Egypt, instead of returning to Bethlehem, they located at Nazareth in Galilee,—"that he might be called a Nazarene," and that thus odium for eccentricity might attach to the Lord, as an offset to his wonderful personality and the "gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth"—"such as never man spake" before or since;—to the intent that only the Israelites indeed might hear in the true sense of the word, and be healed and accepted as sons of God under the New Covenant of grace.

It will be remembered that our Lord's disciples were known as "Galileans," and himself as the "Galilean." And recognizing the truth expressed in the proverb, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country," our Lord did not begin his ministry in Galilee, but in Judea. It seems probable that after his first miracle at Cana he, with his disciples, went to Judea, and was present there at the time of the Feast of the Passover, and at that time performed many notable miracles, on account of which his fame went abroad, not only throughout Judea, but also into his own country, Galilee: for it was the custom for large numbers of the devout Jews to go to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover every year, and these from Galilee had brought back word of the works and fame of their countryman. Hence our Lord was now returning to his own country, a great prophet, because of the fame first gained elsewhere.

Our Lord's experience was no exception to the general rule: it is a trait of human nature to lightly esteem things with which we are intimately acquainted. "Distance lends enchantment to the view." When one sees a mountain at a distance, its outlines stand out with boldness and symmetry, but when he comes close to it the beauty and grandeur are apt to be marred, in his estimation, because his eye rests upon the smaller fragments and the silt and soil and tangle of common weeds. Nevertheless, the view and thought from a greater distance are the truer ones, the proper ones. So, too, some of earth's characters who are highly esteemed today were much less esteemed by those who came most closely in contact with them in their day: not that the present view is

the false one, but because those who were closest to them, and who were affected by the commonalities of daily life, failed to rightly appreciate them. This is often true in the households and family connections of the world's notables. The little things of life are seen, and the character is measured by these, rather than by its larger features, which alone are seen in the distance. For instance, Julius Caesar, who by all the world is acknowledged to have been a great man, was lightly esteemed by Cassius, his intimate friend and servant, who once saved his life from drowning, and who was with him when sick, and who measured him by the weaknesses of these occasions and others, rather than by the largeness and greatness exhibited at other times. He, for instance, called attention to the fact that "when Caesar was sick he cried, 'Give me some drink, Titanius,' **like a sick girl.**" His closeness hindered him from seeing the greatness which others, less close, could readily discern; and thus he says"

> It doth amaze me,
> A man of such a feeble temper should
> So get the start of the majestic world,
> And bear the palm alone."

So it was with Jesus: "Neither did his brethren believe on him" (which expression in olden times signified kinsfolk, including cousins as well as brothers). They knew Mary, his mother, they knew his brethren, they knew Joseph, the husband of Mary, and apparently they knew also that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, but was conceived before Joseph had taken Mary as his wife (Matt. 1:18); for this was the evident purport of their sneer at him, when contending with him they said, "**We** be not born of fornication." (John 8:41.) They knew him as the young man who probably had worked as a carpenter in their midst for years. They knew that his home city, Nazareth, had never been reputed for its wealth or its learning—its sons were not the bright ones of the Jewish firmament. It was correspondingly difficult for them to realize that this one whom they knew so well could be the great one of whom Moses and the prophets did write.

Hence we find that in his own city, altho they said, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and this miraculous power?" they also said, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary, and do not his brothers James, and Joses, Simon and Judas, and all his sisters, live with us? … And they stumbled at him. … And he did not perform many miracles there because of their unbelief."—Matt. 13:54-58.

But, returning to our lesson: The news that the great Galilean Prophet and healer of the sick had returned to his home, soon reached Capernaum, which was only about twenty miles distant from Cana; and a person of social and political rank in that city was amongst the first to manifest his faith, and to receive a corresponding blessing; for we are told that the healing of his son was the "second miracle" performed by our Lord after his return from Judea.

It was doubtless by way of testing his faith that our Lord seemed at first to object to his petition, saying, in effect, You do not have faith in me as the Messiah; it is my signs and wonders that you are interested in. The troubled and affectionate father showed by his answer that his interest was not merely one of curiosity and desire to see a miracle performed: his was a true faith in Christ's power, which, he did not question, was able to save his son from death—"Sir, come down ere my son die." His true faith had its reward, and yet he was required to exercise it still further, and to believe that his request was answered, notwithstanding he could have no proof of this for several hours. His faith again stood the test, and he went his way, ascertaining later that the child had begun to mend at the very time our Lord had granted the request. And his faith brought him a still greater blessing than the physical recovery of his son's health, for it made him and his family "believers" in the Messiah, and thus brought them within reach of the great privilege of sonship and joint-heirship mentioned in John 1:12.

Our Lord's object in this and other healing miracles was evidently not merely the recovery of the sick from pain and disease. Had this been his object, he might have commanded the healing of all the sick in one breath: and more than this, he might have remedied the evil conditions which tended to promote sickness. For instance, the nobleman's son had a fever, and quite probably there were many others in Capernaum similarly afflicted, as the city was built near low, marshy ground, and is noted in history as a malarial locality, unhealthful. The Lord did not do this work of general healing,

but this is no evidence of a lack of sympathy, nor of a lack of appreciation of what would be necessary to make that and other portions of the earth healthful, any more than it could be considered a lack of interest in mankind on God's part which had permitted malarial and other evil conditions and resulting sickness and disease throughout the whole world for thousands of years. On the contrary, God foreknew the sickness, and designed to permit the evil conditions, as accompaniments of the sentence against man as a sinner—as accessories and concomitants to his death sentence.

The time will come when he who redeemed mankind, and who redeemed also from the curse the earth, "the purchased possession" (Eph. 1:14), will cleanse it from all evil, baneful influences—and there shall be no more death, nor pain, nor sickness, nor crying, for the former things shall have passed away, and all things will be made new. And the period of the renewing of the earth and of mankind, for whose use and blessing it was intended, is Scripturally termed, "the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." And this restitution the Apostle Peter, speaking under the inspiration of the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, tells us will begin at the second coming of our Lord Jesus.—Acts 3:19-23.

At his first advent our Lord's mission was specifically to give himself as the world's ransom price, and secondarily to furnish evidences which to a certain class would be a ground for faith in him, in his teachings, and in his future work—to the intent that such "believers" of the present age might come to the Father, receive the adoption of sons, and the promises; and through faith and obedience unto self-sacrifice might become joint-heirs with Messiah in his great future work of restitution—in the work of blessing all families of the earth.

Bringing the matter down to an individual one, we find that the nobleman received the blessing through faith, and that his faith was attested by his conduct. And so must it be with all who would be acceptable to God, and who would win the great prize set before us in the Gospel. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your **faith**:" but "Faith without works is dead." Faith cannot live without manifesting itself. All of our services to the Lord are valuable chiefly as proofs of our faith in his promises.—1 John 5:4; Jas. 2:26; Heb. 11:6.

A story is told of how a private soldier in Napoleon's army exercised faith in his word, and as a result of acting thereon received promotion to a captaincy. Napoleon was reviewing his army in the city of Paris, when the bridle dropped from his hand and the horse started on a gallop. A soldier leaped from the ranks, caught the horse and returned the bridle to Napoleon. The Emperor thanked him, saying, "Much obliged, **captain**." The soldier immediately responded, "Of what regiment, sir?" And the Emperor, pleased with his quickness and confidence, answered, "Of the Guards." The soldier immediately took his place amongst the officers, altho his clothes were those of a private and notwithstanding the fact that they ridiculed his faith. He believed the Emperor's words, and acted on that belief, and was a captain. So our Lord has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature;" and those who will attain the exceeding great and precious things which God has in reservation for them who love him will be the ones who take him at his word, become "children of the light," and "walk in the light." Such, ultimately, shall be members of the great Sun of Righteousness, which shall arise with healing in its beams, to refresh and bless the world by scattering the darkness of sin, superstition, evil.—Matt. 13:43.

But let us guard ourselves against the error of some who have great **faith in themselves**, and consider this a proof that they are of the "elect." Only the soldier who **served** as well as **believed** Napoleon was rewarded. Each should therefore ask himself—Are the exceeding great and precious promises to **me**? Are there conditions attached to those promises? and if so, am I living up to the conditions so as to make sure of my calling and election?

To answer his question so as to have "full assurance of faith," he should search the promises—their significance and conditions, and then act accordingly, if he would win the prize: remembering our Lord's word's, "Not every one that saith, Lord! Lord! shall enter the Kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven."

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Nazareth; Cana; Capernaum	Heals boy; reads commission; rejected; moves to Capernaum	4:13-16		4:16-31	4:46-54

Matthew 4:13-16

And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

Luke 4:16-31

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country, But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way, And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

John 4:46-54

So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself

believed, and his whole house. This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

THE TEACHER AND HIS MESSAGE REJECTED.—*Reprints*, p. 3300

LUKE 4:16-30.

"He came unto his own and his own received him not."—John 1:11.

OUR LORD began his ministry in Judea, and is supposed to have spent a year there before going to Galilee, the province in which most of his life had been passed. And even when he did go to his home province he chose to visit Capernaum before going to his native city, Nazareth. This was a wise course, considering the fact that a prophet is generally less esteemed at home than abroad. As it was, his fame in Judea and still later at Capernaum had aroused quite an interest in the people of Nazareth, where he had lived from about three years of age until thirty. A certain amount of pride in their fellow-townsman had thus been awakened, and we may be sure that there was a large attendance at the synagogue on the first Sabbath day after our Lord's arrival in Nazareth.

But while it was an object of our Lord's ministry to awaken and draw the interest of the people of Palestine to himself and to the message which he had to deliver, nevertheless it was not the object of that message to gather all the people to the Lord, but rather to separate the wheat from the chaff—to gather the wheat to Jesus and, naturally, to array the chaff class in opposition. This foretold result of the Lord's ministry we see was fully accomplished. "He came unto his own [people] but his own received him not, but to as many as received him, to them gave he liberty [privilege] to become the sons of God"—to be transferred from the house of servants, of which Moses was the head, to the house of sons, of which our Lord Jesus is the Head. We remark incidentally, however, that although faithful servants were gathered during our Lord's ministry, they were not begotten again until Pentecost. Pentecost brought the begetting of the Spirit to such of them as were then ready—the begetting necessary to a spirit development of character, necessary to an ultimate birth of the spirit in the First Resurrection.

The first verse of our lesson shows distinctly that it was our Lord's custom to attend the synagogue meetings every Sabbath day, and his custom also to be the reader for the congregation. The synagogue services were not at all like the temple services. The latter was the house of prayer, and the place where typical atonement was made for the sins of the people with the blood of bulls and goats, etc. The synagogue more nearly resembled present day Bible classes, where the Scriptures are read and freely discussed, not only by the leader but also by all in attendance as they may feel disposed. There are certain good features connected with this arrangement, one of which is the opportunity it affords for bringing out discussion on any Scriptural topic. We warmly commend the Bible study and Bible-class methods as still appropriate to the Lord's people and still beneficial for the elucidation of Truth.

Rightly Dividing The Word of Truth.

The Jews had a certain order in which the Scriptures were read in the synagogue, and apparently the book of Isaiah was the appropriate one for this occasion. The Lord turned to what we now call the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah and read the first verse and part of the second, and closing the book he sat down and made certain comments upon the passage read. We find that our Lord read discriminatingly, or, as the Apostle expresses it, he "rightly divided the Word of truth." He read the part appropriate to the time, but did not read about the day of vengeance. His teaching was to test the people: if his message were received no day of vengeance would be necessary; if not received the day of vengeance would follow, as it did follow upon that nation after it had rejected him. There is a lesson for the Lord's people in this: it is better that we should read one verse understandingly and appreciatingly than that we should merely read chapter after chapter of the Lord's Word in a formal manner.

Our Lord brought home to his audience the meaning of his text, saying, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your hearing." It had been written centuries before and read hundreds of times, but now, in the harvest of their age, for the first time it could be said that it was fulfilled. The holy Spirit had come upon the Lord Jesus about a year before, after his consecration at Jordan. It constituted his anointing. The

Jews were accustomed to this thought of anointing: their high-priests were anointed, as representing the Lord's power or spirit upon the priest, to authorize him to perform the sacrifices and to mediate between God and the people. Their kings were anointed, representing that divine power and guidance was upon them, and that they were specially authorized to represent the Lord in the government of the people.

The promise was that the Lord's anointed, the Messiah, should by and by come and establish a reign of righteousness in the earth, and now our Lord announced himself as the anointed of the Father. He did not do this in any coarse or rude manner, saying, "I am the Messiah. I am the anointed of Jehovah, with authority as priest and king;" but he did it in a quiet, unassuming manner, by calling attention to the prophecy and declaring that its fulfillment had now taken place. The announcement was not that the Lord had anointed him to rule, but that the first part of his mission was to preach, to declare, to be the mouthpiece of God to humanity. He had a great message, which should ultimately be unto all people, but which at that time was only for so many as had ears to hear.

It would undoubtedly be disappointing to many to have the royalty feature passed by, and to find that Messiah's work as herein delineated by the prophet and announced by the Lord, was one of preaching a good message rather than of raising a great army—of preaching to the meek and poor, rather than of rallying round himself the rich and wise and proud. They would be disappointed, too, at the part of the message which says that he was to bind up the broken-hearted. They had expected, perhaps, that, like the great warriors and leaders amongst the other nations, their deliverer would be the one who would cause the loss of many lives and the breaking of many hearts with sorrow and with trouble. Even those whose hearts were somewhat broken were probably disappointed because of their wrong expectations.

The proclaiming of liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound, our Lord's hearers probably did not understand. Their thoughts may have gone out to John the Baptist, who at this time was in prison, and they may have wondered whether Jesus would take any steps for his release. They probably had little conception of the real meaning of this Scripture—that it signified the liberation of Satan's captives from the bondage of sin, and ultimately the release from death and its bondage of the millions who have gone down into that great prison-house, the tomb. Even the Lord's disciples, who had ears to hear his message and hearts to respond thereto and become his followers at any cost, could not at this time have appreciated the greatness of the Lord's work. Little by little he needed to make known unto them the meaning of the prophecies and explained 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 Acceptable Time.

"The acceptable year [time, period] of the Lord" mentioned by the prophet was not understood either. Blessed are our eyes that we now see that this acceptable year or acceptable time or acceptable period is the entire Gospel age, during which God is willing to accept all that come unto him through Christ—willing to accept them as joint sacrificers with Jesus, as members of the great Royal Priest. True, by and by, at the close of the Millennial age, the Lord will be willing to accept so many of the world of mankind as the great Redeemer shall have brought into heart-harmony with him, and, by restitution processes, back to the image of God. But that acceptance of the world, after restoration by Christ, is a very different one from the acceptance of the Church in this present time.

Our acceptance now means our change of nature, our begetting to the new nature, the spiritual; and the terms or conditions of this acceptance are, as expressed by the Apostle, that having been first justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, we should, secondly, "present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God and our reasonable service." This acceptable day, then, means the day in which our heavenly Father is willing to accept the sacrifices of the anointed. He had only accepted Jesus' initia-

tory sacrifice of consecration, which later our Lord fulfilled and finished at the cross. It was the ground upon which the heavenly Father gave him the exceeding great reward of the First Resurrection blessing—to glory, honor and immortality. So with all the members of the body following in the footsteps of the Savior, justified by his blood—their sacrifices are counted in as acceptable to the Father during this antitypical Day of Atonement; and by its close all of these "better sacrifices"—then the typical bullock and goat sacrifices—will have been offered and will have been accepted, and thereafter no sacrifices will be either needed or accepted.

This wonderful prophecy which our Lord declared was being fulfilled in his own person is still in process of fulfillment in the persons of his truly consecrated followers—the members of his body. This was shown in the type. The holy anointing oil was poured upon the head of Aaron, but ran down even unto the skirts of his garments, thus anointing in the figure each member of his body. So it is with us. We are members of the Anointed One, and that which was true of our Head is true in a measure also of each one of us. We are all anointed to preach, all authorized of the Lord to declare the good tidings of the coming Kingdom to all the meek and broken-hearted. It is a mistake to suppose that our commission and the Gospel message given us is intended of the Lord to break men's hearts. It is a mistake to suppose that we are commissioned to go especially to the froward. Our message, while given out broadcast, must not be expected to attract any except the meek and broken-hearted. True, the light shining in the darkness will reprove the darkness and convince of sin, of righteousness and of coming judgment, or discrimination between the righteous and the unrighteous; but this is an incidental feature. The real mission of the Gospel is to the meek and to the broken-hearted.

As respects the world our general message, so far as they are able to hear it, is liberty to the captives and ultimately opening of the prison-doors of death, that all the families of the earth may in due time receive from the Lord through his Anointed the great blessing of the knowledge of the Truth, the opening of the eyes of the understanding, opening of the deaf ears, that they may know their God and be able to return by way of holiness and the restitution processes which will ultimately be at their disposal during the Millennial Kingdom. We can do still more for those who have ears to hear now. We can tell them of their liberty, of their freedom from the domination of Satan and sin and the weaknesses of the flesh. We can assure them in God's name, and through the merit of the great sacrifice for sins given by our Savior, that their past sins are forgiven and that their present weaknesses and imperfections are covered, if so be that they are trusting in Jesus and seeking to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit to the extent of their ability. This justification by faith is for the Lord's servants and handmaidens now, but an actual justification or release from the bondage of sin and Satan is the glorious provision for the world in general during the coming age, when Satan shall be bound, when he will deceive the nations (peoples) no more.

Gracious Words To Ungracious Hearts.

The Lord's discourse is not given, but unquestionably it was a grand one based upon so grand a text. The record is that all present bore witness to the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth—words of favor, of blessing, of comfort, of peace. We know not to what extent the Lord may have described the blessings yet to come upon the world through his Millennial Kingdom, secured by his work of redemption. His old neighbors and friends were beginning to think very highly of him, and apparently the old proverb that a prophet is without honor in his own country and amongst his own kin was about to be disproved. Apparently, also, the people of his home city were about to receive him as indeed being a great prophet, and rejoice in him and be proud of him because he was of their city—Jesus of Nazareth.

But how short-lived was their appreciation of him! How quickly the natural mind and perverse reasoning turned everything upside down, and turned his admirers into enemies, hating him and seeking his life! They began to say, Is not this the one we have known as Joseph's son? And then they began to wonder what mighty works Jesus would do in their midst, having heard of the great miracles

wrought by him in the province of Judea and in the nearby city of Capernaum. Our Lord interpreted their thoughts and said, "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, 'Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do here in thine own country.'"

We know not why our Lord refused to perform miracles in Nazareth. We may surmise, however, that this being his home city, where he was well known and where undoubtedly he had previously read in the synagogue, the people being in a right condition of mind should have been ready to accept the good tidings without any attestation of miracles; whereas in the other cities, where the Lord was not known, the miracles were more or less necessary as his credentials, and none might have been expected to receive him and to accept his teachings without having either a personal acquaintance with him or the attestation of miracles. The thought would be that the miracles of our Lord were not intended to be restitution blessings, because the restitution times had not yet come—that the miracles performed were merely to witness, to attest, to substantiate, fortify and clinch our Lord's teachings. Secondly, the people of Nazareth should not have expected miracles, did not need miracles, having another attestation instead, namely, their acquaintance with Jesus.

Have We Not Done Many Wonderful Works In Thy Name?—Matt. 7:22,23.

A lesson may be drawn from this circumstance applicable to our day. Miracles are not necessary today amongst the Lord's people, and hence they have passed away. Not that the Lord has any the less power, but that the time for restitution has not yet come, and the necessity for miracles as introductions to the Gospel message is no longer manifest. Hence, although not for a moment doubting the divine ability to heal all manner of diseases today, we are inclined to look with suspicion upon the miraculous healings of the present time, whether done by Mormons or by Christian Scientists or by Christian Alliance people or by Spiritualists or by Mr. Dowie and his followers or others. We are inclined to look upon miracles as some of the "wonderful works" mentioned by our Lord, to the performers of which he will say, I do not recognize you as my faithful disciples.

Satan and his work are undoubtedly opposed to life and healing, etc.; nevertheless, he is quite able and willing to reverse his processes and to become either a preacher or a healer, as may best suit his convenience. Our Lord in speaking on this subject implied such a course on the part of Satan, but intimated that it would mean the fall of Satan's kingdom—that it would imply that such efforts were necessary in order to perpetuate the superstition and blindness which he has been exercising over mankind, necessary in order to distract attention from the glorious light of Present Truth, gradually breaking in upon the hearts and minds of those who are the Lord's truly consecrated people.

The present time, so far as the Lord's people are concerned, is a time for sacrifice and not a time for restitution—a time for laying down their lives and not a time for saving them. It is a time for the binding up of their broken hearts, though not a time for the repairing of their marred bodies; a time for a reckoned deliverance from sin and death, but not a time for actual deliverance. As for the world, it has now a sufficient witness on every hand to the greatness of Messiah and to his merit as a teacher, it needs no temporary healing of the sick for this purpose, and as for the permanent healing of the world's sickness, the time has not yet come for this; but, as the Apostle Peter points out, it will come at the establishment of the Lord's Millennial Kingdom at his second advent. "The times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began" shall follow, and they will indeed be "times of refreshing."

The people of Nazareth were interested in Jesus from the standpoint of selfishness—pride in him as the representative of their city—and hoped that the great miracles that he had wrought in other cities would be more than duplicated at his home. And so when he intimated that he would do no such miracles there they were chagrined. His citation of previous similar dealings in no measure placated their anger. They were filled with wrath and rose up and thrust him out of the city in the direction of a precipitous hill about forty or fifty feet high, with the evident purpose of killing or maiming him by pushing him over the brink.

"Marvel Not If The World Hate You."

What a picture we have here of the natural man in his fallen condition! At one moment rejoicing in the Master's gracious words, at another desiring to destroy him because of the failure of their selfish hopes and ambitions. So it has been with the Lord's people since, and particularly is this true in the present time, the harvest of this Gospel age. Many hear the good tidings of great joy for all people, and while declaring it to be the grandest Gospel message conceivable, yet selfish interests—especially sectarianism, and the feeling that instead of this message building up their favorite sect or party it will have the effect of discrediting the same—seem to evilly influence those who rejoiced in the gracious message but a short time previously.

Apparently our Lord permitted the matter to go far enough to show the real spirit of his opposers, and then, turning himself, he overawed them with the glance of his eye and passed through their midst unmolested. He exercised this power because his time was not yet come. So, too, we may suppose it will be with all the members of his body. As the Father had a due time for the Son in which to accomplish his work, so, doubtless, divine providence is overruling and guiding the affairs of each member of the body of Christ so that not even a hair of their heads could fall without divine notice; and so, their lives being precious in the Father's sight cannot be taken from them in any manner until their time shall have come—until they shall have finished the work which the Father has for them to do—until they shall have experienced the chastening and polishing necessary to fit them for the Kingdom, or until by their own wilfulness they shall have taken their affairs out of the Lord's hands or have refused to walk in his steps.

"His Own Received Him Not, But—"

Our Golden Text was fulfilled not by the above rejection of our Lord at Nazareth, but by his rejection by the whole nation of Israel. The Apostle, however, points out that, while the nation as a whole rejected the Lord, there were individual exceptions; and hence, while the nation as a nation was rejected by the Lord, these faithful individuals who became his disciples were received of him, were granted liberty to become members of the house of sons, and at Pentecost received the spirit of adoption, the spirit of begetting to the new nature.

A parallel to this experience of fleshly Israel is to be sought and is readily to be found in antitypical Israel—nominal spiritual Israel. At our Lord's second advent he comes to Christendom as his professed people; and, in harmony with the prophets, he is again rejected—yet not by all. As there were some amongst the Jews ready to receive him and to follow in his steps, so, today, there are some to whom his words are applicable, "Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear." Those of the spiritual house now accepting the Lord are in due time to receive a great blessing—the antitype of the Pentecostal blessing—it will be glorification. Soon shall the wheat class of this Gospel age be blessed and changed that they may "shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:43.) Thus we see that the Lord will be for a stone of stumbling to both the houses of Israel, but for a blessing to some, the faithful of each. They shall become as the very elect, his body members, his Bride, and be associated with him not only in the anointing and sufferings of this present age, but also in the glories of the future work of blessing all the families of the earth with a knowledge of the Lord and with an opportunity to return to favor if they will.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum	Call of Simon and Andrew, James, and John	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11	

Matthew 4:18-22

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

Mark 1:16-20

Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

Luke 5:1-11

And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net broke. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

FISHERS OF MEN.—*Reprints*, p. 3307

LUKE 5:1-11.

"If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed."—John 8:31.

CAPERNAUM lay near the shore of the Sea of Galilee, a beautiful little lake of world-wide honor and distinction because of our Lord's association with it, and well stocked with fish, as we may judge from this lesson. It was to this lake shore near Capernaum that Jesus came after his rejection at Nazareth. He had a different reception here: the people pressed upon him to hear of the word of the Lord, and for convenience to himself and to them Jesus got into the fishing boat belonging to Simon Peter, that he might from the boat more effectually address the people, who doubtless sat or stood on the shore.

We are inclined to wonder frequently that more of our Lord's discourses have not been preserved for us in the Gospel accounts. What we have are fragmentary, the sermon on the Mount being the principal one. As for the other references to Jesus' preaching, they are merely

brief extracts—his parables and dark sayings. As an illustration of the latter, note his declaration that he was the bread that came down from heaven, of which if a man eat he should never die. Many of those who heard said, This is a hard saying, and walked no more with him. Our chief instruction in the great doctrines of the Gospel—respecting the ransom, our justification through faith in the precious blood, our adoption, begetting, resurrection, and the difference between the First Resurrection and that of others subsequently, etc.,—comes to us through the epistles of the apostles and through the record of their discourses as given in the book of Acts.

At first we would be inclined to wonder why this should be so, why we should not get our chief instruction on matters pertaining to the future life and godliness from the words of our Lord. But we understand the matter clearly since we discern that it was necessary that our Lord should pay the ransom price before any of our race could be adopted by the Father and receive the spirit of adoption. This explains the whole situation; for without the spirit of adoption we could not understand spiritual things, and consequently the things of a heavenly character which Jesus declared were parables and dark sayings to those of his time who heard them; for instance, his discourse on the new birth to Nicodemus, who could not understand. Our Lord remarked in this connection the fact that he taught merely earthly things and not heavenly things, saying, "If I have told you earthly things and you understood not, how would you understand if I should tell you of heavenly things?" (John 3:12.) Seeing that his hearers were not prepared to understand the heavenly things, our Lord gave his attention chiefly to discourses on earthly things, and to parables and dark sayings, which the Spirit would subsequently make known to his faithful ones.

The Natural Man Appreciates Not Spiritual Things.

This gives us a larger view of our Lord's ministry: first, teaching the natural man such things as the natural man could understand; secondly, healing the natural man's ailments, and thus laying a broad foundation for the spiritual work which he would begin at Pentecost and carry out during this Gospel age through his representatives the apostles, and those who should believe on him through their word. Throughout this Gospel age the Lord himself has been the teacher of the Church, which is "his body"—"his brethren": he has been attending to every feature of our instruction, feeding us upon the Truth—"things new and old." He is still the instructor, and whatever we receive through the apostles is merely his message through them and not their own messages. And whoever now speaks in the Lord's name is authorized to speak merely as a representative and ambassador, who must refer for his authority back to the words of the Lord himself, or to the words of those whom he inspired or directed in a plenary manner—the twelve apostles, Paul taking the place of Judas.

Our Lord had been probably a year engaged in preaching, first in Judea, and latterly in Galilee, at the time this lesson opens. He was evidently already acquainted with these fishermen mentioned in our lesson, Peter, Andrew, James and John. It was probably at an earlier interview that our Lord gave Simon his surname of Peter, as it occurs in this lesson. These fishermen had probably met with Jesus and heard his preaching on other occasions, and were his disciples in a general sense of the word—that is, followers of him, believers on him, advocates of his teachings. Now, however, the time had come for our Lord's selection of the twelve apostles who should be with him continually and see his miracles and hear his teachings and be witnesses of all things said and done: and they in turn might in due time serve as his special representatives and be able to give to us, and to all of his subsequent followers accurate and truthful records of the principal events of his ministry.

After preaching to the company on the shore from his seat in the boat, Jesus proposed to Simon and Andrew, the owners of the boat, that the boat be taken into deeper waters and the nets cast for fish; but Peter informed the Lord that this would be useless as the day was unfavorable, or for some reason the fish were not in that quarter of the lake at that time, for he and his companions had toiled all night and caught nothing. Nevertheless, to please the Lord, they did as he suggested. As they began to gather in the net they found it to be heavily laden with

fish, more than their boat could hold. Their partners in the other boat were beckoned to, and gave a helping hand to save some of the fish. The lesson had its designed effect; Simon Peter at once fell on his knees before the Lord, recognizing that no ordinary human being could have produced such results under such circumstances.

The Lord Loves Zeal And Energy.

There is something very noble about Simon Peter: his impulsiveness by itself is an attractive trait. The zeal and energy with which he was disposed to take hold of any matter considered worthy of his attention is admirable. Indeed we know that Peter, James and John were the three whom the Lord specially loved of the twelve—the three who seemed to have the zeal, energy and vim which the Lord appreciates. They were practical illustrations of the admonition, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Peter's words to the Lord, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man," represented his acknowledgment of the great difference between himself and the Master. He caught the true situation, that he was a sinful, imperfect man, while the one before him, the Master, was perfect and in full accord with the Father, and therefore permitted to be the dispenser of the Father's mercies.

Peter's real sentiment was probably the reverse of his expression. He meant, "O Lord, although I am a sinful man, permit me to be near thee, that I may be blessed by contact with thee." This was the proper attitude of heart and the real prayer, which Jesus answered in making him one of his chosen twelve.

The narrative breaks off suddenly and does not tell us whether it was the same hour or the next day that Peter, Andrew, James and John forsook their fishing business—their boats and nets—that they might be specially the companions of our Lord and ultimately his representatives, his apostles. We may reasonably suppose that the partnerships in this fishing business were family affairs, and that Peter left his boat and implements in the hands of brothers or sons or other partners or associates; and that likewise the sons of Zebedee left their paraphernalia in the hands of their father or others who had previously been interested with them in business. Indeed this thought is fully borne out by the fact that after our Lord's death, about two years later, these same men proposed returning to the fishing business, and apparently had some interest still in the boats, nets, tackle, etc. It was on the last-mentioned occasion that Jesus again gave a great draft of fishes, and that Simon Peter was the first again to recognize that the power to perform such a miracle could belong to no other than the crucified but risen Lord, whom he then recognized as the one upon the shore.

Called To a Higher Vocation.

Our Lord's words to Peter were, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men." These words were applicable also to Peter's associates, and doubtless were applied to them later as an invitation that they should with Peter join the Lord as his disciples or apostles. The account in Mark 1:17 mentions Andrew the brother of Simon Peter, and his partner in business also, and gives the invitation in slightly different language, namely, "Come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of men." Probably the Lord made use of both expressions, but in any event they are of similar import.

All of life's affairs will teach us lessons profitable throughout its future, if we will receive them. Ordinary affairs and business of every kind, in proportion as it is conducted along honest, proper and reasonable lines, will give valuable instruction and preparation for spiritual usefulness in the Lord's service, if they be properly received and wisely improved. Perhaps, however, there was something peculiarly helpful in the fishing business—something peculiarly like the great work in which the apostles were to engage the remainder of their lives. Our Lord intimates this in his call. Fishing requires energy, tact, proper bait, and that the fisherman keep himself out of sight. And these four things are requisites in the spiritual fishing in which the Lord privileges us to engage. Thus he admonished, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." The Apostle Paul, speaking along this same line of the wisdom he used in presenting the Gospel tactfully, says, "Being crafty [wise] I took you with guile"—with bait. The Apostle took advantage of the natural tendencies and inclinations of his hearers to present the Gospel in the most practical form without, however, shunning or refusing to

declare one single feature of it. In this his course is a model for us. We are to remember that as fish are easily alarmed when they find that any one wishes to take them, so humanity is shy of being captured by anything—especially if they have the least suspicion that they may lose their liberties: and thus consecration appears to the world.

The apostles were not, as fishers for men, representing men or human institutions. They were not trying to get disciples into some sectarian bondage. They were fishers of men for the Lord and as the Lord's representatives; as though God did beseech men through them. Their mission was to catch men with the glorious hopes and prospects of the Gospel; to bring them into such relationship with the Lord that they would fully and gladly surrender their all to him. And this is the same course that is properly before the Lord's representatives today. We are to catch men for the Lord and for his service, not for our personal profit or gain,—not for sectarian upbuilding. We are not to give our own liberties to men, nor to seek to take away the liberties of others at the behest of men or sects. The message that goes forth from the true fishers of men whom the Lord commissions is nevertheless a message which implies a loss of liberty and a loss of life to those who are successfully caught. However, the fishing business does not fully illustrate the matter, because all who are of the Lord's catch must be willingly his, else they will not remain caught, but be cast forth: and their loss of personal liberty and life means a gain of glory, honor and eternal life.

Our Lord used this fishing business as the basis of one of his parables, saying that the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a net cast into the sea which after gathering fish of every kind will be finally brought to shore. That net undoubtedly represented this Gospel age, and a general catch of all classes of people, suitable and unsuitable for the Lord's purpose as respects the Kingdom. The bringing of the net to the shore properly represents the "harvest" time of this age—the reckoning time, the time when this catch is concluded. The parable proceeds to say that the suitable fish were gathered into baskets and the unsuitable were cast away,—cast back into the sea. So the Gospel call, the Gospel net, the Gospel fishermen of this Gospel age are gathering out of the world of mankind a peculiar class of people suitable to the Lord's purposes in the Kingdom, and though others may get into it they are not desired and will relapse again to worldly conditions. The fishing of the next age will be different and on a much larger scale.

Apostleship More Than Discipleship.

There is a difference between apostleship and discipleship. There are but "twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. 21:14), but the number of disciples is considerably larger. The word disciple signifies pupil or learner; and all who are now being called of the Lord, all who are now being caught as acceptable fish under the present arrangement are those who desire to be taught of the Lord and willingly respond to his teachings. Our Golden Text sets forth the conditions upon which we may be disciples, namely, that we not only accept the Lord but that we continue in his word—continue to be taught of him—continue to learn in the school of Christ. Before we enter his school we must learn that we are sinners by nature and that we need just the washing or the cleansing that he prescribes as necessary before we can enter his school or become his disciples. After we accept the word of counsel respecting the need of washing in the precious blood, and after by faith accomplishing this cleansing of sins, and after we have started as pupils, we find that there are various lessons to be learned, all necessary to our progress.

It is the Teacher who is to be the decider of what lessons we need, what experiences, what trials, what difficulties, what encouragements, what assistance are necessary to us. The promise is, that no good thing will he withhold. He will give the warnings, the corrections, the encouragements, the blessings and the promises, according as we need them and are in a condition to make profitable use of them. Not everyone who starts to be a disciple will win the great prize as a graduate from the school of Christ into the Kingdom of glory and joint-heirship with the Master; but he who faithfully and patiently continues in discipleship—continues to learn the lessons which the great Master teaches, until he shall have finished his course, will surely receive his crown at the hands of the Lord.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Capernaum	Heals demoniac, also Peter's mother-in-law and many others	8:14-17	1:21-34	4:31-41	

Matthew 8:14-17

And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them. When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

Mark 1:21-34

And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee. And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

Luke 4:31-41

And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power. And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not. And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about. And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them. Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

CAPERNAUM EXALTED TO HEAVEN.—*Reprints*, p. 3726

MARK 1:21-34.

"He healed many of their sick."

OUR Lord declared of Capernaum that having been exalted to heaven it should be brought down to hell. (Matt. 11:23.) Our lesson tells us how it was exalted to heaven—that great mercies and blessings and privileges were accorded to its people early in our Lord's ministry of healing. Nevertheless few there accepted him as Messiah, and, as he predicted, the city was brought down to hell—not to a place of burning or torture, but to *hades*, a grave condition, a death condition. The city so completely disappeared that its location is not definitely known now. A certain pile of stones is credited with being its former site.

Capernaum was on the Lake of Galilee, near the scene of the miraculous draught of fishes noted in our previous lesson. On the next Sabbath day, Jesus, accompanied by the four fishermen who had left all to become his disciples, entered into the synagogue at Capernaum. Jewish synagogues were very liberally governed, and afforded an opportunity for nearly any one of reverent manner to present his views respecting the Law and the prophets. Our Lord availed himself of the opportunity and taught the people, who were astonished at his doctrine, his teachings. They were accustomed to hearing the scribes and Pharisees haggle over the Scriptures, guessing and confusing their meaning and generally mystifying them, but Jesus taught as a master who thoroughly understood his subject—"as one having authority."

True, our Lord had come down from heaven and had knowledge of things of which others were ignorant; but it was not respecting these that he taught, we may be sure from his remark to Nicodemus, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how could you believe if I told you of heavenly things?" On the contrary, our Lord's discourses were along the lines of divine revelation—the Law and the Prophets, and the fulfillment of these. This is clearly indicated by his declaration, "I speak not from myself; but the Father which sent me he hath given me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." (John 12:49.) Again he said, "My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me."—John 7:16.

We pause here to remark that the teachings of all the Lord's representatives should be along this same line—not human speculations and philosophies, but the Word of God—"He that hath a dream let him tell a dream, but he that hath my Word let him speak my Word." (Jer. 23:28.) "To the Law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word it is because they have no light in them." (Isa. 8:20.) "Teach the Word, be instant in season," and even when inconvenient to yourself. (2 Tim. 4:2.) "The Word of God is powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword." (Heb. 4:12.) "Sanctify them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth." (John 17:17.) They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus," and learned of him. (Acts 4:13.) Thus it is that those who are faithful and loyal to the Lord and the word of his testimony speak not vaguely and indefinitely to the world, but declare the message of God, the "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people," "in due time."

"I Know Thee Who Thou Art"

Whilst Jesus was speaking, or probably at the conclusion of his discourse, the congregation in the synagogue was startled by the words, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." The speaker was a demoniac; today he would be called a crazy man, and would be confined in an asylum. We would not say that all insanity is demonism—that all insane persons are possessed of evil spirits, as in the case under review. Quite evidently there are cases in which the brain is diseased, but we believe that fully one-half or more of all those who are dealt with as insane are cases of demoniacal possession—"obsession."

As we have shown in other writings, the evil spirits or demons who thus obsess humanity were once angels—"those angels which kept not their first estate" (Jude 1:6), but who in the days of Noah fell from divine favor through sin,

and have since been under chains of darkness pending the judgment of the great day, the Millennial day, when the Christ—Jesus and the Church in glory—shall not only grant a trial or judgment to man but also to those fallen angels. (1 Cor. 6:3.) Meantime their endeavors to communicate with humanity, and to obtain control over them through the submission of their wills, seems to be incessant. Throughout the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, all who reverence God are warned against having anything whatever to do with mediums, seances and every form of spirit communications as being of these demons—Satanic. It is our duty to reiterate this, because these influences are more active today than ever before, and because the Scriptures show that they will be increasingly active and powerful in the near future as a part of the great trial coming upon all Christendom in this our day. We learn that in Australia Spiritism is much more advanced and more powerful than in either Europe or America, but it is making rapid strides everywhere.

The demon of our lesson seems to have had the thought that at the coming of Messiah all evil was to be abolished and destroyed. One account says, "Art thou come to destroy us before the time?" as though the demons had some information or premonition that the time for the manifestation of power through Messiah was still future. Another Scripture represents an evil spirit as crying out, "Art thou come to torment us?" The word for torment in that case signifies hasten, punish. We may be sure the inspired writers up to that time had not indicated the nature of the punishment that would be inflicted upon the fallen angels, and that the latter merely surmised that it would be their destruction.

The Apostle Peter seems to imply that when the fallen spirits witnessed our Lord's death as the sin offering, and his resurrection with divine power, they realized a love of God and a power of God on behalf of humanity that they had not previously appreciated, and the thought of God's mercy to come in due time to men gave ground to some of them for hoping also that in due time the repentant ones of their number might be the recipients of a share in divine mercy through Christ. And this indeed we know is a part of the divine program—for not only fallen men but also fallen angels are to be judged or tried at his appearing and kingdom.—1 Cor. 6:3.

Our Lord commanded the demon to leave the man—to give up his hold upon his mind and body. The demon was powerless to resist the authority vested in Jesus, but was not hindered from causing the man considerable torture in going from him. Luke says (4:35) the demon threw the man down in the midst of the crowd—thus and in every way the malignity of these evil spirits is manifested. There are no such obsessions or possessions by holy spirits. God recognizes the individuality of each member of the race and does not intrude upon it, nor do the holiest angels thus intrude. God through his holy Spirit operates not as do the demons, to the overthrow of reason and the subjugation of the will, but on the contrary operates only in accord with reason and the will. The fully consecrated believer in Jesus may receive of the holy Spirit, and this more and more abundantly as he comes into glorious touch and relationship to the Lord in thought and word and conduct. But any neglect of the divine teachings or principles in the exercise of self-will in opposition to the recognized will of God, is sure to that extent to quench the spirit of holiness, the spirit of a sound mind, the Spirit of God, which is in no wise forced upon us, but must be entertained, must be held on to, must be desired if it would be retained and increased.

Amazed At The Teaching

No doubt in our Lord's teachings he had explained the cause of sin and sorrow and pain and death—that these were the results of original disobedience, the curse, and that in God's due time and way this curse would be lifted from the world, evil spirits would no longer have power and authority to deceive and infest, and sickness and pain and death would all be wiped out in the glorious morning of blessing which God has promised through the Messiah. These astounding teachings, so much more clear and distinct than anything they had ever heard from their scribes, and so full of inspiration and hope, when backed by the demonstrations of the Lord's power over the evil spirits,

caused all the people astonishment. They sufficiently realized that the one who had been teaching upon their seashore was a great teacher, a great prophet, if not the Messiah himself.

Although more than a year had elapsed since Jesus began his ministry, although the miracle of Cana of Galilee was in the past, and although he had taught to a considerable extent in that region, "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand," yet this seems to have been the first illustration of our Lord's miraculous power over disease and evil spirits. Otherwise the people of that city who had heard Jesus' teaching would not have been so astonished. We may be sure that the four fishermen who had left all to be his disciples were less surprised than the others, because of their knowledge of the increase of the wine at Cana, and their knowledge also of the miraculous draught of fishes a few days previous to this casting out of the demon.

Leaving the synagogue, Jesus and the four disciples went to Peter's home, where his mother-in-law lay sick of a fever. They entreated Jesus on her behalf (Luke 4:38), and he healed her. Evidently the casting out of the demon suggested to the minds of the disciples the power of our Lord to heal diseases, otherwise they would have entreated the Lord to heal the woman before going into the synagogue. Our Lord took the woman by the hand and raised her up, and immediately the fever left her. Other than this she was not weak and enervated, as fever patients usually are when the fever is stopped. On the contrary, she had her wonted strength, and was able at once to minister to the guests of the home, to serve them with dinner, etc.

"Himself Took Our Infirmities"

At even, at sunset, not only because it was the close of the day, but because according to the Jewish custom the Sabbath ending at sunset made it in the eyes of the people the more proper time, they brought to Jesus the sick and those possessed with devils that he might relieve them. He did this, expending in the service his own vitality, we may be sure. This much is not only intimated by the Apostle's declaration that himself bore our infirmities and carried our sorrows, but it is directly stated in connection with one of his healings that "Virtue [vitality, power, strength] went out of him and healed them all." (Matt. 8:17; Luke 6:19.) Thus our Lord fulfilled his covenant of consecration and began to lay down his life for others. The using of strength for the assisting of others continued to the end of his ministry, when through non-resistance, submission to the Father's will, he permitted himself to be crucified for sinners, the just for the unjust, that he might redeem us with his blood, his sacrificed life.

The account says, "He suffered not the devils to speak because they knew him." How evident it is, not only from this statement but also from the case in which Paul rebuked the damsel who cried, "These are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of eternal life"—how evident it is that the Lord does not desire the testimony of devils respecting himself or his plan. The same is true of all the unregenerate. The Word of the Lord is to such, "What hast thou to do to take my word into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and casteth my words behind thee." (Psa. 50:17.) It is the special privilege of those who are the Lord's consecrated ones to be his ambassadors, his mouthpieces—it is a special honor conferred upon such; hence the declaration again, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."—Dan. 12:10.

Only those wise toward God and seeking to live in harmony with his will may be expected to have clear discernment of the true plan of God; all others will be confused and in more or less of darkness. It is in harmony with this that the prophet declares respecting the entire body of Christ, the Anointed, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the good tidings." None are to be considered teachers of God's message except they have the anointing, and all who have the anointing, to the extent that they possess it, are privileged to be representatives and mouthpieces of the Lord according to their opportunities and willingness under the reasonable limitations of the Word.

The next morning the multitudes, enthused with the thought that they had a great teacher and healer in their midst, sought Jesus again, but he had departed early into a wilderness

place, saying that he must preach the gospel in other cities also—he must be about his Father's business, he must attend to the necessities and interests of the entire flock. Evidently our Lord's intention was to merely give such evidences of divine favor as would convince all who were Israelites indeed respecting his true character and work as the Father's representative, as the Messiah. Hence he would leave after giving these miraculous tokens—leave, that those who were not in a proper condition of heart might forget, might lose their interest, might cool their ardor, while only the Israelites indeed, waiting for the consolation of God promised through the Law and the prophets, would continue to watch and hope and wait and pray for the Kingdom he had announced.

So it is in every case: the Lord is seeking only the elect class, those who worship him in spirit and in truth; he seeks not the multitude, their time is not yet. In due time all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the knowledge of the Lord shall be granted to every member of the race, but now it is only for the special class whom the Lord is seeking to be members of the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

He Healed Many

While our Lord undoubtedly healed many diseased ones during the two years and a quarter following this lesson, we have no thought that he healed all the sick of Palestine. His mission was not to heal the sick but to preach the gospel. The healing of the sick was merely incidental, to attract the attention, to assist the faith, to point him out as the finger of God. For instance, we remember the cure of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, where there were many sick folk, and he alone of them all was healed (John 5:1-9.) The account would seem to imply that many if not all the sick at Capernaum were healed, but it was a little city, and, besides, it was granted, we are told, wonderful blessings and privileges and opportunities and favors above other cities—it was exalted up to heaven in point of privileges, blessings and opportunities, and this largely through so general a healing of its sick and devil-possessed ones.

"These Signs Shall Follow"

Many in studying this lesson will doubtless call to mind the arguments of some who claim that all of the Lord's people who truly trust him should heal each other through prayer and should never be sick. Many who thus argue quote these words, "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."—Mark 16:17,18.

These dear friends should note two things: (1) That these words, and indeed all of the sixteenth chapter of Mark from the ninth verse to its close, are not found in the old manuscripts of the Bible, and are recognized as being additions to what Mark wrote, and hence wholly without inspired authority. All scholars know this, and many who quote these words we would suppose are intelligent enough to have this knowledge. Why then do they quote them as Scripture when they know they are not Scripture?

(2) These words are not true of the Lord's followers, and those who quote them as applicable show that they do not believe them. They will not take up serpents, they fear to drink deadly things, they cannot cast out devils, nor can they all heal the sick by laying on their hands.

Our Lord's miracles not only served as an instruction to the people but also typified or illustrated the power which he ultimately will use on a higher and grander scale in the blessing of all the families of the earth. He did not use his power, so far as the record shows, upon any of his followers, his disciples. Their call implied that they would follow in his steps, and instead of seeking restitution and recovery of physical health they would seek to lay down their lives for their brethren in the service of the Truth. Whoever has got the idea that the Lord's followers are called to get physical health and freedom from trials and difficulties, aches, pains and sorrows, has gotten the wrong thought. True, godly living and a heart at peace with the Lord are very conducive to physical health, but it is also true that to be instant in season and out of season in the service of the King will mean a considerable amount of wear and tear,

physically, and imply a measure of physical discomfort at times, and this injury in one way or another should be considered as a part of our sacrifice, a part of the "all things" of our experience which God is able to overrule to our profit.

Very many indeed of the Lord's people have received most wonderful blessings at his hands under the chastening rod of affliction, sickness. Thus an evil thing, an element of the curse, has in many instances been overruled for good to those who loved the Lord and were properly exercised by their experiences. True, there is no sickness in heaven, and there will be no sickness on earth after the Millennial Age shall have fully rolled away the curse and brought in restitution and perfection to those who will accept them on God's terms of obedience and shall have destroyed all other members of the human race. But that time has not yet come; we are still walking not by sight but by faith; we still have the weaknesses, mental, moral and physical, which came to us as our share of the general fall. The Lord may grant us special immunities or special refreshment according to his wisdom, according to his knowledge of the necessity of the work he would have us do, but it is not for us to attempt to withdraw our sacrifice by asking for earthly favors and immunities. Rather we are to ask for the spiritual blessings, realizing that the Father is more willing to give the holy Spirit to his children than are earthly parents to give earthly good things to theirs.

The giving to us of the holy Spirit will generally imply lessons in patience, meekness and in love development through sufferings and trials, moral or physical. The obedient child of God, developed through the knowledge of the Word and the possession of its spirit, will delight to acknowledge the Lord's wisdom and to trust him for such blessings of a temporal kind as may seem to him best. Our special advantages are of a spiritual kind, which did not begin at Capernaum or at all during our Lord's ministry, but on the contrary began at Pentecost after he had ascended on high and received of the Father his reward and the authority to endue his followers with the spirit of begetting to the new nature.

Let us not seek for the loaves and fishes and physical healing, for after all these things do the Gentiles seek; but let us seek the spiritual health, strength and vigor, and all temporal things shall be added unto us according to divine wisdom and love.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Galilee	First tour of Galilee with the four now called	4:23-25	1:35-39	4:42,43	
	Galilee	Leper healed; multitudes flock to Jesus	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-16	

Matthew 4:23-25

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan. [8:1-4] When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

Mark 1:35-45

And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils. And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And, as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

Luke 4:42-43

And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. [5:12-16] And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

HE HEALETH THEIR DISEASES—*Reprints*, p. 4979

MARK 1:29-45.

"Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."—Matthew 8:17.

TODAY'S STUDY follows closely the one of a week ago. When Jesus left the Capernaum synagogue, He went to St. Peter's home. There St. Peter's mother-in-law lay sick of a fever. It was the work of but a moment for the Savior to take her by the hand and raise her up to health. The fame of Jesus had spread and by evening there were crowds importuning His healing words and touch. "And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many demons, and suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew Him."

But He did not remain to increase and deepen the favorable impression that He had made. The next morning, long before daylight, He left Capernaum and went into a desert place for prayer and communion with God. St. Peter and the others who had accepted the call to discipleship followed, and found Jesus later, and apparently urged His return, saying, "All men are seeking Thee." But Jesus replied, "Let us go elsewhere, into other towns, to preach there also." And He went into the synagogues throughout all that section, all of Galilee, preaching and casting out demons.

Nothing is more attractive to the human mind than the miraculous power of healing disease. No one enjoys disease, pain and suffering. People would be glad to be healed of disease, even if they were assured that the cures were performed by the power of Satan himself. It should not surprise us today that many false doctrines, wholly out of harmony with God's Word, commend themselves to the poor, groaning creation by promises of relief from physical ailments, without medicine, and theoretically by the

power and favor of God, and supposedly in proof of the doctrines advocated by the healers.

But since these healers hold various and antagonistic doctrines, it is manifest that all are not of God, if any of them are. To our understanding, the Bible teaches that no miraculous healing at the present time is authorized by God's Word. St. Paul declared by inspiration that the gifts granted to the early Church and exercised by Jesus and the Apostles and those to whom they personally communicated them would pass away. We believe that they did pass away—that they gave place to the next and higher manifestation of Divine favor, namely, the fruits of the Holy Spirit—meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, and love—as evidence of God's favor and of membership in the Church of the First-born. The miracles which Jesus and the Apostles wrought were merely with a view to the establishment of the early Church. Nowhere is it intimated that it was the Divine will that all people should be healed of disease during this Age.

The general healing of disease will doubtless be a prominent feature of the work of Messiah's glorious Kingdom after its establishment. Not only will the ailments of the flesh be lifted, but restitution processes will go on step by step, lifting humanity out of sin, disease and imperfection, up to full and absolute perfection, except in the case of those who wilfully and deliberately oppose the Divine arrangement, and who, in due time, will be cut off from life in the Second Death. All the remainder will ultimately reach the glorious condition of perfection mentioned in the Scriptures, where there will be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things of sin and death will have passed away; because He that sitteth upon the Throne will make all things new.—Rev. 21:4,5.

Satan an Angel of Light

St. Paul intimates that Satan and his messengers, the fallen angels, would seek to transform themselves so as to appear "as angels of light," that they might exercise the greater influence over humanity and that thereby they might inculcate the more successfully false doctrines, subversive of true faith in God and His Word. We believe that the Apostle's words are particularly applicable in our day, and that many conscientious and good people are being deceived, and that miraculous healings are part of the Adversary's bait. It would not be appropriate for us to enumerate here the different doctrines which we believe are thus baited. We content ourselves by giving the Scriptural reason for expecting no miraculous healings from God at the present time.

"Who healeth Their Diseases"

It is quite true that under the Law Covenant which God made with Israel, He agreed that sickness should be a penalty for violation of the Law, and health a reward for the obedient. The statement of the Prophet, "Who healeth all thy diseases," was applicable physically to the Israelites under the Law Covenant. It has also a spiritual application to the Church, the New Creation.

But the healing of the New Creature and the healing of his flesh are different things. The New Creature's soul sickness and heart troubles are all cured by the Good Physician—even though his flesh may suffer pain and go down into death. We are to remember that the condition upon which we were begotten of the Holy Spirit to be new creatures was a full surrender of the flesh and its interests as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable, which is our reasonable service.—Rom. 12:1.

Nor is this any change from the Lord's dealings with the Church from the very beginning. So far as the records show all, or nearly all, who were healed by Jesus and the Apostles were "sinners." Surely there is no record of a single instance in which any of the Apostles were healed of any disease. Although St. Paul healed many sick, yet when Epaphroditus was sick and "nigh unto death" we have no mention of any attempt to miraculously recover him.

Similarly, in the case of Timothy, we find that St. Paul neither sent him napkins and handkerchiefs for his healing, nor advised him to pray for his own healing, nor told him that he would pray for him, nor advised him to have others pray for him. On the contrary, he advised certain medicines, "for thy stomach's sake." Indeed, we believe that for God's conse-

crated people to ask for physical healing would be to attempt to take back again what they have specifically consecrated to the Lord—"even unto death." That the Lord specially overrules in the cases of many of His people to give them remarkable health and strength for their labors in His service, without their asking it, is another matter entirely. This, however, is in no wise in conflict with the fact that God used miracles amongst outsiders, amongst unconsecrated people, as a foreshadowing of the general blessings which will come to mankind under Messiah's Kingdom shortly to be established.

Furthermore, let us remember that the miracles performed by Jesus and the Apostles were not attempts to heal all sickness, to banish pain and sorrow. They were merely intended to attract attention to the Gospel Message. The time when God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces, and when there shall be no more sighing and crying and dying, will be during and as a result of Messiah's reign of a thousand years.—Rev. 21:4.

Today's study furnishes one proof along this line. Jesus did many mighty works in Capernaum, but merely to attract attention. He went to other cities and towns, leaving behind Him in Capernaum many sick and disappointed. Similarly, we read that when Jesus passed the pool of Siloam there was a great multitude of impotent folk there needing healing and waiting the opportunity to go down into the water therefor. Jesus merely observed one of that multitude and said unto him, "Take up thy bed and walk." —John 5:1-9.

A Cleansed Leper Thankful

Today's study mentions another case of healing. Leprosy was regarded by the Jews as an incurable disease, and as a type of sin. The leper of this lesson had faith in the power of Jesus, and came and kneeled before Him and entreated healing, cleansing. His prayer was answered, not because he was one of Jesus' disciples, nor because he promised to become one of them, but because of his exercise of faith, and in order to make of his case a testimony to the priests that Jesus exercised a power Divine. The cleansed leper was told to go, according to the Law, and present the customary offering, expressing his thanks to God and giving his testimony to the priest respecting his healing, and to have him examine him as the Law required.

Jesus admonished the leper not to make known so great a miracle; but in his thankfulness he could not restrain himself; he told it everywhere. The result was that Jesus could not thereafter visit the large cities because he would be overwhelmed with the number of sick brought to him for healing. He therefore frequented the rural districts, but even then the people sought Him for healing, from every quarter.

But alas! they were more appreciative of the restitution blessings than the great privilege which our Lord specially offered them of becoming His footstep followers and joint-heirs in His Kingdom, which, by and by, will dispense restitution blessings and healing far and near to every member of Adam's race condemned through the fall of Adam, and redeemed by the precious blood of Calvary.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Capernaum	Heals paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	

Matthew 9:1-8

And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and

departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

Mark 2:1-12

And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

Luke 5:17-26

And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things today.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.—*Reprints*, p. 3728

MARK 2:1-12.

"The Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins."

IT was but a short time after the incidents of our last lesson and our Lord's subsequent preaching to other cities of Galilee that he returned to Capernaum, which was now his home city, for Matthew informs us that leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt in Capernaum. (Matt. 4:13.) The people heard that he was at home, and a crowd assembled at the house. The houses of the middle classes of that time are understood to have been usually of one room only, in size about 20 × 40 feet, with a flat roof formed by heavy timbers about two feet apart, on which were placed slabs of either wood or stone, the whole being covered with earth or sod closely rolled. The roof was usually accessible by an outside stairway and was often used as a summer sleeping place.

To the crowd of his fellow-citizens—who had but recently awakened to the fact that Jesus was a great prophet, endued with miraculous powers—the Lord was discoursing, doubtless respecting the Kingdom of God long promised, and which he proclaimed to be nigh, even at the door, if the people were willing to receive the message and its blessing. At this juncture four men, bearing on a litter a young man paralyzed and utterly helpless, approached the house with a view to having the sick one healed. His helpless condition probably hindered the ailing one from applying to Jesus on the day when so many of the sick at Capernaum were cured. Now he had found friends and helpers and had come within sound of the Master's voice, yet was unable to gain access to his presence because of the crowd who were unwilling to make way for him.

But the faith which had brought him thus far insisted that some way of presenting his case before Jesus would be found. Finally he was carried to the roof of the house the earthy covering was dug away from a portion, the slab lifted, and by improvised ropes he was let down into the very presence of Jesus. He must have had a strong faith not only in the Lord's power to heal but also in his gentleness and goodness, that so far from resenting the rude intrusion he would have patience and realize his deep necessity.

And so it was: instead of finding fault, threatening them with arrest, accusing them of rudeness, etc., our Lord was so pleased with the faith manifested that he overlooked the intrusion entirely and greeted his uninvited guest most graciously, saying, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." Perhaps the young man was thinking less of his sins and their forgiveness than of his hope for recovery, but in any event our Lord put the most important thing foremost. He was primarily the sin-bearer and teacher, his work of healing being a secondary one at the time, a mere exercise, so as to emphasize the lessons given.

Wise And Unwise Alertness

The people present were alert to notice everything that Jesus did and said, and amongst them were some of the learned, the Scribes, who were well informed respecting the Law and looked up to as authorities by the masses. These with the others had been attracted by the wonderful miracles and teachings of Jesus and they were watching his words and deeds. Here they thought they had found a flaw—that Jesus was arrogating to himself a power and authority which could belong to God alone. Indeed we may suppose that it was partly to start this very line of reasoning that our Lord expressed himself as he did. Then, reading their hearts, he answered their queries, saying, "Which is the easier for you to believe, that I am able to forgive sins or that I could heal this man of the result of his sins? But to prove my power to forgive the sin I will perform the cure, and its performance will testify that I have not blasphemed; that I have not arrogated to myself authority which is not properly in my control; that I am not misrepresenting the Father when I declare that I am his special agent and representative." Then Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Arise, take up thy couch and go to thy home!"

When the man did arise and carried forth his stretcher on which he had lain the people were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything of the like before." Luke adds that they said, "We have seen strange things today." They had heard the Messiah explain about his Kingdom and declare his power to forgive sins and demonstrate that power by a miracle. How could they help but wish that the Kingdom of God might immediately be established, that divine favor might reach the whole world and increase in restitution blessings until there should be no more sickness, no more pain, no more dying, no more crying, no more sin, no more death. However, a particular work must be accomplished before the Kingdom could be set up and begin its restitution work: first the elect of God, a little flock, the Bride of Christ, must be selected. Palestine and the favored nation did not supply a sufficient number to fulfil the divine arrangement, and hence after the selection of all the Israelites indeed the favor of God turned from natural Israel to the Gentiles, to gather out of them a sufficient number to complete the very elect.

Our hope, our confidence is that this election is very nearly accomplished; that soon the sec-

ond coming of Christ will bring forth his Church in the first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality and joint-heirship with him in the Kingdom, and that subsequently the restitution blessings of the Kingdom will go forth to the natural seed of Abraham, yea, unto all the families of the earth.

Sin and its forgiveness may be considered the essence of this lesson: to this subject, therefore, we turn our attention.

Not only is sin generally common to the world of mankind, as the Scriptures abundantly declare and explain, but a consciousness of sin is general. The world in general recognizes what the Bible emphasizes, namely, that all unrighteousness is sin, all imperfection is sin. The Jews under the Law, realizing their inability to keep its requirements, would be bound in all honesty to admit that they were sinners, transgressors of its requirements. Christians, recognizing God's law on a still higher plane, realize still more fully their own blemishes and shortcomings of the perfect law which says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. But those who have not the Jewish Law nor the Christian law and instruction have nevertheless a sufficiency of conscience, a sufficiency of the original law written in man's constitution, though largely obliterated through the six thousand years of the fall: by this they realize that they have shortcomings, and, as the Apostle points out, they confess that they are sinners against their ideals of righteousness in that they sometimes attempt to excuse their conduct while at other times they clearly and plainly acknowledge wrong-doing.

The remarkable thing is that our consciousness of sin increases with our education in the school of Christ—increases in proportion as we cease to do evil and learn to do well. Accordingly, the most advanced saint has a clearer discernment of and a greater repugnance for sin than has the most degraded sinner. Thus it is, too, with God, who hates sin and cannot look upon it with allowance. He has placed his ban, his sentence, his edict against it, and declares that it shall be utterly rooted out, and that all intelligently and wilfully in sympathy with it must be considered as part of it and be destroyed with it.

The more we see of sin, the more we realize its contaminating character and destructive tendencies, the more we appreciate the divine justice which on account of sin condemns sin in humanity. (Rom. 8:3.) The more advanced our conceptions of righteousness, truth, holiness, purity, the more we are enabled to appreciate the divine view of sin and to say of the Lord and his sentence against sin and sinners, "True and righteous are thy judgments, O Lord."—Rev. 15:3.

The Operation of Divine Mercy

But the more we come to appreciate divine justice and the righteousness of the sentence of death against our race, the more also we come to appreciate the love and mercy of God toward us, and to rejoice that he was not willing that any should perish, and hence made provision wide enough, high enough, deep enough, that all might turn unto him and live—have everlasting life. This provision of mercy cannot ignore the sin nor can it permit the sinner to ignore it. It is necessary that the redeemed should know, should appreciate, their fallen condition, the justice of their sentence of death, and that their recovery is wholly a matter of divine mercy. Unless they learn this lesson they could never appreciate the divine arrangements and the only terms upon which God could grant them everlasting life—terms of acceptance of God's grace and forgiveness and their obedience to him and his principles of righteousness.

"None Other Name Given"

It is to this end that the heavenly Father arranged his plan for the recovery of our race as he reveals it in his Word—a plan by which he extends mercy to all, yet requires all to accept that mercy through Jesus, "through faith in his blood," or not at all. (Rom. 3:25.) This insures that every one coming to the Father must admit that he is a sinner, must admit that he cannot meet the penalty of his own sin and live, must admit that his salvation is purely of divine mercy through Christ; and it insures that the terms and conditions which Jesus the Redeemer will establish as the Mediator between

God and sinners must be thoroughly understood and accepted and complied with. He proposes to help back to perfection and to full fellowship with the Father all who sincerely repent of sin and will use their best endeavors under his guidance, instruction and assistance to return to God. To such and to such alone will perfection be granted. Such alone will attain the everlasting life through the assistance as well as through the redemption of him who bought us with his precious blood.

Sins Blotted Out.

It is well that we mark a wide distinction between the blotting out of sin, which the Scriptures assure us will be accomplished at the second coming of Christ, and the forgiveness of sins which may be enjoyed now by all who will exercise the necessary faith and obedience. The blotting out of sins at the second advent of Christ will be applied first of all to the Church: not a trace of sin in any sense or degree will remain upon these from the time that they share in the glorious blessings of the first resurrection. In the present time they are actually imperfect, blemished, marked and marred by sin, and continually need the covering of the robe of Christ's righteousness so freely granted to them; but with the resurrection change all the blemishes of sin will be gone. As described by the Apostle, that which was sown in weakness will be raised in power, that sown in dishonor will be raised in glory, that which was sown a natural body will be raised a spiritual body. No longer will they need imputed righteousness, but each will individually be absolutely perfect, absolutely righteous.—1 Cor. 15:42-44.

The blotting out of the world's sins will not be thus instantaneous, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, but will progress throughout the Millennial age gradually. As each individual recognizes sin and falls in line with the rules of the Kingdom he will find himself growing stronger as a reward for his endeavors in the ways of righteousness, the highway of holiness. Day by day, year by year, he will increase in mental, moral and physical development, or failing so to do will, after the abundant opportunities of that time, be cut off in the Second Death as unworthy of any further opportunities for gaining life eternal through the Redeemer's Kingdom. Those who will may avail themselves of the privileges of that time and have their sins entirely blotted out—reach absolute perfection of mind and body by the close of the Millennial age, and then be tested as to their heart loyalty to the principles of righteousness as shown in Revelation 20:10. That final test will be general to the human family: it will correspond to the trial given to Adam in Eden, except that these will have had experience with sin and the fall, and with the recovery and with the reign of righteousness. They will, therefore, all be in a proper attitude to enable them to pass the examination satisfactorily, and any failure so to do will demonstrate that the heart had not come, under all the favorable conditions, into that harmony with God which would be indispensable to eternal life. Such the Scriptures show us will be destroyed with Satan as those who have some elements at least of his disposition.

Forgiveness Of Sins.

In our lesson the Scribes are represented as reasoning that the only one who could forgive a sin is the one against whom the transgression is committed. If A commit a transgression against B it is not in the power of C to forgive it. B alone has the right to feel offended and he alone can forgive. The Scribes were reasoning along correct lines: while we do as individuals transgress the rights and liberties of each other at times and thus sin against one another and need to have one another's forgiveness, yet all sin is primarily against God, whose law of righteousness is infringed. All unrighteousness is sin—against God, against his laws. He alone sets the standard of right and wrong by which his creatures are to be measured or judged and he is the Judge. How, then,

Could Jesus Forgive Sins?

We answer that our Creator had so fixed the matter of sin and its penalty that Jesus was the only one who could forgive sins—or the heavenly Father through him. The divine arrangement was so fixed that the Father had even put out of his own hands the power to forgive sins, because he had fixed a positive, absolute, unchangeable penalty against sin in the case of

Adam and his posterity. He could have done differently: he could have dealt with mankind as he dealt with the angels that fell, and merely put them under some kind of restraints without imposing directly the death sentence. But once the death penalty had been imposed, nothing could alter or annul it. God himself could not change his unchangeable laws.

But that unchangeable sentence against mankind was made by the Creator with full knowledge of how he could, and in due time, would negative or nullify the sentence, not by withdrawing it but by meeting its requirements through a Redeemer. Thus it was that in the divine plan our Lord Jesus was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. In other words God had in mind the plan of redemption before he imposed the death sentence which made necessary that redemption.

Divine Favor Early Manifested.

It may be urged that God manifested his favor to Abraham and others before our Lord Jesus came into the world and presented man's ransom price. We reply that this is so, that divine favor was manifested, but that its manifestation was based upon the divine intention that in due time the ransom for sinners would be paid. But even then the favor granted was not the blotting out of sins. No! that could not have been done prior to the ransom, and is to be done by God through the Redeemer glorified. All the ancient worthies could possibly have was such measure of divine favor as their faith in God would justify, and the only favors which God could grant to them would be such as his intentions through the Redeemer would make reasonable.

Sin Under Moses' Law.

Under the Law Covenant God arranged with the nation of Israel a certain kind and degree of forgiveness and reconciliation through Moses, the mediator of that Covenant. Under these arrangements the sin offerings year by year made a picture, a type, an illustration of the coming blessings under the New Covenant and its Mediator, the Christ. Israel as a nation enjoyed God's favor to a limited extent through faith, as did the patriarchs, but neither did they have a blotting out of sins. On the contrary, the Apostle points out that it is evident that Israel's sacrifices and sin offerings never really took away sin, but were merely typical of better sacrifices through which sin will actually be cancelled and ultimately blotted out.—Heb. 10:1-4; Acts 3:19.

The Measure of Jesus' Forgiveness.

If the heavenly Father were bound by his own law and could not blot out sins without the payment of the ransom price, could our Lord Jesus do so? Had he greater power in this respect than the Father? We answer, No! His words to the paralyzed man in this lesson did not refer to a blotting out of man's sins, but merely to such a forgiveness of sins as the Father had already extended to Abraham and others in the past. When the Lord had uttered the words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," the man still lay helpless, his sins not blotted out though forgiven; he was still a picture, an illustration of the terrible effects of sin. And our Lord's later words, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk," although in the nature of restitution, were not a blotting out of the man's sins. To have blotted out his sins completely would have meant the lifting of him completely out of all the imperfections of the fall up to the full perfection of a perfect man mentally, morally and physically. Jesus did not do this for him; he merely healed him of a measure of his special difficulty.

Besides, in these words our Lord did not refer to original sin and its death penalty. He was speaking of sins in the plural, the man's own sins additional to his share in father Adam's sin and father Adam's penalty. The man was a Jew, under the Mosaic Covenant. His share in original sin, in common with that of all Jews, was atoned for every year, and on the basis of this atonement he as a Jew had a standing with the Lord, and the Lord's engagement with that people was that under their Covenant they should be free from sickness, etc., so long as they were obedient to the Lord. To every Jew, therefore, sickness meant, implied, personal guilt, personal transgression, because the Lord had so covenanted with them, as he had not done with other peoples and nations.

Our Lord Already Sacrificed.

But even as respects Adamic sin and its penalty our Lord would have had the right to have spoken peace and forgiveness and to have given an assurance of an ultimate blotting out of sins, because although he had not yet finished the work which he came to do, although he had not yet finished the ransom sacrifice, he had begun it. At his baptism he had consecrated his life, had laid down his life, presented it to the Father in sacrifice, and the Father had in a measure accepted it and had signified his acceptance of the contract by giving to our Lord the holy Spirit, the first-fruits of the glorious blessing which he received at his resurrection.

It was by virtue of his already having made this sacrifice, which he fully intended to carry out to the very end, that our Lord was authorized in saying to his believers, "He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 3:36; 6:54)—that is, he who believes in me and becomes my true, faithful follower may reckon that he has already begotten in him the new life, and that I will assist him and carry him through, so that in the very dawning of the Millennial morning he may have a share in the first resurrection and thus obtain the eternal life under its perfect conditions.

The entire operation of this Gospel age so far as the Church is concerned is one of faith—"We walk by faith not by sight." By faith we realize our sins forgiven, by faith we look into the future and believe that in the first resurrection we shall share our Master's glory, honor and immortality. And by faith we are satisfied and rest in hope—yea, actually, we shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness.—Psalm 17:15.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Capernaum	Call of Matthew; feast with tax collectors	9:9-17	2:13-22	5:27-39	
	Judea	Preaches in Judean synagogues			4:44	

Matthew 9:9-17

And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

Mark 2:13-22

And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that

he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

Luke 5:27-39

And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him. And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician: but they that are sick I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better. [4:44] And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

JESUS SAID UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME.—*Reprints*, p. 2590

MARK 2:13-22

CAPERNAUM, where our Lord had been teaching and healing, was situated on the sea of Galilee, or, as we today should say, the Lake of Galilee. It was a city of considerable commercial importance, especially for the fish business, and undoubtedly the lake-shore in that vicinity was quite populous. The tense of the Greek would seem to indicate that our Lord kept going by the sea-shore, stopping here and there to discourse to the people, multitudes of whom flocked to hear him. It was during this journey that he passed Matthew, formerly known as Levi, a custom-house agent of the Roman government—a revenue collector, who was attending to his business, and whom our Lord addressed, saying, "Follow me," and who obeyed the call to discipleship.

Many get a very false thought from the brevity of the narrative, and infer that Levi (Matthew) had never heard of Jesus before, and that our Lord, as he passed him, cast upon him some kind of a spell which led him to instantly drop his business, as though bereft of his senses. On the contrary, we are to remember that the Lord and his disciples were well known in that vicinity for years, and that probably Matthew had not only knowledge of our Lord, but also faith in him, as the Messiah. Not until now, however, had Jesus invited him to become one of His immediate disciples; not until now, therefore, could Matthew essay to become such. There evidently were many who heard the Lord discourse time and again, and who were to be reckoned as amongst his friends, but who were

by no means invited to become special followers, companions and associates in the ministry of the gospel, as were the Twelve.

Nor are we to suppose that Matthew left his money-drawer open, and his accounts with the Roman government unsettled, to immediately follow the Master. Rather, we may assume that it may have taken days, or possibly weeks, to straighten his affairs and to enable him to respond to the Lord's call to apostleship. We should remember that the history of several years, and many discourses, conversations and incidents, are crowded in the gospel narrative into very brief space.

It would seem probable that as Simon's name was changed by the Lord to Peter, so Levi's name was changed to Matthew, which signifies "the gift of God." He was a publican—a person who farmed the taxes and the public revenue. The name "publican" and the profession were both extremely odious to the Jews, who very reluctantly submitted themselves to the tax regulations of the Romans. Publicans were counted unpatriotic, disloyal to their own nation, in that they accepted the service of an alien government, and made use of their knowledge of their country and people in assisting to collect revenues deemed unjust. The office, as will be readily seen, offered many opportunities for dishonesty and extortion, bribery, etc., but we cannot for a moment suppose that Levi was one of these dishonest publicans, for had he been so we may be sure he would not have been called to the apostleship and would not have responded to the call, for we are not to forget that it is written, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him."—John 6:44.

The Consecrated Home Honored.

Matthew was a man of influence, and as soon as he accepted the Lord's call, and responded by consecrating himself and his all, he set about to use his influence in drawing others to the Savior. He would announce his own devotion to the cause in such a manner and under such favorable circumstances as if possible would win some. To these ends he arranged a banquet for the Lord and his disciples at his house, and invited many of his friends and business associates. These in our lesson are called "Many publicans and sinners."

We have seen why the publicans were ostracized by the scribes and Pharisees—not because they were wicked, but because their business was disesteemed: and being thus cut off socially from the ultra-religious, the publicans were forced to have most of their social intercourse with the non-religious, by way of contrast called "sinners." By the term sinners we are not necessarily to understand vile persons and evildoers, but rather persons who did not profess nor attempt the holiness claimed by the Pharisees—persons who did not claim to be absolute keepers of the divine Law—who did not profess to make the outside of the cup or platter absolutely clean, tho perhaps in many instances the inside was as clean or more clean than were the hearts of the Pharisees, who professed perfect holiness. This our Lord intimated on several occasions. When, therefore, we read that our Lord was the friend of publicans and sinners we are not to understand that he made companions of the rowdies or moral lepers of his time. We are rather to understand that in the usage of that time one class of Jews was designated the holy people (Pharisees), and another class designated as not professing absolute holiness (sinners).

Matthew's endeavor to bring his friends and associates into contact with the Master and his teachings is certainly commendable, and is a good illustration of what each one who enters the Lord's flock should do. Each should seek to exert his influence where it is greatest, amongst those with whom he is acquainted and who are acquainted with him, and upon whom either his past honesty and good character should have an influence, or else those to whom his radical change of life would be the most manifest. Another lesson for us is the propriety of using hospitality as a channel for the advancement of the truth—the homes of those who have consecrated themselves to the Lord should be consecrated homes, in which the first consideration should be the service of the Master; and its influence should be to draw out friends to the Lord, that they might be taught of him. Too frequently the consecration of the home is overlooked and antagonistic influences

are permitted to dominate, with the result that neither the Lord nor the Lord's people are entertained, nor his cause served in them. Such a house and home loses a great blessing, and the head of such a house has serious reason to question whether or not he is overcoming, and therefore an "overcomer," to whom only the prize is promised,—or whether he is being overcome by adverse influences.

The Lord desires a courageous people, a people so full of faith, and love to him and his, that they will conquer adverse influences in the interest of righteousness. What would we think of Matthew if he had said to the Lord: Master, I would much like to have a banquet at my home, and to invite there some of my friends, that I might introduce you to them, and that thus a favorable influence might be exerted on behalf of the truth; but I have no liberty in my own home—my wife would not hear of it for a moment,—or, my children are unruly, have no respect for me as a parent, and would create a great disturbance if I were to mention such a thing as a banquet in your honor, so greatly are they offended that I am giving up my lucrative business, and so fearful are they that they will not have the same social standing as before, or the same privileges of extravagance?

We would consider him a most unfit man to be an apostle, or to occupy even the position of elder or deacon in the Church, according to the terms laid down by the Apostle Paul. (1 Tim. 3:4,5.) We would esteem such an one unworthy of any responsible position in the Church, and so deficient in the qualities of an "overcomer" that he would be in great danger of losing the prize, unless he promptly instituted a reform of his character. It is only what we should expect, to find Matthew's case very different from this —to find that he had a strong character. Nor can we expect that the Master would have said to him, "Follow me," unless he had such character that would permit him to follow in the Master's footsteps, for surely our Lord Jesus, while gentle, kind and loving, was never weak or characterless.

And what would we have thought of Matthew's wife and family, had they objected to the banquet? We would have considered them rather hopeless as respects saintship, and that his wife had not learned even the first element of wifehood;—that she was a hinderer instead of a helping mate. As it was we may be assured that with the Lord came a special blessing to that home.

Spiritual Food At The Banquet.

It would seem from other narratives of this same banquet (which was probably several weeks after Matthew's call) that a large number of people were gathered at Matthew's house, aside from those who partook of the banquet (Luke 5:29), and from the connection of the narrative it is supposed that it was on one of the regular fast days of the Pharisees. These facts led to the two questions:

(1) Why does your Teacher associate with these people, who do not profess sanctification? The objection was not that our Lord should not teach the publicans and sinners, but that he should not eat with them, which implied a social equality, and the Pharisees evidently recognized that our Lord and his apostles were professing and living lives of entire consecration to God.

In answer to this query our Lord said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"; the implication being that the physician had a right to go to and mingle with those whom he sought to relieve, and might mingle with them in whatever manner he saw to be expedient for their cure. This language does not imply that the Pharisees were not sick, and that they did not need our Lord's ministry, tho the fact was that not admitting that they were sin-sick they were not disposed to receive his good medicine of doctrine. The same thought is otherwise expressed by our Lord in the same connection, saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Anyone who considered himself to be righteous would be beyond the call of repentance. His first lesson would be to learn that he was not righteous, not perfect; hence our Lord went chiefly to those who admitted that they were not righteous, and whose hearts therefore were better soil for the truth than others. Our Lord intimated this in his parable of the publican's and the Pharisee's prayers, assuring us that in God's sight the publican had the better stand-

ing, because of his acknowledgment of imperfections and his petition for mercy.

Another of the Evangelists adds others of our Lord's words—"Go ye and learn what that meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice." (Matt. 9:13.) Our Lord here evidently quoted from Hosea 6:6. The lesson the Pharisees should have learned from this was that in their particularity respecting sacrifices, self-denials, tithing of mint, anise, cummin, etc., the very things in which they boasted as evidences of their holiness were things which God did not appreciate nearly so much as he would have appreciated mercy. They should have had compassionate feelings toward their fellow Jews, the yearning compassion which would have delighted to have lifted them out of sin and brought them nearer to the Lord and nearer to righteous influences. Instead of having this spirit of mercy, which would have been very pleasing in God's sight, and would have prepared them to be recipients of his mercy, they had instead a loveless sentiment which despised others and boasted of self,—a self-satisfied and complacent condition of mind and heart, very reprehensible to the Lord—a condition of heart unready to be blessed with divine mercy.

Fasting and Feasting—Typical and Antitypical.

(2) The next question was: Why is it that your Master and all who affiliate with him are banqueting and feasting and rejoicing, while we Pharisees "fast twice in the week," and the followers of John's teachings also fast? Is not this a sign that you and your Master are not so devout as we?—Luke 18:12.

The Lord's answer is very comprehensive and far-reaching, and requires considerable study to be appreciated. He explained(

a) That it would be inappropriate for his followers to be in sadness and mourning at a time when they were receiving such wonderful blessings—at a time when the Bridegroom himself was present, cheering their hearts, refreshing and strengthening them, opening the eyes of their understanding, and giving them hearing ears to appreciate the divine favor that was coming unto them. Such would not be an appropriate time for fasting and mourning. By and by, when the Bridegroom would be away, there would be an abundance of perplexity and sorrow and then fasting would be in order. And so surely it has been: the Lord's people throughout the Gospel age have frequently felt called upon in times of darkness and adversity to seek a very close approach to the Lord by the humbling of the flesh, and have found fasting a valuable means to this end.

But fasting has a typical significance—it means self-denial. So long as the Master was with his people, and especially so long as he was honored by the multitudes, it required comparatively little self-denial to be one of his followers—it was in many respects an honor to be called to follow him, and an honor to sacrifice something of earthly interests to be a follower; and this made this kind of self-denial or fasting really a feast of pleasure. But later on trials came, when the Master got into the toils of his enemies, when his cause was unpopular, and the multitudes clamored for his death—then it required self-denial (antitypical fasting) to confess him and follow him; and so it has been all through the Gospel age—none can be a follower of the Lamb without self-denial, fasting, refusing the desires and appetites of the flesh—sacrificing some and mortifying others in the interest of the new creature and its spiritual development.

Now, in the Lord's Second Presence, we might say that the feast has begun again—that from a spiritual standpoint there are so many and so great blessings, so much and so dainty spiritual food, that to those who are invited into the Lord's banqueting house and whom he causes to sit down to meat, and to whom he brings forth things new and old, newly and refreshingly served, it almost appears as tho the fasting time has passed, and that the feasting and "joys of the Lord" have begun. Not that there are no trials and difficulties, according to the flesh, but that as new creatures his people are so refreshed and exhilarated with the meat in due season that the trials and difficulties and self-denials (fastings) incidental to the way may now be esteemed so lightly as not to be worthy to be compared with the spiritual refreshments enjoyed, tho these be but foretastes of the great Marriage Feast soon to be enjoyed.

(b) In addition to the fast that our Lord's presence with his disciples would antidote sorrow, was another fact which the Pharisees did not comprehend, viz., that our Lord's work was not like that of John the Baptist—was not a work of reformation, seeking to patch up the Jewish system and arrangement. John had been commissioned to do that if he could, and had failed and been beheaded; and the work which Jesus was doing was a new work altogether: he was not attempting to patch and reform Judaism with his doctrines, but was making an entirely new institution, gathering out a Church, which would not be a Jewish Church nor a Reformed Jewish Church, but a wholly different institution, a Christian Church. This was the reason he was not attempting to discuss with the Pharisees the proprieties and improprieties of their methods, and to straighten them out. He would let alone the old garment, already worn out and ready to be laid aside; he would provide as a new garment, not the impossible righteousness required by the Law, but an imputed righteousness according to faith, based upon the merits of his own sacrifice for sins.

Had he attempted to combine Christianity with Judaism the result would have been disastrous to both, for they are opposites—the one demanding absoluteness of righteousness, which was impossible to sinners; the other demanding that the impossibility of personal righteousness should be acknowledged, and that faith should be the only condition of forgiveness and mercy.

(c) The same lesson was illustrated by the custom of that time in the use of skins of animals as instead of the barrels and bottles of today—indeed, such skins are used to the present time in various parts of the world, and called bottles. New wine put into such skins in fermenting would stretch them to almost bursting point, and such skins could never be used again for new wine, because the elasticity having gone out of them the new wine in fermenting would surely burst them. The lesson which our Lord taught here is that Judaism having had its day, had accomplished its purpose; and that it was not the divine intention that it should be reformed, as his hearers expected. The system had become effete, and to have attempted to put into Judaism the new doctrines, the new wine of the Gospel, would have meant that not only the Jewish nation would have been convulsed and wrecked by the spirit of the new teachings, but also that the doctrines themselves would have gone down with the wreck of the nation. Consequently it was the divine plan that a new Israel should be started, "a holy nation, a peculiar people," and that it should be the receptacle of the new grace and truth then due.

Similarly now in the end of the Gospel age we perceive the impossibility of putting the new wine which the Master is now providing into the old wineskins of sectarianism, and all sectarians realize this too—they realize that to receive what is now being presented as present truth into their denominations would unquestionably mean the utter wreck of the denominations. God is therefore now, as in the end of the Jewish age, calling out of the whole system such as are Israelites indeed, that they may receive at his hands the wine (doctrine) of the new dispensation just at hand. As for the old institutions, they have served a purpose, partly good and partly bad. Their work, so far as the divine plan is concerned, is at an end. "The voice of the Bridegroom and of the Bride shall no more be heard" in Babylon at all. (Rev. 18:23.) Babylon will not permit them to be heard. The voice, the teaching of present truth is consequently outside her walls; and whoever has an ear for the truth, whoever desires to be filled with present truth, must come outside of sectarianism before he can be thus filled and blessed and used as a vessel in bearing the blessing to others.—Rev. 18:4,23.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31, Passover	Jerusalem	Attends feast; heals man; rebukes Pharisees				5:1-47

John 5:1-47

After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For 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 honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word

abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. I receive not honor from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

THE HOUSE OF MERCY.—*Reprints*, p. 3500

JOHN 5:1-15.

"A great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles."—John 6:2.

THE word Bethesda signifies "House of Mercy." This was the name given to a large structure with five porches connected with a large pool of water, situated near to the walls of Jerusalem. The pool was fed by a spring whose underground reservoirs served as a trap for certain gases. When the gas accumulated in this reservoir it would force out the water, much after the same manner that oil wells sometimes flow out their contents. These flows of the water impregnated with the gases occurred at irregular intervals, and at such times the water in the pool would be disturbed or made to boil by the inflow as well as by the gases it contained.

The phenomenon not being understood, many considered that the agitation of the pool was miraculous, attributing it to an angel from heaven. Partly by the energizing influence of faith and partly perhaps by some medicinal quality imparted to the water by the gases, cures were effected which caused the pool to have considerable fame throughout that district. Benefit from the gases is suggested by the fact that it was only those who entered the water immediately after the agitation who profited by it. The impregnating gases, when once in the pool, would be speedily combined with the atmosphere, and those entering the water first would not only have the benefit of the impregnated water on their persons but would also inhale some of the escaping gases—ozone, or what not. A number of such springs are known today in various parts of the world, and many of them have a medicinal quality without any suspicion of a miracle. The American Cyclopedia on this subject says:

> "Medicinal waters are very common in many parts of the world, and people come to them from long distances to be cured. Priests, especially of Aesculapius, placed their sanctuaries near them, as at the alkaline springs of Nauplia, and the springs of Dodora. Phylostricus says that the Greek soldiers wounded in the battle on the Caicus were healed by the waters of Agamemnon's spring near Smyrna."

There is a spring of the kind mentioned in our lesson at Kissingen which, after a rushing sound, about the same time every day commences to bubble, and is most efficacious at the very time the gas is escaping. There are geysers also in Iceland, Wyoming and elsewhere of the intermittent or "troubled" character.

A Copyist's Marginal Note.

The House of Mercy with its five porches was built for a public sanitarium for the benefit and convenience of those who desired to use the agitated pool, and this explains why a great multitude of the sick, blind, halt, withered, lay in these porches waiting for an opportunity to benefit by the agitation of the waters. In this connection it should be noted that old Greek MSS omit the last seven words of verse three and all of verse four. These are not inspired words, were not written by John the Apostle, but were added to his statement later on—quite probably as a marginal note explanatory of the views held by the people, or possibly the thought of the copyist who made the marginal note. Some later copyist, thinking the marginal note was omitted from the text, added it in, and

his manuscript, copied in turn, has come down to us. Until within the last fifty years, since the discovery of the older Greek MSS, none could know that these words were not a part of the divine record but an addition thereto, perhaps accidentally.

Our last lesson showed our Lord in Galilee and his second miracle at Cana. In this lesson we find him again at Jerusalem, drawn thither according to the Jewish usage to celebrate one of the great annual feasts. He was passing Bethesda, the "House of Mercy," and stopped to perform the miracle noted in this lesson. That our minds may the better grasp the situation, we quote descriptions of two such institutions given by modern writers: Bovet tells us of the bath of Ibrahim, near Tiberius, on the sea of Galilee, thus:

> "The hole in which the spring is found is surrounded by several porticoes in which we see a multitude of people crowded one upon another, laid upon couches or rolled in blankets, with immeasurable extremes of misery and suffering."

Zola describes the crowds at the grotto of Lourdes thus,

> "A perfect *cour des miracles* of human woe rolling along the sloping pavement. No order was observed, ailments of all kinds were jumbled together; it seemed like the clearing of some inferno, where the most monstrous maladies, the rare and most awful cases which provoke a shudder, had been gathered together."

A Sign or Symbol of His Power.

Such a picture met the eyes of our dear Redeemer as he passed this House of Mercy. We can imagine better than describe the extent of his sympathy with the poor ailing ones before him. If such scenes of sorrow, pain and trouble touch our fallen hearts sensibly and deeply, how much more intense must have been the sympathy which our Lord experienced in the presence of such conditions. We may be sure that he who loved the whole world so much that he left the glory with the Father and assumed human nature, that he might die and redeem us and ultimately deliver us from the power of sin and its penalty, sickness and death, must have sympathized with the multitude of sufferers before him, crowding one upon another for the opportunity to receive benefit from the agitated waters. Nevertheless, despite all this sympathy, the record shows that our Lord healed but one of them. Indeed, so far as we may judge, this was his usual custom, as illustrated also in his discourse, in which he pointed out that while in God's providence there were many widows in Israel during the famine time, Elijah was only sent to the widow of Zarephath, and while there were many lepers in Israel, Elisha healed of leprosy only Naaman, the Syrian. Similarly, there were great multitudes of sick at this House of Mercy, but Jesus healed only one.

The reason for this is not difficult to find. Our Lord at his first advent was in the world not to deliver it from the power of sin and death and Satan, but to redeem it, and any deliverances which he granted at that time were only partial and illustrative—demonstrations of his power intended to awaken faith in him and his redemptive work on the part of those who had the ear of faith to hear and the eye of faith to see. These few heard, but the rest remained blinded and know not the great Messiah unto this day. Thank God for the blessed assurance that in his due time all Israel shall be saved from this blindness (Rom. 11:25,26), and not Israel only but all the families of the earth—"All the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped."—Isa. 35:5.

Satan Indirectly The Oppressor.

While freely admitting that all of humanity's difficulties, mental, physical and moral, are traceable to the original deception of Satan, practised upon our first parents—while therefore willing to concede that every case of sickness is more or less directly or indirectly the work of the Adversary, and that of all the diseased ones we might properly enough say of each that "Satan hath bound him," nevertheless we are not of those who understand that the time has fully come for the binding of Satan and for the loosing of his prisoners. That time by divine arrangement is future, fixed—it is the Millennium. Since our Lord did not perform miracles for all the sick, neither are we to expect all the sick of today to be cured either by

natural means or by miraculous power. It comforts us to remember that Satan and every evil is subject to the Almighty's power, and that in the case of the Lord's consecrated and their interests he is both able and willing to overrule, so that what ever he permits them will result in their greater blessing.

We are distinctly told that our Lord's miracles manifested forth beforehand his coming glory. They were thus lessons or pictures or illustrations of the great work of restitution from sin and sickness and death which our dear Redeemer will accomplish for the world very shortly—during his Millennial reign. Then we, his Church, associated with him, will share his power and great glory and privileges. Those who were beneficiaries of his miraculous power at his first advent evidently were but a mere handful as compared to all the sick, impotent and blinded of that time; and those miracles, aside from illustrating the future power of the Lord, were designed to testify of him and of his apostles as the representatives of the Father in the establishment of the new dispensation—the Gospel age, so different from its predecessor, the Jewish age and its law of Moses.

The Healing of The Elect.

It is not improper for us to speak of the man who was the one favored out of a great multitude as having been elected or selected by the Lord as the person through whom he would manifest his power and coming glory. The narrative does not tell us why the Lord selected this one in preference to others. We may reasonably assume, however, that his thirty-eight years of infirmity had developed in him considerable penitence for sin, considerable desire for righteousness; that he had learned some valuable lessons during those thirty-eight years under the hand of affliction; and that it was because he had thus come into a condition where healing would be to his advantage that he was the favored one. Similarly, this is true in the favors of grace which the Lord is distributing during this age, and which are really much more valuable than any physical blessings that could be bestowed.

We may not at first see why the Lord favors some more than others with the knowledge of his grace and truth, but we may safely assume that there is a lesson, and that lesson lies in the direction of honesty of heart, repentance of sin and a desire for or "feeling after God." When God has any special favors to bestow we may safely assume that they are not given out haphazard, but according to some partial conditions of faith or worthiness. In the case of this man who was healed let us notice that there was no record that he had more faith in the Lord than had the other ones about him. On the contrary, the context shows that he had no faith—that he did not even know the Lord, and did not learn until afterward who he was that healed him.

"Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?"

As already intimated, our Lord's words to his followers, "Greater works than these shall ye do because I go unto my Father," have been fulfilled throughout this Gospel age in that it is a greater work to open the eyes of the understanding than to recover sight to the natural eyes; it is a greater work to open the ears of the understanding than to recover the natural hearing; it is a greater work to heal from sin than to heal from its type, leprosy; it is a greater work to recover from the lameness and weaknesses which have come upon the entire race through the fall than to restore strength to the natural limbs. In accordance with this thought we now remark that as our Lord queried the one whom he healed, asking, "Wilt thou be made whole?" and as he thus let the matter depend upon his own will, so it is with those who are now being healed of moral ailments, of those who are now being spiritually enlightened, etc.—the assistance is with themselves. If they have the ear to hear and the eye to see, to appreciate, to understand the gift of God in Christ, the question then is "Wilt thou be made whole?"

How many there are morally leprous, mentally blinded and partially deaf, who can see and hear and comprehend a little of the grace of God, and who, by accepting this little which they understand and by desiring to be made whole, might go on from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, from triumph to triumph, ultimately to the full attainment of the great blessing which the Lord has proffered to his "little flock"—to become heirs of God, joint

heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, in his Kingdom, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.

In harmony with this thought, let us all use our influence with all with whom we come in contact, with all who have no power to see or hear or understand or appreciate the grace of God, to urge upon them their acceptance of divine aid as we ourselves have experienced it —"grace sufficient for every time of need." Only with those who answer this question affirmatively is it worth our while to expend effort. The will must be pointed to the Lord or his blessing cannot come upon the heart and the life; we cannot hope that the Lord will work a miracle of grace in the hearts of the sin-sick unless they are ready to answer this question in the affirmative, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Only those who so will can be benefitted in this age, for this is the divine order—the Lord seeketh such and such only to worship him in spirit and in truth. Our Lord at the first advent testified again on these lines, saying to many of those who heard his preaching, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." To come unto the Lord means to accept his arrangements, to answer his query, saying, Yea, Lord, I would be made whole.

The healing of such is not instantaneous but gradual. They grow in grace, knowledge and love, and the completion of the work of grace will be in the First Resurrection "change," which the Lord promises to all those who in the present time answer his question affirmatively, and show that they are in earnest by seeking to walk thenceforth not after the flesh but after the Spirit. These come under the care of the Good Physician, and eventually he will make them whole, complete, perfect in his likeness.

The Greater House of Mercy.

Ere long the present election of the Church, the present favor and privilege of being made whole, will reach its accomplishment in the First Resurrection, and then, thank God, a still more general blessing will be open for the world. The promise of the Scriptures is that in God's due time the tabernacle of God shall be with men and he shall dwell with them. This is not yet. The race is still under the curse, Satan is still the "prince of this world," we are still waiting and praying, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The establishment of God's tabernacle or house in the world will be during the Millennial age. It will be a house of mercy, not merely for the elect few, but, according to the great Oath-Bound Covenant, God through his elect Church, the Christ, Head and body, the antitypical seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29), shall "bless all the families of the earth."

Ah, yes; what a grand day that will be! "God shall wipe away the tears from off all faces"—yea, also, the reproach of his people shall be done away. No longer will it be a reproach to be of the Lord's people, no longer can it be said to the Lord's mouthpieces, "You tell of the love of God and his mercy and of the value of the great atonement, but we see sin and suffering, sorrow and death, continually reigning over the world." The reproach will be ended, Satan will be bound, the knowledge of the Lord will fill the whole earth and the wiping away of all tears and sorrows and aches and pains will begin. And to all who will rightly receive these favors and fall in line with them, the blessings will ultimately be completed in the full perfection of restitution accomplished at the end of the Millennial age, at the ushering in of the everlasting epoch, while for those who will then neglect, refuse the divine arrangements a merciful blotting out of existence has been arranged.—Acts 3:23.

It Was on The Sabbath.

In performing the miracle our Lord instructed the healed one to take up his bed and walk, and he did so. The bed probably was a very light mattress or comforter, after the custom of that time, and there was no real labor connected with this injunction. It was not the violation, therefore, of the Sabbath restrictions of the Jewish Law, which our Lord neither violated nor taught others to violate, for he was a Jew and subject, therefore, to all the terms and conditions of that Law as much as any other Jew. His object in instructing the man to carry the bed was probably twofold:—

(1) The act of itself would be a witness to the miracle; not only directly but

(2) Indirectly it would attract the attention of the doctors and scribes of the Law, because

they had formulated certain restrictions respecting the day which were not the Mosaic requirements. Our Lord would make use of this opportunity to teach a lesson, not only respecting his power but respecting a proper observance of the Law—that it was designed of the Lord to be for the benefit of mankind and not a moral fetter. Our Lord explained this on one occasion, saying to the scribes and Pharisees that their interpretation of the Law made it burdensome to the masses of the people—that they exaggerated the small features of the Law unduly, and that the greater principles of it, pertaining to righteousness, justice, love and mercy, they overlooked entirely.

From this narrative we see that just this result was attained. The scribes and Pharisees reproved the man for carrying his bed, and he returned that he was fully justified in so doing, because the person who healed him of his thirty-eight years' ailment must have been wise enough and good enough to be an authority on this subject and he was merely following his directions. Thus our Lord's miracle was made prominent to the class that he specially wished to have recognize him, namely the leaders and representatives of the nation, who specially were on trial at this time whether or not they would receive him; and, secondly, the difference between his teaching and good works and the teaching and no works of the Pharisees would be more manifest on the other hand.

It would appear that the healed man was so astonished by the incidents connected with his relief that for the moment he forgot to look for or inquire particularly about the one who had performed the miracle: and our Lord, not wishing to refuse the great multitude of sick ones there gathered, quietly withdrew, so that by the time the miracle was known the healer was not to be found. He had performed the miracle for the glory of God, to call attention to the new dispensation, and to himself as the divine representative in it, and incidentally he had healed, we may assume, the most worthy one of that multitude. The fact that Jesus specially met this man again in the Temple, where he had probably gone to express his thanks and praise to the Lord for his relief, implies that he had seen in the man something of more than ordinary character, which not only led him to heal him but also to reveal himself to him.

"Go And Sin No More."

Our Lord's salutation to the healed man in the Temple must have been very significant, showing the latter that he was not only able to heal but that he had knowledge of the sins which had led up to the diseased condition thirty-eight years previously. He said to him, "Behold thou art made whole: sin no more lest a worse thing befall thee." There is a valuable lesson in our Redeemer's counsel—helpful not only for that poor man, but still more valuable and helpful to those who have by the Lord's grace been healed of sin-sickness, those who have been justified, those who have been accepted into God's family as sons of God. The penalty for original sin has been a severe one and has attached itself to every member of Adam's race; yet for this original sin God has provided a great atonement, and ultimately every creature shall have the fullest opportunity for escape from all its penalties and wages. But when thus liberated a fresh responsibility is upon us. As the apostle declares, if we sin wilfully after we have received a knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but we may surely look for judgment and fiery indignation which will devour us as adversaries. (Heb. 10:27.) The wages of original sin which the whole race has tasted is death, with its accompaniments of sorrow and pain—dying. The wages of wilful, deliberate, intentional sin, after we have been justified from all our sins—that penalty would be a worse thing, very much worse than the original penalty; for although it would be the same penalty of death, it would be the second death, for which God has assured us he has made no provision for recovery—Christ dieth no more. If after being released and justified we sin wilfully, and yet with a measure of weakness and imperfection tempting us, we may expect stripes; but if we sin wilfully and deliberately, aside from a particular temptation or weakness, we may expect nothing further in the way of divine mercy and forgiveness, because having enjoyed these in respect to the original sin we would thus come under a new and personal condemnation, for a new and inexcusable violation of righteousness whose penalty is death without hope of recovery.

"GREATER WORKS THAN THESE."—*Reprints*, p. 2433

JOHN 5:17-27.

"This is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."—John 4:42.

JESUS was again in Judea, probably attending the Feast of the Passover, as was his custom,—these annual gatherings constituting the very best opportunities for reaching the devout Jews from all parts of the Holy Land, and from surrounding countries.

Our Lord, in his quiet Sabbath walk about Jerusalem, came to the Pool of Bethesda, which had a wonderful reputation for its healing qualities, on account of which its porches and sheds were crowded with sick people with divers ailments, waiting to take advantage of what was considered to be a miraculous action in its waters. What is today known as the "Pool of the Virgin" is supposed to be the one formerly known as the Pool of Bethesda, and a peculiar movement in the waters of the Pool of the Virgin is well known. Travelers whose word is reliable declare that they have seen this spring rise twelve inches in five minutes, and then subside about as quickly. There are other springs which have this same intermitting peculiarity. One of these is at Kissingen, Germany. Its flow is accompanied with an escape of gas, and its water is reputed to be more valuable at the time of its movements, and probably because surcharged with gas.

The intermittent movement of the water of the Bethesda Pool is referred to in vs. 7 of this chapter, but the explanation about the angel troubling the waters, etc., contained in the last seven words of the third verse, and all of the fourth verse, is omitted from the oldest Greek MSS. (the Sinaitic and Vatican). There was probably nothing whatever miraculous connected with the spring, but some peculiarity of the channel, which caused the water from one compartment to syphon out into the other at intervals; or possibly the action was caused by gas. The healings experienced were quite probably what today would be termed mind cures, a beneficial action of the mind and will upon the physical organism.

We do not know that the Lord made any movement toward the general healing of the multitude who were waiting for the movement of the Pool, and hoping for relief; nor do we know that he extended his beneficence to any, except the one whose healing is the subject of this lesson, who was more helpless than the majority, and whose case was apparently hopeless, in that it was chronic, of thirty-eight years standing. Nor could the impotent one have had much ground for hope at the Pool, for, as he himself explained, others less feeble than himself availed themselves of the fountain before he could reach it. It was to this heart-sick and weary one, hopeless and helpless, that the Lord addressed himself, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He readily answered that he was anxious to be made whole, and our Lord did not even wait for him to manifest a previous faith in his power, but allowed the man's faith to be testified by his obedience: and exercising the faith, astonished and bewildered, he obeyed, taking up his couch, not even knowing his benefactor.

So it is with the greater miracles performed by our Lord throughout this Gospel age—some of the weakest and most hopelessly powerless for good are morally healed, strengthened, renewed, transformed, through the operation of faith and obedience. Yet such cases are but few compared to the world of mankind, similarly or even less diseased with sin, who are all eventually (during the Millennium) to be made acquainted with the Great Physician.

This miracle brought upon Jesus the opposition of the Pharisees, who, because of a wrong attitude of heart, mistook the real object and purpose of the Sabbath day, and tacking on to the divine command traditions of the elders, had made of it a mere outward form, robbing it of its true thought. We are not to consider that our Lord performed so many of his miracles on the Sabbath, apparently in preference to other days, as signifying any disrespect to the day, nor as signifying a desire to provoke the Pharisees. Rather, we may suppose that the performance of the notable miracles on this day was largely in order to thus point out the great Seventh Day Sabbath, the Millennial Day, the seventh thousand year period of earth's history, when the anti-typical and far greater miracles and blessings will come to mankind. "These

things [miracles] did Jesus, and manifested forth [beforehand] his [coming] glory."—John 2:11.

The conduct of the Jews, in wishing to kill one who, according to their own testimony, had done nothing amiss, but had done much good, simply because he differently interpreted the Law, and disregarded the "traditions of the elders," is a parallel to the opposition which is sometimes manifested by present-day Christians—sectarians of the strictest sort. They might not indeed seek literally to kill the one who would do violence to their theories and traditions, but many of them would have very little hesitancy in assassinating his character, if thereby they could defend the falsities of their systems.

Our Lord's reply respecting his authority angered them the more: not because he declared himself to be Jehovah, the Father, as many seem to think, but because he declared himself to be the Son of Jehovah, who had been given a work to do by the Father. Nor did the Jews misunderstand him in this; their anger was because, in claiming to be the Son of God, he was claiming an honor and place so much higher than themselves—a place which implied a closeness of relationship and of nature to Jehovah, a claim which they considered blasphemous. The successors of the Pharisees in our day go far beyond our Lord's claims, and claim for him what he never claimed for himself; viz., that he **is** the Father, and that he always has been the Father as well as the Son, and that the two are one in person, and not merely two persons of one harmonious mind, purpose, sentiment, will. These take great offence at any of the Lord's "brethren" of today who claim to be sons of God, and who apply that term in its Scriptural force and significance. As is well known to many, a prominent Doctor of Divinity and Professor in a theological seminary in Ohio has published a scurrilous review of *Studies in the Scriptures*, the chief point of which is the holding up to ridicule the hope of the Church's "high calling," therein set forth, based upon and supported by the exceeding great and precious promises given to us in the Scriptures, the intention of which, the Apostle declares to be, "that we might become **partakers of the divine nature**."—2 Pet. 1:4.

The declaration that "the Son can do nothing of himself," if it were not backed up as it is by a score of other testimonies from the same interested and inspired Teacher, is a contradiction to the common thought of Trinitarians, that the Son **is** the Father: it is in direct conflict with the statement of the catechism, that they are "equal in power and in glory." Nevertheless the Father "loveth [*filio*—has affection for] the Son," and as a consequence of this affection has shown, is showing, and will show forth through him greater marvels, greater wonders. And our Lord Jesus has promised us that, as the Elder Brother (of the Gospel house of sons), whatsoever the Father shall make known to him he in turn will make known to us. This is brought forcibly to our attention in the Book of Revelation, which expressly declares that it is—"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which **God gave** unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." (John 15:15; Rev. 1:1.) Our Elder Brother, our Bridegroom, our Captain, has promised further, that in due time we also shall share with him in doing greater works than any which he performed at his first advent.—John 14:12.

Amongst the greater works the Lord mentions the quickening of the dead—claiming that, as the Father has the power to raise the dead, so also this power is granted to the Son. Nor should we suppose that our Lord, in this statement, referred to the awakening of Lazarus, and the son of the widow of Nain, and the daughter of Jairus. These at most were awakenings, and not, in the full sense of the word, resurrections—these individuals were not lifted up completely out of death into the perfection of life. Rather, we may suppose that our Lord was looking down into the future—to the resurrection of the Church in glory, honor and immortality, and to the subsequent resurrection (under trial or judgment) of the world during the Millennial age.

This thought is borne out by the statement of vs. 22, that all judgment has been transferred to the Son. The resurrection life is to be the reward of those who will successfully pass the judgment. The first resurrection will be the

reward of those who are "overcomers" in the trial in progress during this Gospel age, under the conditions of the high calling, and its narrow way to glory, honor and immortality. The Church is on judgment, on trial, under the terms of this high calling, now, during this Gospel age. The Lord will also judge the world of mankind redeemed by his own sacrifice,—during the Millennial age: and in that judgment of the world he has promised to associate with himself the Bride class, whose judgment trial is now in progress. (1 Cor. 6:2.) Those of the world of mankind, awakened and brought to trial during the Millennial age, who shall develop characters in harmony with righteousness, and fully acceptable to the Judge, shall attain to full resurrection, and enter life, complete and everlasting, at the close of the Millennial age—at the close of their day of trial, while the residue will be cut off in the Second Death.

That this judgment of the world did not begin at our Lord's first advent, we have his own testimony: "I came not to judge the world." (John 12:47.) And again, his declaration, "My Word shall judge you **in the last day**"—the last thousand-year day of the seven, the Millennial Day. It is in full harmony with this that the Apostle declares, "God hath appointed a day [period—epoch] in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained"—the Christ, Head and body.—John 12:48; Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 6:2.

In harmony with this, also, is the statement in vs. 17 and Heb. 4:4,10. God rested from his work of creation when man became a transgressor, and instead of proceeding with the work, he abandoned it, placing a curse upon it,—a penalty of death upon his chief handiwork. But altho he abandoned the matter, in one sense of the word, he did not abandon it in his purpose, but intended and foretold that he would raise up a seed of the woman which should eventually crush the Evil One, delivering the race from his power—implying incidentally the revocation of the death penalty, a resurrection. Our Lord Jesus was in person the promised Seed of the woman, but, as we have already seen, the divine plan included also the Church, "members of his body." The sufferings of Christ, Head and body, are mentioned in the promise of Eden, as the bruising of the heel by the serpent. This has been in progress throughout the Gospel age; Jesus was crucified by the forces of evil, yielding himself up a sin offering; and the members of his Body are suffering with him, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24.

Soon the time will come when this great Seed, the Christ, shall be fully glorified, all the members sharing in the glory of the Head: and then, as the Apostle declares, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." (Rom. 16:20.) And it is this great Deliverer, whose Head and Lord has redeemed the world with his own precious blood, that the Father has appointed to be the Judge of the redeemed race, when it shall be on trial during the Millennial age, while Satan is bound. The work of the Son will not be complete until all evil has been thoroughly subjugated, which will be at the close of the Millennial age. He will reclaim, by a knowledge of the truth, and chastisements and corrections in righteousness, so many as are willing, and the residue shall be destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:23.) And when he shall thus have put down all opposing authority, rule and power, the Apostle assures us, he will deliver up the Kingdom to God even the Father. Thus the Father worked previously to man's fall, and has committed the work of reconciliation of man to the Son, and also the judgment of the race, and will receive it back again under divine jurisdiction, when, through the Son as his agent, he shall have made all things new.—1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 21:5.

It is therefore a great mistake to say, as some do, "Jesus is our Judge, **like** the Father," for our Lord's own words assure us that the Father judgeth no man, having "committed **all** judgment unto the Son." The judgment of the Church, in progress during this Gospel age, is referred to in vs. 24: those who now **hear** and believe and obey to the extent of their ability have everlasting life guaranteed to them, as a result of thus favorably passing the present judgment or trial. These are assured that they will not need to come into the general judgment of the world during the Millennial age, because they pass from death unto life as the result of the judgment of this age. The word "condemna-

tion," in this verse, signifies judgment, and is so rendered in the Revised Version.—Compare 1 Cor. 11:32.

In vs. 25 the general judgment of mankind during the Millennial age is specially referred to, when all the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, be brought to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4), and when they that hear (obey that knowledge) shall live: shall be rescued not only from the tomb but also from all the imperfections, mental, moral and physical, which have come upon the world through sin—be raised up to perfection of life. The fact that this judgment work begins with a little flock during this Gospel age is suggested by the expression that the hour for the dead to hear the voice of the Son of Man has already commenced, **"now is."** The whole world, from the divine standpoint, is spoken of as dead, because it is already nine-tenths dead and under sentence of death to the full. It was from this standpoint that our Lord said to one, "Let the dead bury their dead."

Our Lord realized that his hearers could not appreciate the possibility of his doing so great a work as a man, and hence he makes the explanation that the Father, who has life inherent (immortality), hath given (promised) the Son the same inherent life (immortality), as well as given commandment (authorization) that he, the Son of Man, to whom the work was committed, as declared in the prophets, should execute judgment—the divine will. And it is in view of this high honor conferred upon the Son by the Father that we are told (vs. 23), "that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father." (Revised Version.) The explanation of this statement follows, and shows that the honor to the Son is as the Father's appointed representative and agent in the great work, saying, "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father **which sent him**."

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Returning from Jerusalem(?)	Disciples pluck ears of grain on the Sabbath	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5	
	Galilee; Sea of Galilee	Heals hand on Sabbath; retires to seashore; heals	12:9-21	3:1-12	6:6-11	

Matthew 12:1-21

At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were hungry, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was hungry, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day. And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; And charged them that they should not make him known: That it might be fulfilled which

was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

Mark 2:23 to 3:12

And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was hungry, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath. And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him. But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea, And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him. And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

Luke 6:1-11

And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was hungry, and they which were with him; How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone? And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath. And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other. And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

SABBATH OBLIGATIONS AND PRIVILEGES.—*Reprints*, p. 3752

MATTHEW 12:1-14.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."—Exodus 20:8

FEW seem to get the proper thought respecting the Sabbath. Some consider themselves as Jews under the Mosaic Law: others go to an opposite extreme, and, declaring that we are not under the Law but under grace, repudiate the Sabbath entirely. What we believe to be the correct view is the intermediate one between these two extremes, as we shall endeavor to set forth.

God adopted the Jewish nation—all the children of Abraham, through Jacob—as his special possession in the world. With them he made the Law Covenant through Moses at Sinai—to them he sent his messengers, the prophets, and, finally, his Son. With them and with no other nation it was his agreement that by the keeping of the Law they would abide in his favor and have divine blessing upon flocks and herds, land and people, instead of sickness, pain, drouth and dearth. To no other nation was the Law of Sinai given, with no other nation was that Covenant made—as it is written, "You only have I known [recognized] of all the families of the earth."—Amos 3:2.

When the Jews rejected Jesus, and when Jesus made an end of the Law Covenant on the cross, it did not imply that that Law was then extended to the other nations of the world as some seem to imagine: quite to the contrary. Nor did the Law Covenant extend to the Church—the followers of Christ selected from the Jewish nation and other nations—for we read, "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10:4.) Whoever sees this point clearly has the foundation for correct views respecting the Sabbath and every other feature of the Law; those who cannot see this will remain in confusion.

"Kingdoms of This World"

Accordingly it is not for us to **demand** of the nations of Europe and America that they shall enforce the Jewish Sabbath or any other Sabbath. True, the civilized world is called "Christendom"—Christ's Kingdom; but this is a misnomer. The kingdoms of earth are still under the dominion of the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4); they are kingdoms of this world and not kingdoms of God. True, God is aware of their existence and permits them for a time, but he has never attempted authority over them nor made himself responsible for the imperfect governments which they represent—they are not his kingdoms. When the God of heaven shall set up his Kingdom in the hands of the glorified Messiah, Head and body, during the Millennial age, its conditions and arrangements will be greatly in contrast with those of the kingdoms of this world. God, therefore, is not commanding the nations of the world to observe the Sabbath day, etc., etc.; whatever they do in this line is of their own volition, without command, for they are not under the Mosaic Law, and no other law has been given them.

Christian believers, followers of Jesus since he made an end of the Law Covenant, nailing it to the cross (Col. 2:14), are not under the Law Covenant but, as the Apostle declares, "We are not under the Law but under grace." (Rom. 6:14.) Our relationship to God is of the same character as that which prevailed before Sinai's Law Covenant was effected at the hands of Moses over Israel—after the same order as that enjoyed by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—grace under the terms of the Abrahamic Covenant: we are the real seed of promise. (Gal. 3:29.) Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob prosper without a law? Yes! Much more can Spiritual Israel prosper under the same conditions, because we now have much advantage everyway through our special relationship by faith to the great Redeemer, and to the exceeding great and precious promises which centre in him, and which apply to all those adopted by him as members of his body—members of his Bride class.

"Whom The Son Makes Free"

Some are inclined to feel alarmed at the very thought of being free from a law covenant based upon obedience to a law. Such should be comforted with the thought that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were approved to the Lord without the Law. Their faith in God constituted an obligation to do the divine will to the extent of their

knowledge and ability: and the same is true of us, for the Scriptures assure us that, as children of God and adopted into his family, made partakers of his Spirit, our rule of action must henceforth be love, and that to us love is the fulfilling of the law. That is to say, if we receive the spirit of adoption into God's family it implies that we possess the spirit of love, because God is love; and this love for God as it develops signifies love for all that are in accord with him, and a love like his in respect to all of his creation—a sympathetic love. Such a love permits us to be and to do in harmony with the divine will to the extent of our ability; and the Lord, who is dealing with us according to our intentions and endeavors, and who is covering our unwilling weaknesses and imperfections, counts this service of the heart and intention as a perfect keeping of the divine law. Thus the Apostle says: "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not **after** the flesh but **after** the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4.) However short we may come of the full spirit of the divine law, we are counted as fulfillers of it so long as our daily walk is in that direction to the extent of our ability.

From this standpoint we see that God is no longer dealing with Israel, nor has he adopted the other nations as his. Rather he is forming a new nation, gathering its citizens out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue. This new nation is the Church, of whom the Apostle says, "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." (1 Pet. 2:9.) Presently this nation will be completed, and be ushered into glory, honor and immortality, to rule and bless and uplift all the families of the earth. God's dealings, instructions, tests, etc., are upon this new nation—yea, as we have seen, he has placed no law upon us except the law of love—for God and for our neighbor. Before our adoption into this holy nation we accepted its law of love, and recognized selfishness as part of the works of darkness; and in the school of Christ we have been learning more and more the full meaning of the word love in its application to God and to our fellowmen. These lessons still continue, but must reach a certain completion or fruition before we can be accounted worthy of transference to the heavenly and eternal state as members of this Kingdom.

Our Relationship To The Lord

Have we then no relationship to the Law given to natural Israel, as expressed in the ten commandments, etc.? No, we are free from the Law—thank God! Nevertheless, we may derive a great blessing through an examination of that Law from which we are free, because we recognize that it was just and holy and good—that it was not set aside because the Law was imperfect, but because man was imperfect and unable to keep that Law and to gain life thereunder. Looking, then, at that perfect Law, we should seek to get, not merely its outward form and letter, but especially its inner meaning, its spirit, to determine just what it did signify. Then, having ascertained its significance, we as New Creatures—while not depending upon it for our life, but recognizing that the precious blood of the Lamb of God has compensated for all of our unwilling weaknesses and deficiencies and imperfections—we should strive, nevertheless, to conform our lives to all the blessed thoughts we can gather respecting the spirit of the Law.

We should do this, not thereby to merit salvation, but that having obtained the salvation, the forgiveness of sins, and having gone further and been begotten of the holy Spirit to a new life, a new nature, we no longer seek to justify ourselves by the Law, because justified by the blood of Christ. We now seek as New Creatures to please our heavenly Father, and rejoice to find anything in the Law given to natural Israel that would furnish us clearer conceptions of the divine will, that for love to God we might do with our might everything in our power.

Accordingly, as we look at the Decalogue we say, "Yes, those laws are perfect," and the more closely we examine them the more do we grasp the depth of their signification. As, for instance, in the first and second of these commandments we see prohibited not merely the making of images and the worshipping of the same, but equally prohibited the having of any object of worship aside from God—wife or children or mammon or self, etc. Applying this to the fourth commandment respecting the Sabbath, Spiritual Israelites will realize that they are

not under bondage to a day, but will nevertheless desire to know what was the Spirit or intent or object of this command, and to be in harmony, in accord, with all its spirit. The Israelites, as today's lesson shows, got merely the outward form of these three commandments, but wholly missed its real purport; and similarly, many Christians today merely take the Jewish view of the command and entirely overlook its real import.

"We Who Believe Do Enter Into Rest"—A Sabbath

The Apostle refers to the real meaning of this Sabbath rest of faith into which we Spiritual Israelites enter so soon as we accept the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer, the expiator of our guilt —our Life-Giver. As soon as we begin to believe we begin to enter into this rest, and thenceforth, if we are faithful to the Lord and abide in his love, our Sabbath never ends—"We which believe do enter into rest."—Heb. 4:3.

Our lesson of faith should continue throughout all the days of the week, and thus Spiritual Israel keeps Sabbath every day—resting in the finished work of Christ, resting from our own works, from all endeavor to justify ourselves through the Law. Was not our Lord's ministry a perpetual Sabbath? and may not all of the Lord's people today so rest in the Lord by faith, and so continually seek to work the works of him that hath sent us as his ambassadors to the world, that every day with us should be a Sabbath day? Thus all the labor of life is sanctified to us. Whether we eat or drink, scrub or dig, write or talk, sleep or wake, we are to do all to the glory of God—to do all as unto him, and in all of our doings to maintain the Sabbath rest in our hearts—rest in divine love and care, which applies to us through our relationship to Christ Jesus our Lord.

Propriety of Sunday Observance

The question comes, then, Should the Lord's people who see the true rest and who are enjoying it—should they observe the Sabbaths or Sundays appointed by the civil laws of Christendom? We answer, Yes! for three reasons:

(1) It is the divine command that we should obey all the ordinances of human law that do not conflict with our conscience as Christians; and clearly nothing in the human law on this subject could violate our conscience.

(2) Surely if others can afford to rest from their labor one day in seven the Lord's people can afford to do so as well, and indeed to better advantage than the world, because through our better knowledge of God and his Word we can make wiser and better use of the time thus taken from worldly affairs.

(3) Spiritual Israelites are greatly advantaged by the fact that the world, nominal Christendom, has made a mistake in the matter, and is under the impression that the Jewish law obligates the keeping of one day in seven as a religious rest day. Thus all things work together for good to them that love God—even the world's mistakes and ignorance.

Not only should Spiritual Israelites rejoice to have the privilege of one day in seven for a special rest from physical labor and for special engagement in spiritual works, pleasures and refreshments, but additionally they should realize that the world is watching them, and that their influence for good would be greatly interfered with by their violation of this civil law, which the world supposes to be backed by divine command. Our advice, therefore, to all true Spiritual Israelites is that they be as strict or more strict in their observance of Sunday as a Sabbath of rest than are their neighbors—that all works except those of necessity or mercy be avoided, that this precious day be considered a boon from the Lord, a great privilege and opportunity for growth in grace and knowledge and love. Let our homes be the most quiet of all in civilized lands on the appointed day of rest, let no sounds of labor or of worldly pleasure be heard in our habitations, but let our joys of hope and love and faith abound, and let our happy hearts manifest themselves in cheerful words and tones and looks, that thus our moderation as well as our joy in the Lord may be manifest to all with whom we have to do, that they may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and learned of him. (Acts 4:13.) To those of our neighbors and friends with whom we are very intimate we might explain that from our standpoint every day is a Sabbath day of rest in faith—that though upon some days it is necessary we should labor also

for the meat that perisheth, our hearts are resting still in the great Lord of the Sabbath and his finished work.

This would not signify that we of today should attempt an observance of the outward forms of the Jewish Law, according to all that is proper and required of the Jew. For instance, no doubt it would be a violation of the fourth commandment to operate a street-car line; and if the Jewish Law were in force upon us it would be absolutely wrong and sinful for any of us to ride in a street-car, much less to operate the same. But since we are not under the Law but under grace, and since Sunday riding is not prohibited by the civil law nor regarded as evil by our fellows, there is no reason why in this and in similar matters we may not enjoy reasonably and with profit the conveniences of transportation on the Sabbath.

The Pharisaical Sabbath

Our lesson applies to a time when the Jewish Law was still in force, and shows us that even then the right, the true, the proper interpretation of the fourth commandment was much more in accord with our observation of it than with the extreme observances accorded today by the Jewish teachers. The difference between then and now would be that the Jews under the Law were forbidden to do work of an earthly kind on the Sabbath, while we are not forbidden, except as earthly laws may limit without a commandment, and that we may delight to abstain from temporal labors that we may the more fully enjoy our spiritual privileges.

Our lesson pictures to us Jesus and his disciples in a public pathway across a wheat-field (in old English called a corn-field). The wheat was ripe or nearly so, and the disciples, feeling hungry, had plucked a few of the heads and rubbed them in their hands to remove the chaff for the eating of the wheat. The Pharisees, appreciating the shell rather than the meat of the divine Law, were very particular for outward observances of it, while entirely overlooking and neglecting its real sentiment or spirit. Here they thought they saw an opportunity for showing off their religious devotion by calling attention to the disciples of Jesus as being lawbreakers, and to Jesus himself as being little better, in that he as their teacher had not reproved them. We see frequently this same spirit in our day: Some today would be scrupulously careful not to ride in a street-car on the Sabbath who would think nothing of allowing their minds to rove not only after the worldly things but worse, to dwell upon evil subjects, or perhaps meditate how they could take advantage of their neighbor the day following. This is hypocrisy, one of the worst sins from the divine standpoint.

It is really amusing how the Jews, while neglecting the real essence and spirit of the Law toward God and man, exaggerated that Law as respects the trifling and unessential matters. For instance, the ruling of the Rabbis was that catching a flea on one's person was hunting, and therefore prohibited on the Sabbath; that rubbing the grain in both hands and blowing away the chaff constituted winnowing and threshing, and violated the rest of the Sabbath. Our Lord did not accept the reproof, but, on the contrary, pointed out that his disciples not only had his approval in their course but that they were fully justified by the course of others whom the Pharisees recognized. Our Lord's illustration of what constituted necessity and mercy was drawn from the Bible narrative of David's eating the shew-bread, lawful only for the priests to eat, because of the necessities of his position, his hunger. Also the labor performed every Sabbath in the Jewish Temple, in connection with the worship there, by the priests and Levites. Our Lord held logically that these approved matters showed the proper principle governing the Sabbath. He did not claim that reaping, threshing and winnowing on the Sabbath day would be justifiable; his argument was that no such interpretation should be put upon the Law as would make the satisfying of hunger, as the apostles did, a crime, a violation of the Sabbath commandment.

"Lord Also of The Sabbath"

But after convincing them from the Scriptures that their position was untenable, our Lord asserted to them his authority as an interpreter of the Law, saying, "I say unto you, One greater than the Temple is here." If it was right for the Levites to perform the Temple services on the Sabbath, Jesus was greater than the Temple in that he was the Son of God, the

mouthpiece of God, and his disciples might therefore rest secure in anything done in his service and with his approval. What a personality our Lord must have possessed that he could make such a statement before his enemies without its being challenged! We are convinced that he not only spake as never man spake, but that his appearance must have been superior to that of members of the fallen race.

Mark his statement again (v. 8)—"The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." As the Lord of the Sabbath, as the great Teacher, he had not indeed the right to abolish this feature of the Law except by fulfilling it, "nailing it to the cross"; but as the Lord of the Sabbath he was the proper Teacher to set forth its real significance to the Jew. Our Lord called the attention of his critics to the testimony of God through the prophet, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." (Hosea 6:6.) Our Lord declares that if they had given heed to this direction their thoughts would have been more merciful, more in line with the divine sentiment, and this would have hindered them from condemning the disciples, who the Lord declared were entirely guiltless of any violation of the Sabbath day commandment.

Similarly we may say today that the great lack of many critics and fault-finders is their lack of mercy, lack of love. Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and whoever has most of it will come nearest to the standard. The possession of love is always indicated by mercy—toward our friends, toward our brethren, toward the world, toward our enemies. Proceeding to the Synagogue the same question was raised—the predominance of Love above any law was manifested. A man there had a withered hand, and the Pharisees, seeking to prove Jesus and to catch him, inquired whether or not it would be right to heal on the Sabbath day. They fain would condemn him on some score; his defense of his disciples was complete—would he now commit himself to a matter of healing on the Sabbath?

Our Lord's answer was along the lines of the prophecy he had just quoted, namely, that mercy was higher in God's estimation than sacrifice, and he proceeded to show mercy to the afflicted man. First, however, he showed them from their own course in life that they were inconsistent: that if they owned but one sheep and it fell into a pit on the Sabbath day it would be rescued—not for love of the sheep but for fear of the loss of its value. Our Lord inquired, "How much then is a man of more value than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day." This question, as to the superior value of a man over a beast, is one that the world seems to find difficult to answer, but one which should be quickly answered by the Lord's people of spiritual Israel. The Lord set the value of a man when by the grace of God he gave himself a ransom for man. Those who receive of his Spirit should more and more count it a privilege to do anything they can for the relief of their fellow man in matters temporal or spiritual.

The Pharisees were answered at every point, and, less popular in Galilee than in Judea anyway, they felt that their influence before the people had been lessened by their conflict with the Lord, the great Teacher. So when Jesus had healed the withered hand by word they went out of the synagogue angry, to take counsel against him how they might destroy him. They were rabid sectarians, fully convinced of their own importance. They felt that anything that discredited them must be injurious to the Lord and to his cause, that they were the orthodox body, and that they would be fully justified in murdering anyone whose words and conduct so overmatched them as to hinder their influence from spreading more and more over all the people of Israel. A similar spirit prevails today, we aver, amongst many who are outwardly very zealous for religion. They are so deficient in mercy, love, so bound by the sectarian systems with which they are identified, that they would be willing to persecute as thoroughly as opportunity would permit any of the members of the Master's body whose presentations of the Truth today would seem to diminish their honor and standing before the world. Let us, dear friends, remember the Master's word, and understanding and appreciating our relationship to the Lord, let us be obedient to the very spirit of it.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Mountain near Capernaum	The twelve are chosen as apostles		3:13-19	6:12-16	

Mark 3:13-19

And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: And Simon he surnamed Peter; And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into a house.

Luke 6:12-16

And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

THE TWELVE CHOSEN.—*Reprints*, p. 1735

MARK 3:6-19.

"I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit."—John 15:16.

FOR FULL treatment of the main point of this lesson—the ordination of the twelve apostles—see our issue of May 1, 1893; also the last page of June 15, 1893.

Other points of interest in the above selection are (1) our Lord's fortitude in pursuing his work, notwithstanding the opposition which conspired even against his life.—Verses 1-5.

(2) We observe his caution in subsequently withdrawing from that locality when duty no longer necessitated his stay. He did not unnecessarily expose himself to danger and then look for miraculous interpositions of providence for his protection, and claim such interposition on the strength of the fact that his hour to die had not yet come. He used natural means and precautions for his preservation and protection until "his hour was come," and then, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth, nor exerted himself in the least to preserve his life.—Verses 6,7.

(3) The completeness and instantaneousness of his cures evidence a miraculous gift of healing. At the word of his command the man's hand was restored whole as the other.—Verse 5.

(4) His wonderful works were drawing the attention of multitudes from various quarters—both Jews and Gentiles—and thus creating a popularity for the gospel which would be favorable to its dissemination later.—Verses 7,8.

(5) Verses 9,10 indicate that many of his healings of the sick were accomplished by imparting a measure of his own vitality, thus impoverishing himself to bless others. (See also Luke 6:19; 8:43-46.) Feeling, therefore, his own loss of strength after continued service of this kind, he withdrew for rest and refreshment, both physical and spiritual.

(6) Regarding the testimony of the unclean spirits concerning Christ, see our issue of July 15.

THE TWELVE APOSTLES.—*Reprints*, p. 1521

THEIR CALLING, OFFICE AND AUTHORITY.

"Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve?"—John 6:70.

RECOGNIZING our Lord Jesus as the divinely appointed and worthy head of the Church, which is his body, let us mark with what deep concern and wise forethought he considered all the interests of that body, even to the end of the Gospel age—the period of the Church's probation.

Immediately after his forty days of meditation and peculiar temptation in the wilderness, we find our Lord preaching the gospel of the coming kingdom; and from among those who heard him gladly, with hearing of faith, and who became his disciples, he made choice of twelve men to be the apostles of the new dispensation. These were men from the humbler walks of life: Four were fishermen; one was of the despised publicans; the callings of the others are not mentioned.

Concerning this choice of the twelve, we learn that, while under various circumstances the Lord called each individually to forsake all and follow him, which they promptly did, (See Matt. 4:17-22; Mark 1:16-20; 3:13-19; Luke 5:9-11.) there was also a special occasion upon which he dedicated them to their office as apostles. Of this Luke gives an account, saying that prior to this event our Lord withdrew to a mountain to pray—evidently to take counsel of God with reference to the interests of the prospective Church; and that he continued all night in prayer—"And when it was day, he called unto him his **disciples** [Greek, *mathetas*, learners or pupils]; and **of them** he chose **twelve**, whom also he named **apostles** [*apostolos*—ones sent forth]."—Luke 6:12, 13. Thus the twelve were marked as a distinct and separate class among the Lord's disciples. Verse 17 also makes the distinction very clear between these twelve and the other disciples.

The other disciples, not so chosen, were also beloved of the Lord, and were doubtless in full sympathy with this appointment, recognizing it as in the interests of the work in general. And in making the choice the Lord doubtless took cognizance, not only of the willingness of heart on the part of these twelve, but also of the circumstances and fitness of the individuals for the pioneer work that was before them. Thus, for instance, when he called the sons of Zebedee to leave all and follow him, he did not call their father. The following was to be, not merely a mental following of his doctrines, etc., but the leaving of business, home, friends, and earthly plans and prospects, etc., to go about with him or under his direction in the work of the Lord.

That our Lord at that time revealed much of the great importance attaching to his solemn setting apart of the twelve, is not at all probable, as it would have been impossible for them to comprehend it then; but these dear brethren, chosen from the humbler walks of life to be the Lord's special ambassadors, appreciated their privilege, notwithstanding the facts that privation and persecution would certainly be their immediate reward, and that the reward of the future could not then be clearly discerned.

Our Lord's object in selecting the twelve at that time was that he might begin with them a course of instruction and training which would fit them for their future work as apostles; for they did not fully enter upon that work until after the day of Pentecost. After their ordination the twelve were fully under the Lord's direction and much in his company; and they were careful students of his character, his gospel and his methods.

The Commission of The Apostles.

The commission of the apostles was, in the main, the same as the commission of the Lord and of the whole Church. It was to preach the gospel of the Kingdom. (Compare Isaiah 61:1,2; Luke 4:17-21; Matt. 10:5-8; Mark 3:14,15; Luke 10:1-17.) And to this work they zealously devoted themselves during the time of the Lord's presence with them, as well as subsequently; though we are not informed that their success in the work was any more marked during that time than was that of the seventy whom the Lord also appointed to this ministry, though not to the apostleship. (Luke 10:17.) But in addition to this general commission to preach the gospel of the kingdom, the Lord by and by showed the twelve that he was preparing them

for a special work in the future—that they were to be **his witnesses** to bear testimony of him after his death. They must be witnesses, too, upon whom the people could rely as having been with him from the beginning of his ministry, and therefore manifestly acquainted with his doctrine and purpose. (John 15:27; Luke 24:48.) And not only so, but these twelve were also chosen to become, under divine providence, the founders and special teachers of the gospel Church, when in due time they should be endued with power from on high.

In other words, our Lord's object in selecting or ordaining these twelve was to so train and empower them, and to so establish their testimony concerning the truth of God, that, through them, such as hunger and thirst after righteousness might be convinced of the truth, and that from among such "a people for his name" (a bride for Christ—a Church) might be selected, trained and prepared for their exaltation as "joint-heirs with Christ" in his kingdom. This purpose in the selection of the twelve was implied in the prayer of our Lord just prior to his crucifixion (See John 17:6-9,20,21)—"I have manifested thy name unto the men [the apostles] which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them to me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee; for I have given unto them the words [the doctrine] which thou gavest me, and they have received them. … I pray for them: I pray not for world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. … Neither pray I for these [apostles] alone, but for them also which **shall believe** on me **through their word** [the entire gospel Church—to the end of the age]: that **they all** may be one [in heart and purpose and love], as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be **one in us** [and then he shows the ultimate purpose of this selection, both of the apostles and of the entire body of Christ, in the following words]—that **the world** [that 'God so loved, even while they were yet sinners'] **may believe** that thou hast sent me"—to redeem and restore them.

The number of the apostles corresponded to the number of the sons of Jacob, the representatives and founders of the tribes of Israel, which in one phase of their typical character stood for the entire gospel Church, and in another for the whole world. (See *Tabernacle Shadows*.) And in the Book of Revelation these apostles are designated as the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem, the glorious Church. (Rev. 21:14; Eph. 2:20,21.) Just so the foundation which sustains the Church is designed ultimately to sustain the whole world. But if these foundation stones were laid in the sand, the building reared upon them would be very insecure, and could not stand forever. (Matt. 7:25-27.) But they were not laid in the sand, but upon the sure and steadfast rock, Christ Jesus.—Matt. 16:16-18; 1 Pet. 2:4-8.

While all of the twelve were chosen early in the Lord's ministry that they might be his witnesses, because they had been with him from the beginning, when one of them (Judas) dropped out, having proved a traitor to his trust, the Lord supplied his place with Paul, who was made a witness of his glory after his resurrection and ascension. (Acts 26:13; 1 Cor. 15:8.) And thus the testimony, of the eleven eye and ear witnesses of the Lord's ministry, death and resurrection, and of the twelfth as to his glorious exaltation, is a firm foundation for the faith of the whole Church, to the end of the age. The election of Matthias by the eleven, to fill the place of Judas (Acts 1:23-26), was simply a human error—an over-officiousness on their part to attend to the Lord's business without his direction. It was done previous to the day of Pentecost and the descent of the holy Spirit. The eleven chose two, and asked the Lord to take his choice of them, and indicate the same by directing upon which the lot should fall. Of course the lot must fall upon one of them; but that was no indication of the Lord's will; and the Lord simply ignored their choice and in due time indicated his own in the election of Paul. And in his subsequent Revelation he describes **twelve** foundation stones in the New Jerusalem, **not thirteen**. Matthias was probably a very excellent brother; but he was not an apostle.

But, we inquire, What evidence is there that these twelve ordinary men were ordained to fill the important office of apostles in the Church? True, we see that, after our Lord's resurrection

and ascension, the apostles were the strength and consolation of the infant Church. Having been the constant companions and disciples of the Lord, and eye-witnesses of his miraculous power, and having proved their loyalty and faithfulness to him by bearing his reproach with him, very naturally the saints of their day found in them props for their faith; and they rested upon their teaching, took courage from their example and wisely heeded their counsel. But were they ever intended to be more than such helps?—were they ever intended to be authoritative teachers whose words, more than those of others, would express the divine mind?

We answer, Yes; and the Lord clearly indicates that he would have the Church so regard them, and the helpful service he purposed to have them perform for the entire body of the Anointed. Let us hear the testimony:–

(1) As already noted, we have seen that these men were specially called and solemnly ordained, as a class distinct and separate from the other disciples, and given a particular and significant name—the apostles—to distinguish them from the others.

(2) We have also noticed that, although during our Lord's earthly ministry the work of the apostles differed nothing from that of "the seventy," nor were their labors any more signally blessed (Luke 9:6; 10:17), yet they were more directly and continually under his training, and that either some or all of them were the chosen witnesses of every remarkable feature and event of his course during the three and a half years of his ministry. They were the witnesses of his teachings and of his personal character and manner of life; and of his miracles and the effects of his teachings and work in his day. They were the only ones invited to partake with him of the last Passover Supper, and to receive the instructions of that solemn hour with regard to its typical significance and with regard to the changed features of that institution which would make it commemorative thenceforth of the real Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. They were the witnesses of the agonies of Gethsemane and of his betrayal and arrest, as well as of his calm submission to the fate which he knew awaited him. They were the witnesses, too, of all the circumstances of his crucifixion, death and burial; and also of the fact of his resurrection.

(3) After his resurrection we find our Lord promptly taking up his work just where it had been broken off by his death—the work of still further preparing the apostles, his chosen witnesses, to bear reliable testimony to the whole Church. We find that while he appeared to many other disciples besides the apostles, and to upwards of five hundred at one time (1 Cor. 15:5-8), he was specially careful to very clearly establish the fact of his resurrection to the apostles. We find him carefully looking up each one of "the eleven"—sending the women who were first at the sepulcher to communicate the fact of his resurrection to each of them, and specially mentioning Peter, lest he should be overcome with discouragement on account of his previous unfaithfulness (Mark 16:7); opening the understanding of the two (Luke 24:27, 32) on the way to Emmaus; satisfying doubting Thomas with tangible evidence; specially re-affirming Peter's commission; and fully convincing all and sending them out into the work again. —John 20:26-28; 21:15-17; Acts 1:1,2; Luke 24:52.

(4) We find further that "the eleven" were the chosen witnesses of the Lord's ascension, and that there is no evidence of the presence of any others on that occasion. Compare Acts 1:1-13, specially noticing verses 2,4,9,11. The expression, "Ye men of Galilee" signified "the eleven," all of whom were Galilaeans. See also Luke 24:48-51 and Matt. 28:16-19.

The apostles were thus the special witnesses of the Lord's resurrection, although he was seen by others; and thus the Lord made sure of having in them competent witnesses, that our faith in their testimony might be clearly established. Peter says, "And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly, **not to all the people**, but UNTO WITNESSES CHOSEN BEFORE OF GOD, even TO US, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people," etc.—Acts 10:39-43. See also Acts 13:31; 1 Cor. 15:3-8.

(5) We see that, while the testimony of the apostles was at first restricted to the Jews, the Lord, after his resurrection, taught them that repentance and remission of sins must be "preached in his name **among all nations, beginning** at Jerusalem." And then he added, "And **ye** are **witnesses** of these things; … but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." … "Ye shall receive power after that the holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, **both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria,** and UNTO THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH." (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8.) Since "the uttermost part of the earth"—America, for instance—could not be reached and thus ministered to during the life-time of the apostles, it is manifest that the major part of this witnessing was to be done **through their writings** and after their death. Thus they testify to us, and we consider this commission from the Lord to them to do so, and the particular training they received from him, as the best possible endorsement of their testimony and guarantee of its reliability.

(6) In obedience to the command to wait for the promised power, the apostles and the other disciples, about a hundred and twenty in number, tarried in Jerusalem, assembling together in an upper room, and waiting in prayerful expectancy from day to day until the day of Pentecost brought the promised blessing—the "power from on high," the baptism of the holy spirit. (Acts 1:14.) In this great blessing, specially promised to the apostles, apparently all of the faithful souls present with them shared. "They were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." However, from Acts 2:7 it would appear that "the eleven" (all of whom were Galilaeans) were the public speakers. It evidently brought to their minds clearer visions of divine truth, filling their hearts with joy and praise; so that out of the abundance of their hearts they spoke the wonderful words of life as the Spirit miraculously gave them utterance in the various languages of the peoples represented there. And as a result of that power three thousand souls were converted that day. While all of the faithful waiting ones shared the special outpouring of the Spirit that day, and the same Spirit was also poured out upon the Gentiles later (Acts 10:44-47), and has continued with all the consecrated and faithful ever since, we are particularly assured that all of "the eleven" were there, and that not one of them failed to receive this gift of the Spirit without which their apostleship could not be recognized.—See Acts 1:13, 14; 2:1.

(7) Although it may seem remarkable that the Lord permitted a Judas to appear among the apostles, while Saul of Tarsus verily thought he was doing God service as a Pharisee of the Pharisees, and was permitted to remain in ignorance of the truths of the new dispensation until all the privileges of the Lord's presence and personal instruction, etc., and even the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, which the others enjoyed, were entirely past, there was in this also, as we are now privileged to view it, another master-stroke of wise policy; for Paul was made a witness of the Lord's glory—"as one born out of due time"—as one "born from the dead" before the time—before the time for the Church's exaltation and glory, when, being made like the Lord, they shall see him as he is. (1 Cor. 15:8; 1 John 3:2.) And in visions and revelations the Lord more than made up to Paul what he lacked to make him a competent and reliable witness to us.—2 Cor. 12:1-4,7; Gal. 1:11,12; 2:2.

And when the Lord himself testifies to us (Acts 9:15), "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel," that is all the endorsement Paul needed to put him on at least an equal footing with the others, as one of the chosen twelve. In addition to this testimony of the Lord and to the worthy zeal of Paul in bearing witness to the truth, and to the manifestation of the power of the holy Spirit in him, we have also Paul's own testimony concerning himself. He says, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not after man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11, 12.) And again he says, "He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision [the Jews],

the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles."—Gal. 2:8.

Paul was pre-eminently the apostle to the Gentiles, and the others more particularly to the Jews. Hence Paul has by far the more to say **to us** through his numerous epistles; but in their day "the eleven" were more prominent in the Church than he—Peter, James and John, as Paul says, being regarded as pillars among them. (Gal. 2:9.) Paul was the pushing pioneer, and his work among the Gentiles of his day was by no means a light, nor an honorable task, in the estimation of men. It exposed him to all sorts of danger, persecution and humiliation. And even in the Church his zeal was not fully understood and appreciated; for he had occasionally to produce the evidences of his apostleship, and to remind them, and thus prove to them that he was "not a whit behind" the others in authority and power.—1 Cor. 9:1; 2 Cor. 11:5.

But let us inquire further as to the office of the apostles in the Church: Is it merely their historic testimony of the Lord and his teachings upon which we are to depend? or was their witnessing to include more than this?

Evidently they were to bear witness to all they knew, and to all they learned under the special guidance of the holy Spirit. Only thus would they be faithful stewards of that which was intrusted to them. "Let a man so account of us as … stewards of the mysteries of God," said Paul. (1 Cor. 4:1.) And the same intent was expressed by the Lord when he said, "I will make you fishers of men," and again, "Feed my sheep" and "lambs." Again, Paul says that "the mystery [the deep truths of the gospel concerning the high calling of the Church—the Christ] **hidden in other ages**, is now revealed unto his holy [justified and consecrated, and so reckoned 'holy'] apostles and prophets, by the Spirit," and that the object of its being revealed to them was "**to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery** [upon what terms they may have the privilege of fellowship in this mystery—of joint-heirship with Christ], which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." (Eph. 3:3-11.) And, again, after speaking of how the Church was to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone (Eph. 2:20-22), he says, "For **this cause** [viz., **the building up of the Church**, the temple of God] I, Paul, [am] the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles."—Eph. 3:1.

Thus we see that the apostles were not only to bear historic testimony of Christ, but they were also specially prepared and empowered, through the influences of the holy Spirit, both to discern and teach **the deep things of God**, which they did as wise and faithful stewards of the blessings intrusted to them for the good and edification and building up of the whole Church. "Freely ye have received, freely give," said the Master; and they were careful to obey the injunction, and through them the same blessings have come down to us—even "to the uttermost part of the earth."

But still we would reverently press our reasonable investigation a step further and inquire, Are these apostles to be regarded as in any sense **lords** in the Church? or, in other words, When the Lord and Head of the Church departed, did any of them take the place of the head? or did they together constitute a composite head, to take his place and assume the reins of government? Or were they, or any of them, what the popes of Rome claim to be as their successors—the vicars or substitutes of Christ to the Church, which is his body?

Against such a hypothesis we have the plain statement of Paul—Eph. 4:4,5—"There is one body" and "**one Lord**"; and therefore among the various members of that body, no matter what may be the relative importance of some, only the **one Lord** and Head is to be recognized. This the Lord also clearly taught when, addressing the multitudes and his disciples, he said, "The Scribes and Pharisees … love … to be called Rabbi; but be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, and all ye are brethren." (Matt. 23:1, 2,6-8.) And again, addressing the apostles, Jesus said, "Ye know that those presuming to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them, **but it shall not be so among you**; but whosoever will be great among you shall be your servant, and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all; for even the Son of man came not to be

ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Mark 10:42-45.

Nor have we any evidence that the early Church ever regarded the apostles as lords in the Church; or that the apostles ever assumed such authority or dignity. Their course was very far indeed from the papal idea of lordship. For instance, Peter never styled himself "the prince of the apostles," as papists style him; nor did they ever title each other, or receive such homage from the Church. They addressed or referred to one another simply as Peter, John, Paul, etc., or else as Brother Peter, John or Paul; and all the Church were similarly greeted—as brothers and sisters in Christ. (See Acts 9:17; 21:20; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 7:15; 8:11; 2 Cor. 8:18; 2 Thes. 3:6,15; Philemon 7,16.) And it is written that even the Lord himself was not ashamed to call them all brethren (Heb. 2:11), so far is he from any domineering attitude in the exercise of his lordship or authority.

True, there were "bishops" (those who, like the apostles, had a general supervision and oversight of the work at home and abroad); and "elders" (those older and more advanced in the knowledge of the truth, etc., who took the general oversight and supervision of local congregations—Acts 14:23); and "deacons" (those specially charged with the temporal business matters of the various congregations—Acts 6:1-3); and "evangelists" (or traveling preachers of the Word); but they never used these terms as honorary titles. The conditions of fitness for these services in the Church are clearly set forth in 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 2 Tim. 4:1-5.

Nor did any of these leading servants in the early Church go about in priestly robes, or with cross and rosary, etc., courting the reverence and homage of the people; for, as the Lord taught them, the chiefest among them were those who served most. Thus, for instance, when persecution scattered the Church and drove them out of Jerusalem, the eleven bravely stood their ground, willing to do whatever might come, because in this trying time the Church abroad would look to them at Jerusalem for encouragement and help; and had they fled the whole Church would have felt dismayed and panic-stricken. And we find James perishing by the sword of Herod, Peter with a similar fate in view, thrust into prison and chained to two soldiers (Acts 12:1-6), and Paul and Silas beaten with many stripes, and then cast into prison and their feet made fast in the stocks, and Paul enduring "a great fight of afflictions." (Acts 16:23,24; 2 Cor. 11:23-33.) Did they look like lords or act like lords? We think not.

Peter was very explicit in this matter, when counseling the elders to "feed **the flock of God**" (He did not say your flock, your people, your church, as many ministers today speak, but **the flock of God**.), **not as lords** of the heritage, but being patterns to the flock—patterns of humility, faithfulness, zeal and godliness. (1 Pet. 5:1-3.) And Paul says, "I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world and to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, … we are despised; … we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted and have no certain dwelling place, and labor working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things." (1 Cor. 4:9-13.) Not much like lords in all this, were they? And in opposing the idea of some of the brethren who seemed to be aspiring to lordship over God's heritage, Paul ironically says, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings **without us**;" but further along he counsels the only right way, which is that of humility, saying, "Be ye followers of me" in this respect. And again, Let a man so account of us as of the **ministers** [servants] of Christ, and **stewards** of the mysteries of God.—1 Cor. 4:8,1.

And, again, the same apostle adds: "As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness: God is witness. Nor of men sought we glory—neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the Apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children."—1 Thes. 2:4-7.

Nor did the apostles ever claim a monopoly of the teaching or of the pastoral work of the Church; nor did the Lord ever intimate that they should do so. Paul says, "He [Christ] gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, 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 full stature of the Anointed one—that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, … but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."—Eph. 4:11-15.

God has raised up these various helps, and has abundantly blessed their labors, both in the early Church and all along throughout the Gospel age. But the **prominent** and **leading position** of the apostles, as those **specially empowered** to minister to us in spiritual things, is clearly indicated. The Lord's personal supervision and appointment of the various orders or grades of teachers and helps is clearly indicated by the Apostle Paul's words—"**God** hath set [placed] some in the Church—**first**, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, directors and diversities of tongues." Then he inquires, "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" etc. (1 Cor. 12:28,29.) No: certainly not; and if we would be led of the Lord we must recognize this order of his appointment—those whom **"God hath set"** in the Church for its instruction and edification. And of these we must always remember that the apostles are **first**, though every member of the body may declare the unsearchable riches of Christ.—See Heb. 5:12.

In recognizing this priority of the apostles we are not underrating or casting any discredit upon the ministry of the other helps and helpers which the Lord provided for the edification of the Church. Thus, for instance, the testimonies of the "evangelists" Mark and Luke and Stephen are as trustworthy as those of the apostles; for they all had "the same mind and spoke the same things." And to such faithful witnesses whom the Lord has raised up from time to time all through the Gospel age, we find the apostles committing their charge ere they were called to rest.—2 Tim. 4:1-6.

Thus, when the noble apostle to the Gentiles was about to finish his course, we find him committing the interests of the work to the "elders" of the Church (the faithful advanced and active ones); and his charge applied not only to such persons then living, but down even to our day. After declaring his own faithfulness as a servant of the Lord and the Church, and his solicitude for the great work, he said to them, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the **holy Spirit** hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he [Christ] hath purchased with his own blood; for I know that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall [ambitious] men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. … And now brethren, 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 which are sanctified. … I have showed you all things how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"—Acts 20:17,28-35.

And Peter likewise exhorts the "elders," saying, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords of God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

But in judging of such teachers whom we have reason to believe the holy Spirit has appointed in the Church, it is our duty always to see that their teachings are the same as those of the Lord and the apostles—of the Head of the Church and of those whom he has so clearly indicated as specially empowered to instruct us in the deep things of the divine plan, which were not due to be declared in the days of his personal presence, but which he made known subsequently to his holy apostles and prophets. (John 16:12; Eph. 3:5.) The truth, thus divinely inspired and first announced by the Lord's cho-

sen agents, the apostles, even they themselves, had they fallen away, could not nullify. (But that none of them did fall away is manifest from Rev. 21:14.) This Paul distinctly states in Gal. 1:8-12.

The early Church rightly reverenced the piety and the superior spiritual knowledge and wisdom of the apostles, and, regarding them, as they really were, as the Lord's specially chosen ambassadors to them, they sat at their feet as learners; yet not with blank, unquestioning minds, but with a disposition to try the spirits and to prove the testimony. (1 John 4:1; 1 Thes. 5:21; Isa. 8:20.) And the apostles, in teaching them, enjoined this attitude of mind which required a reason for their hope, and they encouraged it, and were prepared to meet it—not with enticing words of man's wisdom (of human philosophy and theory), but **in demonstration of the Spirit** and **of power**, that the faith of the Church might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:4,5.) They did not cultivate a blind and superstitious reverence for themselves.

We read that the Bereans "were more noble than they of Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily [to see] whether those things were so." And it was the constant effort of the apostles to show that the gospel which they proclaimed was the very same gospel darkly expressed by the ancient prophets, "unto whom it was declared that not unto themselves, but **unto us** [the body of Christ] they did minister the things now reported unto you by them [the apostles] that have preached the gospel unto you with the holy Spirit sent down from heaven" (1 Pet. 1:10-12); that it was the very same gospel of life and immortality brought to light by the Lord himself; and that its greater amplification and all the particular details discovered to the Church by them, under the leading and direction of the holy Spirit—whether by special revelations or by other and more natural means, both of which were used—were in fulfillment of the Lord's promise to the apostles, and through them to the whole Church—"I have yet **many things** to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you [the apostles first, and through them the whole Church] into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself [independently of me], but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak [i.e., he will be **my messenger** to you]. … He shall glorify me, for he shall receive **of mine**, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine [there is no conflict between us: his plan is my plan, and his way is my way]: therefore said I that he shall take **of mine**, and shall show it unto you."—John 16:12-15.

It was right, therefore, for the Bereans to search the Scriptures to see whether the testimony of the apostles agreed with that of the law and the prophets, and to compare them also with the teachings of the Lord. Our Lord also invited a similar proving of his testimony by the law and the prophets, saying, "Search the Scriptures, … for they are they that testify of me." The whole divine testimony must be in harmony, whether it be communicated by the law, the prophets, the Lord or the apostles. Their entire harmony is the proof of their divine inspiration. And, thank God, we find that harmony existing, so that the whole Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments constitute what the Lord himself terms "the harp of God." (Rev. 15:2.) And the various testimonies of the law and the prophets are the several chords of that harp, which, when tuned by the holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts, and swept by the fingers of the devoted searchers after divine truth, yield the most enchanting strains that ever fell on mortal ears. Praise the Lord for the exquisite melody of the blessed "song of Moses and the Lamb," which even we have learned through the testimony of his holy apostles and prophets, of whom the Lord Jesus is chief.

But although the testimony of the Lord and the apostles must harmonize with that of the law and the prophets, we should expect them to testify of things **new**, as well as **old**; for so the prophets have led us to expect. (Matt. 13:35; Psa. 78:2; Deut. 18:15,18; Dan. 12:9.) And so we find them not only expounding the hidden truths of ancient prophecy, but also disclosing new revelations of truth.

It may be well here to notice a further claim of that great antichristian organization, the

church of Rome, viz., that Peter is the rock upon which the Gospel Church is built, and that to him and his successors, the popes, were confided the keys of the kingdom of heaven with power to open and to shut, to admit or exclude, whomsoever they will, and to bind or loose whomsoever and whatsoever they please.

The scripture upon which this doctrine is founded is Matt. 16:15-19. In reply to the Lord's question, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And the Lord replied, "And thou art Peter [*petros*—a stone]; and upon this rock [*petra*—a rock, a large stone] I will build my Church." Thus, in harmony with numerous Old Testament references, such as Isa. 8:14, the Lord is seen to be the great rock upon which the Church is built, while Peter is one of the living stones in the glorious temple of God built upon that rock, which he had just confessed as the rock of our salvation—the Christ. And Peter himself freely admits the relationship of all the living stones, himself included, to the great foundation stone—the rock Christ Jesus—saying (1 Pet. 2:4, 5), "To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, **ye also as lively** [living] **stones** are built up a spiritual house," etc.

As shown in several of our Lord's parables, the Gospel Church is the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 13) in its incipient and preparatory state; and its privileges and powers were about to be opened to both Jews and Gentiles. It was really the Lord that opened the door into his Church: Peter was merely the agent chosen to do the work in the name of the Lord—opening the door to the Jews in his discourse on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14,40), and opening the same door to the Gentiles in his discourse to Cornelius and his household, three and a half years later. (Acts 10:33,46.) This honorable service is what is symbolically referred to as using the "keys of the kingdom." (Matt. 16:19.) But, the door once opened, neither Peter, nor any other man, can close it. Our Lord declares that he has "the key of David" (Rev. 3:7); and the door into his kingdom will not be shut until the last member of the chosen and faithful Church has entered into its glory—viz., at the close of the Gospel age. The key which Peter used was the dispensational truth then due, and first made clear to the mind of Peter, by the holy Spirit.

The ability to bind and loose on earth and in heaven, was granted not only to Peter but to all the apostles; and we believe signified that God would so guide the words of the apostles in their presentation of the truth to the Church, that all the faithful might have full confidence in their teachings. Whatever they bound upon the Church as duties, we may know are so recognized in heaven; and whatever they loosed as respecting the Mosaic Law, etc., we may know that they were supernaturally directed to do so, and that the same are loosed or set aside in heaven.

Apostolic Inspiration.

Having observed with what particularity the Lord chose, empowered and commissioned his twelve apostles to serve the Church, our next inquiry is whether we are to consider their teachings as verbally or otherwise inspired. In pursuing our inquiry we would call attention to the following observations:—

(1) We notice that the promise of the Comforter, the holy Spirit, though it was ultimately to reach the whole Church through the ministration of the apostles, was specially given to them. (John 16:13-15.) This was given to the eleven on the night of the last Supper, after Judas had gone out (John 13:31); and when Paul, the twelfth, was ordained, it applied to him also with equal force, and was so fulfilled. The promise reads, "But the Comforter, which is the holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you; … and he will show you things to come."—John 14:26; 16:13.

Thus we learn that the apostolic inspiration was to be threefold in its character, consisting **(a)** of a guidance into all truth concerning the divine purposes and plan; **(b)** of such refreshment of the memory as would enable them to recall and reproduce all of the Lord's personal teaching while he was with them; and **(c)** of special subsequent revelations of things to come—of the "many things" the Lord had to tell them, which they were not able to bear until

after his death and resurrection and the descent of the holy Spirit.—John 16:12.

(2) Beginning with the second of these propositions—the refreshment of the memory—we think it is manifest that the promise did not imply a dictation of the exact order and phraseology in which they should express those things. Nor do their writings give evidence of such dictation, although this promise is of itself a guarantee of the correctness of their accounts. In each of the four gospels we have a historic account of the Lord's earthly life and work, and in each the individuality of the writer appears. Each, in his own manner and style, records those items which seem to him most important; and, under the Lord's supervision, all together furnish as complete an account as is necessary to establish the faith of the Church **(a)** in the identity of Jesus of Nazareth with the Messiah of the prophets; **(b)** in the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning him; and **(c)** in the facts of his life, and the divine inspiration of all his teachings. If the inspiration had been verbal (i.e., by word for word dictation), it would not have been necessary for four men to rephrase the same events. But it is noteworthy that while each thus exercised his own individual freedom of expression, and his choice of the most important events worthy of record, the Lord so supervised the matter that among them nothing of importance was omitted, and that all that is needed is faithfully recorded and is thoroughly trustworthy, as evidenced both by the personal integrity of the writers, and also by the promise of the influence of the holy Spirit to refresh their memories. In this connection it is a noteworthy fact that the Apostle John's record supplements those of the other three—Matthew, Mark and Luke—and that he mentions, chiefly, discourses, circumstances and incidents of importance omitted by the others. A glance at the Table of Gospel Harmonies in your Bagster or Oxford "Teachers' Bible" will show this.

(3) Another proposition of the promise was, "He will guide you into all truth" (or "teach you all things"—concerning the truth). Here we have the promise of just what we see evidenced in the writings of all the apostles; though they were plain and unlearned men, their Scriptural exegesis is most remarkable. They were able to confound the wisdom of the wisest theologians, not only of their own time, but ever since. No eloquence of error can stand before the logic of their deductions from the law and the prophets and the teachings of the Lord. The Jewish rulers and elders and scribes marked this, and "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus"—that they had learned his doctrine and caught his spirit.—Acts 4:5, 6,13.

We notice that a large proportion of the apostolic epistles, particularly Paul's, consists of such logical arguments, based upon the inspired writings of the Old Testament and the teachings of the Lord. And those who have partaken of the same spirit, by following the lines of argument they thus present, are led by them to the same truthful conclusions; so that our faith does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:1,4,5.) But in this sort of teaching, as well as in the historic testimony, we see no evidence of word for word dictation, and that the apostles were mere mechanical amanuenses; but, rather, they clearly show that they were filled with a knowledge of the truth and with the spirit of the truth—with a holy enthusiasm to declare the good tidings, which burns and glows upon every page, and which kindles in the hearts of all of God's people the same sacred flame.

(4) The last proposition of this promise is that the spirit would show them (and by implication the whole Church through them) things to come. Thus they were also to be prophets or seers to the Church. Some of the things to come were evidently shown to the apostles by this superior illumination of the mind or quickening of the mental forces—the guidance of judgment—in the interpretation of law and prophecy and the teachings of the Lord.

But more than this was necessary, and therefore, **special visions and revelations** by the holy Spirit were granted to instruct them concerning the things to come. Among these were—

(a) The vision of the coming glory of the kingdom with its earthly and heavenly phases, as seen on the mount of transfiguration—Matt. 17:2-9. See *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 1, Chapter 14;

(b) Paul's vision of the third heavens or Millennial kingdom (Eph. 3:3-6; 2 Cor. 12:1-4), which so wonderfully influenced his life and writings, although not due and hence not permitted to be plainly expressed in his day;

(c) Paul's vision of the Macedonian desire and call for his services—Acts 16:9,10;

(d) Peter's vision of clean and unclean beasts, directing him to use the keys of the Kingdom (Matt. 16:19) in opening the door to the Gentiles, of whom Cornelius was the first convert (Acts 10); and

(e) The remarkable revelation to John on Patmos, which consisted of a series of visions, portraying in sign language all the prominent features of the course of Christianity until the end of the age. This partakes more of the character of the ancient prophecies; for though John saw and faithfully recorded these visions for the future benefit of the Church, he himself could not have fully understood them because the seals were not yet opened in his day, and the truths therein symbolized were not yet meat in due season for the Lord's household. But now as it does become meat for the household, the honor of the apostles and the importance of their service for the Church in connection with it will be more and more appreciated by all who partake of its refreshment and strength—other helps and servants being now used of the Spirit in setting forth those truths.

Thus the apostles were divinely instructed with reference to the deep and hitherto hidden things of God. When supernatural means were necessary such means were used, but when the natural means were sufficient, they were directed in the use of the natural means, the Lord always guiding them into **correct presentations of the truths** from which he designed to feed his Church, at the hands of other servants, during the entire Gospel age. Indeed we may rest assured that the divine Word, given or elaborated through the twelve apostles, will constitute the text book from which the world also will be instructed during the Millennial age.

Apostolic Fallibility.

Five circumstances mentioned in the New Testament are usually considered as opposed to the thought of apostolic infallibility, which we have presented foregoing. These we will examine separately, as follows:

(1) Peter's denial of our Lord at the time of the crucifixion. It is not disputed that this was a serious wrong, and one for which Peter was sincerely penitent. But it was committed before he had received the Pentecostal blessing; and, besides, the infallibility claimed for the Apostles is that which applied to their **public teachings**—their writings—and not to all the acts of their lives, which were affected by the blemishes of their "earthen vessels," marred by the fall in which all of the children of Adam suffered—which blemishes are forgivable through the merit of Christ's righteousness. The Apostolic **office** for the service of the Lord and the Church was something apart from the mere weaknesses of the flesh. It did not come upon perfect but upon imperfect men. It did not make their thoughts and actions perfect, but overruled those thoughts and actions, so that the teachings of those twelve are infallible. And this is the kind of infallibility now claimed for the popes—that when a pope speaks *ex-cathedra*, or officially, he is over-ruled of God, and not permitted to err. This they claim as apostles—claiming that they possess apostolic office and authority. But all this is contradicted by various Scriptures: twelve alone were chosen, and not in succession, but at once (Luke 6:13-16); and when one failed and another took his office (Acts 1:26), there were still but twelve; and the last pages of inspiration show us that only the teachings of the **twelve** are foundations for the faith of the Church, or will he recognized as such in the New Jerusalem.

(2) The fact that Peter "dissembled" or acted in a two-faced manner on one occasion, in dealing with Jews and Gentiles, is pointed to as proof that the apostles were "men of like passions" as others, and were not infallible in conduct. Again we concede the charge, and find that the apostles conceded this (Acts 14:15); but we repeat that these human weaknesses were not permitted to mar their work and usefulness as apostles—as those who preached the gospel with the holy spirit sent down from heaven (1 Pet. 1:12; Gal. 1:11,12)—not with man's wisdom but with the wisdom from above. (1 Cor. 2:5-16.) And this error of Peter God at once cor-

rected, through the Apostle Paul, who kindly but firmly "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." (Gal. 2:11.) And it is quite noticeable that Peter's two epistles show no trace of wavering on the subject of the equality of Jews and Gentiles in Christ, nor any fearfulness in acknowledging the Lord.

(3) The Lord left the apostles in uncertainty respecting the time of his second coming and kingdom—simply telling them and all to **watch**, that when due they might know and not be in darkness on the subject, as the world in general will be. It is manifest, too, that the apostles rather expected the second advent and kingdom within the first or second centuries; but their lack of knowledge on this subject has in no wise marred their writings, which, under divine direction, made no such statements, but on the contrary declared—"that day **cannot come, until** there come a great apostasy, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition"—Antichrist.—2 Thes. 2:3.

(4) Paul, who wrote, "I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing" (Gal. 5:2), caused Timothy to be circumcised. (Acts 16:3.) And we are asked, Did he not thereby teach falsely, and in contradiction to his own testimony? We answer, No: Timothy was a Jew, because his mother was a Jewess (Acts 16:1); and circumcision was a national custom amongst the Jews, which began **before** the Law of Moses and which was continued after Christ had "made an end of the Law, nailing it to his cross." Circumcision was given to Abraham and his seed, four hundred and thirty years before the Law was given to Israel as a nation at Mount Sinai. Peter was designated the apostle to the circumcision (i.e., to the Jews), and Paul, the apostle to the uncircumcision (i.e., to the Gentiles).—Gal. 2:7,8.

Paul's argument of Gal. 5:2 was not addressed to Jews. He was addressing Gentiles, whose only reason for desiring or even thinking about circumcision was that certain false teachers were confusing them, by telling them that they must keep the Law Covenant, as well as accept Christ—thus leading them to ignore the new Covenant. In Gal. 5:2, Paul shows them that for them to be circumcised **(for any such reason)** would be a repudiation of the New Covenant, and hence of the entire work of Christ.

That Paul found no objection to Jews continuing their national custom of circumcision is evident from his words in 1 Cor. 7:18,19, as well as in his course with Timothy. Not that it was **necessary** for Timothy or any other Jew to be circumcised, but that it was not improper, and that, as he would be going amongst Jews to a considerable extent, it would be to his advantage, giving him the confidence of the Jews. But we see Paul's steadfast resistance, on this subject, when some who misconceived the matter sought to have Titus circumcised—a full-blooded Greek.—Gal. 2:3.

(5) The account of Paul's course, recorded in Acts 21:20-26, is reflected upon as being contrary to his own teachings of the truth. It is claimed that it was because of wrong doing in this instance that Paul was permitted to suffer so much as a prisoner and was finally sent to Rome. But such a view is not borne out by Scripture-stated facts. The record shows that throughout this entire experience Paul had the sympathy and approval of all the other apostles, and, above all, the Lord's continued favor. His course was at the instance of the other apostles. It was testified to him by prophecy, before he went to Jerusalem (Acts 21:10-14), that bonds and imprisonment awaited him; and it was in obedience to his convictions of duty that he braved all those predicted adversities. And when in the very midst of his trouble, we read, "The Lord stood by him and said, 'Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou **hast testified of me in Jerusalem**, so must thou bear witness also at Rome'"; and later we find the Lord again showing him favor, as we read, "There stood by me the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." (Acts 23:11; 27:23,24.) In view of these facts, we must seek an understanding of Paul's course in correspondence with his uniformly bold and noble course —esteeming very highly the work and testimony which God not only did not reprove, but on the contrary approved.

Coming then to the examination of Acts 21:21-27, we notice (verse 21) that Paul had not

taught that **Jewish** converts should not circumcise their children; nor did he repudiate the Mosaic law—rather, he honored it, by pointing out the greater and grander realities which Moses' law so forcibly typified. So far, therefore, from repudiating Moses, he honored Moses and the Law, saying, The law is just and holy and good, and that by it the **knowledge** of the heinousness of sin had been increased; that the Law was so grand that no imperfect man could obey it fully, and that Christ, by keeping it, had won its rewards, and now under a New Covenant was offering everlasting life and blessings to those **unable to keep it**, who, by faith, accepted as the covering of their imperfections, his perfect obedience and sacrifice.

Certain ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation were typical of spiritual truths belonging to the Gospel age, such as the fasts, the celebration of new moons and Sabbath days and feasts. The apostle clearly shows that the Gospel of the New Covenant neither enjoins nor forbids these (the Lord's Supper and Baptism being the only injunctions of a symbolic character commanded us, and they, new ones).—Col. 2:16,17; Luke 22:19; Matt. 28:19.

One of these Jewish symbolic rites was that observed by Paul and the four Jews, which we are now examining, termed "purifying." Being Jews, they had a right, if they chose, not only to consecrate themselves to God, in Christ, but also to perform the symbol of this **purification**. And this is what they did—the men who were with Paul having made, additionally, a vow to humiliate themselves, before the Lord and the people, by having their heads shaven. These symbolic ceremonies cost something; and the charges presumably made up the **"offering"** of money—so much for each, to defray the expenses of the Temple.

Paul never taught the Jews that they were **free** from the Law,—but, on the contrary, that the Law had dominion over each of them so long as he lived. He showed, however, that if a Jew accepted Christ, and became **"dead with him,"** it settled the claims of the Law Covenant upon such, and made them God's **freemen** in Christ. (Rom. 7:1-4.) But he did teach the Gentile converts that they had never been under the Jewish Law Covenant, and that for them to attempt the practice of Jewish Law ceremonies and rites would imply that they were trusting in those symbols for their salvation, and not relying wholly upon the merit of Christ's sacrifice. And to this all of the apostles assented. See Acts 21:25; 15:20,23-29.

Our conclusion is that God did most wonderfully use the twelve apostles, making them very able ministers of his truth, and guiding them supernaturally in the subjects upon which they wrote—so that nothing profitable to the man of God has been omitted—and in the very words of the original manifested a care and wisdom beyond what even the apostles themselves comprehended. Praise God for this sure foundation.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said?
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Near Capernaum	The Sermon on the Mount	5:1–7:29		6:17-49	

Matthew 5:1-48

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are

ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye

therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Matthew 6:1-34

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Moreover 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 thine 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. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Matthew 7:1-29

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt

thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Luke 6:17-49

And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets. But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not

to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch? The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

"MARK THE PERFECT MAN! BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT!"—*Reprints*, p. 2585

MATTHEW 4:25-5:12.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

WHAT characteristics are essential to our attainment of the most blessed conditions God has to bestow? What must we be in order to inherit the Kingdom, be filled with righteousness, obtain divine mercy and everlasting comfort, be called the sons of God, and be permitted to see his face, obtaining a great reward in heaven? What question, what topic, what Bible lesson, could be more interesting to us or a more profitable study than this one? The great Teacher made it the topic, the text, of one of his principal discourses at his first advent, and caused the gist of his argument to be recorded for the admonition of his true followers throughout this Gospel age.

While the character of our Lord, which we as his followers are to copy, is one; and the attainment of that one character or disposition means the attainment of all the blessings God has to bestow; nevertheless, in order to present the matter the more distinctly to our minds the Lord divides this one character or disposition into different sections, giving us a view of each particular part; just as a photographer would

take a front view, right-side view, left-side view, rear view and angling views, of any interesting subject, so that all the details of construction might be clearly discernible.

The First Essential.

The first character-picture which our Lord presents we may reasonably assume was in some respects at least most important: It is Humility. "Blessed are the humble-minded (poor in spirit) for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." We do not understand this to signify that humility is the only essential grace, and that whoever is humble will therefore attain the Kingdom; but rather that to the attainment of the Kingdom humility is a prerequisite of first importance. In other words, while all humble people will not attain the Kingdom, the Kingdom cannot be attained by anyone who is not humble: the Kingdom is theirs, in the sense that it is possible for this class to accept the terms and to attain to the honors and blessings, while all of a different attitude of mind—the proud, the haughty, the self-conceited, are absolutely debarred from any possibility of attaining the Kingdom so long as these contrary conditions lie at the foundation of their characters.

O that all of the Lord's people might see this point clearly and distinctly, and realize once and forever that "The Lord resisteth the proud and showeth his favors to the humble" exclusively! How this thought should put a guard upon every one of the Lord's little ones who is seeking to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son. How jealously they would watch and foster the development of this spirit of humility in their own hearts, and how it would be more and more discernible to others in their daily course of life, and what a blessing and what an influence for good, especially upon the "brethren," would result!

Growing out of this first essential quality or characteristic, as a tree of many branches out of the root, come the other graces of the spirit, which the Lord has declared blessed—divinely approved. How different our Lord's teachings in this respect from all human teachings! Earthly wisdom would say, on the contrary: Hold up your head; think well of yourself, if you would have other people think well of you; be high-spirited, instead of poor in spirit, a little haughty, rather than of humble demeanor; it will have a greater influence in many respects, for no one will think more highly of you than you think of yourself, nor give you credit for more than you claim; hence, think highly of yourself, and claim much, carrying a high head, and having a lofty and self-important look.

No doubt there is worldly wisdom in the worldly counsel; no doubt there is some truth in the worldly suggestion, so far as success in earthly matters in the present time is concerned. But here as in other instances, the Lord shows us that his ways are not as man's ways, but higher, as the heavens are higher than the earth. He assures us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted in due time, while he who exalts himself shall be brought low, in due time. (Matt. 23:12.) In the Scriptures he points us to our dear Redeemer as the illustration of the humble and obedient one, whom he has now exalted to the right hand of divine power; and our attention is also called to the great Adversary, who, taking a reverse course, sought to exalt himself, and has been abased, and is ultimately to be destroyed.—Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:14.

A sharp distinction should be noted between being poor in spirit and being poor in pocket, or in intellectual gifts and attainments. We have all seen people who were poor in these earthly senses, yet proud in spirit. The point to be noticed is that whatever our financial or intellectual gifts and conditions, the thing acceptable in the divine sight is humility of spirit. Such a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above—they must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time, only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind—for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.

Consolations The Reward of Sympathy.

The second beatitude or blessed condition mentioned by our Lord stands closely related to the first—"Blessed are they that mourn." Mourning of itself is not a grace, but it betokens an attitude of mind which is acceptable in the Lord's sight. Nor should we think of a mournful spirit, without consolation or joys, as being a Christian spirit. We cannot suppose that our Heavenly Father and the holy angels are continual mourners, as they would certainly be if mourning possessed any merit of itself. The thought rather is, Blessed are ye that mourn now—to whom present earthly conditions are not entirely satisfactory and happifying—who are not blind to the difficulties and trials through which the human family as a whole is passing—sin and sickness, pain and trouble, dying and crying: blessed are those who have sympathy of heart under present conditions, and to whom they are not satisfactory; for the time is coming when, under God's providence, a better order of things shall be instituted, and their dissatisfaction with present conditions will but bring them into closer sympathy and fellowship with those better things for which the divine plan is preparing. When God's Kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, all cause for mourning and for sorrow and for tears will be done away: that will be a time for consolation, for satisfaction, to this class.

Indeed, a good measure of comfort comes to the Lord's people even in the present age—through faith built upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word. The fact that they are able to discern the wrongs, the inequities, the distresses of the present time, creates in this class that very condition of heart to which divine promises appeal, whereas others not so touched at heart with sympathy for the groaning creation, are unable to so thoroughly appreciate the hopes set before us in the gospel. Hence it is by a natural law that such are drawn to the Lord's Word, and are enabled to draw therefrom consolation which speaks peace to their hearts, and gives them an inner joy which the less sympathetic cannot know under present conditions. Blessed are the sympathetic!

As we can cultivate the first of these graces, humility of mind, and by cultivation develop more and more of this first and essential characteristic, so we can cultivate also the second grace, the sympathetic spirit. To do this we should frequently think of others—their interests, their trials, their difficulties, and should seek to enter into these as tho they were all our own, and should seek to lend a helping hand and to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."—Gal. 6:10.

How The Gentle Inherit.

The third of these graces which the Lord declares blessed is Meekness, or, as we should say, Gentleness. Webster's Dictionary defines meekness to be, "Submission to the divine will; patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." It will be perceived that there is quite a difference between this patient, gentle submission to the divine will, and the ordinary gentleness and patience which may frequently be exercised simply for the gratification of selfish desires. Patient submission to the divine will is impossible to those who have not the first grace in the list, a humble mind: the proud and self-willed find it impossible to be submissive to divine conditions; self rises up, perverts their judgments, and misleads their consciences to such an extent that they cannot have full confidence in divine providence, but feel that they must put forth their hand and steady the ark.

Moreover, patient submission can be developed only in those who mourn, in the sense of having large sympathies, and who have been comforted by the blessed promises of God, through which the holy spirit comforteth his people. Realizing the evils of our time, and that they are permitted of God for the present for a wise purpose, these not only sympathize with the groaning creation, but this sympathy and the comfort received as its reward tend to make them patient, submissive to the divine will. Remembering that all things are working together for good to them that love God, they are prepared to recognize divine providence in whatever may befall them, and prepared also to look for the lessons of those providences, as bless-

ings which will be helpful to them and to others, in preparing for the future and eternal joys.

This third grace—patient submission to the divine will—which can be noted by those with whom we come in contact, might be said to be the outer manifestation of the second grace, which is inward, of the heart, and which might not be outwardly discerned by our fellow-creatures. The grace of sympathy manifests itself in our patient submissiveness in all the affairs of life, realizing that to those who are in Christ all matters are under divine supervision, and this patience in respect to God's providences in our own circumstances and affairs leads also naturally and properly to patience with others in their weaknesses and failures and ignorance, and leads properly to helpfulness toward them as we have opportunity.

These "meek," patiently submissive to the divine will, shall inherit the earth. The Lord did not mean, nor is it true, that the patient and submissive to the divine will inherit the earth at the present time: quite to the contrary, the arrogant, the impatient, the aggressive, the selfish, succeed in grasping the chief things of power, of influence and of wealth now; and the patiently submissive have comparatively a poor chance. The reward of this grace, therefore, like the others, is future: following on under the divine leading, these shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; and the earth is a part of that great inheritance, which in turn, by divine arrangement, they shall bestow at the close of the Millennial age, upon the world of mankind who then survive—those proved worthy of eternal life by the Millennial tests.

Nevertheless, as there is a sense in which the Lord's people are comforted now, so there is also a sense in which they now inherit the earth—a figurative sense, by faith. The Apostle speaks of this when he says, "All things are yours—things present or things to come." (1 Cor. 3:21-23.) Those who have the proper humble attitude of mind and are patiently submissive to the divine will, get more of blessing out of the things of the present time than do their actual owners, because their hearts are in the attitude in which it is possible to receive blessing. The world, full of selfish craving, is never satisfied, never contented; the child of God, patiently submissive to the divine will, is always satisfied—

> "Content whatever lot I see,
> Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."

Filled With Righteousness.

The fourth blessing is that of Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness. No one can have this hunger and thirst unless he previously have to a considerable extent the previous characteristics. If he have not humility of mind he will be satisfied with his attainments of righteousness, being unable to see beyond his own low plane, unable to discern the heights and grandeurs of the divine perfection. He cannot hunger and thirst after that which he does not in some measure comprehend. Unless he have the spirit of sympathy, which discerns the wrongs, the inequities of our present time (which in great measure mankind is unable to counteract and overcome—by which some of the human family, very deficient in the virtues, have an overplus of wealth and influence and authority, while some possessing superior virtues have scarcely the necessities of life) he cannot yearn for the better condition of things which the Scriptures declare can only be introduced by the establishment of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom. It is a blessed indication then, if we find in our hearts a hungering and a thirsting for justice, for righteousness, for truth—an antipathy to untruth in every form, and to all injustice, in-equity—an antipathy, nevertheless, modified, influenced, controlled, by the third grace of this list, viz., by patient submission to the divine will. The control of this last quality is what the Apostle refers to when he says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." It is this quality which stepping in hinders our hunger and thirst after righteousness, and our zeal for it, (both as respects truth and practice) from making us anarchistic or extremists in any sense of the word. This quality of hunger and thirst after righteousness, uncontrolled by the other of these graces of the spirit, has led many worldly people, as reformers, into wild excesses: whereas the child of God altho having this same hunger and thirst in a larger degree than others, yet, under the control of the spirit of a sound mind, instructed from the Lord's Word, rests in his promises and waits for

their fulfillment, patiently submissive, and assured of the victory of righteousness in God's due time, which he adopts as his time also.

Those who have and cultivate this blessed hunger and thirst shall be satisfied, abundantly satisfied, by and by, when God's Kingdom shall be established, and when as a result of its reign all evil and all sin, all in-equities (iniquities) shall be suppressed, and God's holy will shall "be done on earth even as it is done in heaven." Our hunger and thirst after righteousness is not to be destroyed, but, as our Lord promised, it is to be satisfied. The appetite for truth and righteousness will still be there, but the prevalence of truth and righteousness shall be its satisfaction.

In this grace, as in the others, there is a sense in which by faith we already attain some measure of the fulfillment to come—altho it is but a foretaste. Those who have the hunger and thirst for righteousness, in line with the other graces of the spirit, find in the gracious promises of the Lord that comfort and consolation which already, even in this present life, can be assimilated by faith, and which proves to be "meat in due season for the household of faith," sustaining, strengthening, resting, and at least partially satisfying the hunger and the thirst, as they realize the divine provision for everlasting righteousness is exceeding and abundant, more than all that they could have thought or have requested.

How To Obtain Mercy.

The fifth blessed condition is that of Mercifulness. Mercy is the outward expression that man can discern, resulting from an appreciation of righteousness and a hunger and thirst for it in the renewed heart. After we have taken the preceding steps, and have learned to appreciate the inequities of the present time, and our own imperfections (unrighteousness) and those of other men; and after we have learned that God alone is able to right these matters in the full and complete sense, and that he has made provision for the righting of every wrong, and for the restoration to his favor of all who will accept his grace in Christ, to be made known to all in due time—it is then we begin to feel merciful, benevolent, kind, toward others, to an extent and degree that we could not feel these sentiments previously. Worldly people, who have not traveled on the pathway marked by these blessings of character and growths in grace, cannot to the same degree sympathize with nor feel merciful toward others.

The Lord lays great stress upon this quality of mercy, declaring that whatever else may be our attainments of knowledge or of grace, if we have not this one we can never be acceptable to him—if we do not have mercy upon others neither will our Heavenly Father have mercy upon us. And to insure that we do not consider this mercy to be merely an outward form, an expression of forgiveness and benevolence, our Lord expounds the matter, saying, "If ye do not from the heart forgive one another, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." It must be a genuine mercy, and not a feigned one; it must cover from sight, and so far as possible blot from memory, the failings and weaknesses of others, else it cannot hope for forgiveness and blotting out of its own shortcomings which its hunger and thirst for righteousness has clearly revealed to it. Only the merciful shall obtain mercy: and if we have not mercy at the hands of the Lord all is lost; for by nature we were children of wrath, even as others, and under just condemnation.

The exercise of mercy, benevolence, forgiveness, is a blessing, not merely because it is essential to our own forgiveness, and hence to our salvation, but also because this condition of heart which sympathizes with others in their failures and imperfections helps to rid our hearts of certain of the works of the flesh and of the devil, which incline to cling to the Lord's people long after they have been justified by faith, and even after they have made full consecration of themselves to the Lord and are seeking to "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The Apostle includes amongst the works of the flesh which require putting away, after we are fully the Lord's, the following—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. All of these qualities of selfishness are antagonized by mercy, and by it largely they are driven from their secret hidings and entrenched positions in our hearts. The blessed character of Mercy is closely related to Love, for it is in proportion as we

obtain the Lord's spirit of love that we manifest toward others mercy, even as he has manifested his love toward us in the mercy extended to us in Christ. Love and mercy, consideration for others, has much to do with driving out envy. How can we envy those whom we love sincerely? How can we have malice toward those who are our enemies, if we love them and have mercy, compassion, upon them, and forgive them from our hearts? How can we have hatred toward them, if we have mercy upon them, and feel toward them only a forgiving spirit? And how can we be strifeful, if we have a merciful, a forgiving spirit ready to forgive trespasses against us, as we hope for forgiveness of our trespasses against the divine law?

"Mercy rejoiceth against justice," the Apostle explains. (Jas. 2:13.) Divine Mercy satisfied divine Justice, and thus prepared the way for the rescue of our race from the sentence of Justice: and so those who have become partakers of the divine spirit, and in whom it has reached a reasonable development, will permit their mercy to triumph over their conceptions of justice (for they have no law of justice over their fellows which needs to be satisfied).

While justice may not be blind in the Lord's people, while they may discern the faults of others most clearly, and while they may seek to let justice rule in respect to all of their own words, and thoughts, and actions, nevertheless they are to let mercy triumph in their hearts over justice as respects those who trespass against them, and they are not to hold resentments against those who have done them injury, nor to seek to avenge themselves and to inflict justice upon their opponents. Rather, they are to say, It is for God to be just; it is for me, who am a transgressor also against perfect justice, through the weaknesses which I have inherited, to have compassion upon my fellow-creature, who has inherited similar yet different weaknesses: it is for me to exercise accordingly the divine command, the blessed characteristic of mercy, compassion, forgiveness. And those who do so not only get rid of the evil works and sentiments of the world, the flesh and the devil, but increasingly become filled more and more with the spirit of love and gentleness and patient submission to the divine will, and thus the merciful are blessed even in the present time.

"Without Holiness No Man Shall See The Lord."

The sixth step of blessedness is Purity of Heart—purity of motive, purity of intention, purity of effort, purity of will: purity, in the sense of sincerity, of transparency, of truthfulness. In other words, Blessed are the honest-hearted, those who have absolutely right intentions. True, there are worldly people who to some extent might claim honesty of heart, purpose, intention, but until they have come along the way of divine appointment in Christ, until they have become his followers through faith and consecration to him, and until they have taken the preceding steps of blessedness, we could not recognize them as being of the class here specified.

Many have misunderstood this statement, "pure in heart," and have thought of it as signifying absolute perfection—not only outward but inward; not only of words and of deeds, but also of thoughts. This view of the matter has tended to discourage some who honestly said to themselves, I am not perfect in deed nor in word nor in thought; how then can I claim to be blessed under this provision as one of the pure in heart? We answer that this is a misconception. The Lord knows as well and better than we do, that in our flesh dwells no perfection; that by reason of the fall all of Adam's children have their teeth set on edge by the sour grape of sin, so that sometimes we cannot do the things that we would do, and through ignorance we no doubt frequently leave undone the things which we ought to do.—Jer. 31:29,30; Rom. 7:16-18.

The Lord taught a great lesson during the Jewish age by the giving of the Law to that people, with a promise of life attached to it, but the Apostle assures us that God foreknew, even when he gave that Law to the Israelites, that "by the deeds of the Law should no flesh be justified in his sight"—that on the contrary the clearer the Law would be discerned the more clear would be the knowledge of sin—of imperfection. God's provision in Christ is that he will forgive those imperfections which are due, not to personal wilfulness, but to the original sin, and the weaknesses and imperfections which have resulted from it—he will extend his mercy

toward us as respects those deflections which are not wilful. That our Lord Jesus was not ignoring human imperfection is evident from the statement he makes in reference to the fifth of these blessed characteristics, viz., that the merciful "shall obtain mercy"—an implication of our need of mercy. Having assured us that we may obtain mercy, he is not in this sixth Beatitude declaring that we must be absolutely perfect in thought, word and deed; for if we were so, or could attain to such a condition, it would be wholly unnecessary for God to provide us mercy and forgiveness of sins through Christ's sacrifice.

The thought of "pure in heart" is not perfection of conduct nor of word, nor of thought, but perfection of intention as respects all of these. Our desire and effort must be for perfection—in thought, word and deed. The standard before us, to which our hearts, our wills, must give assent, is the divine standard, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) God has set no lower standard than this absolute perfection, but he has provided for us grace, mercy and peace through Christ, if we will walk in his footsteps,—this purity of heart being one of the essential steps in the narrow way.

Only the pure in heart have the promise of seeing God. They continue faithfully to the end of the pilgrimage, not only attaining the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ in the present life (Rom. 8:29) in their purity of heart, purity of intention, sincerity of their efforts toward God and men, but eventually according to the Lord's promise, they shall, by the power of the first resurrection, be changed from earthly to heavenly, spiritual conditions. Then, as the Apostle declares, "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." And when we have thus become changed to be like the glorious Son of God, who is "the express image of the Father's person," we shall be able also unquestionably to see the Heavenly Father himself, and shall be introduced to him by our dear Redeemer—"complete in him," "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—1 John 3:2; Heb. 1:3; Eph. 5:27; Col. 2:10.

In this, as in the other blessings, a portion, a foretaste, comes in the present life. There is such a thing as having the eyes of our understanding opened, that we may be enabled to "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ." (Eph. 3:18.) But not all have this opening of the mental eye; not all are privileged to see the glories of Jehovah's character in symmetrical harmony, divine justice, wisdom, love and power coordinated and cooperating in unison for the blessing of every creature, according to the purpose which God purposed in himself before the world was.

But who may enjoy this blessing, this clearer vision, and who may, by seeing it, be enabled more and more to grow in likeness of that glorious perfection? Only "the pure in heart," only the sincere, the honest-hearted. Those who have a double mind, a double will, are Scripturally said to have a double vision, a double eye. They see spiritual things cross-eyed, see things double, and proportionately indistinctly. Many of God's people have failed thus far to grow up into Christ in all things, see thus doubly and confusedly—they see something of the heavenly things, and something of the earthly; they see but dimly and indistinctly the lines of the divine character, and proportionately they lack ability to copy it. Let all who have named the name of Christ seek more and more to have but the one Master, and an eye single to his glory and service—a pure, a sincere, a faithful heart.

The Sons of God All Peacemakers.

The seventh Beatitude is an outward manifestation of the sixth. The purity of heart toward God, which others cannot discern, will manifest itself in this seventh characteristic of blessedness and growth—namely, in peaceable desires and efforts to promote peace in others. For beyond question no one will be a peacemaker from this divine standpoint unless he have already become sincere, pure in heart toward God; and unless he have also the preceding developments of grace in his heart: (1) humility, (2) sympathy, (3) patient submission, (4) hunger and thirst for righteousness (which includes trust), (5) a love or mercifulness toward others, (6) sincerity of heart. And one who has developed these characteristics to any particular degree can surely be nothing else

than peaceably disposed himself, and a peacemaker with others.

Very evidently but a small number of the Lord's people have progressed so far as to have this grace markedly developed and exemplified in their lives. The great majority, even of those who have named the name of Christ, seem to pursue a reverse course, which indicates that even if their hearts are pure and their sympathies large, they have still much to learn in the school of Christ; for instead of being peace promoters they are strife promoters. Yet this is not of evil intent, but rather of habit, and of ignorance and of failure to discern the wide difference between the divine course of love, and the opposite course of selfishness which prevails in the world. Strife-making is chiefly stirred up with the tongue, tho it may be aroused by a gesture or by a glance. Likewise, peacemaking is chiefly done with the tongue, tho it also may operate through the eye. How many Christian people we all know who have tongues which are continually stirring up strife! The Adversary controls many in this manner long after they have escaped from his control in many other respects; and this is largely because they do not detect that in this they are doing Satan service—do not even detect that they are stirrers up of strife, hatred, envy, malice, and planters of roots of bitterness by which many are defiled.

When will Christians learn the length and breadth and depth of the injunctions "Speak evil of no man," and "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying?" (Titus 3:2; Eph. 4:29.) How long will it take some of God's true children to learn that in uttering an evil thing (even if they were positive of its truth), they may be doing a world of evil? How long will it take them to learn that it is not always necessary to speak the truth, nor ever proper to do so except when it would be for the edifying of others? How many lessons, line upon line, must they have to convince them that they are not only to avoid gossip about other people's business, and fault-finding, and cynicism, but that all these are evidences of their deficiency in love—of their deficiency in the likeness of Christ, and their lack of the qualities of the peacemaker; and that these lacks need to be striven against earnestly, if they would make their calling and election sure to a place in the heavenly kingdom?

Oh, that all would learn by heart, and continually seek to exemplify in life, the words of the Apostle, "Whatsoever things 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." Those who are thinking on the true and lovely and good and beautiful things will speak to each other of the same; hence the importance of having our hearts filled with good things, in order that out of the abundance of the good things of our hearts our mouths may speak continually good things, that the Lord would approve, and that would minister blessing to those who hear.—Phil. 4:8; Luke 6:45.

Such have a very precious promise, well worthy of their efforts—"They shall be called the children of God"—they have God's spirit, the likeness of his dear Son has been traced in their hearts; they have been sanctified with the truth; they shall ultimately be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Only such at heart will the Lord ever recognize as his sons and joint-heirs with his great Son, our Lord, in the Kingdom. Moreover, this is a test which we may well recognize for ourselves particularly, and to some extent for each other, as evidencing the degree of our growth as children of God—our peaceable dispositions, and our carefulness to pursue such a course in life as will tend toward peace.

Some of the Lord's people find in themselves naturally considerable of a spirit of combativeness, unfavorable to peace. Indeed, it requires something of the spirit of combativeness to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, and to "contend earnestly for the faith"; so that those who have combativeness naturally find themselves in antagonism with others along some line continually. However, they should not be discouraged by this, but should remember that combativeness is a valuable servant and soldier, if turned and exercised in the right direction. Its exercise toward fellow creatures must be modified by

mercy, by a realization of our own imperfections and the imperfections of all. Combativeness must be trained to fight along the lines of love and mercy—to fight for the truth and for all the servants and agencies of the truth, and against the error,—but not against the blinded and ignorant servants of the error. Combativeness must be given plenty to do in fighting against the imperfections and weaknesses of our own natures, and being thus busily engaged in this good work, it will find comparatively little time for assaulting others: and realizing the difficulties connected with the conquering of self it will have the greater compassion for the weaknesses of others.

Attaining Great Reward In Heaven.

The blessing that comes through persecution is the eighth Beatitude. It is not until the Lord's people have experienced some of these preceding blessings of His grace that they reach the point where they can "glory in tribulations also," as did the Apostle Paul. But our Lord carefully distinguishes as between different kinds of persecution, marking out the blessed kind as distinct from all other sorts. We are not to invite persecution by fault-finding and general cantankerousness and combative opposition to everybody and everything; nor are we to invite persecution by fanaticism. Rather, we are to cultivate the "spirit of a sound mind," and to learn gradually what the sound mind of the Lord is, as revealed in the Scriptures. Even then, no doubt we will be falsely accused by the world of "fanaticism," because the wisdom of God is oft esteemed foolishness with men, as often the wisdom of men is foolishness from the divine standpoint.

Whenever a course of action would appear to be fanatical and unreasonable, we are to hesitate to do it until we have first made sure that we find the same spirit, teaching and example in our Lord and in the apostles: then we may safely follow, regardless of what the world may say or think respecting our course. For instance, from the divine standpoint it is insanity for a man to labor day and night to amass millions, for his children to fight over at his death; but from the human standpoint this is the reasonable course. From the divine standpoint it was wise for the apostles to spend their lives in the service of the truth, sacrificing earthly interests and prospects, name and fame, to obtain eventually a better resurrection, and eternal glory, honor and immortality; but this, from the world's standpoint was foolishness, fanaticism.

If persecution come to us as a result of our following the Lord, and the apostles,—their teachings and example, and if it is because of our faithfulness to the vows of consecration to His service that all manner of evil is said against us, falsely, then indeed we may rejoice; for so were the prophets persecuted, so was our Lord persecuted, so were the apostles and all the faithful ones since persecuted. Being thus in good company in our experiences, it becomes a witness or testimony to us that we shall be in like good company in that day when the Lord shall make up his Jewels.

All who have such experiences may well rejoice, and if, as the Lord's words intimate, the more of such experiences we have the more will be our reward in heaven, then the more we may rejoice in these experiences. And if we be without any such experiences it behooves us to look well to ourselves, lest peradventure it mean that we are not faithfully walking in the "narrow way" of self-sacrifice,—or are not doing with our might what our hands find to do, but are holding back our sacrifice. Should such be the reflection of any let him not be discouraged, but, in the language of the Prophet, let him "bind the sacrifice to the altar," with fresh cords of love and of zeal, praying the Lord to accept the sacrifice, and to furnish opportunities for being and doing and suffering for His cause, and for the Lord's and the truth's sake.—Psa. 118:27.

The prismatic sum of all these graces is—Love; and those who have them are loveable and shall by and by be made gloriously lovely, with and like him who is "altogether lovely." Our call is to attain these blessed conditions in the Kingdom.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH AND THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.—*Reprints*, p. 2099

"Ye are the salt of the earth … Ye are the light of the world."—Matthew 5:13,14.

SALT and light are two essentials to humanity, and in nature both are abundantly supplied. Salt enters largely into the composition of both animal and vegetable organisms, and its use as a condiment is much appreciated and to a greater or less extent required by both man and beast. At a very early stage of human progress salt became an important element of commerce, and it is believed that the very oldest trade routes were created for traffic in this needful and much valued commodity. Among inland peoples a salt spring was regarded as a special gift of the gods, and so a religious significance began by and by to attach to it; and it was, therefore, as a precious substance, mingled with their offerings to the gods. Homer voiced this sentiment, calling salt divine; and Plato referred to it as "a substance dear to the gods."

In harmony with its uses and its general appreciation the term salt early came to have a generally recognized symbolic significance (which our Lord utilized and perpetuated) to teach important lessons, both under the old dispensation of the law and under the new dispensation of grace. As a savory article of diet, it symbolized hospitality; and as an antiseptic it signified durability, fidelity, purity. Hence the Bible expression "a covenant of salt" (Num. 18:19), as covenants were ordinarily made over a sacrificial meal in which salt was an important element.—"With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." (Lev. 2:13.) The preservative qualities of salt make it, when so used, a fitting symbol of an enduring compact. The purifying property of salt was referred to in its symbolic use by Elisha in his miracle of the healing of the waters.—2 Kings 2:20-22.

The symbolism of salt, therefore, in the above words of our Lord, is clearly this,—that the influence of the true Christian upon the world is a healing, purifying influence, tending always to the preservation of that which is good from the adverse elements of putrefaction and decay. "Ye are the salt of the earth." How significant the comparison!

These words also indicate a responsibility on the part of Christians toward the world in general. Though they are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world (John 17:16), but separated from it, a peculiar people, chosen of God, they are not to forget that this very separation and exaltation to fellowship, communion and cooperation with God, is, not to cultivate in them a pride of aristocracy, but for the purpose of blessing the world; for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem them (John 3:16), and Christ likewise so loved the world as freely to become the instrument of Jehovah for its salvation.—John 6:51; 10:18; Heb. 2:9; Rom. 5:18,19.

We note further that these statements are in the present tense,—Ye **are** the salt and the light,—even now, before the time for the general blessing of all the families of the earth through the Church glorified. We call to mind also the exhortation of the Apostle Paul,—"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt," the appetizing salt of purity, righteousness, truth.—Col. 4:5, 6.

The proper attitude of the Christian toward the world is thus shown to be, not that of a proud, stoical indifference, but that of a noble, generous, loving benevolence which, while it keeps entirely separate from its spirit, from its unholy aims, ambitions and doings, is ever ready to bless and, by precept and example, to point to the way of life and holiness. It is not that attitude which proudly says, "I am holier than thou," but which, on the contrary, says, "I am no better than thou, except for the influences of divine grace, which are free to all who will accept them. By grace, I am what I am; yet still my shortcomings necessitate the merit of my all-sufficient Advocate." It is not necessary that these sentiments should be expressed in words; for actions speak louder than words, and their testimony is much more potent. The testimony of a holy walk and conversation cannot fail to be to the glory of God, to the wisdom and excellence of righteousness, to the reproof of unrighteousness, and to the fact of a coming judgment in which righteousness shall surely triumph.—John 16:8; Acts 24:25.

"Salt is good," said Jesus, referring to its symbolism of purity, righteousness, and to its cleansing, healing and preserving influence; "have salt [purity, righteousness] in your-

selves." (Mark 9:50.) If we have not the salt in ourselves, how can we be the salt of the earth? If we are not truly and sincerely righteous, how can we exert upon others the cleansing, healing influence? Mere outward profession of righteousness will not avail as a substitute for the salt of actual and sincere holiness. Mere profession has no healing properties, and can never fulfill our obligations toward the world. Therefore, let us have the salt of actual holiness in ourselves; so shall we be known and read of men to the praise of God.

Under this same speaking symbol our Lord also adds a word of warning, saying,—"If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth **good for nothing**, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." So if the Christian who once had the salt of righteousness in himself should turn again like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire; if he should wilfully and persistently fall away from his righteousness, he is "thenceforth **good for nothing**." (Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-31,38,39.) How important then that we not only have salt in ourselves, but that we continue to retain its healthful properties!

This same class Jesus also declared to be "the light of the world." Although they do not yet shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of God for the enlightening of the whole world, they are nevertheless luminous even now, and their light may shine within a smaller radius for the blessing of all who will receive it. And the Lord's solicitude for the benighted world, as well as for his saints, is shown in his exhortation to the latter to let their light shine.—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." He also counsels the setting of our light in a position where it may dispel as much as possible of the darkness of this world. We are therefore not to put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick. Zeal for the Lord needs no further exhortation to this duty and privilege; for, like him, all who have his spirit or disposition in the matter will find in this duty and privilege their meat and drink. It will be their joy to let the light that has illuminated their darkness—the light of God's truth and of his holy spirit—shine out through them upon the darkness of others.

Thus, through the salt and the light of God's people, a measure of blessing comes to the world, even before its day of blessing. And at this end of the age we may with some degree of definiteness sum up their effects. A little observation shows that all the blessings of temporal prosperity included under the term "civilization" are due to the influences, direct and indirect, of those comparatively few people who, during this Gospel age, have been the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Civilization is simply the indirect result of the measures of salt and light that have been in the world up to this present time. The faithful people of God have held up the light of divine truth as prominently as they could; and from it they have reasoned of righteousness and of a coming judgment; they have endeavored to salt the minds of men with as much as possible of the knowledge of the principles of righteousness exemplified in their own characters, and have urged their adoption; and to the extent to which these have operated the world has been profited.

The Lord, who foresaw the end from the beginning, knew that, with all their salt and all their light, his people would not be able to accomplish for the world in general more than this, until the appointed time for their exaltation with himself to power and great glory. But even this work of civilization is of great value as preparatory to the greater future work of restitution, and also in facilitating the special work of this Gospel age, of taking out a people prepared for the Lord, to be kings and priests unto God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

Then, beloved heirs of the promises of God, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom, "have salt in yourselves," and forget not that, being thus salted, ye are the salt of the earth, so that your very presence is a rebuke to iniquity, and its continuance a living testimony to the beauty of holiness and the power of divine grace. Let us endeavor also so to focus the light of divine truth and its holy spirit that from the glowing focus of a chastened and purified character the light may radiate again to the blessing of all who will heed it, to the warning of all who will not, and to the praise of the great center and source of all light —God himself.

—MRS. M. F. RUSSELL.

YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.—*Reprints*, p. 3243

> "Ye are the light of the world; … let your light shine. … Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all shall be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees ye shall in nowise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."—Matthew 5:14-20.

OUR Lord's sermon on the mount, from which these words are chosen for our present consideration, was a discourse remarkable for its simplicity and its weighty import. From beginning to end there are in it no attempts at literary embellishment nor oratory nor flights of fancy to please and entertain. His object was to instruct, and he did so in the most simple and forcible language. It will be observed, too, that he did not on this occasion seek a public place where the largest audience could be gathered; but, on the contrary, he chose a place of retirement where he could be alone with his disciples. The multitudes had thronged about him to witness his miracles and to hear his words, and he had healed their sicknesses and taught them many things, but this discourse was one specially designed for his disciples, the household of faith. And here it has been faithfully recorded, that its instructions may extend to the entire household, even to the end of the age. So while we consider these words of our Lord, we may almost realize that in company with Peter and James and John, and many of the brethren and sisters of the early Church, we, too, are sitting on the grassy slopes of the mountain side and hearing the words as they fall from the lips of the greatest preacher the world has ever known. And as we turn away from the hallowed spot, let us not be forgetful hearers, but let us treasure up the words of life; let them sink deep into our hearts and bring forth their rich fruitage unto eternal life.

This fragment of our Lord's discourse indicates a responsibility toward the truth received which it is feared many Christians do not carefully observe and consider. Mark the expression, "**Ye** are the light of the world; … let your light shine." And again he said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world; … he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 9:5; 8:12.) And now, instructed and enlightened from his Word, he would have us remember that we, as his representatives, are the light of the world, and that we should keep our light constantly trimmed and burning—that we must let our light shine so that those following us may not walk in darkness.

Light is a symbol of truth, both in the Scriptures and in common parlance. So the expression, "Ye are the light of the world; … let your light shine," is equivalent to saying—"You are now so illuminated by the truth that you yourself have become a living representative of the truth. So do not in any way obscure it, but let it shine out more and more, that others may be similarly blessed by it." This truth is "the light of life"; it is what the world needs—what all must have before they can attain unto everlasting life. Men must know the truth before the truth can make them free from the bondage of sin and death; they must know the truth before the truth can cleanse and sanctify them. It is the will of God, therefore, that all men shall come to an accurate knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:4.) And therefore it is the duty of every child of God to be very active in the dissemination of the truth—in letting his light shine, and in keeping it trimmed and burning.

" 'Trimmed and burning!' 'trimmed and burning!' " says some thoughtful soul. "I have often sung with fervor those words, 'Let the lower lights be burning,' 'Trim your lamps,' etc., but what does it mean?" It means that we must give very close attention to the words of life that we may come to an exact knowledge of the truth, and that we must carefully and faithfully trim

away every vestige of error as fast as it becomes apparent to us—whether it be an error in doctrine or in our daily walk and conversation—so that the pure light of divine truth may shine out with as little obstruction as possible through the medium of a clear and transparent character.

It is a lamentable fact that many of the Lord's children seem very indifferent to this matter of trimming their lights. They get some truth and with it a great deal of error; and instead of trying to eliminate the error, they hold and teach the two together, so that the light they shed is not a pure light, but is colored and distorted by the shades with which it is mixed. And again, even when much pure truth is held, there are those who fail to let it have its cleansing effect upon the character, and so the light is obscured and misrepresented by the unclean medium through which it passes. Any who continue thus to hold the sacred trust of truth are really unworthy of it, and must eventually lose it; for it is written, "Light [truth] is sown for the righteous"; and such indifference to the claims of the truth is unrighteousness.

In our Lord's day there were those who openly professed to be teachers and representatives of divine truth. The scribes and pharisees professed to be very zealous for the truth, and thought themselves very creditable manifestations of its cleansing power. They claimed to have the light and to be letting it shine. "God," said the pharisee, "I thank thee that I am not as other men. … I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess." But the Lord said, "Woe unto you; … ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and deceit." So they appeared in the Lord's sight; but they were reverenced and honored of men and esteemed as holy, and as guides in the way of truth and holiness. To God's law they presumed to add their own vain and foolish traditions, which made void the law of God, and they were very zealous in teaching these traditions to the people.

In so doing those teachers were inexcusable. The law of God was open before them, and it was their privilege and their duty to be correctly informed with reference to it. And especially after Christ had come, and by his teaching had made the truth so manifest, and the absurdity of their vain traditions so apparent, they were without excuse. And our Lord's accusation of hypocrisy well fitted their case when they resolutely determined to hold and teach the traditions of the Elders and to oppose the increasing light of truth which made their absurdity so manifest.

The scribes and pharisees had much truth: they had the whole law of God and claimed to believe and teach it; but they miserably colored and distorted it by their traditions and their really ignoble, though whitewashed, characters. And consequently their efforts, professedly to convert men to God, resulted only in making more hypocrites like themselves.

"I say unto you," said the Lord to his disciples, "that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Let us beware of that kind of righteousness which to men may indeed appear fair and praiseworthy, but which, in God's estimation, is mere sham and hypocrisy. God, who reads the heart, quickly discerns the motives with which we receive or disseminate the Truth; and foolish indeed is the man who attempts to make merchandise of this divine treasure for the paltry gains of this fleeting life, who prefers to hold and to teach error and becloud or oppose the truth of God, or to sell it after having once accepted it, for money, or influence, or popularity among his dying fellow-travelers on the way to the tomb, or for any consideration whatever.

And yet there are some who, though they do not thus hypocritically make merchandise of the Truth, do in a measure undervalue it, and who, both in the present and in the future, will be the losers thereby. If we permit prejudice, or some measure of self emulation, or of pride, or of combativeness, or any other thing, to interrupt the freedom of artless candor and simplicity and that spirit of meekness which alone befits the searchers after truth, we will find ourselves approaching the pharisaical spirit which, when fully ripe, becomes glaring hypocrisy. Those who avoid such a disposition, and who, therefore, in meekness and sincerity fully accept the Truth and zealously teach it at any

cost or sacrifice, shall, the Lord says, be called great in the kingdom of heaven; while those who hold and teach a measure of error when it was their privilege to have clear Truth, had they been in the right condition of heart to receive it, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 5:19.

Prejudices and various old deformities of disposition often greatly retard the progress of some of God's sincerely consecrated children; and in consequence their efforts, which are verily meant to be in God's service, are misdirected, and they are found both believing and teaching contrary to the Truth on points where God's Word is very explicit. Let us beware of these things, and, diligently casting behind us every hindrance to our personal progress in the way of truth and to our usefulness in the Master's service, let us run with patience, with meekness and diligence the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, who has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness."

PERFECT AS YOUR FATHER IS PERFECT—*Reprints*, p. 4558

MATTHEW 5:19-36,38-48.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matthew 5:48.

SINCE the Lord's followers have fallen flesh it is not possible for them to be perfect as God is perfect—except in heart, in intention. But this good heart intention is not sufficient to prove us worthy of a share with Christ as his "elect" to the glories of his Kingdom. Our profession of pure heart and God-likeness must be tested. It must be demonstrated and developed to the point of fixity of character. It must stand tests of temptation. It must endure faithfulness under stress. Hence those accepted as disciples of Christ are required to be faithful under very trying circumstances.

The Jews had gradually lost sight of the Divine Law and had filled their minds with certain traditions which were more or less contrary to the Law. The Great Teacher, ignoring the Rabbis, might have been thought by some to be setting aside the Law, but he assured them, to the contrary, that he was merely setting aside human traditions and seeking to establish the Law and make it the more manifest. The people regarded the Scribes and Pharisees as very religious and holy. But Jesus assured them that they must have greater holiness or they would never enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Tradition quoted the Law, "Thou shalt not kill," and then added, "Whosoever shall kill will be in danger of the judgment"—in danger of trial and punishment by the appointed judges. But Jesus taught a still more rigid application, namely, that anger against a brother (in the heart, unexpressed) would mean a murderous condition of mind, which would be reprehensible in God's sight, even though the murder might never be actually committed. More than this, he reprehended unkind remarks, as, **rakah**, signifying "blockhead," and **"thou fool,"** as meaning still worse, a moral degenerate. Our Lord declared that such expressions indicated wrong conditions of heart, which might ultimately bring the individual before the Sanhedrin, or, possibly, eventually lead him on into the Second Death, symbolized by *Gehenna*.

Hell fire in this study is literally **Gehenna fire**. It refers to fires kept burning in the Valley of Hinnom (*Gehenna*) for the destruction of offal and the prevention of contagion. Into this fire the carcasses of malicious evil-doers might be thrown for destruction. It thus symbolized the Second Death.—Rev. 20:14.

According to the Galilean Prophet it would be useless for anyone to approach God's altar with a sacrificial gift while his heart contained any enmity against another. Hence any of Christ's disciples before offering a gift to the Lord should search their hearts and purge them from enmity, knowing that otherwise their sacrifices and praises would be vain.

The advice of verses 25,26 is sound. If there is an obligation against us we should settle and discharge it as quickly as possible. It was an important lesson for all Jews to learn that their Law Covenant, which they supposed was their friend and assistant, was really their adversary

and **condemned** them all. Because of imperfection of flesh, they were unable to keep the Law and could not have its approval, and hence had its condemnation. The proper course for all who recognized this was to seek as good a settlement with the Law as possible, confessing their imperfection.

Those who heeded our Lord's advice, realized their imperfect condition and cried for help and found forgiveness in Jesus through his sacrifice. Thus, by faith, these were permitted to come into God's favor and blessing at Pentecost. But the Pharisees, hypocritically claiming to keep the Law perfectly, did not come to terms with it and confess their sins repentantly, and did not accept Jesus, and did not obtain the Pentecostal blessing. On the contrary all of that Jewish nation who rejected Jesus stumbled into prison nationally, and wrath came upon that people to the uttermost. And until all things written in the Law and the prophets concerning them shall be fulfilled, they shall not come out of that prison-house. They said, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," and they are held condemned of their Law. It will require all of the Millennial Age for them to profit by the opportunities of the Millennium, to rise up out of sin and death conditions. By the end of the Millennium through the Lord's grace they will have "paid the uttermost farthing" and then the willing and obedient shall get free. Every Jew who would get free from that Law obligation could have done so only by confessing his shortcomings and inability and by accepting a share in the sacrifice of Christ. Only the few agreed with the Law-adversary.—John 1:12.

"Eye For Eye—Tooth For Tooth"

The Mosaic Law laid down the Divine principle which the Judges of Israel were to follow, **"an eye for an eye,"** the exaction of strict justice. The people had applied this to their individual relationships unwarrantedly, with the result that it cultivated hardness of heart, an exacting disposition, pitiless, merciless. Our Lord's teachings showed the error of this and pointed to the more excellent way—love. Although the Heavenly Father had made the Law, he had also prepared to show mercy and did show it in sending his Son into the world to be the Redeemer of sinners, that they might not perish, but have eternal life through obedience to the Savior. How much more proper was it that fellow-sufferers, both imperfect, should be lenient, tender-hearted toward each other. Mark the Lord's words, I say unto you that by requiring an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth, in exacting justice of your imperfect fellows, you are encouraging an improper spirit in your own hearts.

(1) If your enemy smite you on the cheek turn to him the other one—not literally, but in your heart, mentally. Do not retaliate in kind. That our Lord did not mean this literally, is demonstrated by the fact that when on trial he was smitten but did not ask to be smitten again. Figuratively he turned the other cheek, but not literally.

(2) If any man sue us at the Law and **legally** get possession of our property we are to feel no grudge against him, but are to render up willingly all that the Court might decree, more rather than less. We are to be law-abiding to the extreme.

(3) If conscripted for Government service after the manner of ancient times and compelled to carry a burden for a mile, the Lord's followers were not to be too close or exacting, but evidence their good will by doing a little more, rendering help for another mile if necessary or expedient, rather than grumble and shirk legal exactions.

(4) The Lord's followers are to cultivate generosity. As the Heavenly Father is always giving and never asking, so all his children should have this character-likeness, and be ready to give something to anyone in need. This need not necessarily mean extravagant gifts, nor all that the petitioner would desire. Judgment, discretion, is to be used. But the desire to give, to help, should by all means be **cultivated** in his own heart by every follower of Jesus. And from him who would borrow of them they should not turn away. They should, on the contrary, do good and lend, hoping for no similar favor in return. The Lord's people might not thus amass as much money as others, but they would be pleasing and honoring their Heavenly Father, and laying up treasure in heaven, and getting their own hearts into that condition which God could approve and bless in the Kingdom.

"Bless Them That Curse You"

Tradition taught that neighbors should be loved and enemies be hated; but the Great Teacher said that enemies also should be loved and blessed, even though they returned persecution and injury. It was this new and high order of teaching which marked our Redeemer's utterances as different from all others.

The cultivation of this spirit of love for enemies, as well as for friends, would mark the followers of Jesus as children of God, as having the Heavenly Father's Spirit—disposition. He sends the sunshine on sinners and on saints. And the rain comes down for the just and for the unjust. It is difficult to estimate the amount of harm done to our minds by the traditions of the "Dark Ages" respecting God's intention to torment eternally his enemies—all except the elect. Thank God that we find that these teachings are not from his Book! They made our forefathers heretic-burners.

Admittedly love is a glorious quality and God-like quality. But if it extend only to those who love in return, how would it be worthy of any special reward? Do not the heathen, yea, all men, love after this fashion? And if we are courteous merely to those who are courteous to us, wherein are we superior to Gentiles and sinners?

The followers of Jesus, the pupils in his school, are to take the highest standard of excellence for their pattern,—their loving Creator. They are to strive for perfection such as his. They are to attain it in their hearts, and, so far as possible, outwork it in every thought and word and deed of their fallen flesh.

PRAYER A GREAT PRIVILEGE—*Reprints*, p. 5021

MATTHEW 6:1-18.

"Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them:
else ye have no reward with your Father which is in heaven."—Matthew 6:1. (R.V.)

THE MASTER in today's lesson tells of proper and improper giving of charity. He extends the subject and explains proper and improper prayers and finally proper and improper fasting. In all these He denounces hypocrisy, theatrical display. His followers are to be actuated solely by a desire to please the Heavenly Father and have His approval. There may be times and places where the giving of charity in the presence of others would be perfectly proper, or praying in the presence of others would be entirely right, and where fasting might come to the knowledge of others without reproach.

The point which the Great Teacher makes is the motive actuating us. If we are actuated by a selfish motive, if we are seeking show and applause or earthly gain, the procedure cannot bring Divine approval or blessing—"Blessed are the pure in heart." We may be **seen** to do good or to pray or to fast, but we are not to do our charities, our praying and our fasting to be seen. Of such the Lord says, "They have received their reward"—nothing more is coming to them; they get the publicity sought.

The Privilege of Prayer

Prayer is a privilege. Jesus did not command His disciples to pray, nor did He even give them a form of prayer until they requested it. "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." The Lord's people must feel their need of Divine grace and help in order to appreciate the privilege of approaching the throne of heavenly grace. The trials and difficulties, the sorrows and temptations of life frequently impel God's children to prayer. It marks a better, a higher Christian development when they love to come to the Throne of grace, not only in their sorrows, but also in their joys, to give thanks, to praise, to worship, to adore.

It will be noticed that our Lord did not tell about how the world should pray, but merely taught His disciples: "when **ye** pray." As a matter of fact, the Gentiles, the world of mankind in general, have no access to the Throne of grace. Only those in covenant relationship with God (Jews and Christians) ever had any Divine assurance that their petitions would be accepted by Him. This may cause surprise to some, so general is the custom of encouraging

and exhorting everybody to pray. A brief glance at the situation, however, shows us the fixed principle underlying the matter. Let us note it. The world in general, the race of Adam, was alienated from God through wicked works. Adam was under a covenant with God by which he enjoyed the privileges of a son of God. This included fellowship, communion, prayer and Divine supervision and care even to the extent of everlasting life. But Adam's disobedience broke that covenant, abolished that covenant-relationship and all its privileges. (Hos. 6:7, R.V.) The only ones who now enjoy the privilege of prayer are those who have been accepted of God back into covenant-relationship. The natural Israelite was so accepted under the Law Covenant; hence the Temple at Jerusalem was called the House of Prayer. It was specifically for the Jewish nation, but all nationalities had the privilege of becoming Jewish Proselytes and thus of being received into all the privileges of Jews, which included the privilege of prayer.

Our Lord, on the basis of His better sacrifice for sins, made holy and acceptable to still higher privileges of prayer such as became His disciples, His footstep followers. These, from Pentecost onward, were called sons of God and enjoyed the begetting of the Holy Spirit. At first these were only Jewish believers, but in due time the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down, and all Gentile believers, from the time of Cornelius onward, were accepted as spirit begotten sons and granted all the privileges of prayer.—Acts 10.

These Gentiles did not come into relationship with God through the Mosaic Law Covenant, but through the Covenant of sacrifice, under which they were called and accepted as joint-sacrificers with Christ: "Gather together My saints unto Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) Only such Gentiles as accept Christ and enter with Him into this covenant of sacrifice can, during this Age, become sons of God and enjoy the privileges of sonship, of which prayer is one. The habit of inviting people out of covenant-relationship with God to pray is both unscriptural and unreasonable. God heareth not sinners (John 9:31); those who come to Him through Christ are acceptable only because Jesus is their Advocate. It is plain to be seen, then, that those who approach God in their own names—without having accepted the Advocate and His terms of discipleship—such can have no standing with the Father and their prayers are unacceptable.

Instead of exhorting our friends and neighbors to pray to God and to trust for the fulfillment of their prayers, we should give them the Scriptural counsel, to repent of sin and by faith to accept the forgiveness of their sins, according to the testimony of God's Word, by making a full consecration of themselves to be the footstep followers of Jesus. Then, as sons of God, they would have all the privileges of sonship in this present time as well as the glorious prospects hereafter.

Vain Repetitions of The Heathen

All are heathens or Gentiles—all of the world who have not left the world and come into covenant-relationship with God through Christ. Such outsiders, not understanding the Only Way, the Only Door of God's favor, vainly suppose that they will be heard for their much speaking, and therefore repeat their prayers. Some use praying wheels; others use beads; and still others repeat hundreds of times certain ejaculations.

None are heard except those of Jesus' followers, and Jesus counsels these not to think that the length of their prayers would make them acceptable with the Father. They have no need to offer long prayers, because, as Jesus said, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." Why then should we ask at all? Because this is the Divine arrangement, and evidently with the purpose of stimulating our faith and of giving us the greater and the more frequent blessings. God thus deals with us as with dear children whom He loves and whom He would educate into the practices of life most helpful to themselves. When Jesus had long prayers to offer they were never uttered in public; He went apart into the mountain. So with His followers; they are to go aside and have their communion with the Father chiefly in private, although fellowship in public prayer in gatherings of the Lord's people is distinctly approved.

A Form of Sound Words

Responding to the request of His disciples Jesus gave a sample of a proper prayer. We note its brevity, its simplicity, its directness, its orderliness.

(1) It opens with an ascription of praise and a plea that we are coming as children to a father: "Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed [adored, honored] be Thy name." God's Name represents His character, His Kingdom, His personality. First of all, then, we ascribe honor, reverence, majesty, glory to our great Creator, who through His appointed way we delight to call our Father in Heaven.

(2) Next in order we acknowledge the Divine rule, authority. This means that our hearts are submissive to the will of God, for joy or sorrow, for pleasure or pain, for life or death, and we are continuing to express our confidence in the Divine power and promise that ultimately the Divine will shall be as fully and completely done in the earth as it is now done in Heaven: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven." In this we recognize the coming of Messiah's Kingdom and indirectly our own hopes connected with that Kingdom—that we, if faithful, shall be associated with the Lord in His glorious Throne, in dispensing the blessings of Divine power and mercy to mankind, so as to effect the regeneration of all the willing and obedient of mankind.

(3) Our daily needs, our daily bread, is next the subject of request: "Give us this day our daily bread." How simple! God has promised that our bread and our water shall be sure in the sense that He will not forget us and our needs. In our petitions we merely suggest that we are waiting confidently upon the Lord, nothing doubting His willingness and ability to perform His promises. He has not promised, nor are we to ask for an abundance, wealth, riches, nor are we to specify fine food or luxuries. The thought is, Father, grant us daily such provisions for life's necessities as seemeth to Thee best for us. And should Divine Providence ever fail to make the provision, the believing soul is to recognize that it is neither from oversight nor from lack of power, but because Divine Wisdom sees best thus to deal with us.

(4) "Forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors." Here is emphasized the Master's teaching that only the merciful shall obtain mercy, that only the forgiving shall be forgiven. This has no reference whatever to the forgiveness of their original sins—they are past and gone forever to those who remain under the blood; they were covered when we accepted Christ and entered into covenant-relationship with Him. But we have daily shortcomings, weaknesses, imperfections, frailties, trespasses against the Divine Law. These we are to acknowledge, and Divine arrangement has been made for their forgiveness in harmony with our prayers, with but the one proviso, viz., that we appreciate the matter so deeply that we ourselves are acting upon the same principle in our dealings with others.

(5) "Lead us not into temptation [to abandon us there]." We feel our own weakness, imperfection; hence, while knowing that we must be brought in Divine providence into positions of trial and testing, we may well pray not to be abandoned there, not to be left to our own strength, but that in harmony with the Lord's agreement His grace may be sufficient for us.

(6) The Bible assures us that there is an Evil One, and that he has great power and influence amongst men, that he is "the Prince of the power of the air," and "the god of this Age." How appropriate that we should request the Lord not to abandon us to the Devil's wiles!

The words, "For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen," are not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts, and are therefore properly omitted in the Revised Version as being no part of the Scriptures. The kingdom or rule of the present time are not of God. His Kingdom and power and glory are not in evidence. We await the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom for the overthrow of Satan's Empire, and the binding of the Adversary for a thousand years, and the ushering in then of the Divine Kingdom and power and glory, forever.

WORTHY AND UNWORTHY AMBITION—*Reprints*, p. 4566

MATTHEW 6:19-34.

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness
and all these things shall be added unto you."

THE Great Teacher taught no extravagance. He was energetic in the Father's business and taught his followers to be "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Nevertheless his teaching in this lesson is that our energies are not to take the selfish form of laying up earthly treasures: We are to lay up heavenly treasures instead. Notwithstanding the reference to moth and rust and thieves despoiling earthly treasures, we understand his teaching rather on a higher plane, though the principle is a broad one. All will admit that it would be folly to lay up clothing or food far in advance of need, except under very peculiar circumstances. But gold might be treasured, or money in the bank, or bonds, or stocks, or farm added to farm, and house to house, and the same principle would be involved.

Although no moth could touch the bank account, nor rust injure the gold, and no thieves could steal the title to the property, the principle is the same. Treasures of every kind may lose their value—do lose their value to us, when we die, if not before. Death, corruption, touches everything earthly under present conditions, no matter how careful or thoughtful the provision. "Naked came we into the world, and naked must we leave it." (Job. 1:21.) Intelligent people are generally agreed that God has provided a future life beyond the tomb, attainable in the resurrection morning. And the Scriptures teach that the degree of our blessing then will stand related to our use of the present life. It is this point that the Great Teacher emphasized in the study of today. All intelligent minds assent to the reasonableness of this.

Let us not take the extreme view entertained by some; let us not suppose that the Master taught that people might not make reasonable provision for their own comfort, and that they might not be dependent upon charity in old age. Let us not suppose that he meant that parents should be neglectful of their duties toward dependent members of their family. The Bible distinctly teaches that "he who provides not for his own is worse than an unbeliever." The proper thought, then is that it is right to economize and, as St. Paul expresses it, "to lay by in store" for our own future needs or that we may have to lend to others, in need. God's people are to be frugal, to avoid debts, to be "forehanded," and with some reserve of capital.

But earthly things are not to be the treasures of their souls, but merely their servants, conveniences—always ready for use, for every emergency, freely, whole-heartedly. He who follows this course will rarely have large earthly wealth. Only by making wealth a treasure and setting upon it inordinate desire can one become miserly or very rich. Setting the affections on things above would signify so loose a handling of worldly riches as would hinder the accumulation or preservation of great wealth.

The Master's word is, that whoever sets his affections upon earthly treasures will become sordid, selfish, earthly; while he who sets his affections upon the things above will become correspondingly heavenly, spiritual, blessed, generous. We have two eyes and if they be not properly adjusted with relationship to each other our vision of things will be distorted. Hence we seek to correct such a difficulty, that we may get the true view of matters. So it is with the eye of our understanding. It has both a present and a future outlook, an earthly and a heavenly view. It is important that we get these rightly adjusted, so that we may see matters in their true light—see the great value of the future life in comparison with the present one, and correspondingly be guided to the setting of our heart affections there, and in general balancing all the interests of life wisely.

As in the natural body the eyes may become darkened or blinded, so it is with our eyes of understanding. And if this blindness come upon us after we have once seen and enjoyed the Divine promise, our case would be all the more pitiable. How great that darkness would be!

Still another lesson there is for us along the same line. The serving of mammon would bless us in the present life, but be injurious to our future interests. But the service of God would

prepare us for future influence. And although obedience to God may cost us the loss of the pleasures of sin and the loss of some legitimate worldly blessing in the present time, nevertheless there is a blessing even now to those who are faithful servants of God and righteousness. And additionally there is the glorious prospect of the future. It is necessary, however, for us to choose between the two masters. We cannot serve both. We cannot get the rewards of both. As Joshua did, so let us determine, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

The Master urges us to commit all of our interests to God and to wholly resolve to be obedient to him, to the extent of our ability, and then to realize the Divine care which is over all creation to be specially over us, because of having come into special relationship to him, in accordance with his promises. Such need have no anxiety with respect to their earthly affairs, but may trust all their interests to their Heavenly Father. Our eternal life is worth more than the food and raiment of the present life. If wise we will seek the future life at any cost, at any sacrifice of the present one.

As for the ability of our Heavenly Father to care for our interests, we should consider the manifestations in nature of his power and wisdom and grace, in his provision for the fowl of the air and for the lily of the field. We should realize that he has equal power to provide for our best interests; thus faith should firmly trust him, come what may. Suppose we were of small stature, and inclined to worry over the matter of increasing our height? Then let us realize our own littleness and look rather to the Lord for the things respecting the present as well as the future life. Let us be diligent in his service, leaving all of our present experiences as well as our future rewards to his wisdom, love and power.

Should we suppose that God, who cares for the lilies and the birds, would not much more care for us after we had become his children through faith in Christ and through the consecration of our lives? Let us then cast off all anxious care respecting food and raiment and all matters pertaining to these which the world in general are worried about. To be without worry would not mean to be without proper concern and due diligence to find work and to do it. But our Father knows better than we the things that we really need, and faith is not merely to trust him, but to accept what he gives as being for our best interests.

Our chief concern as followers of Christ is to seek to attain a share in God's Kingdom with our dear Redeemer—a share in the Millennial Kingdom as the Bride of Christ, who shall sit with him in his glorious Throne for the blessing and uplifting of the world of mankind. We have our Master's assurance for it that whoever pursues this course will do wisely and that God will look out for his earthly interests, for his highest welfare. So doing our lives will be crowned with peace and joy and rest in the Lord, which in his Word he has promised those who trust him.

THE ROYAL LAW—THE GOLDEN RULE.—*Reprints*, p. 2589

MATTHEW 7:1-14.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

IN THIS lesson we have another leaf from our Lord's great Sermon on the Mount. This is not a sermon to sinners but to the Lord's consecrated people; and although there were multitudes within the hearing of our Lord's voice, all of whom belonged to the typically consecrated nation, yet our Lord addressed himself specially to his twelve chosen disciples, who were being particularly and fully instructed, that they, under the spirit dispensation soon to be inaugurated, might become the twelve foundations of the heavenly Kingdom, represented symbolically in the New Jerusalem of Revelation.—Rev. 21:14.

True, many of the features of this Royal Law were then and still are sound advice for all who can receive them; but the fact remains that comparatively few are blessed with the opening of eyes and unstopping of ears to permit their appreciation of these holy pearls of truth; and

assuredly they were addressed to and intended for only those who could receive them. Thank God for the good hope that ere long, the Kingdom being established, all the blind eyes shall be opened, all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and that in God's "due time" these precepts of the Golden Rule of Love will be appreciated by all and be applicable to all—whether they respond to them or reject them.

Following our Lord's example and injunction, we are endeavoring to set meat in due season, "things new and old," before the household of faith, the children of the Kingdom, and not before "dogs"—those who are still outside of divine favor, who have not yet received the grace of God and been adopted into his family and constituted sons. These precious truths are pearls of great price—of great value—to those who have the hearing ear and the understanding and appreciative heart—those who have been begotten of the spirit and are "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and seeking to live the new life. We do not attempt to present these matters to the brutish, the swinish, knowing that they would not appreciate them; but would merely feel a disappointment and resent our good intentions to our injury. Our Lord points this out later on in the discourse (verse 6), and his words are in full accord with those of Solomon, "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee." —Prov. 9:7,8.

It is to the household of faith, then, that the Lord says, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It is useless that we give this advice to others than the pupils in the school of Christ, for not having put themselves under the instruction of the great Teacher it gives evidence that his instructions are not appreciated by them. But all true disciples (learners, pupils) should give earnest heed to this injunction, and should understand that it contains a very important lesson, which unlearned will render them unready for the great examination, unready for graduation, unready for the Kingdom; because in their examination this will be one of the tests. If they have been fault-finding, cynical, hypercritical, etc., judging others harshly and uncharitably, it will be a clear token that they have not developed the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love,—which is full of kindness and consideration: hence such would be judged or condemned as unfit for the Kingdom, for according to our way of judging others we will be judged—since nothing else will better demonstrate our true spiritual condition,—the presence or absence of love.

Whatever measure of mercy and generosity we mete out to others will be the measure of divine mercy that will be extended to us. If all the Lord's people could have well impressed upon their hearts this lesson from the great Teacher's lips, how wonderfully it would affect their attitude toward others, in thought as well as in deed; how generous, how forgiving, how sympathetic for the weaknesses of others they would become; how the spirit of love would grow in their hearts and manifest itself in their words and deeds!

Rafters in Their Eyes.

Emphasizing this lesson, our Lord suggests that those who are always finding fault with the "brethren" who, like themselves, are seeking to walk in the narrow way—who can never see the noble efforts of the "brethren" to copy the Master, but are continually picking at them, are the very ones who have the greatest of faults in themselves,—lovelessness. The exaggeration of our Lord's words of reproof to this class seems to imply a vein of sarcasm, for literally he says, Why do you stare so at your fellow who is troubled with a grain of sawdust in his eye, while you have a whole rafter in your own eye? All the "brethren" are more or less troubled with difficulties of one kind or another, weaknesses of the flesh,—because all have the treasure of the new nature in imperfect earthen vessels—marred by original sin. "There is none righteous, no, not one" absolutely perfect. Yet the brethren whose hearts are full of love, even though they have sawdust in their eye of faith, or intellectual discernment or spiritual discernment, and perhaps also splinters in their hands, which affect all the deeds of life, and render their work imperfect, and tho many of them have splinters in their feet also, so that their walk is by no means perfect, as they would desire it to be—yet if they have the spirit of faith and of love and of sympathy, the spirit of Christ, they are his, and far more acceptable to him than any could possibly be who are devoid of the spirit of love and sympathy, and

who therefore in this parable are represented as wholly perverted in their judgment of others, because possessing so little of the Lord's spirit and so much of the spirit of the Adversary—the great "accuser of the brethren."

This loveless, fault-finding, brethren-accusing class the Lord denominates hypocrites. Why? Because in finding fault with others they are evidently wishing to give the inference that they are not afflicted with the same malady of sin themselves; they evidently wish to give the impression that they are holy, and since they know in their own hearts that this is untrue, and that they have many failings, many imperfections—therefore their course is hypocritical, false, deceptive, displeasing to God. Their claim that their fault-finding is prompted by love for the erring and a hatred of sin is deceptive and hypocritical as our Lord's words clearly show. Otherwise they would find plenty to do in hating and condemning and battling with their own sins and weaknesses;—casting out their own rafter of self-conceit and hypocrisy. The experiences thus gained would make them very tender and merciful and loving in their assistance of others.

All of the "brethren" should carefully view this picture which our Lord portrayed, and should note well to see whether or not they have any of the evil disposition of heart—fault-finding, nagging, harsh criticism and denunciation—different degrees of the same fault. If they find any trace of such a "beam" of lovelessness and self-conceit in their spiritual eye, they should go at once to the great Physician and have it thoroughly eradicated, that they thus may speedily become gentle, sympathetic assistants to the "brethren," and be prepared as successful surgeons and physicians for the great work of the Millennial age—the kindly and sympathetic opening of the blind eyes of humanity and the healing of all the wounds of sin.

Tying Grape Clusters To Thorn Bushes.

But while we are not to judge our "brother," who with us professes to be endeavoring to walk in the footsteps of our Master, and who gives any evidences at all of sincerity in the matter, we nevertheless are to do a certain kind of judging as respects mankind in general. Elsewhere the Lord intimates that "by their fruits" we are to "know" grapevines from thorn-bushes, and figs from thistles. And in this sermon he intimates that we are to judge or discern as between the brethren and "dogs" and "swine"—the selfish, the sensual, who mind earthly things and who have never been begotten of the spirit of God. We may know these by outward evidences, for "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his;" and if he is none of his, not a branch of the Vine, we are not to waste our time in trying to tie onto him bunches of the fruits of the vine. We are not to attempt to deceive others or ourselves by helping to counterfeit the true holy spirit in the selfish, unregenerate world. We are not to expect that this class, whose appreciation is only for earthly things, to appreciate holy, heavenly things, any more than we would expect that dogs would appreciate the difference between meat from the butcher-shop and the holy, consecrated meat eaten only by the priesthood. We are not to expect that the swinish and groveling, who think only of money and the things of this life, would appreciate the pearls of truth which are so precious in the sight of the brethren, begotten of the spirit.

This does not mean that we should never bring holy things to the attention of those who are not the Lord's consecrated people; but it does mean that a mere presentation of the first principles of righteousness and truth should quickly manifest to us those who have an ear for the truth, and those who have not,—that finding the hearing ear we might give diligence to serve it, and finding the ear closed we might cease to waste our time, knowing that the effort would be fruitless as respects the calling of this Gospel age—to saintship, to the divine nature, to joint-heirship in the Kingdom. The Millennial age will soon be ushered in, and that will be God's time for breaking the hard hearts, for opening the blind eyes, and unstopping the deaf ears.

Indeed, in some respects the efforts which have been expended upon the "dogs" and the "swine"—the thorn-bushes and the thistles, endeavoring to tie to these various imitations of the fruits of the spirit of Christ, and to make the meat of the household palatable to them, have been positively injurious to the Lord's

cause. The "brethren" have been neglected in the endeavor to feed the "dog" class; the making ready of the Bride for the Bridegroom, and adorning her with the pearls of truth, has been neglected in the endeavor to interest the "swine" in the pearls. The real value of the true vine, in producing good fruit, and the wide difference of nature between it and a bramble bush, has been greatly obscured by the appropriation of the vine's natural fruitage to the bramble. Let us not be wise above what is written; let us attend in the present time to the work which God has appointed for this age, and leave to his appointed time the general work for the world of mankind.

How To Overcome Loveless Self-Conceit.

Returning to the lessons which the "brethren" must learn, and possibly having specially in mind the correction of the tendency to judge one another, our Lord gives instructions how these wrong qualities may be eradicated. We are to ask of the Lord the needed measure of love and sympathy which will hinder us from judging others, and which will help us in correcting our own defects. If we ask sincerely, truly, we will receive his grace and help in this direction. And while asking, it is our duty to be seeking the things which we lack, the holy spirit of love to fill our hearts; and if we seek it we shall find it. We are to knock upon the Lord's store-house of grace and blessing by continued efforts, as well as prayer without ceasing, and as a result it will surely be opened to us. The asking, the seeking, the knocking, will all imply faith in the Lord, which will be pleasing in his sight, and it will also imply faithfulness on our part and a desire to be conformed fully to the Lord's will. And these good desires of our hearts shall be gratified, because, as an earthly parent would respond to his child's request for earthly food, so will the Lord respond and supply grace in every time of need to his children. He will not deceive us nor give us evil things, when we desire the good, but will do for us exceedingly abundantly more than we could ask or think; for is not our heavenly Father much better than any imperfect human father could possibly be?

Luke's reference to this discourse (11:13) declares that the good thing that God will be pleased to give these asking, seeking, knocking ones, is his holy spirit. And this is exactly what is needed, as an offset to the unholy, unloving, selfish, judging and fault-finding spirit of the flesh, which must be cast out. The antidote for the poison is that we should be filled with the holy spirit, the spirit of love, for "love worketh no ill to his neighbor;" love "suffereth long and is kind;" love "is not puffed up" to see the faults of others and to be blind to its own; it "vaunteth not itself" to be a general critic, fault-finder and "accuser of the brethren." Love is sympathetic, helpful, the spirit of God.—1 Cor. 13:4; Rom. 13:10.

"Working in You That Which Is Wellpleasing in His Sight."—Heb. 13:21.

"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." The word "therefore" shows the connection between this and the preceding features of the lesson: it signifies that this will be a test or rule by which we may discern when and to what extent we are misjudging the motives of others, and officiously endeavoring to perform the very delicate operation of removing their splinters. This verse is therefore known as the "Golden Rule,"—the rule which God would have his people use in respect to all the affairs of life—especially in their relationship and dealings with the "brethren." When disposed to find a fault, or pick a flaw, when disposed to condemn another or to criticize another's faults, or to hold him up to odium, we can generally know of the propriety or impropriety of so doing or thinking by asking ourselves the question: Would I wish the brother to do, to say or to think thus respecting me, if I were he and he were I?

This rule, closely followed, will very generally be a guide, and yet we have known instances in which the Lord's people seemed so anxious for an excuse for slander, for evil speaking, for gossip, that they found some kind of a way of excusing themselves for the violation of the Golden Rule, even when they remembered it and at heart wished to obey it. Let us be very careful, dear brethren, how we handle the Lord's rule—that we do not handle the Word of God deceitfully—that we do not blind and deceive ourselves respecting its true

importance—that we do not thus vitiate and impair our consciences—that we do not thus thwart our prayers for the holy spirit. For the holy spirit can flow into our hearts only as the channel is open; and the channel can be kept open only by keeping this Golden Rule continually at work at its full gauge. This Golden Rule and all these lessons, that seem so new because presented by the great Teacher in a clearer and sharper light than ever before, were nevertheless the gist or essence of the Mosaic Law, and of the Lord's teachings through the prophets.

Narrow Is The Way.

Our Lord intimates that such a life of carefulness respecting not only our actions but also our words and even our very thoughts (which are the springs from whence proceed our words and actions) will be a very "narrow way"—a difficult way. And yet it is the only way by which we can hope to enter into the life and Kingdom of joys which are now set before us in the Gospel call. The broad way, the easy way, the selfish way, the worldly way, does not lead to the Kingdom: on the contrary, it leads to death—to the Second Death, to utter destruction. The many are going in that way now, and only the few find and enter into the straight gate and narrow way to the Kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality.

This does not, however, either say or imply that the present age is the only one in which any opportunity will be given to escape the destruction toward which the broad way and the world tend; though it is the only way now open. The Word of the Lord elsewhere points out to us that after the select little flock, the elect Church, the Bride, the body of Christ, shall have been selected from amongst mankind—composed of those who seek and walk in the narrow way—after these shall have been glorified with the Redeemer, will come a time when, in the Lord's providence, a grand highway of holiness shall be opened to the world of mankind, during the Millennial age. While it will be an upward way and not a downward one, so that it will require effort to walk thereon and to attain to the full restitution, the prize at its further end, nevertheless it will be very different from the narrow, the difficult way now open before the elect church, God's peculiar people. It will be a way of righteousness, but not a way of sacrifice, as is the present narrow way, which thus selects the "royal priesthood," each one of whom must present his body a living sacrifice, in order to make his calling and election sure.

No lions shall be in that grand Millennial highway; nothing to hurt or destroy or intimidate from well-doing; nothing to seduce or to devour as a prey those who seek to walk righteously and to come back into harmony with the Lord; whereas all these besetments are now about us, because Satan, the prince of this world, is still unbound. (Isa. 35:8,9; Rev. 20:2.) All who now enter the "narrow way" are compelled to fight a good fight, to contend earnestly for the faith, to resist the devil, if they would secure the greater "prize" of our high calling. We must not only contend with the weaknesses of the flesh, which we have inherited, but we must also wrestle with wicked spirits in exalted places (Eph. 6:12), but the Lord giveth us the more grace, that thereby we may come off conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.—1 Tim. 6:12; Jude 3; Jas. 4:7; Rom. 8:37.

"TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR."—*Reprints*, p. 3746

MATTHEW 7:15-29.

"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only."—Jas. 1:22

OUR lesson follows the Sermon on the Mount, and was evidently intended as a parable, to impress upon the minds of the Lord's people the importance of what they had heard—the importance of obeying as well as hearing the good tidings. It sets forth the good results of careful obedience, in contrast with the unsatisfactory results to those who would fail to obey. It is evidently not evil surmising if we are on the lookout for false teachers, who our Lord declared would come amongst his sheep to mislead them. Neither can it be evil speaking to call the

attention of the sheep to such false teachers. The Master and the apostles foretold and forewarned against them and so should all who are faithfully following the Master's example.

But we are to distinguish them in the manner which our Lord and the apostles clearly indicated: however smooth, polished, educated, gentle, they may be on the surface, we must get to know them better than by surface indications before we may dare trust them as leaders of the flock—we must become intimately acquainted with them, their motives, ambitions, private life. This our Lord intimates by telling us to beware of them if they are ravenous, greedy, selfish, even though outwardly they may have a sanctimonious air. The Apostle speaks of these, saying that "grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock": "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you": "even denying the Lord that bought them."—Acts 20:29; 2 Pet. 2:1,3.

We are to balance the matter, however; and while vigilant to detect and resist the wolves in sheep's clothing, as well as out of it, we should remember our Lord's teachings on the other side of the question—that those who are not against us are on our part, and that we should neither reprove as wolves nor disown as brethren those whose hearts, whose characters, give evidence that they belong to the Lord, even though they follow not with us in respect to his service, the promulgation of his message, etc. In other words, we are to love all and wish Godspeed to all loving the Lord and manifesting his Spirit, whether they associate with us or not. In a word, the divine rule is very broad and very narrow at the same time. It is narrow as respects discipleship and character: faith in the redeeming blood, consecration to the Master, and a manifestation of his Spirit are the lines of discipleship—broad within themselves, but narrow as compared to the lines of the world.

"Know Them By Their Fruits"

Anticipating our query respecting how we may know the true from the false our Lord says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." He illustrates this by suggesting that grapes are not to be expected on thorn-bushes nor figs on thistles, although it is said that there is a thorn-bush in Palestine which grows a fruit somewhat resembling grapes, and a kind of thistle with heads shaped like figs. Nevertheless, no one was in danger of being deceived thereby, nor should any among the Lord's people be in doubt respecting the character and the fruitage of the life of those who are the followers of Christ.

The thought is that the Lord's true people are of such a kind that the fruit of their lives is nourishing and refreshing toward all who have fellowship with them. On the other hand there are persons who, thistle-like, are always scattering seeds that will cause trouble—false doctrines, evil surmisings and errors; and there are some who, like thorn-bushes, instead of bearing refreshing fruit, are continually reaching out to impede, to irritate, to annoy, to vex, to poison, to injure, those with whom they come in contact. The intimation clearly is that the Lord's people ought to have little difficulty in distinguishing between the false teachers who would mislead them and the under-shepherds who gladly lay down their lives in the service of the flock. The one class are continually mischief makers, underminers, destroyers. The other class are helpers, builders, strengtheners, peacemakers.

Not content with giving us a word-picture distinguishing between wolves and sheep, between injurious plants and fruitful ones, our Lord next institutes another illustration still more searching—contrasting a healthy fruit-tree with a diseased or evil one, contrasting a healthy Christian with a perverted and misguided one. He declares that a sound tree brings forth good fruit, but a corrupt or diseased tree brings forth undesirable, evil fruit. How we have all witnessed this in nature—the sound apples come from good apple trees that are in healthy condition. The knotty, wormy, unsatisfactory fruit comes from trees that are diseased, under-nourished, uncared for, unpruned, attacked by worms, etc.

In this illustration our Lord seems to refer to the fact that those who are his disciples, sound and proper enough to begin with, might become evil, might lose their spiritual strength and fruitfulness—their carefulness. Lack of nourishment in the soil would expose a tree to disease, blight. So the Christian who would add to

his attainment in knowledge is liable to decline in spirituality unless he have spiritual nourishment of the right kind. As without pruning the tree would develop suckers, which would corrupt it and ultimately destroy its fruitfulness, so the Christian needs the disciplines, the prunings, that he may develop in character and the graces of the Spirit. Our heavenly Father is the great husbandman and has promised us the proper care, yet it is not exactly with us as with the trees; for because of our higher endowment, our godlike quality of individuality, will, we are dealt with differently.

To a considerable degree it is for us to determine what nourishment we will have. The Lord supplies the good soil of Truth, the refreshing showers of grace, and the nourishment of precious promises, but it is for each of his people to use these and thereby to grow in grace, knowledge and love. We cannot, then, blame the Husbandman if we come short, and be unfruitful from lack of nourishment. None of his good promises can fail; whatever failing there may be must be in ourselves. Likewise with the pruning—the Lord will send the chastisements, trials, difficulties; but with our independent will it is possible for us to pass these by and, failing to use them, fail to correct the weaknesses, shortcomings and wrong developments of our nature. It is possible with us, notwithstanding all the development or pruning we may receive, to set our affections on houses, lands, or earthly aims, objects or individuals, which, like the suckers in the illustration, would draw away our vitality and hinder our bearing of acceptable fruit.

The sound tree cannot bear poor fruit, nor the corrupted or decayed tree bring forth good fruit. While each of the Lord's people is to examine himself before the mirror of God's Word, to ascertain his own character, disposition, likeness or unlikeness to divine standards, nevertheless, in this matter of deciding about fruit, whether it be good or bad, each of the Lord's people is called upon to exercise judgment in regard to others as well as to himself—what are the results, the fruitage, the token of my own life, and what is the fruitage, results, token of my brother, my neighbor. Our Lord's intimation is that these tests are specially applicable to those who would be leaders of his flock. They should all be examples, bearers of good fruit, and these good fruits should be looked for as a test of good, sound character—a character fully in harmony with the Lord. True, all are imperfect, and with the best of intentions we cannot do all that we would, but the weakest of the Lord's brethren must bear some fruits that other brethren could discern, and these fruits should be accepted by the brethren according to the divine standard, viz., not of the flesh but of the spirit, the will, the intention. So, then, every true child of God should manifest before the brethren and before the world honesty, faithfulness of intention, a consecrated heart, mind, will, which would seek in all things to do the will of the Father in heaven.

In Palestine, to this day, fruit trees are taxed, and hence a tree which will not bear, whose fruitage is poor, cannot be tolerated, for it would entail a loss instead of a revenue. Similarly, the assurance that the Lord will ultimately cast away every unfruitful one—"every branch in the vine that beareth not fruit he taketh away"—while every branch that beareth fruit is purged, that it may bring forth more fruit, is a further lesson along the same line.

Our Lord used a fig-tree to represent the Jewish nation, and pointed out that it was not bringing forth the desired fruitage, and that therefore it would be cut down and destroyed. The symbolical "fire" which utterly destroyed the Jewish nation made an end of their tree. The Jews will indeed receive a further blessing at the hand of the Lord, but, as he declares through the prophet, it will be "not by your Covenant." The blessing to come to Israel and all the nations in the future will be the New Covenant. Similarly, in the end of this Gospel age, not only will there be an individual test of the Lord's people as respects good and bad fruit, but Christendom as a whole, as a system, will be found unfruitful, unsatisfactory; and when the true saints of the Lord shall have been gathered out and glorified, the tree, the system as a whole, will go down, in the great time of trouble with which this age shall close and the new dispensation begin. Christendom will indeed be favored and blessed under the New Covenant of the Millennial age, but its special privileges and opportunities of the present time under the Abrahamic Covenant will be forever gone.

"I Never Knew You"

Continuing his discourse, our Lord implies eventually a great number of nominal followers

devoid of his Spirit, not bringing forth the fruitage that he desires, not members of his called and chosen and faithful class, though outwardly, nominally, all of these. Of this class he says there shall be many. He points down to our day, saying, "in that day"—in the closing of this age, in the testing time, in the time when he shall come to make up his jewels and to glorify them as his Bride, his members, his associates in the Kingdom. Many at that time—in our day—will profess that they know the Lord, that they are prophesiers or teachers, that they are casting out devils, opposing sin and multitudinous forms of evil, and that they are carrying on mighty works, benevolent institutions, colleges, seminaries, etc., in his name. The Revised Version gives, "by thy name," intimating that the name of Christ is used rather as a charm, to conjure by.

How true is this picture to the conditions of our day! How many take the Lord's name in vain, associating it with their enterprises, which are often in direct conflict with the Master's Word and Spirit. Why do they use his name? Simply as a talisman to conjure by, to increase their influence, to satisfy their own minds, to make themselves believe that in doing their own wills they are working the will of God. How true this is in respect to nearly all religious institutions of our day! Take the churches, for instance, recognizing more or less clearly the divine opposition to their sectarian spirit and creeds and methods and organizations—they, nevertheless, are not satisfied unless they somehow connect the name of Christ with their institutions and arrangements.

But the testing time is near—the Lord will inquire respecting the fruit of these systems; he will not be deceived; yea, he will expose the bad fruit, that all may see that his judgment is just. It will be manifest that neglect of his Word has led to degeneracy, decay—that the suckers of worldly ambition, pride, wealth, show, etc., have been cultivated, notwithstanding all of the trying experiences which might have served to prune these. It will be shown that many of the prophets of Babylon are false prophets, whose teachings have misguided the people and, instead of blessing, have done injury, instead of enlightening have blinded. It will be manifested that many of them are ravening wolves in sheep's clothing, hungry with ambition for fame and prominence and honor of men, and willing to barter the interests of the flock for their personal aggrandizement. It will be shown that much of this conjuring in the name of Jesus has been merely a cloak under which, deceiving and being deceived, sectarian fruitage, and not the love, joy, peace and holy Spirit, have been cultivated. The day will declare it, will show it, will manifest it. The whole world shall be witness eventually that God's name was proven a dishonor, and his Word misrepresented, because false teachers were looking every one to gain from his own quarter—his own denomination. —Isa. 56:11.

The Lord never knew the sects—he never recognized them, he never authorized them; they are of men, and for men, not of the Lord nor for the Lord's glory. Claiming that all there is of Christianity is due to themselves, they are proud and boastful and realize not that the Lord's true cause would have flourished far better without them in the simplicity of the early Church, one in redemption through the precious blood and in consecration to the Redeemer. The gathering out of the Bride class and the leaving of the remainder will be saying in effect, "I never knew you, never recognized you, never authorized you;" and these unauthorized sects will go down in the great time of trouble. We are glad, however, that the thousands and millions who have been deceived by these false systems will have a glorious opportunity during the Millennial age to come to a knowledge of the Truth and a right understanding of the character of God as revealed in the fulfillment of his gracious plan. Thus many who miss the great prize may still have a glorious opportunity for the lesser prize or favor of God in restitution, etc.

"Depart From Me, Ye That Work Iniquity"

We believe that there are active workers in the sectarian systems called "Babylon" who will yet be reached by the knowledge of the Truth and delivered. Our Lord intimates this, saying, "Come out of her, my people." Some of his people evidently are in Babylon, and it is our present mission in the name of the Lord to call these out—through the presentation of the

Present Truth, which will show to all who are truly the Lord's where they stand, and their duty. Others of the active workers in the iniquitous systems, which are counterfeits of the true, misrepresenters of God's message and binders and enslavers of the Lord's people, because not at heart loyal to him, will not come out of Babylon, and therefore will share in the condemnation coming upon her. They will go into the great time of trouble, and for a season at least be cut off from all fellowship with the Lord. These workers of iniquity will have their hands full of the trouble which they have helped to bring upon the world of mankind by their misrepresentations of the divine character and plan. It will be a terrible chastisement, and our hope for them is that "when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth all the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isa. 26:9.

On The Rock or On The Sand

This picture or parable of one house built upon the rock and the other house built upon the sand refers not to the Church and the world, but to two parties in the Church. None are in the parable except "those who hear these sayings of mine." The world hears not our Lord's message at all. As the Apostle declares, the world is both deaf and blind to spiritual things. Those who hearken to and appreciate the Lord's sayings represent at least a nominal Church, and amongst those of the nominal Church are some who are obedient to the Lord's Word while others are disobedient. The obedient are built upon the rock, the disobedient upon the sand.

Those who build upon the rock our Lord explains to be such as not only hear his message but are obedient thereto to the extent of their ability. Let us remember the words to which he refers—they are the words or message of the Sermon on the Mount, which show the things which are blessed of God in contradistinction to the things which would not have his approval. Those who do, who strive for, who to the best of their ability obey these divine teachings, the message from heaven, are laying the foundations which will be permanent, which will guarantee them against all the storms, difficulties and trials of the present life.

Those who hear the Master's words and say, "Yea, Lord," but who do not put the Master's teachings into practice, are not built properly upon the rock of Truth, upon Christ. They are building their hope, their faith, their trust upon a foundation which will not stand. When the adversities of life come upon such their hopes will be undermined, their faith will collapse. Thus does the Lord teach us that it is not merely to know his will, to be doctrinally informed, but that he is looking for such character development in us as will bring us into full harmony with his teachings, into heart harmony, and, to the extent that we are able, to obedience in all the affairs of life. The other, whose faith is built upon knowledge without obedience, without growth in grace, will not be accepted to the Kingdom, will not be members of the Bride class, will not be joint-heirs with God's dear Son.

"The Fire of That Day"

In this lesson our Lord describes not only the trials and tests which come upon all Christians throughout this Gospel age, but especially the great test in the close of this age—in the "harvest" time. Here his figure is that of rain, floods, and winds beating upon the faith structure of his professed followers, overthrowing the faith of those not properly constructed in accordance with his teachings, but unable to harm those founded on the rock of Truth. A mighty downpour of Truth throughout Christendom is in progress. The great storm is already raging. The various denominations are trembling under the shock. Their foundations on human tradition, creeds, theories, ignorance, superstition of the "dark ages," are realized to be unsatisfactory. Ere long the storms of Truth will move the quicksand foundation upon which nominal Christendom is built, and her wreck will follow. Only the true people of God will be able to stand the great storm of "that day"—already beginning.

This is the same storm and flood mentioned by the Lord through the prophet Isaiah—"The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding places … when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be overthrown by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; for

morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report [the message, the Truth]."—Isa. 28:17-19.

The same day of trial is pictured under another figure by the Apostle Paul when he says, "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." He pictures true believers built upon the rock, the true foundation, but points out to us the necessity of having a proper house, or faith, as well as a proper foundation. He pictures one faith structure built of wood, hay, stubble, combustible materials, which will shortly be destroyed in this day when the fire of divine judgment shall test every doctrine and destroy every error. He pictures also the proper building constructed of gold, silver and precious stones, the divine promises, and how these will stand every test.

The lesson as a whole is, first, that we must be on the rock foundation to have either part or lot in the matter—to be able to stand any test; second, that of those upon the rock, trusting in Christ, loyal to him and his atonement work, there will be two classes—the "little flock," faithful to the Word and upheld by it and protected, and the "great company," not sufficiently diligent and careful respecting the divine promises, and who will have a faith structure largely composed of error, which will be consumed. Respecting this latter class the Apostle declares, "the same shall be saved, yet so as by fire." This fitly describes the deliverance of the great company, who will "come up through great tribulation and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb."—1 Cor. 3:12,15; Rev. 7:14.

"Doers of The Word"

Our golden text is well chosen—"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only." To be honored with a knowledge of the divine will and plan is a great boon, a great blessing; but it brings a great responsibility: "to whom much is given of him shall much be required." We who have heard the voice of him that speaketh from heaven, speaking peace through Jesus Christ; we who, on the strength of this message of forgiveness of sins, have been accepted in consecration as members of the body of Christ, we have greater responsibility than have others. To attain the glorious things to which we have been invited we must not merely have this honor but must make use of the privilege and show our appreciation by obedience to the terms of the Covenant—presenting our bodies as living sacrifices to the divine service, in faithful obedience to righteousness, and in endeavoring to assist others in the same course.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Capernaum	Heals army officer's servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
	Nain	Raises widow's son			7:11-17	

Matthew 8:5-13

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

Luke 7:1-17

Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick. And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. And this rumor of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

RESURRECTION POWER IN JESUS.—*Reprints*, p. 3754

LUKE 7:1-17.

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life."—John 11:25

RESURRECTION power resided in our Lord Jesus because in the divine plan it was he who was to redeem the world by the sacrifice of himself and consequently to restore it. This included not merely an awakening from death, but also such vitalization as would overcome the dying processes of disease and ultimately bring the revived one up, up, to the full perfection of being originally enjoyed by our first parents in Eden but forfeited because of disobedience under the sentence, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4.) This is the most important feature of all the plan of God revealed to us, and if we discern it clearly it assists us in the understanding of every other feature of that plan. We must see that death is the absence of life, the loss of life—that it is a penalty upon our race because we are judged unworthy of life.

All references to a future life imply a redemption from the curse or sentence which came upon us because of the original sin. The cancellation of the debt or sentence, however, does not revive or restore mankind, but it does remove the legal barrier to man's restitution to all that was lost. Hence it is that our Savior's work is to follow. First, it is to be a redemptive work: the redemption was accomplished at his first advent—though he has used this Gospel age as the period in which to accept also some of the redeemed ones as his members, his Bride, his Church, under him as their Head, to be his associates in the great work of restitution which belongs to the next age.

Second, restitution is to be our Lord's work at his second advent, when his Church, his members, will have been selected, polished, prepared, glorified and associated with him in

glory, honor and immortality. Then the full work of the redemption will be granted to the world of mankind—not by raising them from the dead to absolute perfection in an instant, but by first awakening them from the sleep of death, and then, under the disciplines and instructions of the Millennial age, lifting them gradually in harmony with their own wills and cooperation, step by step, out of sin and death conditions into life eternal, as they may respond to these mercies and opportunities. The disobedient, being counted unworthy of life eternal, will be cut off in the Second Death.

Jesus, The Life-Giver

The words of our Golden Text, although specially applicable to our Lord in the future, at the beginning of his Millennial reign, when he will abolish death by lifting mankind out of its power, out of the great prison-house and out of the weaknesses that are associated with the fallen condition, nevertheless were applicable also in some degree at the first advent. True, our Lord's own sacrifice was not finished until he died at Calvary, and the sacrifices of the members of his body would not be finished for centuries; but when our Lord at thirty years of age made a full consecration of himself to do the Father's will, to lay down his life, etc., that divine plan which he there undertook to carry out included all these subsequent features—the completion of his own sacrifice and that of his completed body, of the Church.

That our heavenly Father so regarded his sacrifice was evidenced by the impartation of the holy Spirit, which anointing upon him constituted him the Messiah, the Christ, and the hope of the Church, which is his body, as well as ultimately the hope of all things. Hence, since our Lord had never abrogated that covenant of consecration, sacrifice, since he was still in line with his Covenant, and since the Father still so recognized him, it was proper for him to think and act and speak from that standpoint, which not only looked down to the end of his own course with faith, but also looked down to the end of this Gospel age with confidence, and to the end of the Millennial age with assurance that all the good purposes of God would finally be accomplished in and through him. From this standpoint, therefore, he said, "I am the resurrection and the life." He knew that the sacrificial work he had undertaken would secure to him the privilege of being the Life-Giver to the world, and that in the exercise of that right he would raise up not only from the tomb, but completely out of death conditions up to perfection, all who would come unto the Father through him—all who would have the right desire of heart to return to loving obedience to the Creator.

Our Lord's Miracles Illustrative

Our Lord's miracles were performed with a view to proving him to be the Life-Giver, not merely as having the right or privilege of giving life but as having pleasure in so doing. From this standpoint our Lord's miracles were small illustrations on a limited scale of that much grander work which he, with and through his glorified Church, will accomplish for mankind during his Millennial reign, when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and all the mentally, morally and physically lame shall be healed, and all the dead in trespasses and sins will be revived and, through obedience, gradually obtain full restitution of all things lost, as promised through the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:19-23.

Our present lesson follows the Sermon on the Mount—the thought evidently in the minds of Matthew and Luke in thus arranging matters being to show that he who had given the wonderful teachings on the mount was fully attested by the miraculous powers shown to reside in him. He had returned to Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee, the home city of Peter and others, and now the home city of Jesus, since he had been spurned and rejected at Nazareth. We remember that on a previous occasion at Capernaum he had healed many, and cannot doubt that his fame had reached all classes. A centurion, captain of the Roman guard, with a company of soldiers, resided here, and a much-prized servant having been taken sick the centurion was anxious to have Jesus cure him. That he was a man of humble mind, as well as full of faith and benevolence, is clearly shown by the narrative. Indeed, so far as we remember, all three of the centurions mentioned in the New Testament were evidently reverential: this

one, the one who put Jesus to death and who subsequently declared, "Surely this man was the Son of God," and the centurion Cornelius, the first Gentile convert.—Matt. 27:54; Acts 10:1.

The Noble Centurion

The centurion of our lesson was both wise and humble. He realized that as a Gentile he could have no special claim upon this Jewish Prophet and the work he was doing for the Israelites, and hence he secured the cooperation of some of the elders of the city—not the elders of the Synagogue, but the chief men of the city—to present to Jesus on his behalf a request for the healing of his servant. A man of less humble mind would doubtless have thought of the dignity of his own position, and would have ignored the distinctions which the Jews and the Scriptures both fix, the "middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile excluding the latter from the divine mercies of the former. He was like the Syro-phenician woman who desired a crumb from the children's table without claiming to be one of the children.

The elders, his representatives, besought Jesus on his behalf, testifying that although he was not a Jew he was a noble character, a lover of Israel; he had built them a synagogue for their worship, in which he himself could not engage because a Gentile. Had he taken any other position, had he ignored the fact that he was not one of the "children," doubtless it would have been necessary for our Lord to have impressed this lesson before granting the request; but since all this was conceded in the request our Lord promptly acceded thereto. A lesson for each of us in this connection would be humility of mind in approaching the Lord on any subject, which would make us ready for his favors and blessings. We, too, should concede that we have nothing of right or of merit to demand, that we should approach the Lord from the standpoint of unworthy suppliants, seekers of grace and mercy, not justice, at his hands.

Then the centurion bethought him of the fact that, being a Gentile, according to Jewish custom it would be an impropriety for a Jew to enter his house, that a certain measure of defilement would be implied. Doubtless, too, he thought of himself as a sinner, and that here was a representative of the Almighty, whose power he acknowledged. His feelings, doubtless, were akin to those of Peter when the latter cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."—Luke 5:8.

The centurion reasoned that if the Lord could exercise the power when present he could also exercise the power of healing though absent, and possibly he had heard of the healing of the son of the nobleman of his own city, Capernaum, when Jesus was at Cana and merely spoke the word. For these reasons the centurion at once sent a messenger to Jesus, explaining his own disinclination to incommode the Master, his unworthiness to have him under his roof, and his complete faith that a word from him would be sufficient. He explains this faith in the Lord's word by the illustration that he himself had been given a certain amount of authority by which he could tell his servants to go and to come, and that, recognizing Jesus as the Lord's anointed, he was sure that he had control over the influences of nature as his servants, so that he could bid the disease go from the servant and he should be well.

Marvelous Faith of an Alien

Jesus took him at his word and went no further, but he expressed his astonishment at the amount of the man's faith, saying to the multitude with him, "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel." Only in one other place do we read that Jesus "marvelled," and that was at the instance of the unbelief of the people of Nazareth. (Mark 6:6.) The people so long favored, so greatly blessed, so richly fed with divine promises and instructed by divine providences, lacked the faith that might have been expected of them, while the Gentiles, unfavored, were possessed of faith in many respects remarkable. No wonder our Lord contrasted the people of Capernaum with the heathens of Sodom and Gomorrah. No wonder that he declared that if the mighty works done in Capernaum had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah they would have remained—would never have been destroyed—would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.

How glad we are that the Scriptures assure us that it is the divine plan to give all the heathen peoples—yea, and all the Jews—the favorable, gracious opportunities of the Millennial

age whereby to rise out of sin and death conditions and to restore to the obedient the life conditions lost through sin, redeemed by the precious blood. Are we not sometimes surprised today, likewise, to find that some prominent in religious affairs seem to have less faith in the Lord in his goodness, in his power, in his wisdom, in his love, than have some who are of the world? What surprises there may be in this respect by and by when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth and the eyes of understanding of all mankind shall be opened to appreciate the knowledge of the glory of God. How many who were not God's people shall then become his people; and how many who now have much advantage everyway, and who have forms of godliness without the power, may then be seen to be inferior to some who now appear to be their inferiors.

Soon afterward (R.V.) our Lord, the disciples and quite a multitude of followers were approaching the little city of Nain, when forth from the gateway of the city came a funeral procession, a widowed mother and mourning friends, pall-bearers, and a bier or litter on which lay a dead young man, the widow's only son. Our Lord was touched with compassion as he saw the widow's tears, and he said to her, "Weep not," and, approaching, the pall-bearers stood still and Jesus touched the bier and said, "Young man, I say unto thee arise." The dead man stood up and began to speak. In a manufactured story it would be considered the proper thing to suppose that the widow fell at the Lord's feet, praised him in a loud voice, and that the whole multitude would join in acclaiming him; but in the simple narrative of our lesson, "there came a fear upon all"—a realization that God was very near to them as represented in the power of Jesus.

The very thought of the imminence of God is very sure to bring awe to mankind as they realize the holiness, the absolute perfection of the Almighty and their own blemishes and imperfections in contrast. The multitude glorified God, not with loud hosannas, but with a reverential appreciation of the fact that a great Prophet, a great Teacher, was in their midst, and that God was thus with him, saying, "God hath visited his people." The Jews at that time looked back to God's special dealings with their fathers, in which miracles attested the Lord's favor. They remembered also the promise that a Prophet like unto Moses would be raised up to them with still greater power than Moses. They expected to some extent what Peter refers to in Acts 3:19-21, that "times of refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord"—that the Lord Jehovah would manifest his favor toward his people in reviving them, blessing them, sending them times of restitution spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets.

Prophet, Priest And King.

Their anticipations were quite correct: Jesus was the great Prophet, the representative of the Father and of his favor. And yet how long the test of faith! How long the period necessary for the raising up of the members of the body of Christ, and until the heavenly Father's plan should thus be fully developed and the times of restitution fully ushered in at the second advent of the Lord. Our Redeemer's work of healing and of awakening from the sleep of death were merely premonitions or foreshadowings or illustrations of the great universal blessings coming to mankind through the merit of his obedience even unto death as our sin offering. No wonder the message of Jesus and his work spread over all parts of the country.

A greater work was being accomplished by our Lord's miracles than was apparent at the time. We are inclined to be surprised that only about "five hundred brethren" were gathered during the Lord's ministry—that only that number were counted worthy of the name brethren and of the privilege of meeting our Lord after his resurrection during the forty days. However, we may reasonably suppose that under the new dispensation, under the ministries of the apostles from Pentecost onward, a large fruitage was found to our Lord's ministry. For instance, we would think it very probable that this widow of Nain and her son would ultimately become followers of Jesus, and that others in that multitude who witnessed the miracle and who were in proper condition of heart would therein find a sufficiency for a foundation to their faith in the Messiah. We cannot doubt either that after "the middle wall of partition" had been broken down, and

Cornelius the first Gentile convert had been brought into faith-fellowship, this centurion, whose servant was healed and who manifested everyway so noble a character, would be one who would be specially susceptible to the message of grace and truth. One lesson we may learn from this is that we must not at once look for the full fruitage to our own efforts in the Lord's service. We must be content to labor and to wait, and must realize that the Lord himself is behind his Word, his message, making the selections of those whom he esteems worthy of joint-heirship in his Kingdom. Another thought would be that there may be worldly persons who may now come to some knowledge of the Truth and yet not be blessed fully by it—who will by and by, under the trials and difficulties of the time of trouble, or later on during the Millennial age, be profited through our ministries of the Truth and our present endeavors to glorify the Lord in our bodies and spirits which are his.

Let us then scatter the good seed everywhere as we have opportunity, for we know not which shall prosper, this or that. Sometimes that upon which we bestowed the greatest zeal and effort proves fruitless, and sometimes that from which we expected the least proves very fruitful. Let us remember that the Lord will reward us according to our zeal or efforts, and not according to results; and indeed the chief results he seeks are in ourselves, in the development of the graces of his Spirit, which will manifest themselves in so many ways in connection with our love for him, for his message, for the brethren, yea, for the whole world of mankind, even for our enemies.

"Quicken Your Mortal Bodies"

Our Lord's ministries of healing lasted but a few years and reached comparatively few of the Jewish people, but since he ascended he has been carrying on a work of healing on a still higher plane—through his disciples whom he acknowledges as "members of his body." (1 Cor. 21:27.) Operating through these, many eyes of understanding have been opened, many deaf ears have been unstopped, many morally halt and lame have been cured, and many have been raised from the dead in the sense that the Apostle refers to when he says, "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins;" and again, "If ye be risen with Christ seek those things which are above;" and again, "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."—Eph. 2:1; Col. 3:1; Rom. 8:11.

If we are inclined to marvel that the Jews rejected Jesus after seeing his mighty works, what might be said of us if for any reason we become doubters or unfaithful to him who has so clearly spoken to us from heaven, by whose stripes we have been healed and who have realized him to be indeed the resurrection and the life? Whoever, therefore, has experienced this quickening to newness of life, this begetting of the Spirit, has come under so clear a demonstration of the divine power and goodness and wisdom and love operating through Jesus as to be without excuse "if they fall away." Hence the Apostle tells us that it would be "impossible to renew them again unto repentance." (Heb. 6:6.) He tells us that in their case such a falling away would be a wilful act, not one of ignorance or weakness, and that to thus fall away would imply the same attitude of heart which the Jews entertained toward our Lord when he was with them—that it would be virtually crucifying the Lord afresh and putting him to an open shame.—Heb. 6:6.

But, dearly beloved, to use the Apostle's thought, we have more confidence in each other than to surmise such an unworthy ending to our call, such an unworthy response to the mercies and favors which we enjoy at the hands of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. Let us be faithful, let us remember that the resurrection work begun in us as New Creatures is the one which is to be completed by the grace of God in the First Resurrection, when in a moment of change we shall be like our Lord, see him as he is and share his glory.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Galilee	John in prison sends disciples to Jesus	11:2-19		7:18-35	

Matthew 11:2-19

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 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. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elijah, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

Luke 7:18-35

And the disciples of John showed him of all these things. And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come or look we for another? When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appareled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! But wisdom is justified of all her children.

THE DISAPPOINTED PROPHET'S WISE COURSE.—*Reprints*, p. 2620

LUKE 7:18-28.

"He hath done all things well."—Mark 7:37.

WHILE Jesus was performing many miracles, making numerous disciples, and meeting with comparatively little opposition, things were going very differently with his cousin, John the Baptiser. Yet this was only in accordance with what John himself had prophesied, saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease." John was in prison, about 120 miles from where Jesus was laboring so successfully. To be shut up in a dark dungeon of the kind usual at that time, and to have our Lord proceeding with his work, and raising no voice of protest on his behalf, and exercising none of his mighty power for his deliverance, probably seemed very strange to John—especially in view of his expectations respecting the work of the Messiah—that he would be a great earthly general and king, in harmony with the general Jewish expectations.

We see how readily John might have permitted doubts and fears to enter his mind. He might have said, This whole matter is a fraud, and Jesus and I have been deceiving ourselves. He might have lost all faith in God's providential dealings in the past and all heart and hope for the present and for the future; but notwithstanding the great disappointment he felt, his faith continued its firm hold on the Lord. This is indicated in his sending of his disciples to Jesus, to make inquiry, and also in the character of the inquiry. He does not say, Is this whole matter a farce, and are we deluded? but on the contrary his question was a sound one, and expresses the conviction that thus far the Lord has been leading, and that the only doubt in the prophet's mind was whether or not, as he was the forerunner of Jesus, Jesus in turn, greater than he, might be the forerunner of some one else still greater and yet to come. And strictly speaking this was exactly the case; for Jesus in the flesh was indeed the forerunner and preparer of the way before the still greater glorified Christ of the second advent, who will accomplish the great and wonderful things foretold by all the holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:21-23.

Our Lord, it will be noticed, did not answer John's question directly—he did not say that there was not another coming and still greater work than that which he was performing, but he did give John to understand distinctly that the work he was then doing was the very work which had been foretold in the prophets, and the proper thing to be done at that time. While John's messengers were with Jesus a number of miracles were performed in their sight, and Jesus sent them back to John with instructions that they bear witness to him of the work of the Lord progressing in his hands, and to say to John that while the opportunities to stumble at Jesus, his work and his words, were many, and while many would stumble at these, as the prophet had declared (Isa. 8:14,) yet a special blessing would rest upon all who would not stumble, but whose faith in the Lord would continue, despite various disappointments of expectation respecting his work and their fulfillments—through misapprehension of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, which, as the heavens are higher than the earth, were higher than human conception could have foreseen. For instance, what Jew could have thought for a moment of the still higher than Jewish expectations of the Kingdom—of the spiritual Kingdom-class to be selected first before the establishment of the earthly kingdom, and to be sharers with Messiah in his glory, honor and immortality?

All of the Lord's faithful servants need to remember the same lessons which were thus forcefully impressed upon John: they need to remember that when sometimes matters turn out very differently with themselves than what they had expected, when they receive injuries, reproaches and oppression, as the rewards of faithfulness to duty and to truth, it does not mean that God has forgotten them, nor that they were misled in their previous service to the Lord; nor does it mean that the Lord has changed his plan; nor that he is careless or indifferent respecting their condition. True, their first thought should be whether or not present unfavorable conditions are in the nature of chastisements or the results of any misdoings on their part, or failures to serve the

Lord in his own way, but if they find their course to be harmonious with the divine will and Word they should at once rest their faith upon the Lord, and conclude that God knows better than they how to manage his own work. Then while thankful to be used in that work for a time they should nevertheless be pleased, if it were the Lord's will, to be set aside for a time—perhaps for the good of others, or perhaps for their own training in the school of experience, and in the learning of lessons of patience and of faith.

But such a resting in the Lord, such a centering of life in him, can be enjoyed only by those who have made considerable progress, who have run a considerable distance in the way of the Lord, and who have already been exercised under the Lord's providences, and have learned many lessons in his school. This, however, is the condition which all of the Lord's true followers are to strive to attain, as the only one thoroughly pleasing to the Lord. The proper course of all God's servants when perplexed is the one followed by John, namely, to go to the Lord with the perplexity—not doubtingly, but inquiringly—and be set at rest by his Word. We may not be able to hear the Lord's words with our own ears, but we can receive it second hand as did John,—through the testimonies of the Apostles and prophets, by whose writings God has provided in advance replies to all proper queries.

The question arises, was John imprisoned on account of officiousness—on account of trying to mind Herod's business? Or was he imprisoned because of his faithfulness in the discharge of that duty? Was it right or was it wrong for him to reprove the king, and to say to him that it was not lawful for him to take as his wife his brother Philip's wife? There is no question that Herod was in the wrong, and that John's expression on the subject was a correct one, and that Herod was living in adultery, but the question is, Was this any of John's business? Did he need to meddle with the king's affairs, and thus get himself into trouble? And if it was John's duty to reprove Herod on this subject, was it not the duty of our Lord Jesus to have done the same, and in addition to have uttered a protest against the imprisonment of John, and in general to have raised a great hubbub over the injustice being done by the wicked ruler? And if John was right in this matter was our Lord Jesus wrong in not following the same course? Or if Jesus was right in not following John's course in reproving Herod, does it prove that John erred in giving the reproof?

We answer that our Lord's conduct is certainly to be considered as above reproach, since "in him was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" but this does not prove guile and sin on John's part in following a different course. We are to remember that in many respects John and his ministry differed widely from our Lord and his ministry. For instance, the uncouth skin-girdle which John wore was very different from the seamless robe which the Lord wore; and the Scriptures call attention to the fact that John lived a very abstemious life, "neither eating nor drinking" ordinary food, but practicing a continual fasting or self-denial as respects these comforts, while our Lord Jesus came "both eating and drinking," attended wedding feasts, and banquets made in his honor. The lesson is that these grand characters each fulfilled his own mission, according to the divine arrangement, but that they had different missions. John's mission was pre-eminently that of a reprover and reformer, and we are to understand that as a prophet he was supernaturally guided in respect to the various features of the course which he took. Our Lord's mission, on the contrary, was a different one; he was gathering to himself those whom John's ministry served to arouse to righteousness and to zeal to know and do the Lord's will.

We who are called to be the "body" of Christ and to follow him, may learn a lesson in this as respects our proper course: we are not sent forth as John was, to dwell in the wilderness, living and dressing uncouthly, and to criticize and denounce everything and everybody. Some of the Lord's dear people fail to notice that such commissions are special and very rare and sometimes in following the wrong copy, undesignedly bring reproach upon the Lord's cause. We are to be copies of God's dear Son, our Lord, and not to be copies of John the Baptiser. We are not to stir up strife by trying to mind other people's business, nor to seek to govern all the affairs of this world, reproving

emperors, kings, governors, etc., but to the contrary of this are exhorted by the Apostle to remember that what God sees fit to permit we can see fit to endure.

Even tho we find many things which we cannot commend or indorse, we may equally find ourselves able to avoid any special denunciation of them—especially of things which have no bearing whatever upon the proper understanding and fulfilling of the Lord's Word. The Apostle points out our proper position saying, "As much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." And our Lord emphasized the same thought, saying "Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called the children of God."

Some of the holiest of the Lord's people err on this subject in their own families, and needlessly arouse prejudice and opposition, and make their homes unhappy, by continually finding fault with things which tho not up to the standard of saintliness and cross-bearing, are nevertheless not immoral or wicked even in tendency. Parents and guardians are surely to guard against all tendencies toward immorality, etc., but to find fault with those they love merely because they are only nominal Christians and have the spirit of worldliness, is certainly unwise. Their general life of peace and joy in the holy spirit is the very best reproof of worldliness they can give and the best recommendation of the glorious gospel they profess. This is the epistle that will be read, the light that will reprove darkness. In other words, we must not expect from nor try to force upon the unconsecrated the details of our own self-denials. We must wait until they shall see full consecration to be their "reasonable service" and present their bodies living sacrifices to God. Pastors and teachers, however, should seek to keep continually before the Lord's consecrated flock the high Scripture standard, realizing that many influences are continually at work to lower the standard of holiness and devotion.

John More Than a Prophet.

The multitude who stood about must have heard the message which John's disciples brought to Jesus, and no doubt queried within themselves, if not audibly, Is John losing faith in Jesus as the Messiah? If John is a prophet himself, should he not be informed by God on this subject, without sending to inquire of Jesus? Does not this, in connection with the fact that John did no miracles, prove that John was not a prophet, but merely some sort of a reformer, possibly self-appointed? Our Lord seems to have detected such a questioning, and hence, after John's disciples were gone, so that his words could not be construed as a sop of flattery to hold John's confidence, he delivered quite a eulogy upon his faithful forerunner, which we paraphrase thus:—What did you expect in John—a weak, pliable character, easily swayed by every wind of doctrine and fancy, as a reed is easily swayed by the wind? Those who get such an impression respecting his character are deceiving themselves. On the contrary, he is a prophet, yea, more than a prophet—he is a special ambassador and messenger of God at this present time, to do an introductory work related to the Kingdom which I am now preaching. He is referred to by Malachi the prophet (3:1). Indeed, I declare to you that there has never arisen a greater prophet than John, and yet I say to you that the least one in the Kingdom-class is greater than he; for he does not belong to the Kingdom-class at all, but to the previous dispensation—"the house of servants." "The law and the prophets were until John" (and he is the last of the prophets), and since then the Kingdom of heaven is preached, that now whosoever will of this divinely favored nation may press his way and gain an entrance into it and become a son of God.—John 12:1.

Note in the text the clearness of our Lord's words respecting the distinction between the new institution which he was founding and the old institution founded by Moses, and which was then coming to an end, giving place to the new. The Apostle shows that the call of us Gentiles during this Gospel age to a joint heirship in the Kingdom as members of the Kingdom-class is because those of the Jews ready to receive the Kingdom favor upon the Lord's terms were fewer than the pre-determined number. Our call is to fill the places of those "natural branches" of the Abrahamic stock, by being grafted into and made partakers of the original root of divine favor—the Abrahamic promise—to be members of the seed of Abraham, in which as a Kingdom-class all the families of earth

shall be blessed with certain favors of knowledge and opportunity.—Compare Rom. 11:1-33; Gal. 3:16,29.

How highly we who belong to the new dispensation should value its privileges and opportunities, and seek to "make our calling and our election sure." (2 Pet. 1:4-11.) If those who were called with an earthly calling to be a "house of servants" rendered but a reasonable service when they engaged in the Lord's work zealously, as did John the Baptist, and have been faithful, how much more zeal and energy ought we to put forth who have been favored so much more highly! "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness!" Let us remember that this "high calling," this "heavenly calling," to joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom, is a very special and a very limited call, that it will soon end, and that so far as the divine revelation shows, it will never be repeated. In view of these things let us lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race set before us in the gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author, until he shall have become the finisher, of our faith.—Heb. 12:1.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Galilee	Cities reproached; revelation to babes; yoke kindly	11:20-30			

Matthew 11:20-30

Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. 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 in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

KNOWLEDGE INCREASES RESPONSIBILITIES.—*Reprints*, p. 2623

MATTHEW 11:20-30.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

OUR LORD would seem to have been somewhat disappointed at the result of his ministry, especially in Capernaum, where he had resided a considerable time, and our lesson opens with a warning to the people of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida, that having been favored with many mighty works and many evidences of Jesus' Messiahship, and that the Kingdom was being offered to them, etc., they would be held correspondingly responsible. As Capernaum had been greatly blessed, highly exalted, or, figuratively, "exalted up to heaven" in its privileges and opportunities, the result to it would be greater degradation, and eventually it would be brought low into the dust—destroyed, "brought down to hell," in the text, signifying

brought down to *hades*, the death-state. And surely this was fulfilled in the trouble which came upon the Jews, and which destroyed their nationality, as a result of their having failed to accept the Messiah and the Kingdom which he offered to establish.

But though our Lord was disappointed that he was so generally rejected, he cannot have expected that he would be widely welcomed by the people. He must have known, as he elsewhere describes to his disciples, quoting from the prophecies, that he would be rejected by Israel, and that the Kingdom offer would pass by them. As a matter of fact his rejection on their part incidentally permitted the sending of the gracious call to the Kingdom honors to believers among the Gentiles, and thus we are favored at the present time.

The contrast which the Master draws between Bethsaida and Chorazin and Tyre and Sidon is a strong one. The latter two were flourishing Gentile cities, yet, as was common in such, very full of wickedness and immorality, so that evidently their names were synonymous for that which was unholy, licentious, unclean. So then, for our Lord to say that if his mighty works had been done in those unholy cities they would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes, that is, with deep contrition, was to say that the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin were in very much worse condition of heart than those Gentiles: further from such a condition as God could bless.

From this we may gather that God takes a different standpoint of viewing such matters from that taken by the majority of people. He does not merely say, Is this a moral or an immoral city? Are these people decent or indecent? The question which the Lord would examine rather would be, What is the heart attitude of this people or that people, this individual or that individual? What is he aiming, striving, for?—how would he be effected thereby if granted clearer light respecting the divine will? Hence, if we look at ourselves, and find that we are not immoral, not coarse, sensual, brutish, but more refined than many others, this is well; it is what we should be in view of our favors, privileges and mercies; but we are to remember that we might still be very far short of what would be pleasing to the Lord, and that if God should favor us with certain privileges and blessings and opportunities, and we were to reject them, our attitude in his sight might be worse than that of the immoral.

Turning to Capernaum, most favored of all, our Lord contrasts her with Sodom, whose wickedness was very great, so that it brought upon her a fierce destruction from the Lord. Capernaum is clearly told that from the Lord's standpoint of view her people were more wicked, less worthy of divine favor, more worthy of punishment, than the people of Sodom. This was a severe arraignment, and yet, we can see, a just one, for the poor Sodomites, walking in the way of sin, ignorance of God, etc., gradually went down and down, according to the course of fallen nature, while the people of Capernaum had much advantage every way as Jews, whom the Lord had blessed with a knowledge of himself, and to whom now, finally, he had sent Messiah, and whose miracles they had seen repeatedly, and with whose beautiful character and teaching they had been brought much in contact through his considerable residence in their midst.

In view of these privileges and mercies, their rejection of Messiah and failure to grasp their opportunities branded them, so to speak, as being inferior to the Sodomites, in appreciation of righteousness and truth; for our Lord declares that the Sodomites would not have met the end they did had they had similar privileges and mercies bestowed upon them.

The question naturally arises, Why did not our Lord grant the Sodomites as good an opportunity as he granted the people of Capernaum, and why did he not grant the people of Tyre and Sidon, who were still living, as favorable an opportunity as he granted to the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida? We answer, that none of these people were granted a trial for eternal life. The Sodomites did not have such a trial; the people of Tyre and Sidon had no trial of any kind; nor did the people of Palestine have a trial for life eternal. The trial which they did have was a trial respecting their love for the Lord and for righteousness, and of their readiness to be his people and supporters of his Kingdom. The result of the trial showed that

they were not sufficiently in love with righteousness to appreciate the Lord's Kingdom, nor to become its friends and servants; and in consequence of this their city and their land, and they as a people were rejected by the Lord from being his agencies in connection with the establishment of his Kingdom.

That no individual trial for eternal life had yet come to any of these people is evident from several facts: (1) that the whole world was under condemnation through Adam's transgression; (2) that no one could be relieved from that condemnation, so as to have a fresh individual trial for life, until the ransom price was paid, and it was not yet finished; (3) this is further implied by our Lord's statement (verse 24) that there would be a day of judgment future—a day of testing, a day of trial, a day to see who would be worthy of eternal life and who unworthy. (Acts 17:31.) In that judgment day, the Millennial age, all are to have a chance for everlasting life; for the granting of this very chance to all of Adam's race was the very object of our Redeemer's death. Meantime, the people of Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum, having rejected the Lord and having been rejected by him, he nevertheless found some there, and has been selecting others since, of a special class, which he is calling to joint-heirship with himself in that Millennial Kingdom, under whose beneficent reign of righteousness a full and impartial judgment or trial for life shall be granted to all. He would have his hearers understand, however, that in that future trial time the people of Tyre and Sidon and Sodom would be treated with more consideration and allowance than those who, having many more privileges, had hardened their hearts against what they did see and know. "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee," Capernaum.

How scathing was the rebuke of these words, that the people of Sodom, notorious for their wickedness, licentiousness, etc., should find more favor, more tolerance, at the Lord's hand, when he should begin the work of judging mankind, than themselves, who had been God's favored people, but who had not appreciated his favors, and had done despite unto his goodness! But if any infer from this that the people of Capernaum, when they shall be on trial for life during the Millennial age, will be unkindly treated, it would be a great mistake; because the declaration of the Lord's Word distinctly is that the world shall be "judged in righteousness"—not in wrath, malice, not with a desire to do them injury, but with a desire to do them every good possible—hence it will be "tolerable" for the people of Capernaum in that day—very tolerable—it will be a grand and blessed opportunity for them to come to a full, clear knowledge of the Lord; but it will be still more tolerable for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sins, although greater in some respects, were less heinous in the sight of God—they were less against character, more sins of ignorance.

We may assume, therefore, that during the Millennial age disciplines such people as those of Tyre and Sidon and those of Sodom, who had never known God to any degree, who had never known his laws, will be in a condition of heart much more readily amenable to the influences and requirements of that time than will be some others—the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, who having known more respecting God had misused the opportunities of the present life—who broke down their characters instead of building them.

And these are merely ensamples, for we know that all those that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth—"they that have done good [the saints, the overcomers] unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil [all mankind outside of the saints] unto the resurrection of judgment."—John 5:28,29.

We can readily see, in harmony with our Lord's declaration in this lesson, that many who in the present life have no knowledge and no opportunity may be nothing disadvantaged thereby in that judgment time, but on the contrary may be more susceptible to the good influences of the Kingdom and its laws than some others will be who have had contact with the light to some extent in the present life, but who have refused it. What a blessed promise is this one, of a future judgment or trial! How much it means to the whole groaning creation, that God, who let the sentence of Adam fall on all

without giving them an individual trial, has provided a redemption for all from that first sentence, and has provided that each member of the race shall individually have a trial, a judgment, in due time, at the hands of him who died for all. And then, how favorable the conditions are to be, under which that trial will be granted! Satan is to be bound, and the earth is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and his gracious arrangements on behalf of his fallen creatures, whom he desires shall not perish, but, if they will, have eternal life through Christ.

However, as our Lord distinctly intimates (v. 5), these things respecting the coming judgment and the blessed opportunities which shall be accorded to every member of Adam's race, are hidden from the majority—especially do they seem to be hidden from the worldly-wise and prudent, who instead of accepting so gracious a plan, are rather inclined to teach the people that the poor Sodomites went to eternal torment without ever having had a chance, and with no prospect of ever having a chance in the future, although our Lord declares that if they had had as good an opportunity as the people of Capernaum they would have repented with a deep contrition. The wise and prudent are inclined to tell us also that the people of Tyre and Sidon, although not favored with our Lord's blessing, are also to be considered doomed to eternal torment, though they would have repented had they had as good an opportunity as the people of Palestine; and finally they tell us that these people of Palestine, having rejected our Lord, must necessarily be sufferers of eternal torment, and not merely losers of the Kingdom. They fail to see; they are blind to the truth—blinded by the traditions of their religious teachers—as the Jews were.

Then, to add to their confusion, they begin to attempt to apply the Lord's words respecting a day of judgment, and of course interpret it to mean a day of damnation, instead of a day of trial. They fail to note that their claim is that the Sodomites were already in hell, suffering torments of the severest form for nearly two thousand years, at the time our Lord uttered these words. Do they think that the Sodomites could suffer any more after the day of judgment than they describe them as suffering now? What do they understand by the words "day of judgment," anyway? Evidently they have no proper conception of the meaning of the words. They see that our Lord referred it to a future time, and they are hopelessly confused and thoroughly unable to give any reasonable explanation of the matter, either in harmony with God's character or in harmony with their own wretched and God-dishonoring theories.—See *Studies in the Scriptures,* vol. 1, p. 137.

How comforting are our Lord's words, that these things are revealed, nevertheless, to some —to babes, to those who are not great, not wise, according to the course of this world; to those who are of humble mind, ready to be taught of the Lord, instead of wishing to teach the Lord. This great blessing, dearly beloved, is ours, and let us be very careful that we maintain the attitude of childlikeness and simplicity, that we may continue to be taught of God, and to "know the things that are freely given unto us of God." Let us rejoice in them and use them, and let the light shine out to others. The explanation of the fact that the divine plan is hidden from the great majority of the learned, the doctors of divinity, etc., is that so it has pleased the Father to let "the wise be taken in their own craftiness," and to reveal his purposes to those of an humble mind. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (1 Cor. 3:19.) The Father drew to the Son at the first advent, not the doctors of the law, the scribes and the notables, but certain "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile, though they were but an humble few. And the same class has received the blessing all down the age.

The Master realized that his special instructions must be toward those whom the Father had given unto him, rather than toward the unready and unwilling ones who would not receive his testimony because not in a proper condition of heart to appreciate. To his faithful disciples, therefore, and to all of the same class since, he declared that all things he possessed he had received of the Father; he claimed nothing of himself; and further, he asserted that no one knew him truly, fully, intimately, but the Father, and that no man knew the Father except himself, the Son, and he to whom the Son

revealed him. The average reader gets very little meaning out of this passage at first. The Christian who has been making progress for years, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, can appreciate it much better. He realizes that while he had some knowledge about Jesus and about the Father at first, from the very inception of his Christian experience, yet it was a different matter to come to know the Father and to know the Son in the intimate sense, in the sense of becoming well acquainted with them, knowing their mind as one knows the mind, the heart, of an intimate friend. It is a privilege to receive such an acquaintance. It is not to be had by everybody; it requires seeking for and knocking for, and such seeking and knocking implies an earnest desire to have an intimate fellowship and communion. Such a growth in grace should be earnestly sought by all of the Lord's true followers who seek to be his joint heirs in the Kingdom; for without it they cannot make progress. In proportion as we know the Father and know the Son we will love them and seek more and more to do those things which are pleasing in their sight.

Come! Weary And Heavy-Laden.

Still addressing the same class, and implying that there were some present of the right disposition who had not yet become his disciples, our Lord appealed to his hearers individually, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The difficulty with most of the people would seem to have been that they were neither weary nor heavy laden, but on the contrary pretty well self-contented. We cannot suppose that physical weariness and physical burdens was the thought before our Lord's mind, but rather the heart-burden and sin-weariness, which all true Israelites must have felt, if they were honest with themselves.

We are to remember that they were under the Law Covenant, that its requirements were very exacting, and that it made no allowance for weaknesses, imperfections, errors, etc.; consequently, all of those Jews should have felt themselves continually condemned in striving to carry the burden of the Law of Sinai. Not that the law was an unjust one or impossible to be kept by a perfect man, but because all being imperfect and fallen they were unable to keep the Law Covenant. So we may suppose that amongst the Jews at that time, while the majority were professing to be holy, law-keepers, who did no sin, there were some who honestly admitted to themselves and to others that they did not, could not, keep the Law perfectly, and who therefore felt burdened and wearied with their fruitless endeavors. Such felt their need of a burden-bearer, such felt their soul-sickness and need of the good Physician, and to such Jesus addressed himself, inviting them to come to him and receive rest, relief.

This coming to Christ for rest is the first step toward a Christian life; it is justification, the acceptance of him as the satisfaction for our sins; and from the time we thus accept him, as the Apostle declares, we have joy and peace through believing. (Rom. 5:1; 15:13.) But having been thus received and blessed, there is something more for us to do, viz., to learn that there is another burden and another yoke which we should take upon us voluntarily.

A yoke is a symbol of servitude, and so our Lord implies that those who are set free (either from the yoke of the Law Covenant, as were the believing Jews, or from the yoke of Satan, as were the believing Gentiles) should become his servants, should take his yoke, should learn to do his will. A yoke generally is arranged for two, and our Lord speaks of it as his yoke, by which we are to understand that he also is a servant; having come to do the Father's will, and having put on the yoke of servitude, he invites us to become true yoke-fellows with himself in the doing of the Father's will, co-laborers together with Christ in the great work of the world's deliverance from sin and death.

The secret of the ability to wear this yoke, and to have companionship with Christ in his service, and to have as a result a great blessing in our own hearts, a rest unto our souls, lies, he explains, in our learning to be meek and lowly of heart as he was. It will be impossible for those who are proud, haughty, self-willed, ambitious, worldly-wise, etc., to labor in the same yoke with Jesus, or to find the true rest of soul which we properly seek. But if we are meek, teachable, humble-minded, ready to know and

to do the Lord's will at any cost, then indeed we shall find rest to our soul's satisfaction—the peace of God which passeth all understanding will rule in our hearts.

We notice a difference between the two rests of vs. 28 and 29. Of the first it is said that the Lord will give it to him who comes to him in faith; of the second, it is said that he finds this rest to his soul through becoming a yoke-fellow with Jesus. And so it is: there are two blessings; the first blessing is that of justification—the joy of having our sins forgiven, realizing ourselves no longer strangers and foreigners from our heavenly Father, but brought nigh by the blood of Christ; the second is the joy which comes more gradually, a fruitage, a grace, a development in the heart, the growing and abiding peace and joy of the holy spirit. This second blessing, however, is attained by very few; the majority of nominal Christians know nothing of it; and yet it is the very object of the calling of this Gospel age, and those who fail to come to the Lord and to take his yoke, and to learn of him, to become thus "copies of God's dear Son," will fail utterly of the special purpose and call of this Gospel age, and will have neither part nor lot in the Kingdom. The blessing of justification by faith is merely to fit and prepare us to take the yoke and to become a co-laborer with the Lord in the Father's service.

This yoke which Jesus invites us to come under with him is a very formidable affair from the standpoint of the world: to them it seems to be a most unreasonable yoke, a most terrible burden—to consecrate life, time, means, everything to the service of God; but from the standpoint of those who have come unto Jesus, and to whom he has spoken peace and rest through justification, the matter is very different. To such it must seem a "reasonable service," that since the Lord has graciously redeemed our lives and our all, we should use what remains of that life to his praise and glory; and after we have fastened the yoke upon ourselves we find that it is an easy one, and that with it any burden, any duty, any trial, any difficulty, any vexation of spirit, any burden of any kind that could come to us, would be light indeed, because of this yoke.

Why? Because those who wear this yoke have the assurances of the divine Word, that all things are working together for good to them; that the heavier the burden that may be attached the greater will be the blessing and the reward by and by; the more severe the experiences during the present time, the brighter shall be the glory, and the brighter shall be their character and the more sure shall they be of being fitted and polished for the heavenly Kingdom. From this standpoint every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable; and additionally it is so light because the Lord is with us in this yoke. He is the great Burden-bearer, and will not suffer us to be tempted nor to be pressed with more of the burdens of life than we should probably be able to endure. He is watching out for the interests of all those who take his yoke upon them. Their burdens are his burdens, their trials are his trials, their interests are his interests; yea, all things shall work for good to them because they love him.

Let us remember, however, that the Lord takes no slaves in this way; he does not fasten the yoke upon any; he merely invites us to come, and then to fasten his yoke upon ourselves, to make a full consecration of ourselves to him and to his service.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Galilee	Feet anointed by sinful woman; illustration of debtors			7:36-50	

Luke 7:36-50

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

TWO TYPES OF SINNERS.—*Reprints*, p. 2625

LUKE 7:36-50.

"Thy faith hath saved thee."

SIMON was a very common name amongst the Jews, and hence it is not so remarkable that there were two Simons at whose homes Jesus was entertained. It is a little peculiar, however, that there are so many features of similarity connected with the two entertainments—that at both of them our Lord's feet were anointed, etc. (Compare Matt. 26:6-13.) It is supposed that about a year and a half elapsed between the two events, that recorded by Matthew being just prior to our Lord's death, "anointing for my burial."

In this lesson we see Simon, a Pharisee, evidently considerably impressed with our Lord's character and teachings, and more favorably inclined toward him than the majority. He thought it would be pleasant to invite Jesus to dinner, thus to honor him, and possibly have a little notoriety himself in connection with the noted Nazarene.

When our Lord accepted the invitation and attended the dinner Simon treated him kindly and politely, but did not go to any extreme of politeness in his entertainment; perhaps thinking of him as not being used to special attentions, but rather as being a companion of fishermen and common people generally. Simon therefore did not salute him with a kiss on his arrival, as was usual with honored guests, for that would have seemed like bestowing too much honor upon an ordinary person whom he, as a Pharisee, was not yet prepared to fully endorse; nor did he send the servant to take off the Master's sandals and to wash his feet, according to the custom of the best entertainers of that time. He may have said to himself, This man and his disciples are not used to being entertained in such style, and my servants would recognize themselves as being on a

par at least with any of these men except the Teacher himself. Without, therefore, going to the extremes of polite entertaining, the Pharisee had nevertheless cordially welcomed the Lord to his table, feeling no doubt that in doing this he was honoring the Lord, and not sufficiently realizing that he was the one who was being honored, in the privilege of entertaining so noble a guest. How will Simon regard the matter when, in the resurrection time (during the Millennium), he ascertains that his guest was "the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"?

The Apostle urges upon us all, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels [God's messengers] unawares." The Lord wishes his people to be generous with such things as they have (but not to be vaingloriously extravagant), hence it is written again, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet [proper] and it tendeth to poverty." It is a part of our present lesson to learn of our own mean selfishness, which all have inherited through the fall, and gradually, under the instruction of the Lord's Word, to get the victory over this and become more generous—more like our Father in Heaven.

Let us be specially generous and hospitable toward the "brethren," who really represent the Lord himself; not only as "ambassadors for God," but also as "members of the body of Christ."

The "woman of the city" mentioned, was evidently a common character, widely known to the people of the city, though she might not be known to Jesus and the disciples, who were not residents. Whatever the woman's previous life may have been, she had experienced deep contrition of heart, and a desire to live a better life. She had heard about Jesus, the great Teacher, and that unlike the Pharisees he did not disdain to speak with and to encourage fallen ones and to help them up again. She felt that she would like to go to the Lord in prayer for forgiveness, and would like to make a fresh start in life, to seek thereafter to live more consistently. She knew not how to approach the matter; she knew not what to say respecting herself; she would merely take a little offering in her hand, and while he was reclining at dinner, after the custom of that time, and while his feet would be easily accessible to her, she would venture to anoint them with the fine ointment which she had brought with her. Saying not a word, her heart too full of utterance, she reached the Master's feet, and there her tears trickled over them. By her tears he should know, more eloquently than she could voice her sentiments in words, what were the true longings of her heart for forgiveness and for reconciliation.

How merciful and considerate of our needs, is the Lord's provision that when we come penitently to his feet for forgiveness we are not required to approach him through another, nor to formulate our petition in some exact form of language—he can read our hearts and accepts our tears and even our humblest efforts to make amends and to serve the "members of his body." And even though he may delay the message of forgiveness it is but to let the roots of penitence and faith sink deeper in our hearts.

Jesus for a time seemed to heed her not, and she may have questioned whether or not he was misunderstanding her motives and her prayer, but the fullness of her heart found vent in still more tears, and tenderly she wiped his feet and anointed them with the ointment. The Pharisee, meantime, was saying within himself: Now it is most fortunate that I invited Jesus to dinner today, and it is fortunate that this woman came in; it affords a proof, a test, respecting the ability of Jesus to read the hearts of those about him. If he were a prophet, if he were specially empowered and enlightened of God, he would have known the character of this woman; but he evidently does not know her character, and therefore is permitting her to anoint his feet, and this seems to be a proof that he is not a prophet.

But Jesus, fully conscious of all that was going on, and with a clear knowledge of the heart of the poor woman at his feet, and of the self-satisfied Pharisee who entertained him, was planning a way by which he might do good to both of them—a way by which he might set before all present a great truth. Therefore he put a parable to Simon, saying that a certain creditor had two debtors, the one owing a large

amount, the other a small amount, and when they were totally unable to pay he cheerfully and promptly forgave them both. Then our Lord pointed his lesson on this little parable, by enquiring which of the two forgiven ones would be most appreciative of the creditor's leniency? Simon, who had not as yet caught the import of the parable, promptly answered that the one who had the largest debt forgiven would undoubtedly be the one who would be most appreciative, and our Lord approved this answer. Then directing attention to the woman, he reminded Simon that although he had been kind in inviting him to dinner, and although he appreciated his attentions, nevertheless the still greater attentions of the woman, and the still greater marks of respect which she had showed, were evidences that while they both loved, the woman loved the more; and the intimation clearly is that the greater love was developed by a greater realization of sin and a greater desire to be relieved from it.

Of course, in one sense of the word, all are sinners, all have come short of the glory of God, and are hopeless without forgiveness; yet the Pharisee occupied a different position from the woman, because under the Jewish Law Covenant he was already occupying a standpoint of typical justification, and was seeking to maintain that standing by living a life of strict regard for the divine Law. On the other hand, the woman, although under the same Covenant, by living an abandoned life in open violation of the Law, had lost her interest in the national typical justification, and was therefore in a much larger sense of the word a sinner. Simon knew very well that while he was trying to keep the Law he was not keeping it perfectly, but infracted it in various ways from time to time, and yet he was not wilfully an infractor of the Law, as was the woman; hence in this sense of the word there was the wide difference between great sin and less sin; yet both needed the Saviour, and if the Pharisee had realized the truth of the matter he needed the Saviour just as much as did the woman; for the Law Covenant could not give him everlasting life—to attain that he must admit his sin and accept forgiveness and salvation from sin and its penalty, death, as a gift from the Saviour who honored him by consenting to be his guest.

Then Jesus turned to the woman and said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven." What words those must have been to her! Her prayer was answered—a prayer, which had arisen in her heart, and which had expressed itself through tears and ointment, had been heard, and she was forgiven and all the past treated as forever blotted out. How thankful she must have felt! Poor Simon, however, so far as we know, did not come to the point of saying, Lord, I also am a sinner, and even though I have loved less than this woman I also need to be forgiven, and I pray for the forgiveness of my sins, that I may be counted one of your followers. No; the very fact that he had a religious standing in the nominal Church, and had made a profession of holiness, seems to have stood in his way, and to have hindered him from accepting the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins. And so it is right along. How frequently do we see that people who have been living moral lives, evidently seeking to walk in paths of righteousness, are much less prepared to accept forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ than are some others who have been living more carelessly and who awaken to a realization of their undone condition, and go to the Lord more contritely and more earnestly, and exercise a greater faith, and feel for him consequently a greater love!

There is no intimation, however, that because of his failure to ask forgiveness, and to become a follower of Jesus, Simon was condemned to "hell," etc.; quite to the contrary, he simply followed the course of his nation (blinded by prejudice and false traditions of men). Their rejection of Jesus lost to them the privileges of joint-heirship in Christ's Kingdom, and led to their national rejection from God's favor until the opening of the Millennial age. Then, as the Apostle clearly shows, their blindness shall be removed and they shall be blest with a much clearer knowledge of the truth. Then the Lord will "pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and shall mourn because of him." Then when they weep as did the woman with the ointment, God, through the glorified

Christ, will have mercy on them and forgive their sins. Then their trial for everlasting life will begin.—See Rom. 11:25-32; Zech. 12:10.

The other guests at the table were particularly struck with our Lord's declaration that the woman's sins were forgiven her. Not recognizing the speaker to be the Messiah, the Son of God, they questioned the propriety of such words, but this was one reason why our Lord uttered the words; it was one of his unostentatious methods of calling attention to the fact that he was the Messiah, and that as such, and in view of the work which he was yet to do all power to forgive sins was in his hands.

Then he said to the woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." He wished her to know that it was not her tears that had brought the forgiveness; that it was not the value of the ointment that had moved him to forgive her, but that the thing which was pleasing in his sight, and on account of which her sins were forgiven, was her faith. She not only realized her own sinful condition, but she had realized that this great Teacher had the power to forgive her and to restore her, and she had trusted, and acted upon this, and our Lord wished her to realize that the reward she had received was because of exercise of this faith. And so we may realize in respect to all of the Lord's favors in the case of each one of his people. When we come unto the Lord, with tears of penitence, we are to know that they do not prevail; and if we present gifts we are to know that they do not prevail, and that the tears and the offerings could avail us nothing except as we present to the Lord our faith, accepting him as the one who has power to forgive sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And not only is this necessary at the beginning of the Christian way, but similarly faith is necessary all the journey through. If we do not continue in faith we cannot progress. "According to thy faith be it unto thee," would seem to be the Lord's method of dealing with all who are his disciples, from first to last of their Christian walk and experience.

The center of the lesson, then, is abiding faith in the Lord: faith when he seems not to notice us; faith when things seem to be going prosperously with us in our spiritual affairs and in our temporal affairs; and faith equally strong when the currents and forces seem all to be against us. The victory that overcometh the world is the faith that in all conditions is able to look up to the Lord with absolute confidence in his goodness and faithfulness, and to realize that according to his promise eventually all things will work together for good to us because we are his people.—1 John 5:5; Rom. 8:29.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Galilee	Second preaching tour of Galilee, with the twelve			8:1-3	
	Galilee	Demoniac healed; league with Beelzebub charged	12:22-37	3:19-30		
	Galilee	Scribes and Pharisees seek a sign	12:38-45			

Luke 8:1-3

And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

Matthew 12:22-45

Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to

desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Mark 3:19-30

And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into a house. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself. And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

"THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE"—*Reprints*, p. 4608
MATTHEW 12:22-32,38-42.
"He that is not with me is against me, and he that
gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."—Matthew 12:30.

SOMETIMES on a battlefield it would appear as though each man were fighting for himself. All battle lines seem lost in the confusion; yet in the end the victory will show the same clear-cut distinctions that prevailed in the beginning of the battle. According to the Great Teacher the entire human family is either on one side or on the other side of a great battle between right and wrong, truth and error, God and Satan. There is no doubt whatever as to how the battle will end—God will have the victory. Indeed the Bible assures us that at any time he could quickly put an end to the conflict, deliver his saints, overthrow Satan and his empire, etc. The Divine promise is that this will be done in God's "due time"—when the Church will be completed and changed by the power of the First Resurrection, and the time shall come for the establishment of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom for the blessing of all the nations of the earth.

Is it asked why the long delay of now six thousand years that sin has triumphed, two thousand of this since Messiah died for the redemption of sinners and their release from the death sentence? The answer is that during these nineteen centuries those whom he has favored with some knowledge of his will—testing their loyalty to him, to his Law, to his representatives—he is testing because he seeks to find amongst those professing loyalty, such as have the principles of righteousness at heart. Our present Study shows how some at the First Advent were thus tested and we know that throughout these nineteen centuries the experience of the footstep followers of the Nazarene have been similar to his own. Frequently they have been hated without cause—maligned, misunderstood, slandered—sometimes by fellow-religionists of honorable standing. In every such instance we are to remember that there are but two sides to the conflict—the side of God, truth, righteousness, and the side of error, falsehood, Satan.

Every Test Twofold

As we see how blindly scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law hated Jesus and said all manner of evil against him, we perceive that really they were on Satan's side. As we see Saul of Tarsus stoning Stephen to death and others persecuting followers of Jesus, we see clearly that they were in Satan's service, deluded by him and, in some instances, we are assured that these servants of Satan and unrighteousness verily thought that they did God service. Let us therefore be on guard along these lines, remembering the words of the Great Teacher, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "He that is not for me is against me." "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Alas, how many noble people have unwittingly been on the wrong side of the great controversy—fighting against God and the Truth, ignorantly deluded by the Adversary. By permitting this conflict and the measure of darkness, God is the more effectively trying, testing, those whom he has called to be his people. Not only are we tried directly as to the side we will take, but in a secondary sense we are tried as respects our humility. Those who are honest of heart and who make the mistake of fighting against God, when their eyes are opened, have a great test of humility in the matter of confession of their error and becoming zealous for the Truth. Those who are on the right side have also a test of humility, that they be not puffed up by their victory, but "humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time."

Satan, because created on a higher plane, is styled the Prince of demons in his relationship to the fallen angels. Judge of the delusion in the hearts of the Pharisees which prompted them to charge the Master with being Satan himself and, on this score, accounted for his power to cast out demons! The Master took the time to philosophize with them on this subject and to show that if the time had come when Satan would work against his own associates and servants it would imply the speedy fall of his

empire. He also pointed out that demons had been cast out by some whom they acknowledged and honored. If he must be Beelzebub to cast out the demons, what would their logic be in respect to their neighbors and friends who at times had exercised this power! On the other hand, if he, by God's power cast out demons, it was an evidence that God's Kingdom was nigh, just as he had proclaimed.

Wilful Sins Unforgivable

Having thus answered their objection he showed that they were against him and opposing his Word and that this meant that if he were God's representative, they were opposing God. Then he called their attention to the fact that their words were blasphemous in that they attributed God's spirit, God's power in him, to Satan's power. Since they did this without any real provocation and in opposition to every evidence, it implied that they were wicked at heart. Ordinary sins resulting from the fall, ignorance, superstition, etc., would all, in God's providence, be ultimately forgivable, but a wilful sin against light, against knowledge, would be a sin against God's spirit. And for that sin there would be no forgiveness, either in this Age, or in the coming Age—either during this Gospel Age or in the Millennial Age. If the sin were committed against full light, its merit or punishment would be destruction, Second Death. But very evidently it would be such a sin to only a few. With the majority there would be a mixture of wilfulness with ignorance, and, if so, the proportion of wrong represented by the ignorance could be forgiven; but the proportion represented by the wilfulness would need to be punished, because unforgivable.

The scribes and Pharisees, envious of his popularity, asked for a sign, a proof of his Messiahship—not recognizing his teachings and his miracles as proofs sufficient. He then told them of one sign which would come to them too late—his stay in the tomb would correspond to Jonah's stay in the belly of the great fish. The people of heathen Nineveh in the Judgment Age, in the Millennial Age, he assured them, would rank higher than they, for the Ninevites did repent at the preaching of Jonah, while these repented not at the preaching of a greater than Jonah. The Queen of Sheba had journeyed afar to hear Solomon's wisdom; yet these who were in the presence of a greater than Solomon realized it not and heeded not his message. Let us not be thus blinded, but, with our whole hearts, accept and follow the Nazarene!

BY THY WORDS ACQUITTED; BY THY WORDS CONDEMNED.—*Reprints*, p. 1937

> "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof on a day of judgment. For by thy words thou wilt be acquitted, and by thy words thou wilt be condemned."—Matt. 12:34-37.

REALIZING that we, the Church, are at the present time under the inspection of our kingly Bridegroom, who is now present (Matt. 22:11) to gather out of his Kingdom [in its present embryo or formative condition] all things that offend" (Matt. 13:41), and to gather unto himself his jewels, his bride (Mal. 3:17), we cannot too carefully consider the principles upon which this judgment and this selection are made.

The above words of our Lord indicate that the heart and the mouth are under very special scrutiny, the former representing the individual character, and the latter being an index of the character. It is in this same view of the matter that those words of wisdom were penned,—"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee." (Prov. 4:23,24.) The indication is clear

that a right condition of heart is necessary to right words; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," as experience testifies to every man. It is therefore just that our words should be a criterion of judgment in the Lord's estimation, as he tells us they are. True, honied words are sometimes only the masks of deep hypocrisy; but the mask is sure to drop off some time, as soon as selfish policy renders a change of tactics necessary. The fact therefore remains that the words, the entire course of conversation and conduct, are an index of the heart.

Our first concern, then, should be for the heart—that its affections and dispositions may be fully under the control of divine grace; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, brotherly kindness, love, faith, meekness, temperance, supreme reverence for God and Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles be fixed, established, in the heart, then out of the good treasure of the heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

Concerning our Lord Jesus, whose heart was perfect—in whom was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, it was said, "Grace is poured into thy lips;" and again, "All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." (Psa. 45:2; Luke 4:22.) Moses, personating Christ, foretold the blessed influences of the Lord's words, saying, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deut. 32:2.) And Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63.) So wise, just and true were the Lord's words, that, though his enemies were continually seeking to find some fault, it is said, "They could not take hold of his words before the people; and they marveled at his answers and held their peace." (Luke 20:26.) And others said, "Never man spake like this man."—John 7:46.

Thus our Lord left a worthy example to his people, which the Apostle urges all to follow, saying, "Let your speech be always with grace [with manifest love and kindness], seasoned with salt [a purifying and preservative influence]." (Col. 4:6.) And Peter adds, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,"—wisely, and in accordance with the spirit and Word of the Lord. Again, it is written, "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile [deceit]." "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles." "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious words: but the lips of a fool [an unwise, reckless talker] will swallow up himself. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is mischievous madness." "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."—Psa. 34:13; Prov. 21:23; Eccl. 10:12, 13; 5:2.

Job, in the midst of all his afflictions, was very careful not to sin with his lips. (Job 2:10; 31:30; 1:21, 22.) He knew that his words would be taken by the Lord as an index of his heart, and he was careful to keep both the heart and the words right, saying, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil [calamities, troubles—for discipline or refining]? … The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." There was no spirit of rebellion in a heart out of whose abundance came such words of loving submission, patience and faith under severe testings, and that, too, without a clear apprehension of the divine wisdom in permitting them.

The Psalmist puts into the mouth of God's consecrated and tried people these words of firm resolution:—"I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked [who tempts and tries the righteous] is before me."—Psa. 39:1.

How necessary to the stability of Christian character is such a resolution, and the self control which develops under a firm adherence to it. In an unfriendly world we can expect to receive only the reproaches of our Master; for the servant is not above his Lord. The world, the flesh and the devil oppose our way: there are

fightings within and fears without, and many are the arrows and fiery darts aimed at the righteous. But what is the safe attitude of the soul under afflictions and severe testings? Is it not in silence before God, waiting and watching first to see his leading, his will, in every matter before presuming to touch things that often involve so much? So the Psalmist suggests, saying, "I was dumb with silence: I held my peace, even from good [even from doing or saying what seemed good in my own sight]; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me, and in my self-communing there burnt a fire [description of a fiery trial]. Then spake I with my tongue"—not to the revilers, nor to others, but to the Lord.

Yes, it is always our blessed privilege to carry our sorrows and vexations to the Lord;

"For he knows
How to steal the bitter from life's woes."

He does it, as the Psalmist suggests (vs. 4-6), by showing us, through experience, the vanity of all earthly things and their utter inability to satisfy the soul's cravings, or to comfort the wounded spirit. Then comes the thought that the present life, with its cares, vexations and sorrows is passing away, that our days are but as a handbreadth, and however vexing our experiences, they will soon be over; and if we permit them to do so they will only work out in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and develop in us strong and noble characters, disciplined to thorough self-control, thoughtful consideration, patient endurance of affliction and loving loyalty and faithfulness and trust in God. Then the assurances of the blessed rewards of righteousness in the life to come begin to have a new and deeper significance, and we are made to realize that this is not our continuing city, but we seek one to come. Thus the heart is separated from earthly things, and made to realize the superior worth of heavenly things. Nothing but the Lord himself can satisfy the longings of the soul, which, tempest-tossed and tried, comes to realize—

"How vain is all beneath the skies,
How transient every earthly bliss,
How slender all the fondest ties,
That bind me to a world like this!"

Thus chastened and comforted, we learn to look beyond the present to the glory that shall by and by be revealed in the faithful overcomers, who, by patient continuance in well-doing in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, seek for the prize revealed to faith alone. Thus disciplined and blessed under fiery trials by going to the Lord for comfort and help, the child of God begins to realize what it means to be dead to the world and alive toward God, with a keen appreciation of his love and goodness and grace; and being thus separated from the world, and more firmly united to Christ, the language of the heart is, as the Psalmist further suggests, "And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee." (Vs. 7.) Thus

"E'en sorrow, touched by heaven, grows bright
With more than rapture's ray,
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day."

Such is the blessed result of bridling the tongue under circumstances of trial and vexation, and humbly taking all our cares to the Lord in prayer, to the end that, when we speak, our speech may be with grace, seasoned with salt, and that under all circumstances we may speak as the oracles of God.

Considering our Lord's words above quoted—that we must give an account for "every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word"—in view of the fact that the present is our (the Church's) judgment day, we see what great importance attaches to our words. All our words are taken by the Lord as an index of our hearts. If our words are rebellious, or disloyal, or frivolous, or flippant, or unkind, unthankful, unholy or impure, the heart is judged accordingly, on the principle that, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Thus our words, in all the varied circumstances of our daily life, are bearing testimony continually before God of the condition of our hearts. So our Lord's words imply: and in this view of the case how timely is the admonition,—"Be not rash with thy mouth; and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God [And remember that "all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do."—Heb. 4:13]; for God [our Judge] is in heaven [upon the throne], and thou upon earth [under trial before the bar of God]: there-

fore let thy words be few." Let them be thoughtful and wise, as uttered before God, and not rash, hasty and illy considered.

Again, in harmony with the Lord's statement of the responsibility incurred by our words, it is also written, "He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction." (Prov. 13:3.) What a fearful responsibility attaches to the tongue that wags in an evil, or even in a flippant, way, which is also dishonoring to God! And how necessary is the injunction of the Apostle Peter, "Be sober and watch unto prayer!"—1 Pet. 4:7; 1:13; 5:8.

The Psalmist puts this prayer into the lips of all who feel this responsibility, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: keep a guard at the door of my lips. Permit not my heart to incline after any evil thing." "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." "My lips shall utter praise when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness. Let thy hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. I have longed for thy salvation [from all sin, and for the perfection and beauty of holiness], O Lord; and thy law is my delight."—Psa. 141:3,4; 19:14; 119:171-174.

That, as imperfect beings, we may always be perfect in word and deed is not possible. Despite our best endeavors we will sometimes err in word as well as in deed, yet the perfect mastery of our words and ways is the thing to be sought by vigilant and faithful effort. But, nevertheless, for every idle word we must give an account in this our day of judgment. If, in the daily scrutiny of our ways, which is the duty of every Christian, we discover that in any particular our words have been dishonoring to the Lord, we should remember that, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1); and in the name of our Advocate we may approach the throne of grace, explain to our Heavenly Father our realization of the error, our deep regret at our failure to honor his name and his cause by a holy walk and conversation, and humbly request that the sin be not laid to our charge, but that it may be blotted out through his gracious provision for our cleansing through Christ, humbly claiming that in his precious blood is all our hope and trust.

Thus we should render up our account for every idle word; and by our words of repentance, supplemented by the merits of Christ applied by faith, shall we be acquitted. Otherwise the idle words, dishonoring to the Lord, will stand against us and condemn us, and we will be obliged to suffer the consequences. The first consequence will be self-injury, for every evil thought or word indulged hardens the character and inclines it the more toward unrighteousness. The second consequence is a bad example to others, and the stirring up of evil in them. "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." (Prov. 15:1.) Thus, as the result of unwise or unkind words, we may stir up about us difficulties which will become the agents of retributive justice to teach us the lesson of self-control, and consideration for the feelings and opinions of others. It is often the case that the Lord (or the devil) is blamed for sending trials which are simply the natural results of our own mistakes. And those who fail to locate the root of the trouble **(in themselves)** pray in vain for the Lord to remove miraculously what they themselves could obviate by obedience to the Word, and vigorous self-discipline. "If we would judge [and correct] ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord [largely by the experiences through which our own faults put us], that we should not be condemned with the world." (1 Cor. 11:31,32.) But even should it be admitted that the difficulties are not directly caused by God, or the devil ("Every man is tempted [tried] when he is drawn away of his own lusts [desires] and enticed"), the natural tendency is to blame the matter on some one else, and to think that our loss of patience, our hasty word or act was the fault of another. How many deceive and encourage themselves with the thought: "If every body else had as reasonable and generous a nature as I have our family or church gathering or community would be a veritable heaven upon earth!" Beloved, let us examine **ourselves**, let us be very humble, lest the very words of self-

congratulation and self-satisfaction which we consider in our hearts (if we do not utter them aloud) bring our condemnation. "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye [what merit is there in it]?" (Luke 6:33-38.) It is only when we "endure grief, **suffering wrongfully**," that our suffering is acceptable to God as a sacrifice of sweet incense. "What glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even hereunto were ye called." (1 Pet. 2:19-21.) Beloved, let us see to it that our sufferings are for righteousness' sake only, and let us not charge God or our neighbors for tribulations resulting from the indulgence of our inherited or cultivated faults.

"In many things we are all faulty. If any one does not err in word, he is a perfect man, able to control the whole body." (Jas. 3:2.) But such a man does not exist. We all need and must continually plead the merit of our Redeemer and Advocate, while we strive daily to bring every thought into captivity to the will of Christ, and to perfect holiness in the fear (reverence) of the Lord.

In view of this fact, which we trust all of the Lord's people will endeavor more and more fully to realize, viz., that we now stand before the bar of judgment, we inquire, in the words of Peter, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" God-likeness certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let such things be put far away from all who name the name of Christ in sincerity and truth. And let us remember daily to settle our accounts with the Lord, to make sure that no record of idle words, unrepented of, and consequently unforgiven, stands against us. "Let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ." "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, 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." Thus out of the good treasure of the heart we shall be able to speak the words of truth and soberness, to honor our Lord by a godly walk and conversation, to subdue the evil tendencies of our fallen nature, and to have our conversation "honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."—Phil. 1:27; 4:8; 1 Pet. 2:12.

If daily we render up our accounts to God and seek his grace for greater overcoming power with each succeeding day, we shall be acquitted in judgment and stand approved before God through Christ, having the testimony of his holy spirit with our spirits that we are pleasing and acceptable to him.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Galilee	Christ's disciples his close relatives	12:46-50	3:31-35	8:19-21	

Matthew 12:46-50

While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Mark 3:31-35

There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

Luke 8:19-21

Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press. And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

"WHO IS MY MOTHER? AND WHO ARE MY BRETHREN?"—*Reprints*, p. 943

IT IS WELL for those who have entered into the new relationship of spiritual sons of God to consider carefully and frequently the changed relationship into which it has brought us. Our most intimate relationships are no longer those of earthly origin. Our interests, hopes, and aims are now bound up with those of the heavenly family; and as we come to realize this more fully, our affections reach out after the family of God and our communion one with another should be such as to deepen and broaden that love one for another.

The above expression of our Lord shows how he regarded the heavenly relationship. When one said unto him: "Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with thee," he answered, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."—Matt. 12:47-50.

As new creatures, we are spiritual sons of God, soon to be joined in heirship with his dear Son; we are the espoused virgin who, forsaking all earthly ties, is to be joined in marriage to our heavenly Bridegroom, and with joy we are now making all possible preparation for the great event. When this new condition is **fully** entered upon, we shall no longer be husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, etc., with those on the earthly plane; for we shall be "kings and priests unto God," prepared to rule and to bless all the families of the earth, every member of which will then be as dear to us as to God. Our love to our former dear ones will be no less than now. Our love will be greatly intensified, though not bounded by the former narrow limits of blood relationship.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
30	Sea of Galilee	Illustrations of sower, weeds, others; explanations	13:1-53	4:1-34	8:4-18	

Matthew 13:1-53

The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one 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 way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold some sixty, some thirty. Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the

birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude 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. Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

Mark 4:1-34

And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred. And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them. And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with

gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred. And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come. And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it. And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

Luke 8:4-18

And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit a hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

GOOD SEED FOR GOOD GROUND—*Reprints*, p. 4634

MATTHEW 13:1-9;18-23.

"Wherefore, putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls."—James 1:21—R.V.

FROM a boat our Lord taught a most wonderful lesson respecting the method used by the Almighty in the selection of the "little flock," whom he invites to be members with Christ Jesus in the administration of his Millennial Kingdom. The Kingdom message or invitation is the "seed" which is under consideration in the above parable, which, under favorable conditions, germinates and brings forth the required fruitage of character-development. Our Lord was the great Sower of this good seed of the Kingdom, and after him came the Apostles. Since then he has used all of his faithful people more or less in this seed-sowing.

The fact that most of the "seed" of the Divine message seems wasted is no proof that the message is not good and desirable. This parable shows that the real fault lies in the soil—in the heart. If all hearts were right the message or seed would bring forth much fruit everywhere.

Wayside Hearers.

The parable states that not all of the soil is good or suitable, nevertheless, the intimation is that it is within the power of many to correct and offset the unfavorable conditions in themselves. We are not left to conjecture, for this is one of the few parables which our Lord himself interpreted—a fact which many seem not to have noticed.

The "seed" is the message of the Kingdom. Many do not understand it. On such ears the message is lost, for the Adversary is on the alert to take it away, symbolized by the birds devouring the exposed "seed by the wayside." Such "wayside" hearers constitute the most numerous class in every congregation of the nominal church. They are merely formalists.

Stony Ground Hearers.

"Stony" ground represents another class of hearers of the Kingdom message. To them it sounds good; they are interested, but they lack depth of character. They make professions and for a time flourish extraordinarily, but they lack the depth necessary to a character development suitable for the Lord's use in the work of the Kingdom, and when the trials and testings come they stumble. They thought they might be carried to the Kingdom on "flowery beds of ease," while "others fight to win the prize and sail through bloody seas." There is no easy road to the Kingdom. The Master declares to all who would be of the elect "Bride," "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom."

Good Seed But Thorny Ground.

The ground which will produce thorns is rich and very suitable for the production of proper Christian character, but it is infested with thorn seed and the soil cannot successfully produce both wheat and thorns; hence, as the parable shows, the thorns choke out the wheat so that a sufficient crop is not produced. These thorns are not, as some have suggested, sensual vices and criminal appetites. Hearts in which sensuality dominates have no ear whatever for the Kingdom message, and are not mentioned in the parable, which refers only to those who are no longer willing sinners, but who are walking outwardly in the way of righteousness. The Master's word is, "He that receiveth the seed among thorns is he that heareth the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and he becometh unfruitful." There are many noble people represented also by this portion of the parable. There are many who, if freed from the spirit of the world, from its ambitions and wealth and influence, its love of the good things of this life, would be very fruitful in righteousness. When we look about us and see the thrift and energy of many people of civilized lands, we say to ourselves, properly, if these lives were really turned into the way of the Lord and were rid of these earthly encumbrances, what grand, noble characters they would make. However, their strength, their energy, is absorbed by worldly affairs and cares, and they do not bring forth the fruitage demanded as the necessary qualification for the higher honors of a place with Christ in his Kingdom. The Master's mes-

sage to such is, You cannot give your time and strength and influence to worldly matters and at the same time make your "calling and election sure" to a place with me in my Kingdom. Whoever would be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me. Where I am there shall my disciple be.

"That Ye Bear Much Fruit"

"Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit," said our Master. In this parable the good ground varies in its productiveness—thirty, sixty and an hundred fold. The larger the returns, the greater will be the Father's pleasure and the Savior's glory. Nor is the statement an extreme one, as some might suppose. The new "miracle wheat" sometimes produces more than two hundred grains from one. This parable seems to imply that the responsibility for the fruitfulness of the heart and life and character depends very greatly upon the individual and how he receives the message of the Kingdom. Those in whom the fruits will be the most abundant will be such as grasp the invitation most intelligently and earnestly. "He that heareth the word and understandeth it" and whose heart is in a condition of loyalty to God and who frees himself from hindrances and worldly ambitions and aspirations and, like the Apostle Paul, can say, "This one thing I do," will surely gain the Kingdom.

It is not sufficient that we hear the message of the Kingdom; it is not sufficient that we have good hearts or good intentions in respect to it; it is additionally necessary, as the Master says, that we should understand the Kingdom message; hence the need of Bible study. Intelligent people consider it very wise and proper that several years of study be devoted to preparation for the few years of earthly life. How much study, then, should be considered proper for our preparation for the eternal life and Kingdom blessings? The time and effort thus consumed in character development for the Kingdom are wisely spent, and the harvest of thirty, sixty or a hundred-fold illustrates the degree and intensity of our earnestness. The rewards in the Kingdom will also be proportionate. "As star differeth from star in glory, so shall it be in the resurrection of the dead." Varying degrees of glory in the Kingdom will be manifested, yet none will be acceptable to the Father who shall not have brought forth fruitage in good measure; the "well done" will never be pronounced if not merited.

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES—*Reprints*, p. 4635

MATTHEW 13:24-43.

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."—Matthew 13:43

HERE have introduced by another "Kingdom" parable a great prophecy. Our study of a week ago showed various classes of hearers of the truth. To-day's study ignores all except the "good ground" hearers, which shows that our Lord foreknew the history of the Gospel age. We are informed that he and his Apostles sowed none but good seed, but that after the Apostles had fallen asleep in death, the great Adversary, Satan, over-sowed the wheat field with tare seed, darnel. We are told that such spite-work is not uncommon in the Orient. The "darnel" seed is very different from the wheat, but the growing stalks look very much alike, and even when headed the resemblance is close, except to the expert, until the heads ripen; then the head of the wheat becomes heavy while the darnel, being light, stands upright. Only the expert can discern the wheat from the tares while growing.

The Master gave this parable to illustrate how error would be brought into the Church by Satan, and that the children produced by the error would in many respects resemble or counterfeit those produced by the truth. It was impossible for the Adversary to corrupt the seed of truth which Jesus and the Apostles sowed; neither was he allowed to interfere with the sowing of it, but he was permitted to over-sow it in the field and, if possible, to choke the wheat,

and in a general ay to deceive the outside world respecting the true character of the wheat—the children of the Kingdom.

We are to have in mind the Almighty power of God by which he could hinder Satan and prevent the accomplishment of his plans at any and all times. We are to remember that the Divine Plan of the Ages permits many things which God does not approve, but in his Word condemns. We are to remember that the Divine Plan spans several ages and that only the finished work will fully display the Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. We are to remember that, in the present time, God permits the wrath of demons and men to oppose his purposes, but only so far as he can and eventually will overrule these to his own glory and for the good of all in harmony with himself.

"Let Both Grow Together"

The parable represents the servants as asking whether or not the "tares" should be gathered out from the "wheat," and thus the enemy's work be destroyed. The answer is, No, because in so doing there would be such a commotion in the wheat field as to disturb all of the wheat—so intimately were the true and false associated—their roots intertwining in society, in the home, etc. Instead the Master declared that both should be allowed to grow together throughout the age until the harvest-time at the end of the age; then the "reapers" should be instructed concerning the gathering together and separating of the two classes. The wheat would then be gathered into the barn and the tares would be bundled for burning, to the end that none of the bad seed might affect the future crop.

At the special request of the disciples the Master interpreted this parable also. Jesus himself was the sower of the good seed of the Kingdom message. Satan was the sower of the crop of seed of false doctrines and deception. The "harvest" time will be the end of this age, just before the inauguration of the new age of Christ's Millennial Kingdom. The wheat class will be those counted fit to be associated with Christ in the glory of his Millennial Kingdom, and the gathering into the "barn" or garner represents the resurrection change which this wheat will experience. The Apostle explains this, saying: "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 (earthly) body, it is raised a spiritual (heavenly) body." This is the resurrection of the dead—the first resurrection.—1 Cor. 15:43, 44; Rev. 20:6.

The tare class is represented as being gathered out of the kingdom (vs. 41), in the sense that the Church at the present time is God's kingdom in embryo—in a state of progressive development or preparation for the glory and work of the future. All of the Kingdom class are fully consecrated to God and begotten of the Spirit with a view to their becoming Divine spirit beings in the resurrection. Others who are not thus spirit-begotten have no right to class themselves with the "wheat" nor to consider themselves heirs of the Kingdom. Their presence in the Church of Christ is out of order. They have been permitted to commingle with the wheat for centuries, but with the end of the age the dispensational change will come, incidental to the inauguration of the Millennium.

It would be a mistake to suppose that there are to be thieves and murderers of the baser sort among these offenders, but they include some whom the Apostle describes as doing the works of the flesh and the devil, namely, anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. However, many "tares" are fine people of generous disposition, but not "New Creatures" in Christ Jesus. They are blame-worthy, not because of not being spirit-begotten, but because they are in the nominal church and posing as Christians. They are offensive in this sense in the Master's sight. Nor are they entirely to be blamed for thinking themselves Christians. They have been encouraged so to think and act by preachers and teachers, many of whom, like themselves, have no knowledge of the Kingdom nor of the spirit-begetting power which initiates into membership in it. The gathering of these into "bundles"—into lodges, societies, churches, sects, parties—will especially be an evidence of the "harvest" work in progress. The true are exhorted to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and that they come not into bondage to sects and parties. They are to avoid membership in "bundles," but stand in

the full fellowship of all who are of the true "wheat" class.

The casting of these bundles into the furnace will mean their destruction, but we are in no sense to understand the furnace to be a literal one, nor the fire which will consume the tares to be a literal fire. The fire with which this age will end will be a great "time of trouble" foretold in the Scriptures as preceding and introducing the Millennial Kingdom—"A time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Daniel 12:1). In that time of trouble the delusions which now make the tares think themselves to be the true "Church" will all be dissolved—they will all be reduced to their proper plane—the earthly plane—and recognize themselves as merely of the earth, earthy, and not in any sense members of the called-out, spirit-begotten, elect "Church of the living God."

The Kingdom of Their Father

Hearken now to the Master's words respecting the consummation of the Church's hope in the end of this age. He says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father"! "He that hath an ear to hear let him hear." Not every one has the hearing ear, but this is the Lord's message to those who have the proper attitude of heart—to all who have the ability to understand spiritual things. Let such understand that with the close of this age the Lord's saintly ones, irrespective of the earthly Church systems, will be associated with the Redeemer in the glory of his Millennial Kingdom and will shine forth as the sun for the blessing and enlightenment and uplifting of the human family.

PICTURES OF THE KINGDOM—*Reprints*, p. 4636

MATTHEW 13:31-33;44-52

"The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."—Romans 14:17.

LET us keep in memory that the Master's parables of the Kingdom of Heaven relate to the class of people whom he is calling out of the world of mankind to be associated with him in his Millennial Kingdom soon to be inaugurated. Let us remember that sometimes this class is spoken of as including, nominally, not merely the saintly, the wheat class, but also, to some extent, the tares, as shown in our study of last week. These different parable-pictures represent the same subject from different standpoints, just as we take a photograph of a building from the north, the south, the east and the west, internally and externally.

Like a Grain of Mustard Seed

As a mustard seed is very small, yet produces a large bush, so that the fowls of the air may lodge in its branches, so this illustrates how the gospel of the Kingdom would, from a small beginning, attain to a considerable size. Its size would not be great among the trees, but great among bushes or herbage. Thus the message of Christ received at first only by the poor and the few of Israel, has finally grown to such important dimensions that the fowls like to gather in its branches. But let us remember that the fowls, according to our Lord's interpretation of a previous parable, represent the servants of the Wicked One. So then the teaching of this parable would lead us to conclude that the Church of Christ, at one time, was so unimportant in the world that it was a shame and a dishonor to belong to it, but that ultimately it would become honorable and great and the Adversary's servants would have pleasure in its shade. This development the Scriptures represent as being Babylon, declaring that, as a whole, with the various branches and denominations, the nominal Church of Christ is Babylonish. Hearken to the Lord's words; "She has become the hold of every foul spirit and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird." The intimation is that there is a large outward development of the Church which is not to her advantage and glory but contrariwise. Nevertheless, this is, nominally, the Church of Christ.

However his spirit may have been misrepresented and there may have been an improper development, ultimately the great Head of the Church will bring order out of chaos and confusion and will glorify and use his "elect."

"Leaven Hidden In The Meal"

The parable of the "leaven" (v. 33) illustrates the process by which, as was foretold, the Church would get into the wrong condition. As a woman would take her batch of flour for baking and put leaven (yeast) in it and the result would be that the mass would become leavened, so it would be with the Church of Christ; the food of the entire household would become leavened or corrupted. Every portion would become more or less vitiated with the leaven of false doctrines which would permeate the entire mass. Thus today nearly every doctrine inculcated by Jesus and his Apostles has become more or less perverted or twisted by the errors of the dark ages.

Treasure Hid in a Field

The desirability of obtaining joint-heirship with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom, is pictured in the parable of "the treasure hidden in the field." The finder, realizing its value, desired it for himself and had such faith in it that he disposed of all of his property in order to buy that field, which he believed to contain the precious treasure. Only those who will appreciate the Gospel message will gain its glorious promises. If we love the present life with its joys and prospects, its hopes and ambitions, then we will labor for these, but if we intelligently hear and, by faith, believe the Gospel offer of this age of a share with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom, then in proportion to our faith and appreciation will be our self-sacrificing zeal to attain that prize. Whoever believes the message of the Kingdom will find his faith an inspiration, indeed a necessary inspiration, to the attainment of the prize, for it will cost all that he has of earthly blessings; and unless he has faith that he will find the prize, he will surely be unwilling to sacrifice all he has for it. The field belongs to God. He has put the treasure there. He offers it for sale to any willing to pay the price. The buyer is the Lord and those who accept his invitation to join with him in the sacrifice of their earthly interests that they may be sharers with him in his heavenly glories—in the work of the Millennial Age, to unearth all that treasure in the blessing of the world of mankind. The hiding of the treasure is necessary; as our Lord said, "Cast not your pearls before swine"; they will not understand you, they will think you foolish, and in their disappointment may do you injury. "Hast thou faith, have it to thyself before God." Make your sacrifice of earthly things to him and he who seeth in secret will reward you openly.

The Pearl of Great Value

Pearls were much more in vogue in ancient times than now. Pearl buyers traded in these gems and carried them to the market, where they were highly estimated. The parable represents one of these pearl merchants as coming across the finest pearl he had ever seen. He considered it so priceless that he was quite rejoiced to sell or trade all of his other pearls and property that he might become the owner of that pearl.

This parable represents the Gospel offer of a share with Christ in his Kingdom as being superior to all other propositions of the world. The honor of the world, of name and fame, position and wealth, are indeed desirable; as the Scriptures say, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches"; but when our eyes behold "the pearl of great price," the Kingdom offer of joint-heirship with our Lord Jesus in his heavenly glory and the association with him in his work of blessing all the families of the earth, we realize that this is a priceless thing, worth more by far than all the honors and dignities and pleasures of the world. Those worthy to buy this pearl will gladly exchange all earthly things therefor—even their good name, and this will be necessary, as the Master forewarned them, saying, "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, for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:11, 12). He that is not willing to have the Kingdom at such a cost is not worthy of the Kingdom. The Apostle has said, "Through much tribulation must we enter the Kingdom" (Acts 14:22); and only those who willingly endure such tribu-

lations for righteousness' sake—for the sake of the truth, in obedience to the Heavenly calling—are overcomers. And only to the "overcomers" has the Lord given "the exceeding great and precious promises." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Rev. 3:21.

The Net Gathered of Every Kind

Another parable of the Kingdom represents the gospel message as a "net." Only one kind of fish is desired, but the net gathers every kind. Not every kind will inherit the Kingdom as joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, hence the end of this age will be a sifting, separating time, as represented in the parable. The desirable fish will be gathered into vessels, the remainder will be cast back into the sea as unfit for the Kingdom, but not necessarily unfit for any purpose. During Christ's Millennial reign that class unfit for the Kingdom will be dealt with and blessed and, if possible, made useful and fit for eternal life.

Here, as in the parable of the wheat and the tares, the furnace of fire, and the weeping and gnashing of teeth in connection therewith, symbolizes the great time of trouble with which this age will end, giving place to the Millennial Kingdom, the Kingdom for the establishment of which upon the earth the Church has been praying so unceasingly for nineteen centuries, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." What a Kingdom that will be! It will be a Kingdom entrusted to a "Little Flock"—"Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom"—and it will be fully empowered to establish the rule of heaven among mankind!

Our study closes with the Lord's exhortation that all who are instructed respecting the things pertaining to the Kingdom should set their affairs in order.

Lay down your rails, ye nations, near and far,
  Yoke your full trains to steam's triumphal car,
Link town to town, unite in iron bands
  The long-estranged and oft-embattled lands.
Peace, mild-eyed seraph; knowledge, light divine,
  Shall send their messengers by every line.
Men joined in amity shall wonder long
  That hate had power to lead their fathers wrong;
Or that false glory lured their hearts astray,
  And made it virtuous and sublime to slay.
How grandly now these wonders of our day
  Are making preparation for Christ's royal way,
And with what joyous hope our souls
  Do watch the ball of progress as it rolls,
Knowing that all as yet completed or begun
  Is but the dawning that precedes the sun.

THE KINGDOM A PRIZE—*Reprints*, p. 5047

MATTHEW 13:44-53

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matthew 6:33.

TODAY WE HAVE further precious lessons from the Great Teacher respecting His Kingdom. The parable of the "Treasure hid in the Field," and the parable of the "Pearl of Great Price," both picture to us the great value of the Kingdom of Glory which is ultimately to be established amongst men for the blessing of the world. These parables also furnish lessons of what it will cost to secure a share, a place in that Kingdom. A third parable of the lesson treats of the embryo Kingdom; that is to say, the Parable of the "Net Cast into the Sea," pictures the condition of this present Age, during which the Elect, or Kingdom class, the Bride, is being found and gathered by the Lord's providences.

"Treasure Hid in The Field"

This is not one of the parables which Jesus expounded. His people, therefore, are left to exercise their judgment of its meaning, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the light shed upon it by other Scriptures. Indeed, there might be more than one application of it correct. For instance, we might apply the parable to our Lord Jesus and say that He bought the whole world at the cost of all He had, and that He purchased the world because of the "trea-

sure" which it contained. And that treasure might consist of a variety of treasures of different values—for instance, the Church, the Bride class, the Lord's special "treasure," and such of the world as will ultimately receive and be blessed by the Messianic Kingdom.

But our preference of thought is that the Great Teacher referred, not to Himself at all, but to those whom He instructed. By virtue of His own covenant of sacrifice, the Kingdom was already promised to Him, and He, in turn, in the Father's name, was inviting those who had the ears to hear, and heart to appreciate, to become members of His Bride class—members of His Kingdom class.

He recommends that these should view the Kingdom after the illustration of this parable. Suppose in their journeying they saw a field for sale at a certain price, and suppose, upon examination of it, they found it to contain a great treasure. The treasure might consist of very excellent soil, especially suited to their purpose, or it might consist of a valuable vein of precious metal, or it might consist of money buried long centuries ago and forgotten, and not belonging to the owner of the field more than to others who might find it. In such a case, the parable suggests, any one of ordinary intelligence would be willing to invest everything that he possessed to acquire the title.

So the Master declared to those who heard Him then, and to us who receive His words now, that He has information to give respecting a Great Treasure, a Priceless Treasure, which can be obtained, but only by the expenditure of great energy and the investment of everything of value. The Great Treasure is the share in the Messianic Kingdom—that by accepting the terms of discipleship we may become not only sons of God, but, if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord to His heavenly inheritance. This inheritance was the same as was promised to the Seed of Abraham, and we acquired an interest or share in it, not by being the actual seed of Abraham and the actual heirs to the Kingdom, but by becoming Messiah's Bride and Joint-heir.

When we think how much time and energy are put forth, and how much money and influence are expended to obtain some little, petty earthly honor of worldly renown and glory, and when we reflect that these at most will last but a few years and be unsatisfactory at best, then we can appreciate the better the glory, honor and immortality which God has in reservation for the "called and chosen and faithful," the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

A Pearl of Great Value

In the days of our Saviour pearls were represented amongst the most precious and most desirable of jewels, and the larger and more nearly perfect the pearl the greater its value. The Great Teacher used this familiar matter as the basis for a lesson on the value of the Kingdom. The Merchant of the Parable found a Pearl so superior in every respect to all other pearls that he considered it cheap to give everything that he possessed to become the owner of that Pearl.

This, said the Master, illustrates the value of the Kingdom, with its glory, honor and immortality, which I am inviting an elect, saintly little flock to share with Me. Those who prize it properly will show their appreciation by the amount they will be willing and glad to pay for it. Whether a man be wealthy or poor, learned or ignorant, influential or otherwise, the cost of this Kingdom Pearl of great value will be—his all. It cannot be had for less.

The wealthiest or most talented person in the world could not obtain a share in that Kingdom if he kept back one single atom of his possessions; the price of the Kingdom is self-sacrifice, even unto death, and nothing less will secure it. Nor would any sacrifice that we could make secure a share in this Kingdom for us, except as our sacrifice would first be made acceptable in God's sight through the precious merit of our Redeemer's sacrifice, which He finished at Calvary.

The Parable of a Fish Net

We are not to think of the Kingdom as like a net, but to understand that the embryo Kingdom resembles a fishing experience with a net, in which were gathered all kinds of fish, which were brought to shore and sorted. This is a parable of the embryo Kingdom because it relates to a work done in this Age, in connection with the finding of the "little flock" who will consti-

tute the Kingdom in glory. The Lord during this Age has not been fishing for all kinds of fish; He has not been seeking for all kinds of people. He has been calling, drawing especially, and dealing with, only the elect, only the saintly.

But, incidentally, a variety of other kinds of fish have gotten into the Gospel Net, some from worldly ambitions, some because religious systems are a good matrimonial field, others because of social privileges and standing, others because they desire to breathe a moral atmosphere, others because they would use religion as a cloak for business enterprises, etc. But the suitable fish, which the Lord is seeking, and who alone will constitute the Kingdom class, are those who hear His Message with joy and count the cost and appreciate the situation and desire to be "bond servants of the Lord Jesus Christ." They are willing to suffer with Him now that they may be glorified together with Him in His Kingdom.

The parable tells us that "when the net was full it was drawn ashore" and the fish sorted. This evidently signifies that there will come a time in the end of this Age when the Lord will have gathered a sufficient number of saintly ones to serve His purpose—to complete the number foreordained by the Father to be members of the elect Church in glory. Then the fishing will cease. Who can say that the opportunity for entering the "net" as one of the true "fish" of the kind the Lord is seeking may not be almost at an end? Who can say that the Gospel Net, with its full assortment of churchianity of every style, will not soon be drawn ashore that the suitable, the elect, may be gathered into the Kingdom?

The unsuitable "fish" of this parable correspond with the "tares" of the parable considered a week ago. The "furnace of fire" will be the same "time of trouble" which will come upon the whole world of mankind very shortly. The unsuitable fish in the net are all church members—the unprofessing world are not represented in the parable at all.

Jesus asked His disciples if they understood the parable. They answered, Yes, and He told them to consider His parables as a householder would consider his reserve of food supplies, from which from time to time truths "both new and old" would be brought.

Our text emphasizes this study. If the Kingdom is the Pearl, and the Treasure, which the Master indicated—if we believe His testimony, then by all means let us show our faith, not merely by professions, but in every act and word. Let us seek the Kingdom as the pre-eminent matter of our lives, in comparison with which all other things are inferior, and, as St. Paul declared, "not worthy to be compared." If seeking the Kingdom seems to hinder some of our earthly prospects, so much the better. The Master said it must cost us our all. Our earthly considerations we have left in His hands. Let Him apportion our earthly blessings according to His wisdom of what will be most helpful to us in making our "calling and election sure" to a place in the Kingdom.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Sea of Galilee	Windstorm stilled in the crossing of the lake	8:18,23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
	Gadara, SE of Sea of Galilee	Two demoniacs healed; swine possessed by demons	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	

Matthew 8:18,23-27

Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. ... And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him, And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

Mark 4:35 to 5:20

And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshiped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

Luke 8:22-39

Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him. And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and wore no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he broke the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And

he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

POWER OVER THE ADVERSARY—*Reprints*, p. 4577

MATTHEW 8:23-34

"What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"—Matthew 8:27.

SEVERAL of the apostles were fishermen on Lake Galilee. Apparently the Master launched out with them occasionally in order to obtain rest and quiet; for while he was ashore he was constantly active in his mission, teaching the people, healing the sick, etc. Today's lesson includes an account of such a drawing aside from his busy activities. Exhausted, he was asleep in the hinder end of the fishing smack. Suddenly a great storm arose, as is frequently the case on that lake. The mighty waves threatened the destruction of the ship. The violence of the storm may be judged from the fact that even the apostles, who were experienced, were alarmed. The account very briefly tells us that as the disciples awakened the Master, saying, "Save, Lord, or we perish," he arose and rebuked the wind and the sea and there was a great calm. And he rebuked the apostles with the words, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Many since have read these words with great comfort and profit; not that many have been in perils by sea, but because all are subject to the storms of life, in which mighty billows threaten our destruction. The manifested power to deliver from literal waves gives confidence that the same Mighty One is able to deliver from every trouble. The rebuke of the apostles for lack of faith has come home to the hearts of many of the Lord's people, chiding them and encouraging them to be more faithful, more courageous, more trustful, in the providential care of our Almighty Friend.

Well might the apostles marvel, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him." Not until they had learned that lesson were they prepared to trust him with all their trials, difficulties and interests. And likewise not until we have learned the same great lesson of Jesus' Messiahship, and that to him at his resurrection was granted "all power in heaven and in earth," can we fully trust him and rest by faith in his loving care.

Evidently the apostles all understood that Satan is a spirit being, invisible and powerful, and that, to some extent, he has power over human affairs under certain Divine limitations and regulations. Thus St. Paul designates him the "Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."—Eph. 2:2.

We remember the case of the Prophet Job and the Bible testimony that God permitted a trial of his faith and allowed the Adversary to have great power over his affairs. We recall that some of that power was exercised through a cyclone, which destroyed the house in which Job's children were gathered.

Possibly the Adversary was permitted to develop the storm on Lake Galilee for the very purpose of the lesson it gave to the apostles. The "Prince of the power of the air" may have thought to destroy the Savior in this manner, as later he evidently had to do with his crucifixion between two thieves. In the one case his effort was thwarted by the word of Jesus. In the other case it was permitted to reach success—because "his hour had come." We may well remember, too, the declaration that Satan, who had been working with Judas previously, fully entered into him, according to the account, on the night of our Savior's betrayal.—Luke 22:3; John 13:27.

This study tells us of our Lord's encounter with some of the inferior fallen angels, of whom we read that Satan is the "Prince of devils." We must not forget that the Scriptures deny that these demons are disembodied men and that they teach most distinctly that they are fallen angels.—2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.

The Bible tells that these fallen angels at one time were holy, but that in the period before the flood they became contaminated with sin through association with humanity. Since the flood, cut off from association with the holy angels and from liberty to materialize and appear as men, they have, nevertheless, sought to break down the barriers. Not permitted to materialize, they have sought to control, to obsess and to possess humanity—using the human body as their medium, their body, to the extent of their ability to break down the barrier of the human will. The Scriptures continually guard us against having anything to do with necromancers, wizards, witches, mediums, or others, who claim to represent and speak for the dead. The Bible assures us that "The dead know not anything," and that the only hope for them is in the resurrection and that not dead humanity, but fallen angels, strive to communicate with us and through us. We are not in this blaming spirit mediums with being in collusion with the fallen angels knowingly. We believe that they are deceived, as are others. Indeed, the Bible alone gives light on this subject, as we have been able to point out to many mediums whom we have recovered from their delusions.

The two maniacs of verse 28 were crazy because many demons possessed them and attempted to control them in different ways. Intelligent physicians recognize that probably more than one-half of the inmates of insane asylums suffer from this same terrible trouble, demon possession.

Another account tells us how our Lord questioned the obsessed ones and how the evil spirits answered through them that they were legion—that is to say, a multitude of demons were in possession. They besought the Lord that if they could not remain they might at least be permitted possession of the herd of swine. The permission was granted them. The result was that the entire herd of probably hundreds stampeded, rushed down the face of the hill, and were drowned in the sea. When we consider the nature of the hog, it would appear that there were enough demons to supply one for every hog, because, unlike sheep, a hog will stand still while his fellows in the same herd may become greatly excited. Each hog is independent in his action. The number of demons was indeed legion. Unable to break down the barrier of the human will in a general way, they crowd into poor human beings whose will-barriers have been let down.

Continually we warn people, in harmony with the Scriptures, against Spiritism and everything occult, as being of the Adversary. We warn them also that hypnotism and everything which breaks down the human will is injurious and leaves the person the more subject to the invasion of these fallen angels into his mind, his affairs, who, if yielded to, endanger his sanity through obsession.

The result of this miracle shows the power of selfishness. The multitude came to see the miracle—two men who had been crazy, clothed in their right minds. "But," said they sordidly, "What a cost! See the hogs floating in the sea!" And they besought the Lord to leave their country, which he promptly did. The same principle of selfishness may be noted everywhere today. The multitude are moved specially by their temporal interest, while the great blessings of the Lord they pass by comparatively unnoticed. Let so many of us as are disciples of the Galilean Prophet take a different view of matters and have our hearts in harmony with his glorious work of the deliverance of humanity and the destruction of everything obnoxious to the Divine will—even as swine were contraband of the Jewish Law.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Probably Capernaum	Jairus' daughter raised; woman healed	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	
	Capernaum (?)	Heals two blind men and a mute demoniac	9:27-34			

Matthew 9:18-34

While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshiped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples. And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land. And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us. And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country. As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marveled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

Mark 5:21-43

And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea. And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. And when he was come in, he saith unto them,

Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

Luke 8:40-56

And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him. And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him. And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood staunched. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace. While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

FAITH, THE CHANNEL OF BLESSING—*Reprints*, p. 4588

MATTHEW 9:18-34.

"All things are possible to him that believeth."—Mark 9:23.

FAITH in God consists in taking him at his word—accepting and believing his Revelation of his Character and his Plan in respect to ourselves and others. We should clearly distinguish between faith and credulity. Some very good people make the mistake of supposing that the more absurd the thing which they believe, the greater is the faith. Faith does not spurn reason, but uses it within certain prescribed and rational lines. In order to have faith in God, we must first satisfy our reasoning faculties

(a) That there is a God;

(b) That he has a dependable character—is Just; is Wise; is Powerful; is Gracious;

(c) We must reasonably assure ourselves that what we accept as his message is worthy of acceptance—bears marks of truthfulness and harmony with the Divine Character. He who does not seek such evidences as a foundation for faith is merely credulous—not faith-full.

Because so many Christian people ignore the proper definition of faith many candid minds are repelled from Christianity, refusing, they tell us, to believe absurdities. We urge Christian people to a more rigid examination of their

faith in God and in the Bible, that, as the Apostle says, We may be able to "give a reason for the hope [the faith], that is within us." (1 Pet. 3:15.) We owe this to ourselves, as well as to those whom we would endeavor to interest in God's Word. In the light now shining upon God's Word it is possible, as it was in the days of the Apostles, for the man of God to be "thoroughly furnished" and able "to rightly divide the Word of Truth" and to show to his friends and neighbors solid, logical grounds for each item of his faith. We admit that this was not, apparently, possible during the dark period which intervened between the first century and now. Knowing how to sympathize with the many who have perplexities respecting the reliability of the Bible as the inspired Word of God, we invite correspondence from such, feeling sure that we can assist them.

Our present study illustrates faith from four different standpoints:—

(1) The faith of Jairus—the father, on behalf of his daughter;

(2) The faith of the woman who, on her own account, touched the hem of the Lord's garment;

(3) The faith of the two blind men who encouraged one another;

(4) The faith of those who brought to the Lord a deaf and dumb man possessed of a demon.

Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue in Capernaum, our Lord's home city, knew Jesus well. He sometimes called upon him to read the Sabbath lesson. (Luke 4:16.) On a previous occasion with others he entreated the Lord on behalf of the centurion's servant. (Luke 7:4.) Now affliction had invaded Jairus' home. His only daughter, twelve years old, was dying. The Master had been absent across the sea. Amongst the throng awaiting him was Jairus, who, because of his prominence as a representative man, was properly given first audience. He manifested his faith not merely by his request that the Lord would come and heal his daughter, but also by his conduct in prostrating himself, figuratively expressing his homage, obedience and faith. He had left the daughter in a dying condition. She was dead at the time that he was talking to Jesus and urging haste. Before they reached the house messengers came, saying that it was too late, that she was dead. When Jesus arrived, neighbors had gathered, in harmony with the Jewish custom. Some were playing doleful tunes on flutes; others were groaning and lamenting. It was the custom for the females of a family and neighborhood, when they heard of a death, to give a shriek and then to continue murmuring, mourning as they entered into the death chamber a while later. The Master bade all these to depart, lightly saying, "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth." The language is similar to that used respecting Lazarus. She was dead, according to the usual human expression. But she was not dead from the Divine standpoint—not extinct as is a brute in death. God's provision from the first was that the death sentence upon humanity would be cancelled by the Redeemer's sacrifice and that as a result there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. From this standpoint the Scriptures speak of death as a sleep, from which there will be a glorious awakening in the resurrection morning—in the dawning of the Millennial Age. Thus Abraham and others of the past, both good and bad, are referred to as falling asleep, sleeping with their fathers, etc. Thus Stephen, the first Christian martyr, fell asleep. (Acts 7:60.) Evidently this does not mean that the dead go to sleep in either heaven, purgatory or hell. The Bible explains the matter, saying that many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. (Dan. 12:2.) As all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive. (1 Cor. 15:22.) What would have been death to them and eternal cessation of being has been changed by virtue of the Redeemer's sacrifice and is a sleep of unconsciousness, until the morning when the great Redeemer will say to all, as he did to Lazarus, "Come forth," or as he did in this case, to Jairus' daughter, **"Talitha Cumi"**—"Come, my child." So, we are assured that eventually all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth. (John 5:28.) On the way to Jairus' home a woman in the crowd surrounding the Lord touched the hem of his garment, believing in his greatness and power and that thus she would get a blessing. The thrill of life and strength immediately came into her body, just as the touching of the storage battery with a wire would draw the electric current. Our

Lord was full of vital energy. He was perfect, not only free from sin, but free from sickness and death conditions. He noticed the loss of vitality and, turning, inquired, "Who touched me?" The poor woman was fearful that she had stolen a blessing, of which she felt herself unworthy. But soon she was assured by the kindly words and look of the Master. This incident teaches us clearly that our Lord's miracles drained upon his vitality. Thus from Jordan to Calvary he willingly, gladly, responded to the needs of those about him—laying down his life.

The two blind men who met Jesus, hailing him as Messiah, the promised King of David's line, encouraged one another and both got the desired blessings, according to their faith. Here we have illustrated the advantages of Church fellowship in respect to faith stimulation. Let us assist one another in the most holy faith. Let us be helpers and not hinderers to fellow-pilgrims. The Master did not attempt the healing of all the people. For instance, there was but one healed at the Pool of Siloam, though many were there. So here Jesus admonished those whose eyes were opened to keep the matter quiet. But they could not. Their joy was so great and the Lord's humility in the matter served to draw forth their praise the louder. So with us—quickened from the dead, spirit-healed, and with the eyes of our understanding opened—we cannot refrain from telling the good tidings and praising the Lord.—Romans 1:12; Acts 4:20.

The man possessed of a demon and made both deaf and dumb was in such a deplorable condition that he could not help himself, neither could he ask the Master's aid; neither could he hear, if anyone should exorcize the demon. His friends, however, exercised faith in his behalf. Jesus responded and cast out the demon. The man was healed. The multitude marveled. But the Pharisees were envious. They wished to pose as the chief religionists and to have and to hold the popular respect, which was rapidly passing to Jesus. The poison of envy in their minds so perverted them that they declared that Jesus himself was Satan, Beelzebub, the Prince of devils. Let us learn the lesson and avoid envy, malice, hatred, and fill our hearts instead with the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, love, and thus become more and more like our Master, increasing our faith.

O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe;
That will not murmur nor complain
Beneath the chastening rod,
But in the hour of grief or pain,
Will lean upon its God.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Nazareth	Revisits city where reared and is again rejected	13:54-58	6:1-6		
	Galilee	Third tour of Galilee, expanded as apostles sent	9:35–11:1	6:6-13	9:1-6	

Matthew 13:54-58

And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Matthew 9:35-38

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no

shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.

Matthew 10:1-42 and 11:1

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into a house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's

reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

Mark 6:1-13

And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching. And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse; But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

Luke 9:1-6

Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.

THE HARVEST PLENTEOUS—THE LABORERS FEW.—*Reprints*, p. 2635

MATTHEW 9:35-10:8.

"It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."—Matthew 10:20.

IT IS A GREAT tribute to the spirit of liberty which prevailed amongst the Jews, that our Lord could and did preach the Gospel of the Kingdom from city to city in their synagogues without molestation. In contrast, we may feel sure that were he to attempt to teach in any of the churches of today, of any denomination, he would be refused the privilege—no matter how faithfully he should adhere to the Scriptural declarations, and the more explicit his teachings the more unsatisfactory would they be to those now in charge, who have a theory of their own respecting the Kingdom, which will not stand investigation, and whose weakness they would not wish to have exposed. And this loss of liberty amongst Christians, as compared with the Jews, in religious matters, is to their injury —making it that much the more difficult for them to hear the joyful sound of the present harvest message.

Notwithstanding all the healing of disease which our Lord accomplished, there were still

multitudes of sick who flocked from various directions to him, in hope of relief, and when we read that he was moved with compassion for the distressed sheep of Israel, it gives us a deeper appreciation of his kindness, his love, his mercy, and we do not feel that it was strange that he who had left the glory of the Father and the holy angels, and had humbled himself to man's estate, should now feel compassion for the weak and sinful, the degraded, depraved and pained. Rather, we say, It was just like him! Without such a spirit of compassion how would he have become our Redeemer, how would he have left the heavenly glory on our behalf! And when we think of him as being still the same it gives us fresh confidence, that notwithstanding our weaknesses and imperfections, and the imperfections and weaknesses of the whole world, "the groaning creation," this same Jesus has compassion, not only upon his people, but in a large sense in due time will have compassion upon all the families of the earth, and grant to all a full opportunity of recovery from the blights of sin, mental, moral and physical. Surely he only waits for the due time—the time appointed of the Father; then with his faithful, his Kingdom-class, as the Seed of Abraham, he shall indeed, in times of restitution, bless all the families of the earth with a full opportunity of reconciliation to God, and thus of the attainment of life eternal.

At the time of our lesson his work had not yet taken this broad sweep; nor has it yet, altho it has advanced beyond the confines of that time. Then his message of reconciliation and his help were extended only to the lost sheep of the household of natural Israel—not to the Samaritans nor to the Gentiles. Since then the blessing of reconciliation has been extended so that whosoever has an ear to hear, amongst the Gentiles or amongst the Samaritans, has the privilege of reconciliation during this Gospel age; but the great time of opening deaf ears and causing all to know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, will be in the Millennial age to follow this one.

Compassion, however, will be an element of the Lord's character so long as there are any who need help, and desire it; and this will be until the close of the Millennial age, when all willing to receive the help will have received it, and the only ones not blessed thereby will be those who shall have deliberately rejected his help. Then, and not until then, will his compassion cease to be exercised, for then there will be no need of compassion, that which is perfect having come through the grace of God in Christ.

Our Lord's compassion for the multitude suggested the sending forth of representatives, clothed with the power to heal the sick, etc., and in order to bring his disciples into line with his thought he told them that the harvest was plenteous, but the laborers were few, and that they should offer prayer on this subject. The substance of their prayer would necessarily be, —Lord of the harvest, send forth me as a reaper in the harvest. Jesus himself was the Lord of the harvest; the whole matter was in his hands, and evidently the twelve apostles quickly caught his thought and spirit respecting the increase of the harvest work, and in consequence he sent them forth two and two; yet he restricted their going, even as he had restricted his own ministry, to fleshly Israel, because all of God's covenants and promises were still confined to that nation, and would not be open to others until a due time which the Father had fixed, and specified through the Prophet Daniel—viz., the end of Israel's seventy weeks of favor—three and a half years beyond our Lord's crucifixion.

"And he gave them power [authority] over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and sickness." This power was holy spirit power, the same and yet different from that which they received later on at Pentecost from the Father. It was the same, in that the holy spirit or power of God is always the same power even tho it have differences of manifestation. It was holy, in that it was the spirit of our Lord Jesus, the holy spirit or power which was granted without measure unto him, —which he at this time communicated to these apostles, that they might, as his representatives, do a work in his name.

Indeed, we may surmise that as the curing of disease caused vitality to go out of our Lord Jesus, to effect the cure, and that thus every cure meant the robbing of himself of his own life-powers, his own vitality, so in this case we

should understand that the power for the healing of the sick was Jesus' power, that the disciples did not use their own vitality, but merely his, which he communicated to them, and authorized them to use, saying, "Freely ye have received, freely give." They were giving what cost them nothing, but which was costing Jesus much daily and hourly. It is when we get this thought of our Lord's yielding up his life daily in doing good to others that we can best appreciate how his perfect life was so thoroughly used up in the short space of three and a half years.

The healing of the sick and the casting out of devils were but parts and incidents of their mission. In connection with it they were to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom—the good news that the Kingdom of God was nigh at hand; and the influence of the miracles should properly attract attention to the message, and make the people ready, yea, anxious, for the Kingdom. But so far as the record shows, the people were anxious for the miracles, the healing, but very indifferent respecting the Kingdom. They would take the cures from Jesus and his disciples, but if they wanted information respecting how and when the Kingdom of God would come they would follow their blind guides as usual.

Nevertheless we may presume that the influence of this mission work throughout Israel was not entirely lost, and that after our Lord's crucifixion, and after the holy spirit had come upon the disciples at Pentecost, and they preached the Gospel of the Kingdom from a different standpoint, inviting all true Israelites to unite with Christ, and thus become joint-heirs of the Kingdom with him—then it was that many, no doubt, of these who had heard previously and witnessed the miracles, were that much better prepared to enter the embryotic Kingdom, the Church, through consecration of themselves to the Lord. And the conversion of several thousands within a few days after Pentecost corroborates this.

The harvest in the end of the Jewish age foreshadowed or typified the harvest of this Gospel age. And now, as then, Jesus is the Lord of the harvest, and his disciples, his messengers, are his agents in the gathering work. Now, as then, he seems to speak to these, saying that the harvest is great and that the laborers are few, and that if we have his spirit in the matter, and entreat him to send us forth in his service, he will be pleased to do so. And many are thus praying from day to day, and seeking to see what more their hands can find to do in the harvest work. And the Lord is graciously with such to guide their service and to bless the results to their own good as well as to the good of others. As all of the disciples then prayed this prayer, and got opportunity to engage in some part of the harvest work, so now all true disciples should be praying this prayer and should be expecting and utilizing opportunities for service.

The methods of the harvest work then and now may be slightly different, and yet they are considerably alike. This is not the fleshly Israel, and the blessings sent at the hands of the harvest reapers are not temporal blessings —not the healings of physical disease; but they are better than these—the opening of eyes of understanding, a far greater blessing than the opening of natural eyes; the removal of deafness as respects the Lord's great plan, a far more precious boon than the restoration of natural hearing, etc. Likewise, the offering of the Kingdom now is much more tangible and can be demonstrated much more clearly than was possible then, for it is nigh, even at the doors, and even the world can see the shakings of the present institutions, preparatory to their removal, that those things of truth and grace which cannot be shaken may remain, may be established, under the Lord's reign of righteousness.

As the harvest laborers going forth now seek the ripe wheat of this Gospel age, each should remember the words addressed to the laborers in the Jewish harvest, "It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." Not that we are to expect to have miraculous powers of speech granted us, but that we are to be filled with the truth and its spirit; and then indeed it will be true that it will not be our own wisdom that we shall speak, nor our own plan that we shall declare, but the wisdom that cometh from above, and the plan of the Lord our God.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND—*Reprints*, p. 4593

MATTHEW 10:1-15.

"Freely ye have received, freely give."—Matthew 10:8.

JESUS had been preaching for more than a year when he appointed twelve of his followers to be specially his representatives sent forth—Apostles. He sent these two and two throughout Judea. They had not the Father's appointment. They had not yet received the holy Spirit from on high and did not receive it until Pentecost, some two years later. The holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39.) But by virtue of the holy Spirit given without measure to Jesus at the time of his baptism, he conferred upon these Apostles his own special powers that they might heal the sick, cast out demons, etc. But their special mission, like his own, was not that of healing physical ailments merely, nor chiefly. They were to proclaim the Lord Jesus to be the King, the long-expected Messiah, and to tell the people that the time was at hand for the establishment of his Mediatorial Kingdom, in conjunction with their nation. This message would be in harmony with the expectation of all the Jews. For centuries they had been waiting for the fulfillment of God's promise made to Abraham that through them all the families of the earth would be blessed. The miracles of Jesus and the Apostles were to call attention to the proclamation, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3:2.) This message, in harmony with that of John the Baptist, was expected to arouse all the "Israelites indeed" and to attract their attention to Jesus as the King. They were particularly warned that their message was not for the Gentiles, nor even for their neighbors, the mongrel people called Samaritans. True Jews, and these only, were called upon to make ready their hearts and minds that they might be participants in the Kingdom and its glories. Their message was only "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—V. 6.

They were to make no provision for their journey—neither money nor extra clothing. They were to learn a lesson of absolute dependence upon the Master who sent them forth. They were not to be beggars seeking from house to house. On the contrary, they were to recognize the dignity of their mission and service for God and ambassadors of Messiah and were to inquire in each village for the most worthy, the most saintly, the most holy people, because these would be the ones who would be specially interested in their message—whether rich or poor. And such of these as received their message would be glad indeed to treat them as representatives of the King, whose Kingdom they announced. Their stay in each place was to be as guests until they were ready to depart to the next place. On entering into a house they were to salute the householder in a dignified manner, advising him of the object of their call. If received peacefully, cordially, their blessing would be upon that house. Otherwise they were not to lose their own confidence and serenity, but to pass along and look for one more worthy of the message and of them as its representatives. Those receiving them would receive a blessing. Those rejecting them and their message would lose a great privilege.

The Gospel of The Kingdom

Many wonder greatly why it was proper for our Lord and the Apostles to declare the Kingdom of Heaven at hand when, as a matter of fact, it has not yet come and, by the Lord's directions, its followers still pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The understanding of this furnishes the key to the appreciation of much of the Bible that is now misunderstood. We must, therefore, outline the matter in some detail.

For more than sixteen centuries Israel had been waiting for the fulfillment of God's promise that they would become so great that through them the Divine blessing would extend to every nation. Our Lord through the Apostles signified that God's time had come to fulfill all of his promises made to the Jewish nation if they were ready for them. To be ready they must be a holy nation. And to instruct them and prepare them their Law Covenant had been introduced to them through Moses centuries before. And now, just preceding Jesus, John the Baptist had preached to them reformation, repentance, getting into harmony with the Law, that they might be ready to receive the Messiah. While as a people they were the most religious nation in the world at that time, nevertheless but few of them were "Israelites

indeed"—at heart fully consecrated to God; fully in accord with the principles of holiness. As a consequence, instead of the whole nation being ready for God's work, only a small remnant of them were saintly and received the message. At the close of Jesus' ministry only about five hundred worthy ones had been found, and the multitude cried, "Crucify him!" while the godless Pilate inquired, "Why, what evil hath he done?" Most evidently, therefore, Israel was not ready to be used of God in the blessing of the other nations.

God foreknew this, however, and through the prophets declared that a remnant only would be found worthy. To the nation as a whole our Lord declared, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. 21:43.) Accordingly five days before his crucifixion our Lord said to them, "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."—Matt. 23:38,39.

The Kingdom privileges or opportunities which were first offered to natural Israel were transferred to Spiritual Israel, whose existence began at Pentecost. All "Israelites indeed" of the fleshly house were privileged to become members of the spiritual house—to receive the begetting of the holy Spirit and adoption into the Body of Christ, which is the Church. Of this Church St. Peter says, "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a peculiar people."—1 Pet. 2:9.

After selecting as many Jews as were worthy a place in Spiritual Israel, nominal Israel was cast off from Divine favor until the completion of Spiritual Israel, when God promises that his favor shall return to them. (Rom. 11:25,26.) Meantime the invitation has gone through the Lord's faithful members to every nation, seeking such as have the spirit of loyalty to God, the spirit of "Israelites indeed." All such are accepted with the Jews as members of the same Kingdom. Around these Spiritual Israelites have gathered all sorts, so that there is an outward or nominal body or Church numbering millions, as well as a real body or Church scattered amongst them.

As at the end of the Jewish Age Jesus came to inspect them and to set up his Kingdom if enough worthy ones were to be found, so he will do in the end of this Gospel Age; he will come to Spiritual Israel to find the saintly. The Scriptures assure us that from first to last, from Pentecost until the end of this age, a sufficient number of saints will be found to constitute the elect Church of Christ, designed of God to be his Queen and Joint-Heir in the Millennial Kingdom, which will then be set up and begin the work of blessing the world. After the spiritual Kingdom of God shall have been exalted, the Bible assures us, in Romans 11:25-32, that God's favor will return to natural Israel and they will be the first nation to be blessed under the new order of things that will then prevail and through those of that people in harmony with God the blessing will extend to every nation.

"More Tolerable For Sodom"

The Sodomites were wickedly immoral; yet, in the Master's estimation, less wicked than those who, after hearing the Gospel, rejected it. This principle applies to many people and many cities of our day, as well as to Capernaum. The Master assures us that when the great Millennial Age, otherwise called the Day of Judgment, shall furnish opportunity for the whole world to be on trial for everlasting life or everlasting death, it will be more tolerable for the Sodomites than for many others. In proportion as anyone has come to a knowledge of Christ he has become responsible. The death of Christ secures for Adam and all of his race one full opportunity for salvation and no more. The majority have died in heathenish darkness without any opportunity; and many in Christian lands have disregarded their opportunity, as did the people of Capernaum. All must be brought to a full knowledge of their privileges in Christ and then all rejectors will be destroyed.—Acts 3:23; 1 Tim. 2:4; Matt. 20:28.

It is for us to be followers of Jesus and the Apostles—to walk in their steps of devotion and thus to make our calling and our election sure to a share with Messiah in his Kingdom, which, during the Millennium, will bless Israel and all the families of the earth under a system of rewards and punishments, called judgments. The Scriptures distinctly tell us that the Israelites and the Sodomites will be sharers in that work of restoration—restitution.—Ezek. 16:50-55; Acts 3:19-21.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
31	Tiberias	John the Baptist beheaded; Herod's guilty fears	14:1-12	6:14-29	9:7-9	

Matthew 14:1-12

At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him. For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger. And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother. And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

Mark 6:14-29

And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him. Others said, That it is Elijah. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead. For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; And the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he swore unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother. And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

Luke 9:7-9

Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead; And of some, that Elijah had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

BARGAINS THAT WERE COSTLY.—*Reprints*, p. 3325

—MATTHEW 14:1-12.—

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Revelation 2:10.

JOHN THE BAPTIST had been imprisoned about a year when he was beheaded, as narrated in this lesson. He had preached only about a year, but in that time evidently made a profound impression throughout Palestine—an impression, however, which signally failed to accomplish the purpose intended by him—failed to prepare the hearts of the people, through repentance and contrition for sin, to receive Jesus as the Messiah. Josephus supposes that he was confined in a dungeon connected with the castle Macherus. Geike gives us his opinion of the kind of dungeon in these words: "Perhaps a cage of iron bars like one I saw at Gaza, to which friends of the prisoner could come with food or for gossip, but with no conveniences or provision of any kind for living or sleeping, and only a bare stone floor." This would account for John's ability to send his disciples to Jesus, inquiring, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" We cannot wonder that his experiences were in some respects disappointing to him, though from our standpoint we can see that he did the work which the Father intended. This may serve as a lesson to us. We, too, should do our parts faithfully as unto the Lord and leave all the results in his hands, assured of his wisdom and power to overrule all things to the final accomplishment of his gracious purposes. The words of the poet are appropriate to John and to many other faithful souls,—

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

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

Herod, Herodias and Salome.

Herod the Great left several sons ambitious to be his successor. Herodias married the eldest of these, anticipating that thus she would become the queen. The Roman Emperor decided otherwise and chose Antipas, the Herod of this lesson. Thereupon Herodias, still strong-willed and ambitious to be a queen, brought her captivating influences to bear upon Antipas, induced him to repudiate his former wife, and to accept her as queen instead. John the Baptist, preaching against sin, had evidently declared in public against this unlawful union—declared that Herod and his wife were living in adultery—the king separated from his own wife and improperly associated with his brother Philip's wife. We cannot wonder that such haughty, ambitious, and lawlessly disposed persons as Herod and Herodias must have been should feel resentment against any preacher who would dare to call in question the conduct of the regal pair. The result was the imprisonment of John. Evidently this course was instigated by Herodias, who had everything to fear from John's preaching. If Herod should feel conscience-stricken, or if the people should become aroused to such an extent as to influence his course aside from his conscience, the results would surely be disastrous to her interests. She would not only lose the high social position she had sacrificed her life to attain, but she would lose everything and become a homeless wretch. Evidently she strove to incite her husband to put John to death at the time he was imprisoned; but her influence was offset by Herod's fear of the effect of such a course upon the people, who esteemed John to be a prophet.

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

The King's Bad Bargain.

Only a judgment unbalanced by excitement and alcohol could have made so rash a promise, and bound it with several oaths, as the original indicates. Here is one of the advantages possessed by the Lord's people. They are not only protected from such excesses and the distortions of natural judgment caused thereby, but additionally, as the Apostle intimates, they receive the "spirit of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7.) The mind of Christ, the disposition of Christ, lifts the heart from such follies and places it upon more reasonable things. It gives us a truer estimation of values. Whereas the spirit of the world, the spirit of pride, the spirit of ambition no less than the spirit of envy, tends to pervert the judgment, to give false conceptions of value.

Along this line we call to mind various bad bargains: amongst others that of Esau, who for a mess of pottage sold his birthright as the first-born of Isaac, the natural heir of the Abrahamic promise. We call to mind Judas' bad bargain, by which he received thirty pieces of silver, sold his Lord, and lost everything. Herod's was one of these bad or costly bargains. He lost his peace of mind as the lesson records —"The king was sorry." We may be sure that his mind was frequently disturbed with the thought of his injustice, and the further thought that quite probably his crime was against one of the Lord's special favorites—against a prophet. The popularity of Jesus did not evidently become so general until after John's death. Herod, hearing of the matter about that time, was perplexed, and wondered whether or not there might be some truth in the Grecian theories that the dead were not dead, but had power to communicate through other living persons, after the manner of spirits through mediums in the present day. His mind was troubled, yet he was not penitent.

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

Did John Act Imprudently?

It is not for us to sit in judgment upon the course of John the Baptist, to determine whether or not he exceeded his duty in his criticism of the king and queen. We are inclined, however, to think that he did exceed his duty. So far as we may be able to judge, there were many officials at the time against whom serious charges might have been brought by Jesus and the apostles, yet we have no evidence that any of these ever took the course which John took. Jesus was before Pilate, and, later on, was before this very Herod, yet we have no record that he ever said a word on the subject concern-

ing which John felt free to speak; Paul was personally before Agrippa and Felix and others prominent in that time, some of whom, according to history, were disreputable men, yet he made no personal attack upon them, and his only appeal was to Agrippa, "I would that thou wert altogether as I am, except these bonds," and this was in reply to Agrippa's remark, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

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

A Parent's Influence, For Good or Evil.

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

Alas, how some, even Christian mothers, fail to seize such opportunities and to direct their children in the heavenly ways. They seem to have so much of the worldly spirit themselves that, even while desiring to sacrifice their own earthly interests for the cause of the Lord and to lay up treasure in heaven, they shrink from having their children participate, failing to realize that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness and that all other paths lead to present and future trouble. They fail to appreciate the Apostle's words, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Every other course is unreasonable, irrational, unwise.

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

Possibilities of The Future To Us.

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

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

Go Tell It To Jesus.

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

Our Golden Text.

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

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32, near Passover	Capernaum (?); NE side Sea of Galilee	Apostles return from preaching tour; 5,000 fed	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-13

Matthew 14:13-21

When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities. And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and broke, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

Mark 6:30-44

And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they did all eat, and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

Luke 9:10-17

And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing. And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place. But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people. For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company. And they did so, and made them all sit down. Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and broke, and gave to the disciples to set before the

multitude. And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

John 6:1-13

After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

HE GIVETH FOOD TO THE HUNGRY.—*Reprints*, p. 3779

—MARK 6:30-44.—

"My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven."—John 6:32.

THE twelve apostles had returned from the mission work to which the Lord sent them two by two. No doubt there was a fixed time for their return and Capernaum was probably the rendezvous. The presence of Jesus and his apostles caused commotion amongst the people, because by this time our Lord's fame was generally spread abroad. At Jesus' suggestion the twelve went with him to a country place that they might have quiet for the discussion of their affairs—their experiences on their mission, and the lessons Jesus wished to emphasize in connection with their experiences. Our Lord intimated, too, that the rest would be beneficial to them. Is not the same lesson applicable to us today?

Ours are strenuous times of great activity, mental and physical. The Lord's people, busied with the common activities of life, endeavoring to provide things needful, honest, and endeavoring also to tell the good tidings and show forth the praises of the Master and to proclaim his presence, have special need to heed the words, "Come ye yourselves apart in a desert place and rest awhile." Many of us enjoyed a brief season of resting and refreshment at last year's conventions, especially at the one held at Niagara Falls. But still the rest feature hardly seemed to be sufficiently emphasized even there. Hence we are planning for the present year two general conventions, with about the same number of meetings spread over about twice the number of days, giving better opportunity for fellowship, communion and rest. It is our experience that while these conventions cost those attending them considerable money, especially for railway fares, they nevertheless are sources of great spiritual profit and refreshment. Likewise the one-day conventions, though in a lesser degree and to smaller numbers. The Lord, we believe, is pleased that we should estimate spiritual strength, refreshment, grace, above financial cost. This, however, would not signify extravagance, wastefulness, neglect of duty nor the contracting of debt.

"All Men Were in Expectation"

But the people were hungry for the Lord's teachings, and noting the direction of the boat

many went afoot and some ran so that they awaited the Lord upon the landing of the boat. Was the Lord angry that his endeavor for privacy and rest should be thus intruded upon by people for whom he had already done much? No! his heart was too full of sympathy for that. He looked about upon the people and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep having no shepherd. John the Baptist had been proclaiming the coming of God's Kingdom. Jesus had been giving parables illustrative of the Kingdom, which the people but imperfectly comprehended. The disciples, whom he had sent out two by two, had proclaimed repentance and preparation for the Kingdom. King Herod, living wickedly, had gone the length of beheading John, one of the greatest of the prophets, and subsequently he had been at war with King Aretas of Arabia, the father of his deserted wife. His army had been defeated and there was considerable turmoil and excitement amongst the people. They wondered as to what might be the outcome of these disturbances, when and how the Kingdom of God would be established. They questioned as to whether or not Jesus were truly the Messiah and would shortly announce himself as the king, and call for volunteer soldiers, etc., etc. Evidently the people were becoming greatly worked up on the subject, and we know that it was only a few days after this that Jesus withdrew from the public ministry in that vicinity for awhile, lest the people should take him by force and make him a king—contrary to the divine plan and our Lord's program.

Although desiring rest our Lord could not forbear to teach the people. He was the true Shepherd and ready at all times to fulfill his mission, to lay down his very life for the sheep —not merely at Calvary but hourly, daily, during the years of his ministry while he was approaching the grand climax of his sacrifice. This must be the spirit of all who are the Lord's true disciples—increasingly so as they become partakers of the Master's holy Spirit, by feeding upon his Word and following his directions, growing in grace and knowledge and love.

"Thy Kingdom Come"

Today many of the Lord's people in Babylon are in a similar condition—easily persuaded that we are living in remarkable times, that some great dispensational change is about at hand. Many have heard something respecting the Millennial Kingdom being nigh, even at the door, and are wondering how, when, why, where it will be established. Looking to the political leaders they see more or less of confusion, hear of wars and rumors of wars, and the voice of Socialism proclaiming a general overturning of matters in the very near future. They note an impending time of trouble between capital and labor, and they long for information, for leading, for guidance, as to what should be their proper course. They are as sheep having no shepherd.

True, there are many shepherds in Babylon, but in proportion as they notice that these are leading toward infidelity, toward higher criticism of the Bible and evolutionary theories, they fear such leading, they lack confidence in it. They know not to whom they should look. The most satisfying portion that reaches their ears is the message of the Kingdom as we proclaim it, and yet they fear to accept this in the face of the denunciations and anathemas of their shepherds, who in a measure control them through fear, superstition and priestcraft. Every member of the body of Christ should remember that he is an ambassador for the Lord and should be glad to be used as his mouthpiece in proclaiming the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, and in helping lead the sheep in the right way toward the true Shepherd.

Not that we can hope to influence all who are in a measure hungry: evidently only a little flock will be in that condition of heart where they will heed not the voice of strangers, but will follow the voice of the Son of God—the voice of the Truth. Nevertheless, like the Master, we should be compassionate toward all, rejoicing that those who cannot hear distinctly in the present time will hear unequivocally very shortly, when the Kingdom shall be established and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth.

"Taught Them Many Things"

We should take a lesson from the Master's example. There were many things that he could

teach even to the multitude that would be to their advantage, to their comfort, and serve as a preparation for their development, so that they would by and by be prepared for the deeper things. To his twelve apostles, and those who were his specially consecrated disciples, he had still other things to tell, saying, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God: but unto them that are without these things are done in parables." (Mark 4:11.) And yet even to the disciples there were certain things better left unsaid, as our Master intimated: "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now"—"the spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth."—John 16:12, 13.

So the Apostle says, we may talk of the deep things of God, the wisdom of God hidden in mysteries, to those who are advanced in the knowledge of him and those prepared in heart for the deeper truths. We are to be especially on guard against choking the babes in Christ with the strong meat; but nevertheless we are not to allow them to starve, but to give them the milk of the Word that they may grow thereby. Let us remember our Lord's words as well as his example: he said, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Doubtless every one who reads these words can realize that in the beginning of his efforts to serve the Lord and his cause he did more injury than good because of unwisdom, indiscretion, a failure to take heed to the instructions of the Lord, a failure to follow his example of giving milk to babes and strong meat to men.

From an account given in another of the Gospels it seems evident that after teaching the people our Lord left them for a time and went with his disciples apart on the hillside, where they reviewed their ministries. Doubtless, also, they had opportunities for such fellowship and recounting on the boat on the journey. It would appear to have been later in the day, in the afternoon, that he came down from the mountain and that the crowds already there were augmented by large caravans, which at this time were en route for Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover, the whole multitude numbering several thousand. Apparently the newcomers were full of questions and interest and our Lord gave forth teachings and expositions.

"Give Ye Them To Eat"

The night was coming on and the disciples urged that the Lord should disperse the people, but he had a purpose which they knew not of—he had in mind one of the greatest miracles of his entire ministry. However, instead of telling them of it, he allowed the matter to come about in the most natural way, suggesting to them that they should seat the multitude and he would assist them in their helplessness. He inquired what food they possessed, and a lad with four barley loaves and two small fishes was found—next to nothing. This served our Lord's purpose, however; he wished to show his willingness to cooperate in the work of blessing the multitude, and thus he illustrated a general feature of his dealings with his people and with the world. He takes our time and talents, little and unworthy as these are, and blesses them and uses them in his service and accomplishes great things. He thus associates his people with himself, and blesses them by these experiences and lessons even more than he blesses those to whom he sends them with his mercies, temporal and spiritual.

The disciples had learned to be obedient in respect to whatever the Master would propose; hence we find no objection offered to the Lord's command that they apparently make themselves foolish in the sight of the people by bidding them sit down in a hundred companies of fifty to prepare for a feast when apparently no feast could be spread for them. They were beginning to learn that he who could fill their nets with fish, who could awaken from the sleep of death, who could restore withered hands and heal without a touch by a word, was so different from themselves as to be beyond the power of their judgment or criticism. They obeyed; the Lord did the rest.

Blessing The Bread

Our lesson says that the Lord blessed the bread; John's Gospel recounting the same matter says, "He gave thanks." The two thoughts are in close agreement—the giving of thanks to God brought indeed a blessing upon the food. We pause here to suggest that if it was appropriate that the Only Begotten of the Father should render thanks for that frugal meal and should ask the divine blessing upon it, it is certainly becoming that any who in any sense of

the word profess to be his followers should copy his example in this as well as in other things. How can we partake of food, recognizing that it is of God's bounty and provision, without returning our thanks or acknowledgments? We feel sure that all who do render thanks receive special blessing with their food and upon it, and a special wisdom in respect to the use of it that others fail to get. The very peace and rest of heart which comes as a result of looking to the Lord in gratitude, and accepting his provision with thankfulness, by natural law insures a tranquillity which is favorable to the digestion of the food. Undoubtedly food which is eaten in a pleasant and thankful attitude of mind is more nourishing, more refreshing, than the same food if eaten in unthankfulness or anger or with feelings of dissatisfaction.

Notice also that the feast for which our Lord returned thanks was not a sumptuous one; it was not served in elegant, decorated ware; it was not fine food; it was plain barley bread and dried fish. As we think of the simplicity of the diet of our Lord's day and of that of the people of oriental countries still, and as we consider the food furnished to the Japanese army and the usual food of the Japanese family, we get the lesson that both in quantity and in quality many people of our day are overfed and perhaps not benefited thereby—that plainness and simplicity of food would not only be more healthful, but would leave much more time for the spiritual refreshment, the bread from heaven, and the service of the Truth to others. Each should consider this matter and act upon it according to his circumstances and the interests and preferences of others, which he is surely bound to consider.

One lesson, however, all can appropriate, namely, that gratitude to God is appropriate however simple our bill of fare. It would be our hope that so far as possible the readers of this journal in their family associations are not neglectful of this privilege of giving thanks—to the extent that they are the persons having properly the authority or conduct of the family's affairs. It would be, of course, inappropriate for a stranger or a visitor to intrude upon the customs of the family, nor can we think that it is always appropriate to openly manifest our thankfulness to the Lord when at public tables, at hotels, restaurants, etc. We might be pleased to thus acknowledge the Lord, but might well refrain if our conduct would be misapprehended as Pharisaism. In such cases, however, the heart should always render thanks—even if no outward sign or word should indicate it to those about us—before a mouthful of food be taken.

The Disciples Gave To The People

Other accounts show us that as the Lord broke the food he distributed it to his disciples, they in turn carrying it to the multitude. How gracious of the Lord to so arrange matters! The disciples were thus the better witnesses of the power of the miracle, and the people were more or less made acquainted with the apostles, who perhaps later on, after Pentecost, met many of them, and, as the Master's representatives, bore to them the heavenly bread. It is still the same, for the Lord will find and will feed and will strengthen those who are his, for "the Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19.) He is not at all dependent upon us for the carrying of the Present Truth to the hungry multitude, but for our advantage he has given us the privilege of becoming co-laborers with him. How we should appreciate it! How eager we should be that any little barley loaves we may possess, any little fishes, any dollars and dimes, any shillings and pence, any time and influence, might be used of the Lord in his blessed work!

While such a course on our part is in the Scriptures dignified by the name of sacrifice, yet really, to those who understand the situation properly, it is the very reverse, a blessing, a privilege, a favor. We are glad to note that this privilege is so highly esteemed by those who are now rejoicing in the Present Truth. It is a matter of continual wonder to the enemies of the Truth, as well as to the slightly interested, that means seem never lacking for the promulgation of the harvest message, and that without resorting to appeals to the world through festivals, fairs, etc., without importuning the Lord's people by requests for money or any collection baskets—the Spirit of the Lord seems to accompany the Truth, so that those who have the Truth and have talents of any kind for the Lord's service rejoice with joy unspeakable to have these used, giving thanks to the Master for the privileges they enjoy.

"All Ate And Were Filled"

It was not merely a taste of food that the Lord provided, but a satisfying portion—all had plenty. We may reasonably suppose, however, that a meal consisting of barley bread and dried fish would not be partaken of as liberally as if condiments, spices, sauces and preserves, sweets, etc., had been supplied. Perhaps nature with us all would act more reasonably, so we would know when we had enough, if we lived more upon the plain substantials of life, and did not too much pamper our appetites and encourage ourselves to eat beyond the point of proper satisfaction of hunger.

That great multitude in some respects pictures the world during the Millennial age. Those who now follow the Lord as his special disciples will then be supplied abundantly by the Master with the bread of eternal life and will be privileged to distribute it to all the families of the earth. They will all have the opportunity of being filled, refreshed, strengthened. As we see how much the world lacks in this matter now, our hearts rejoice to know of the abundance of God's provision for the future and of the share we shall have in co-laboring with our Redeemer in the distribution of it to every creature, that all who will may take of the water of life freely and eat of the bread of life to their satisfaction. It was on the day after this miracle that our Lord gave his discourse on the bread of life.—John 6:26-58.

Gathering Up The Fragments

It would strike us as rather severe economy that the Lord should send his apostles to gather of the leavings of the feast from the multitude. It would be rather severe economy to oblige the faithful twelve to subsist upon the scraps that had been fingered by five thousand people. It seems much more reasonable to suppose that the small fragments left by the multitude were allowed to go to the birds and squirrels, and that the fragments gathered by the apostles were those broken by our Lord. As he broke the loaves and fishes they multiplied exceedingly, so that he supplied and resupplied the disciples with the food, while they carried it to the multitude, and that a sufficiency remained beside for our Lord to fill the twelve baskets with food that was good and clean and in every way suitable for further use.

The lesson of economy is appropriate to us all, but in our experience the poorest of the world and of the Lord's people often have greatest need for this lesson. While the Lord had abundance of power to create, he would have his disciples note the principle of economy and practice it. His wealth of power should not be a cause of extravagance on the part of any who are his. Extravagance in any matter seems much out of place in any that are our Lord's followers. If we have more than we need are there not others who have less than they need? If we have the Spirit of the Master we will have the spirit of helpfulness and generosity, and that increasingly as we come more and more into his character-likeness.

The same lesson seems to come to us in connection with the harvest work. We sometimes say to ourselves, "While our Lord is rich why should any of his followers be poor?" Undoubtedly it must be to our advantage that the Lord provides apparently just what is needed for his work and no more. The lesson in this parable is that he desires to give us, his followers, opportunities for sacrificing in connection with his service, and thus to bless us and to enable us more and more to appreciate our privileges. Perhaps, too, if the harvest work were blessed with wealthy friends and abundance of money this would foster more of a worldly spirit, more of pride and outward display, which would be disadvantageous to the cause and unfavorable for our own development. Let us be content with such things as we have, with the plain bread and fish, with our Lord's blessing. Let us take heed to the fragments, too, that we may render up a faithful record of our stewardship, that we may see to it that the talents entrusted to us have not been buried in the earth, but have been used to the best of our ability to the glory of our King.

As our Golden Text declares, we are to give our Father in heaven thanks for every good thing, including the bread of life—including Jesus, the salvation which he provides, and the Kingdom blessings which are coming through him and the privileges of association with him. All things are of the Father, and all our favors are by or through the Son. Gratitude is one of the smallest returns imaginable: it leads on to perfect love, which includes a self-sacrificing spirit.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	NE side Sea of Galilee; Gennesaret	Attempt to crown Jesus; he walks on sea; cures	14:22-36	6:45-56		6:14-21

Matthew 14:22-36

And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

Mark 6:45-56

And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened. And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him, And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

John 6:14-21

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

ST. PETER CRIED "LORD, SAVE ME"—*Reprints*, p. 4618

—MATTHEW 14:22-36.—

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped him, saying,
Of a truth thou are the Son of God."

RESPECTING its heroes the Bible, unlike any other religious book, tells the naked truth. Today's study emphasizes both the strength and the weakness of St. Peter's natural disposition. We identify the character here pictured as the same which was displayed on other occasions—noble and courageous, but rather forward and boastful. Not a single weakness of any of the Bible characters seems to be smoothed down or cut away in the narrative. It was this same St. Peter who, after hearing Jesus tell of his approaching death, took the Master to task for it, upbraiding him for speaking after this manner and assuring him that he did not tell the truth, and that the disciple knew more than his Master; that the latter was either ignorant or else wilfully misrepresenting the future. No wonder the Master rebuked him, as in this matter being an adversary.

The same courageous man afterward drew his sword and smote the servant of the High Priest in his Master's defense. Yet with all this it was only a few hours later when he denied him entirely with oaths and cursing. Nevertheless, the Master loved him; with his peculiar combination of weakness and strength he had, withal, a noble, faithful heart, even while he boastfully declared, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." Our study shows us St. Peter with the other disciples in a fishing-boat on a boisterous sea. Jesus had declined to go with them in the boat, withdrawing himself to the mountain for a season of prayer. The boat had not yet reached her destination, when the disciples saw the Master walking upon the water and drawing near. At first they were all affrighted; then reassurance came from his word, and finally St. Peter asked the Lord's permission that he might walk to him on the water. This permission was granted, and we cannot doubt that, had the Apostle maintained his faith, he would have reached the Lord in safety, for the same power that had exercised itself in him and in the other disciples for the healing of sick and the casting out of demons was absolutely able to keep him from sinking into the water.

"O Thou of Little Faith"

But while St. Peter's faith was stronger than that of the others and stronger than ours today, in that he even attempted to walk on the water, nevertheless it was not strong enough. As his eye caught a glimpse of the boisterousness of the sea his faith began to fail and he began to sink. The Master, however, caught him, saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt"! The lesson of the occasion being ended, the wind ceased. All the disciples then offered the Lord their worship, realizing afresh that he was the Son of God in power; that even the winds and the waves obeyed him.

"A hand that is not ours upstays our steps,
A voice that is not ours commands the waves;
Commands the waves, and whispers in our ear,
O, thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?"

All are sinners. "There is none righteous; no, not one." Some do not realize the extent of their imperfections. Nevertheless it is safe to say that all sane people recognize themselves as imperfect and hence as unworthy the recognition of the great Creator. They cannot commend themselves to him as being worthy of his favor and life eternal. It is when this conviction of unworthiness becomes deep-seated; when the realization is keen that "the wage of sin is death," that the heart is most likely to realize the value of life eternal and to cry unto the Lord for deliverance from darkness, from sin's bondage and from its death sentence. To all such the Savior stands ready to lend a helping hand, as in St. Peter's case. He will not reproach such for their sins if they have repented of them and turned to righteousness. Rather, he will say, "Why did you not come sooner? I was quite willing to aid you as soon as you cried."

Threats of Torture Failed To Convert The World

Our forefathers used to think that they should picture before the sinner's mind an everlasting torture at the hands of devils. It seemed

to them that such pictures would be more successful in drawing men from sin to righteousness than the Scripture penalty which declares that the wages of sin is death, "everlasting destruction." (2 Thess. 1:9.) But they overdid the matter. Their message failed to convert the world. It merely tortured the saintly, the loving, the Godlike. Men reasoned that there was probably some mistake about it, as it is contrary to all human experiences that life could persist in such untellable torture. Now, however, with the aid of the modern Bible, superior translations, marginal references, etc., the people of God are learning more and more that God's Word is true and that it should not be twisted—that when it says **death** it does not mean life in torture.

Indeed, some have told us that to their minds the utter blotting out of existence which God has ordained to be the fate of those who refuse his every opportunity and offer of salvation is more of a terror to them than life in any condition would be. One reason that it has greater terrors undoubtedly is that it is more rational, and thinking people can and do receive it more earnestly and give it more weight. It is from everlasting destruction that the Savior stands ready to deliver every member of Adam's race from the death penalty—from the tomb and all the imperfections of mind and body which are parts of death. Jesus' death at Calvary was of sufficient value to cancel the sins of the first man and of all those who share the death penalty with him. Without Christ's death there would be no resurrection, no future life.

A little while and the faithful ones shall come forth in the "first resurrection" to be Christ's Joint-heirs. Then will come the general uplift of mankind, including the awakening of those of the whole world from the sleep of death. Our Lord's help of Peter corresponds to that greater help of the whole world. It also illustrates how those who have already become the children of God would be in danger of sinning again, were it not for our Lord's helping hand.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Capernaum	Identifies "bread of life"; many disciples fall away				6:22-71

John 6:22-71

The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone; (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:) When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe

not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE."—*Reprints*, p. 2651

—JOHN 6:22-40.—

SOME OF THE MULTITUDE who dined on the five loaves and two fish were evidently very deeply impressed with the miracle, and inspired with great respect for Jesus. A number of them (we cannot suppose very many) concluded that they would follow this great Teacher, possessed of such wonderful powers, feeling assured that becoming his disciples would at least safeguard them from want; and this, to a people of their kind and under those

conditions, was evidently quite an inducement. However, when they found the Lord on the other side the lake, at Capernaum, and expressed to him their interest, and how it had led them to follow him, he told them plainly that theirs was a selfish or mercenary interest, and not the kind that he desired to cultivate, namely, an interest in the truth.

Taking advantage of the situation, our Lord gave, not only to these but also to his disciples and to us through them, a most valuable lesson on the proper things to be sought after; pointing out that the chief aim and desire and object of life should not be the meat that perisheth, earthly food, earthly comforts, earthly pleasures, which at very most can be but transitory, but that on the contrary the chief aim of all should be to attain life eternal, beyond the present dying condition. He points out that God's provision for his creatures is not merely earthly food for the sustenance of our natural bodies for a little time, but much more important, a spiritual nourishment, of which, if we partake, we shall attain eternal life.

He would have them see that the miracle which he had performed, and whose blessing they had shared, was merely an illustration of a greater gift, of a more valuable bread of life, that he, the Son of God, was alone able to give them—and the same is true of us and of all. By way of assuring them that he was as able to provide the bread of eternal life as he had shown himself able to provide the natural food, he declared himself to be the Son of God; and that the heavenly Father had sealed him, marked him, granted him the evidences and proofs of sonship in the powers conferred upon him. The seal was the holy spirit, the holy power of God, which acting upon our Lord Jesus enabled him to turn the water into wine and to increase the broken barley loaves and two little fish so as to feed the multitude. These powers were the evidences or outward manifestations to men that God's holy spirit was with him, the mark or seal of his relationship to God as an honored representative, a Son. On the strength of these evidences, the witnesses having the right condition of heart should have been prepared to heed our Lord's testimony, as a message from the Father.

The discourse was not without its effect: the hearers felt the force of the suggestion that the important food to be sought after was that which would give the life eternal, and as Jews they had before their minds the further thought that God had made a covenant of works with their nation, with promises of eternal life attached thereto—the Mosaic Law Covenant. Hence their inquiry, What works shall we do that would be pleasing to God, and that thereby we might have eternal life? Give us whatever message you have that will help us in this matter.

Our Lord's answer may at first seem to us a peculiar one, in that he declares that to believe on him would be a **"work"**—the work most acceptable before God—the only work that could possibly make them acceptable to God. What is meant by this we will consider further along. His hearers evidently understood exactly what he meant, viz., that the thing most pleasing in God's sight would be that they should acknowledge him as the Son of God, the Messiah, coming into the world according to divine promise, to establish the Kingdom of God, and to begin the blessing of all the families of the earth. But now they asked a **sign** of his Messiahship, instead of realizing that they had already seen the sign or signet or seal of God upon the Lord Jesus, as manifested not only in his spirit of love, kindness, generosity, goodness, purity and truth, as well as in his doctrines, but additionally that they had seen outward manifestations and evidences of the divine power upon him, as shown, for instance, in the miracle of the day before. This was because they were hard-hearted, as the Scriptures elsewhere express the matter (Mark 3:5; John 12:40), that is to say, they were in a faithless attitude, not readily impressionable, but rather inclined to be skeptical: hence these signs or evidences of the seal of God upon Jesus were not sufficient for them.

We can readily see, however, that if sign upon sign had been given, the same "evil heart of unbelief" could reject ten signs as well as it could reject one. Just so it was in the case of Pharaoh: he was really more impressed with the first sign given by Moses than by the succeeding ones, each of which being received in an

improper spirit tended to make his heart the harder, until the last. Just so it is with some today in respect to the Lord's promises. They incline to ask, Did the Apostle say this, that is contrary to my prejudices? And if convinced of the fact they would want to know whether any other apostle had said it, and thirdly, whether the Lord himself had said it, and fourthly, whether any of the prophets had said it,—seeking not so much to believe as for an **excuse** for disbelieving. Such persons usually, if they had all of these evidences, would be no more convinced by the multiplicity of testimony. On the contrary, he who really believes the Bible to be God's Word believes its every authentic testimony, whether by the Lord or an apostle or prophet, and whether stated once or many times reiterated.

The workings of skepticism in the minds of our Lord's auditors is evidenced by their statement. In substance they said, "We cannot acknowledge that your miracle was so great or so wonderful as necessarily to imply that you are the Son of God, for we remember that Moses exercised a power something of this kind; in fact, he provided bread enough for our forefathers, the whole nation of Israel, for quite a long time in the wilderness, and that without any loaves and fish to begin with,—we refer to the manna."

Our Lord's response is that the manna was not produced by Moses, that he had nothing whatever to do with sending it; that it came directly as a provision of the heavenly Father, Moses not being even an agent in the matter. And then our Lord pointed out that the manna given in the wilderness was typical of the true Manna, the true bread of eternal life—himself and the truth he proclaimed—which he now desired them to receive at his hands.

They did not yet get the thought that he referred to himself, but rather were getting a crude and natural thought, that as God had given manna from heaven that sustained their fathers in the wilderness, so now this great Teacher, Jesus, was telling them of a still higher class of manna, the partaking of which would yield eternal life, and hence they exclaimed, "Lord, evermore give us this bread!" Our Lord then explained the figure or parable, declaring, in the language of our Golden Text, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

It is evident that in the words "cometh to me" our Lord did not mean to approach him as his hearers had done, coming across the lake. The expression "cometh to me" must be understood, therefore, as coming to the Lord with hunger and thirst for righteousness, with a desire for the life eternal, and hence for the bread of life by which it might be attained. All who would thus come to Jesus, in this proper attitude of heart, would find him to be indeed a satisfying portion. Likewise the expression, "He that believeth on me shall never thirst," must be understood to mean more than merely believing that such a person lived, for it is written that "devils also believe and tremble:" to "believe," therefore, must be understood to signify accepting the Lord, not merely intellectually, but with the heart, as it is written, "With the heart man **believeth unto righteousness**" [to a change of heart which aspires to righteousness]. He who thus believes in the Lord from the heart, recognizing him as the Son of God, through whom are to be fulfilled all the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word, receives such a refreshment, such a slaking of thirst, such a satisfaction, as will never end so long as he maintains this faith. (Rom. 10:10.) Such find the divine provision in Christ so abundant that they could not ask for more, and exclaim,—"It satisfies my longings, as nothing else could do."

And now we see the meaning of our Lord's words of verse 29, "This is the **work** of God [the work which God would be pleased with], that we **believe** on him whom he hath sent." There is a **work** connected with believing;—not a work with our hands, but a work with our heads and our hearts: and no work that we could do with our hands would be as acceptable in the Lord's sight as this. Indeed, when we realize that in our fallen and imperfect condition it is impossible for us to do anything perfectly, when we remember also that God is perfect, that all his work is perfect, and that he cannot therefore be in sympathy with imperfection, or any degree of sin, we can readily see

that the very best works we could offer him aside from **faith** would be unacceptable.

But God has proposed to do a great work for us—he has done that great work in that he has provided the Redeemer, through whom the ransom-price has been paid for our race: and now God can be just and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Hence, while no work that we can do could be accepted of the Lord so long as we are under condemnation, yet he can, by his own provision, accept our **faith** in Christ, and justify us through that faith: this, our first work possible, is therefore what God calls for. He will accept no other work, except it is preceded by this one and based upon this one. O that all could realize the importance of faith in the Lord's sight! "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and the more faith we exercise the more do we please him: not credulity, not a belief of something which God has not said; not a belief in our own imaginings or those of other men; but a belief in what God has said, and a firm, confident trust therein: this is acceptable with God, and becomes to all who exercise it the ground or base of justification, that "**being justified by faith** we might have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. 5:1.

The Lord did not here discuss the further step to the high calling of this Gospel age; hence we will not discuss it now. He is dealing merely with our first necessary step in approaching God,—justification. The thing necessary, in order to justification, is the acceptance of Christ as the Bread of Life—which must be preceded by the realization that we have no life in ourselves, death having passed upon all of our race through father Adam's transgression; and that the Lord Jesus was made flesh in order that he might meet the penalty that was upon father Adam, and thus upon the race; and that **now**, therefore, whoever accepts this free grace of God in Christ, whoever appropriates to himself the merit of Christ's sacrifice, is thereby eating, partaking of the great benefits and blessings provided by God in the Anointed one, who gave his life for the life of the world, a ransom price. Whoever mentally accepts this fact, and feeds upon it in his heart, is represented as feeding upon the flesh of the Son of Man—partaking of the human rights, privileges and blessings of restitution [or in this age justification] provided in him.

Our Lord pointed out to his hearers the fact that their slowness to receive him, and the slowness of the people of Israel in general, was not an evidence that he was not the Messiah, but rather was an evidence that they were not in a condition to receive the Messiah. And further, that it was not God's purpose that he should attract the whole Jewish people, but merely that he should draw to himself, by the gracious words which should proceed out of his mouth, and by the miracles or evidences of power of the Lord in him, such as the Father had "given" him—such as were pleasing to the Father, such as were ready to receive a further blessing through this channel which the Father had provided. And he assured them that while not expecting all to be thus drawn to him, nevertheless all who would be drawn thus of the Father he would most gladly welcome, because he was not in the world on a mission of his own merely, but to fulfill the Father's purposes,—with which he was in full harmony.

In the two verses following, our Lord seems to distinguish between the two classes of saved ones, verse 39 referring to the elect class of this Gospel age, and verse 40 to the general blessing upon mankind to follow this age, during the Millennium,—and to the opportunity that will then be afforded to every creature to be blessed with this great gift of eternal life, purchased by our Lord at such high cost as his own life.

The elect are frequently, as here, spoken of as specially **given** to Jesus, while the whole of mankind are referred to as his because **bought** with his own precious blood. The Father draws to the Son during this age a special class, and gives such a class to him to be companions, joint-heirs in his Millennial Kingdom—these are sometimes called his "brethren," as when it is said that Jesus was "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29); and again, they are designated his bride and joint-heir, in contradistinction to the saved of the world of mankind, who will be recognized as the children of Christ, and of whom he will be the "Everlasting Father."—Rev. 21:9; 22:17; Rom. 8:17; Isa. 9:6.

Our Lord declares it to be the Father's will that all whom he has "given" him shall be saved,

shall be raised up—not one of this class shall be lost. Who, then, are these thus sure of salvation? We answer that the Apostle Paul adds a word of explanation along this line, informing us of the class whom the Father has elected and predestinated: they are such as receive the Lord Jesus now by faith, and who hearing the invitation of this Gospel age, the "high calling," are so impressed with it that they lay aside every weight and run with patience the race set before them in the gospel;—and so doing, under divine providence and direction they are molded and fashioned as respects their characters so that they become "copies of God's dear Son."—Rom. 8:29.—*Diaglott.*

The heavenly Father fixed the marks and conditions of his predestination of this class, not so much in respect to all who shall **hear** the good tidings (altho he has to do with sending the message); not so much in respect to who all shall be **drawn** by the message of his grace in Christ (tho he has to do with the drawing, and in the present time is drawing only a particular class); not so much with reference to the **call** that goes forth to all who accept Jesus, inviting them to run the race of self-sacrifice in his footsteps (tho he is interested in this call, and supervises the affairs of those who accept this call, causing that all things shall work together for their good); but especially he has predestinated in respect to the **number** who shall constitute the Bride of Christ, and to the **character** of all who shall be in that company: that it shall be composed of such and such only as shall during this Gospel age, while in the school of Christ, learn thoroughly the lessons of faith and obedience, developing characters of like pattern to that so gloriously manifested in Jesus, whom the Father sent forth to be not only our Redeemer, but also our Pattern.

It is the Father's will that every one who thus obeys the leadings of divine providence, and attains to the likeness of the Lord Jesus in his heart, his will, his intention (not perfection of the **flesh**), shall everyone of them be saved in this great salvation, and be sharers with Jesus in the "first resurrection," and in the glory, honor and immortality to which it leads. Not one of these shall be lost; every one of them shall be raised up to that glorious station at the appointed time—"the last day," the seventh of the great week of thousand-year days,—the Millennial day. And as the Prophet declares, it will be early in that day, for "God shall help her [Zion] and that right early [in the morning]."

The 40th verse does not refer to those whom the Father specially gives to the Son to be companions and joint-heirs in the Kingdom, and whom he draws through his providences during this age: it refers to the remainder of mankind whose ransom price our Lord Jesus has paid, and who, according to the Father's program, our Lord Jesus himself is to draw unto himself, during the Millennial age; as it is written, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." But even as the Father's drawing is not a compulsory drawing, so likewise the drawing of the Son will not be compulsory. But since we may assume that the majority of those who now resist the Father's drawing do so because of blindness, ignorance, etc., because the prince of this world is now reigning and deceiving, we may reasonably suppose that when our dear Redeemer's Millennial Kingdom shall have been established, and when Satan, the prince of this world, has been "bound" (Rev. 20:2), and when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth,—then the drawing influence upon the world of mankind exerted by the Redeemer himself and by the Church, his body, associated with him in glory, will be a drawing which will yield much larger results, so that many will yield to it and come to the Lord truly and heartily, and receive of the blessings which God has provided in him;—all except those who wilfully love sin and refuse the terms of the Kingdom, faith and obedience.

Of this class our Lord declares (verse 40), that it is his Father's will that all such shall see the Son (their blinded eyes being opened in that Millennial day, as the Lord has promised through the prophets.—Zech. 12:10.) Their eyes of understanding being then opened, they will be able to appreciate, as they cannot now appreciate, the Lord and the covenant of eternal life which he offers to all who obey him. They will not thus see him, however, until the god of this world, who now blinds the eyes of their understanding, shall be bound for the thousand years, and his baneful influence offset with the

light of the knowledge of God which will then shine out to the world from the great Sun of Righteousness,—the Lord and the glorified Church, his body.

It is God's will that all who shall accept Christ then shall have everlasting life too; and that they shall be raised up by the Lord Jesus to perfection also,—tho theirs will be an earthly, and not like the others a heavenly, perfection; and their raising up will also be "at the last day," but not at its beginning as with the "elect" of the "first resurrection." The overcomers of this Gospel age, the body of Christ, will be perfected in his likeness in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and then subsequently, throughout that age, the work of raising up the world of mankind out of sin and depravity and degradation will go gradually and grandly forward, until by the close of the Millennial age all the willing and obedient shall have eaten to their fill of the bread from heaven and shall be fully raised up, out of sin and death, to life eternal—in the image and likeness of God as was Adam before sin, but with characters perfected and tested in righteousness by their Millennial experiences.

FLESH AND BLOOD.—*Reprints*, p. 611

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." "The words that I speak unto you are spirit and are life." "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." —John 6:53,54,63.

It was a custom with Jesus to express truth under cover, in "dark sayings," and to many this is one of the darkest. When they heard it the Jews wondered, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" and many of the disciples murmured, and said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" And to-day, while it is generally recognized that Jesus did not mean that they were to eat his literal flesh, few have a clear idea of what he did mean.

Some have hastily concluded that because the Master said his words were spirit or spiritual, that therefore to appreciate them they must seek the very opposite of the literal meaning of the words; and such have concluded that the expression "flesh and blood" means a **spiritual nature**. They overlook the fact that Jesus did not say that the flesh was spiritual, but the words.

That the Lord did not refer to a **spiritual nature** when he used the words "flesh and blood," is easily seen when all of his words are remembered. Did he not say, "My flesh … I will **give** for the life of the world"? (ver. 51.) Did he mean that he would **give** his spiritual nature? If so, if he **gave that** for us, then he has not a spiritual nature now; for we remember that he "gave **all** that he had." (Matt. 13:44.) It cannot be that he gave away **all that he had** of the divine nature for the life of the world. Speaking of the same thing again he said, "This is my body broken for you … and my blood shed for many for the remission of sins." Who can for a moment suppose that the **divine** nature is here meant? Was it the spiritual that was broken and shed, or was it the human—the "body **prepared**" for sacrifice (Heb. 10:5) and taken for the suffering of death (Heb. 2:9)? Which think you?

In view of these and other statements of Scripture, let none interpret these words of Jesus to mean that his spiritual nature was broken, and that all are to eat it. Better far confess as did some of the Jews, "We cannot tell what he saith" [meaneth].

But some one else suggests that, possibly "flesh and blood" here is used as referring to MORAL PERFECTION, and that all must eat or receive moral perfection from Jesus or they have no life. This is as far from the import of Jesus' words as the other suggestion, for while it is **true** that to have everlasting life all must have moral quality, yet such is not the meaning of the words of our Lord now under consideration. Let us test it and see. Was Jesus' MORAL PERFECTION "laid down," "given," or "broken" for us? Assuredly not; to "break," or give up, or lay down moral perfection, would be to become MORALLY IMPERFECT. Hence it is clear that the **"spirit"** or MEANING of Jesus' words

was not that we are to eat his divine nature nor yet his moral qualities.

What, then, is the **spirit** or import of the words "blood and flesh" here used? We answer, The same spirit or significance should be attached to these words here as elsewhere. Flesh and blood uniformly represents HUMAN NATURE as many Scriptures prove (Matt. 16:17; John 1:14; Col. 1:22; Philemon 16; 1 Cor. 15:50; 1 Pet. 1:24, and 3:18, and 4:1).

Now, let us try this definition of "flesh and blood," and see whether it will fit and fill all the conditions. Was Jesus' **human nature** "laid down," "given" and "broken" for the life of the world? Yes, verily; he took our human nature, which is a "little lower" than the nature of angels, that he might give it as a ransom for all. He gave his **human nature** as a ransom for our human nature; he bought us with his own precious blood; he "gave **all that he had**" (Matt. 13:44) for us. And thus "as by a **man** came death, by a **man also** came the resurrection of the dead." (1 Cor. 15:21.) It was the **man** Christ Jesus that became our substitute or representative, giving his human nature a ransom for ours.

If, then, this definition is found to meet all the conditions under which the expression is used, it is thus proved to be the correct meaning or spirit of the Master's teaching.

But we inquire: In what sense can we eat Jesus' human nature? We must still remember to look for the spirit or meaning of the words, for the EATING is as much a symbol as the flesh and blood. To **eat** is to appropriate to one's self the life-giving properties of the thing eaten. Now, let us see, how does it harmonize to say, Unless you **appropriate** to yourself Jesus' human nature given, broken, and laid down for that very purpose, you have no life in you. This is in perfect harmony. Humanity lost all right to life through Adam, hence are now dying and **dead**, having in them no right to life; and though the ransom has been given, though the body has been broken, it is a part of God's plan that no man shall ever reach human perfection (life) again, except by a full recognition of the **ransom** price and an **appropriation** by faith of those rights which the **man** Christ Jesus secured by giving his flesh (human nature) for all. And as fast as we appropriate, God imputes; and thus the righteousness of Christ, and its right of life everlasting, are **imputed** to us.

Thus by faith we eat or appropriate to ourselves that which was sacrificed for us. Unless we thus eat or appropriate to ourselves the rights and merits of the **man** Christ Jesus, who was sacrificed FOR us, it is evident that we would have no life, nor right to life in us. It is in or by or through him that we obtain back again the life lost for us by the first Adam—neither is there **salvation** (life) in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved [from death]. Acts 4:12. How dangerous, then, is the position of those who deny the **ransom** and its necessity and value as the **life-restoring** power given for the whole world. Neither they nor any shall ever have life until they do eat or appropriate that which was sacrificed. Hence the Apostle marks as one of the most serious offences any attempt to depreciate that sacrifice, or deny its necessity, saying, "Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he **was sanctified** an UNHOLY [common or ordinary] thing."

So, then, the eating or appropriating to ourselves of the "flesh and blood" [human nature] of Jesus, JUSTIFIES us **from** sin and its penalty death—justifies us **to** human life and its privileges. (Rom. 5:18, 19.) This is the **"common,"** that is to say, **general** salvation. (Jude 3.) But to the "little flock" being selected or elected out from among the saved world—called to be saints, joint-heirs of God with Jesus Christ, there is a **special** salvation mentioned by the Apostle. (1 Tim. 4:10.)

These called to this "high calling," and to become "partakers of the **divine** nature," not only eat or appropriate life by appropriating the value of Jesus' sacrifice, but THEY **do more**. Having been **justified** to life as men, i.e., having obtained back again (in faith) the rights lost for them by Adam, the call or privilege of **this class** during THIS AGE is that they may **sacrifice** or "break themselves, laying down their lives as Jesus did, thus becoming "dead **with**

him" in hope that thereby they shall be accounted worthy of the promise made to them, that they shall live **with** him, and partake of the **divine nature** bestowed on him as a reward for the sacrifice of the human nature.

It is thus that the Apostle refers to this class, not only as having eaten or appropriated Jesus' sacrifice to themselves, but also as having become associated with him in the sacrifice. He says of the Lord's Supper: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion **[sharing]** of the blood of Christ? The bread which we **break**, is it not the communion **[sharing]** of the body of Christ? [Is it not thus that we illustrate the "filling up of the afflictions of Christ"? Col. 1:24.] "For we being many are **one** bread [loaf] and **one body** [the body **anointed**] 1 Cor. 10:16,17.

So, then, in a word—one loaf of life-giving bread has been provided from heaven for all mankind, and during the Gospel age an opportunity has been offered to some of joining the body of Christ and sharing with him in sacrificing the human nature and inheriting with him the divine nature.

Thus we see that while to have eaten Jesus' flesh literally would have profited nothing, yet to appropriate the rights which he possessed and laid down for men, is to have a right to perfect human life and all its privileges. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have **no life** in you."

"THOU HAST THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE."—*Reprints*, p. 1710

"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."—John 6:66-68.

THERE is just a tinge of disappointment in our Master's words here recorded—"Will ye also go away?" Accustomed to look for a reason for every action and word, we inquire, Why did the loss of a number of followers make our Lord feel sad? Was he ambitious for a large following? Did his confidence rest in numbers? Did he say to himself, Now what will the Pharisees say when after three years of my teaching they see me deserted by many of my followers? Was it that he feared the deflection might curtail his revenues? No, it was none of these things; for he had already made himself of no reputation. He had already said to his disciples, Woe unto you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets. He had also the power by which two small fishes and three barley loaves could be made sufficient to feed five thousand people. And he already knew that his faithful followers were to be, in all, but a "little flock," and who of the multitude believed not.—Verse 64.

Why then, did his words express sadness at the loss of a number from his company? It was because he was true and noble and sympathetic, and loved his friends, and seeing the hour approaching when the Shepherd would be smitten and all the sheep be scattered (as it was afterward fulfilled when "all forsook him and fled"), the lonely sadness crept over him and found expression in the words, Will ye also go away? Love of sympathy, fellowship of friends, etc., are not weaknesses, but, on the contrary, are elements of a true character. But it would have shown weakness had our Lord allowed the turning back of his disciples to have influenced or swerved his course from the path of sacrifice marked out for him in the Father's plan. No such weakness ever manifested itself. On the contrary, but a few days after, when Peter who here spoke so nobly, attempted to dissuade our Lord from sacrifice, he promptly answered, Get thee behind me, adversary, thou savorest not the things of God, but of men.

The Apostle Peter's words, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life," are full of meaning. He had known what it meant to seek God's favor and everlasting life through keeping the Law, and, like most of the Jews of the humbler class, had been discouraged, finding himself condemned both by the doctrines of the Pharisees and by his own conscience. Doubtless, also, he knew something of the various heathen philosophies respecting a future life; and, if so, he knew them to be merely human speculations or guesses.

But for three years he had known Jesus and heard his words on this subject of eternal life. His teaching was not speculative guessing as to what might be. "He taught them with authority, and not as the scribes." Nor did he teach them to hope for eternal life through the keeping of the Law (which they knew to be an impossibility). His teaching, on the contrary, was different from that of every other teacher. He taught them that he had come into the world, not to be served or honored and titled, but to serve men and to finally give **his** life a **ransom** or purchase-price for the forfeited lives of all who lost the right to life in Adam's trial and disobedience. (Matt. 20:28.) His teaching was that as a result of this ransom-sacrifice, which, by divine love and arrangement, he was about to give for all, all shall have the **opportunity** of everlasting life through obedience under the gracious terms of the New Covenant; and that to this end not only they, but also, "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth, and they that hear **[obey]** shall live"—attain **perfect life**. (John 5:25, 28,29.) Peter had heard this simple and beautiful **gospel**—this, the only real good tidings of everlasting life; he recognized Jesus as the Messiah sent of God to be the Life-giver to the world, the true light that shall ultimately lighten every man that cometh into the world. —John 1:9.

What wonder, then, in view of this, that Peter answered as he did, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Peter's faith and hope had found in the doctrines of Christ a foundation and anchorage which they could not find elsewhere.

And the same is true of all intelligent believers to-day, in proportion as they have heard and understood the wonderful words of life, of which Christ's death is the central theme, the hub, whose spokes are the love and favor of God, including all his exceeding great and precious promises reaching to the circumference—everlasting life. Having once seen the truth, having once heard the good tidings—the words of everlasting life—for what would they exchange it?

Looking abroad, we still find the philosophies of Confucius, Buddha, Brahma and Zoroaster, but they satisfy us not. We hear the wisdom of this world speculating about an evolution which it surmises has already progressed from a protoplasm to a tadpole and from a tadpole to a monkey and from a monkey to a man and which it hopes, guesses and tries to assure itself will continue to progress to planes of being still higher than man. It assures us that whether there was or was not an intelligent God at the beginning, there will be millions of wise and powerful gods eventually, when they get evolved. But our hearts turn from such wild speculations back to the wonderful words of life spoken by him who spoke as never man spoke before or since. In those words is the rest and peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

Following the instructions of this same great Teacher, we are learning more and more about this eternal life which he has provided for all. As meat in due season he has taught us that this gift of eternal life is only for those that love him;—that a little flock of the ransomed world, called and proved worthy by their loving obedience during the Gospel age, are to be his joint-heirs in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature, and that he with these will in the next age, the Millennium, bless all the families of the earth with the knowledge of and opportunity to attain restitution to human perfection with everlasting life conditioned only upon faith and hearty obedience under the New Covenant, sealed with the blood of the ransom-sacrifice. This is the same gospel as of yore: these are the same words of everlasting life, only amplified and magnified as we get nearer to their grand consummation.

In the harvest of the Jewish age, it was after our Lord had spoken to his followers the "words of eternal life" that he permitted "offenses" to come to sift them as wheat, saying, "It must needs be that offenses come." Those trials came to **prove** which were ripe wheat and which chaff and undeveloped wheat. Two classes specially were sifted out—the merely curious and slightly interested class, and a consecrated class which had not much **depth of character**, represented in our Lord's parable (Matt. 13:5,6, 20,21) as the stony ground hearers, which received the message with joy, but not having

depth of heart-soil and earnest love and consecration to the truth, when tribulation or persecution arose they were at once offended, and turned back and walked no more with the Lord and the faithful.

The same is true now, in the present harvest of the Gospel age. Blessed have been our eyes, for they have seen many of the "deep things" in the divine plan of the ages; and blessed have been our ears, for they have heard with wonderful clearness the lessons of the great Teacher—the words of glory, honor and immortality—words of eternal life. And now in the Lord's order we are to be ready for trials and siftings. Now, again, offenses must needs come to prove all, and to turn back those who are not consecrated and those who have no **depth** of character, who are unwilling to bear the reproaches and afflictions of the Christ. So it was with Gideon's typical army. All who shall be owned of the Lord as joint-heirs with Christ must be a select class, a peculiarly zealous people;—and no wonder: Marvel not therefore at the fiery trials which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. In fact, that is the very purpose of the permission of offenses and divisions: "that they which are approved [by God, because they endure the tests and stand fast in the truth] may be made **manifest** among you."—1 Cor. 11:18,19.

Those who will stand the test here will be just like those for whom Peter spoke in the previous harvest testing. Should any feeling of faintness or discouragement come over them, they will also ask, "Lord to whom shall we go?" Looking about them they see the delusions of Spiritism and various doctrines of devils, and the blindness and contradictions of reason as well as of Scripture among agnostics, and in the various denominations of Christendom. The glance is sufficient for the class which the Lord desires to select. They **could** not go away, they could not be forced to leave the army of the Lord. Truly, where should we go? Our Leader, and he alone, has the words of eternal life. Since we have heard his words, all other gospels have lost their charm. We will abide with and follow the great Captain of our salvation: in his words and in his love and in his service we live and move and have our being as the elect of God.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word.
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32, after Passover	Probably Capernaum	Traditions that make void God's Word	15:1-20	7:1-23		7:1

Matthew 15:1-20

Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. Then answered Peter and said unto him,

Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

Mark 7:1-23

Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

John 7:1

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

GOD'S WORD NOT MAN'S—*Reprints*, p. 5096

—MARK 7:1-13.—

"For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink,
but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."—Romans 14:17.

THE STUDY TODAY shows that the Pharisees of eighteen centuries ago, while professing to keep carefully the Divine Law, and while even boasting of faithfulness in this respect, had gradually gotten away from God's Word and become followers of human tradition. It is so with the Jews today. Although they read the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament it is

regarded as a sealed Book which they cannot understand; instead of endeavoring to comprehend it they study and shape the course of their lives by the Talmud. The latter admittedly contains both wise and unwise statements, sound and foolish advice; but according to it the orthodox Jews shape all their religious sentiments.

And surely the same is true of Christians today. The Bible is the recognized Authority and Standard, but each denomination of Christians has its own theory, its own proof-texts, its own catechism. When the Bible is read the gloss or interpretation of the accepted creed is before the mind and veils it. Thus it is that with Bibles in our hands and with reverence in our hearts Christians are divided into six hundred different sects, with very little prospect of coming together, because each one insists upon using his own creedal spectacles in the study of the Bible.

If truly wise would not all Christians cast aside and destroy these creed spectacles which have so long separated us, given false coloring to various passages of God's Word and confused our minds in general? Would it not be following Heavenly counsel and Heavenly wisdom to take a different course and to begin a study of the Word of God afresh in the light which shines from one page upon another? We surely will all agree to this theoretically; shall we not put our agreement and resolution into practice?

Eating With Unwashed Hands

The Pharisees would have liked nothing better than to have had so very able a person as Jesus to be one of their number—to conform to their usages and thus to mark them with His approval. They could not fail to note the lofty character of His teachings along the lines of Justice, Mercy and Love. They could have forgiven Him for some of the truths which He uttered and made them wince, if only He had enforced their formalism. As it was, He really suited nobody. To the impure He was too pure; to those of loud, hypocritical profession He was too sincere; to the worldly-wise He was too frank, too truthful.

In this lesson the Pharisees inquired why the followers of Jesus were not instructed along the lines of the Talmud—to be very careful to always wash their hands before eating, as a religious duty. We may be sure that Jesus set His followers no example of filthiness or impurity. Indeed, we know that in proportion as truth enters the heart it has a cleansing and purifying effect upon the entire life, upon the whole person—mental, moral and physical. What the Pharisees meant was a ceremonial washing, whether the hands were clean or unclean—to make a formal washing a part of their religion. This was what Jesus objected to. He could not so teach because it would have been ceremonial hypocrisy. As He said on another occasion, These customs of the Pharisees, of wonderful washings of their persons and of the vessels in a perfunctory and ceremonial way, consumed much of their time and were burdensome upon the poor, who had no servants to do these things for them, and not doing them were considered unclean, unholy, out of accord with the Divine arrangements, not true Jews.

Answering the Pharisees on these points, Jesus said to them, You are the holy people mentioned by Isaiah the Prophet saying, "This people seeketh Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain do ye worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," for ye leave the commandments of God and hold fast the traditions of men.

Jesus gave them an example of how they neglected the Divine commandments while giving so much attention to ceremonial washings, which were commanded, not of God, but of the Talmud. The illustration was that the Mosaic Law commanded that father and mother should be honored and that he that spoke evil of either of them should be put to death. But this command had been changed by the Talmud and any man might be free from his parents by consecrating himself and substance to God and religious uses. Having done so, according to the Talmud, he was freed from all obligations to his parents. Thus they had made God's direct commandment on this subject null and void, which they had no right to do.

This was the conflict between the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of the Pharisees. Both claimed holiness and strict observance of the Divine Law, but Jesus held to the Word of God and rejected the Talmud, the traditions of

the Elders, and the Pharisees neglected the Word of God and held to the traditions. What are we as Christians doing today? "Let us hold fast the faithful Word," "The Word of God, which is able to make us wise." Let us search the Scriptures daily and critically, and let us abandon everything which conflicts therewith.

What Is God's Kingdom?

Our text is frequently misunderstood to mean that God's Kingdom consists in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The context shows that this is entirely a wrong thought. Let us follow the context and see.

Let us bear in mind what we have already seen respecting the Kingdom mentioned in the Bible—that it is the glorious reign of Messiah for a thousand years, for the uplift of the human family, and that during that reign the Church will be associated with Jesus in His Kingdom glory, power and honor. The call of this Gospel Age is to select this Bride class and to develop them and make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

We have seen that in the present time these called out ones—called to be the "Bride, the Lamb's Wife"—are the Kingdom in embryo or in an undeveloped state. These probationary members of the Kingdom, the Scriptures tell us, are not under the Law of Moses, expressed in the Ten Commandments; they are not hoping for eternal life through them, but they are under Grace—under a gracious arrangement which God has made for them through the merit of Christ's death. St. Paul points out that while these are free from the various commands of the Jewish Law they are not without Law, but under the great Divine Law, as members of the Body of Christ. He says that thus we, as New Creatures, do fulfill the real meaning of the Divine Law when we "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit," even though we be not able to walk fully up to the spirit of the Law because of weaknesses of our flesh. It is the New Creature, the desire, that is being judged and not the flesh.

Accordingly the Gentiles who came into membership in the Body of Christ were not required to conform themselves to the demands of the Jewish Law. For instance, a Jew, according to the Law, might not eat fish that had no scales, mackerel, etc., neither might he eat rabbit meat, nor pork, etc., and in a variety of other ways he was restrained and limited in his eating and drinking. But none of these restraints apply to Christians who had come from amongst the Gentiles and who never had been under the Law Covenant.

In our text St. Paul urges that these liberties respecting what they might eat and drink were not to be esteemed as the real blessings of this embryo Kingdom class in the present life. Far from it; the real blessings of this class consisted in their enjoyment of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Transformed by the renewing of their minds, they had come to appreciate and love righteousness and truth; good things rather than evil things; pure things rather than impure things; spiritual things rather than earthly things; their citizenship now was in Heaven instead of being an earthly one. They had come to appreciate "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and its rule in their hearts was one of the grand blessings which they enjoyed as members of the embryo Kingdom class.

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." "The wicked are like a troubled sea which cannot rest." Our heavenly peace and confidence in God are the result of our union with Christ as members of His Kingdom class. This we prize and not specially the privilege of eating pork or some other thing forbidden to the Jews. Joy in the Holy Spirit—fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with all who possess the spirit of righteousness—is the blessed privilege of every member of the embryo Kingdom class, every member of "the Church which is the Body of Christ."

Thus the Apostle would have his hearers place a proper valuation upon the various favors which they had received, so that if the interests of the Lord's cause or the interests of the brethren in Christ should ever require them to forego their liberties in respect to food and drink, they would count such self-denials for Christ's sake and for the brethren's sake as nothing—as sacrifices they could make with joy, because they would not interfere with or disturb in the least the real value of the blessings and privileges which are ours in Christ.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Phoenicia; Decapolis	Near Tyre, Sidon; then to Decapolis; 4,000 fed	15:21-38	7:24–8:9		

Matthew 15:21-38

Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel. Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and broke them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

Mark 7:24 to 8:9

And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house, and would have no man know it, but he could not be hid. For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter. And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed. And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it; And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: And if I send them away fasting to their own

houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far. And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness? And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and broke, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people. And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them. So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

"CHRIST BROUGHT LIFE AND IMMORTALITY TO LIGHT THROUGH THE GOSPEL."—*Reprints*, p. 3337

—MARK 7:24-37.—

"Without faith it is impossible to please him."—Hebrews 11:6.

WITH this lesson we start a new quarter in studies of the earthly life of Christ. Since it falls on what is generally observed as Easter Sunday, those who have arranged the lessons suggest, without breaking the narrative of Christ's ministry, that this lesson be treated from the resurrection standpoint. The thought is a good one, especially for those whose eyes of understanding have been opened to some realization of the glorious things of the Millennial Kingdom, for which the whole creation is groaning and waiting. These and not others can properly get a connection between our Lord's miracles and the resurrection life of the Millennial age.

Life-Rights For The World Secured By The Precious Blood.

From this standpoint we perceive that while our Lord Jesus came into the world to die on man's behalf, to redeem Adam and his race from the sentence of sin—namely, death—he did, additionally, two other important works. The redemptive work was the principal one, without which there could be no future life of any kind. The laying down of life daily until the sacrifice was finished at Calvary may, therefore, be designated the principal or foundation work accomplished by our Lord. Without that nothing else could have been of any avail, but on that foundation the other two works could proceed. The Apostle declares that the Lord brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. This means that no clear and definite hope respecting eternal life had ever previously been given to any one—even to the Jews. While other nations were without God, having no hope, the Jews did have a sufficiency of divine revelation to inspire a hope in the resurrection; though the philosophy of it—how God could be just and yet release those whom he had justly sentenced to death—they could not see, because it was not time, and therefore was not yet revealed.

Christ brought LIFE to light by explaining to those who had ears to hear that he had come into the world to "give his life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45.) He explained further that the time would come when all in their graves should hear his voice in kingly authority, and awaken from the sleep of death—come forth from the prison house of the tomb. The people even then might have wondered what advantage there would be in such a release from the tomb if they would still be subject to the pains and aches and demon oppositions of the present time. Our Lord fortified the testimonies of the prophets respecting the Millennial age, which they declared would be a period of universal blessing, with nothing to hurt or destroy in all the holy Kingdom. He showed how this could be by the various miracles which he performed; for he not only preached the Kingdom of God, taught his disciples to look forward to it and to pray for its coming and blessing and power, but in the various miracles which he performed he illustrated that its powers would prevail amongst men for their blessing.

He healed all manner of diseases and cast out demons, and thus gave evidence that in

God's due time, as the great Physician, he will be armed with the abundant power which will completely restrain Satan and all the fallen angels from all work of evil in respect to the human family, and when he will lift up the poor, the lame, the deaf, the blind, the dumb, out of their present tribulation. And moreover, this temporary release which he brought to those who by faith accepted his favor, illustrated still higher blessings, labors and privileges—the opening of the eyes of the understanding, the curing of the leprosy of sin, the returning of the withered powers, as well as the awakening of the dead—that all might see and hear and know of the righteousness which God approves and of the life everlasting which will be its reward, and that all might be helped out of the present bondage to sin and imperfection, etc., into the full liberty of the sons of God. Thus the Lord brought life—everlasting life—to the view, to the knowledge, of those who hear his message of the Kingdom and the blessings to flow from it.

Immortality or Divine Nature Only For The Elect.

He brought IMMORTALITY to light also. In addition to everlasting life for the world, he opened up a way by which a special class of footstep-followers might share with himself the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature. The world in general was not expected to understand or appreciate this. On the contrary, the natural eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath in reservation for them who love him—for the New Creatures—for those who are begotten of the holy Spirit, and that make their calling and election sure to joint-heirship with him in the Kingdom.

Our Lord's ministry and teachings can only be rightly appreciated when viewed from these three standpoints:—(1) His own sacrifice as the redemption price for Adam and his race—laying down his life day by day until he cried, "It is finished." (2) His general teachings—which in due time will be applicable to the whole world—respecting the outcome of the redemptive work, the reconciliation of the world to God, the complete forgiveness of the world's sins, the great trial or judgment or opportunity then to come to the world through the Kingdom which the Redeemer, as the Mediator between God and man, will establish for the deliverance of mankind from the adverse conditions within and without, and for the assistance of all who desire to return to harmony with the Creator. (3) The call to special discipleship, to walking in the narrow way, to be baptized with the baptism of death that he was baptized with—and thus by divine grace through this arrangement to be fitted and prepared for a share in the heavenly Kingdom—to sit with Christ in his throne, and participate in the dispensing of all the wonderful blessings of the Millennium to all the families of the earth.

It is with this thought that we follow the lesson before us. Jesus and his disciples, after the feeding of the five thousand and the stormy night upon the sea of Galilee, spent some time in Capernaum. There the Lord gave the sermon which illustrated that his hearers should think less about the loaves and fishes which he had given them, and should appreciate more the higher things. They should recognize him as the Bread of Life that came down from heaven; they should feed upon his words and thus gain life everlasting. The time had not yet come, however, for the general dispensing of this life everlasting—that work belongs to the Millennial age. He therefore was seeking specially for such as were particularly hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Of this class were the apostles, whom he was now training for the future work which he would accomplish through them after the new dispensation, to begin at Pentecost.

God's Favors For His Consecrated People.

With his disciples our Lord traveled northwestward to the borders of the country called Tyre and Sidon, so named because of the prominent cities by these names which were there situated. He did not announce himself publicly to the people there, but his presence soon became known, showing that the fame of his miracles and teachings had spread throughout the whole of Palestine. A Canaanitish woman living as a Greek was amongst the first to hear of his presence, and coming before him she cried or wailed for assistance for her daughter. Our Lord on this occasion acted very differently from his custom, and doubtless for the purpose

of imparting a lesson. Although usually so prompt to hear and to sympathize and to heal, on this occasion he paid no attention to the woman, according to Matthew's account, who tells us that the disciples came to the Lord and urged him to send her away—either grant her request and send her away or refuse her request and authorize her expulsion.

The poor woman's importunities were not for herself but for her daughter, who was possessed of a demon, an unclean spirit; and, so far as we have any knowledge, most of these fallen spirits, demons, are unclean, depraved, and their influence upon those possessed by them is an unclean, injurious one. Sometimes they do indeed simulate purity, and on numerous occasions we have heard of their attempts to personate holy ones—even the Lord; nevertheless the whole tendency of these evil spirits seems to be toward impurity of thought and conduct on the part of those possessed and through them upon others.

Finally, in answer to the woman's cries and to the expostulations of the disciples, our Lord did speak, but very differently from his usual message. He merely intimated to the woman that his miracles and services were not intended for the world in general but for God's covenanted people, the Jews. He followed the Jewish custom of the time, of speaking of the Gentiles as dogs, yet he modified the matter, for instead of using the word which would signify the detestable brutes which infest the Orient and are the scavengers of the streets, he used another word signifying the little or pet dogs of the family. The woman, strong in her faith in the Lord's power, was equal to turning the unfavorable answer to her own benefit, and to urge that as the little pet dogs got some of the surplus from the table of the children, so she as an outsider might be granted some of the Lord's favors without in any degree working disadvantage to the Jews, to whom our Lord's ministry was specially sent and given.

Without Faith It Is Impossible To Please Him.

This shows the earnestness and faith of the woman. Such an exhibit would surely be pleasing to the Lord. Indeed we can see in our own experiences as Christians that many of the Lord's dealings with us are along the lines of developing and testing of our faith. He is good and gracious of heart, however we may have misunderstood him in the past, and however his character and plan may have been maligned and misrepresented by the Adversary. It is impossible for us to come near to the Lord except as we shall exercise faith and trust in him, in his goodness, in his power, in his wisdom, in his love. All things are possible, only believe—is the lesson which the spiritual Israelite of today needs continually to learn, as the apostles of old prayed, "Lord, increase our faith." Along this line it were well that we should pray, and that we should seek continually to accept the lessons of life from this standpoint—as lessons or instructions in faith. We are not in this ignoring the necessity of obedience to the divine Word, but are holding that wherever faith exists the works will correspond to it and be proportionately large or small. Hence the stronger our faith, the more our works are sure to be under the divine arrangement. Our Golden Text well says that without faith it is impossible to be pleasing to the Lord.

Faith is a matter of cultivation, of development. The same apostles who cried out in terror when the storm was upon the Sea of Galilee gradually grew stronger and stronger in faith until, as the records show, they could and did trust the Lord in his absence and where they could not trace him. Similarly it should be a part of our daily lesson to cultivate trust in the Lord, and to think of the experiences in the past in our lives and all of these lessons in his Word, that thus our faith in him may become rooted and grounded.

Faith Rewarded After Being Tested.

The Lord said unto her, "O, woman, great is thy faith." (Matthew.) Her faith was strong in its love for her daughter, in its perseverance and persistency, in its humility, recognizing matters just as the Lord recognized them, and not according to the general sentiments of the Greeks and Gentiles—that the Jews were merely pretentious and not more in divine favor than other peoples. It was strong in overcoming great obstacles,—even our Lord's apparent repulsion. We would not consider this heathen woman's conduct to be in every sense of the word a pattern for the Lord's consecrated and

enlightened people. The strength of faith is the only one that we should copy. As for us who have become the Lord's people, and are no longer strangers, foreigners, dogs, but children adopted into the Father's family and recognized by the Lord as "brethren," it would be no longer appropriate that we should cry or entreat or beseech in any wise for things which the Lord is not pleased to give us.

The Master himself represented the difference between the things which the Gentiles might do and the things which we as his disciples might do, saying that our petitions and seeking should not merely be for the bread that perisheth, for after such things do the Gentiles seek—merely the earthly things and with importunity; but seek ye first, chiefly, the Kingdom of God and the righteousness which is appropriate thereto, and all these things of an earthly kind will be added unto you—in such measure as will be for your best interests. Our petitions, our requests, our cries to the Lord, therefore, should be for the holiness of heart, for the filling of his Spirit, for the spiritual food, refreshment, strength; and as for the natural things, he knoweth the way we take and what would be to our best interests as New Creatures. We are to leave this to him: he would not be pleased to see us importuning him for things which he did not give us, for to do so would not be an exemplification of faith in him, but the reverse—an exemplification of doubt, a manifestation of fear, that he was forgetting or neglecting his promise to give us the things needful.

Our Lord informed the woman that the faith manifested in her saying was sufficient, that her request was granted, that the demon was gone from her daughter. The woman's faith was further manifested by her immediate withdrawal. She took the Lord's word implicitly; if he were what he claimed and had the power that she believed, he would not lie to her. Many of the Lord's people today seem to lack faith along these lines—to have less than this poor heathen woman. Many of them hear the Lord's word assuring them that those who come to him have their sins forgiven, yet Little Faith bids them doubt and keep on bemoaning their sins and requesting forgiveness, which the Lord has assured them would be accomplished from the time of their acceptance of it. They fail to exercise the faith and they fail proportionately of the blessing and peace and joy.

So far as the record goes our Lord did nothing in that quarter except for this poor woman, and the spiritual lessons connected with it were evidently less for her than for the disciples, for we have no record that he taught her or taught anyone of that vicinity. Departing thence, our Lord took an easterly course along the northern borders of Palestine, and crossing the river Jordan began to come southward toward the Sea of Galilee. Matthew says that he made a stop in the mountain, and that a great multitude brought their sick to him; the lame, blind, dumb, maimed and many others they led to Jesus' feet and he healed them, and the multitude wondered and glorified the God of Israel.

Our lesson gives one particular instance from this multitude of healings. A man who was both deaf and dumb was brought to Jesus, and his treatment was peculiar; the Lord took him apart privately, perhaps to impress upon him the lesson. The man could not hear, and hence the Lord imparted the lesson through signs, touching his tongue and touching his ears, and then with a sigh he glanced heavenward, as indicating that the sympathy of heaven was moved for the man's assistance, and immediately the blessing came and he was healed. This may have been the first miracle in that region, and possibly the multitude coming, as Matthew records, were attracted by it. Our Lord's injunction that it should be kept quiet seems to have been understood, not as a command, but rather as a suggestion that he was not seeking publicity. Nevertheless, when the faith was manifested and the poor afflicted ones were before him the Lord never refused to give the blessing. Thus we are taught that when the due time shall come for the blessing of all the families of the earth, the Lord will not withhold a blessing from any; all who desire to be blessed may then have his favor.

Blessed Are Our Eyes And Ears of Understanding.

As New Creatures who have already in a figurative sense risen with Christ to walk in newness of life, to walk in his footsteps, we have our

eyes opened and our ears unstopped and our tongues loosed, so that we may not only see and enjoy the grace of God ourselves, but we may speak of his goodness and love to others. In many respects those to whom the Lord grants the special knowledge of the Truth in this present time have a suggestion that it is not for everybody, that we are to be discriminating in our endeavors to dispense the Truth, and that some of these great blessings of the Lord which are to us like pearls are not meant for all; that we should not cast our pearls before swine, or before those who manifest no disposition to know of or receive the Lord's favors. But with us, as with the healed one in this lesson, the message is too good to keep; we love to tell the story, it did so much for us; we desire that all who are blind and deaf may come to the great Physician and be healed; we desire that all who are stammering in their endeavors to tell the good tidings may have their lips touched by the Master and henceforth speak plainly the glorious things of the Gospel of Christ. And as the Master would not reprove this one in the lesson, neither does he reprove us if in our zeal we go sometimes to the extreme of trying to tell the good tidings to those who have no ear to hear, or endeavor to make disciples of those who are swinish and not at all inclined to spiritual things, or of following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

The heart of this lesson is that we who are risen with Christ in the spirit of our minds should walk in newness of life while still in this mortal body and still amongst men; that we should look forward to the glorious change of the First Resurrection, when we shall be actually in the Lord's likeness and see him as he is, sharing his glory and participating with him in dispensing all these blessings of life and healing to whosoever will accept these favors in the glorious Kingdom time which we rejoice to know is near at hand.

"HE DOETH ALL THINGS WELL"—*Reprints*, p. 5103

—MARK 7:31-8:10.—

"He hath done all things well:
He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."—Mark 7:37.

IN PREVIOUS STUDIES we have noted the fact that Jesus invariably, in connection with His miracles, impressed the healed ones in particular, and all the witnesses in general, with the fact that the healing power was Divine, thus to establish faith in God. Today's lesson gives a special illustration along this line. A person was brought to the Savior to heal who was deaf and who had an impediment in his speech. They besought Him that He would lay hands on him.

From this it seems evident that most of the miracles were performed by the laying on of hands, although the record also is that some were healed by touching Jesus or touching His garments. In the latter case it is evident that the healed person exercised faith, otherwise he would not have touched the garment in hope of healing. In another case we read that Jesus could not do many mighty works at a certain place on account of their unbelief. Hence, willingly or unwillingly, the power of healing was associated with the exercise of faith; it was either on the part of the sick, or for him by his friends.

The instance under consideration is peculiar. (1) Because Jesus took the man away from the multitude and healed him privately; and (2) it is peculiar as to the means used. He put His fingers into the man's ears, as though to start some life current through them; then He spat and touched the man's tongue. We cannot suppose that the Master's power was limited to these means, when on other occasions He exercised other means. It seems preferable to understand that these methods were used in order to attract the man's attention and assist him in the exercise of faith.

As the man could not hear, nothing said to him could explain the situation; he could see the spitting, he could feel the touch, he understood what was going on, and incidentally the

healing of his person. These matters meant the submission of his mind, or the exercise of a degree of faith. Additionally, after having given those lessons, and while the man still looked at Him, Jesus looked up to Heaven, and thus the patient had a third lesson on the subject, namely, that the power for his cure was expected from God. Jesus sighed, and said, "*Ephphatha*," that is, **"Be opened,"** and immediately the man's ears were opened and the difficulty of his speech was gone.

The statement that Jesus sighed is worthy of note; we can only surmise that it indicated His deep sympathy with the man before Him and with the groaning creation in general. We remember another occasion on which it was said that Jesus "groaned in spirit." That was when He stood by the tomb of His friend Lazarus, and saw Mary weeping and the Jews weeping with her; "He groaned in spirit and was troubled," and wept also. The general lesson seems to be that He was

Touched With a Feeling of Man's Infirmities,

as had been prophesied. The fact is, He was perfect—He did not have an imperfect body with aches and pains and blemishes, such as other men have, but this did not make Him cold and unsympathetic, rather the reverse. His perfect mind would make all His sensibilities more active than ours; His sympathy would be stronger, His sense of pain keener. We, as a fallen race, have become so accustomed to many of our surroundings that they are commonplace and we are inclined to consider them natural—forgetting that the natural order of man would be the perfect order, and that the blemished state is the unnatural.

In yet another way may we suppose our Master was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, namely, by reason of His losing vitality on the occasion of each miracle. Is not this the meaning of the Scripture which declares that "He poured out His soul unto death"? Daily, hourly, His vitality was being exhausted in the healing, blessing, comforting and instructing of those with whom He was in contact. We have a very clear expression on this very subject, in the case of the poor woman who had an issue of blood for years, and who quietly and unostentatiously touched the hem of His garment, saying within herself, "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be healed." She was healed instantly, and Jesus turned Himself about and asked, "Who touched Me?" for He perceived that virtue, vitality, had gone out of Him.

This thought, that the Master was not merely using a Divine power as an Agent of God, but that He was using up His physical power for man's relief, should properly bring our hearts into very close touch and sympathy with Him, and give us that much clearer view of the Savior's love, and that much better foundation for confidence in Him in respect to all our affairs.

In the miracle under consideration in this lesson, our Lord's sigh may also have been, as with us, an evidence of physical weakness—the result of His bestowing of His vitality and energy in the cure of the patient. We are not to think of the death of Jesus, therefore, as having been entirely accomplished at Calvary. Rather are we to understand that it began at His consecration, at thirty years of age, at Jordan, and that it continued day after day, and year after year, and merely culminated and was finished at Calvary.

The day before His crucifixion our Lord intimated this. Speaking of His consecration unto death, He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" It was accomplished fully the following day, on Calvary, when He cried, "It is finished!" His baptism into death was accomplished.

"He doeth All Things Well"

It is following the account of this miracle that we read that the multitude declared the words of our text. We are not, however, to understand that merely this one healing was the basis of their comment, for the account of these same instances by St. Matthew (15:29-31) tells of great multitudes gathered, having with them many lame, blind, dumb and maimed and many others, and they cast them down at His feet, and He healed them, insomuch that the multitudes wondered when they saw the dumb speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to

walk and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel.

"Manifested Forth His Glory"

Let us never lose sight of the great central thought connected with our Lord's miracles. His mission was not to heal the sick and to cast out devils, but to "give His life a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The secondary feature of His work was the calling of the "Israelites indeed" to be His footstep followers, who would be received of the Father and begotten of the Holy Spirit, at and after Pentecost. The miracles and cures performed were merely incidentals and not His real work. They were incidental in the sense that they were illustrations on a small scale of the great work which His Kingdom will accomplish during the thousand years of His reign. Then "all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped."

It would have been a still greater and grander work for Jesus to have expounded the Divine Plan, and to have opened the eyes of the understanding of the people, and their deaf ears; but this work could not be accomplished to any extent until after He had ascended up on high, and had appropriated the merit of His sacrifice to the justification of believers. Hence it was that Jesus said to His disciples, "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to My Father."

And so it is today that the followers of Jesus are permitted to do greater things than He did, greater than any of those miracles, because it is surely a greater miracle to open the mental eyes than to open the physical; to unstop the mental ears is more wonderful than to open the physical ears; to cause the dumb to sing praises to God in the spirit of their minds is still greater work than the giving of natural speech. It is not that we can do greater works than Jesus of ourselves, nor that we could do as great, for without Him we could do nothing. As it was Jesus who did the cures accomplished by His Apostles when He sent them forth to heal the sick and to cast out devils, so it is Jesus now who is doing these greater things through His consecrated people.

Another Multitude Miraculously Fed

The account in the conclusion of this lesson, of the feeding of four thousand people with seven loaves, and the taking up of seven hampers of fragments, was another manifestation of Jesus' power, or as He would express it, of the Divine power in Him. When the five thousand were fed, five loaves and two fishes were used, and they were gotten from a small boy. In this case the disciples themselves had seven loaves, and gave their all for the feeding of the multitude, and all had sufficient; and the fragments, according to the Master's direction, were again collected.

It is worthy of note that in both cases the Master displayed frugality and encouraged economy on the part of His followers. No doubt it would have been just as easy for Him to have created more delicate viands and in great variety. The loaves used then were the same as are used in Palestine today by the natives; they are about the size of our large buns and are made of the entire wheat, ground. Many of the strong natives of Egypt and Palestine seem to live almost exclusively on this bread, about two such small loaves constituting a meal. Quite possibly some of us would find ourselves equally healthy and strong on similarly plain food. It is for us to exercise faith in God and to partake of our daily bread with grateful hearts; there will be a blessing in it, however plain.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Magadan	Sadducees and Pharisees again seek a sign	15:39–16:4	8:10-26		
	NE side Sea of Galilee; Bethsaida	Warns against leaven of Pharisees; heals blind	16:5-12			

Matthew 15:39 to 16:12

And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala. The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah. And he left them, and departed. And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Mark 8:10-26

And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha. And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side. Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread. And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand? And he cometh to Bethsaida: and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.

A SIGN FROM HEAVEN—*Reprints*, p. 5111

—MARK 8:11-26.—

"Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—John 8:12.

THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES—the leading religionists and teachers of Jesus' day—were perplexed and troubled by His success in reaching the people. True, those who heard Him gladly were chiefly of the common people, whom the Jewish teachers had come to despise, terming them "publicans and sinners," and refusing to recognize them as brethren. They considered Jesus a competitor and a successful one, and feared, not without a cause, that their own reputations as teachers were becoming tarnished because of the superiority of Jesus as a Teacher, whose "Wonderful Words of Life" touched the hearts of many.

These Pharisees came specially to find fault —"tempting" Jesus. They asked Him for "a sign from heaven." Their real purpose was to belittle the many signs He was giving the people, in the healing of the sick, etc. Ignoring all these, they said, What sign can you give us from heaven? We want a heavenly sign; give us that and we will believe on you.

In order to be able to sympathize to some extent with the chief rulers of the Jews at that time, we must remember how different were the things which Jesus was doing in proof of His Messiahship from the things which they had supposed He would do. The prophecies told many things of Messiah, but they in reading them had given special heed to those which spoke of His glory and of the power that would come to the Jewish nation, and of the blessing which the Jewish nation would ultimately bestow upon all nations, for the blessing of the world during Messiah's Kingdom. They overlooked, and did not study carefully enough or deeply enough other Scriptures of a totally different kind.

These other Scriptures tell of how Messiah would "be led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He would open not His mouth." (He would be "dumb" in the sense that He would not open His mouth to prevent His condemnation and death.) They told of how He would "preach deliverance to the captives," and the opening of the eyes of the blind, but these they associated with the glorious Kingdom rather than with the period of Messiah's being "despised and rejected of men," and of their hiding their faces from Him in shame, in disesteem.

True, they should have studied the Scriptures properly. It might be said that they were not at fault in making this mistake; in one sense that might be true. On the other hand, however, we are to remember that their difficulty really was pride of heart, and a know-it-all spirit. They lacked humility, and therefore were not teachable. The "Israelites indeed," who did accept Jesus' Message, doubtless had similar misunderstandings of the prophecies, but they were open to conviction and ready to be led and guided, and to these the Master's teachings were attractive, blessed, wonderful. They were guided gradually to the correct understanding of each feature of the Divine Plan as it became due, and thus they became ready for the Pentecostal blessing in due time, and manifested themselves as part of the Elect, which God was choosing to be the Bride of Messiah, and joint-heir in His Kingdom.

No Sign But That of Jonah

Our lesson tells that Jesus sighed deeply and said, "Why doth this generation seek after a sign?" and refused to give them a sign, and departed for the other side of the Lake. Saint Matthew (16:1-4) gives a more detailed account of this question and its answer. Jesus called the attention of the Pharisees to the signs that He was giving in abundance to them, and then said that there would be one great sign given that nation; but it was not given until Calvary. That "sign" did have a great effect upon thousands of Jews, as is evidenced by the account in Acts of the thousands who were baptized on Pentecost Day, and subsequently, upon hearing Saint Peter's preaching respecting the death of Jesus, His three days in the tomb and His resurrection on the third day.

Jesus cited the sign of Jonah, that as he was (portions of) three days and nights in the belly

of the fish, so the Son of Man would be a similar period in the earth, and as Jonah came forth, so the Son of Man would come forth.

We leave it for Higher Critics to fight out amongst themselves the proposition they raise in opposition to our Lord's statement. According to Higher Critics, Jesus and the Apostles were badly deceived, in every sense of the word; but according to Jesus and the Apostles, the Higher Critics are badly deceived. We prefer to stand by the Word of God, let who will take the "wisdom of men."

The Leaven of The Pharisees

After entering the boat Jesus cautioned His disciples against the doctrine of the Pharisees —He likened it to leaven—yeast. Leaven is a ferment, which spreads, especially in dough for bread. God's Word is Truth, the bread upon which His people are to feed. But they are to use the unleavened bread—pure bread, pure Truth, unmixed with the leaven of human philosophy.

This caution was necessary because the Pharisees were apparently and really the most holy sect or party amongst the Jews. The most earnest and most zealous and most gifted Jews would therefore naturally be attracted to that sect. Its claimed association with the highest and best things made the sect and its teachings the more dangerous, because its bread, its truth, was intermingled with human traditions which would make sick and dyspeptic, and to that extent poison all the minds which received it.

The same lesson is applicable to us today; no matter how holy any denomination of Christians may claim to be and seem to be, we are to remember to beware of their "leaven," their false doctrine—to be on the lookout for it, to avoid it. It is the pure Truth of God's Word that is able to make us "wise unto salvation" and which, the Apostle says, "is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

Let us all, then, as Christians of all denominations, unite our hearts and minds in full consecration to our Lord and Redeemer to do the Heavenly Father's will; and let us stand free and clear from all the "leaven" in all the various creeds, which in the past have done so much to separate the people of the Lord into six hundred denominations. We deprecate this division as more and more bearing in upon God's people everywhere, and more and more we desire to unite the earnest hearts under one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father over all, and one "Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven."

"Perceive Ye Not Yet?"

The disciples very stupidly missed the point of Jesus' parabolic statement about the leaven of the Pharisees. They at once thought of literal leaven and literal bread, and noted that they had only one loaf with them and supposed that the Master was upbraiding them. Their mental eyes, their eyes of understanding, were not very widely open, and Jesus promptly and very plainly told them so, and apparently with a measure of chagrin, that after all the teaching He had given them they should be so slow to perceive the spirit of His words.

He reminded them of the miracle of the five thousand fed with the five loaves, and asked them how many basketfuls of fragments they collected. They answered, "Twelve." He reminded them of the other feeding of the four thousand with seven loaves, and asked them how many baskets were taken up. They answered, "Seven." He said, How, then, do you not understand that I was not finding fault with you for having only one loaf; surely, if I had the power to produce bread before, I have still that power, and could not have referred to your lack of bread.

The same thing is noticeable today amongst the Lord's people in Bible Study frequently; the spirit of our Lord's teachings is often missed altogether by some whose minds center merely around some little incidental. The remedy for this is a closer walk with God; a more careful study of the Divine Word, entering into the spirit of the Master and His work, as footstep followers. In this connection let us not forget the difficult "thorns" which another parable tells us so frequently infest the hearts and minds of God's people and hinder the Word of Truth from bringing forth its proper fruitage. The "thorns" are "the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches," Jesus said.

Arriving at Bethsaida a blind man was brought to Him with a desire that He would heal him. Jesus took him by the hand and led him out beyond the village. He spat upon his eyes and put His hands upon him and asked him if he saw anything. He looked up and said that he saw something that looked like trees moving about which he supposed to be men. Again Jesus put His hands upon his eyes and bade him look once more. He did so and saw clearly. The object in employing this method is not clear to us, but quite probably the man himself lacked faith and Jesus was gradually developing it in him. This thought is borne out by the final statement that the man looked steadily, and kept looking for some time, and then declared that he could see everything clearly. Apparently the Lord required the man to exercise his full power of will and to strive to see things.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Caesarea Philippi	Jesus the Messiah; foretells death, resurrection	16:13-28	8:27–9:1	9:18-27	

Matthew 16:13-28

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Mark 8:27 to 9:1

And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elijah; and others, One of the prophets. And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind

me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

Luke 9:18-27

And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am? They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again. He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God. And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing; Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day. And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

THE GREAT QUESTION—*Reprints*, p. 5120

—MARK 8:27-9:1.—

"Thou art The Christ, the Son of the Living God."—Matthew 16:16.

FOR A CONSIDERABLE period of His ministry our Lord did not declare Himself, even to His disciples, to be the Messiah. Undoubtedly He chose the wiser course. As the Great Teacher He instructed the people, until they said, "Never man spake like this man"; He healed the people, until they said, "Could Messiah do more than this?" It was better, undoubtedly, that the thought should gradually come upon the minds of His followers than that He should have started in with making that claim —better that the people should claim it for Him than that He claim the honor for Himself.

He did, however, wish His disciples to know, and He approached the question by asking, "Who do men say that I am?" He got a reply, that some thought Him John the Baptist risen from the dead; that others considered Him to be Elijah risen from the dead, and others thought of Him as being perhaps one of the other Prophets.

Then came the point of the question: "But who say **ye** that I am?" St. Peter answered and said, "Thou art The Christ, the Son of the Living God." Jesus admitted the correctness of this, saying, "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven."

Forthwith Jesus began to explain to the beloved Twelve the experiences that lay before Him—how the Kingdom would be formally proffered to the Jews, and how through their representatives, the Elders, the chief priests, they would reject Him; how He would be killed, and after three days rise again. He made the statement about His death very emphatic, and the disciples clearly understood it. Judas, angrily disappointed, considered it a disgrace upon our Lord for Him to take such a view of the future, and a disgrace also upon the Apos-

tles, because if Jesus had such expectations it would modify and regulate His course, and soon disaster would come to Him, and the dashing of all their hopes which He had inculcated—hopes of sitting with Him in His Throne, etc.

Doubtless all of the Apostles were disappointed, but only St. Peter had the courage to express himself, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not happen." You will, we all know, as the Messiah, attain the Throne of Israel and thus eventually the Throne of the world, and bring blessing to the whole human race; and as you have promised, we shall be with You in Your Throne.

"Get Thee Behind Me, Satan!"

In this course St. Peter was opposing the Divine will and plan, of which the death of Jesus was the very center or hub, from which would radiate all the fulfilments of all the various promises—to the Church first, to Israel next, and finally to all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues. Jesus perceived that these influences were striving to hinder His consummation of His sacrifice, even as Satan tried to do in the beginning of His consecration.

To make the matter very emphatic He said to St. Peter, "Get thee behind Me, adversary," thy words savor not of the things of God's plan, but of the things of human judgment and preference. Then He began to make clear to His followers what had not been "meat in due season" to give them before, in such plain terms, namely, that whoever desired to be counted in with Him in any part of His work must realize that it would cost him all that he possessed of an earthly kind; he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow in the footsteps of the Redeemer.

Anyone solicitous of maintaining his rights and holding on to the present life, and unwilling to sacrifice all, will lose the great "prize" of the Divine nature, which will be given to those who do take up the cross and make a full sacrifice of earthly interests. And on the other hand, he who will faithfully lose his life for Jesus' sake will save it—will gain the reward of life on the spirit plane.

Moreover, the same principle that now thus operates will always operate, namely, that whoever is simply selfish, loving his own life and his own interests, will not be accounted worthy of everlasting life; but those who will sacrifice, if need be, in the interests of the Lord's cause will be the ones accounted worthy in character for eternal life.

"What Shall It Profit a Man?"

God has provided a future life for every soul of man through the redemption accomplished by Jesus, but only the noble of heart, of character, of life, who will accept this great blessing through the Divinely appointed way will get it. If they selfishly seek for the whole world, the selfishness thus developed will make them unfit for the eternal life. For what would a man take in exchange for the loss of his life? Would he consider wealth or fame or name for a few years in the present time worthy of exchange at profit, if it were to cost him eternal glory and eternal life? Surely not. We are therefore to have in mind that character-building is absolutely essential to our attaining eternal life upon any plane, by the proposition that God has made us through His Son.

Whoever becomes a follower of the Lord and hopes to gain the prize of everlasting life and glory on the spirit plane must do so wholeheartedly, and not in an underhanded or secret manner. He must come out fully and courageously and properly acknowledge Jesus and acknowledge His words. And Jesus puts Himself and His words on a parity—"whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words." Jesus' words are Jesus' doctrines or teachings. To be ashamed of the Truth, to be ashamed of the Divine Plan, to be ashamed of what we find to be the teachings of God's Word, because they are unpopular with men, is to offend the Lord and to prove ourselves unworthy of His favor.

All who are of His Church will need Christ continually as their Advocate, down to the very last, when He shall present them blameless and unreproveable before the Father in love. (Col. 1:22.) And if they would maintain Him as their Advocate, they must also be advocating His cause amongst men, not ashamed of Him and not ashamed of His doctrine, His words.

That the Lord addressed His words especially to the disciples is shown by His reference to others of that nation who had not made such a consecration as all of His disciples must

make. The others were called "an adulterous and sinful generation." The followers of Christ must hold up the Light of Truth before the world, and so doing faithfully they will be acknowledged by the Lord Jesus in due time, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels. He will not be ashamed to acknowledge them; He will present them to the Father and to the holy angels.

The Great Question

The great question of eighteen centuries ago is the great question of today! Who is Jesus? If, as some claim, He was merely a good man, a most able Teacher, then He was not The Christ, for The Christ, although the embodiment of all these qualities, was more, much more. To be The Christ, He must have been "the Man Christ Jesus," who gave Himself a Ransom-price for all, to be testified in due time. (1 Tim. 2:5,6.) And this signifies that He must have been, not of ordinary birth, but extraordinary, born from above, because if born in the ordinary course of nature He would be like others of Adam's sons, subject to the sentence of death, and hence unable to save either Himself or others. But if He was The Christ, the Sent of God, who left the glory of the Father and was made flesh that He might "taste death for every man," then we behold Him as the great Redeemer of the world, whose death was necessary as a Ransom, or corresponding price, to secure the release of mankind from the death sentence and to make possible the resurrection of Adam and his race.

More than this, the word Christ signifies The Anointed. The Bible declares that the Anointed Lord shall be the Great King, Prophet and Priest, whose Kingdom shall be under the whole heavens—a Kingdom which shall last for a thousand years; and shall destroy sin and all who love sin; and which shall lift up all humanity willing to return into harmony with God. According to the Scriptures, this Jesus is—the Messiah. And His present work is the gathering of a Bride class, to be His joint-heir in His glorious Kingdom, which will be set up soon after the Elect Church shall have been completed by the glorious change of the First Resurrection.

What think ye of Messiah? What think ye of His invitation to become His associates in His glory and Kingdom? What think ye of the cost of self-denial, self-sacrifice? What think ye of the great reward? Let those who have made the consecration review the terms; let those who have not made this consecration do as Jesus said: "Sit down and count the cost," before making a decision, so that if they become His disciples they will do so intelligently, and be loyal and faithful in their course.

Only those who appreciate the "High Calling of God in Christ," "The Heavenly calling"—only such will have the necessary incentive to run with patience the race upon which they started when making a consecration; and only those who run the race faithfully will win the prize; and only by the assistance of the Great Advocate can any hope to come off conqueror and "more than conqueror," through His precious Blood.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Mt. Hermon	Transfiguration before Peter, James, and John	17:1-13	9:2-13	9:28-36	

Matthew 17:1-13

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said,

Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

Mark 9:2-13

And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean. And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elijah must first come? And he answered and told them, Elijah verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at naught. But I say unto you, That Elijah is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

Luke 9:28-36

And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elijah: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.—*Reprints*, p. 1761

LUKE 9:28-36. Parallel Accounts—Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13.

"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him."—Matthew 17:5.

THIS lesson should begin with verse 22. Verses 22-26 tell us how the Lord disclosed to his disciples the intelligence of the tragic end of his life which he must soon meet, and assured them of his resurrection on the third day. He then intimated that his disciples would not be exempt from similar persecution and counselled faithfulness under even such trials, assuring them of an abundant reward in the glory of his Kingdom at his second advent.

Verse 27 was a prophecy which received an almost immediate fulfillment, as the narrative

of this lesson proves.

Verses 28-36. We have the Lord's own words to prove that the incident here recorded was a "vision,"—not a reality. "And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, 'Tell **the vision** to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.'"—Matt. 17:9.

The import of this "vision" is also clearly indicated by the Apostle Peter. (2 Pet. 1:16-18.) He declares it to have been a "vision" of the coming glory of Christ's Kingdom, saying, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were **eye-witnesses of his majesty**; for he received from God the Father honor and glory when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, **when we were with him in the holy mount**."

As a "vision" it is to be understood as a symbolic representation of the glory of Christ's Millennial Kingdom. The changed appearance of the Lord's person and clothing were symbolic of his coming personal glory. And the glorious appearance also of Moses and Elias represented the association with the Lord in the glory of his Kingdom of the two companies from among men who shall constitute the earthly and the heavenly phases of the Kingdom. Moses represented the earthly phase and Elias the spiritual or heavenly phase. Here in symbolic "vision" was represented the established Kingdom, referred to in verse 27—"I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God." It was not the actual Moses and Elias, remember, for this was a "vision," not a reality. (Jude 9; Rom. 5:12; Eccl. 9:5; Psa. 146:4; Job 14:21; John 3:13; Acts 2:34; Psa. 90:3.) Nor was their resurrection due then: "They [the ancient worthies of the Jewish dispensation] without us [the Church] shall not be made perfect." (Heb. 11:40.) Their resurrection tarries, therefore, until the second advent of Christ and the full establishment of the spiritual phase of the Kingdom—the Gospel Church.

Verse 31 records the theme of the three glorified ones, which was the great transaction shortly to be accomplished at Jerusalem—the crucifixion of the Lord, the payment of our ransom price.

The object of the "vision" was probably twofold—for the comfort and strengthening of the Lord, and for the enlightenment of his chosen witnesses. The communication with the Lord concerning his decease was probably while the disciples were asleep (verse 32), and was doubtless, therefore, specially for his own comfort. The "vision" came in answer to the Lord's prayer, and though it was not understood by the disciples at the time, it was afterwards a blessed inspiration to them, and should be to us also. Yet, says Peter, "we have a more sure word of prophecy [concerning the Kingdom and its glory. It is spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began—Acts 3:19-21], 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 Pet. 1:19.) The "vision" was a vivid and refreshing symbolic view of the Kingdom, but without the "sure word of prophecy" it would have been unintelligible.

Verses 34,35. Here was another testimony by a voice from heaven to the claim of our Lord to be the Son of God, and pleasing and acceptable to him. At his birth the heavenly messengers announced him; at his baptism the voice from heaven declared him the acceptable Son of God; and here, very near the close of his human existence, he is again proclaimed the acceptable and well-pleasing Son.

Verse 36. "And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone." The "vision," the voice and the cloud had all passed away, and the natural conditions were again realized, while the lessons of that solemn hour remained to gain a yet broader significance when, by and by, after Pentecost, they would receive the anointing of the spirit, and understand its significance.

Thus with line upon line, and precept upon precept, the blessed truths of God concerning his glorious benevolent plan were riveted upon the hearts and minds of his disciples; and they shall be upon ours also as we bring ourselves more and more into communion with his word.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Caesarea Philippi	Heals demoniac that disciples could not heal	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	

Matthew 17:14-20

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Mark 9:14-29

And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tore him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

Luke 9:37-43

And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him. And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not. And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tore him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE—*Reprints*, p. 5128

—MARK 9:14-29.—

"And Jesus said unto Him,
If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth."—Mark 9:23.

WHEN JESUS and the three favored Apostles came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, where they had been enjoying the vision of coming glory, they found the other nine Apostles at the foot of the mountain surrounded by a multitude. They had made several inefficacious attempts to cast out a demon from a boy whose father had brought him for the purpose.

So it is with some of the Lord's people; occasionally by faith they go up into the mountain, into the Kingdom; by faith they see the glory of the Lord revealed, and hear afresh that they must suffer with the Lord if they would enter into His glory. Then, coming down from the exalted heights of contemplation of things glorious, they face the realities of the present time—the Adversary is in possession of the world still; many are his slaves and dupes; no earthly power seems sufficient to cast him out; they are back with the remainder of the Church. But if the Master be with them, victory will ultimately be achieved.

This case was one of occasional obsession by an evil spirit, whereas many of the others were continuous. The evil spirit came into this boy at times, causing him to have a fit, to froth at the mouth, to wallow in the mire, sometimes striving to throw him into the fire or into the water, or otherwise destroy him. The parents had brought the child to Jesus for a cure; in His absence they sought the nine Apostles remaining, but their endeavors were fruitless; they could not cast out this spirit.

The unsuccessful disciples were perplexed; never before had the Master's name failed to be respected by the demons. The Scribes also were harassing them with questions, when Jesus and the other three appeared coming down the mountain. The multitude hailed Jesus and flocked to Him, but He came promptly to the relief of the Apostles and inquired the nature of their trouble. The father interposed and explained: "I have brought my son, who is possessed of a dumb spirit; and whenever it takes hold upon him it dashes him down and he foameth and grindeth his teeth and pineth away; and I spake to Thy disciples that they should cast it out, and they were not able."

And Jesus answered, "O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring the boy to me." And they brought him, and immediately the spirit caused him to fall to the ground, wallowing and foaming. Jesus questioned how long he had been thus. The father answered, "From a child," and that often the spirit attempted to cast the boy into the fire or into the water to destroy him; "But if Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

"To Him That Believeth"

Jesus replied, "If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth." How great stress the Lord lays everywhere upon the exercise of faith in the Divine Power! "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Those who cannot exercise the faith cannot have the blessing which others may have who do exercise faith; and our blessings increase in proportion as we will exercise our faith. Thus the Lord puts a premium upon this element of character, and makes it essential to His favor.

This does not imply that people who cannot now exercise faith will never get any blessing. On the contrary, while the Lord has given certain exceeding great and precious promises to those who can believe and who do believe, and who follow their belief with obedience to the extent of their ability, He has also promised that by and by, during Messiah's Kingdom, the way of faith and obedience will be made so plain, so simple, that all will be able to follow it and to gain a reward—but a lesser reward than that now extended to those who can and do exercise faith and obedience.

The reason for this is manifest. God is now seeking a special class of specially faithful and obedient children, to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus in His glorious Messianic Kingdom. He is now selecting the class which by and by He will use in bestowing His blessing world-wide; and He desires that in this class

shall be only such as can exercise absolute faith in Him. Hence, now, God's rule for dealing with the Church is, "According to thy **faith** be it unto thee."

And in this and other miracles the Lord required faith seemingly as the condition of the healing. He thus manifested forth His coming glory and the power of His Kingdom. During the Kingdom reign there will be such manifestations of Divine Power, and such assistance given to those willing to exercise faith, that all may profit thereby and experience the healings of their flesh and the casting out of every power of Satan and sin.

The poor father realized from Jesus' words that the difficulty rested with him, that he must exercise faith else his son could not be recovered. With tears he cried out, "Lord, I do believe; Help Thou mine unbelief!" His faith got its reward. Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of the boy, and enter no more into him. This last was the special point of this cure. The evil spirit had frequently left the boy, but only to return. The Lord's command was that he should leave and never return.

It may be wondered why the Master permitted the evil spirit to tear the boy and cause him pain, etc., in leaving him. If He had power to cast him out, He also undoubtedly had power to control the manner of his coming out. We can only surmise therefore that Jesus, on this and other occasions, allowed the evil spirit a measure of liberty in the method of leaving the victims, and that this was for the very purpose of demonstrating how malicious and evil the spirit was which had control; and thus the miracle was the more clearly seen, and thus the more would the Lord be praised by those interested.

"Many Said, He Is Dead"

The boy was left in an apparently dead condition, but Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up. The lesson for us in this is that it is not only that the Adversary and his power be cast out of humanity and from control, which the poor world needs, but they need Divine aid, the hand of Divine Power, for their uplift out of the mire of sin and death. According to the Scriptures, we are near the time when Satan will be bound, when all the influences of evil amongst humanity will be restrained. According to the Scriptures, also, this binding of Satan will be accomplished in a great "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," and humanity will be left in an almost dead condition. The pride, the hopes, the ambition of men will perish in that awful trouble time, but the Master will be present in Kingdom power to uplift them.

Messiah's Kingdom will not only bind the Adversary and forbid him to re-enter humanity and interfere with their affairs, but the power of the Kingdom will for a thousand years do an uplifting work amongst the fallen and degraded members of our race, lifting them up, up, up, until they will be fully up to the Divine standard, as represented in Father Adam—from which condition he originally fell through disobedience, and return to which condition has been secured for all through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice accomplished at Calvary.

The disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast out this demon. And so God's people many a time have asked themselves, Why cannot we do more than we are doing in the way of opposing Satan and Sin, and their reign of evil? The answer of Jesus is applicable here as well as there: "This kind cometh not out save by fasting and prayer." Undoubtedly God's people could accomplish much more in their own conflicts with Sin and Satan, and in helping others to get free from the power of Sin, if we would always exercise full faith in the Lord, and if we would continually live more in the spirit and less according to the flesh. This would mean fasting, or self-denial, and prayer, or fellowship with God. To him who believeth, every blessing belongs which God has promised to His faithful ones, but we have the conditions expressed elsewhere by Jesus: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Galilee	Again foretells his death and resurrection	17:22,23	9:30-32	9:43-45	
	Capernaum	Tax money miraculously provided	17:24-27			
	Capernaum	Greatest in Kingdom; settling faults; mercy	18:1-35	9:33-50	9:46-50	

Matthew 17:22-to 18:35

And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry. And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee. At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would

take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him a hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

Mark 9:30-50

And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him. And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me. And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And 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 the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

Luke 9:43-50

And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him

of that saying. Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great. And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

LEAST AND GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM.—*Reprints*, p. 2660

—MATTHEW 18:1-14.—

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not,
for of such [like] is the Kingdom of God."

THE GOLDEN TEXT chosen for this lesson is most inappropriate and misleading. It was spoken respecting children, and as indicating our Lord's sympathy and love for them. Indeed, we cannot think of any truly great man or woman who would not look upon childhood with loving sympathy and interest; and viewing the blank pages of the life represented in them be awakened to tender feelings respecting the trials and difficulties and disappointments which must lie before them in the path of life, and with hopes and good wishes respecting their possible victories and attainments of desirable characters, as a result of those experiences and conflicts. That Jesus loved children, yea, loved everything guileless and pure, is not to be questioned, and our Golden Text substantiates this conviction.

The Kingdom of God will not be composed either wholly or in part of infants who died without either knowledge, experience or character attainments. Had such been God's purpose it would not have required nearly nineteen centuries to complete the "little flock" of "one hundred and forty-four thousand;" nor would it have been said that a good fight must be fought and victory achieved and graces of the spirit attained by "patient perseverance in well doing," and that all in all it must be through much tribulation to the flesh, voluntarily and joyfully accepted, that any can enter into the Kingdom. Infants can have no share under this Gospel call; but they will surely share the great world-blessing that will speedily follow the completion of the Church and its glorification as God's Kingdom.

This text is misleading, in connection with this lesson, because in the latter the expression "little ones" is used in a figurative sense, not literally,—the Lord referring to his humble and trustful disciples as God's little ones, God's children, whom he pities and cherishes as do earthly parents their little ones. Nor is this an exceptional case, for we find that repeatedly in the Scriptures the young Christian and the less developed are likened to babes, to children. Thus the Apostle Paul exhorts: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be ye men." And the Apostle Peter exhorts the brethren, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Cor. 14:20; 1 Peter 2:2.

It was apparently after the journey back from the Mount of Transfiguration to Capernaum that the discourse of this lesson occurred. Comparing the accounts as given by Mark and Luke, we gather that the apostles on the way had a discussion respecting who of their number were the greatest, and who would be the greatest or most honored in the Kingdom which the Lord had promised and in which they hoped to share. This discussion quite probably was instigated by the fact that only three of their number had been specially favored by being with the Lord in the mount. The discussion between them, altho carried on probably in subdued tones, not intended for the ears of Jesus, had become animated as the various sides and claims were advocated. It was a little later that our Lord inquired of them what had been the subject of their earnest and animated converse

as they followed him in the way. According to Luke's account they were reticent, not liking to answer his question and to tell of their dispute, no doubt feeling rather ashamed of it. But, realizing that they could not hide the matter from the Lord, and some of them evidently anxious to have his decisive word on the subject, they asked him to settle the question for them.

Our Lord desired just such an opportunity for presenting to his faithful ones a needed lesson along this line; and according to his usual custom he illustrated it. Calling a little child, and seating it in the midst, he made the astounding declaration that only such as would become childlike could enter the Kingdom at all. As natural men, and most of them rather unlearned, the disciples had no doubt been aiming as far as possible from childlike simplicity, and striving rather to assume the dignity of mind and of bearing which would suggest itself to the natural man as being appropriate to those who hoped soon to share regal honors in the Kingdom of God. What astonishment it must have caused them to learn that the Lord was looking rather for simplicity, meekness, teachableness, child-likeness, than for astuteness, wisdom, dignity, etc.!

Yet our Lord's words were not merely a condemnation of the spirit which they had been cultivating, but a lesson of instruction regarding a change in this respect, his words intimating not merely the possibility, but the necessity of a change of course on the part of those who desired a share in his Kingdom. If, instead of reading our Lord's words as in the Common Version, "Except ye be converted," we read them as in the Revised Version, "Except ye turn," more will get the true thought our Lord wished his followers to learn, the word "convert" having lost its primary meaning to many by reason of misuse. They must turn their ideas on the subject, and study and practice lessons in the opposite direction—lessons of meekness, of humility, of child-likeness: and our Lord's declaration that those who attain to the greatest development in meekness and simplicity of heart will be greatest in the Kingdom, implies that those who strive after simplicity and meekness will be granted a share in the Kingdom, but that none who are self-seeking and boastful will have part or lot in this matter.

Having thus defined the humble-minded and unostentatious amongst his followers as those upon whom he would bestow the highest honors and dignities of the Kingdom, Jesus proceeded to give a general lesson respecting such "little ones" of his followers, saying that all who receive such humble disciples in his name will be reckoned as having received him, and whoever stumbles or injures one of these humble or "little ones" will thereby commit a crime so serious that it would be better for him to have lost his life—better that a millstone were fastened to his neck and he be cast into the sea, and thus all hope of saving his life effectually destroyed—better that this great calamity should come upon one than that he should do an injury to one of the Lord's "little ones"—one of the humblest of the disciples, child-like, meek, following in the way of the Lord.

As we thus see how great a value the Lord places upon humility it should encourage all true disciples to cultivate this quality daily, that thus they might grow more and more guileless, honest, truly humble, and in the sight of the great King become more and more great, more and more fit for the high exaltations of the Kingdom to come. Seeing that without this meekness none can enter into this Kingdom, we need not wonder that the Scriptures everywhere exhort the Lord's people to humility—"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God [now] that he may exalt you in due time" in the Kingdom. Yet notwithstanding all these exhortations of the Scriptures the perversity of human nature seems to be such that those who become the Lord's people and who engage to run in his way seem to find more trouble, more to contend against, in this matter than in any other. And some who feel themselves to be little enough seem very anxious that others of the brethren shall esteem them very highly. Would to God that all of the Lord's dear people, and especially all who seem to be leaders, and who have some natural qualifications for leading, and helpfulness in the Church, would study well this lesson, and learn from it how to advance themselves in the Lord's favor, and how to be

truly great according to his standard, which alone shall prevail.

The word rendered "offend" in verse 6 and onward would be better rendered "stumbled," the thought being that of placing a stumbling-block in the path. The Lord intimates most distinctly that there will be plenty of such stumbling-blocks in the way of those who are truly his, and that too in proportion as they are "little"—humble. He declares it necessary that these difficulties, these trials, these "offences," shall come. It is necessary, because it is the divine will that all the elect Church shall be thoroughly tested and developed in character, that thus they may become strong characters, copies of God's dear Son, willing to suffer for the truth's sake, and that gladly, joyfully, the loss of earthly things, that thereby they might please the Father which is in heaven,—thus developing humility and obedience, that by and by they may be ready for the exaltation which he has promised to those only who faithfully follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Yet however necessary that the stumbling-blocks shall be in the way, and that the Church, the body of Christ, shall be tested thereby, this does not lighten the responsibility of those who, as the agents of the Adversary, lend themselves to his influence in placing those stumbling-blocks before the feet of the saints; and our Lord's words, without indicating exactly the nature of their punishment, assure us positively that such evil-doers will have a reward from him who says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay."

In all probability many to-day are putting stumbling-blocks before the Lord's little ones, his faithful little flock, who do not realize what they are doing,—just as Peter unconsciously became a stumbling stone, a rock of offence, to the Master, when he attempted to dissuade him from the performance of his consecration vow. Those who place stumbling-blocks before the Lord's "little ones" now similarly seek to lead them from the narrow path of full consecration and self-sacrifice—seeking to persuade them that another and an easier way, a way less humbling to the natural man, a way more politic, more crafty, more wise according to the course of this world than the narrow way, is just as good as or a great deal better than the narrow way. Such testings are necessary, and it is also necessary that all who do not walk closely in the footprints of the Savior shall be sifted out, for the Lord seeketh only a little flock,—all of them copies of his dear Son. But there is a great responsibility upon those who aid in turning aside any of the flock—who to any extent are stumbling-blocks, causes of stumbling or "offence" in the pathway of the Lord's people.

Following this line of thought, that offences or trials and testings must come to all, our Lord urges that tho these tests mean the sacrifice of pleasure or hopes or aims or customs or privileges, precious to us as a right eye or a right hand, or useful to us as our foot, they must nevertheless be overcome, if we would enter into the Kingdom. This is another way of saying what he at another time expressed in the words, "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom." Whoever has gotten the thought that the Kingdom is to be granted merely on condition of **believing** in Jesus has gotten a wrong thought that is not imparted by the Scriptures. Faith is necessary to our justification, before we can do anything in the nature of self-sacrifice that God could accept; but whoever stops with the faith without the works, without the self-sacrifice, loses every hope and privilege in connection with the Kingdom. To attain it we must "strive," must "fight the good fight," must "endure hardness as good soldiers," must be willing to cut off, not only sinful pleasures, but all things that would interfere with our full devotion to the Lord's service and our fulfillment of our covenant to be dead with him; must "work out our salvation with fear and trembling,"—assisted by divine grace sufficient for every time of need, and by the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We are not to understand that any may be lacking a foot or a hand or an eye in the Kingdom; but rather we should understand that as the offending eye represents besetments which appeal to our natural tastes as beautiful and likely to charm and attract us to earthly things, and as the offending hand would represent the

doing of things that would be contrary to our highest spiritual interests, and as the offending foot would represent the going into forbidden paths of sin of self-gratification, so the lopping off of these would properly signify that it would be better that we should enter the life eternal and into the share in the Kingdom without having enjoyed certain earthly privileges and gratifications, than that having enjoyed all the earthly gratifications we should thereby have missed our calling and failed to make our election sure.

The "everlasting fire" and the "hell-fire" mentioned are equally symbolical with the other parts of the figure, and undoubtedly refer to the destruction which is the wages of sin to be visited upon wilful sinners—"everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." That fire is used here and elsewhere in the Scriptures to represent not torture, but destruction, is clearly set forth in a pamphlet entitled, "What say the Scriptures About Hell."

Branching out further along the same lines, our Lord gives the general caution to us all: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones"—these humble ones that belong to the Lord. They may seem humble and insignificant when viewed from the worldly standpoint, but they are God's friends; yea, they are God's children, for whom he cares; and hence whoever does injury to them is insulting and antagonizing their Father which is in heaven. Moreover, our Lord assures us that each of his little ones, his faithful, humble little flock, have a constant representation in the Father's presence. There is a guardian angel for each of the Lord's people, and we are to get the thought that there is no delay in the bringing of any and everything which pertains to their welfare and interest before the attention of the great King. What a thought is here for those who are inclined to be heady and to despise or in any manner override or mistreat the humble ones of the body of Christ! And what a lesson is here also for the humble ones—that they are the special objects of divine care and providence, for whom, therefore, all things must work well, because they belong to the Lord!

The remaining four verses seem not to be properly a part of this lesson, and inasmuch as they will come up in another lesson later on and in their proper connection, we omit the discussion of them here.

FORGIVE SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN—*Reprints*, p. 5134

—MATTHEW 18:15-35.—

"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other,
even as God, for Christ's sake, forgave you."—Ephesians 4:32.

TO LEARN TODAY'S lesson well means a blessing for life to every true Christian, and might be said to ensure him eternal life—so fully would he be in accord with the Divine requirements. The lesson relates specially to the consecrated, to the members of the Body of Christ, the Church, of which He is the Head, although application, of course, may be made by others with profit.

The Master's rule for His followers is, If a brother injure you, go to him alone with the matter, striving to reach an agreement, an understanding. The probability is that **misunderstanding** is all that there is of it. But if this does not suffice and you consider the matter serious enough, ask two others to accompany you to the offender, without explaining to them the mission—leave their minds free to hear the case and to advise yourself and the person injuring.

The agreement of these brethren and their advice should be followed by both. If they disagree with you, you should acknowledge that you have erred and that the matter is evidently susceptible of this construction. If they agree with you, and your opponent refuses to heed their counsel and persists in doing you injury, and you still think it of sufficient importance to trouble the Church with the matter, you are then at liberty so to do. The Church's decision of the question is to be final, binding upon both. The one refusing to hear the Church is to be treated as an outsider, not in the sense of doing him injury, but abstaining from appointing him

to any position, or honor in the Church, until his course shall be changed. How simple the Divine direction; what a blessing would come from following it!

Forgive "Seventy Times Seven"

St. Peter put a hypothetical question, of how many times a brother might trespass and ask forgiveness and yet be forgiven—would seven times be the limit? The Master practically declared that there could be no limit, that any brother confessing his fault and asking forgiveness must be forgiven, if it should recur four hundred and ninety times. There is no other position left; forgiveness is obligatory when asked for. We must not be too much afraid of the consequences of following the Master's direction; we must put the responsibility of the matter with Him, assured that His wisdom has not misdirected us.

Then our Lord gave a parable, to illustrate this matter, in respect to the Kingdom of Heaven class—the Church in the present embryotic condition. A certain king had a reckoning with his servants, and squared up all accounts. Amongst the others, one owed him ten thousand talents. His master commanded him to be sold, and his wife and all that he had, until the payment should be made. But the servant fell down at his master's feet and besought him to have compassion on him and he would pay the debt. And the master had compassion on him and discontinued further prosecution on account of the debt.

"Owed Him a Hundred Pence"

The servant thus released went out and began to look up some of those who were indebted to him, and found a fellow-servant who owed **him** a hundred pence, a very insignificant sum in comparison to the one which he had owed the master. He took his fellow-servant by the throat, saying, "Pay me the hundred pence thou owest." His fellow-servant fell at his feet and besought mercy, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." But he would not delay, and cast him into prison till the debt should be paid. The matter finally reached the ears of the master, who called him and said, "Thou wicked servant! I released thee from the penalty of thy debt because thou didst entreat me! thou shouldst also have had mercy upon thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity upon thee." And he was angry, and delivered him to punishment till he should pay all that was due.

An Important Lesson Here

What is the lesson? It is that we should have compassion upon one another, even as we desire that God for Christ's sake should have compassion upon us. The lesson is well expressed in our text. We should be kind one to another, tender-hearted—even as God also in Christ forgave us—and continues to forgive our trespasses day by day. The trespasses of others against us are trifling indeed in comparison to our obligations to the Lord. We should therefore be very willing to forgive all who ask us—"until seventy times seven." In thus exercising mercy we will be copying the Divine character. The influence upon our hearts and lives will be ennobling. Our Lord Jesus is the express image of the Father's person, and we in copying the qualities of generosity and Love become more Christlike, and therefore more Godlike.

So Also Did God Do Unto You

Our Lord Jesus explains that His parable teaches the principles along which the Heavenly Father deals with the members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. If they are harsh and unsympathetic, if they hold their brethren to a strict account along lines of justice, then the Heavenly Father will so deal with them, and will hold them to account for all their shortcomings. It would seem that if God's people would realize the force of this lesson, the practice of forgiving the brethren of their trespasses and shortcomings would very generously and very generally be brought into play, for who of us could afford to have the Heavenly Father exact of us a full penalty for every imperfection, and refuse to remit any of the same?

We show our appreciation of God's mercy toward us by schooling ourselves in His character and becoming more and more merciful and generous toward all the Household of Faith. And if merciful toward the brethren, naturally we would be generous also toward all men. In other words, as we remember and appreciate our own weaknesses and blemishes, it will make us sympathetic with the brethren and

with all mankind. And mercy, generosity, sympathy, God delights in. Such as cultivate these graces of the Spirit will be pleasing in the Lord's sight, and they will thereby be fitted and prepared to have a share with Jesus in His Throne of Glory; for that great Messianic Kingdom will be established for the very purpose of showing mercy unto thousands of mankind who will return to Divine favor and blessing, under clearer knowledge and with the assistance that will then be afforded.

Adam's Sin Is Not Meant

We are not to understand this parable to refer to Divine forgiveness of original sin. The sin of Adam is not forgiven simply because we cry for mercy. Adam and the entire race might have called for mercy, and would have received none, except in the Divine way—through Jesus—through faith in His blood. Nor could this forgiveness be granted until Jesus had finished His sacrifice and ascended up on high, and there appeared in the presence of God on behalf of those coming to the Father through His merit.

This parable refers entirely to subsequent sins—sins referred to in our Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." This is shown also by the fact that the parable speaks of these as servants, whereas the world, as sinners, are not God's servants, but aliens, strangers, foreigners. The only ones whom God will recognize as servants are such as have come back into relationship with Him through Jesus—through faith and consecration. It is these who are servants of God and who are required to have mercy upon their fellow-servants—upon other brethren.

Each and every one of the New Creatures, sons of God, accepted through the merit of Jesus, is held responsible for his own weaknesses; but Divine Power has provided for the cancellation of these freely for Christ's sake, upon their acknowledgment and request for forgiveness. But the forgiving of these trespasses of God's children is made dependent upon their having a spirit of forgiveness toward the brethren, for "if ye do not from the heart forgive one another's trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure" of benevolence ye mete out to others, the same shall be meted out to you. How wonderful are the Divine arrangements! How blessed, how profitable to us, how helpful to us in our preparation for the Kingdom!

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Galilee; Samaria	Leaves Galilee for Festival of Booths; everything set aside for ministerial service	8:19-22		9:51-62	7:2-10

Matthew 8:19-22

And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

Luke 9:51-62

And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou

that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elijah did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village. And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

John 7:2-10

Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him. Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee. But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

"WILT THOU THAT WE COMMAND FIRE?"—*Reprints*, p. 4701

—LUKE 9:51-56.—

"And it came to pass, when the days were well-nigh come, that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem and sent messengers before his face."

THIS week's study relates an incident which occurred on the occasion of our Lord's journey from Galilee to Jerusalem just before his crucifixion. He knew that his hour was come; that his sacrificial life of three and a half years should be accomplished. The Great Teacher was full of courage. "But of the people there were none with him" in the sense of sympathetic appreciation of the conditions. True, he had informed the twelve Apostles respecting the consummation of his work and its nearness, but they had been slow to believe all the things written in the Law and the prophecies concerning him. Their minds naturally grasped the glorious things spoken of the Messiah. They were so busy thinking of his glorious Kingdom, and of their glorious association with him in that Kingdom, that they failed to note the other prophecies which, with equal distinctness, foretold his sufferings and ignominy. Similarly, they overlooked the Master's own words concerning his death. They thought of him as speaking in some figurative, hyperbolic manner. And Peter even attempted to rebuke him, saying, "Be this far from thee, Lord; it shall not happen unto thee."

Refused By The Samaritans

Another account intimates that James and John visited the Samaritan city for the purchase of bread and supplies for the party. The Samaritans recognized them and inquired, would the Great Teacher recognize the Samaritans and heal their sickness or would he treat them as Jews in general treated them—unkindly? They believed the latter. The Apostles frankly told them that the Great Teacher was sent only to the Jewish nation and would not stop to heal their sick ones, because he was "not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Naturally enough the Samaritans resented this and were angry. They said, Very well. Buy bread from the people whom you instruct and whose sick you heal.

St. John and St. James were greatly incensed at this. Was not Jesus the greatest Teacher? Was he not the Messiah? Had he not, as such, the right to determine the will of God respecting who should and who should not receive his benefactions? With this answer they came to Jesus and, relating the circumstances, asked, "Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven to destroy these men and their city?"

What Spirit Are Ye Of?

We listen with keen interest for the Master's response. As we once viewed the matter of the Divine program it would have seemed right for the Great Teacher to have said to the Apostles, Never mind, my dear disciples; wait just a little while and all those Samaritans will die and my Heavenly Father will deliver them over to the devils for an eternity of torture. In comparison with eternal torture that which you propose in the way of burning up their city and incidentally burning them for a few minutes would be as nothing. I appreciate, my dear disciples, your spirit, that it is God-like; that you desire to do all the roasting and burning within your power, and I commend you for it. Continue to thus copy your God and to cause suffering to as many as possible of your fellow-creatures who do not think exactly as you do.

Was this the answer of the Great Teacher? Thank God, No! His teaching was the very reverse—sympathetic, loving, kind. And he had the Father's Spirit and understood it and followed it perfectly. In answer to their query, we read, "Jesus turned and rebuked them" and said, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of! The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them!"

"A Savior And a Great One"

The language spoken in Palestine in Jesus' day was the Syriac. One of the Great Teacher's titles is The Savior. And this, in the Syriac language, signifies, "The Life-Giver." The whole world was damned enough before Jesus came. He came not to damn (condemn) them more, but that they through him, might have life!—John 10:10; 3:17.

Life! Did they not have life? No. All human life was forfeited through father Adam's disobedience. All mankind are dying as a result. A Life-Giver, a Savior from death (and not from eternal torment), was what was needed.

The first work of the Savior is the redemptive work of Calvary. His second work is the selection of his Church to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom. His third work will be the saving of Adam and all of his race from sin and death—from all the mental, moral and physical degradation which came through father Adam's disobedience and through his children being born in sin and shapen in iniquity and in sin conceived by their mothers.

The saving of the Church is a great work! How faithful we should be if we have heard, if our eyes have seen, if our hearts have tasted of the grace of God in this wonderful privilege of becoming members of the Bride of Christ. However, we cannot suppose that the saving of merely a handful of select ones is the purpose of God in the creation of the world and the redeeming of the world. On the contrary, this elect "Little Flock" is spoken of as a "first-fruits unto God of his creatures." (Jas. 1:18; Rev. 14:4.) This implies an after-fruitage much more numerous. While God does not propose to save anyone out of death and to life eternal contrary to the individual will, he does propose that every creature lost in Adam and redeemed by Jesus shall be brought to a clear knowledge of the Truth, that they may be saved. He does propose that only the willingly obdurate shall be lost; and their loss will be the loss of life—as the Apostle declares, "everlasting destruction."

"HIS SERVANTS SHALL SERVE HIM"—*Reprints*, p. 5370

—LUKE 8:1-3; 9:57-62; 10:38-42.—

"Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me."—Matthew 25:40. R.V.

THE opening verse of this Study furnishes us the key to all the preaching that Jesus did, so far as the record goes. His one Message was the Good Tidings of the Kingdom of God. This is still the Good Tidings, and any of the Lord's people who have not yet learned that the Kingdom of God is the very center and essence of the hope of the Church and the hope of the world, have not profitably read and believed the Bible. The Jews, not being ready for the Kingdom, were as a nation rejected from being Messiah's associates in that Kingdom. But not all were rejected; hence we read that to as many as received Jesus, to them gave He liberty to become sons of God—by the begetting and anointing of the Holy Spirit, which first came at Pentecost.

Surely This Is Good Tidings

Those sons of God, if faithful, are to be with Jesus by and by—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord in this Heavenly Kingdom. Their honor and blessing shall be great; for they shall be like their Master and see Him as He is and share His glory. But this will not be all. If they develop this spirit of love, they will thereby be qualified for association with the Master in His great work of blessing mankind, rolling away the curse and uplifting humanity out of sin and death conditions.

Surely this is Good Tidings, as stated in this lesson! And the same Good Tidings were heralded by those angels who proclaimed the Master's birth, saying, "Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people!" Thus far it has been Good Tidings only to God's servants and handmaidens, the Church. But it shall be Good Tidings to all when all the deaf ears shall be unstopped and when all the blind eyes shall be opened, and they shall see the glories of Messiah's Kingdom.

While Jesus was thus declaring the Kingdom, He was not begging His way. We have no suggestion that He ever took up a collection or in any manner solicited money. Many think that this is a suggestion that the followers of Christ should likewise make no appeals for money, but merely use of their own substance and such other moneys as shall voluntarily be given unto them. However, this is for each to decide for himself.

Amongst the healed ones was Mary of Magdala, out of whom the Lord had cast seven demons. In other words, the poor woman was in the condition in which many are who are in insane asylums. Her trouble was not organic, but caused by the harassing of the seven fallen angels who had taken possession of her. Whoever believes the Bible Message must believe that there are fallen angels—spirit beings who have a malevolent influence upon humanity to the extent that they can gain control, and who must be resisted by the will. Mary, apparently, was a woman of wealth. Released from the power of the demons, she was so grateful to Jesus that she did her best to serve Him on every occasion. Other honorable women are also mentioned as having contributed to the maintenance of the Lord.

"Let Me Bury My Father"

Some were attracted to Jesus, evidently, with the thought that one so gifted and so well supplied with the necessities of life must be wealthy. One such said to the Lord, "I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." But apparently his ardor was cooled when Jesus informed him that He had no property, no home of His own, although there were numerous homes to which he was welcome. Foxes have holes of their own and birds have nests of their own, but the Son of Man had no home that He could call His own. None but the very sincere would likely be attracted to follow a leader under such circumstances. Wealth attracts many, poverty few.

Another said to Jesus, in substance, Lord, you may count me as one of your disciples; but I have a father, and I feel as though I must stay with him until his death. The reply of Jesus shows us the importance He attaches to every

service we can render to the Heavenly Father's Cause. He said to him, "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God."

Is It Not Time To Awake?

The whole world is already dead from the Divine standpoint. The sentence of death that passed upon Adam involved all of his children. The only ones whom the Scriptures recognize as possessed of any life at the present time are those who become related to the Life-Giver, Jesus. The Master intimates that all such should take a different view of life from others. There are plenty in the world who can attend to the earthly things; few who can attend to the greater and more important work of proclaiming the Kingdom and gathering the Kingdom class.

This is the most important work in the world, because it is God's work. And those who engage in it are co-laborers with God. Be it noticed again that it was the Kingdom of God that was worthy of this preaching and this sacrifice. Alas, how strange it is that so little of the preaching of later times is along this line! In other words, the Gospel Message that Jesus and His disciples delivered has been lost, forgotten, neglected. Is it not time for all Bible students to awaken to the great privilege of preaching the same Message that the Master and His appointed ones at the First Advent preached?

Lessons To Be Learned

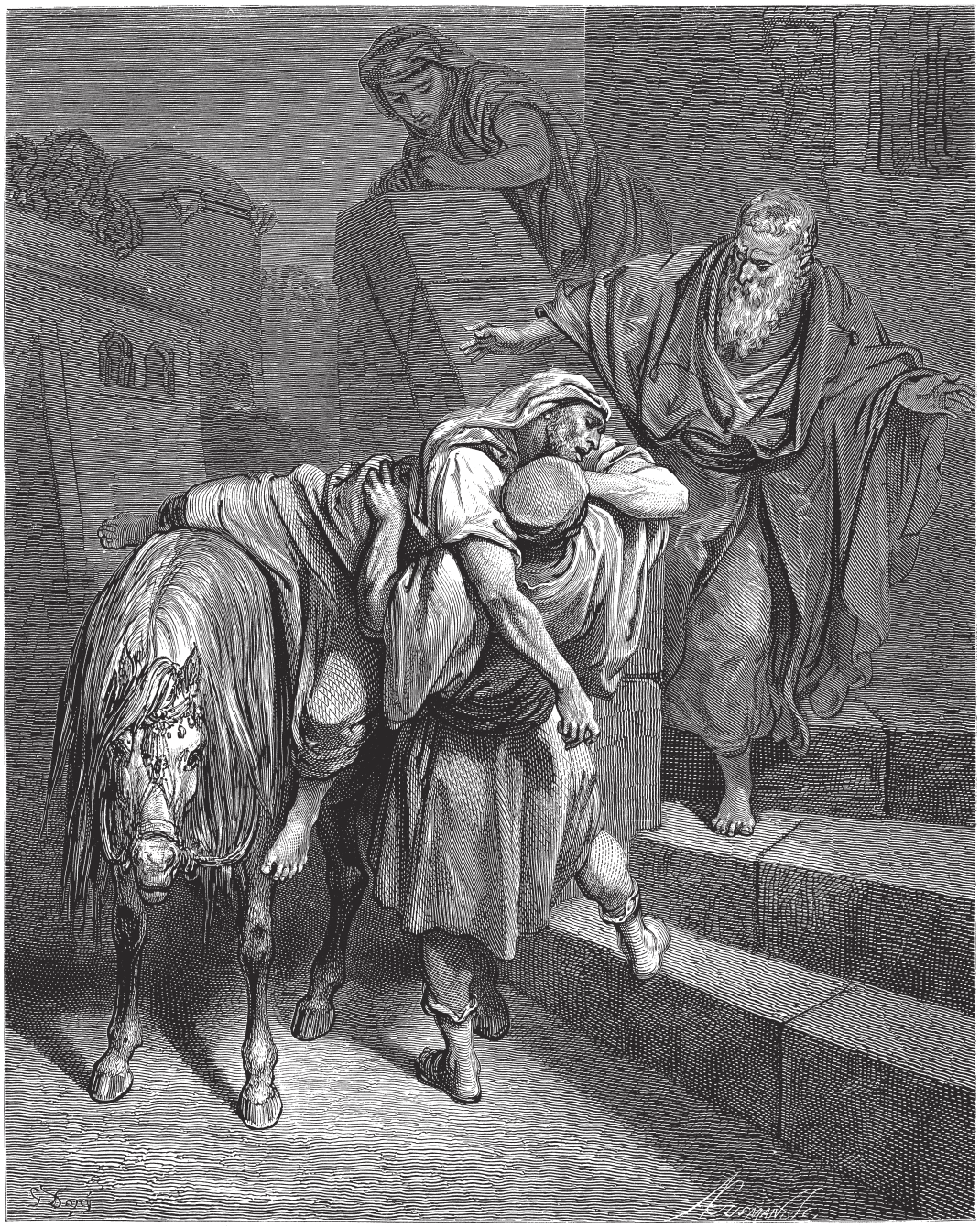
Another came to Jesus, saying, I will follow You, but I wish first to go and bid farewell to those who are at home. I will spend a little time with them; and before long I will be with You in the work. It was not heartlessness on Jesus' part that suggested the answer: "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." According to these searching words, who then, even amongst the Lord's consecrated people of today, is fit for the Kingdom?

We are not to judge others, but each to judge himself. And yet, in a general way, are we not confident that many not only are looking back and making special provisions for the social amenities of life, but additionally are plunging into many of the luxuries, pleasures and frivolities of the world? The question is a searching one. How many of us will the Lord consider fit for the Kingdom—fit for a place with Himself in that glorious Messianic Empire, which we trust is nigh—at the door? There seems to be a principle involved. Those who are not absorbed with interest in the Kingdom, desiring its blessings and desiring a share in conferring blessings upon others, would probably not be qualified by the resurrection change to accomplish the work which He has designed shall be done for humanity.

The story of Martha and Mary concludes the lesson. Both loved the Savior, but they manifested their love differently. Jesus did not disapprove of Martha and her carefulness as a cook in providing for His comfort; but He especially appreciated the spirit of Mary, which drew her to His feet to hear the wonderful words of life. Hers was the better part, Jesus said. So, then, in our service for the Master let us have this in mind, that He is especially pleased when we give earnest attention to His words and seek to be filled with and guided by His Holy Spirit.

Today's Study represents special services which were rendered at different times during our Lord's ministry. Acceptable service, like acceptable praise, must come as a fruitage of love to the Lord. He who loves much will serve much. Salaries cannot purchase this kind of service, and persecutions cannot hinder it.

Whoever was privileged to serve the Lord Jesus personally was certainly highly privileged. And yet we may be sure of the general principle laid down in our text, that whoever serves any whom the Lord classes as His brethren is really serving Him. He accepts the same as service to Himself. How precious this thought, and how valuable it is! What wonder that all who truly believe the Lord's Word should be zealous in their service of their brethren! As the Apostle suggests, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren, even as Christ died for all.



ARRIVAL OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN AT THE INN
[He] brought him to an inn, and took care of him. (Luke 10:34)

JESUS' LATER MINISTRY IN JUDEA

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Jerusalem	Jesus' public teaching at Festival of Booths				7:11-52
	Jerusalem	Teaching after Festival; cures blind				8:12–9:41
	Probably Judea	The 70 sent to preach; their return, report			10:1-24	
	Judea; Bethany	Tells of neighborly Samaritan; at home of Martha, Mary			10:25-42	
	Probably Judea	Again teaches model prayer; persistence in asking			11:1-13	
	Probably Judea	Refutes false charge; shows generation condemnable			11:14-36	
	Probably Judea	At Pharisee's table, Jesus denounces hypocrites			11:37-54	
	Probably Judea	Discourse on God's care; faithful steward			12:1-59	
	Probably Judea	Heals crippled woman on Sabbath; three illustrations			13:1-21	
	Jerusalem	Jesus at Festival of Dedication; The Good Shepherd				10:1-39

John 7:11-52

Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews. Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek

me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come? In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him. And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him. Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.—*Reprints*, p. 2437

JOHN 7:14,28-37.

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

AS A RESULT of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, noted in our last lesson, the multitude pronounced our Lord a great prophet, and proposed to take him by force to make him king. He, however, knew that such was not the Father's program; that, on the contrary, he was to fulfill a mission of contradiction of sinners, which would end in death, and that the Kingdom to which he was heir could only thus be attained—that the Kingdom promised him was not of this world, not of the present order and arrangement, but of a new dispensation. Our Lord therefore sent his disciples away by boat, while he himself withdrew to the mountain, subsequently meeting his disciples, walking on the water.

Six months more of preaching and teaching in Galilee, without any apparent effort to take advantage of the popular interest in his miracles, to forward his cause as a king, began to tell upon his brethren—his kinsfolk—who began to lose confidence, for their interest all along had been rather of pride than of faith. Now the time to go up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles having come, they noticed that Jesus was making no special preparations to attend. They were anxious that his power should be put to the test—Either do something, and make yourself great in the eyes of the whole world, or give the whole matter up and admit that your claims to Messiahship are fraudulent—was their attitude. Hence they said, Why do you not go up to the feast? Any person who makes such claims as you put forth should not make them in secret, but should seek the largest opportunities for publicity. You tell us that you have eternal life, and that you are able to give it to others, but apparently you are afraid to risk your life: "For neither did his brethren believe on him."

Our Lord's answer pointed out that it was very different with them than with him—they might go at any time, but he was under certain restrictions. They had not drawn upon them the murderous animosity of the most influential and powerful class of the nation. He had done this, by faithfulness to the truth which he came to the world to serve. While it is true that "Jesus did not walk in Jewry (Judea) because the Jews sought to kill him," yet this evidently was not for any fear of death, but because he realized that "his hour was not yet come." He felt it, therefore, to be his duty to cooperate to the extent of his ability with what he knew

respecting the Father's plan, and not to ignore that plan so as to require a special miracle for his deliverance, that the divine plan might not be frustrated.

There are lessons here for all who are seeking to walk in the Master's footsteps:—

(1) If we are finding no opposition in the world it is because we have not been faithful to our Father's Word, and to our appointed mission in connection with it,—not been about the Father's business: for our Master declared that it would be with us, his followers, as with himself—not being of the world the world would hate us, would say all manner of evil against us falsely, and think that those who persecuted us did God service. The positive declaration is, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."(2 Tim. 3:12.) We are still in this time of persecution; the great Adversary is not yet bound, and if we are entirely free from such opposition it is a sure indication that we are not living up to our privileges in godliness—not following closely enough in the footsteps of Jesus to incite the animosity of the Adversary and his blinded servants.

(2) We are to remember that the special opponents of our Master were not the unbelieving world, but were the unbelieving, unfaithful professors of holiness and of complete devotion to the divine law. So with us, our special opponents and defamers and persecutors are to be looked for inside and not outside the pale of the nominal Christian church.

(3) We may profit by our Lord's example in not needlessly and unwisely placing ourselves in positions of jeopardy, expecting the Lord to miraculously intervene for our preservation. Like our Lord, however, we are not under any consideration to deny the truth, nor to forsake a duty for the preservation of our lives. We see that when the most wise and appropriate time came our Lord went to the Feast, and spoke fearlessly and boldly. So our caution in the protection of life, etc., is not to be the result of fear and lack of confidence in divine providence, nor lack of courage to do our duty, but merely the caution and prudence which desires to cooperate as far as possible with the divine will.

Our Lord knew the disposition of the Pharisees to kill him. He knew also that they would hesitate a great deal more to make any attempt against him on the occasion of these Feasts, when Jerusalem was full of visitors, thousands of whom would be from Galilee and more or less his friends and the friends of his disciples, who were also Galileans. He may have known, too, of some arrangements among the rulers to apprehend him at the beginning of the feast, during the commotion incident to the arrival of pilgrims. At all events, acting upon his own superior knowledge of the situation, he deferred his going until after the multitudes had gone, and then went in a quiet manner, avoiding teaching, miracles, etc.

In the midst of the feast-week he appeared in the Temple, teaching the people. His enemies had sought him previously, and were rather surprised that he had not come as usual, but now they beheld him teaching publicly and boldly; but they refrained from laying hands on him, because they feared the people—they feared that too large a proportion would have at least a sympathy for his teachings, recognizing that he "taught them as one having authority," with positiveness, and not with uncertainty, as themselves. The fact that many of the multitude were favorably impressed, and inquired amongst themselves whether or not they could expect any greater miracles from Messiah at his coming than those which Jesus had already performed, and the fact also that he was teaching publicly, and the rulers did not interfere with him, led some to inquire, "Do the rulers really acknowledge that this is the Messiah?"

Thus the rulers saw that their timidity was really advancing the cause which they hated, and they sent officers to take him; but apparently these felt that they must hear some rebellious, anarchistic or blasphemous utterances from his lips or they would not be justified in the eyes of the people in making the arrest, and so they waited, to watch him. They were charmed with "the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth," and returned without him, saying, "Never man spake like this man." Then Nicodemus, in his heart believing Jesus to be a teacher, sent from God, tho doubtful of his being the Messiah, raised his voice, being a member of the Sanhedrin, and expostulated, defending the officers, and exclaiming, "Doth

our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?" Even this plea for justice was met with the sarcastic remark, "Art thou also of Galilee?" And the meeting disbanded, angry because they were foiled in their murderous attempt.

This should be true as far as possible with all of the Lord's footstep followers: their speech should be with grace, with moderation, the overflow of hearts full of loving sympathy for the truth and all who love and seek it. Their words should always be well within the limits of reason and righteousness, and strictly in conformity to the Word of the Lord. And their manner, their conduct, as living epistles, should harmonize with this, so that even their enemies would marvel, and take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of him.

Having in mind the murderous designs of his enemies, and that thus it behooveth the Son of Man to suffer and to rise from the dead, and knowing that the end of his pilgrimage was only about six months distant, our Lord said, I will be with you but a little while, "and then I go unto him that sent me." Then, taking into account the predicted troubles to come upon Israel, expounded to his Apostles subsequently (Matt. 24) and that they would endure much before he would offer himself to them again as the Messiah at the second advent, he added, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me." The Jews have been seeking the Messiah during the eighteen centuries of trouble experienced since that time, for, as the Apostle declares, "the rest were blinded," except the remnant which received the Lord at his first advent—"the day of their visitation." So our Lord declared to them subsequently, "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 prophet tells us that they shall then look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as an only beloved son, and that then the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, their blindness being then turned away. —Rom. 11:27-32.

When our Lord declared that they could not follow him to the place to which he was going, the people speculated whether or not he meant that as he had shown himself willing to preach to the lowest classes of Israel (publicans and sinners), he might now purpose to leave Palestine entirely, and go to the "dispersed amongst the Gentiles," the scattered Jews amongst the Greeks,—speaking the Greek language and not the Syrian, the language of the Jews in Palestine. Here we see afresh the error of the so-called "Anglo-Israelites," who have a theory about "lost" (?) tribes of Israel. The scattered Jews were not considered lost in our Lord's time, evidently, and this statement of the multitude is in full accord with the statement of the Apostle, when he speaks of "the twelve tribes scattered abroad." The only sense in which these tribes are lost is that they have become so thoroughly combined and amalgamated that all tribal distinctions are lost, and very few Jews in the world to-day have the slightest idea of which tribe their ancestors belonged to.

Our Lord's remark, "Thither ye cannot come," is worthy of consideration from another standpoint. He did not mean that he was about to establish a kingdom, and that they could not get into the kingdom, but he did mean that he was going to heaven, and that they could not come to heaven. This is evident from his further statement, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I have said, therefore, unto you that ye shall die in your sins."—John 8:21-29.

But the poor, disbelieving Jews are not the only ones who cannot go to heaven. The Scriptures clearly indicate that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy prophets, have not gone there. (See Acts 2:34; Heb. 11:39,40.) Moreover, this same declaration was repeated by the Lord to his believing followers, saying "Yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and I said unto the Jews, Whither I go you cannot come; so now I say to you." (John 13:33.) It is because the believers of the past as well as the believers of the present age could not go to our Lord, that all of them who were rightly instructed from his Word looked earnestly for **his return**, his second advent, his coming in glory and kingdom power, according to his promise, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also."—John 14:3.

Many have lost sight of the hope set before us in the Gospel, and have accepted instead a hope that has no foundation, except like the errors of fleshly Israel, in "the traditions of the elders"—the hope that when they die they will not be dead, but more alive than ever: a hope that is as contrary to reason as to the Word of God, in which it finds not one solitary word of support. "But he that hath this hope in him [the hope of the second coming of the Lord to make up his jewels, to receive his faithful ones to himself] purifieth himself even as he is pure." There is no greater incentive to faithfulness than this, the true Gospel hope.

The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles was the eighth day, for it lasted in all for that period. The seven days of the feast were devoted to sacrificing, seventy bullocks being burned upon the altar, and understood to be sacrificed on behalf of the whole world, but the eighth day was specially a Jewish day, and was the most joyous day of this joyful thanksgiving feast. Describing it, Geikie says"

The whole week was full of excitement, the great altar smoking with whole burnt offerings of oxen, lambs and rams, besides the solemnity of the morning and evening sacrifice, the Sabbath sacrifice, and countless private voluntary sacrifices and offerings of all kinds. Every available spot inside Jerusalem, and in the hollows, and on the slopes around it (which, by legal fiction, were counted holy ground) was covered with huts or tabernacles of wattled or interplaited twigs, set off by branches of trees, fronds of palms, and all kinds of ornamental greenery."

But the last day of the feast, called the great day, the day of special rejoicing, had one peculiar feature—its Water-offering, and it was on this day, and probably in connection with the pouring out of this libation, that, taking it for a text, our Lord lifted up his voice, saying, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." He is here presenting himself as the giver of the water of life, as in the more private discourse to the woman of Samaria. He is the fountain of life, the fountain of truth, the fountain of refreshment, to all who accept him. In every human heart there are thirstings, longing desires, and all who have sought to satisfy these desires from earthly fountains of fame or pleasure or wealth have found that they do not satisfy; but those who have received the water of life, the truth, the grace of God in Christ, have received the only satisfying portion. Lord, ever more give us of this water.

An able writer, Edersheim, gives us a very interesting account of the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the great day, as follows"

Let us suppose ourselves in the number of worshipers who, on 'the last, the great day of the feast,' are leaving their 'booths' at daybreak to take part in the service. The pilgrims are all in festive array. In his right hand each carries a branch consisting of a myrtle or willow branch tied together with a palm branch (Lev. 23:40). In his left hand he carries a bough of the so-called Paradise apple, a species of citron. Thus armed, the festive multitude would divide into three bands. One of these, to the sound of music, started in a procession from the temple. It followed a priest who bore a golden pitcher, capable of holding three log (rather more than two pints). They proceeded to the fountain of Siloam, in the valley south of the temple. Here the priest filled from this fountain the golden pitcher, and brought it back into the court of the temple, amid the shouts of the multitude, and the sound of cymbals and trumpets. The rejoicing was so great that the rabbis used to say that he who had never been present at this ceremony, and at the other similar ceremonies by which this feast was distinguished, did not know what rejoicing meant. The return was so timed that they should arrive just as they were laying the pieces of the sacrifice on the great altar of burnt offering, toward the close of the ordinary morning sacrifice service. The water from the golden pitcher was poured upon the altar. Immediately the great 'Hallel,' consisting of Psa. 113-118, was chanted antiphonally, or rather with responses, to the accompaniment of the flute. At the close of this festive morning service there was a pause in the services while the priests prepared to offer the special sacrifices for the day. At this moment there arose, so loud as to be heard throughout the temple, the voice of Jesus. He interrupted not the services, for they had for the moment ceased; he interpreted, and he fulfilled them."

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.—*Reprints*, p. 3508

John 7:37-46.

"Never man spake like this man."

THE TWO great feasts of the Jews were the Feast of Passover, from the fifteenth to the twenty-second of the first month, and the Feast of Tabernacles (dwelling in booths), from the fifteenth to the twenty-second of Tishri, the seventh month, corresponding closely to October 1, but varying according to the Jewish calendar, which was calculated on lunar time. These two great feasts divided the Jewish year, and were the great occasions on which the people from all over the Kingdom were expected to visit Jerusalem, the capital city, to spend a week in fellowship together, in thanksgiving to the Lord and the making of vows to him. These two festivals represent the beginning of a year —the one the civil year, the other the Church year, yet both might be termed religious in the sense that the entire national government was built upon a religious foundation. Israel was God's nation, and its laws were from him.

Each of these feasts had its peculiar religious sacrifice, pointing to our Lord and his sacrifice and the Gospel Church, his body. The Passover festival in the beginning of the year was the anniversary of the deliverance from Egypt, the Passover lamb representing Christ, our Passover sacrifice, and the feast following representing the liberty and joy and blessing which come to all of the Lord's people passed over through faith in his blood. The fall festival was held in connection with the Day of Atonement and its sacrifices for sins, which typified the better sacrifices of this Gospel age and the ultimate atonement for the sins of the whole world, and the consequent ultimate removal of the curse which still rests upon the world of mankind. This festival was instituted at the time Israel passed from the wilderness into the Land of Promise. It commemorated the wilderness life and the entrance into Canaan, where they were privileged to enjoy their inheritance and have more substantial dwelling places. It was really the festival of the New Year, and a kind of thanksgiving occasion for the ingathering or harvest of the year.—Exod. 23:16; Lev. 23:33-44.

The Feast of Tabernacles Celebration.

The usage of the people on this occasion is thus described by Edersheim and others"

In Jerusalem booths were erected everywhere, in court and on housetop, in street and in square. These arbors or booths were made of branches of trees—palms, sycamores, olives, pines, willows, etc. Nobody was living at home, everybody in these booths—all the people from the city and crowds from the country. All distinctions of rank, all separation between rich and poor, were for a while forgotten, as each one dwelt in as good a dwelling as his neighbor.

> "Each morning a joyous procession, with music, went down to the Pool of Siloam and drew water in a golden pitcher, from which it was poured out upon the altar amid hallelujahs.
>
> "At night, four golden candelabra, each with four golden bowls for light, were in the center of the court, and the light emanating from them was visible to the whole city. Around these lights pious men danced before the people with lighted flambeaux in their hands, singing hymns and songs of praise, whilst the Levites, who were stationed on the fifteen steps which led into the woman's court of the Temple and which corresponded to the fifteen psalms of degrees, i.e. steps (Psalms 122-134), accompanied the songs with instrumental music.
>
> "The Temple illumination was symbolical of the light which was to shine from out the Temple into the dark night of heathendom; then, at the first dawn of morn the blasts of the priests' silver trumpets, of the army of God, as it advanced with festive trumpet-sound and call, to awaken the sleepers and to utter solemn protest against heathendom.
>
> "It is supposed that on the last evening of the festival, when the splendid light of this grand illumination was to cease, Christ called attention to himself, 'I am the Light

of the world' (John 8:12), which is to shine forever and illuminate not only the Temple and the Holy City, but all the world,"—the Sun of Righteousness.

"That Great Day of The Feast."

The last of these seven days of the feast was called the Great Day. It was in it that the entire festival ceremony and rejoicing reached its climax. Again we glean from Edersheim and others, as follows"

According to Jewish tradition the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night, symbolical of God's presence and guidance, at first appeared to Israel on the fifteenth of Tishri, the first day of the feast. On that day Moses was said to have come down from the Mount and announced to the people that the tabernacle of God was to be reared among them. We note that the dedication of Solomon's Temple and the descent of the Shekinah glory upon it took place at this feast.—1 Kings 8; 2 Chron. 7.

"The last great day of the feast was the climax of all this symbolization. Early in the morning the people, with the Paradise apple (an orange) in their left hands and branches in their right, marched to the sound of music in a procession headed by the priest, who bore a golden pitcher to draw water from the Pool of Siloam, south of the Temple. The priest having filled the golden pitcher at this fountain, brought it back into the court of the Temple, amid the shouts of the multitude and the sounds of cymbals and trumpets. The return was so timed that the procession should arrive just as other priests were laying the pieces of the sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering toward the close of the ordinary sacrifice-service.

"On each of the seven days the priest made a circuit of the altar, saying, 'O, then, now work salvation, Jah! O, Jah, give prosperity!' But on the seventh day they made the circuit seven times remembering how the walls of Jericho had fallen in similar circumstances, and anticipating that by the direct interposition of God, the walls of heathendom would fall before Jehovah and the world lie open before his people to go in and possess it.

"The golden pitcher full of water was then poured upon the altar. This ceremony was considered of vital importance and apparently symbolized the out-pouring of the holy Spirit. Immediately following the pouring of this water the Hallel was sung. This consists of Psalms 113-118. These were chanted, with responses, to the accompaniment of the flute. As the Levites intoned the first line of the Psalm, the people repeated it; while to each of the other lines they responded, Hallelu Yah (Praise ye the Lord). Then the priests blew a threefold blast on their silver trumpets."

Jesus at The Feast.

Our lesson relates to the last feast of Tabernacles attended by our Lord—the one which occurred just six months before the crucifixion. In a previous lesson we saw that the feeding of the five thousand was at a time when many of them were on their way to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover, so that the present lesson is at least six months later—quite possibly a year and six months later, as evidently there was a considerable time during which our Lord "could not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."

On the occasion of this feast, many wondered whether or not Jesus would attend it, for it seems to have been well understood by a considerable number that the chief priests were so envious against the Lord, so enmitous, so bitter, that threats had been made against his life. While our Lord realized that his life was under divine protection until his "hour" should come, nevertheless it would appear that he did not tempt providence by going unnecessarily in the way of danger, but rather shaped his course according to the conditions he found. Thus, too, he admonished his disciples, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another."

The context shows that at this time some of our Lord's brethren (probably his cousins, for cousins at that time were called "brethren") seemed to doubt his Messiahship, and urged him to go up to Jerusalem and perform his mighty works there, where the most learned

men of the nation would have an opportunity for seeing and criticizing and fault-finding, and if possible refuting his claims and miracles. Our Lord's answer was, "Go ye up to the feast; I go not up to the feast; mine hour is not yet fully come." For our Lord to have gone up early to the feast might have provoked the animosity of the religious teachers the more. His delay in going was no injury to the publicity of his teachings either, because the people naturally inquired for him, expressed wonder, discussed his claims, told one another what they had seen and heard in their own cities, villages, etc. It was toward the latter part of the feast week that our Lord arrived on the scene and went straightway to the Temple, and when the religious sentiments of the people were at their highest pitch he called their attention to the deep spiritual things symbolized by them year by year continually.

It is presumed that it was just at the close of the pouring of the golden pitcher full of water on the altar, a libation to the Lord, and while the multitudes in the warm climate were probably thirsty and had their thirst rather aggravated by the sight of the water, that Jesus made the announcements which constitute the essence of our lesson, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, Out of his belly shall flow a stream of living water."

No wonder the people said, as the Prophet had foretold, that our Lord spake in parables and dark sayings. How many, how few of the multitude who heard could gain any reasonable understanding of this message! Even under the blessed influences that are ours under the Spirit dispensation, how few have any adequate conception of what these words signify.

Drinking at The Fountain.

All have some conception of what natural thirst is, and of the refreshment that comes through partaking of literal water, and to understand our Lord's words respecting the water of life which he has to give, we must carry the figure forward and realize that there are other thirsts and cravings of the human nature which need satisfaction, which without satisfaction cause unrest, distress. These cravings of the heart we briefly refer to again as thirst for rest, peace, joy and fellowship. Only those who have such thirsts are called upon—"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst." Many of our race at the present time are so depraved mentally and physically that they have no hunger and thirst for better things than they now enjoy—they already are full and satisfied with the imperfect things possessed. The Lord's appeal at the present time is not to these, but to those who hunger and thirst, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."

This is the appeal of this Gospel age: the Lord is seeking for the thirsting ones and finding them, and if they will drink at his fountain of grace and truth, they will find the satisfaction, the comfort, the joy, the peace, the rest, the blessing, which the world can neither give nor take away. Blessed, therefore, are the thirsty, and favored are they who are now drinking of the waters given forth by the smitten Rock—our Lord.—1 Cor. 10:4.

The Apostle commented upon our Lord's words, explaining the first part, but not the second. He says, "This spake he of the Spirit which they who believed on him should receive." The receiving of the Spirit is the satisfying of our thirst. All through life we are drinking at this fountain. We will not be satisfied until we awake in the Lord's likeness; then, as the Apostle declares, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness"—when this mortal shall be swallowed up in immortality, we shall be like our dear Redeemer, see him as he is, and share his glory as members of his body.

The Holy Spirit Was Not Yet Given.

The holy Spirit was exercised upon the prophets, and under its influence they spake and wrote. But the holy Spirit granted to the Gospel Church at and since Pentecost is different; it is the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of understanding, not the Spirit of prophecy. It was not possible for any to be begotten of the Spirit as sons of God until the ransom-sacrifice of Jesus as on our behalf had been accomplished, not until he had ascended up on high and presented the merit of that sacrifice on our behalf to the Father, not until it had been accepted by the Father. Then this blessing of the Spirit of adoption was shed forth upon the apos-

tles. All accepted to membership in the body of Christ since, by association with the fellow-members, are made partakers of this one Spirit, by which all are sealed until the day of deliverance. Eph. 4:30.

The Outflowing Stream.

"Out of his body shall flow a stream of living waters." This verse was not fulfilled at Pentecost, where the Lord's followers merely began to drink of the spiritual truths, and by them to be united into one body of many members, of which Jesus is the head. It is from this one body that ultimately the stream of the water of life shall flow during the Millennial age for the blessing of the whole world. Our Lord referred to this saying, "My word shall judge you in the last day"—in the great day, the Millennial day; the world shall be judged by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The water of life represents the Truth, and the amount of this water of life or Truth that shall proceed from the mouth of the Lord, from the mouth of the glorified Church, shall be such a stream, such a flow, as will reach to every part of the earth. "The knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth."

In the present time, those who drink at the fountain of the water of life, are merely the sanctified in Christ Jesus, and our Lord declares of these that his grace and truth in them shall be as a well of water springing up into life everlasting. In Revelation, Chapter 21, we are given the picture of the aggregation of the various members of the body of Christ in glory. The whole is pictured as the New Jerusalem, and from it issues the stream of the water of life which our Lord referred to in his discourses. It will be a great river of the water of life, and on either bank of it will be the trees of life, nourished and supplied by it, bearing good fruit, and the leaves of those trees will be for the healing of the nations.

Thus seen the Lord's discourse briefly pictured the blessings coming to his followers during this Gospel age, and the blessings that shall in the next age proceed from them for the comfort, blessing and uplifting, restitution, of all the families of the earth—of whosoever wills to take of that river of the water of life, which then will flow freely, and to which all will be clearly and distinctly invited by the Spirit and the Bride.

A Division Amongst The People.

Peace and unity are greatly to be desired; yet these are not always possible, not always advantageous. If all were perfect, peace and unity would certainly be the only proper condition, but so long as there are imperfections, errors, etc., there must be differences. In harmony with this our Lord declared that his message would not bring peace but a sword under present conditions. He will be the Prince of Peace by and by, but not until peace shall be established upon a righteous basis. Before that time he will be the King who will reign in righteousness, and dash evil systems and things to pieces as potters' vessels, with a rod of iron.

There are those who say peace, peace, when there is no peace and when peace is not possible, and the Lord's people are not to be of these. This does not mean that the Lord's people are to be breeders of strife. On the contrary they are exhorted everywhere in the Scriptures to be peaceable and peacemakers; but with all efforts for peace, and their love of peace and their peacemaking qualities continually increasing, the message that our Lord gave them will breed disturbances. Why? We answer in the words of our Lord, because there is no fellowship between light and darkness, there can be no peace nor truce between the two; in proportion as the one obtains control, the other is excluded.

In harmony with this we find in this lesson that there was a division among the people because of him—some approving and some opposing. Thus it must be with us as we lift up the standard of righteousness: if we will let the light of truth shine out, those who love the truth will be more or less attracted by it in proportion as their hearts are sincere, truth loving. Those who love the error will become antagonistic in proportion to their lack of sincerity. If this was the case with our Lord, can we think that it would be possible for his disciples to find it otherwise? Surely not. We must have our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Ours is the Gospel of peace, yet we will find that as we bear it to others our path of progress will be a difficult one and we will need all the protection the Lord has provided in his

fore-statement of what we must expect, and his promises of blessing and glory to the overcomers.

Envy, Malice, Hatred, Murder.

While our Lord was in the Temple teaching, the Jewish rulers, aware of his presence, were conspiring for his life. A meeting of the Sanhedrin was called, and officers representing the body were present in the Temple amongst the people, charged with the responsibility of finding some fault with the teaching and making it the pretext for a measure of insurrection, and further, the arrest of our Lord—under a charge either of teaching contrary to the Law of Moses or contrary to the Roman laws. On every occasion they sought to entrap him in his words, but being unable to do so, they returned to the Sanhedrin to report.

What a sad commentary it is upon the deceitfulness of the human heart, that these men, who were thus seeking for the apprehension and death of Jesus, were the most influential men in this, the holiest nation of earth. Not only so, they were Doctors of the Law—men supposedly the best versed in the Mosaic Law, its letter and spirit—men whose position in Judaism corresponded to that of Doctors of Divinity in Christendom today. We may well ask, as Pilate subsequently did, "Why, what evil hath he done?" The answer must be that there was no evil except in the hearts of these most talented, educated and nominally most religious men in the world.

We can imagine that if one were to have inquired as to their motive, the answer would have been, We are so loyal to God, to his Law through Moses and to the interests of this mighty people, over which God has made us rulers and teachers, that we are zealous to put down this man who, though he seems to be God-fearing, sympathetic with the poor, etc., is, we believe, a most pernicious man. He is pernicious in that he is representing himself to be the Messiah, and because he is really a man of ability, he has hoodwinked the people. If we let him alone, the power of controlling this nation, which now rests with us as the moral and intellectual leaders of the nation, will pass out of our grasp; this man will establish himself, and the whole people of Israel will look upon us as being foolish, and conclude that they were able to know the Messiah and that we, their intellectual superiors, were stupid or out of divine favor so we could not recognize the time of our visitation.

This would be their way of reasoning on the subject, but the Lord's view of the situation would be the very reverse, that they were hypocritical, that they were pretending to be what they were not in reality, that much of their praise and service toward the Lord were formalistic lip services, and that pride lay at the bottom of their endeavors and professions, and that this pride was touched by the success of our Lord and his wisdom, and the fact that the multitudes heeded his message: they were envious, malice burned in their hearts, they hated him without a cause—simply because he was better, holier, wiser than they, and because the people were recognizing this fact.

How dangerous a thing is envy—selfishness! How many of the Lord's people today are afflicted by it so that they refuse to recognize the Spirit of the Lord, so that instead of seeking to encourage one another and to add to the influence of one another and to realize that the whole work of the Lord is one, alas, how often is the spirit of strife and vain glory found! How displeasing everything of this kind must be in the sight of the Lord!

Grace Was Poured Upon His Lips.

When the officers returned to the Sanhedrin, the question was asked, Where is your prisoner? Why did you not bring him? Were you not able to entrap him in his words? Is it possible that any man could speak in public and that keen-minded men such as you are would be unable to entrap him in anything he might say that would enable you to form a charge against him as a teacher of that which would be injurious to the people, that he said nothing that you could construe to be a violation of the Law of Moses or the law of the Romans? The answer was a volume in itself,—"Never man spake like this man."

The Lord's people, seeking to walk in his footsteps, continually find that the world is still full of envy and malice and hatred. They still find it true that "The world knoweth us not, even as

it knew him not;" they still find that amongst their opponents, amongst those who seek to do them injury, amongst those who seek to entrap them in their words and who would apprehend them and injure them in reputation, if not in person, they find some of the worldly noble, the worldly wise, the worldly religious. The Lord's message to these is, "In your patience possess ye your souls." Their proper course is to set a guard upon their lips that they sin not with their mouths, that they should not only pray but strive that the meditations of their hearts and words of their mouths be acceptable to the Lord, and in proportion as this is true of them it will also be true of them that they will be wiser and more discreet in their language than others—approximately like unto him who spake as never man spake.

But what a matter this is to guard the tongue! Truly the Apostle said that he who is able to conquer his tongue is able to conquer his whole body. It is so easy to say something that ought not to be said, it is so easy for the majority to repeat an evil rumor, to cast a reflection upon the character of another, to assassinate in this manner, or at least to wound or injure, the interests or feelings or good name of another. Let us more and more in this particular also seek to be like our Lord, seek to speak as other men do not speak, and thus show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Jerusalem	Teaching after Festival; cures blind				8:12–9:41

John 8:12-59

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come. Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house forever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you

free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honor my Father, and ye do dishonor me. And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honoreth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

John 9:1-41

And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this

is our son, and that he was born blind: But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him. And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

"YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED."—*Reprints*, p. 2438

JOHN 8:12,31-36.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—John 8:36.

OUR Lord's discourses of this lesson are presumed to have been delivered on the day following the eighth or great day of the Feast of Tabernacles, referred to in our last lesson: this conclusion is based upon the statement of the first verse of this chapter and the last verse of the seventh chapter. It appears that, altho the eighth was the last day of the Feast proper, another day was kept to a certain degree, the people being loath to relinquish the joys of the season. Another view is that this was a part of the discourse of the eighth day.

It is said that during this festival there were two great lights near the porch of the Temple, where Jesus discoursed (the Court of the Women—the portion of the Temple structure open to women as well as to men). These lights or candelabra, ornamented and gilded, were about seventy-five feet high, and threw a great light over the city, extraordinary for that period. It is presumed that this may have given Jesus the text for a discourse on the light of the world: but it is possible that our Lord took occasion to make this observation at the time of the performance of a certain ceremony by the Jews, described by Buxdorf as follows:

> "The ninth day, or day after the expiration of the eighth, which belonged to the "Feast of Tabernacles," is a solemn day likewise, and is called, "The Feast of Joy for the Law;" because on that day the last section of the Law was read, the rest having been read weekly during the course of the preceding Sabbaths. On this ninth day the custom of the Jews was to take all the books of the Law out of the chest, and to put a candle into it, in allusion to Prov. 6:23, and more particularly to Psa. 119:105." —Synag. Jud., c. xxii.

This act, symbolically considered, would imply, first, that the Law was a light, and secondly, that ultimately the Jewish Law would be superseded by the True Light—the Gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Either this last, or the two great lamps, or both of them, were quite a sufficient suggestion and illustration of the lesson which our Lord designed to inculcate. The thought of the one is that the world is in darkness, and needs the Light of Life, and that he who walks in the light will not stumble. The thought or suggestion of the other is equally comprehensible, implying that ultimately the vail of ignorance shall be removed, and the spirit of the truth shall be discerned, and thus Jesus, as the True Light, shall lighten every man that cometh into the world, respecting the divine character and law, and the conditions upon which eternal life may be enjoyed.

Another suggestion is that, as this Feast of Tabernacles represented the period of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, en route to Canaan, the great light to be followed would probably refer to the pillar of fire and cloud, which led Israel during the wilderness journey as a great light, and which was to their enemies who pursued them a cloud of great darkness. This thought is in full accord with the others, for we realize that spiritual Israel is journeying toward the heavenly Canaan, through the wilderness of sin, and that our Lord and his teachings are a light and a guide to his people—to the entire household of faith, but especially to those who are vigilant and attentive to the heavenly counsel.

That relationship to Christ is not a matter which, being put on in the instant of consecration, can never be dissolved, is clearly shown by the statement of vss. 31 and 32. Therein our Lord sets forth that **discipleship** is the thing that is entered into by those who accept him as the Savior and the privileges and blessings obtainable only through him. And **discipleship**, as here shown, does not signify mastery: on the contrary, it signifies that the one who becomes a disciple is, until perfect, a novice, who becomes a disciple in order that under the Master's instructions he may come, morally and intellectually, to the full stature of manhood in Christ. A great mistake is made on this point, not only by worldly people, who expect perfection in all who have named the name of Christ, but also by Christians themselves, who vainly imagine that a fullness of **consecration** to the Lord should produce in them instantaneous perfection: some vainly and sinfully claiming that they are without sin, and thereby give the inference that they have no need of a Savior, a Mediator, and his merit, to cover their blemishes of omission and commission.

The correct thought to get is the one which is clearly set forth in our Lord's Word; viz., that sinners are not called to discipleship, but are called to repentance and faith in the Redeemer for the forgiveness of their sins (justification): but this is all to the intent that as justified persons they may, by a full consecration to the Lord, become his disciples,—**pupils** in the school of Christ.

Why do we enter this school? What lessons are we to learn in it? And for what reasons do we seek to learn these lessons, and consecrate ourselves to their study?

The incentive to enter the school of Christ is the heavenly Father's invitation to **justified believers** who approach his throne of grace by the new and living way—Christ: to such he extends a "high calling," inviting such to become "sons of God; and if children, then heirs, 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 together."

This school of Christ may be considered a school of self-denial, of self-sacrifice, prompted by love and maintained by devotion. The great Teacher of this school, appointed by the Father to instruct those who shall be accepted as his "brethren," was himself educated in the same school, under the Father's inspection and direction—"He learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect [acceptable to the high station to which he was called—the divine nature] he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."—Heb. 5:8.

It was necessary that the "Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," should be tried in all points like as we are—that his obedience to the Father's will at any cost should be

fully proved and demonstrated, as well as his love for his neighbor, humanity, whom by the Father's arrangement he came to redeem and to uplift. Much more, it is necessary that we who belong to this fallen but redeemed race, having been called to joint-heirship with him, should receive instruction and disciplining in this school which the Father has provided for those invited to be his sons,—partakers of the divine nature,—to the intent that we may fully put on the spirit of Christ, which received the Father's unstinted approval. Indeed, we have the plain declaration to the effect that we are all called according to a predestination on God's part that we might become copies of his Son, and thus be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," as joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

From this we see that in joining the Lord, through faith and consecration, we are not proclaiming ourselves graduates and heirs, but are proclaiming ourselves students, disciples, who **desire to be prepared to inherit** "the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him." If this thought be kept in mind, as the divine teaching on this subject, it will help to prevent our discouragement with ourselves when we find that unavoidably we do those things which we ought not to have done, and leave undone those things which we ought to have done, and that in our flesh dwells no perfection.—1 Cor. 2:9; Rom. 7:25.

Moreover, we are to remember that it is not the flesh that has entered the school of Christ, and is under his instructions and preparation for the Kingdom,—for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 15:50.) Our acceptance of the divine call to spirit nature meant the renouncement of the earthly nature in every sense of the word, and meant our begetting as new creatures—"sons of God." It is the "new creature," the new mind, the new will, that is in the school of Christ, and that is to be perfected—to be brought into full accord with the divine will—to become a copy or likeness of the Lord. We will never succeed in getting our flesh into absolute harmony with the divine law, because of its imperfections, inherited and otherwise. And he who is looking for perfection of his flesh, and who is resting his faith therein, must of necessity have a poor hope of ever attaining to the likeness of Christ—of ever becoming one of the predestinated class—"a copy of his Son."—Rom. 8:29.

It is unnecessary that we should point out that the new mind, in proportion as it develops in likeness to the mind of Christ, will relax no efforts to keep the body under, with its motions of sin—to keep the will of the flesh dead. Surely, no spirit-begotten son of God could allow sin to **reign** in his mortal body: should sin to any degree control him, it will not be willingly, and hence could be but momentarily—until the new mind, the new creature, seeing the uprising of the flesh, would conquer it, obtaining the promised grace and help in every time of need, from the heavenly store-house of grace,—Christ.

This thought, rightly entertained, will help true disciples to appreciate their own position, and not to be utterly cast down if overtaken in a fault of the flesh, so long as they realize that their **hearts** are not in sympathy with the sin and unrighteousness, but on the contrary in full sympathy with the principles and instructions of our Teacher, and longing to be pleasing and acceptable in his sight. And this correct thought will also help all such to exercise fervency of love amongst themselves, toward the "brethren," who similarly are disciples, pupils in this school,—new creatures, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit of their minds. If, therefore, each shall see blemishes in the flesh of the "brethren," disapproved and striven against, each should remember that the evil which he sees is that of his brother's enemy and not the evils of the brother himself, the "new creature;"—if so be that he gives us the assurance that his heart, his will, is in harmony with the Lord and his law of Love; and that he is daily seeking to learn the lessons taught in this school of Christ; and seeking to fight a successful warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh.

This is Scripturally termed walking in the light, and not stumbling about in the darkness—understanding and acting upon and in harmony with the divine arrangement—viewing matters as God views them, and as he presents them in the Word of his grace. We need not, however, expect the worldly-minded to be will-

ing or able to view the Lord's consecrated people in this light—of love, of charity, of patience, of long suffering, of brotherly kindness. On the contrary our Adversary, "the god of this world," points out to them the hypocrite, who uses the name of Christ and the law of Love as a cloak of maliciousness, selfishness, etc., and this Adversary continually seeks to misrepresent the terms and conditions of the school of Christ, not only to the world and to the hypocritical professors, but also and especially to the true disciples, whom he would fain discourage and turn back from the right way—persuading them, contrary to the Word of the Lord, that they are being judged according to the flesh, and not according to the spirit, the new mind.

"Disciples indeed" are those who will finish their course in this school of Christ and graduate and become joint-heirs with their Lord, and ultimately be associates with him in teaching and blessing all the families of the earth. But joining the school does not bring these results necessarily; as our Lord indicated, it is only by **continuing** in the school, continuing under his direction, under the direction of his Word of truth, faithfully and perseveringly, that the grand object of this school shall be attained. Nevertheless, at each step of the journey it may be our privilege to see that we are making progress—that we are coming to know more and more of the truth, and that it is more and more making us free. We are not to expect an instantaneous knowledge nor an instantaneous freedom.

The general effect of the light of the truth, of which the Word of God is the lamp, is to break the shackles of superstition and to make people independent, but these effects are of questionable profit to those who are not disciples in the school of Christ. To others, freedom and light of knowledge are apt to bring nearly as much bane as blessing, leading often to arrogance, self-conceit, unkindness, boastfulness, combativeness, dissatisfaction and general unhappiness. These evil results come upon those who are made free in some respects only, and left bound in other respects: and this is the general and growing condition of the civilized world today, including the majority in the nominal Church.

But the true disciples, heeding the Word of the great Teacher, and continuing in all things to be his pupils, are not only set free from superstitions and ignorance, but also from the service of Sin; and receive instead a correct appreciation of their own natural weaknesses and blemishes, and of the divine mind—the truth. In consequence, their freedom is one which blesses instead of injuring them; one which brings humility instead of pride and boastfulness; one which brings patience instead of anger; one which brings generosity and benevolence instead of spitefulness and selfishness; one which brings joy and peace instead of discontent and bitterness of spirit. Truly, the Son alone can make us free indeed.

And yet, be it remembered, our freedom is not a freedom of the flesh, but a freedom of the heart, the mind, the will, the new nature. And this freedom is necessarily incomplete so long as we have this treasure in an earthen vessel—so long as the new creature must use the imperfect body of the flesh as its instrument and exponent. These "brethren" of Christ, "sons of the highest," will be free in the absolute sense only when they attain their share in the first resurrection,—"I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

Our Lord points out that those who commit sin are the servants of Sin, and are not free. The Apostle declares, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and yet declares that, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 3:8; 1:8.) How, then, shall we reconcile these opposing statements and understand the Scripture which declares, "Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness?"—Rom. 6:18.

We answer that the Scriptures ascribe **no sin** to the new mind, and **no perfection** in righteousness to our fallen flesh: both of these facts must be kept in mind in studying this subject. The "new creature" begotten of God (whose flesh is reckoned dead) and which is represented by the new mind, CANNOT SIN, because in its very essence as the "seed" or germ, implanted by the truth, "the spirit of the truth," it is opposed to sin. (James 1:18.) This new creature is so fully in accord with righteousness, so fully imbued with the spirit of the Lord, the

spirit of holiness, that it delights in holiness, and not in sin; and this must be the case so long as this begotten or holy spirit condition continues. He that is **begotten*** of God sinneth not (willingly—does not approve of nor take pleasure in sin), because his seed remaineth in him, —the holy seed of the truth, the spirit of the truth, with which he was begotten, and "that wicked one toucheth him not."—1 John 3:9; 5:18.

So long as the heart (the mind, the will) is holy, in harmony with God and with righteousness,—that is to say, so long as the seed of our begetting, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of holiness, continues in us,—the new mind cannot approve of sin, but must and will be its opponent. Even tho many of the battles fought are with the members of our own fallen and weak human nature, their appetites and desires, we nevertheless, as "new creatures," are separate and distinct from the flesh and the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh are not imputed to the new creature in Christ Jesus, but are reckoned as covered, hidden under the merits of our Lord's redemptive sacrifice.

Thus, altho our flesh, through weaknesses of the fall, and through evil besetments, may never come up to the standard of the divine law, notwithstanding all our efforts to bring it into subjection to the same, nevertheless **we**, as "new creatures," have the Scriptural assurance that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us ["new creatures"] who are walking not after the flesh [but resisting day by day its seductive influences to the best of our ability, and seeking divine aid] but after the spirit [we are walking,—not **up to** the spirit probably, but following day by day, to the intent that eventually we shall, by the grace and help of our great Teacher, arrive at the glorious condition of character as "new creatures" which even the Heavenly Father can accept as copies of his dear Son]."—Rom. 8:4.

On the contrary, if any who had thus become "new creatures" should engage in sin **willingly, heartily,** and live according to the flesh, it is a sure sign that the **seed** of truth wherewith he was **begotten** has perished: for so long as this **seed** remaineth in him, he cannot sin willingly.—1 John 3:9.

Those who are slaves of sin, who have not been made free indeed and received into sonship, may sometimes be used for a time, under present conditions, as servants of the divine plan, in the accomplishment of the plan of the ages; as, for instance, God sometimes overrules and uses the wrath of man and Satan's opposition; but God has made no provision for the everlasting continuance of sin and those who are its slaves. Ultimately the only ones who shall be privileged to exist at all will be sons of God. Not to be misunderstood here, let us remember that there are sons of two ages:—

(1) The sons of this Gospel age, begotten of the Father to joint-heirship with Jesus Christ, our Lord, as his "brethren," otherwise called the Bride of the First-begotten, who has inherited all things. "Now are we [thus] the sons of God." This house of sons, begotten to the spirit nature, will soon be complete, and never have further additions to its members; but we are to remember that—

(2) Another house of sons is shortly to be started. For the declaration is that our Lord Jesus shall become a Father, a Life-giver, to the world—to whosoever will accept this gift of God under the terms of the New Covenant during the Millennium. Those will be the sons of the after resurrection, while the Church are to be sons of the first resurrection, the first-born ones. The Apostle, referring to these sons of Christ who will be begotten during the Millennial age, and be born to full sonship at its close, declares that they also shall be delivered "from the bondage of corruption [death] into the glorious liberty of the sons of God"—freedom from sin, death, sighing, crying, pain, etc. They will inherit these, the common privileges of all the sons of God, and in addition the earthly heritage, the "purchased possession," secured for mankind by the great sin-offering.—Rom. 8:21-23.

The restitution class of earth will thus be sons of Christ, who **bought** their life and who

* *Gennao* here signifies **begotten**, and refers to the beginning and not the completion of our "change" of nature. —See also *Revised Version*, and the *Emphatic Diaglott*.

will give afresh to them that which was lost in Adam and which he redeemed at the cost of his own life. But this will not imply that such will not eventually own Jehovah as their Father also and be owned by him as his sons. On the contrary, the typical custom in Israel on this point makes this all plain. For instance, all Israelites were known as children of Abraham, children of Israel and children of Jacob.

But the central thought we would impress is that all who shall be recognized by God as sons at any time must be freed from the incubus of sin by the Only Begotten Son of God, the Mediator,—and such only are free indeed.

"I WAS BLIND, I NOW SEE"—*Reprints*, p. 4148

JOHN 9:1-41.

"I am the Light of the world."—John 9:5.

OUR LORD was in Jerusalem on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, in the fall of the third year of his ministry—just six months before his crucifixion. No doubt there were then as now many blind men sitting by the wayside soliciting alms, especially at that season of the year, when the crowds gathered for worship and were apt to feel benevolent. Our Lord did not heal all of these blind; the recorded instances are just six. His mission was not for the healing of the sick, but for the preaching of the Gospel, the power of healing being exercised merely to point to the Gospel message, as in the instance given in this lesson.

As our Lord and the apostles passed one of these blind men it was noted that he was blind from birth. Probably his asking for alms led to a discussion of a very important question raised by the apostles—"Lord, which did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" It may be that the apostles were less clear in their logic than usual, else they might have known that the man could not have sinned before birth; but it is barely possible that some of the heathen ideas respecting the transmigration of souls had come to their attention. Satan has deluded many of the heathen into the supposition that they lived before in some other form or condition and that having been born into the world they were merely having life renewed under changed conditions, either better or worse than previously. This view is held by millions of Buddhists and also by the Mormons. The Scriptures, however, are very explicit to the contrary, teaching that Adam was a direct creation of God and that all the human family have sprung direct from him by natural processes of birth.

Our Lord's reply that neither this man nor his parents had sinned is not to be understood as meaning that he and his parents were without blemish, without a share in the condemnation which came upon Father Adam and which, through him in a general way, has come to all of his posterity. Of this the Apostle says, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as the result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men." (Rom. 5:12.) This blind man and his parents as members of the Adamic race were under the death sentence, the same as ourselves and others. Our Lord evidently meant and was understood to mean that it was not because of any special sin committed by this man and his parents that he had been born blind. Similarly on another occasion he said, speaking of those upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell, "Think ye that these were sinners above other men? I tell you, Nay; but unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"—not all perish in the same manner, but all shall die. (Luke 13:4.) The death sentence is over all, and only by getting into relationship with the Life-giver can any of us hope to escape it.

Afflictions No Proof of God's Displeasure

The principal point of this lesson, therefore, is that calamities are not necessarily marks of divine disapproval. It was not so in this man's case; it was not so in the case of Job nor in the instance of the burial under the Tower of Siloam. Nevertheless, our Lord did imply that with the Jews special sickness often meant stripes or punishment for personal sin. Thus in the case of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda; in a previous lesson we noted our Lord's words to the healed one, "Go thy way, sin

no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." It is undoubtedly true that many of the ailments that afflict mankind are the results of improper living on their part or on the part of their forefathers. Scrofula is such a disease, often being transmitted through several generations; gout is another. Indeed we could mention scores. It is proper, therefore, when we find ourselves in sickness, that we examine carefully to what extent we ourselves have been responsible through careless living, either through eating or drinking too much, or by the use of foods unsuited to our condition. If we find the cause of such an ailment in such a direction it is well that we repent thereof and take such steps in an opposite direction as may be possible to us, while with prayer we resolve that with the Lord's assistance we shall be more consistent in the future; that our eating and drinking and whatsoever we may do may be to his glory and for the best possible preservation and usefulness of the mortal body we have consecrated to his service.

But if on investigation we cannot find that our experience and sickness were the result of self-gratification nor the result of hereditary disease beyond our control, it would be well, then, for us to examine carefully and note whether or not our experiences had resulted from our activity in the Lord's service. If so, we should glory in them; we should rejoice that we have been enabled to lay down some of life and health in the service of him who did so much for us. Nevertheless as wise stewards we should seek to note whether or not we could accomplish as good results or better by a different course, one which might be less exhausting, less debilitating. Even then, however, the thought before our minds should not be self-protection, for he that loveth his life to an improper degree will lose it. Our thought should be our responsibility as stewards, that we might accomplish in our bodies that which would be most pleasing and acceptable in his sight. If none of these suggestions seems to fit our case we still have two others to examine:—

(1) Might our sickness be a chastisement for a course displeasing to the Lord? Might it be in the nature of stripes? If in our minds we can find sin at the door of our hearts—a wrong course of life, it would be safe to accept the experience as a chastisement and to seek to profit thereby. But otherwise, (2) finding none of these things to fit the case we should consider that our affliction, as in the case before us in this lesson, is simply for our welfare, to assist us to the application of some valuable spiritual lesson, or, as our Lord expressed it, that the works of God might be made manifest. It should be our pleasure to glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits [minds] which are his, either by receiving good lessons ourselves or by pointing good lessons to others. As we shall see this was much the experience of the blind man; his case was one which operated as a blessing for himself and as a manifestation of the Lord Jesus and his power and as a testing to the Pharisees and others of his time and as a valuable instruction to many of the Lord's people from that day until the present time.

"The Works of God"

We emphasize the fact that the works of God were not merely in the healing of one out of thousands of sick and blind, but the manifestation of Jesus as the Light of the world and the influence and testing which that would mean to the Jewish people—gathering out of them a little handful of Israelites indeed for membership in the Bride class and the rejection of the great mass of that nation as unfit for a share in the heavenly Kingdom. This work our Lord proceeded to do in the healing of this blind man, saying, "I am working the works of him that sent me while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work." Our Lord's day of opportunity was rapidly drawing to a close. This miracle and others, especially the awakening of Lazarus, brought him so prominently before the eyes of the people that there was a division amongst them concerning these things, some accepting, some rejecting, and this division must necessarily proceed throughout the whole nation. It was the test, and it must culminate in a night time in which the Light of the world, Jesus, would be for a time entirely extinguished—before the Israelites, before Pilate, at Calvary. Similarly with each one of the Lord's followers we might say that there is a day time of opportunity when his time and talent and zeal may bring forth fruitage to the Lord's

praise, and that the opportunities then afforded should be exercised to the fullest, for to each will come a night time when the opportunities will pass from him as he passes into death.

In harmony with this is the prophetic statement, "Do with thy might what thy hand findeth to do: for there is no work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave [*sheol*] whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9:10.) And there is another application still which we should not forget, namely, that the Church as a whole has had varying experiences. Beginning at Pentecost there was quite an illumination upon the early Church; but it was not morning time, it was evening time. The glow of light which was upon them was from the setting sun; gradually the darkness came and throughout the long epoch of this Gospel Age gross darkness has prevailed and in it the Lord's people have been able to see only a little of the pathway at a time; as it is written, "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a lantern to my footsteps." That epoch in general has been called the "dark ages," and now we are approaching the dawning of the morning and the path before shines more and more.

The light now shining more closely resembles that which shone upon the early Church, and in both instances it is the light of the *parousia*, the light of the **presence** of the Son of Man. But even in this morning of dawning light we are to expect another time of deep darkness: a night time in a certain sense will intervene, an overcasting of the skies, a great morning storm, as the Lord has foretold through the Prophet, "The morning cometh, a night also." (Isa. 21:12.) The morning is here, but before it is ushered in in the full splendor of Millennial brightness the great storm of the time of trouble will break—"a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1.) Therefore we may well say to ourselves, individually and as the Body of Christ, we "must work the works of him that sent us"—who commissioned us while it is day, while the light of the sun is upon us, because the night of trouble cometh when no man can work, when our opportunities for serving the cause and the brethren and for the public dissemination of the Truth will be forcibly closed by the powers that be.

The Light of The World

Our Lord added, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." The light shone amongst them to reprove the evil and to encourage the good for another six months, up to the time of our Lord's crucifixion, but he left behind him some who were receptive to the influence of the light, his Spirit, and who were illuminated by the Pentecostal blessing. Of these he said, "Ye are the light of the world." "Let your light so shine before men that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father in heaven." Thus, as the Apostle says, "As he was, so are we in this world"—lights shining in darkness, appreciated not, comprehended not, understood not, refused, repulsed by the great mass, even by those who claimed to be the people of God, but whose hearts were not in such sympathy with the light as to permit them to receive the holy Spirit's illumination. For be it noted that there is quite a distinction between having the holy Spirit and being illuminated by it so as to let our light shine, and on the other hand being of those upon whom such illumination shines. Our Lord let his light shine upon many, and so we have opportunity to let our light shine upon many. But no one has the light within him except he is begotten of the holy Spirit.—Heb. 10:32.

Anointing The Eyes of The Blind

This little discussion was probably within the hearing of the blind man and intended not merely for him but also for the disciples and all who have since believed on the Lord through their words. Afterwards our Lord spat upon the ground and made an ointment with the dust and saliva, with which he anointed the eyes of the blind man. All this implies some assistance from the blind man. His assent is also implied in his going at our Lord's bidding to wash in the waters of the pool of Siloam. Faith was first followed by works and this attested a degree of perfection. If he had not believed he would not have submitted to the anointing, neither would he have left his seat as a beggar to go and wash. The ointment which our Lord made and used, we may safely say, had no particular virtue in it, neither had the waters used any virtue in them, and this fact is recognized in the whole narrative; it was merely an aid to the blind man's faith, but did not in his mind perform the

cure; he recognized that it was a miracle, as did the Pharisees. The great weight of this miracle lay in the fact that this man was born blind, and as he said subsequently no one up to that time had ever heard of the opening of the eyes of one born blind. Indeed, oculists today tell us that with all the advancement of science since on this line those who are born blind are beyond hope of relief, except in the one ailment, cataract. And in this case the remedy is but partial, through a surgical operation; removing the lens, for which an artificial one is substituted.

The miracle was evidently the talk of all in the vicinity of the man's home; neighbors and friends congratulated him, but some were unable to believe that it was the same person, unable to believe that one born blind should ever be able to see. It became quite an advertisement for Jesus, for the man when asked how it came that he could see told that a person named Jesus had performed the miracle. The Pharisees, already envious and seeking occasion to kill our Lord, had, we are told, formulated a resolution that if any one confessed Jesus as the Messiah he should be excluded from the synagogue and its privileges as unworthy of the honor and liberty and privileges belonging to a true Jew. Lest the matter should spread, and, if possible to corner it and head it off, they made an investigation. Going to the man's father and mother, the parents simply told the truth and avoided anything further, saying that they knew him to be their son and that he was born blind and that now he saw; but how they could not say, for they did not see; he was of age and able to speak for himself. The once blind man was again interrogated: How? When? Where? as though to entrap him in an untruth. His own heart honest, he perceived that these so-called holy men were so opposed to Jesus that they were trying every way to disprove or belittle the miracle.

Turning to the healed man the Pharisees said to him, Thank God for your sight, even though it came through a bad channel, for we know that this man Jesus who healed you is a sinner, is a hypocrite, is a falsifier in claiming to be Messiah; he is a bad man. This was more than the once blind man could or should endure; he must not hear the character of his best friend traduced without speaking a word in his defense; he therefore said, This is a very remarkable case that a miracle should be performed such as never before was heard of, and that the man to perform the miracle should be a sinner with whom God would have no dealings; this is indeed remarkable. It has been a teaching amongst us Jews that God would not even hear the prayer of sinners; how then could this man, a sinner, have performed so stupendous a miracle? Then they began to cross-question him again respecting the how and when and where. But perceiving their dishonesty of heart he said to them, Why are you asking again? You remember what I told you; are you anxious to become his disciples that you want me to explain further, or what is your motive? Perceiving that their hypocritical designs were discovered, they railed at the man, saying, No, we are not Jesus' disciples; you are one of his, we are Moses' disciples. We know that God appointed Moses, and by his Law we stand; as for this man, who knows anything about him? He is said to come from Nazareth, but is not of wonderful parentage, and is not the kind of a Messiah that we have been expecting, with power and great glory and ability to deliver our nation from the hands of the Romans. You had best follow him, we will have nothing to do with you or him; do not come again to our synagogue. Consider yourself an outcast from the religious people of your own nation.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out and found him and said to him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? In answer to the man's desire to know more our Lord revealed himself to him as the Messiah. Then he worshiped Jesus. Notice the exercise of the Lord's providential care over this man and his interests. He did not spare him from being cast out of the synagogue, but turned the same into a special blessing of instruction of much advantage to the man in every way.

In the various features of this incident we today find a lesson along higher lines. Some of us were born blind—blind to the Lord and his true character, blind to the truth of the divine Word. The blindness upon us was neither our own fault nor the fault of our parents. They as well as we were honest-hearted toward the Lord. Our blindness, therefore, was not a chastisement for sins. The darkness, the blindness, which so long has overspread Christendom en-

trapped us as well as others, but the Lord had mercy upon us and passed our way and made ointment and eyesalve for us. He took of the clay of human agency and mixed it with his Word, the fruit of his lips, and with that combination he gave us the anointing of the eyes of our understanding and bade us wash in the waters of Siloam, his Word of truth and grace. We followed his prescription and now we see. A new world is opened before us, "Wonderful things in the Bible we see!" The Scribes and Pharisees of our day wonder, criticize and try to account for the blessing which has come to us, and of course will find fault with every agency which the Lord has used in connection with our blessing, for their hearts are not in the right attitude to appreciate the light of the favor of God.

It is for us now to take a similar stand to that which this blind man took, to confess the truth, confess the light, confess the miracle which the Lord has wrought upon the eyes of our understanding and to give him our hearts. And it is also for us to find that this will bring against us the anger, the chagrin, the malice of the Scribes and Pharisees of our day. It is for us to find that this will lead men to separate us from their company, to cast us out of their synagogues. Through the Prophet the Lord has foretold this, saying, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out, said, The Lord be glorified [we do this casting out for the good of the Lord's cause that we may glorify him]. But he shall appear to your joy and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. 66:5.) How many of the Lord's people have found that the major part of their blessing comes after they have acknowledged the Truth, stood up for it and endured some persecution on its account! Then the Lord findeth them, he knows where they are and all about them all the time, but then he reveals himself to them specially that they may know him, that they may have fellowship with him, that they may receive from him a blessing, as in the case of this blind man.

"Are We Blind Also?"

The last two verses of our lesson call our attention to the theological pride of the Pharisees. And, alas, in this also, we must concede that they represent fitly some of their successors in Spiritual Israel who are spiritually proud. Our Lord had declared that his coming into the world would prove a judgment or testing to that order of things, that some of the blind would be made to see and some of those who had been seeing would become blind. That is to say, the truth would prove a testing to many, some coming out of the blindness and darkness and ignorance and superstition to an appreciation of the grandest of God's blessings, and others, who had a larger measure of favor previously, lapsing into a blind condition. Those who received the Lord received enlightenment at Pentecost, and the Apostle remarks that the remainder were blinded and are to remain blind until the close of this Gospel Age.

Hearing his remark about the blind ones seeing and the seeing ones becoming blind the Pharisees said to the Lord, In what list are you placing us? not amongst the blind, we hope? Jesus replied that it would have been better for them if they had been blind, if their course had been actuated by total ignorance, but the case was different. They did have considerable enlightenment and therefore corresponding responsibility, but because of their pride and self-sufficiency in taking what they did see as the whole truth and rejecting the real message of the Lord they were hardening themselves against the light, against the truth, and their sin was fastening itself upon them, shackling them so that they could not and would not and did not receive the light that was then due.

Are there not a good many in this situation today, prominent Christian people boasting of their enlightenment and yet afraid of the light of God's Word and afraid, ashamed to acknowledge either their own ignorance of it or the light that is now shining upon it by the Lord's presence and through the channels which he is using for the scattering of the light in this present time? Let us be prompt to acknowledge that we have nothing of our own, neither light nor wisdom, and let us receive at the Lord's hands the true wisdom, the true enlightenment which comes from above. If all could come to this position rapidly the truth would spread. The great opposition comes from those who claim to know but do not really know; whose boastfulness and pride not only hinder them from entering into the light, but lead them also to hinder others from appreciating it.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Judea	The 70 sent to preach; their return, report			10:1-24	

Luke 10:1-24

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me. And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

SEVENTY MINISTERS ORDAINED—*Reprints*, p. 5362

LUKE 10:1-24.

"It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."—Matthew 10:20.

MINISTERIAL ordination has for centuries been a bone of contention. Indirectly it has led to bloody persecutions in the past. Thank God! those days are gone, so far as the majority of Christians are concerned. And yet, because the masses do not clearly understand the subject of ordination, there is always danger of a recurrence of persecution along this line. Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, all, have shared in these persecutions based upon misconceptions of ministerial ordination—in times past

they persecuted each other along these lines.

The claim was that none could be a preacher or teacher unless he had a special ordination; that for the unordained to preach or teach was a rebellion against Divine arrangement; and that all who followed his teaching or gave him support were heretics, and, as such, deserving of no sympathy, but rather of persecution.

Ordination does not relate to a ceremony, or form, as many suppose. It signifies an authorization, a commission to preach. The Baptists commission those who agree with their creed to preach it. The Presbyterians so commission their disciples, as do the Lutherans, Methodists, etc. Roman Catholics and Episcopalians claim an ordination from God—that all their bishops are successors to the Apostles and armed with Apostolic authority; hence that any not commissioned, or ordained, by their bishops have no right to preach, but are heretics. From their standpoint, all other Protestants are heretics, preaching without authority.

But the spirit of tolerance is growing; and within the last two years Episcopalians have lifted the embargo on other Protestants to the extent that an Episcopal minister may preach in the pulpit of another denomination, or a minister not ordained by the Episcopalians may be permitted to preach in their pulpits. But this is a very modern concession.

The right thought of ordination is presented in the Study for today. Jesus had already appointed twelve to be His special Apostles; and now He ordained, or appointed, seventy more, not to be Apostles, but to be general ministers or missionaries. There was no ceremony connected with their appointment, or ordination, so far as the record shows. Jesus simply sent them out, telling them what to say. Our Golden Text explains the matter saying, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."

Strictly speaking, the Apostles had not yet received the Spirit of the Father directly. The Father's Spirit had been imparted to the Son, and it was the Son who shared that Spirit with those He sent out to preach in His name. The Father did not directly recognize, authorize or ordain any to preach the Gospel Message, until Pentecost. St. Peter there explains that the Holy Spirit shed forth upon the witnessing disciples was from the Father and by the Son.—Acts 2:32,33.

Elsewhere it is explained that the Holy Spirit was not given previously because Jesus had not been glorified. It was necessary for Jesus to suffer, and to ascend on High and to present His merit on behalf of His disciples, before the Heavenly Father recognized them as sons of the new order and gave them the begetting of the Holy Spirit, the unction from the Holy One, the authorization, or ordination, to be His ambassadors and representatives in the world and, if faithful, by and by to be associates with Jesus in the Heavenly Kingdom, which for a thousand years is to bless the earth and roll away the curse.

Only those whom God has ordained in the sense of giving them the Holy Spirit of sonship are in any wise commissioned, or authorized, to preach in the Lord's name. All the ceremonies on earth and all the hands of all the bishops cannot give authority to anybody to speak in the name of God. Our Lord Jesus did not begin His ministry until He had received God's ordination. At the time of His consecration and baptism the Holy Spirit came upon Him, anointing Him, consecrating Him, authorizing Him, to preach the good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort those that mourn.—Isaiah 61:1,2.

The same Holy Spirit is authority for anybody who has received it to tell all that he understands respecting the Plan of God to all who have an ear to hear—especially to the meek, the broken-hearted, those who are feeling after God. While the Apostle Paul intimates that the female members of the Church are not to preach publicly, this does not interfere with the fact that all of them who have received the Holy Spirit have the anointing to preach and to teach according to the limitations and opportunities of their sex. And sometimes the private teaching is equally as effective as the more public.

The forty years which closed the Jewish Age, beginning with John the Baptist and ending A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem, was

the Harvest period for typical Israel. It witnessed the gathering into the Gospel garner of all the true wheat and the entire setting aside of the remainder, the chaff, in a great time of trouble, symbolically called fire. The Lord, in Matthew 13, intimates that in the end of this Gospel Age there will be a similar Harvest. Many believe that it began in 1874 and will end in 1915.

All of the Lord's faithful ones at the close of the Jewish Age were to recognize the great privilege of being engaged in the Harvest work, and the same must be true now. The Lord's followers are compared to gentle, inoffensive lambs and sheep, while the selfish, unregenerate world He pictures as wolves. In the Jewish Harvest He would not have them beg their way from house to house, but inquire for the most worthy people in every village, and, if received, remain there until they had given their witness in that village. They were to depend wholly upon the Lord, and to make no attempt to provide for their needs. This was to be to them a lesson for their future benefit. Later, Jesus sent forth His disciples, telling them to provide for their wants to the best of their ability—implying that the first experience had been a special one, to give them confidence and reliance in the Divine Power that they represented.

The Master's Spirit was given to them in such measure that they were enabled to do as He did—to heal the sick, cast out devils, etc. We are not to understand that there is such an authorization of the Lord's people today. Conditions have changed. The healing of spiritual sickness, blindness and deafness, greater works than those, is the privilege of the Lord's people today.

The one Message of the disciples was that the Kingdom of God had come nigh. Whoever could be influenced would be influenced by that Message. God's Kingdom had been waited for by the Israelites for many centuries. But alas, when it was presented, only a comparatively small number of the Jews were ready to receive it! Thereafter the Kingdom offer was taken away from them, and has since been given throughout the whole world, gathering the elect class from every nation to be Messiah's Bride and Joint-heir, through whom shortly the Kingdom will be established in the earth and its blessings be bestowed far and near upon all of the race.

The Master referred to His preaching and mighty works in Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin. These cities were figuratively said to have been exalted in point of privilege; and, as having rejected the Lord's favors, they would be cast down to the grave. Examples were given of Sodom and Tyre, both of which then were in ruins—brought down to Hades, down to the dust.

Our Lord intimates, however, that the trial, or testing, or judgment, which His preaching had given was not a finality—there would be a future judgment or trial. According to St. Paul the entire Millennial Age is to be a thousand-year Judgment Day, in which the whole world is to be brought to a knowledge of the Truth, to a full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of God. (Acts 17:31.) Nevertheless, those who heard Jesus unmoved had hardened their hearts, and would be correspondingly disadvantaged in the Judgment Day. Jesus put the matter very strongly when He implied that it would be tolerable for those people, but more tolerable for Sodom, because its sin had been against less light and privilege. See also Ezekiel 16:48-63.

Concluding, the Master assured His messengers that whoever heard them and despised them despised Him and the Father. This same thing is true undoubtedly of all whom the Lord has ordained and sent forth as ministers of the Gospel—the truly ordained.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Judea; Bethany	Tells of neighborly Samaritan; at home of Martha, Mary			10:25-42	

Luke 10:25-42

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was encumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful 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.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?—*Reprints*, p. 3803

LUKE 10:25-37.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."—Matthew 5:7.

JESUS was a teacher and expounder of the Law to the common people, but he did not class himself with the Scribes and Doctors of the Law amongst the Jews. He had a different view of the Law from theirs and taught in a different manner. The common people heard him gladly, whereas the Jewish Doctors of the Law did not appeal to the common people at all or attempt to teach them, but merely discussed the great problems of divine law amongst themselves and with the more ascetic of the people—the Pharisees.

The common people, although they heard the Lord gladly, did not clearly comprehend his teachings, for he spoke to them in parables and dark sayings to the intent that the mass might not understand, but that the specially zealous Israelites indeed might be attracted to closer study and inquiry. To these he explained the parables, saying, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom, but to all those without [outsiders, not specially interested followers] these things are spoken in parables." (Mark 4:11.) Nevertheless, there was something very attractive in the Master's style, so that even those who did not fully comprehend his teachings said, "Never man spake like this man"; and again we read, "They wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth," "For he taught them as one having

authority [as one who understood his subject thoroughly] and not as the Scribes [not doubtfully]."—John 7:46; Luke 4:22; Matt. 7:29.

For this reason jealousy of Jesus sprang up amongst the Doctors of the Law. To them he was a rival teacher, and accordingly they sought to entrap him, with a view to exposing him to ridicule before his followers, whom they recognized as "unlearned men." But in no case did they succeed; in every instance recorded the Lord's wisdom was too great for them—he entrapped them in their own arguments. The present lesson is an illustration of this. One of the Doctors of the Law, evidently thinking that our Lord's teachings along the lines of love and mercy were contrary to the rigid lines of justice as laid down in the Law, thought to entrap our Lord by a question. He would ask him upon what terms he could have eternal life. He expected Jesus to answer, "Eternal life will be given to all who manifest a God-like, loving, generous character," or that he would say, "You can have eternal life by becoming my disciple and practicing my teachings." Thereupon this Doctor of the Law would at once call attention to the fact that the teachings of Jesus abrogated the Law, made it null and void—that he ignored the Law.

"Wise as a Serpent, Harmless as a Dove"

Our Lord answered this Scribe thoroughly out of his own mouth: he said to him, "You are a teacher of the Law; give us your statement of what the Law says respecting how eternal life may be obtained?" This was a pointed reply, and the lawyer was fully prepared to answer it, for, What saith the Law? was a common question amongst the Jews who quoted from the Law. (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.) This was the very definition which our Lord a short time before quoted to the rich young ruler who came to him on one occasion. The lawyer evidently repeated a well-known formula of the Law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus replied, "Thou has answered right: this do and thou shalt live"—have eternal life.

The Law Versus The Gospel

Why did Jesus thus refer to the Law? Why did he not avail himself of this opportunity for preaching the Gospel? Why did he not say to the lawyer—"The only way to obtain eternal life is through faith in me, followed by a full consecration to walk in my footsteps as my disciple"? Why did he not tell the lawyer, "There is no other name given under heaven whereby men must be saved but the name of Jesus"? Why did he not tell him, "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son shall not see life"?—Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:12.

We answer that this would have been too strong meat for the lawyer in his condition of mind. It was necessary that first he should realize his own inability to keep the full letter of the divine Law, so that he might be prepared to look for divine mercy through Jesus. The difficulty with the Pharisees and Scribes was that they were pretending to keep the Law, pretending that they were justified by it, pretending to gain eternal life by it, although they very well knew that they all died like other men, and knew also, when they would reflect upon the subject, that the divine Law was so high, so grand, so complete, that in their weak and fallen condition they were unable to meet all of its requirements perfectly.

There are some people of the same kind today, who are ready to acknowledge that God has a perfect standard and that none can expect eternal life except as they harmonize with that standard; and many today, as well as formerly amongst the Jews, believe that they are sufficiently near the divine standard to have eternal life, and are therefore not looking for any Savior—not looking for a Redeemer to pay a ransom price for them and to grant them immunity and forgiveness of sin and reconciliation through him to the Father—the covering of their blemishes. It is necessary for all such to learn first the lesson that divine justice has but one standard and that is a very high one. When they find how high God's standard is and how imperfect are their best endeavors to measure up to their requirements, then and not until then do they begin to look for help from the Lord in the attainment of life eternal. The Lord wished the lawyer to learn this lesson, and

therefore exacted from him a statement of what the Law required.

The lawyer did not stop to haggle over what would be included in loving God with his entire heart, soul, strength and mind. Some one might claim to be loving and serving God and others might doubt the truthfulness of the claim, though unable to prove anything, since only the Lord and the man's own heart could judge perfectly in this matter. The lawyer passed over that great question as though it were nothing, as though it were settled, but had he sought to critically examine what such a complete consecration to the Lord would signify he would doubtless have found himself far short of its standard.

Let us not pass the question too quickly or too lightly—let us know that to love the Lord with all our heart would mean that the sum of all our affections would center upon the Lord, so that our love for him would far excel all of our love for the dear ones of the home and the family and of the whole world. To love the Lord with all our soul would signify with all our being—to manifest our love not only by our words and looks, by our praises, but by our services and all of our conduct in life, everything testifying that God is first in our affections and in all of life's interests. Thirdly, to love him with all our strength would signify that time and talent and influence would all be at the service of our God, that in everything we would be ready to be used, spent, in glorifying his name, in serving his cause as we might understand it to be his will. Fourth, to love our Lord with all our mind would seem to imply that we are to intellectually attempt to appreciate the Lord, to understand his divine laws and to enter into heart sympathy with them, so that our service and worship would be the more intelligent, after the kind described by our Lord when he said, "They that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"—intelligently.

"Love Thy Neighbor As Thyself"

The Scribe, passing over the obligations to the Lord, seemed to realize that his daily conduct would condemn him as a violator of the latter part of his own definition of the Law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He apparently recognized this as his most vulnerable point, and that the Lord had entrapped him in his own answer. He knew how in his daily life he was not loving his neighbor as himself—that he was making a wide discrimination between those of his own class and the common people, the publicans and the sinners; and that even in his present endeavor to entrap Jesus he was not loving him as himself, as his neighbor, but treating him as an opponent. He felt that, like others of his class, he had a haughty, disdainful attitude toward the lower classes of his own race. He was skilled in the Law, however, and this was not a new point for him to evade. He had the same explanation of the matter that was common to others of the Scribes and Pharisees, namely, that their neighbors whom they were, according to the Law, to love as themselves, were those who belonged to their class, to their set, to their station in life. Apparently, therefore, with considerable confidence he replied to Jesus, "But who is my neighbor?" as though he would say, "That is a point, I presume, upon which we might possibly differ. I think that I keep the Law when I love and respect and fellowship those of my own class, and treat others with more or less of disdain. How could you apply the Law of Moses differently? I feel sure that you will agree that the Law meant that each person was to consider those of his own class as his neighbors, and to love them and cooperate with them and not with others of the outside world."

With marvelous wisdom the Lord framed a parable, such as the Scribe of the Law well knew might take place any day. He pictured the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, a bridle-path, in some places quite steep, passing through a gorge in the mountain—a vicinity infested with robbers, who lived in the numerous caves, and who not infrequently attacked passengers. Even today it is the custom for travelers to have an armed escort of Arabs on this journey to Jericho. Our Lord pictured a traveler on this road beset by the robbers, beaten into helplessness, stripped of his clothing. He pictured a priest passing by, seeing the man and hastening on, lest he also might be beset by the robbers; similarly a Levite passes by, unwilling to spend the time necessary to render assistance. Then a man of Samaria comes along, and,

moved with sympathy, assists the injured one, binding up his wounds; and finally, taking him on his own beast to the nearest inn, he cared for him over night and made some provision for his further care.

The force of our Lord's illustration is only seen when it is remembered that the Levites were specially set apart for holy service to the Lord as instructors of the people, to guide them by word and by example in the ways of the Lord, and when it is further remembered that the priests, also belonging to this tribe, were a special family chosen of the Lord for the very highest service toward himself and toward the people of Israel. The picture is still further heightened when we recall that the Samaritans were a mixed people, whom the Jews despised and with whom they would have no dealings.—John 4:9.

With these things in mind mark the Master's question, "Which of these three was neighbor of the man who fell amongst thieves?" There was only one answer for the lawyer to make. He himself belonged to the Levite class condemned by the parable. The reply was, "He that showed mercy on him." Our Lord approved of that answer and responded, "Go thou and do likewise"—go and show mercy, go and understand that any man in the world, friend or foe, is your neighbor and is to be loved and served by you as you may have opportunity. As you would have him do for you do even so for him; love him and serve him as yourself, as you would have him love and serve you under reversed conditions.

The Golden Rule

We have found some of the Lord's people disposed to evade the force of this requirement of the Law and its illustration by the Lord's parable by saying, "Yes, the Samaritan who showed mercy to the wounded man was indeed his neighbor, while the priest and the Levite who did not show mercy to him he should not consider to be his neighbors; hence the wounded upon recovery, should he ever have any dealings with that Samaritan who assisted him, should love him as himself, should be willing to lay down his life in his service. Whereas the other two who did not do neighborly acts ought not to be considered as his neighbors, and he should not try to love them as himself.

We answer that this is a distortion of our Lord's language. Indeed, he was seeking to counteract this very thought, which was common to the Jews, for it was a proverb amongst them that they should be loyal to neighbors but bitter to enemies. The word neighbors signifies those who are near, and the Scribes and Pharisees were in the habit of applying this to those who were near in sympathy, in sentiment, in faith, in sectarian relationship. Thus a Pharisee would gladly serve another Pharisee, and a Scribe would gladly serve another Scribe, from a clannish, selfish spirit, regarding each other as neighbors in the sense of the Law, and that others of a different class were more or less opponents, either to go unloved or, if they oppose themselves, to be hated.

As Christians we must take a much higher view of the matter than this. We remember our Lord's words in opposition to this very thought. He said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:43-45.) Any who will not come to this standard of love, not only for friends but also for enemies, cannot long be recognized by God as his children.

Our Lord originated the Golden Rule as a full statement of the divine will, which must govern all who would be his disciples. That Golden Rule does not say that we shall love as brethren those who have done kindness for us. Our Lord condemned that selfish kind of love when he said, "If ye love them that love you what thank have you? Do not even the publicans and sinners the same?" Such an interpretation, therefore, as would make this parable to teach that we should love as our neighbors those who have hazarded their lives for us would be far beneath the teachings of our Master, and, he says, would be on a parity with the usual sentiments of sinners.

As followers of the Redeemer we are to have the much higher standard; we are to recognize every one who is in adversity and needing our help as our neighbor, whom we should love

sympathetically to the extent of being ready to do for him or her whatever service we might be able to render, to the extent that we should wish that person to do for us if we were in his difficulty. To whatever extent we can get this high standard of love, sympathy, cooperation, generosity, kindly feeling in control of our hearts and to be the rule of our conduct, in that proportion surely we will be the more Godlike, the more Christlike, for, as our dear Redeemer remarked, God is kind even to the unthankful.

Love Your Enemies

Our Lord's requirements of us as his disciples go beyond merely the loving of a neighbor. We must have at least a sympathetic love for our enemies, so that we would not only not endeavor to injure them by word or deed, but that we would be ready and glad to assist them as might be in our power. No one, however, is to suppose that the Lord means that we are to love our enemies as we love the Lord himself, nor even as we love our brethren. Our love for the Lord and for the brethren is love of the very highest type—love which appreciates the principles represented in our heavenly Father's character, which all who are truly his are seeking to copy.

Our love for our enemies and for many of our neighbors must necessarily be along lines of their characters: their hopes and their plans are very different from those which we have adopted. As is our Lord's, so our love for them must be of the sympathetic kind, even as is the love of God—"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish." God does not love the world with a love of fellowship, nor are we to do so. Like him we are to have the love of sympathy for the world. Realizing its fallen and depraved condition we are to be glad to do all in our power for its rescue, for its comfort along lines of justice and mercy.

There seems to be a limitation to the love commanded by the Law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—not better than thyself. Hence if it came to the place where a neighbor's life was in jeopardy, and we could assist him only by the sacrifice of our own life, it would not be a requirement of the divine law of love that we should sacrifice our life for his—that would be loving him better than ourselves, and therefore more than the divine requirement. Neither should we expect a neighbor to love us better than himself, so that he would sacrifice his life for us. Should he attempt to do so it would be our proper attitude of mind to hinder it, not to allow him to work a permanent disadvantage to himself, more than we would have been willing and glad to have done for him. It is in this particular that our Lord's course in the sacrifice of his life on our behalf transcends anything that was required of the Law—in giving his life a ransom for many, he did more than was required by the Law. It is for this reason that it is denominated a sacrifice. To do the whole Law was his duty, but when he went beyond this, and gave his life a ransom price for mankind, that was a sacrifice, and as a sacrifice it was appreciated by the Father and specially rewarded with more than everlasting life. And the same rule applies to us, for as he was so are we in this world—we are to walk in his footsteps.—1 John 4:17.

The demands of the Law are still to do to our neighbor as we would have him do to us. We are to do nothing less than this to anybody; but as followers of the Lord, imbued with his spirit of sacrifice, we are joyfully to lay down our lives for the brethren—in harmony with the divine program which is now selecting the little flock, the household of faith, as sacrificers with Jesus, to be by and by joint-heirs with him in his Kingdom and in its great work of blessing and rejuvenating the world. It is very necessary that we have clear views respecting this subject of the demands of the Law, the demands of justice upon us toward any creature, and also as respects what would properly come in as a part of our sacrifice.

"The Law Is Fulfilled In Us"

We noticed in the beginning of this lesson that our Lord gave the Scribe instruction in the Law instead of preaching to him the gospel of grace. Now let us note that the Lord applies to his followers both the Law and the Gospel. God has but one standard, but one Law, and never will abolish it. The Law Covenant indeed, after serving its purpose, ceased; but the Law of God, upon which that Covenant was based, will never fail. We as well as the Jews are com-

manded to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. This is the standard before us as well as before the Jew. The Jew could not keep it—he found himself deficient not only in respect to his treatment of his neighbor, but deficient also in the fulness of his love for his Creator, which must overbalance all other loves and manifest itself in all the conduct of life.

Only our Lord Jesus could or did keep that love in the absolute perfection of its very letter and spirit. However much a Jew living before our Lord's time might have had the right disposition of heart as respects the Law, because unable to come up to its requirements he could not have eternal life. Our position is different. Our Lord Jesus, having kept the Law, gave his life a sacrifice for Adam and for all of his race; and we who now come to a knowledge of this fact, and by faith accept it, have a standing with God in Christ, so that our best endeavors to keep the Law are supplemented by the merits of Christ and thus made acceptable to God. In other words, if we do our best in the matter of loving God supremely with our hearts, with our whole being, with our strength, with our minds, and our neighbors to the extent of our ability as ourselves, God will accept that good endeavor as though it were perfection, making up for its defects through the merit of Christ's sacrifice. Thus the Apostle tells us, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh [not seeking to please ourselves and our fallen dispositions and attributes] but after the Spirit [to the best of our ability seeking to be in accord with the very spirit of the divine Law]."

The Golden Text

Our Golden Text reminds us of the Apostle's statement, "He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20.) In other words, the measure of the love which fills our hearts will find expression toward our fellow-creatures who have need of our sympathy and attention, and if we show ourselves deficient here it will imply a deficiency of our love for our Creator. If, on the contrary, we are merciful to others, generous, kind, taking pleasure in doing what we can for the relief of our fellow-creatures, especially to the household of faith, this will be an indication of the spirit which our Lord will appreciate and own if it be accompanied by a trust in the precious blood of Christ. Such merciful ones of the Lord's followers shall obtain mercy at the Lord's hands. He will deal gently with them, forgiving their blemishes and weaknesses in proportion as they have this spirit of generosity, forgiveness, toward those who trespass against them.

CHOOSING THE BETTER PART—*Harvest Gleanings*, vol. 2, p. 80 [excerpted]*

"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

* From the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, April 11, 1904. Published in *The St. Paul Enterprise*, July 24, 1917.

for good and for evil, so that really our experiences and opportunities may be said to be at least sevenfold 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.

…

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!

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Judea	Again teaches model prayer; persistence in asking			11:1-13	
	Probably Judea	Refutes false charge; shows generation condemnable			11:14-36	

Luke 11:1-36

And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it. And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah;

and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here. No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

PRINCE OF DARKNESS VS. PRINCE OF LIGHT—*Reprints*, p. 5377

LUKE 11:14-26,33-36.

"Look therefore whether the light that is in thee be not darkness."—Luke 11:35.

HOWEVER much the worldly-wise may scoff at the Bible teaching that there is a personal Devil, and that he is a prince over a demon host of spirit beings—rebels against God's government—let us always remember that this is the teaching of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The difficulty with the worldly-wise is that their good reasoning faculties are not guided by the Word of God. They say it is difficult enough to believe in a God and an angelic host, His servants, spirit beings and invisible to men. Much more difficult is it—yea, to them unreasonable—to believe in another spirit ruler and another spirit host, the adversaries of God. They reason that it would not be thinkable that God would create beings opposed to Himself; or that if, created holy, they became the adversaries of righteousness, an all-powerful Creator would not destroy them, but permit them to continue their evil opposition.

The Bible explains that Satan was the first transgressor, in that previously he was a cherub, an angel of superior rank and nature, who lost his loyalty to God through pride and ambition; and that he seduced into disobedience those whom the Bible now designates a demon host. Everywhere the Scriptures set forth that this host of spirit beings are associated with our earth, and not in some far-off fiery furnace torturing the human dead.

The Bible indicates that God does not lack the power to deal with these rebels, but that He is permitting them for a time, allowing them to manifest the fruitage of sin, anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife—as a lesson for angels and men. They are under certain limitations which the Apostle styles "chains of darkness." They have not been permitted to materialize as men since the Deluge. But they have sought intercourse with humanity; and in proportion to their success their victims are said to be obsessed by evil spirits. When the victory is complete, the victim is said to be possessed of a demon and insane.

It is estimated that fully one-half of those in insane asylums are demon-possessed—the demons belonging to the very class so frequently mentioned in connection with our Lord's ministry. As in the past, intercourse was sought through witches, wizards, necromancers, etc., so today, intercourse with humanity is sought through ouija boards, planchettes, and spirit mediums. Humanity, deceived by the doctrines of these demons inculcated in the Dark Ages (1 Timothy 4:1), has neglected God's testimony in the Bible to the effect that the dead are asleep, and "know not anything." (Ecclesiastes 9:5.) "Their thoughts perish," until their awakening in the morning of the New Dispensation, otherwise styled "the Day of Christ"—"the Times of Restitution"—the Millennial Day. (Philippians 1:10; Acts 3:21.) Today's Study introduces the Master delivering a man from demon possession. The people rightly understood what was the difficulty; but, being opposed to the Master, some of them evilly declared that the demons obeyed Jesus because He Himself was Satan, Beelzebub, the Prince

of devils. Others said: Your miracles are all earthly; show us some sign from Heaven.

Jesus answered the accusation that He was the Prince of demons rather than the Prince of Light by showing that for Satan to cast out his own hosts would signify a warfare in the camp of the evil ones, which would imply that Satan's house was divided and that it would soon fall. It would be foolish, therefore, for Satan to cast out Satan; consequently such an argument should have no weight. But, said Jesus, other Jews have exercised this same power of casting out devils, and you never charged these with being the Prince of demons. And how could there be several princes of demons? Judge according to this whether your argument against Me is good. But, on the contrary, to those of you who realize the truth that I am casting out demons by the "finger" of God, the power of God, there will be no doubt that this power, which I possess more than others, and which I have exercised through My Apostles also, is an evidence of special favor from God and a corroboration of My testimony that God's Kingdom is near you —that the power of that Kingdom is being exercised in your midst.

But, as a matter of fact, when that nation rejected Christ, the Kingdom which God offered them was taken away from them. The offer was discontinued. They were turned aside for a time from God's favor, while the Message of Grace and Truth has since been gathering another Israel—drawing first of all from the Jews such as were Israelites indeed; and later, going hither and thither, it has gathered for this same class saintly ones out of every nation.

The power of Jesus in casting out demons showed that He was thoroughly competent to deal with the Prince of this world, the Prince of Darkness, Satan; and that, had the Kingdom been set up at that time, Satan and his angels would have been bound or restrained then. However, in view of the foreknown and foretold rejection of Jesus and the Kingdom, the work of binding Satan did not progress, but delayed until the Second Coming of Jesus. Then, His Bride class having meantime been selected to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, He will take His great power and reign. At that time He will deal with Satan and his subordinate demons; yea, with all that have cultivated sin and the spirit of Satan, which has so seriously gotten hold of humanity under the conditions of the fall.

The Binding of Satan

Our Lord tells that in the end of this Gospel Age Satan shall be bound for a thousand years (the thousand years of Messiah's glorious Reign), that he may deceive mankind no longer, as he has been deceiving and deluding them for six thousand years, putting darkness for light and misrepresenting the Heavenly Father as the worst being imaginable, plotting and predestinating thousands of millions to be born and to go to eternal torture.

Jesus pictures Satan's control of the world at the present time, likening him to a strong man armed and guarding his palace. He can maintain his control until a stronger comes, overcomes him and takes possession of his wrongly-acquired valuables. Thus Jesus foretold that His own Messianic Kingdom will be stronger than that of Satan, and will control it and bind him. The result will be the deliverance of mankind from the curse of sin and death which has rested upon the race for now six great Days of a thousand years each. Messiah's Kingdom will be in the great Seventh Day, or Sabbath, in which all who will accept the Savior may enter into rest.

Meantime Jesus, according to the Father's Plan, during this Gospel Age, through His own Message and the Message of the Apostles, has been gathering out of the world a Bride class, to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom. Satan is allowed considerable liberty in the testing of the loyalty of all these. There can be only the two masters. Knowingly or ignorantly, people are serving either the One or the other. As Jesus said, "He that is not with Me is against Me."

The Whole World Obsessed

St. Paul declares that the Prince of this world (Satan) "now works in the hearts of the children of disobedience." Jesus took up this same

thought, and likened the world to the poor demoniac whom He had released from Satan's grasp. Similarly, all who accept Christ are delivered from the power of Satan. Let not sin, therefore, have dominion in your mortal bodies.—Romans 6:12.

Jesus represents such hearts as swept and garnished—sins forgiven and grace of God received. But He declares that Satan will seek to regain control of such through the spirit of the world—pride, anger, malice, hatred, strife, works of the flesh and of the Devil. (Matthew 12:43-45.) "Whom resist, steadfast in the faith," writes the Apostle. (1 Peter 5:9.) If Satan be not resisted, the danger is that the light and the blessing received through the knowledge of God will become a curse and an injury; and that the result with such a person will be worse than before he came into relationship with Christ.

Jesus emphasized this, declaring that as a candle should not be put under a bushel and hidden, but should be exposed so as to do good, so also the light of the Truth, the grace of God received, must not be hidden, but must be let shine to the glory of God. Otherwise, the light would become extinguished and the darkness would prevail. The eye represents intelligence; and as long as we have the true enlightenment, or intelligence, the whole body is blessed thereby; but if the intelligence be destroyed, if the eye be blinded, the whole body will suffer and be in darkness.

Every one, therefore, receiving the light should take heed to it as a precious thing lest he lose it, and have darkness instead. The eye, the light, here represents the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, which has the greatest power to bless us; and this, if lost, would mean to us even a greater darkness than that we experienced before coming to a knowledge of the Lord.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Judea	At Pharisee's table, Jesus denounces hypocrites			11:37-54	

Luke 11:37-54

And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that he had not first washed before dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you. But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them. Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also. And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchers of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchers. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation. Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered. And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things: Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

"WOE UNTO YOU, PHARISEES!"—*Reprints*, p. 5389

LUKE 11:37-54.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked."—Galatians 6:7.

AMONGST the various sects of the Jews of our Lord's day we have every reason to believe that the Pharisees constituted the best—the one most loyal to God and His Law. The Sadducees professed no faith in a future life. They were infidels and politicians. The Essenes were a small sect not mentioned in the Bible, a kind of Higher Critics, of little faith and confused by mixing paganism with Judaism. The Pharisees were what might be termed the orthodox body of Jews. Their name signifies "holy people." In today's Study, Jesus, not deigning to mention the other sects, which had entirely departed from God, addresses Himself especially to the Pharisees, pointing out wherein, with all their boasted holiness, they came far short of what would be acceptable to God.

A Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him at his house. The invitation was promptly accepted, and Jesus passed in and sat down at the table with the others, without going through the formalism of washings, customary to the Pharisees. We are not from this to suppose that Jesus was careless. Rather, we are to recognize that the washing of hands by the Pharisees was a ceremony which Jesus especially wished to ignore, in order that He might have the opportunity of criticizing that spirit which the ceremony well illustrated.

The host thought of Jesus as a holy man, not a publican or a sinner, and remarked that it was strange that He had not performed the usual ceremony of washing. This remark gave opportunity for a discourse on the subject. Jesus pointed out that a great deal of the religion which even the holiest of the Jews practiced was merely ceremony, formalism, and not true religion. Outwardly they were clean, but inwardly their hearts were unclean—given to extortion—spiritual wickedness. The Lord sought to show that in God's sight the heart is the important matter and that the outward cleansing is quite secondary. The inside of the cup should first be attended to, and afterward the outside.

As a matter of fact, those who do come into heart harmony with the Lord, and who are cleansed by obedience to His Message and its spirit, are thereby made clean every whit—outwardly, as well as inwardly. It is safe to say that every one who is pure in heart will, according to his circumstances and opportunities, seek to be clean in person, in speech, in every way. The principle working in his heart will exercise an influence upon all his words and thoughts and doings—all his days and all his hours.

From the expressions of our Lord here and elsewhere it would appear that one of the great failings of the Pharisees was covetousness. According to the Greek, Jesus called them "money-lovers." On one occasion He told them that this covetousness, greed, love of money, led them to disregard dishonestly the rights of others. He said: Ye devour widows' houses, meaning that they would take advantage of widows to accumulate property for themselves. As a matter of fact, it would appear that many of the Pharisees were quite rich.

Jesus pointed out that with such wrong conditions of heart God could not be well pleased with them, even though they ever so carefully observed the outward regulations of the Jewish Law. He called attention to the fact that in their outward observance of the tithing (giving one-tenth of their income every year) they were particular even to those small seeds of which they grew but a trifling quantity. In everything they were careful to give one-tenth, but they neglected the weightier matters of the Law—to do justice in their dealings and to have mercy toward others. The Master did not object to their giving one-tenth of everything, but declared that these things they should do and not to leave the more important things undone.

Another time He reproved them, saying, Ye strain a gnat and swallow a camel—a strong hyperbole, a figure of speech, showing how inconsistent were their reasonings and doings. The straining out of a gnat represented their carefulness to avoid things strangled. The swallowing of a camel meant that, on the contrary, while careful about the little things, they would be thoroughly disregardful of God's Law on the weightier matters. Jesus declared that they should be benevolent rather than covetous and self-seeking, and that if this were their disposition of heart the outward cleanliness would be less important.

He declared that they chose the chief seats in the synagogue and salutations in the marketplaces. Their covetousness took the form of pride, as well as dishonesty. They wanted to be very prominent in things religious, to be very popular and to be hailed as "Rabbi"—master, learned one. Jesus declared that they were like sepulchres, outwardly clean and whitewashed, but inwardly full of death, corruption, uncleanness, unholiness. They were holiness people merely in the outward form or ceremonial.

It is not for us to judge all or any of the sects of Christendom and to apply the Master's words to them. Unlike Jesus, we have not the power to read men's hearts, nor the authority to pronounce them hypocrites. The Lord's message to us is, "Judge [condemn] nothing before the time." At His Second Coming, He declares, everything will be revealed. The true status of each will be shown. He declares that at that time many will be saying, Lord, have we not done many mighty works in Thy name? but that He will, nevertheless, declare to them: I do not recognize you. Ye have been workers of iniquity—workers of unrighteousness—in My name.

Without judging personally, we may all fear that much of the Christianity of our time is well described by the Apostle Paul. Speaking of our day he says, "Having a form of godliness, but denying its power"—outwardly Christians, but inwardly skeptics—covetous, extortionate, unjust. Men are not able to judge rightly of such matters today. Some who are loyal and zealous for the Lord are branded as hypocrites and deceivers; while others, disloyal, merely whited sepulchres, may be lauded to the skies as denominational idols or generous benefactors of earthly systems.

Some of the Pharisees, especially educated, talented and well-versed in the teachings of the Law and the Prophets, were styled lawyers—Doctors of the Law, the equivalent of what today are termed Doctors of Divinity. Turning to these, Jesus upbraided them, saying that they placed upon the common people grievous burdens which they themselves would not bear. He meant that they gave such hard interpretations of God's Law as were discouraging to the common people—setting before the publicans and sinners standards of excellence and perfection which they themselves would not think of even trying to live up to. Apparently the thought was thereby to impress the common people with the sanctity of the clergy, that they might be the more reverential toward them. They builded sepulchres for the Prophets of old, forgetful that their fathers, whose same spirit they had, were the very ones who had killed those Prophets—had persecuted them to death.

Woe! Woe! Woe! Woe! Woe!

While Jesus prophesied woes against the Pharisees, we are not to think of Him as condemning them to eternal torment, nor as intimating that this would be the nature of the woe that would come upon them. The woe to the Pharisees was that they were about to miss the great blessing which God had promised to the Jewish nation; namely, that of chief association in Messiah's Kingdom. (Genesis 12:3.) The Promise belonged to Israel primarily. Because of their unpreparedness for it, this was taken from them to be given to another Israel. Had enough of them been "Israelites indeed" to complete God's foreordained Elect, the Bride of Christ, the Kingdom offer would not have gone to the Gentiles.

The Pharisees, of all the Jews, were in the most favored place for attaining to joint-heirship with Messiah; but they recognized not what they were losing, as Jesus recognized it. His expression, "Woe unto you," is therefore to be regarded sympathetically, pityingly. This thought is borne out in the context, which proceeds to declare the great time of trouble which came upon their nation at the time of Jesus' crucifixion, and reached its completion in A.D. 70 in the total destruction of their city and polity.

As the Lord here declares, that awful trouble was a settlement of Jehovah's account with the Jewish nation for all the righteous blood which had been shed and for which no expiation had been made. Little did those Pharisees know that their hypocrisy was not only hindering themselves from preparation to be joint-heirs with Messiah in His Kingdom, but was also hindering the masses of the people, who relied upon them for information. Jesus refers to this in the succeeding verse (52), saying, Ye have taken away the key of knowledge. Ye neither enter into the Kingdom yourselves, nor do you permit others to enter who would be glad to do so, but who are misled by relying upon your judgment.

Bible students very generally believe that the great time of trouble which closed the Jewish Age was an advanced picture, or prophecy, of the still wider spread of the Time of Trouble which will close this Gospel Age and bring woe to many of the Pharisees of our day, as well as tribulation upon all evil-doers in connection with the overthrow of present institutions, as a prelude to the establishment of Justice—the Messianic Reign of Glory.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Judea	Discourse on God's care; faithful steward			12:1-59	

Luke 12:1-59

In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trod one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven. And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say. And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will

return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. 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 to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all? And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

GOOD CONFESSION VERSUS BAD CONFESSION—*Reprints*, p. 5390

LUKE 12:1-12.

"Whosoever shall confess me before men,
him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."—Luke 12:8.

A LARGE crowd surrounded the Savior, anxious to hear Him who "spake as never man spake." Ignoring the multitude, Jesus addressed His disciples, saying: "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Here, as elsewhere in His teachings, Jesus uses leaven as a symbol, or figure, of an evil influence. We know not of one instance in which leaven is used to represent anything good or pure. During the Passover season Jews were prohibited from using it, thus symbolizing the putting away of sin.

Jesus declared that the hypocrisies practiced by the Pharisees—the learned people of that

time—were leaven, impurity, sin, contaminating in their influence. His disciples should be honest, sincere, pure, free from cant and deception. Their words and works should be such as would not need to be covered. Jesus declared that ultimately all hypocrisies and sins will be uncovered, revealed. Undoubtedly He meant that during His Kingdom, when the power of the resurrection will be exercised, all the hidden things of darkness will be abolished, the secrets of mankind will be exposed. No doubt this will constitute the basis of the shame and contempt which will be the punishment of many, as foretold.

Thus we read that in the resurrection some will come forth to shine as the stars of heaven, and others to shame and everlasting contempt. (Daniel 12:2.) However, it is comforting to know that the Hebrew text signifies lasting and not everlasting. The shame and contempt will last as long as the shameful and contemptible conditions last—until the reformation of the individual or, that failing, until his destruction in the Second Death.

Fear Not Persecutions

Jesus intimated that honesty of life would bring His followers persecution from the hypocrites; but that they should not fear, even though the persecution resulted in their death. The present life is but ephemeral, at best. The life that is worth considering is the everlasting one which God has provided for all the willing and obedient, and which may eventually be attained through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice. Those who thus believe should have no fear of what man can do to them, but rather should be fearful of anything that would separate them from God and His gracious provisions of a future life.

"Fear Him who after He hath killed hath power to cast into Hell." The word Hell here is *Gehenna* in the Greek. Primarily, this is the name of the valley outside of Jerusalem, into which the offal of the city was cast for utter destruction, and into which the vilest criminals were cast after execution—not to torment them, but to imply symbolically that there was no future for the wicked. Jesus used *Gehenna* as a type of the Second Death, which will be the portion of all who willfully, intelligently, deliberately, sin against light and knowledge.

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and a reverential fear is always proper. But as God's people become intimately acquainted with Him, learning of His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and realize that He is the Friend of all who love righteousness, they come to love God; and, as the Apostle declares, "Perfect love casteth out fear [dread to offend]," which signifies rest. The Lord's disciples were to realize their Heavenly Father's care for them and His Wisdom—that as He forgets not the sparrows, so He will not forget them; and that not even a hair of their heads could be injured without his knowledge and permission; that everything that He permits to come to His people, to His children, He assures them, will work out for them some blessing.

Confess Me Before Men

Whoever would be in accord with God must confess Him and must confess Jesus, His Representative, whom He sent into the world. Whoever confesses Jesus, confesses the Father who sent Him. And all such will be in the Lord's favor, and ultimately be acknowledged in the resurrection by the Father and the holy angels, as members of the Bride of Christ. But those who, after becoming disciples of Christ, deny Him, He will not acknowledge as disciples in glory.

Jesus' words were addressed to the disciples, not to the masses. Whoever would confess Christ would become His disciple. None could deny Him who had never acknowledged Him. He is to be confessed, not merely by baptism, nor by any outward form. He is to be confessed in the life, in the conduct, in the words, of His followers. They are to have His Spirit and to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." Whoever makes a profession of being a disciple, and then ignores the Master's teachings, misrepresents Him, slanders Him, denies Him, and will not share in the glorious presentation of the Bride, in the end of this Age.

The masses, of course, were in doubt, and did not become disciples at all. Some even derided Jesus, saying that He had a devil and was mad. The Master declared that such misunderstand-

ing of Him and such slanders were quite forgivable, if done ignorantly. But when some went beyond this, and declared that His good works of the Holy Spirit were accomplished through the power of Satan, Beelzebub, they were committing inexcusable sins which would not be passed over.

Such sin must be willful; for their accusations had no basis whatever. The Master's teachings were purity itself. His conduct, His sayings and His miracles were all good works. Only a willful perversity could attribute these to Satan. The fact that they would never be forgiven does not signify, however, that the vilifiers were hopelessly lost. They would suffer punishment proportionate to the degree of their willfulness. If the punishment would bring reformation, well and good; but if not, it would eventuate in utter destruction—the Second Death.

Few subjects are less understood than this one—the sin against the Holy Spirit. The word spirit in such a case as this stands for power, or influence. For instance, the spirit of Satan would be the power, or influence, adverse to God and to righteousness. The spirit of error would be the power, or influence, of falsehood. Contrariwise, the spirit of Truth, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, represents Divine influence and power, wherever recognized. The responsibility of each individual is proportionate to his enlightenment. The mentally and morally blind have comparatively little responsibility, because they do not appreciate clearly the distinction between the spirit of Truth and the spirit of error, the Spirit of God and the spirit of Satan.

Man was not created in this condition of inability to discern right and wrong, good and evil. He was created perfect, in the image and likeness of God. Sin has wrought death, not merely to man's body, but also to his mind, his conscience. The ability to discern between right and wrong varies, therefore. Additionally, some have opportunities for instruction more than others, and thus their responsibility is increased. The world in general knows not God, and hence could not sin against the Holy Spirit in that full sense or degree which would be punished with the Second Death. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."—2 Corinthians 4:4.

Some knowledge is necessary to bring us to an appreciation of Christ as the Sent of God. Then if we accept Him and become His consecrated disciples, or followers, we receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit. This brings us to a vantage point where our eyes of understanding open more and more widely, in proportion as we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Our responsibility increases with our joy in the Lord and our preparation for the Heavenly glories to which we have been called. It is these advanced disciples of Jesus that are in danger of grieving the Holy Spirit whereby they were sealed—of quenching the Spirit of holiness in their hearts. (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19.) While the quenching and the grieving are not instantaneous works, they are the paths which lead to the Second Death. Every Christian, therefore, should press on toward perfection of holiness—the filling with the Spirit.

The Apostle presents this thought in Hebrews 6:4-6, declaring that those who have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the Age to come, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, cannot be renewed unto repentance, if they with full willfulness and deliberation reject Christ and righteousness, and turn to sin. Again, later on, he says (Hebrews 10:26,27), "For if we sin willfully after that we have received a knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for our sins, but a certain fearful looking for a decision and a fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries"—of God. The Apostle mentions especially the rejection of the atoning work of Christ, saying that such count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified a common thing, and do despite to the Spirit of favor which has brought them thus far.

Those who quench the Spirit of holiness, or "grieve the Spirit," are described by St. James (5:14) as spiritually sick. Cut off from fellowship with God, they have one last resort; viz., to request the assistance of sanctified elders of the Church to pray for them and to anoint them with oil, symbolic of the Holy Spirit. The prayer of faith shall save these spiritually sick; and the

Lord will raise them up; and though they have committed sins, these shall be forgiven them.

"The Holy Spirit Shall Teach"

The Lord's faithful followers were to expect that amongst their tribulations would be false accusations which would bring them before magistrates. For the most part the disciples were unlearned, and would feel great trepidation in the presence of educated officials. They were to know, however, that the Lord's blessing would be upon them; and that they would have wisdom superior to that which was naturally theirs. They need not anxiously premeditate what their answers would be, but commit all to the Lord, expecting Divine assistance.

Nothing in this implies that the ministers of Christ either in the pulpit or in the class meeting should attempt to represent the Lord without studying their subject. On the contrary, each should accept to himself St. Paul'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 Timothy 2:15.) There is a difference between standing before a congregation of God's people as a mouthpiece of His Word and being called before magistrates.

"WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS"—*Reprints*, p. 5396

LUKE 12:13-34.

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—Luke 12:34.

JESUS was surrounded by a multitude of Jews, one of whom, recognizing Him as influential, requested that He admonish his brother to give him a share of the family inheritance. Jesus declined, saying that He was not a judge or a divider. It would be well if the followers of Jesus would follow their Master in this, as well as in other matters. Too many are disposed to be busybodies in other men's matters, and overlook the fact that their commission of the Lord is to preach the Gospel.

Society has provided certain rules, laws and regulations—"the powers that be are ordained of God." Whatever these laws will not accord us we should let drop. We should be content with such things as we have and such things as Divine providence insures us. As Jesus had another work to do, so have His followers. That other work is the preparation for the glorious Messianic Kingdom. The riches which it promises us so far transcend all earthly riches as to make them appear, as St. Paul declared, loss and dross, not worthy to be compared with the blessed things our Lord promises.

Jesus backed up His refusal to intervene with a caution against covetousness. This implies that the estate properly belonged to the brother, and that the one who addressed Jesus desired more than his legal rights. He was coveting that which legally belonged to another. Jesus would have him, and us all, see that the abundance of earthly possessions, wealth, is not the sum of life. A man may be miserable while rolling in wealth, or he may be happy in comparative poverty. The basis of happiness is measured by the soul's relationship to God and hope in Him.

The Jews were a typical people—Natural Israel, in comparison to Spiritual Israel of this Gospel Age. God's promise to Natural Israel was that if they would keep the Law, they would inherit the Promise made to Abraham, and be used by God as His Kingdom to bless the world. Their difficulty was that, being sinners like the remainder of men, they were unable to keep the Divine requirements, hence were not qualified to be used of God as His Kingdom for scattering His blessings to the nations. Nevertheless, the hope of the Kingdom was the thing ever uppermost in their minds, sought for by all of them.

Jesus came into the world to give Himself a "Ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:6), and to begin the work of calling and drawing "Israelites indeed," to constitute His associates in the Messianic Kingdom. He could, and did, keep the Law perfectly, and additionally, laid down His life sacrificially for Adam and his race. This sacrifice permitted Him to make good for the unintentional shortcomings of all "Israelites

indeed," in whom was no hypocrisy. While they could not keep the Law and thus obtain the Kingdom, they could by accepting Christ have the righteousness of the Law imputed to them, and thus be acceptable with God. Hence Jesus' preaching was wholly along the lines of the Kingdom to the people who had for centuries been striving to approve themselves to God as worthy to constitute that Kingdom. The first opportunity for membership in the Kingdom class was granted to the Jewish people; and only in proportion as they rejected the favor did it pass beyond them to the Gentiles. As St. Paul said to some, "It was necessary that the Gospel should first be preached to you; but seeing ye reject the grace of God, … lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46.) In view of these facts, we see that the teachings of Jesus were not addressed to the world, but to people who claimed to have separated themselves from the world, and to be seeking or desiring to attain a joint-heirship in the Messianic Kingdom.

Indeed, the entire teaching of the New Testament is to such persons. These alone have the hearing ear; and we are instructed that "He that hath an ear, let him hear." Again, we are instructed that the Gospel of the Kingdom is to be preached to the meek, the humble, the broken-hearted; for only these are in any sense of the word prepared to receive the Message. All others are blind and deaf to the Gospel of the Kingdom. All who do not now hear or see will have their eyes and ears opened by and by, during Messiah's Reign, because He tasted death for every man. But such will fail entirely as respects the glorious High Calling of this Gospel Age—the Kingdom.

"Soul, Take Thine Ease"

Our Lord gave a parable illustrating the comparative foolishness of all earthly ambitions. This does not mean that earthly ambitions are the worst things; but rather that they are poor in comparison to the one great possibility, the Kingdom. It is a pearl of great value, to obtain which all other pearls—all other valuables, all other ambitions, and all other hopes—are to be set aside, and counted as dross.

The parable tells of a rich farmer who, instead of using his riches in doing good, was miserly—taking pleasure in accumulations. He built greater barns and storehouses, and consoled himself with the thought that he had plenty and more than enough, and could thenceforth take his ease. The parable points out that ere long he died. We query, What advantage did the man really have through his accumulation of great wealth, which he failed to use? He left it for others to quarrel over, and possibly to be more or less injured by. He was a foolish rich man. Instead of leaving his wealth thus, he should have enjoyed himself in spending it wisely for the good of others and to the glory of God. Thus he would have been rich toward God. But on the other hand, he was an illustration of those who are not rich toward God; for he laid up his treasure for self.

Many read into this parable things that it does not contain. They infer that the rich man went to eternal torment, but nothing in the Lord's words so intimates. The expression, "this night shall thy soul be required of thee," signifies this night you lose your life—you die in poverty. Earthly riches will be of no account to you in the future if you have not laid up spiritual riches in the heart, in the mind and in good works, which would make you rich in the future.

That rich man, instead of being benefitted by the riches which he accumulated, will in the future life be disadvantaged. He might have used his riches sacrificially, or he might have consecrated his entire life to God through Christ and then faithfully laid down time, talent, opportunities, wealth. Thus he would in the same proportion have been laying up treasures in Heaven, so that in the resurrection he would have been received of the Lord as a faithful follower, to share His glory, honor and immortality—to be a member of His Kingdom class, whose commission it will be for a thousand years to scatter the Divine blessings secured by the death of Jesus to all of Adam's race.

That rich man, having missed his opportunities, will nevertheless come forth during Christ's Millennial Kingdom; for we read that all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth. But instead of coming forth approved, to a share in the First Resurrection, he will come forth disapproved of God, and his

resurrection opportunities will be those described as the Resurrection of Judgment. (John 5:29, R.V.) He will come forth to shame and contempt, which will continue until he shall, under the judgments of that time, learn his lesson and form a better character; or, refusing so to do, he will be cut off in the Second Death.

Seek First The Kingdom

We are not to understand the good Teacher to mean that we are to look amongst the kingdoms of earth hoping to find one of them His Kingdom. On the contrary, He informs us that His Kingdom is future. "My Kingdom is not of this world"—this order of things. (John 18:36.) For His Kingdom, God's Kingdom, we pray, "Thy Kingdom come." We hope, we wait, we prepare, for that Kingdom. We are to seek it in the sense of seeking to do those things which will make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." We are to lay up treasures in Heaven. We are to use our pounds and our talents so wisely that at the Second Coming of the Savior, when He calls first for His servants and reckons with them, we may not only be amongst His servants, but hear His "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord"—the Kingdom joys—"Have thou dominion over two cities" or "five cities."

There is one definite procedure for those who would be heirs of the Kingdom. (1) They must recognize themselves as sinners, unworthy of Divine notice. (2) They must recognize Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (3) They should realize that while His sacrifice is the basis for the ultimate cleansing of the world, the reconciliation of all the willing and obedient to God, nevertheless that work has not yet begun. That work is to be accomplished by Him during the thousand years of His Kingdom Reign. (4) They are to hear the Lord's Message declaring that He is now seeking the members of the Kingdom class, and that the way to membership is a narrow way. "Whosoever will be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me, and where I am there shall My disciple be." They are to realize that the testing of this class is through much tribulation; that God is calling for not only saints, but those whose saintship will endure fiery trials, testings, in respect to their love for God and for the brethren, and in respect to their loyalty, even unto death.

From the time of making their full consecration to be the Lord's servants, faithful unto death in the service of righteousness, they will regard that Heavenly Kingdom as the great treasure beyond all comparison of value. They will seek it daily, hourly. Their hearts will be there—with the treasure. It will be the theme of their thoughts by day and of their meditations by night. Earthly occupations will still be necessary to them, in order to provide things needful and honest; but no earthly prize will have any value in comparison to the Heavenly prize, in their estimation. Such will be the successful heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised to those that love Him more than they love houses or lands, parents or children or self.

"LIKE UNTO MEN WHO WAIT FOR THEIR LORD."—*Reprints*, p. 3354

LUKE 12:35-48.

"Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find watching."

FOLLOWING up his instruction respecting his approaching death and resurrection, and after the transfiguration vision which emphasized this lesson to the apostles, our Lord began to explain to them something respecting his second coming and what their attitude should be in the interval. The present lesson emphasizes this matter. During the Lord's absence his people were to be continually on the alert; their loins girded would represent that they were to be ready for service all the time—actively engaged in promoting the interests of the Kingdom. According to the custom of that time, loose, flowing garments were used, and the girdle at the waist drew these into proper place so as to permit of the ordinary services of life. When rest was sought the girdle was loosed. Consequently the lesson of the figure is constant activity on the part of the Lord's people during his absence from us. We are not to become charged with the cares of this world and slumber and sleep, and thus refrain from

attending to the duties properly devolving upon us.

Each one of the Lord's servants is represented as a light bearer, and instructed to let his light so shine before men that they, seeing his good works, may glorify the Father in heaven. The picture is that of general darkness, ignorance, superstition and sin in the world, while the Lord's disciples have been granted the light of divine revelation and wisdom and understanding, which not only transforms them and makes of them New Creatures, but also shines through them unto all with whom they come in contact. "Ye are the light of the world." A suggestion is here in place, namely, that the Great Light, the glorious sunrise of the Millennial morning, has not yet taken place; the Lord's people are still in the world as little lights, shining in the midst of general darkness and watching and waiting for the morning. The Prophet's words were in line with this when he said, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." This night time of darkness and ignorance and sin began with the curse of death, which came upon our race through father Adam's disobedience, and the whole creation is groaning and travailing together, waiting for the morning, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God—Christ Jesus and his brethren, his joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

Our Lord gave a parable to illustrate the alertness and attentiveness that should characterize his followers. Amongst the Jews there would be no occasion on which the servants of the household would be expected to be more alert or to manifest more interest in the welfare of the household than on the night or morning on which their master would come to his home bringing with him his bride. And so the Lord chooses this as an appropriate illustration of the alertness that should characterize his followers while waiting for his second coming. As a matter of fact, the servants in this parable are the bride of another parable, but represent the matter from another standpoint. The sole lesson here is that diligence in service, that watchfulness for the interests of the Master's cause, that faith in his promise to return and expectancy of the event, serve as an aid or stimulus to proper service. When the master of the house should arrive with his company it would be a reflection against the interest of his servants and their love and devotion for him if on such an occasion they were found asleep or otherwise than ready to open the door at the Master's intimation of his arrival.

If Thou Wilt Not Watch Thou Shalt Not Know.

The parable implies that at our Lord's second coming he will have arrived before any of his faithful servants will be aware of the fact. His presence will be made known by the knock, and the knock would correspond to an announcement, through some special servant or servants, either orally or by the printed page, setting forth the evidences of the Master's presence. For instance, the publishing of time prophecies showing that the time is fulfilled—that certain prophecies marking events belonging to the close of the Gospel dispensation and the opening of the Millennial dispensation are accomplished, and that certain signs mentioned in the Scriptures are fulfilled—such testimonies are in the nature of a knock, which would be heard by such of the servants of the Lord as would be awake at that time. It is not for the servants in general to do the knocking, but for the Master himself to set in operation the forces and agencies he may choose to use for producing this knock and the announcement.

A blessing is promised to those servants who at that time shall be on the alert and hear the knock and understand it, and welcome the Master. Verse 39 shows quite distinctly that none except the servants are to appreciate the knock—that the world in general will not know of the time of the Master's return, but only his servants. No particular time for the Master's coming is set, but the intimation is clearly given that it is not for them to know the times and seasons, but for them to be on the alert continually, not only during the first watch, but during the second and during the third, that at whatever time the Master's knock may be heard they may respond promptly. It is not the thought, let it be noticed, that the servants are never to know when the Master will come: it is the thought that on his arrival he will cause such a knocking to be made as will be appreciated by all of his servants who are awake and

waiting and watching. Wherein would be the use of the knock if the servants were not to know when they heard the knock? The knock is to be the evidence of the presence, and the servants are not to know in advance, but are to know at the time of the arrival and that without seeing.

The Master Will Serve His Servants.

What will be the special reward of these servants? The parable states it: their Master will "gird himself [he will become their servant] and will make them to sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them." This implies that at our Lord's second coming he will be present before any of his servants know of his arrival. He will knock or cause announcement of his presence to be made. Those who will hear the knock will be such only as are awake and ready, expecting him and on the alert for the knock. These will receive a special spiritual feast. It will be special because it is on a special occasion and intended as a special reward for their manifestation of interest and devotion. It will be special also, because the Master of the household, turned to be its servant, would have all the keys to all the riches of grace and blessing, and, as elsewhere explained, will bring forth from his treasuries—his pantries—things new and old, substantials and delicacies. The faithful ones will surely have a royal feast, such as never before was granted them.

These things, we hold, have already been fulfilled. The knock, or proclamation of the Lord's presence, as indicated by the Old Testament prophecies, has been given since 1875 and is still being given. The knock of the parable might appropriately be but for a few seconds, but the fulfillment would properly cover a period of years. The servants of the household are taking notice, and each one as he opens his heart and mind to the fact of the Lord's presence receives a fulfillment of the blessing promised—receives a feast of fat things, spiritual—an understanding and appreciation of the divine plan and a soul nourishment and strengthening such as was never his before. That this serving of the servants by the Master should be understood to be an individual work and not merely a collective service and feast, is evidenced by the Lord's statement in Revelation 3:20. Here the Lord represents the same event in connection with his message to the last phase of his Church nominal, the Laodicean phase. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man [individual] hear my voice [knock] and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me."

"A Thousand Years … Are as a Watch in The Night."

According to the ancient Jewish method of reckoning the night time, the second watch would be from ten to two o'clock and the third from two to six o'clock. The parable does not state in which watch the Master may be expected. That question was left open; the faithfulness of the servants would be tested in proportion to his delay. Many would find it easy to keep awake and alert during the first watch, not so many during the second watch and still fewer during the third. It is in accord with this implication of the parable that we find today general lethargy prevailing amongst Christian people respecting the return of the Bridegroom and the glorious things of the Kingdom then to be brought unto his faithful household. Many are asleep in Zion, many are overcharged with the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. Not only have worldly people made a god of business, money and pleasure, but many who are at heart lovers of righteousness and who desire to be considered servants of the Lord, are seriously overcharged—absorbed in worldly things. Their hearts are so filled with these and their minds so occupied with dreams of Churchianity and pleasure and personal interest that they cannot hear the knock. They know not of the Master's presence; they open not their hearts to this wonderful announcement, for which the Lord's people have waited so long and prayed so earnestly, "Thy Kingdom come." They are missing, as a consequence, a great blessing implied in our Lord's parable, and definitely stated in Daniel's prophecy—"O, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."—Dan. 12:12.

His Presence Unknown To The World.

"But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief would

come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through."

The reference here is to a thief-like coming, and the Greek word, translated broken through, would mean literally "dug into." Many of the houses of olden time were not built of stone or bricks but of dried mud, somewhat like what are known as adobe houses in some parts of the West and in Mexico. Entry into such houses could be gained more quickly by digging through the wall than by forcing the door. The goodman of the house or its master does not refer to the Lord, for the house referred to is the "present evil world"—the social structure as at present organized. It is not necessary to conclude that Satan is meant, although he is in a general way the master of present institutions, "the god of this world," the "prince of this world." We may properly enough understand the goodman of the house to here signify earthly governments, the powers that be, the representatives of the ten toes of Daniel's image and of his fourth beast.

This matter of the second coming of the Lord and the knock which will be heard by those of his servants who are awake, but not heard by his servants who are asleep and overcharged, will be totally unknown to the world. To them his presence will not be that of a master longed for and served, but that of an opponent whose house they have in his absence taken possession of and used contrary to his interests. These, if they knew the time of his coming, would have fortified themselves in some manner and have sought to defend present institutions and to perpetuate them.

The coming as a thief upon the world signifies a quiet coming, unostentatious, unknown, without heralds or any commotion likely to disturb. The breaking up of the strong man's house—the breaking up of present institutions, civil, religious, political, financial—is already under way, just as the knocking for his servants is in process. The entire social structure is under control of the new Prince. He is marshaling his forces, and will cause even the wrath of man to praise him and to work out his purposes in the overthrow of every known institution built upon selfishness. Great will be the fall thereof—"a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation"; but upon the ruins the King of kings and Lord of lords will rear the grand Kingdom of the Lord, for which all who are his already pray, "Thy Kingdom come," and which, when it shall come to be instituted by the Lord, will be indeed the "desire of all nations."—Haggai 2:7.

"In Such An Hour As Ye Think Not."

The essence of this lesson is summed up in the 40th verse, "Be ye also ready; for in an hour ye think not the Son of man cometh." No one will be aware of the hour of the Son of man's coming; it is not a matter that is left in such a form as to be speculated upon in advance. His knock will be the first intimation of his presence. And so it has been fulfilled: none of us knew in advance when the Lord's coming would take place; it was after it had occurred that we heard the knock—his voice through the prophets of the Old Testament, declaring to us that we are already in the harvest time and in the days of the presence of the Son of man. Here we have fulfilled the words of the Lord in Matthew 24:37, "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the *parousia* [presence] of the Son of man be." The text shows that the thought is that as the world was ignorant of coming events in Noah's days, and, being ignorant, was eating and drinking and planting and building, so it will be in the days of the presence of the Son of man: the world will be ignorant of the fact of his presence, and the ordinary affairs of life will be progressing as usual. Only "ye brethren" who hear the knock will discern the presence and get the blessing.

Peter inquired whether or not this parable was applicable only to the twelve apostles, or to all those who were disciples in a general sense. Our Lord measurably ignored the question in his reply, "Who then is the faithful and wise steward whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?" The implication seems to be that when the right time should come for understanding the parable, it would be clearly set forth: that at the time of the parable's fulfillment the Lord would appoint a servant in the household to bring these matters to the attention of all the servants, and that certain responsibilities would rest upon such a one respecting the dis-

patch of his duties. If faithfully performed a great blessing would be his reward, and if unfaithful to his charge severe penalties would be inflicted. The implication would be also that if faithful the servant would be continued in his service, and if unfaithful he would be dismissed and another take the position and its responsibilities.

"The Faithful And The Wise Steward."

We would naturally enough endeavor to interpret our Lord's words as signifying a composite steward—that is that a certain number or class of brethren together would constitute the steward of this parable. In endeavoring to make such an interpretation we are met with several difficulties, however.

(1) To suppose such a class in the Church would be to recognize what is elsewhere denied—to recognize a clerical or authoritative class as distinct and separate from the remainder of the Church, because this steward is to dispense the meat in due season to the household, to the fellow-servants. The Church of Christ, we hold, is not composed of clergy and laity, but "ye are all one in Christ Jesus, and one is your Master, even Christ." There would be no violation of principle, however, in supposing that the Lord at the time indicated would specially use one member of his Church as the channel or instrument through which he would send the appropriate messages, spiritual nourishment appropriate at that time; because at various times in the past the Lord has used individuals in such a manner. For instance, Peter used the "keys" of the Kingdom of heaven at Pentecost, and again at the home of Cornelius, and in both places he was used as a special servant in connection with the dispensing of special truths. This did not constitute Peter a lord over the other apostles or over the Church, but merely a servant.

(2) However much we might endeavor to apply this figure to the Lord's people collectively, the fact would still remain that the various items stated would not fit to a company of individuals. For instance, in the 42nd verse, in the common version it is rendered, **that** faithful steward; the revised version, **the** faithful steward; as though a particular one were meant and the term not used indefinitely for a number. Turning to the Greek text we find that the emphasis is there also and in double form—the faithful, the wise steward. If it were a case in which we could apply this text to Christ, there would be no difficulty, or if it were a case in which it could be applied to the whole body of Christ, there could be no difficulty, in harmonizing the one with the many members of the one body of Christ; but since the servant mentioned is to dispense food to the other members of the body, his fellow-servants, the term seems to be limited to some particular individual. However, just as we said of Peter, that he was not by reason of special use made a lord over the brethren, so we say of whoever is meant in this passage, that in no sense of the word would this constitute him a lord, or dictator or master, or imply his inspiration. All that we could say would be that it would be one who would be privileged to be a servant, and not many seem anxious to fill such a position in the true sense of the word. This servant, if found faithful, would be entrusted more and more with the distribution of every feature of Present Truth as represented in the parable, by his being given the dispensing of the food in due season to the household. Unfaithfulness on the part of this appointed one would mean his degradation from this service, and presumably the service would go on at the hands of another, his successor.

The expression, "Verily I say unto you, He shall make him ruler over all his goods," should not be understood to apply to future glories and honors, but merely to a more general charge or stewardship as respects the dispensing of the Lord's "goods" or truths due to be protected or disbursed during the remainder of this "harvest" time. In other words, the steward through whom the Lord will dispense Present Truth in this "harvest," will, if found vigilant, humble, faithful, be continued in the stewardship and be used of the Lord more and more in the service of the household—down to the close of the "harvest."

"Not As Lords Over God's Heritage."

That this servant must not act or be regarded as a lord is clearly indicated in the 45th verse, which shows that such a misuse of his appointment would work his downfall. At no time has the Church ever had need to be on guard

against its servants who really endeavored to serve it and to hand forth from the Lord's treasure house the meat in due season. The Church's dangers have always arisen from those who sought to lord it over God's heritage, and to dispense their own wisdom or the wisdom of other men instead of the Word of the Lord.

Verses 47,48, seem to imply that the servant's responsibility to the Lord will be in proportion to his knowledge of the Lord's will; and that the Lord will deal with him on the principle that having had much knowledge and opportunity, the requirements at his hands will be proportionately large.

While this exhortation in general seems to apply to one particular servant through whom the other servants are to be supplied (see Matt. 24:45-51), we can see that the same principles in a general sense would apply to each servant in turn, as he would receive either food or stewardship. His responsibility would be in proportion to what he received or had opportunity to receive, and to the manner in which he used the blessing. We of today, living under such great favor from the Lord, enjoying the light of Present Truth as we do, have every reason to give thanks and more and more to appreciate the things new and old from the Master's storehouse of Truth that he is now dispensing to us, and which each in turn is privileged to dispense to others and has responsibility for in proportion to his knowledge. The Lord help us each to be faithful, and to remember that our Lord was a servant as well as a Son, and that our highest privilege as sons is to be faithful servants, stewards of the manifold grace of God.

VIEW FROM THE TOWER.—*Reprints*, p. 748

"Ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth,
but how is it that ye do not discern this time?"—Luke 12:56.

Glance backward for a little more than eighteen centuries. There stands Jesus with twelve disciples; they are mostly young men, the Master himself being but little over thirty. They have never had an education, and most of them have been ordinary fishermen. But though "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13), the disciples had a confidence and power in teaching which marked them among men as peculiar; and wherever they went "they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus," for though their Master had "never learned," yet he was scholarly, a man of letters. John 7:15.

But after all, that was an insignificant little band in the eyes of the military governor Pilate, in the eyes of the chief priest, and in the eyes of the Scribes, and Pharisees—the Doctors of Divinity—the apostles of legal holiness in that day. The class **chosen** to announce Jesus as the King of the Jews, saying, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15), was not a prepossessing one, and to the zealous Jew was so unlike what might be expected of their long anticipated Messiah, and so out of harmony with their great religious teachers, that they failed to recognize Jesus as such.

The miracles and teachings of Jesus, and the correspondence of these with the predictions concerning Messiah, made by the Lord's prophets long before, were the only evidence Israel had, that Jesus was the long-expected King. This could be evidence to such only as by careful heed to the "more sure word of prophecy," knew what to expect, and who by humility of mind would be prepared not only to note the prophetic utterances which foretold the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus, but to receive him who came in meekness with the escort of humble fishermen.

Even John the Baptizer, his cousin, who had immersed Jesus, and who saw and bare witness to his anointing by the holy spirit of God was sorely puzzled by the strange course events were taking. He had perhaps supposed that when anointed, Jesus would publicly announce himself with power and authority, and bring honor and dignity to all associated with him; but to the contrary of this, Jesus was going about quietly and not attempting the exercise

of marked power as a ruler, while he (John) had been cast into prison. Things progressed so differently from what he had expected that even John's faith in Jesus as the Messiah began to fail, and he sent a message to Jesus, saying: "Art thou he that should come, or [are you also merely a forerunner as I was, and] look we for another," to be the Deliverer, the Messiah to bless Israel and through them all the nations?

Mark carefully the answer of Jesus to John; he in substance recalls to him the **transpiring events**, as in the Scripture at the head of this article; and he expected John to be able to DISCERN THE TIME by the events. He said, "Go and show John again, those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Matt. 11:3-6.

There was in transpiring events proof that he who was then present, was no less than the Messiah promised. But we should not forget either, that not only were Jesus' miracles performed with a degree of secrecy, but that they were done over a large area of country, and that the majority of the Jews probably never saw one of the healed persons. Nor had they the printing press and its reporters to spread reports of the details of the miracles.

The learned there, might have known from Daniel's prophecy that The time was fulfilled; (Dan. 9:24-27; Mark 1:15,) but for the masses, the evidence was simply, and only, the signs of the times; but these because blinded by the traditions of men, they did not appreciate. In following men the word of God became of none effect, so that the people as well as the leaders were blind. The blind followed the blind; both stumbled; and thus Israel as a nation received not the blessing but only the elect—those who were of the class chosen, "Israelites indeed."

And now what do we see? Messiah is present again; the time is fulfilled for his Second Advent—Jesus a spiritual being, in power, is about to exalt his "body" to his own condition, and to judge, cleanse, heal and bless the world —the House of Jacob and all the families of the earth.

What are the evidences? They have been repeatedly furnished in these columns, and are ever increasing. We have shown the testimony of the prophets to be that—The Day of the Lord [the time of Christ's presence] is a day of trouble; that in it the powers of the heavens shall be shaken [earthly governments and authorities removed—Matt. 24:29; Heb. 12:27,28; Dan. 2:44.] In it, when fully under way, all the tribes of the earth shall mourn because of him who now is assuming the control, and who will shake to pieces every evil system which hinders, binds, oppresses, or blinds the people whom he comes to bless—all of earth's families. Then the great ones shall fear as they look after those things coming upon the earth. They are already in this condition. They see the spirit of liberty working among the masses, and they truly see that it will soon lead them to madness and bring a sanguinary conflict. Again, it is noted in Scripture that in the coming troubles the rich of this world will suffer much; (James 5:1-4) and so it is, today, the aims and threats of the discontented are against the wealthy. We see these things all about us; are they not signs of the times in which we are living?

Look again; see the Jew once more finding a home in the land of promise from which for so long he has been an exile. Note, too, the fact that there is now a beginning of the turning away of his blindness, and he is beginning to recognize Him whom they have pierced and lament therefor. (Zech. 12:10.) Turn now to the apostle James' statement, and note that this rebuilding of Israel is due "after" the selection of the people for his name, the Bride from the Gentiles. (Acts 15:16,17.) Turn to Paul and note his statement—that **when** the fullness of the Gentiles is come in [the full number selected from the Gentiles to be joint-heirs with Christ —His Bride] then, blindness shall begin to depart from Jacob—Israel after the flesh. Rom. 11:25-32. A letter from the one whom God seems to be raising up as a teacher among the Jews, will be found in another column, and is of deep interest as bearing upon this feature of restitution. What is this, if not an evidence of what the **time periods** of the prophets have already showed us?—that we are living in the harvest of the Christian age, the dawning of the Millennial age; that the selection and trial of "the Church which is His (Christ's) body" is about complete. It proves that the DELIVERER

(head and body) is come, and the blessing coming to Israel is but a premonition of the coming blessings upon all nations, of which they are the first-fruits.

Look again, but in another direction; Note the increase of special healing of diseases since 1874. Some are in answer to prayer, some in answer to anointing with oil and prayer, and some without prayer, or oil, or anything. Thus in various ways today, ye see increasingly that the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, blind eyes are opened, and the Gospel (good tidings) of a "restitution for the groaning creation, of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets" (Acts 3:21.) is preached.

The healings of our day are as pronounced and as true, as were those at the first advent, except that the dead have not yet been raised from the tomb. Nor is it in any one place, but everywhere, that this power is manifested and this feature of restitution work is beginning. We hear from Sweden, and Germany and Britain, in much the same strain, as from all over this land. Among the remarkable insurances coming under our notice recently, is that of a family in Louisville, Ky., in which four deaf and dumb persons were perfectly and instantly healed. One of them aged eleven years, had never spoken or heard from birth. The two small towns of Midway and Primrose, Pa., have during the past month been much excited by six remarkable cases of faith cure from various maladies. One old man, Hamilton Smith, Midway, Pa., had been so crippled by rheumatism that he could not stoop down; but was instantly healed, and to a reporter who called to inquire regarding his healing, demonstrated his suppleness by kicking higher than his own height, and the night he was cured he jumped over a fire board fence with ease. He declares that he is stronger than ever, and that he is becoming young again. And in fact this seems true. He is seventy-two years old but in a short time his white hair has commenced to resume its original color; the wrinkles are leaving his face, and his complexion becoming fresh so that he might pass now, for a man of fifty.

We might multiply instances; one of a woman healed after an illness of sixteen years, who is now thirty-seven years old but might readily be mistaken for twenty. She though ignorant of the views presented in the TOWER relative to our being now in the dawn of Millennial Day, expresses herself as satisfied that she has entered on the "Resurrection Life" as she calls it.

If these be not evidences of the beginning of Restitution work, what are they? This is the right time for the work of healing; in the time of the first advent, restitution and restitution works, healing, etc., were not due; they were premature and were only performed to manifest forth beforehand, Christ's glory and to illustrate the powers of the world (age) to come, which now is at hand. In his miracles, as in everything else, Jesus dealt with the end of that age as though it had been the Gospel age which it only typified; hence the works of the restitution which he and the disciples performed, no less than offering himself then as their King, and Reaper, were but illustrations of the end of the Christian age, his assumption of kingly powers, etc., now fully due, because the "body," the church, is complete, and the time for this blessed SEED of Jehovah (Gal. 3:29) to bless all the families of earth, is at hand.

If all could see that the world's hope is **restitution** to perfection, many more of that class would be prepared to ask the Lord in faith for physical healing and might go on unto the perfection of human nature, instead of into the tomb. Not only is the time at hand when he that believeth need not enter the tomb, but such may go from strength to strength. If men but realized the Scripture teaching, better, and did not get the heavenly hope of the Gospel church, the "body of Christ," mixed with the restitution hope of the world, they would be much better prepared to receive the blessing of restitution now within their reach. The basis of restitution simply stated is this: Man became a sinner and in Adam his right and hold upon life was lost. Since then, death has reigned over all. But Jesus was made flesh in order that he by God's favor might redeem all. He paid the full penalty, DEATH, and thus redeemed ALL. (Rom. 5:17-19.)

Now, all may return to life and perfection because ransomed by Jesus. This restitution might have taken effect as soon as Jesus died and rose and ascending on high presented the sacrifice on man's behalf. Jesus might have re-

turned at once to restore all things but another work intervened the selection of the Christian church—"the body" "the Bride" of Christ Jesus, to be his joint-heir in the reign of blessing and work of restitution. Now, the work of restitution is fully due because the selection of the body of Christ, from the world is complete, and the work of restitution is beginning while the sifting of the consecrated saints progresses to completion. Men shall be and now may be, released by faith in him who gave the ransom which not only releases from pain and sickness, but ultimately from every degree of death, to perfect life.

So far as our observation goes, the Lord makes use of various characters as agents in these healings, even as Judas was one of the twelve who worked miracles. And some mentioned as remarkable for doing "wonderful works" (Matt. 7:22), will lack the approval of the Master, and some were not reckoned among the followers of Christ (Mark 9:38, 39). Apparently the Lord acknowledges and answers FAITH in this direction by whomsoever exercised, because it is now due time for restitution work of this kind to have a beginning.

As heretofore shown, physical restitution is not the hope set before the "little flock," but on the contrary sacrifice. It is their mission as it was their Leader's whose footsteps they follow, to "lay down" life as human beings, not to take it up. They might be agents of God in blessing others as was Paul (Acts 19:12), and yet like him suffer from maladies they were instrumental in curing in others (2 Cor. 12:8,9). Of the Master it was truly said: "He saved others himself he cannot save." Had he saved himself, he could not have been our Redeemer. So if we would share his glory, and with him bless and restore the families of earth, we must with him, share in his sacrifice.

But while these, appreciating their covenant, will not **ask** for healing or any earthly blessings, it does not follow that if they asked, God would always, as in Paul's case, refuse them. Thus Jesus said in Gethsemane, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But then how shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be." Matt. 26:53,54.

If the legions of angels had protected him from the priests and soldiery then where would have been his sacrifice? Therefore he did not **ask**. Likewise those who now tread the same "narrow way" [See "Food," page 134] refuse to **ask** for the same reason—that they may complete their covenant of sacrifice. At times, however, without asking, such have been relieved in such manner as to enable them to accomplish further labor in the Lord's vineyard (Phil. 1:12,13,24,25).

What think you of the signs of our times? How is it that you can discern the face of the sky, but cannot discern **this** time? Is it not more clearly marked than was the first advent? Are there not more convincing proofs now, than there were then, even in the signs of the times, that we are in the Day of the Lord's presence?

The Lord willing, we purpose hereafter to devote more space to the mention of cases of healing on every hand, that this sign of restitution and hence of the Lord's presence (Acts 3:21) may be duly noted by our readers.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Judea	Heals crippled woman on Sabbath; three illustrations			13:1-21	

Luke 13:1-21

There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye

shall all likewise perish. He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why encumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him. Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

LAWFUL ON THE SABBATH—*Reprints*, p. 5405

LUKE 13:10-17; 14:1-6.

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

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

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

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

Jesus and the Apostles were Jews, and were under obligation to the Law Covenant up to the time that Jesus by His death became the "end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Since that time the followers of

Jesus are in no sense of the word bound by the Jewish Law. They are interested in the Ten Commandments, because those commandments in an outward way indicate the will of God; and all the sons of God are anxious to know the Father's will, that they may voluntarily do it. But God does not address the House of Sons, "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal"; for so surely as they have been begotten of the Holy Spirit at all, they will not wish to kill, nor wish to steal.

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

Seventh Day—First Day

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

Although Christians have now abandoned the observance of the seventh day in favor of the first day of the week, many erroneously think that God authorized the change. But not so; the Christian is not under law, but under grace. It was from privilege that the early disciples met together on the first day, and not by instruction of God. So it should be still, and so it is yet with some. True Christians cannot have too much opportunity for fellowship together for the study of the Heavenly Father's Word, and for offering Him the worship and homage of their hearts.

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

The Sabbath of Rest

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

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

But, as the Apostle points out, "there remaineth a rest for the people of God"—a future rest. The Church will enter into that rest when they experience their resurrection change, when they are made like the Savior and enter into the joys of their Lord. That will be the complete rest. So far as the world is concerned, the great Messiah's Reign of a thousand years will be the

Sabbath of the world in general, in which they will have the privilege of attaining perfection in every sense of the word and thus will enter into rest by coming into harmony with God.

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

To Do Good on The Sabbath

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

These for show exaggerated the letter of the Law in some respects, while they entirely ignored its spirit. Thus when the disciples of Jesus, passing through a wheat field, rubbed some of the grains in their hands to hull them before eating, the Pharisees complained that they were breaking the Sabbath—they were threshing and winnowing. Jesus showed that this was not the purport of the Law. It was not made to hinder any good or necessary work, but to benefit the people. According to the Doctors of the Law, to search for a biting flea would be sin on the Sabbath day, because it would be "hunting." Thus in various ways they made the reasonable Law of God to appear unreasonable to the people; and while thus particular in trifles, they ignored the weightier matters of the Law, which appertained to justice, love and mercy.

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

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

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

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

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Jerusalem	Jesus at Festival of Dedication; The Good Shepherd				10:1-39

John 10:1-39

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind? And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him. Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

THE SHEPHERD, THE DOOR, THE FLOCKS—*Reprints*, p. 4157

JOHN 10:1-18.

"The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—John 10:11.

THE Scriptures assign many very beautiful and expressive titles to our Lord as descriptive of his relationship to his faithful. Amongst the most beautiful and impressive of these is the Good Shepherd, or, more literally, the grand Shepherd, the ideal Shepherd. Likewise amongst the various names applied to our Lord's followers, the term "sheep" is the one most familiar as well as one of the most fitting. Surely it would never occur to the natural man to use such an illustration. In illustration of what we mean note the fact that the barons and lords of England have adopted various signets, coats of arms, etc., on many of which animals or animals' heads appear. Did any one ever see a sheep's head on any of these? We think not. If we could imagine any earthly lord as adopting a symbol of a sheep, it would surely represent a surly-horned ram. Lions' heads, tigers' heads, eagles' heads, and nondescript heads of ferocious aspect, dragons, etc., are what are usually chosen. This represents the natural mind and the desire that the natural man has to appear strong and ferocious and to intimidate others. He who represented himself as the Good Shepherd and his followers as sheep had a very different idea of the whole matter from that of the natural man, and we who have become his followers should take note of this, and, appreciating it, should cultivate more and more of the sheep-like nature in our relationship to him as the Shepherd.

The Door Into The Sheepfold

The parable of our lesson divides itself into two parts, representing Jesus first of all as the door into the sheepfold and secondly as the Shepherd. The fold described in the parable is well represented in the accompanying illustration. It was a place of safety, of rest, of protection from prowling wild beasts and from robbers. There was but one doorway into these folds and it was supposed to be guarded by a porter who would know the true shepherd and admit him and no other. Our Lord declared himself to be the true Shepherd of Jehovah's flock, the only one to whom the porter would grant admission and the only one, therefore, who had the right to control the sheep and who alone could provide for their safety. The porter who could thus discriminate between the true and the false was the Law Covenant. Those who could not answer the Law, who could not fulfill its demands, could not substantiate their claims to being the Shepherd, the Messiah. But our Lord did meet the demands of the Law fully, completely—"in him was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." He was already holy, harmless, separate from sinners. He is thus identified to us as the rightful Shepherd. Others had come in his name, professing to be the Messiah—false Messiahs—and had endeavored to attract the sheep; but our Lord declares of them that they were fraudulent, "thieves and robbers," who were merely assisting to steal the sheep, and who were actuated not with a desire to profit the sheep but by personal, selfish ambitions.

There was but one way to become the true Shepherd of the Lord's flock and to have a right to lead his flock—out to the green pastures and still waters of truth and grace and into the rest and security of the fold. That way was the way of the cross—to give himself a ransom for all. This our Lord did and thus he became the door to the sheepfold, opening up a new and living way, or, more correctly, a new way of life. Nevertheless, this is not the making of a new door into the fold, but the opening of the door which had previously been closed. The door was the Law, which could not open except by obedience to the Law; and now our Lord Jesus, having kept the Law, has made it possible for all of his true sheep to enter in by the same door, by the keeping of the Law—not, however, the letter of the Law, which would be impossible to us, but its spirit. Thus the Apostle says of the true sheep and their entering into the fold, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit," (Rom. 8:4); because our Shepherd has made an appropriation of his grace on our behalf which makes up for us all that we lack. So long as we are his and are striving to walk in his ways every deficiency is compensated out of his

abundance. To him the porter openeth, to him the Law and the prophets bear witness.

"But They Understood Not"

It is supposed that this parable was uttered in the hearing of the man born blind, who had been expelled from the synagogue, and in the hearing also of the Pharisees, who had so much to do with his expulsion. No doubt the man was feeling discouraged, downcast, because of his excommunication from the supposed fold of the Lord's people. The presumption, then, is that the Lord gave this parable to illustrate the fact that he had not really been cast out of the Lord's fold, but merely out of a human organization by those who had no power in respect to the matter. Our Lord would have him and the Pharisees and his disciples and us see that there is no flock of the Lord except that of which he is the Leader and Shepherd; that there is no way into that flock except through him, through the work which he would accomplish by his sacrifice and through our acceptance of the same by faith. But verse 6 says the hearers understood not the meaning of the parable, therefore the Lord repeated it in slightly different terms, proclaiming himself as the doorway by which any could enter into divine favor as members of the Lord's flock. Thus the man who had been cast out of the synagogue might perceive that he really had lost nothing, but that on the contrary he had been assisted toward the right door of the true fold, in which rest indeed could be obtained. Now he was invited to see that the Lord alone was the avenue to rest and salvation and to the spiritual refreshment of divine instruction. Others had selfishly sought to steal or to destroy the sheep, if thereby they could advance their own personal interests; but he, as the true Shepherd, instead of seeking his own welfare, was seeking the welfare and advantage of the sheep that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

What a lesson for us! The Master did not say that he came to deliver the sheep from eternal torment, but that he came to deliver them from death. He does not say that they already have a life which they must spend somewhere either in joy or anguish, and that he had come to assist them, so that it should not be spent in anguish; his language, on the contrary, teaches that the sheep could have no life except through him, the Life-Giver; that he had come to give back in due time by restitution processes, to as many as would receive it, the life which was lost by father Adam's disobedience—human life. Yea, he declares that he intended to give life more abundant than that which was lost! How could this be, if father Adam was perfect and as such had everlasting life according to divine arrangement? We answer that the life which the Lord proposes to give to those who are his sheep of this Gospel Age, this Little Flock, is a still higher form and degree of life, namely, immortality, inherent life. These he proposes to make partakers of the divine nature by giving them a share with himself "in his resurrection," the "First Resurrection."—Phil. 3:10.

He Gave His Life For Us

This is the central point of our lesson. The Good Shepherd, so far from self-seeking, gladly laid down his life for the sheep, and it was by virtue of thus purchasing the sheep by his own precious blood that their eternal life is possible; without his purchase there would be no flock, and it is by this that he becomes the Shepherd of the flock. How clear, how beautiful the thought, "Ye were bought with a price"! (1 Cor. 6:20.) No one else could give this ransom for us, no one else could purchase us or grant us life everlasting, no one else, therefore, could legally become our Shepherd or be able to lead us into the rest and peace of God, into the knowledge of the truth and ultimately into the heavenly fold, the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Worthy the Lamb that was slain to receive glory, honor, dominion and power!

"The Sheep Hear His Voice"

The tales told respecting the shepherds of eastern countries and their flocks are remarkable and illustrate well our Lord's declarations of this parable. Let us examine a few of these that we may sympathetically enter into the spirit of the Lord's words. Those who heard him were familiar with these facts. One writer says"

It is one of the most interesting spectacles to see the number of flocks of thirsty sheep water at a fountain. Each flock in obedience to the call of its own shepherd, lies down awaiting its turn. The shepherd of one flock calls his sheep in squads, and when the squad has done drink-

ing, orders it away by sounds which the sheep perfectly understand, and calls up another squad. The sheep never make any mistake as to who whistles to them or calls them. In a flock of hundreds or thousands each individual sheep has a name, knows it and is known by it. The Greeks had a similar custom. The names frequently corresponded to certain defects, as for instance, 'Torn' or 'Broken-Legged,' 'One Eye,' 'Curly Horn,' 'Bald Head.' As lambs they are taught to answer to their names by patient drill, being led back and forth from the rest of the flock and not allowed to go to their mothers for food until they respond properly to the calls. The shepherd never drives his sheep in the East, but goes before them, they follow him, they run after him if he appears to be escaping from them and are terrified if he is out of their sight or any stranger appears instead of him. He calls for them from time to time to let them know that he is at hand, they listen and continue grazing, but if anyone else attempts to produce the same peculiar sounds they look around, startled, and begin to scatter. A Scotch traveler changed clothes with a shepherd, and thus disguised began to call the sheep; they remained motionless; then the true shepherd raised his voice and they all hastened to him in spite of his strange garments."

"He Calls His Own Sheep By Name"

The foregoing illustrations help us to appreciate this statement and assist us in applying it to the true sheep of the Lord's Little Flock. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and it is also true that those who are his know him. "He goeth before them and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice and a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." The voice of the Lord is the voice of justice, of truth and of love, and all who are his sheep are expected to be able to discriminate between his message and the various false messages which more or less particularly represent the Adversary, who seeks to mislead the flock, using human instrumentality to accomplish the purpose. We have the Lord's assurance that none of the true sheep will be satisfied with the false Gospel; it will not appeal to their hearts, and equally we have the assurance that the true sheep will be satisfied with the true Gospel, because it will satisfy their longings as nothing else will do. This is an important point to keep before our minds. It indicates to us the importance of becoming fully, truly, emphatically the Lord's sheep, of entering into covenant relationship with him and thus making sure his protecting care and instruction.

"I Know My Sheep"

It becomes an important question then as to how and when we become the Lord's sheep. Are all the wise and the learned, the rich and the great, the Lord's sheep? The Apostle answers, No, and says further that not many of those will be found amongst the sheep—not many wise, not many great, not many learned, not many noble, not many rich, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. (1 Cor. 1:26-28; Jas. 2:5.) Are all of the poor, then, the Lord's sheep? We answer, No! These different flocks do in a general way indeed hold the name of Christ. But surely not many of them give evidence of being his disciples, his followers. Many of them know little about his Word, his voice; many of them know nothing about his leading into green pastures and by still waters of divine truth and grace, many of them know nothing about the real fold with its rest and peace and protecting care. Their lack in these respects shows that they are not of the true flock whom the Lord is leading, though true sheep of the Lord may be found in each denomination. But wherever they may be, if they are his, they are being led and being fed and know him and know his voice, his Word, and are dissatisfied with the husks of human tradition.

"The Hireling fleeth"

Many, indeed, might have been glad of the honor of being the Shepherd, the caretaker of the Lord's flock, but the test, the cost, was too great for them. We may well suppose that many of the angels would have been glad to occupy such a position—but would they have been willing to undertake it at the cost involved? Many amongst men have coveted the office of a shepherd both before our Lord's day and since; but while none of them could have bought the sheep, since all were under condemnation, we have no reason to suppose that any of them would have been willing to purchase them at the cost of his all. The Lord's words seem to

imply this. Only the true Shepherd was willing to make the sacrifice and to lay down his life for the sheep. We may remark here that while there is but one Shepherd of the Lord's flock, he, in his absence, has made provision for his flock, that he would give them pastors and teachers who were to feed the flock of God and to watch for their souls, for their lives, to protect their interests.

It is in line with the Master's teaching that we find that he expects all who would be worthy of this position of feeding this flock, shepherding them, must have his spirit, his willingness to lay down their lives for the sheep, and in their defense, as his representatives, to protect them from the Adversary and his various snares and machinations and from the wolves in sheep's clothing who would make merchandise of them that they might bring them into bondage, into human pens separate and apart from the true fold opened by the true Shepherd and who would feed them upon the husks of human tradition, instead of leading them to the green pastures of "Present Truth." As the true sheep know the true Shepherd and are known by him, so the true Shepherd should know the true under-shepherds and they should know the sheep intimately. Those who utter a voice or call of their own cannot be recognized by the true Shepherd or by the true sheep; the faithful under-shepherd will speak not only the words but also in the tones, in the manner of the true Shepherd.

How comforting the assurance of verse 14, "I know mine own and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me and I know the Father"! (R.V.) What a beautiful description we here have of the precious relationship between the Lord and his own! The comparison between his knowledge and that of the Father is forceful, and, as our Lord elsewhere pointed out, they that know not him know not the Father. How important from the divine standpoint is knowledge, not merely head knowledge, but heart knowledge, intimate acquaintance with the Lord and his glorious plan!

One Flock And One Shepherd

An important truth is set forth in v. 17: There is only the one fold now provided for the Lord's sheep, and in it all of his true ones of this Gospel Age find rest and peace through faith and obedience. This is the Little Flock, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom. Many have supposed in the past that this Elect Little Flock which will receive the Kingdom glory, honor and immortality will be the only ones ever recognized of the Lord as his sheep, that all others will be consigned to purgatory or to eternal torment. But the erroneousness of this view is abundantly shown in this verse where our Lord distinctly declares that he has other sheep not of this fold, others who have not yet entered into its rest of faith which we have entered, hoping for the glories of the Kingdom beyond. Let us have a good view of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of divine love and provision in Christ: that the whole world was lost in sin and death through father Adam's disobedience, and that the whole world was redeemed by the precious blood of Christ! Let us see that as yet only a special class has been called out of darkness into the Lord's marvelous light and into the privileges of the present sheep-fold conditions! Let us note that the great mass of mankind are without God and have no hope in the world, because their eyes are blinded and their ears are stopped and they know not of the grace of God and have not yet received of the blessings!

But let us hearken also to the declaration of the Lord that in due time all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped! Let us hearken to his declaration that the Little Flock now being selected are to constitute his Bride and joint-heirs in the Kingdom and that then, through him and his glorified Bride, the blessing of the Lord shall be extended to every member of the race. The Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth with healing in his beams, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. Then the gathering of the sheep of the other flock will begin, as recorded in John 10:16. At that time the present flock will have passed beyond the vail into the Kingdom and its glories. Then the present fold will be at an end and there will be no use for such a fold in the future, for thieves and robbers will not be permitted then—"nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [Kingdom]." (Isa. 11:9.) Then the great Adversary shall be bound for a thousand years that he may deceive the sheep no longer until the thousand years

are finished. Meantime the whole world of mankind will be under the instruction of the Lord and his Bride class, and the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. (Hab. 2:14.) The effect will be a test of humanity, and some will come gladly, voluntarily, into accord with the Lord as his sheep and be accepted to his right hand, to his favor, as the kind upon whom he is pleased to bestow everlasting life. Others under the same favorable conditions will manifest the goat-like, the wayward disposition and be gathered gradually to the left hand of disfavor as of those who have the spirit of the Adversary, which cannot be favored of the Lord. These ultimately with Satan, at the close of the Millennial Age, will be utterly destroyed in the Second Death. Their punishment will be everlasting, because their death will be everlasting; they will never be resurrected, theirs will be the Second Death—symbolically *Gehenna*, destruction.

None will deny that throughout the Gospel Age there is a large class who have never heard of the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby they must be saved and who, therefore, have never had an opportunity of becoming members of the Lord's flock. That they have gone to heaven without a knowledge of the "only name" is unscriptural as well as unreasonable, and that they have gone to eternal torment without an opportunity for salvation is equally unscriptural and unreasonable. That the Lord intends to use the Very Elect Little Flock of this Gospel Age as his kings and priests during the Millennium, to carry his mercy and favor to all of these and to give them an opportunity of becoming members of the human flock to whom he will be pleased to give eternal life, is both reasonable and Scriptural.

One Flock, But Not One Fold

Our common version declares, "There shall be one fold and one Shepherd," but this is not borne out by the Greek text, which is more properly rendered in the Revised Version and in the Diaglott—"There shall be one flock and one Shepherd." This is in full agreement with the Apostle's statement (Eph. 1:10) that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one [literally, under one head] all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him. Ultimately all of God's creation will be under the headship of this great Shepherd, who is now the Head of the Church, the Little Flock, and who in future will be Head over angels also and over restored humanity. The flock will be one, but the sheep will be of various natures on various planes of being; as it is written, "In my Father's house are many mansions," many apartments, many planes, but all harmonious, grand. But the highest of all these planes, the plane of glory, is that to which the Lord has invited the Little Flock, the Bride class of this Gospel Age. Let us hear his voice, let us follow in his footsteps, let us make our calling and election sure!

THE GOOD SHEPHERD—THE CHRIST.—*Reprints*, p. 2441 [last half]

JOHN 10:1-16.

"I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—John 10:11.

JEHOVAH GOD established a typical Kingdom or sheepfold, and accepted the nation of Israel as his sheep, but as a nation they were wayward sheep and knew him not. Nevertheless, with a Law Covenant he fenced them in. They desired a king, a ruler, a caretaker, a governor, and God let them have their wish; but none of these was the true shepherd, neither did any bring the sheep into desirable conditions. And when these were finally done away, various others presented themselves as the Messiah, falsely claiming the right to lead Israel—false Messiahs. These, as our Lord declares, were thieves and robbers, who sought the control of the sheep, not from interest in the sheep, but from selfish motives, for self-aggrandizement and exaltation. These attempted to lead out the Lord's people, not by the door, but by climbing up other ways: by climbing over the Law, or by digging under it, they would reach the sheep and become leaders; and altogether in various ways a large proportion of Israel had been led

astray out of the fold, some to idolatry, and some simply to wander in the wilderness.

At our Lord's first advent this was the condition of things: God's covenant with Israel was standing as a wall around that nation, but its door was barred by justice, as represented in the Mosaic Law—Israel's Covenant. There could be no proper ingress or egress; all were prisoners of the Law,—shut up unto that hope which should afterward be revealed, namely, Christ the Door or "way" of life. Meanwhile, tho the door was guarded zealously by the scribes and Pharisees, the fact was entirely neglected that thieves and robbers, Satan's servants, were at work plundering the sheepfold.—John 10:1,2,7,9; Gal. 3:24; John 14:6; Zech. 9:9-12.

Nor could our Lord Jesus rightfully open the fold and take charge of the sheep, except at the cost of his own life. This was the purpose of the Father, the Great Shepherd, and with this in view he shut up the sheep under the Law, to the intent that they would need to be redeemed by his Son (the appointed Shepherd), from under the dominion of the Law, before they could be made free with the liberty wherewith Christ makes free his people. And this was the first work that the Good Shepherd did for the sheep; the laying down of his life began at the beginning of his ministry, when he made a full consecration of himself even unto death, and symbolized this in baptism. It was in view of this sacrifice which he had already devoted, and was even then offering, and which was finished subsequently at Calvary, that our Redeemer announced himself as the Good Shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep.

The Apostle declares that our Lord's death redeemed Israel from under the curse (sentence) of the Law—but it not only satisfied the Law, "the porter," so that he opened the sheepfold, but it gave to the true Shepherd the ownership and control of the sheep, that he might lead them out to green pastures, and that they might go out and in with perfect freedom, as his sheep, following him. Our Lord testified, however, that many true sheep had gotten out of the fold, and were lost in the wilderness of sin. His ministry was a call to these as well as to those who remained in the fold,—to the publicans and sinners as well as to those who were endeavoring to live near to God.

Thus the true Shepherd showed his interest in all his true sheep, including the lame, the weak, the starved. He called sinners to repentance, and the true sheep, realizing their shortcomings under the Law, responded and came to him as the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. But inasmuch as many of the flock had wandered far from the position of true sheep, so that there were not enough who heard his voice, to complete the elect number of his flock, this Good Shepherd has, during this Gospel age, lifted up his voice (speaking through the members of his Body), and has called sheep from amongst the Gentiles; and a sufficient number to complete the original predestination will eventually respond.

The call of this present time is not a general one, but, as this Scripture declares, "he calleth **his own sheep by name**,"—it is therefore a special call. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." They manifest relationship to him as his flock by their obedience to his call—by following him. The flock which is now being called, and which eventually will make its calling and election sure, the Scriptures inform us will be only "a little flock," and the fold provided for these is a special one; viz., the Kingdom.—Luke 12:32.

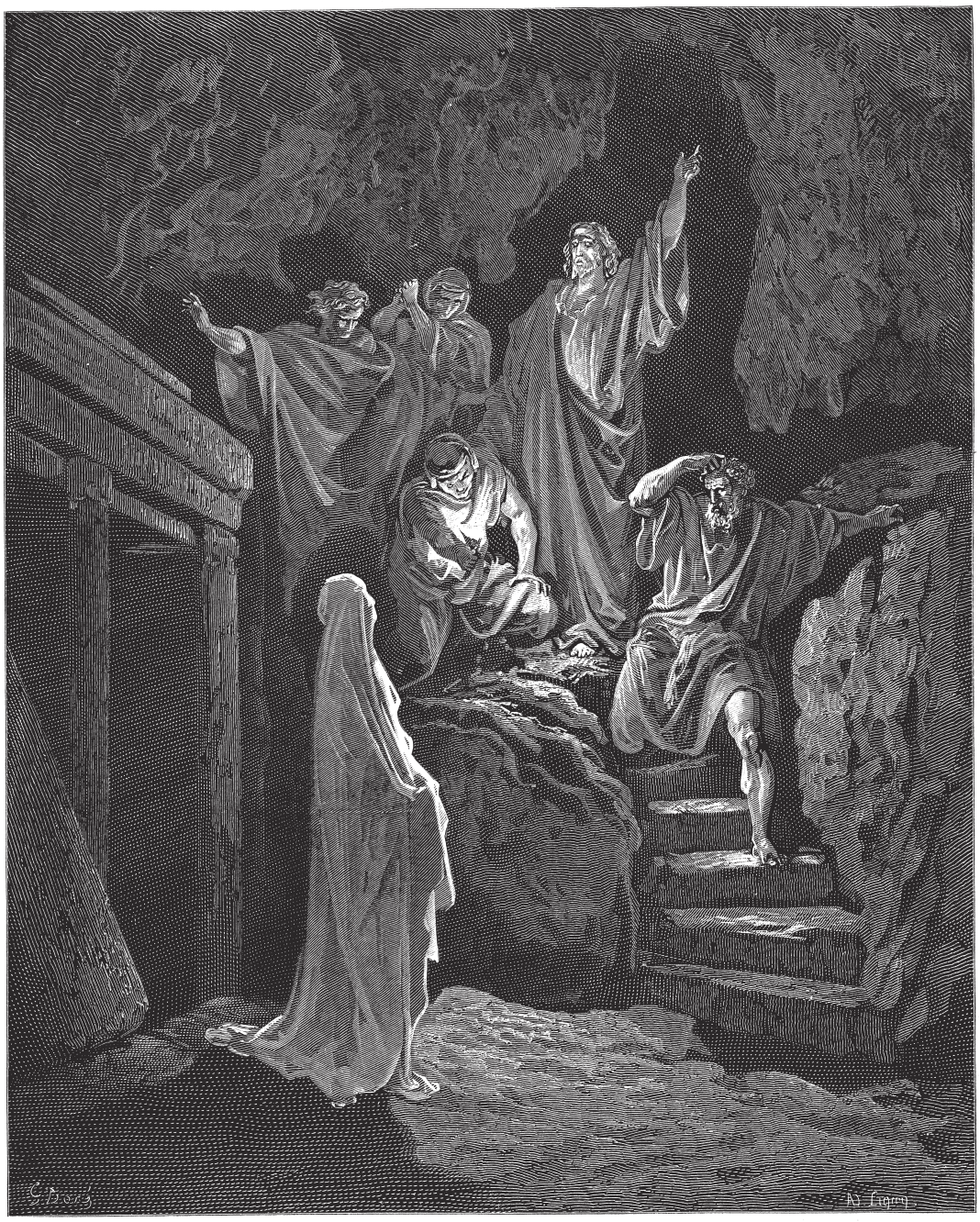
Throughout this Gospel age the Lord has been caring for this class; he has specially led and fed and blessed them, notwithstanding that to the appearance of others they have passed through severe trials, disciplines, sufferings. Yea, as our Shepherd himself declared, whosoever lives godly suffers persecution. But we are to remember that this is a peculiar trial time, for a peculiar and elect flock. We are to remember, also, the Shepherd's declaration that he has other sheep which are not of this fold—not provided for in the calling to the Kingdom. These other sheep are still astray in the wilderness of sin, but the Millennial Day is near at hand, in which the Lord will gather all his scattered sheep, all who would seek and love righteousness and harmony with God under favorable conditions,—that they may all be brought into accord with him and be his flock. The Good Shepherd gave his life a ransom for all his sheep—not merely for the "little flock" of this age, the "heirs of the Kingdom."

Christ's larger flock will be gathered after the Kingdom is set up.—Matt. 25:31,32.

A part of the key to this parable, as it is also the key to many other features of the divine plan, is found in the fact that the sheep of the "little flock," now being called and selected to joint-heirship in the Kingdom, are to be **sacrificed**: as the Shepherd, the King's Son, himself was sacrificed as the Lamb of God, and not only opened the door to those who are shut up under the Law, but by the same sacrifice also redeemed the whole world of mankind, amongst which are the "other sheep" that he is yet to seek, so the sheep of the "little flock," now being called, are all to suffer with Christ—with the Lamb of God,—are all to be "living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.) As the Apostle elsewhere declares, "Hereby we know love, because he laid down his life on our behalf: and we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren," for the fellow-sheep.—1 John 3:16—*Diaglott*.

From this standpoint it will be seen that, as our Lord was the Father's Lamb, and the sin-offering for the world, so we who are of Jesus' flock are to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in the interest of his Body, which is the Church. (Eph. 1:22.) And other Scriptures show us that all of the flock thus faithful, in following the Shepherd even **"unto death,"** are counted as members of the Body of the Shepherd. Thus the entire Gospel age has been the period of suffering with Christ, of dying daily, of laying down our lives for the brethren; and not until this sacrifice is complete in the close of this age will the New Covenant be thrown open in the largest sense of the word to the world of mankind in general, and the great Shepherd be complete—Head and Body. Then the spirit and the Bride will say, Come, and whosoever will may come.—whereas now, "No man can come except the Father draw him," and in all a "little flock."

The spirit of the great Chief (or Head) Shepherd of the flock is to be in all those now being called to association with him in the Kingdom. As the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the flock, so all of these will lay down their lives in the service of the truth. As the Good Shepherd was not indifferent to the necessities of the sheep, caring simply for himself, and how much he could get out of the sheep, so it will be with those who have his spirit—their service of the Body of Christ will not be for filthy lucre's sake, nor for honor among men, nor for earthly gain, in any sense of the word; but for the love of God, the love of the truth, the love of the flock.



RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS
And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. (John 11:43)

JESUS' LATER MINISTRY EAST OF THE JORDAN

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Beyond Jordan	Many put faith in Jesus				10:40-42
	Perea (beyond Jordan)	Teaches in cities, villages, moving toward Jerusalem			13:22	
	Perea	Kingdom entrance; Herod's threat; house desolate			13:23-35	
	Probably Perea	Lessons from the home of a Pharisee			14:1-24	
	Probably Perea	Counting the cost of discipleship			14:25-35	
	Probably Perea	Illustrations: lost sheep, lost coin, prodigal son			15:1-32	
	Probably Perea	Illustrations: unjust steward, rich man and Lazarus			16:1-31	
	Probably Perea	Forgiveness and faith; unprofitable servants			17:1-10	
	Bethany	Lazarus raised from the dead by Jesus				11:1-46
	Jerusalem; Ephraim	Caiaphas' counsel against Jesus; Jesus withdraws				11:47-54
	Samaria; Galilee	Heals and teaches en route through Samaria, Galilee			17:11-37	
	Samaria or Galilee	Illustrations: importunate widow, Pharisee and tax collector			18:1-14	
	Perea	Swings down through Perea; teaches on divorce	19:1-12	10:1-12		
	Perea	Receives and blesses children	19:13-15	10:13-16	18:15-17	
	Perea	Rich young man; illustration of laborers in vineyard	19:16–20:16	10:17-31	18:18-30	
	Probably Perea	Third time Jesus foretells his death, resurrection	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34	
	Probably Perea	Request for James's and John's seating in Kingdom	20:20-28	10:35-45		
	Jericho	Passing through Jericho, he heals two blind men; visits Zacchaeus; parable of the pounds	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35–19:28	

John 10:40-42

And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there.

Luke 13:22-35

And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there

are first which shall be last. The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk today, and tomorrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, 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.

STRIVE TO ENTER IN AT THE STRAIT GATE.—*Reprints*, p. 1951
Luke 13:22-30

THE question, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" our Lord did not answer directly. The time had come for preaching the Kingdom, and inviting those who had "an ear to hear" the call to enter in. The call for the time was limited to the high calling of joint-heirship with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom; and it has so continued ever since. There is but the one call during this age. "Ye are all called in one hope of your calling." The fact that God has in purpose another call, to another class, in the Millennial age, may cheer and comfort us now, and enable us to see harmony and consistency in the divine character and arrangement, but it should not encourage any one to reject a present call and to hope for another. He who "hears" the present call has no right whatever to hope for another if he spurns what has been put within his reach. As the Apostle said, "How shall we escape [destruction] if we neglect so great salvation?"

Our Lord taught the Apostles much concerning his mission, his Kingdom and its object; but also said to them. "I have many things [yet] to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when he the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you [gradually] into all truth." (John 16:13.) To have answered their question in full would have led to many other questions for whose answers they were not prepared, therefore our Lord wisely avoided their query, and merely told them what was their duty and proper course: "Strive [make great effort] to enter in at the strait [difficult] gate, for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able, when once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door."

The illustration is that of an eastern wedding, as represented in the parable of the Ten Virgins. Those who were invited were expected to be ready before the coming of the bridegroom, and to **enter with him**. When he and his ready, accompanying friends have entered, the door is shut, and for the occasion all outside are treated as strangers, as unknown, and the festivities proceed without them.

In all of his parables our Lord represented the Kingdom promised to his followers as to be gained at the end of the age, when the Nobleman would return from the far country, heaven, to take possession of his kingdom and to share its honors with those faithful to him during his absence. (Luke 19:12-27) Or, under other figures, he represented himself as the bridegroom coming to claim and take home his faithful, waiting, betrothed virgin. He gave them no definite information respecting the time of his coming, so that all might be constantly on the alert, not knowing at what hour their Lord might arrive;—nevertheless assured that all the ready, waiting, watching ones would get word in time and be able to enter in to the marriage.

Hence the coming of the bridegroom, and the shutting of the door at the proper time, has reference to the close of this Gospel age, when the full predestinated number of the Church, the bride of Christ, has been called, chosen and found faithful. Then the "door" or opportunity to become a member of the bride and joint-heir with Christ in his Kingdom will be forever closed. There cannot be one additional member,

even as there could not be one less than the predestinated number.

We are down in the end of the age now; the Bridegroom-King has come; the wise virgins are trimming their lamps, examining the evidences of the Scriptures, and going forth as those who acknowledge his presence and avowedly are going to the wedding. Soon the last of this class will have gone in, and the door will be shut. Then the foolish virgins, drowsy and overcharged and lacking sufficient zeal, but nevertheless **"virgins,"** will begin to bestir themselves; they will buy the oil in the market of experience; they will begin to realize that the end of the age is upon us, that the Bridegroom has come, and that the Kingdom feast is about to take place. But as they see the storm growing dark, they will hasten to go to the wedding, and many will find themselves debarred, refused admittance. They will then realize that they have failed to make their calling and election sure by so running as to obtain the prize of jointheirship with Christ.

"There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." Yes, not alone will there be disappointment in losing the prize offered and sought (but sought too indifferently), but some of the wailing and tribulation will arise from another cause: they will find themselves suddenly in the midst of the great "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1), a trouble that will be worldwide, and from which there will be no escape except by those who enter in before the door is shut—to whom it was said, "Watch, … that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things."—Luke 21:36.

The angels are holding the "winds" of violence, until the full number of the elect have been sealed and have made their calling and election sure; and when this is finished we may expect that the trouble upon the world will come "as a whirlwind, suddenly."

But the "foolish virgins" who have been of the household of faith, but slack and not "overcomers," are not the only ones who will find themselves shut out of the Kingdom. Many others—**all** workers (servants) of iniquity, whether Jews or Gentiles, will find themselves excluded and denied any part or lot in the Kingdom of God.

In this discourse our Lord does not tell what great blessings are to follow the union of the Heavenly Bridegroom with his bride, but other Scriptures tell us that soon thereafter the whole world will be blessed; for the spirit and the bride will give the invitation, "Come!" and whosoever will (not merely an elect "little flock") may then come and take of the water of life freely. (Rev. 22:17.) Neither does the parable tell what became of the "foolish virgins;" but another Scripture shows them "saved so as by fire.—1 Cor. 3:15.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Perea	Lessons from the home of a Pharisee			14:1-24	

Luke 14:1-24

And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? And they could not answer him again to these things. And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room;

that when he bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither 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 maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

THE GREAT TEACHER'S TABLE-TALKS—*Reprints*, p. 3831

LUKE 14:1-14.

"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

THE SABBATH was quite a feast day amongst the Jews, but in accordance with the requirements of the Law the dishes were served cold—cooked previously. Our Lord evidently made no objection to these Sabbath feasts, since we find that on several occasions he participated in them. The feast at Bethany just before his crucifixion was on the Sabbath, and likewise the one referred to in the present lesson. The invitation was from a prominent Pharisee, one of the rulers. It evidently included our Lord's disciples as well as himself, and numerous of the host's prominent friends, Pharisees and Doctors of the Law.

The fame of Jesus had spread considerably, and doubtless these men were interested in thus coming in close contact with him, with a view to judging according to their own standards respecting his character, teachings and miracles—whether or not he was a fanatic, whether or not he made great boasts of himself, why the common people seemed so attracted to him, and why he did not seem to specially seek the fellowship of the rich and influential—although, so far as we know, he never refused an invitation to a feast, always using such occasions as opportunities for the presentation of the truth, to glorify the Father in heaven, to help, to instruct, to benefit those with whom he was in contact.

The guests watched him critically rather than sympathetically. They were looking for faults rather than for virtues. But as with others, so with these—they found no fault in him. Perhaps by accident, perhaps by design, there was in the company a man who had the dropsy. He may have been a member of the household or family; indeed our Lord possibly may have been invited there with a view to proposing the healing of this one with the infirmity.

Our Lord seems to have had a special feeling of sympathy with the afflicted, and he quickly noticed the man with the dropsy. The Pharisees were no doubt interested in witnessing the miracle, as any others would be; and at the same time, according to their forms, such a miracle

on the Sabbath day would have been a misdemeanor. Our Lord's interest in handling the situation is apparent. He first inquired of his host and his learned associates whether or not it was lawful to heal the sick on the Sabbath day. The Doctors of the Law were expected to be able and willing to answer such questions propounded by the people at any time; yet in the presence of the great Teacher they all held their peace, made no reply; they wanted to see what course he would take. They did not wish to interrupt him—perhaps they wished to have an opportunity to find fault with him on this account. No objection to healing on the Sabbath day having been cited from the Law, our Lord performed the miracle—"He took him and healed him and let him go." The implication is that in some manner our Lord touched the afflicted one, that thus it might be the more manifest that the miracle was of divine power through him.

They Would Assist Dumb Brutes

After having answered his own question by the miracle, thus attesting that nothing in the Law forbade the healing of the sick on the Sabbath, our Lord justified his course before the company saying, "Which of you having an ass or an ox fall into a pit would not draw him out on the Sabbath?" Another reading is, "Which of you having a son or even an ox fall into a pit would not on the Sabbath draw him out?" The proposition was unanswerable. They all knew that, where their selfish interests were involved, they would decide that there was nothing in the Law to hinder lending assistance on the Sabbath. Thus our Lord clearly showed that their thought respecting the healing of humanity on the Sabbath was fallacious, unscriptural.

It will be remembered that our Lord was still under the terms of the Law Covenant, bound by every provision of the Law just as much as every other Jew had been from the time the Law was given at Mount Sinai. The Law Covenant did not pass away, as the Apostle points out, until Christ "nailed it to the cross." (Col. 2:14.) Hence nothing that our Lord did on the Sabbath day, healing the sick, etc., could properly be esteemed a violation of the fourth commandment, or any other feature of the Law.

We have already shown (*Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 6, chap. 7) that the Law Covenant sealed at Sinai was not in force before that time upon the Jews, that it was not given to any other people, and that so far as those who accepted Christ were and are concerned the Law Covenant ended at the cross. Hence all the obligations of the Jewish Sabbath ended there also. The followers of Jesus during this Gospel age keep the higher Sabbath, the antitypical Sabbath, the "rest of the people of God"—rest from their own works, rest from fear, rest in hope of the glorious things which God has provided through Jesus for all who love him, rest in hope also for the world, that in due time all shall come to a knowledge of the Lord. This perpetual rest of peace abides with us every day alike.

"No Longer Servants, But Sons"

Our celebration of the first day of the week as a Christian Sabbath should not be with the thought that it is a law or bondage, but rather an appreciation of the great privilege we enjoy of leaving the ordinary affairs of life on that day to give special thought to the spiritual things of the New Creature and to fellowship one with another, commemorating the day also as the one on which our Lord arose from the dead and began the work of the New Creation. We are looking forward also to the glorious rest that remaineth for the people of God, the eternity of blessed perfection into which we hope to be ushered by a resurrection from the dead, when we shall awake in our Lord's likeness. During this Gospel age our heavenly Father addresses us not as a house of servants but as a house of sons—as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. It would not be appropriate for him to give to these New Creatures, begotten of his Spirit, such laws as he gave to the Jews, the house of servants.

The Lord would not insult the New Creature by even suggesting the various things stipulated in the Ten Commandments. The New Creatures in Christ Jesus have no sympathy with profanity, idol worship, the unrest of disbelief, with dishonor to parents, with murder and adultery, false witness, covetousness. Those whose hearts run in these directions have not been begotten of the Spirit, have not the Spirit of Christ, are none of his. The Lord's

command to those who are New Creatures in Christ Jesus is that, being begotten of the spirit of love, they shall grow in grace and in knowledge and in love, seeking daily to bring into subjection all the weaknesses of their mortal bodies, reckoned dead at the moment they were begotten of the Spirit. True, the apostles do urge upon the Lord's people to **put away anger and malice and envy and strife, etc.,** works of the flesh and of the devil; but even then they address the New Creature, not as though it were in sympathy with these wrong doings, but on the contrary, urging the New Creature to put away, to mortify, to put to death, these deeds of their flesh, already **reckoned dead.**

Our Father's dealings and commands are never to the flesh, but to the New Creatures. From this standpoint, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you." (Rom. 8:9.) Therefore, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now, henceforth, know we him [so] no more." (2 Cor. 5:16.) We are "judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." (1 Pet. 4:6.) We are reckoned as fulfilling the highest demands of the divine law to God and to man, because we are not walking after the flesh but after the Spirit.

The Humble To Be Exalted

It was probably in answer to some question that our Lord propounded the parable of the guests bidden to a marriage feast, warning against the custom of seeking prominent positions, and the danger incurred that a more honorable person might come in later, and thus they might get the least honorable seat in the company. Our Lord noted this mark of selfishness in those who were gathered with him at the table of his host, but we must suppose that he did not rudely intrude the matter as a reproof at such a time without having a question or some reasonable cause for bringing the matter forward.

The entire lesson of the parable seems to be an illustration of the proper course amongst men as viewed from the divine standpoint, and hence an illustration to all of the way in which God will deal with those whom he invites to the antitypical marriage-feast. The chief places will not be given to those most bold, most inclined to usurp authority; but, on the contrary, the Lord will not forget the man or woman of humble mind who, thinking little of himself or herself, would thankfully and gratefully seek for and appreciate the very humblest place in the divine presence.

Ambition is a very necessary faculty of the human mind, without which the world would make comparatively little progress; but it is a very dangerous element as respects the formation of Christian character. We may be sure, from all the Scriptures set forth, that God's principle of dealing with us in the distribution of the glories and honors of the Kingdom will be along the lines laid down by the Master: he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, he that exalteth himself shall be abased.

Love of Power To Do Good

We are frequently charged by those who, from blindness or other reasons, would disparage the glorious Gospel of the Kingdom, that those "of this way" are seeking selfishly for the glory and honor and immortality of the Kingdom as something superior to what others will receive at the Lord's hand. This as a whole is an unfair and an unjust charge, for as far as we know the majority of those who are interested in "Present Truth" are not so much ambitious for the dignities of the Kingdom as they are for any place in that great marriage feast, any membership in the glorious Bride company, any opportunity to share with the heavenly Bridegroom in the great and wonderful work of blessing all the families of the earth. It would not occur to any of us to think of ourselves in connection with such high honors and dignities, glory and immortality, except as we find it plainly stated in the divine Word, but finding it there, it is the duty of faith to accept whatever we may be deemed worthy of, and to allow it to work in us to will and to do the Lord's good pleasure, as he intended.

The chief difficulty, so far as our experience goes, is not a mere ambition as respects glory, honor and rank in the Kingdom, but rather an ambition as respects the present life—a seeking who shall be greatest on this side the vail. Our observation is that some of the most talented,

most able, most conscientious of the Lord's followers are in danger along this line, and it is a part of our duty to call this matter to the general attention, that each of the Lord's dear people may do all in his power to help any who are in such a position to see that an ambitious striving for glory and honor and dignity and position in the present time would surely mean a loss of the Lord's favor and the ultimate attainment in the Kingdom of a much humbler position, if indeed pride did not hinder them entirely from being accepted as members of the "little flock." Let us remember the Apostle's exhortation, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—1 Pet. 5:6.

Remember The Poor And The Friendless

Perhaps it was in answer to some other question that our Lord gave his dissertation respecting the making of a feast and who should be invited to it, the conclusion of our lesson. He set forth a new proposition: The custom was to invite to a feast those whom you would expect and desire to ask you in return to a feast at their home. The thought of recompense was thus associated, a selfish thought. But our Lord's suggestion would not necessarily, we think, mean that it would be wrong to invite a person to a feast at our homes if we thought it at all probable he would ask us to his home. His thought rather is that, while this would be a pleasant and profitable interchange, there would be no merit in so doing in the Lord's sight—each would get his reward in such a reciprocity.

Perhaps the Lord wished to show his host that in inviting himself and his disciples, who were not so situated as to be able to invite the others of the company in turn to their homes, he had really done a gracious act, provided he had the gracious motive back of it. In making a feast for the poor, the helpless, the maimed and the blind, a work of charity and mercy would be done, and, no recompense coming in the present life, they might be sure of a blessing in the future life. In other words, our Lord intimates that every good deed willingly, intelligently done from the right motive, may be sure to have a blessing, as surely as will every evil deed, every injurious matter done with a wrong thought and evil sentiment, be sure to have some kind of punishment either in the present or in the future life.

Our Lord declared that such a good deed will be recompensed in the resurrection of the just, but since he was not addressing his disciples, not addressing justified ones, we feel that his words should not be understood to mean that such a feast to the poor, etc., would secure the highest place in the First Resurrection among the blessed and holy who shall be kings and priests unto God and reign as the kingly class, the Bride class, with the Bridegroom. This would not be a reasonable view to put upon the words, because other Scriptures intimate that not only faith in Jesus as the Mediator is necessary, but a travelling faithfully in the narrow way in order to attain a share in the First Resurrection.

What then did our Lord mean? We answer that the First Resurrection, which will include only the "blessed and holy," the saints, the Bride of Christ, the Bride with the glorious Head and Bridegroom, will mark the beginning of the Kingdom which our Lord preached and which he taught us to pray for, saying, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven." Those who will have part in the First Resurrection are to be the kings and priests and judges of the world. (1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 20:6.) Surely after that First Resurrection the blessing of the world, the times of restitution of all things, will begin! Then the whole world will stand before these judges during the thousand years to be helped up, if they will, to the full of human perfection, or, failing to respond to their glorious opportunities, they will be destroyed in the Second Death.

In that day of their judgment every deed of kindness to the poor will be found to have wrought some blessing in the character of the individual which will have to do with his station, with his starting-point on the highway of holiness. The most degraded, those who have accomplished nothing in the present time in the way of character development, must begin at the very start of the road and have the longer journey to its farther end of perfection; while those who in the present time have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and have sought to comfort and benefit their fellows, especially

those who would give even a cup of cold water to a disciple of the Lord because he was his disciple—all such would be found to be benefitted proportionately in that day of glorious possibilities. Thus the Lord's words would signify that any who would give a cup of cold water or who would bless the maimed and the blind and the poor would experience a reward and blessing in that future time which would follow the resurrection of the just—in the Millennial age.

Value of Table Talks

The example set by our Lord in the matter of table-talks we have followed for many years at the Bible House with great profit. We find that much advantage accrues from the observance of order and regularity. Every morning promptly at 7 o'clock we have praise and prayer (Sunday 8 a.m.). Then we gather at the table, and after giving thanks for the food and praying that a blessing may be derived from our fellowship together, one of our number reads the text for the day from the *Heavenly Manna*. Questions are called for as breakfast proceeds and the text is thoroughly discussed. Later, before leaving the table, the comment following the text in the Manna is read as a conclusion of the lesson. Our dinner and supper-table talks are upon whatever questions may suggest themselves to any of those present, with opportunities for general expression—the brethren being asked for an expression, then the opportunity thrown open to anybody. The one occupying the head of the table is expected to give the final answer to the question. These table-talks are a schooling of themselves, ranging as they do on all parts of the Word of God, and refresh the memories of those present respecting what they have previously learned. We commend this method to all the dear people of God. Food partaken of under such circumstances seems to do one more good than otherwise, and the spiritual refreshment is almost certain to be advantageous. We do not favor disputings or replies of one to another, but merely the statement by each one of them of his own understanding of the question or the Scripture involved. Our minds cannot help being active, and it is profitable to us to have them directed into useful channels. Anyway, the example set by our Lord is surely a good one.

A ROYAL BANQUET DECLINED.—*Reprints*, p. 2701

LUKE 14:15-24.

"Come, for all things are now ready."

JESUS continued his table-talk of our last lesson at the Pharisee's dinner. Our Lord had led the attention of his associates, not only to the proprieties of life, but to future things, by the suggestion that feasts should be given in the interest of the poor, whose inability to return the favor would insure a divine blessing more than compensating in the future—in the Kingdom. This led one of the company to a remark which we loosely paraphrase, thus,—Ah, yes! that Kingdom, for which we hope, will be a blessed time. How blessed it will be to share the bounties which God has promised in the great feast which he shall spread! The speaker probably was well acquainted with Isaiah's prophecy respecting the Kingdom (Isa. 25:6) in which God's mercies and blessings to the world are figuratively represented as a feast, in the words, "In this mountain [Kingdom] shall the Lord of hosts make unto all the people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow."

Thus gradually the minds of the company present had been led from earthly things and from commonplace matters and social chit-chat, which might have occupied their attention, to the consideration of the gracious promises of God. And undoubtedly this was our Lord's very object in accepting the Pharisee's invitation, and in leading the conversation gradually in this direction. Now he had an opportunity to teach something respecting this Kingdom and its blessings and the call to share it; and he improved it. His hearers, if they had in mind

Isaiah's prophecy and God's promise to Abraham, would understand that the Kingdom or mountain of the Lord would be the house of Israel, in some glorious and exalted condition under Messiah, and that it was in and through this Kingdom that the **feast** of divine blessings, for all nations, was to be spread. Our Lord now, by a parable, drew attention to the Gospel call of great blessings and privileges, and would have his hearers note the fact that while in a general way they would all assent to the statement that the Kingdom would be a blessed one, and the feast there something to be greatly desired, nevertheless when the offer of that Kingdom would be made them temporal things closer to their hearts would make it of no effect to the majority.

The parable represents a great feast, with a large number of friends of the host invited in advance, that they might be ready at such a time as the feast would be ready and announced. God himself is the host in this parable, and the Jewish nation were his friends to whom, as a people, he had given much advantage every way, chiefly in that to them were committed the oracles of God,—much knowledge of the divine plan for human salvation and the promises that if they, as the seed of Abraham, were faithful, they should have the invitation and privilege and opportunities of this great feast. The Lord addresses them through the Prophet, saying, "You only have I known [recognized] of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2.) Israel only was invited to this feast; but the feast was not ready until our Lord's day, and hence the invitation to partake of it did not go forth until then. Finally, however, the time had come; Christ, as represented in the bullock of the sin-offering, had already given himself,—the sacrifice being counted as accomplished from the time of its offering, when our Lord presented himself to John at Jordan, making a full consecration of his entire being, even unto death. In view of this sacrifice for sins, God could begin at once to call the already promised guests to the great feast of blessing and manifestation of divine favor toward those to whom he had promised it so long before, through their father Abraham.

And thus it was that when Jesus came and called his disciples and sent them forth, the message was, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" the great feast of fat things for this nation, that God has so long promised, is ready; and whosoever wills may come and be received and participate in it. The message of Jesus and the twelve, and later the seventy, throughout all Judea, was the invitation of that favored people to come and enjoy the great feast for which they had impatiently waited and hoped and prayed for over sixteen centuries,—the great privileges and opportunities of the Kingdom.

But as the parable shows, when the offer of the Kingdom was really made, when the invitation to partake of the blessings of the great Feast was really put before them, it proved that they loved the Kingdom and the future things far less than they and others might have supposed. On the contrary, the unanimity with which the invitation to the Kingdom was rejected made it appear almost as tho the rejectors had acted in concert in the matter. Their excuses for so little interest in the things which God had promised, and which they claimed to be eagerly longing for, were the apparent pressure of other duties which they **must** attend to, and which left no time for responding to the divine invitation to the Kingdom. With one the pressure came in the direction of seeing to his farm, and thus being not slothful in business; another felt that it might do very well for people who had nothing else to do, to give attention to a spiritual feast, but as for him, his time was fully occupied with his property, his oxen, sheep, store-business, and what not. Another felt that his duties, social ties, wife, children, etc., demanded all of his attention, and that therefore he could not accept the Kingdom privileges.

And this, which was the sentiment of fleshly Israel, is largely that of spiritual Israel, also, now that the spiritual Kingdom is announced. Many seem to feel that what they would call the real and practical things of life need all of their attention. They want to "get along" in this world's affairs, and to be somebodies in it, and they find such interest in social and material

matters a great hindrance to any response to the divine invitation to a share in the glorious Millennial Kingdom, as joint-heirs with Christ,—the great feast, the high calling which has come to us. Well, in one sense of the word this is all right, for it merely keeps out of the Kingdom a class which the Lord does not desire should be in it, and which if it did come in would need to be sifted out, later. Altho God has bidden many, he is seeking for this feast only such as will highly appreciate it above all other privileges—those who would be willing to sacrifice any and every other thing in order to share it.

The first invitation to the feast, recounted in the parable, represents the first years of our Lord's ministry, which were specially directed toward interesting the scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who, as the leading men of that nation, and as our Lord said, occupying Moses' seat, really represented that nation as a whole; and the rejection of the invitation by these meant the rejection of it by that nation as a whole. Thus our Lord was careful to bring before the priestly class of that time the evidences of his Messiahship, so that when, for instance, he healed the ten lepers, he charged them to tell no man, but go and show themselves to the priests. Thus the priestly class was informed respecting the miraculous work of our Lord, perhaps more particularly than others. They therefore had the invitation to the feast more particularly than others. However, the fact that the chief representatives of Israel were unready for the invitation was not permitted to hinder, and our Lord, through his disciples, subsequently extended the invitation to another class.

The trial of the nation as a whole, represented by its leaders, ended at Calvary, or rather five days before Calvary, when our Lord rode on the ass and wept over the city of Jerusalem, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee: how oft would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!" As a nation, as a people, you have rejected the divine invitation to the great Feast, and as a nation you cannot taste of it. Nevertheless, according to divine intention and promise, through the prophets, God extended mercy to various individuals of that nation, after the nation as a whole had proven itself unworthy of the Kingdom privileges. The apostles were sent to gather, not the nation, but such individuals as were of humble mind, to share in the feast, and this calling of individuals, instead of the nation of Israel, was responded to exclusively by those who realized their own unworthiness,—the lame, the halt, the blind, who confessed that they were not perfect, but who desired perfection, and who rejoiced in the call to partake of the Kingdom privileges, and gladly forsook all else for it. Amongst them, we are assured, there are not many wise, not many great, not many learned, but chiefly the poor, for altho the poor are not always humble by any means, yet amongst them proportionately more were found who were of acceptable character; amongst the rich and the great humility would appear to have been at all times correspondingly scarce.

This second invitation to the poor, the halt and the blind, in the streets and lanes of the city, as a picture would be very difficult to appreciate in our day of hospitals and almshouses, etc., provided by general taxation; but in the days of our Lord it would be very easy indeed to have collected a large crowd of indigent and infirm in short order.

It will be observed that both of these first calls belong to the city—that is, Israel, the nominal Kingdom of God. But the two calls failed to find the sufficient number which God had predestinated should constitute the Kingdom class. He could indeed have induced others to come in, but, on the contrary, he purposely put the invitation to the Feast in such a form as would repel those who were not of the right attitude of heart—in such a form as would attract Israelites indeed, who felt and acknowledged their own unworthiness, and who would be glad, on entering the feast, to have on the robe provided for the guests (symbolical of Christ's righteousness), to cover the filthy rags of their own imperfection. But now, because a sufficient number was not found in Israel to complete the elect number, the message must be sent outside the city, outside of Judaism,—to

the Gentiles; and thus the third message was, "Go ye into the highways and whosoever you meet, compel them to come in." The word "compel," however, gives a wrong thought here: it should properly be rendered, urge, persuade.

And thus it has been that throughout the Gospel age, since the bringing in to the Gospel favor of as many Jews as were ready for it, the message has been turned to the Gentiles, "to take out of them a people for God's name," to partake of the great Feast with the remnant of Israel. As the Apostle Paul said to some of the Jews in his preaching: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; for so the Lord hath commanded us." (Acts 13:46,47.) They showed themselves unworthy of this great blessing or gift, in that they were interested more in the things that perish than in the glorious promises of the everlasting future.

The Apostle Paul calls attention to this fact in Rom. 9:27: "Tho the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant [only] shall be saved." The Apostle further shows that the call of the Gentiles to be sharers in the Kingdom is merely the continuation of the original call, and that we are called in to take the places of those who neglected so great salvation and privilege. He illustrates this by the olive tree, saying that the natural branches were broken off that we, who by nature were wild, might be grafted in and become partakers of the root and fatness of the olive.—Rom. 11:17.

This third call to the great Feast of the Kingdom blessings and privileges has progressed throughout this Gospel age, and to our understanding is now nearly complete—nearly all the places at the table have been provided with guests; only a few are yet vacant; and so soon as these places are filled, the great feast will begin, and we shall indeed enter into the joys of our Lord, and not only be privileged to feast ourselves, but to carry of its bounties and blessings to all the families of the earth.

The same matters which hindered the Jews, under the first call, from accepting this invitation, have hindered to a large extent also many of the Gentiles who have heard the third call. It is impossible to be thorough-going business men, wealthy, influential, etc., and at the same time follow in the footsteps of Jesus, giving all of our hearts, talents and energies to the Lord in acceptance of his invitation to this Feast. The acceptance of the invitation to this Feast means a deep interest in it, beyond everything else, so that all other matters, whether houses or lands, father or mother, wife or children, shall be secondary to the interests of the Kingdom, and to our responsibilities to the terms and conditions of the invitation. Consequently, what was true respecting Israel has been true as respects the Gentiles, viz., that the call to the Kingdom has been generally rejected by those who had a considerable measure of this world's blessings and advantages—those who are rich, either in honor of men or social position or talents or reputation or money, have found it difficult to leave these all to follow Jesus in the narrow way: and, consequently, the Scriptural assurance is, not only that those elected in the end of the Jewish age were chiefly the poor and lowly, but that the same has been true amongst the Gentiles, and is true today: "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble;" but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith.—1 Cor. 1:26; James 2:5.

This does not debar those who have riches of any kind, but really gives them all the greater privilege and opportunity; for they have that much greater talent which, if they will, they may sacrifice, and thus the more fully demonstrate their appreciation of the invitation and of the Feast, and be correspondingly appreciated by the Host. Let us all, like the Apostle Paul, lay aside every weight, every hindrance, every besetment, everything precious to us of an earthly kind, that we may run with patience the race set before us, in response to this invitation to the great Feast of joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom.—Heb. 12:1,2; Rom. 8:16-18; 12:1,2.

Time	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Perea	Counting the cost of discipleship			14:25-35	

Luke 14:25-35

And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth ambassadors, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP—*Reprints*, p. 5425

LUKE 14:25-35.

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."—Matthew 16:25.

IT WAS at the close of the Great Teacher's ministry. Vast multitudes were following Him, all, according to the requirements of the Law, going up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of the Passover, at which Jesus foreknew, that He would die as the antitypical Passover Lamb. Occasionally in the journey He would turn and address some of the multitude. Today's lesson gives us some of His teachings. It was the custom of teachers in those days to accept disciples, or pupils—those who considered them great teachers and desired to learn of them and profit by their instruction. To this day Christians claim to be the disciples, or followers, of Jesus, claim to be giving heed to His word and seeking the blessing which He promised to His faithful followers.

The terms of discipleship which Jesus set forth, it will be noted, are very different from those proclaimed by some who profess to be His mouthpieces, His ministers. They sometimes proclaim that it is a sufficient sign of discipleship for persons to arise in a congregation and declare that they desire the prayers of God's people. Such are counted converts. To get them to take even this step requires the holding out of inducements. Sometimes the inducements are of a commercial kind—greater business prosperity to the merchant, greater favor with the employer for the clerk, an entrance into society or a better prospect of political preferment.

If we contrast these methods with the words of Jesus in this lesson, we shall perceive that the vast number of nominal Christians have been, so to speak, inveigled into professing something that they never intended to profess. Many are entrapped into professing Christianity who never became Christians, according to the Master's conditions of discipleship, and who hearken not to His Word.

"If any man come unto Me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." Surely there is no excuse for us to misunderstand such plain terms and conditions. The Master did not say that only His dis-

ciples could **ever** gain everlasting life. His general teaching was that the whole world is lost, estranged from God and without the right to everlasting life. But He came to die, "the Just for the unjust," that all of the unjust might have the opportunity of returning to Divine favor. He did not say that none but His followers would have such an opportunity of future life. Those who so declare are adding to the Word and helping thus, eventually, to confound themselves.

What Jesus **did** teach was that He would in due time be "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The world had already existed for 4,000 years before Jesus came, and no one will dispute that those who died previous to His coming had no opportunity of knowing Him and being His disciples. Yet He died to bless them, as well as to bless all who have been born into the world since. This blessing of the world, He declared, is to be accomplished by His Kingdom; and He told them plainly that His Kingdom was not of this world, age, or epoch, but of a future period. For the time being He was merely inviting disciples, and not attempting to reach the world.

The disciples were invited to become joint-heirs with Jesus in His Kingdom, that they might sit with Him in His Throne and participate with Him in His great work of human uplift—Restitution of all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. He told them plainly that only through much tribulation would they be able to enter the Kingdom class; that the tribulations would prove their love of righteousness, their loyalty to God; and that God had purposely made the way so narrow that only the few, the very choicest of humanity in God's sight, could find it—a very few walking in that way to its further end of glory, honor and immortality.

With this view clearly before our mind's eye, there is a reasonableness in the hard terms of discipleship. Only those willing to comply with such terms, and thus to demonstrate their love and loyalty to God, could properly be entrusted with the great power, glory and honor which will be granted to the Kingdom class, in association with the Redeemer, as soon as it shall have been completed. Let us examine these words carefully, meanwhile measuring ourselves —not our flesh, but our spirit, our intentions, our desires.

Well did Henry Ward Beecher say respecting this statement made by the Master: "Never was there before, and never has there been since, I apprehend, such a speech made to those that professed to be willing and desirous to follow another." And probably a parallel statement is found in Matthew's Gospel (10:37): "He that loveth father or mother **more than Me** is not worthy of Me." The word hate is apparently used in contrast with love. To be a disciple of Christ, then, means that we must love supremely the Lord and the principles for which He stands, so that love for others would comparatively be hatred.

This proposition in its very start signifies a cutting-off—so far as the man is concerned, the will, the purpose—of every other love that would conflict with our love for the Lord and with our obedience to His will. Our earthly loves are to be counted as nothing in comparison. We are to be ready to sacrifice at the Lord's command every earthly hope, aim, object, and to lay down our lives willingly, gladly. Such as manifest a devotion of this kind can be trusted with anything. Of these the Lord speaks, saying prophetically, "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that Day when I (come to) make up My Jewels."—Malachi 3:17.

The fact that Jesus was of this character Himself, and placed the Father's will above all other considerations, is an assurance that all amongst His joint-heirs in the Kingdom will have the same mind, the same spirit. He assures us that the Kingdom will not be a selfish one, but the very reverse. The kings and princes and judges of that Kingdom will be not only irresistible in power, but incorruptible, unbearably. With them the Divine standard will be first, in the absolute sense.

Such devotion to the Lord as is here described will necessarily at some time or other mean the severing of many earthly ties. It means that the followers of Jesus will be thought a peculiar people; and that many will think their course strange, unnatural, insane. Hence, as St. Paul said, we are counted fools all the day long for Christ's sake—because we preach the Wisdom of God and the Love of God in preference to the wisdom of humanity and

the love of humanity. Of such St. John writes, saying, "As He was, so are we in this world"—ostracized, misunderstood; reproved, slandered. Only those who can stand such an experience can be winners of the crown to which Jesus referred, saying, To him that overcometh I will give a crown of life, and permit him to sit with Me in My Throne.

Who is sufficient for these things? asks the Apostle. And he furnishes the answer: "Our sufficiency is of God"; and in the promises—"My grace is sufficient for thee; My strength is made perfect in weakness"; and again, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Definition of Cross-Bearing

Adding to the severity of the terms, Jesus declared, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." It is not enough that we should start out with a courageous intention, a bold acknowledgment of Jesus, and a bold profession of discipleship. After we have been faithful in taking our stand on the Lord's side, we must be proven. Not merely those who have a little enthusiasm at the beginning, but those who shall demonstrate their worthiness by their faithfulness will be accounted worthy, and will be finally accepted by the Lord. Cross-bearing must be a daily matter. Our crosses are those oppositions of the world, the flesh and the Devil which conflict with the Divine will as laid down for us in the Lord's Word. The only proper sentiment is that which the Master expresses, saying, "Not My will, but Thine."

As an admonition to all not to undertake discipleship without mature deliberation, our Lord gave a parable of a man who began to build a tower, laying the foundation, but who was not able to complete it, and thus wasted his effort and made himself ridiculous, foolish. Another illustration was that of going to war without adequate preparation—an undertaking which would result disastrously. All the followers of Christ set out to build characters and to "fight a good fight." Whoever enlists under the banner of Jesus takes his stand against Satan and sin, and must expect to have a hard battle, and not to receive the victor's crown, nor to hear the words, "Well done," except by faithful perseverance in well doing.

What a blessing it would be if all who espouse the cause of Christ would do so with a full, clear understanding of what they are doing and with the fixed determination to go onward in the good way, not even to look back! The cause of Christ would be much further advanced amongst men; and while their number would be much smaller, their influence and power in the world would undoubtedly be much greater.

"Salt Is Good, But—"

Salt has preservative qualities in connection with whatever it touches. It also serves to bring out the flavor of our food. In olden times it was used as a symbol of faithfulness, loyalty; and it is said that even yet some of the Arabs would be faithful to death to any person in whose home they had eaten salt. To them it seems to mean a pledge of loyalty.

Jesus used salt as a symbol, representing His own loyalty to God and the loyalty which all of His followers must have, and not only so, but which they must maintain. If salt lose its value for seasoning purposes, it is useless for anything else. It will not serve as a fertilizer, for it has an opposite effect. It is absolutely useless except for its intended purpose. So the Christian has a special purpose in the world—to be a preservative power, to have, as it were, antiseptic qualities, and to draw out all the good qualities of those with whom he is connected. This is the mission of the Christian in respect to the world. If he fail in this, he has failed in the purpose for which he was called, and is of no particular value in the Lord's service.

"He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear," said Jesus, in conclusion. All of His followers are to take heed to these words. Whoever neglects them despises the One who gave them, and will surely fail of a blessing that might otherwise have been secured. But as for the world, "ears they have, but they hear not; eyes have they, but they see not." We are not to measure the world by the same standards that we measure ourselves and all who profess to be the followers of Jesus. The world's highest standard is the Golden Rule. The Christian's highest standard is self-sacrifice, doing God's will at any cost.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Perea	Illustrations: lost sheep, lost coin, prodigal son			15:1-32	

Luke 15:1-32

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

DIVINE CARE FOR THE LOST.—*Reprints*, p. 2706

LUKE 15:1-10.

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

LOST, AS USED in connection with mankind, has quite a different meaning in the Bible from that commonly given it in modern theology. The latter uses the term "lost" in connection with reprobates, for whom there is no hope; it implies, according to "orthodoxy," hopeless, endless, eternal torment. But from the Scriptural standpoint the word "lost" is used in an almost opposite sense, as will be noted in the lesson before us.

Our Lord, holy in word and in conduct, naturally would draw to himself especially the holiness people of his day, and these were the Pharisees, amongst whom, however, were many whose holiness was of a hypocritical character,—delighting in outward show rather than in purity and holiness of heart. Recent lessons showed us our Lord the guest and companion of prominent Pharisees, and how he improved the opportunity to preach the gospel to them as well as to others. But the Pharisees, accustomed to thinking of themselves as the holier class of the Jews, had gradually separated themselves from the lower elements of that people, so that in our Lord's time the two classes mingled very little; the Pharisees refusing to acknowledge the others as brethren and fellow-heirs of the divine promises. Consequently, when they perceived that the lower classes of the Jews were interested in Jesus' teachings, and that Jesus did not hold himself aloof from them, but mingled with and taught them just the same as others, they wondered, and this inclined them to repudiate Jesus, whom they would have been glad to have had as one of their number if he had been willing to be known as a Pharisee and to conform to their customs. It was to correct the wrong ideas of these Pharisees that Jesus gave five parables, which we are about to consider,—two of them in this lesson.

The parable of the true shepherd who, loving his sheep and caring for them, left the ninety and nine well cared for by under-shepherds in the wilds (not in a desert) and went after the one lost sheep until he found it, gives us an illustration of the divine care. Possibly our Lord meant no further lesson than this to be taken from his words; but if we shall suppose that the parable was intended to be applied in its varied particulars, and to illustrate features of the divine plan of salvation, we would be obliged to suppose that the one sheep that was lost represented Adam and the human family, and that the ninety and nine never lost, but remaining under the shepherd's care, were the angels and other spirit beings, who never wandered into sin and away from God; and who always have been under his supervision and care. In this view the shepherd going after the straying sheep would represent our Lord Jesus, leaving the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and coming into human conditions in the interest of mankind.

To take any other detailed view of the parable than this would seem inconsistent; as, for instance, to suppose that the lost sheep represented the degraded element of humanity, and ninety-nine sheep a holiness class, would be inconsistent in two ways: (1) "There is none righteous, no, not one," is the Scriptural declaration; and again, as the prophet has declared, "we **all** like sheep have gone astray." (Rom. 3:10; Isa. 53:6.) (2) Even if it should be claimed that the ninety-nine represented some who are relatively whole, tho not actually so, the illustration would be inapt; because it will not be questioned that only a small minority—one in ten thousand, or one in a hundred thousand of earth's sixteen hundred millions, is even in a condition of reckoned and relative harmony with Jehovah, the Great Shepherd.

Viewing the one sheep as representing the whole of humanity, fallen in Adam and straying far from paths of righteousness, and viewing Jesus as the Good Shepherd, the representative of the Father, the Great Shepherd (Psa. 23:1), we see that the work of going after the lost sheep began at our Lord's first advent. We see the cost to our Savior incidental to his start for the recovery of the sheep, but we do not yet see the sheep recovered; for in no sense of the word is mankind brought back into harmony with God. We do, however, see that during this Gos-

pel age God is selecting from humanity an elect Church, to be the body of Christ—members of the Good Shepherd, under Jesus as the Head; and we see that it is costing every member of the body something to prepare to join in this work of seeking the lost sheep—humanity in general—during the Millennial age.

Already the sheep is found, in the sense of being located; indeed, in that sense of the word it was not lost. But as it was lost, in the sense of having wandered from God into sin and degradation, in the same sense of the word it must be recovered or brought back, by processes of **restitution** (Acts 3:19-21) out of degradation, out of the mire of sin, and the horrible pit of iniquity and death. It will require the entire Millennial age to bring back the sheep in the full, perfect sense of the parable; but meanwhile our Lord assures us that every step in this great plan for human salvation is viewed with interest by the heavenly host, the sheep who strayed not from the Father's fold: and the figure changing a little in our Lord's explanation, and no longer represented by one sheep, but by many (even as the human family, tho originally one, is now many), he declares that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth—that returns to the fold, to harmony with God. Those now returning to harmony with God are accepted in the Beloved, and justified freely from all things by the grace that was in him, and are, in the language of the Apostle, "returning to the Shepherd and Caretaker of their souls" (1 Pet. 2:25); and called to be co-laborers with the Good Shepherd, as members of his "body."

In the case of Father Adam, the one original straying sheep, as in the case of many of his posterity, the lost condition is not the desirable one—far rather would he and many others have gone back again to the fold from which he strayed; but in the degradation and mire of sin, they became so degraded and helpless that it was impossible for them to **return** in their own strength by the way in which they went. They needed a Savior—one able to save them unto the uttermost—able to recover them fully from all condemnation of sin, and to bring them back completely into the fold of God; and just such an one the Heavenly Father has provided in our Lord Jesus: "He is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto the Father through him."

True, there will be a class, as the Scriptures clearly show, who, after having received at the Lord's hands all the blessings and opportunities which his love has provided for their recovery, will still persist in willfulness—self-will, and thus spurn the Good Shepherd's proffered assistance. These, in the Scriptures, are said to "sin willfully after they have come to a knowledge of the truth;" for such, the Apostle declares, there remains no longer an interest in the great sacrifice, and "it is impossible to renew" or recover them. Respecting the course of such it is written, "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that ye should pray for it." Whoever thus sins willfully and persistently puts himself beyond the reach of the Good Shepherd, and dies the Second Death, and thus ceases to have any part or lot in the divine plan. (Heb. 6:4-6; 1 John 5:16.) It was not for the "goat" class that the Good Shepherd gave his life, and seeks in the desert; nor for the "wolves;" but merely for those who retain something at least of the "sheep" nature, despite their degradation in sin. Adam was a "sheep," or, as the Scriptures declare, a "son of God" (Luke 3:38); and while his transgression was a willful one, in some respects, we have no reason to suppose that it was more than a wandering of the "sheep" from the fold, into ways of self-will: it did not mean a change of nature from a sheep disposition to that of a goat or a wolf. It did not mean that Adam preferred to be a "child of the devil."

Had Adam at heart become intelligently and wilfully an enemy of God and of righteousness we cannot suppose that the all-wise Shepherd would have sent his Son after him as a "sheep." True, many of the children of Adam today have attained marked characteristics of goat nature, and, as the Apostle declares, are "enemies of God through wicked works." (Col. 1:21.) Nevertheless, the Apostle also explains that many of these are in this condition, not willfully, but because they have been deceived by Satan into putting light for darkness and darkness for light; —the eyes of their understanding have been deceived. He explained that the "god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them that be-

lieve not" lest they should see the glorious light of truth. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Many of these, then, who through association with the Adversary have become goat-like in many respects, still have something of the sheep nature, which, under proper enlightenment, would assert itself and be glad to have the Good Shepherd restore them fully to divine favor and the fold.

From this standpoint, which we believe is the true one, and the only one in harmony with the various features of the parable, we perceive that God takes no account whatever of those who will go into the Second Death; they will have no existence whatever, so far as God and his plan are concerned, from the moment they lose the sheep nature. And the one sheep which our Lord will recover during restitution times, and by the close of the Millennium bring fully back into the fold of God, will be **the human family** as God has recognized it from the first; viz., those created in God's image and likeness, and who never fully lose that image and likeness, and in whom his image and likeness will be revived and restored during the Millennium. The lost sheep, which originally was represented in one (Adam and Eve) in its recovery will be represented by hundreds of millions of the redeemed and restored of mankind.

The Lost Piece of Silver.

The parable of the woman who, having a bracelet on which were hung ten pieces of silver—a marriage token—on losing one of these set diligently to work until she found it, is another representation of the same thought expressed foregoing. The woman's energy in seeking for the lost piece of silver is given by our Lord as an illustration of **divine energy** on behalf of **lost humanity**. And here again we see that the Scriptures use the word "lost" in reference to the original loss, and not at all in respect to those who will be destroyed in the Second Death—the latter are not said to be lost; they cease to exist; they are not reckoned in the divine calculations at all, and not worthy to be mentioned. They are not at all like the original that was lost, which God recognized and proposes to recover.

The ten pieces of silver were not only of value, but each had stamped upon it, as is the custom with coin, a certain image or likeness. And so with all the sons of God, angels, archangels, and we know not how many other orders of spirit beings, were made in the **image** and **likeness** of God. It was one of these that was lost—the human one, man. And it was that which was lost that was sought, and ultimately found.

The houses of olden times, lighted mainly through the doorway, with the floors of earth (clay or sand or stones) more or less littered and defiled, well represented the condition of sin and degradation in which mankind was lost, as represented in father Adam, who bore the image and likeness of God, as represented in the lost coin of the parable. The parable does not represent the processes of restitution, but merely the original loss and the ultimate recovery of the **same thing that was lost**, and the energy put forth to this end. The lighting of the candle and the sweeping diligently represent the work of God through the Christ, which will be accomplished by the end of the Millennial age, when that which was lost and sought for, will have been fully recovered.

The restored race, when returned to the heavenly Father at the close of the Millennial age will, each and all, be as perfect in his image and likeness as was Adam in his creation, with the added benefits of larger knowledge and fuller appreciation of the divine One, whose likeness they will bear. No account is taken in this parable, either, of the increase in the numbers of the human family, nor of those members of Adam's posterity who, by reason of willful sin (the love of sin more than righteousness) will be "destroyed from amongst the people." (Acts 3:23.) They have no standing in the Father's sight; indeed, the Father takes no cognizance of any except that which was lost, and that which will ultimately be restored to him by his faithful representative, Christ, who seeks and finds.

The great time of rejoicing, both in heaven and in earth, will come at the close of the Millennial age, when all things in heaven and in earth will be heard praising Him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb; but now, in advance of the complete rejoicing, our Lord assures us that all the heavenly host rejoices in every evidence of the accomplishment of the great work; rejoices over one sinner that re-

penteth—who fully turns from sin to harmony with God. And if the angels in heaven rejoice, so, in proportion as they are in harmony with God and the heavenly beings, will all who profess to be God's people on earth have rejoicing in the recovery of fellow-creatures out of the snare and blindness of sin and Satan.

This was the particular lesson which our Lord sought to impress upon the Pharisees—that instead of holding themselves aloof from, and feeling offended at, those who were hearing Jesus gladly, they should, if they were in harmony with God and the heavenly holy ones, have rejoiced to see any evidence of repentance and reformation; and should have been glad to assist back into harmony with God those who, as the Apostle expresses it, were "feeling after God, if haply they might find him."—Acts 17:27.

And this must be the attitude of all the Lord's people today: if they have not this sentiment of heart it is an evidence that they have not the spirit of the Lord. And to have such a feeling of loving interest in the recovery of others out of sin, and a disposition to assist them back to harmony with God, not only is an evidence of a condition of heart which is in harmony with God, but will be found to be an aid to such themselves, an assistance in making straight paths for their feet, that they themselves, under the Shepherd's care, may ultimately reach the fold in safety.

So then, let all of the Lord's dear people who have already been found by the Good Shepherd, and who have accepted his loving care and assistance back to God, cultivate more and more the spirit of sympathy for others, and of helpfulness and cooperation in the work in which the Good Shepherd is engaged—not yet in seeking for humanity as a whole, but now specially in rendering assistance to those whom the Lord is, in the present age, seeking out as the "firstfruits" of his work and victory,—edifying one another, building one another up in the most holy faith, encouraging one another: helping one another to put on the wedding garment, and to be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, as joint-heirs in the Kingdom.—1 Thess. 5:11; Jude 20; Col. 1:12; Rom. 8:17.

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.—*Reprints*, p. 1459
LUKE 15:11-32.

MANY HAVE applied this parable to Jews and Gentiles, assuming that the Gentiles are illustrated in the prodigal son. To us, this interpretation is not consistent with facts and Scripture; for up to the time of the giving of the parable, and for years afterward (three years and a half after Pentecost), the Gentiles were not recognized as sons of God, but as "strangers," "aliens," "foreigners," "having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:11,12.) From the time of the fall none but the one line of Adam's children had divine favor—the line of which Noah and Abraham and Israel and Christ came—the line of Seth. (Amos 3:2.) All of this line, as the record shows, were accepted through the mediation of **typical** sacrifices of atonement for their sins—except Christ, whose life was from another father than Adam, and who himself became the true antitypical sacrifice of atonement for Adam and all who lost life in him.

Gentiles, consequently, cannot have been meant or illustrated by the prodigal son of the parable, for they had never been sons, and could not have left the father's house when they never were in it. We must look elsewhere for the class represented.

Others have suggested that the two sons represent, the elder the "overcomers" and the younger the "great company" of the Gospel Church: that those who fail to live up to their covenant are represented in the prodigal and may be said to be wasting their spiritual privileges, with figurative publicans and harlots, in the enjoyments of worldly favor, and in immunity from the reproaches which fall upon the faithful covenant-keepers who are "dying daily" in the service of the Master according to their covenant. But it should be noticed that this

exposition reverses the order of the parable, makes of the prodigal the one free from the reproaches and opposition of the world, and represents those who **suffer** with Christ for righteousness' sake as the elder son who suffered nothing. In the parable it was the elder son that had the good things, the plenty of food and clothing and every comfort; and it was the prodigal son who was ragged and hungry and barefoot and suffering and outcast with the swine.

The application of the parable most reasonable and most fitting, all phases of the parable and the facts considered, is as follows:

In the parable the elder brother represented the Pharisees, and the younger brother the publicans and sinners. The context shows that our Lord's willingness to receive the "lower classes" of the Jews, those who were living sinful lives regardless of God's laws and of their covenant, had excited the anger of the Pharisees. The latter were strict observers of God's Law, and in this respect commendable; but they were blameworthy in that they were **proud** of their religion, and boasted of their goodness; and because they despised and spurned and would not recognize, nor speak to, nor eat with, the irreligious class; and the more so because in their pride they failed to acknowledge the fact that, when doing their best to fulfill God's law, they came far short of perfect obedience.

Our Lord's strict observance of the Law [for, being born a Jew, born under the Law, he was bound to and did respect every legal requirement up to the day of his death—which ended that Law covenant] no doubt made him at first a favorite with the Pharisees: accordingly we find him occasionally the guest of some of them. (Luke 7:36; 5:17; John 3:1,2.) But when they found that he received sinners and ate with them, they began to realize that his righteousness was of a different sort from theirs, and, as darkness is opposed to light, they hated him. Moreover, soon they began to see that his teachings reflected against them, severely reproving their claimed and yet very imperfect sanctity. So it was in this parable and the others of the same discourse: they were spoken to the Pharisees as a reproof, **because** they had murmured at him for teaching or having anything to do with the disreputable backsliders.—See Luke 15:1-3.

Originally all the Jews entered into covenant relationship with God, and thus became, typically, his **sons**. Although they were a "house" of servants as contrasted with the Christian Church, called the "house" of sons, yet we must remember that they **typified** the house of spiritual sons, and that as Adam was a **human** son of God before he sinned, so all who obtain forgiveness and return to harmony with God are again **sons**, either of the earthly or the spiritual family. So, then, as in this parable, all Israelites under the Jewish covenant were treated as (human) sons of God. The beginning of this relationship dated from the Covenant at Sinai.

At first all sought to abide in God's favor at "home," fulfilling the relationship of obedient sons —the original or eldest son of the parable, represented most prominently in our Lord's day by the Pharisees. But another class developed, who, after having received God's favors, wandered off into the ways of sin and forgetfulness of God, and his love and care, and into dissipation—the younger son of the parable, represented in our Lord's day by the publicans and sinners.

Sin always brings misery in some form, and often in many forms: and one can fancy that the publicans and sinners, as they heard the story of the young prodigal beginning to feel his lack, would realize their own miserable condition therein pictured. Before the Master had finished telling how the prodigal "came to himself," and how the father "saw him a long way off" and ran to meet and greet him, no doubt many of the hearers' eyes were wet with tears, and many of their hearts swelling with emotion and sympathy and the desire similarly to get back from the service of the devil to God's favor and love.

And how true to facts was the picture of the Pharisees standing around and objecting to his telling those poor prodigals anything about the love of God and his willingness to forgive them, and to welcome them back home again. The elder son of the parable was "angry, and would not go in:" the self-righteous Pharisees were angry, too, and refused to enter the Kingdom,

then nigh at hand, and first offered to their nation according to divine promise. Our Lord said to them upon another occasion, "Woe, unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matt. 23:13); and again he said, "Verily, I say unto you that publicans and sinners shall go into the kingdom before you." (Matt. 21:31.) Poor, self-righteous Pharisees! To this day they are jealous and will "not go in." As a class they refused the Kingdom on the conditions offered, until the offer and opportunity were taken from them entirely (Matt. 21:43), and given to a class whom they esteemed still less than the publicans and sinners—even to the Gentiles whom they esteemed as "dogs," from among whom, strangers and aliens and not then sons, members for the Bride and Kingdom of Christ are being selected.

We who have been accepted by God from among the Gentiles to be his sons—joint-heirs with Christ—can perhaps enter as fully into the spirit of this parable as did the publicans and sinners who heard the gracious words from the Redeemer's lips. We, who were strangers and aliens, learned that the Father prepared a great sacrifice for the sins of all condemned in Adam. We have heard and tasted of his loving welcome into his family—we who were dead in trespasses and sins, but who are now alive toward God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. We received the **"best robe,"** the robe of Christ's righteousness, replacing the filthy rags of our unrighteousness; we received the ring, representing the witness of the spirit that we are sons and heirs; we received the sandals, preparing us for the sharp contact often to be experienced from the beggarly elements of the present evil world; and above all we received the kiss, the seal of our reconciliation, the mark of our adoption into the divine family. Nothing in this parable shows the necessity for the **ransom** as other Scriptures show it. This, however, is not out of harmony but consistent with our interpretation of the parable; for Israel as a whole had been typically atoned for in the typical sacrifices by which their covenant was introduced and renewed yearly. It is therefore evidently a picture of the return of a backslidden **son**, and not that of the redemption of a condemned stranger and alien.

The lesson of this parable to the Pharisees is one widely applicable in its principles—viz.: that all who are in harmony with God should, nay, all who have the spirit of holiness will, rejoice to see sinners returning to divine favor. Any other spirit will surely work injury, as it did to the Pharisees, who, as a class, were **unfit** in their selfishness to share the blessings God had or ever will have to offer. Thank God, the time for removing blindness will soon be here. (Isa. 35:5.) Let us trust that under the new conditions many more will learn and practice the spirit of love, who now are ruled by selfishness. How hardly shall a selfish man enter the Kingdom! Let us beware of selfishness, and embroider our wedding-robe with flowers of humility and love.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Perea	Illustrations: unjust steward, rich man and Lazarus			16:1-31	

Luke 16:1-31

And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, how much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, A

hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery. There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

THE UNJUST STEWARD.—*Reprints*, p. 2715

LUKE 16:1-13.

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

WHILE THE previous parables of this dinner-table talk were addressed specially to the Pharisees, this parable, and the one following it, concerning a rich man and a poor man (Dives and Lazarus), were addressed not so exclusively to the Pharisees, but, as the first verse of our lesson declares, to the disciples **also**, as well as to the Pharisees at the same table. The reason why the first three parables were addressed to the Pharisees only, and not to the disciples, is evident—the disciples needed no such instruc-

tion, having no prejudice against the poorer classes, recognizing themselves as amongst the "lost" who were glad to be found by the Good Shepherd.

The steward of this parable corresponds to the elder son of the preceding parable, and to the rich man of the succeeding parable; it applies specially to the scribes and Pharisees, who, as our Lord declared, on another occasion, "sat in Moses' seat"—represented Moses, and the Law Covenant of which Moses was the Mediator, and the blessing obtained through that covenant, of which Moses was the original steward, and they now the steward, as his representatives. In what did this stewardship consist? The Apostle Paul asks this question, and answers it, saying, "What advantage then hath a Jew? Much every way; chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God," the knowledge of God, with typical justification and at-one-ment with him, and an interest in the promises made to the fathers.

The Jews, as represented in Moses and his successors, failed of their stewardship—failed to use in a manner satisfactory to God the favors committed to their care. Nor, indeed, were they wholly to blame for this, as the Apostle Paul points out; they were weak through the fall, incompetent to be administrators of so great a trust; and God knew this when he gave them the stewardship—he knew that they would fail to keep the Law perfectly. He had fully intended that in due time he would depose them from the stewardship and give it to the one whom he had foreknown—to Messiah.

Now the time had come when this change of administration was about to be effected, and God was calling upon the representatives of Israel to give an account of their stewardship, and informing them that a new dispensation was about to be ushered in. Our Lord Jesus in this parable wished to point out to them what would be the wisest course for them to pursue under the circumstances. He shows them what an earthly steward would do under such circumstances, and tells them there is wisdom in such a course, saying, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light:" you, as God's people, more favored than any others with light on the divine character and plan, are not acting as wisely as you would do if you were earthly stewards.

Here we are met with the difficulty that the majority of people do not clearly comprehend—the scope of a steward's privileges in olden times. We have no such office today amongst civilized people. A steward's office was a confidential one; he had the liberty and full authority to do anything and everything that the owner himself could do with his goods. He could make presents or cancel debts, or use in any manner he chose the goods under his care, and could not be held responsible as a culprit before the Law, because the nature of his office as a steward was such that he fully represented and acted for his employer. The latter could discharge him from the stewardship as a penalty for unfaithfulness, but this would be his only punishment, because in making him steward he fully authorized him to use his judgment.

In the parable the unjust steward—unjust in his previous use of his master's affairs, that is, unrighteous, unsatisfactory, imperfect—as soon as he realized the situation, made no attempt to defend himself, nor to claim that he had done perfectly; but before rendering up his accounts he dealt leniently with some of his lord's creditors, remitting parts of their indebtedness. (This may have been a wise course, as, for instance, today bankruptcy laws similarly release debtors from obligations which they could not pay; and similarly creditors frequently, in their own interest, agree to accept sixty per cent., fifty per cent., forty per cent., or some other proportion of the original sum as for the whole of a debt, seeing that the debtor is unable to pay the account in full, and with a view to his encouragement to do the best he can. The Jewish Jubilee year of full release from all debts was along the same line of leniency and wise business policy represented in the "Bankruptcy Law" of today.) It is not because of this last conduct of the steward that he is called unjust (unrighteous) in the parable, but because of his previous stewardship, not having come up to the full, perfect demands of his master.

Now, applying the parable to all of the Jewish nation, especially to those who sat in Moses' seat and had the control of matters, and who decided what was and what was not the proper

interpretation of the Law, our Lord intimated that if they were as wise as earthly stewards they would make use of their opportunities in a somewhat similar manner. Now how could they have done this—supposing that they recognized the fact that they had not fulfilled the requirements of God under the Law, and supposing also that they realized that the time had come for a change of dispensation, and that God was demanding an account of them and informing them that a new steward would take possession of matters—under such circumstances how should these in Moses' seat have acted? We answer, that in harmony with the lesson of the parable, they should have said to themselves: We realize that we ourselves have not kept the Law of God perfectly; indeed, that it is not within our power to do so. We realize that a change of dispensation is impending, and that we are called upon to make an accounting, and that we can only admit before God that we have made a failure as respects the carrying out of the demands of his Law and the gaining of eternal life under it,—and as respects the use of the many advantages every way which God has given us. We have used our advantages in some respects well, but we failed on the whole to accomplish anything in the world, or to gain eternal life, either for ourselves or for any,—and we cannot dispute, therefore, that "By the deeds of the Law no flesh should be justified in God's sight."

Since, therefore, it must soon be evidenced to all that our stewardship has resulted in failure and that we are dispossessed, the wise thing for us to do is to turn about at once, and deal kindly and generously with these sinners (the prodigal son class) and, instead of denouncing them as sinners more than ourselves, we should say to them frankly, We cannot keep this perfect Law of God, and we know also that you cannot do so; but now, instead of being hopelessly discouraged and cast down, do the best you can; we will remit part of the exaction of the Law, admitting that you are unable to keep it perfectly, and will merely require of you that you keep it to the best of your ability—fifty percent, or eighty percent, according to your circumstances and conditions—according as you are **able**, keep the Law.

Had the scribes and Pharisees taken this position they would have healed the breach as between themselves and the people, and their honesty in admitting that they themselves could not keep the Law would have been a distinct advantage to them, subsequently, in connection with the new dispensation. And this very conduct of candid admission and of sympathy for others, and assistance in lifting their burdens would have brought them into such a condition of heart that they would have been ready for the **Gospel**; and the lower classes, from which they had hitherto held aloof as sinners, would have had a kindly feeling toward them, and as a result they would have retained a measure of their sympathy, at least, in the time of trouble which came upon them when their polity was overthrown.

But did the scribes and Pharisees follow any such course? By no means. On the other hand they put on a brassy front, made broad their phylacteries, made still louder claims respecting their own perfection of heart and life, deceiving their own selves probably as much as or more than they deceived others. They boasted that they should ever continue to be stewards of the manifold grace of God; and, as our Lord declares, so far from lifting the burdens and condemnations of the Law from the shoulders of the people, who were honest enough to confess inability to keep the perfect law, these scribes and Pharisees, on the contrary, bound upon the people heavy burdens which they would not assist to lift with their little finger.—Matt. 23:1-4.

Thus doing they became more and more hypocritical and case-hardened, until, in his later descriptions of them, our Lord declared them to be whited sepulchres, outwardly fair and beautiful, inwardly full of corruption, dishonesty, hypocrisy; knowing themselves to be infractors of the Law they were outwardly claiming and boasting perfection. This not being said to the Pharisees alone, but to the disciples "also," implies that they were to notice how the parable fitted and how unwisely this steward class was acting. Even at the table the Pharisees, perceiving to some extent at least the trend of the parable, "derided"—being covetous. But our Lord pressed the lesson home to them saying, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men;

but God knoweth your hearts." You are the unjust steward and soon all will witness your rejection. "The Law and the prophets [of which you are the representatives] was [recognized of God] until John [the Baptist]; since that time the Kingdom of God is preached [the new, the Gospel dispensation], and every one [should] press toward it." (Verses 14-16.) You, leaders of the people, however, not only will not enter yourselves, but those desiring to enter you hinder. (Matt. 23:13.) You should see that your institution is bound to Moses and the Law as a wife to her husband—so long as it liveth. It is needful, therefore, that the Law which you represent should die, that Israel may be liberated and thus be prepared to be united (married) to Messiah by a new covenant.—Verses 17, 18; Rom. 7:1-4.

We are not informed that this parable had special application in the end of this Gospel age, but since we know from other Scriptures that natural Israel and its harvest time were a pattern or illustration of spiritual Israel and this age and the present harvest time, therefore we are justified in looking for some parallel as between the condition of the unjust steward in our Lord's day and a similar class in this present time. And looking about us today for a class corresponding to those who sat in Moses' seat, we find a class today sitting in Christ's seat, as respects the Gospel Church. This class is composed of elders, Sunday School teachers and superintendents, ministers, bishops, archbishops, etc. These as a whole are representing a great stewardship of divine favor as respects the Lord's people today. They perceive that a change of dispensation is upon us, that their creeds and traditions from the past are being called in question, and that they are being required to render up an account. They perceive that the account will not be a very flattering one, and that if the whole truth were known to the people as it is known to God, they would be found derelict, unfaithful to their stewardship in many respects. They fear the crisis; they put off the day of reckoning as far as possible; they hush the murmurs of the people and the questions respecting creeds, and as the Lord said of the steward of his day, so it will be true of these: "That which is highly esteemed amongst men is an abomination in the sight of God."—Verse 15.

These representatives of the nominal church, who hold a position of stewardship as respects the masses of the Lord's people, are disposed, as were the Pharisees, their prototypes, to put a bold face upon matters, to brave it out rather than to confess the truth. As for instance, in the matter of creeds that are being called in question: Many, even of those who were at first disposed to demand the revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith, have concluded that this would be showing the white feather, and admitting that they had been in error in the past, and imperfect in their interpretation of the divine Word, and hence calculated to discredit them with the people; and now the tide is rapidly turning and the same ones who were demanding a revision are now voting to the contrary, that the creed is good, thoroughly satisfactory to them, that they would not change it for anything. They are so anxious to be highly esteemed of men that they seem to forget altogether the one from whom they received their stewardship, and who is about to take it from them.

What would be the proper course for this steward class of the Gospel age? We answer, that the proper course would be to do what our Lord recommended to the Jewish stewards; viz., they should candidly confess to the people the errors of the creeds and their own imperfection in attempted exposition of the divine Word, and their own failures in the past in respect to a proper use of the oracles of God and a proper application of the exceeding great and precious promises. And while acknowledging their own errors and shortcomings, they should modify the demands made of the people and bring them into conformity with their ability. For instance, they should say to the people, How much did we say that you owed to God, and what penalty did we say would be imposed upon you? If we said you were to receive a penalty of eternal torment, count that now as being an error, and write down instead, "A just recompense of reward." If we taught you that your obligations to God are according to the Jewish law, and as represented in the Ten Commandments, and that unless these were kept **per-**

fectly in letter and in spirit you would have no hope of eternal life, alter and amend that feature of your faith, and write instead that, under the New Covenant, God will accept the most imperfect works of those who have consecrated themselves to him, providing those imperfect works are the best that they are able to offer; and providing they are offered in the name and merit of him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood.

If the present stewards would follow such a course they would undoubtedly be respected through the future, but following their present course, the time is surely coming when they will be despised as hypocrites and blind guides, who mislead their confiding flocks into the ditch of skepticism and the great time of trouble.

This parable may be considered as ending with the eighth verse, the instructions which follow being separate and distinct, and along a somewhat different line, and addressed specially to those who accepted the Lord's teaching, his disciples.

"Ye Cannot Serve God And Mammon."

This after-lesson is on the subject of the impossibility of having two masters, God and Mammon. Mammon represents earthly riches, not only financial wealth, but honor amongst men, etc.—the thing which was particularly hindering the Pharisees from taking the proper course and acknowledging their error and seeking for and obtaining mercy. Mammon still is a great hindrance to all who desire to be the Lord's disciples. Whoever worships Mammon—and it may be self or wealth or fame or position and honor amongst men, one or all of these—whoever worships Mammon cannot at the same time be a true worshiper of God, a true follower of Christ; because God and Mammon are rivals before our hearts. If we attempt to divide our love and attention, and to give part of it to God and to his service, and part of it to Mammon, the results will be unsatisfactory to God, unsatisfactory to Mammon and unsatisfactory to ourselves.

We must, therefore, decide either to live for self and earthly things or to renounce and sacrifice these in the interest of God and of heavenly things. The worshipers of Mammon may have certain advantages as respects the present life, in the way of earthly prosperity, but Mammon cannot give eternal life. It is the gift of God, and those who would have God's gift must be God's friends, God's children; and he demands of such that they shall manifest their love and devotion to him by renouncing Mammon, by joyfully sacrificing earthly name and fame and favor and interest, thus showing their higher appreciation of his love and favor, the riches of his grace, and the exceeding great and precious things which he has promised to give them in the life to come.

These are to "make to themselves friends;" in other words, to lay up treasures in heaven, by the sacrifice of the Mammon of unrighteousness;—that is to say, the sacrifice of the various interests of this present time of unrighteousness, "this present evil world."

Some may have very little of Mammon at their disposal to sacrifice; but the Lord encourages us all by saying that he that is faithful in that which is **least**, thereby gives evidence of how faithful he would be if he had **much**; and the Lord accepts the little sacrifices which we are able to make as tho they were greater ones. "She hath done what she could" is the best of testimony as respects the use of present opportunities in the Lord's service, whether it refer to a mite or a million, a little influence or a great one. It is not the **amount** that God is seeking, but the character, the disposition of heart; and whoever has the right disposition of heart and is careful in the small affairs of life, to serve the Lord with all that he possesses and to the extent of his ability, such an one will have committed to him the true riches—the heavenly riches. Not merely may he expect to enter into the glories of the heavenly Kingdom, but even in the present life he will begin to get a first-fruits of those riches in his own heart, in his own experiences; for it is unquestionably a fact that the heirs of glory, those who are in the right relationship with God and running faithfully in the race, not only will get the prize at the end of the race, but already get blessing which the world can neither give nor take away;—the joys of the Lord, the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts; so that they can sing for joy, even in the

house of their pilgrimage—even in the present unsatisfactory tabernacle condition, in which we groan also, being burdened with its weaknesses.

But if we are not faithful in the little things which confessedly are not our own, and merely given to us as a stewardship—the things, the opportunities, the talents, which are merely put within our grasp as stewards of the Lord,—if we are not faithful in using these with an eye single to the Lord's glory, how can we expect that he will ever give us true riches of grace, to be our own forever, either in the future or in the present life.

The sum of this lesson to the disciples, then, is that as no man is able to serve two masters and satisfy both, and do justice to both, their interests conflicting, no more can we serve God and righteousness, and at the same time be pleasing and acceptable to the Adversary and those who are in harmony with him who now rules in this present dispensation, the "prince of this world." All of the Lord's consecrated people, those who would lay up treasures in heaven and be rich toward God, must be willing to become of no reputation amongst those who are not consecrated, and who, whatever their professions, are really serving Mammon, selfishness, the present life, and not sacrificing these interests to the attainment of the heavenly Kingdom.

RICH TO HELL—POOR TO HEAVEN—*Reprints*, p. 5444

LUKE 16:19-31.

"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor,
he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."—Proverbs 21:13.

DID OUR LORD mean that all rich men and all rich women are to spend eternity in misery because of faring sumptuously every day, and wearing purple and fine linen? Can it be true that in order to get to Heaven we must be poor beggars, covered with sores, and have them licked by dogs, and must eat crumbs from a rich man's table? Has character nothing to do with future rewards and punishments? Again, will it be so that for all eternity the rich, tormented in fire, will see the poor in bliss, and the honored poor see the rich in eternal misery? Can this be the arrangement of an all-wise, all-loving Creator—one who knew the end from the beginning?

For many years this parable has caused distress of mind to the more saintly of God's people; both heart and head have rebelled. We remembered that Abraham was very rich, likewise Isaac, Jacob, King David, King Solomon, etc. We remembered that God Himself is very rich. Then we looked up the subject in the Hebrew and the Greek, and found that Abraham did not go to *Gehenna*, the hopeless condition, the Second Death, but to *Sheol, Hades*, the tomb, the grave, the state of death, where there is no fire.

Our greater knowledge increased the mystery; for the Scriptures declare that *Sheol, Hades*, the tomb, is to be destroyed, that all are to be brought forth from it in the resurrection. No other Scripture seemed to agree with this parable. It stands in a class by itself, except as we might use for its support one text in Revelation which speaks of a symbolic beast and a symbolic false prophet in torment. Thus have the thinking people of the Church been stumbled and perplexed by the story of this lesson.

Now All Is Clear, Plain

Now we see that our lesson is a parable. It is not to be taken literally, any more than are the other parables and dark sayings of our Savior; such as, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you"; or again, "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out …; if thine hand offend thee, cut it off." Indeed, we find that Jesus spoke to the people only with parables. (Matthew 13:34.) None were ready for the depth of His teaching until after the Holy Spirit at Pentecost began to give qualification.

How simple it all seems now! how beautiful! Many of God's people are rejoicing that in the light of the present understanding of the Bible the Divine character is shining forth, beautiful in its Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power.

It is not difficult for us to understand that our lesson is a parable. To take it literally, as we have seen, would involve the absurdity of supposing that all beggars go to Heaven, and that all wealthy go to Hell; for the parable says nothing about character—either that the poor man was good or that the Rich Man was bad. Viewed as a parable, we see that the thing said is not the thing meant. Thus in other parables wheat and sheep represent children of God; tares and goats represent those dominated by the Adversary, the god of this world.

The Rich Man of The Parable

In the parable under consideration, the Rich Man represents a class, and the poor man, Lazarus, another class. Let us see: The Rich Man was the Jewish nation, which had been in God's favor for more than sixteen centuries. To the Jew had been given the promises, the Prophets, the blessings and privileges of the Law Covenant. These symbolically were their purple, fine linen and sumptuous table. The fine linen symbolized their typical justification through typical sacrifices. Their purple raiment symbolized royalty; for they were the typical Kingdom. Their sumptuous fare represented the Divine promises, as St. Paul's words imply.—Romans 11:9.

In Jesus' day Jewish favor began to wane. They were completely cut off in A.D. 70, as all Jews will admit. During the interim of forty years the Rich Man, the Jewish nation, sickened, died and was buried. Nationally, they went to Hades, to the tomb; and their resurrection has not yet been accomplished, although Zionism is the beginning of it.

But although nationally dead and buried, the Jews individually have been very much alive during the last nineteen centuries. They have had anguish of soul, as they have received persecutions—sometimes, alas! from those who profess the name of Jesus, but who deny Him in their practices. For all these centuries the Jews have cried out to God, who in the parable is represented as Abraham, the Father of the Faithful. The only answer that they have had is that there is a gulf of separation between them and God. Thank God, this cannot much longer be the case! The New Dispensation dawns, in which the Rich Man will return from Hades. Israel will be nationally rehabilitated, and God's favor will again come to those of them who shall learn needed lessons.

The Poor Man of The Parable

The poor man of the parable represents an outcast class. It included publicans and sinners, who had alienated themselves from God's favor. It also included Gentiles, to whom Divine favor had never been extended—"aliens and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel." (Ephesians 2:12.) These had no fine linen of typical justification, and no purple, representing a share in God's favor as part of His Kingdom. None of the promises belonged to them. All that they could have would be merely such crumbs as would fall from the Rich Man's table.

The Scriptures illustrate two such crumbs given to this class by Jesus. When He healed the Roman centurion's servant, it was a concession at the request of the Jews, who declared that this man was a friend and had done them good, by building a synagogue, etc. The healing of this servant was a crumb. Similarly, the Syro-Phoenician woman got a crumb when she came to Jesus entreating the recovery of her daughter, who was possessed of a demon. The Master answered, "It is not proper to take the children's bread and give it unto dogs." He here used the customary Jewish phraseology respecting Gentiles—Gentile dogs. The Syro-Phoenician woman was not a Jewess and had no claim on God's favor, but she replied: "Yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the children's table." Jesus noted her faith and gave her the crumb which she desired.

As the Jews died to their favor, so the outcast publicans, sinners and Gentiles died to their disfavor; such of them as desired the favors of God, hungering and thirsting for His Word of promise, were received by Him. The early Church was made up of this Lazarus class, rejected by the Pharisees as publicans, sinners and Gentiles. Instead of being any longer alienated from God, these became the children of God and heirs of His promises. In the parable they are represented as children of Abraham—in his arms. In the type, Isaac was the beloved son of promise to the literal Abraham. In the antitype, Jesus and His followers are the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, received to God's bosom

and favor. Thus St. Paul writes, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the Promise"—made to Abraham. —Galatians 3:29.

"A Great Gulf Fixed"

The great gulf between Judaism and Christianity has been fixed for more than eighteen centuries. During all this period no Jew has been permitted to come near to God, and no Gentile permitted to take the former position of the Jew, or in any manner to claim favor aside from Christ. In the Divine Plan the gulf was fixed unalterably. "There is none other name given under Heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved"—whereby we may come into heart relationship with God. This gulf dates from the time that Christ came and offered Himself to Israel, and was rejected and crucified.

Thank God, His Word points us to another change of dispensation at the Second Coming of Christ! Then the Lazarus class, now children of God by faith, will be made actually and gloriously His children beyond the veil. In association with Jesus their Lord, they will take control of the world; for they will be His Bride and Joint-heir in the Kingdom. What will happen to the Rich Man then? Oh, he is to have a resurrection from Hades! While God's Kingdom will be represented on the spiritual plane by the Lazarus class, it will be represented on the earthly plane by another class, which will be Jewish. The Jews who crucified Jesus will not be made princes in the earth in association with Messiah's spiritual Empire, but some of their brethren will be—a class whom they have been accustomed to call fathers will be made Princes. These Scripturally are known as "Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the Prophets," and all who during the Jewish Epoch proved themselves loyal to God and faithful, described by St. Paul in Hebrews 11:32-40.

St. Paul refers to this recovery of the Jews to Divine favor in Romans 11:25-33. He there points out that as we who are now the people of God were not always so, but were received to Divine favor when Israel was broken off from God's favor, so in due time those Israelites cut off from the favor of God will receive favor through our favor. That is to say, when the Church shall have attained the prize of glory, honor and immortality, as Spiritual Israel, then the gulf separating Natural Israel from God's favor will have been passed. Then favor will return to Natural Israel. Coming to them through the glorified Spiritual Israel, it will extend through them to all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues of humanity, during the Millennial Age.

This is the Divine Promise, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The Spiritual Seed of Abraham, the Church, gets the first share in this Promise, and the natural seed of Abraham gets the second part; but both together will be used by the Lord in rolling away the curse and pouring out, instead, favors and blessings upon humanity, upon whomsoever will accept them.

Dives' Five Brethren

The parable represents Dives as praying for a drop of water to cool his parched tongue. Symbolically, parabolically, this represents the Jewish people in great distress, asking God to allow Christians to give them some help from their troubles. Have the Jews ever appealed to God for help? Have they prayed for relief from the persecutions which have come to them in the past and which to some extent still continue in Russia? Surely they have! Moreover, they have appealed to representatives of the Lazarus class—representatives of Christianity—desiring that their release and relief should come through them.

An illustration of this prayer for relief in our own day was afforded in the appeal of the Jews to President Roosevelt that he would use his influence with the government of Russia for the amelioration of Jewish persecutions. Did they get this drop of water? Nay! Mr. Roosevelt replied that the comity of nations would not permit such a communication from a friendly nation.

The parable goes further and develops the fact that the Rich Man had five brethren in danger of joining him in the trouble that was upon him. Who were his five brethren? We reply that the Jews of Palestine in Jesus' day represented chiefly the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, while the majority of the other ten tribes were scattered abroad in various lands.

The question raised is, Did this trying experience affect merely the Jews of Palestine, who had enjoyed most of God's favors, or did it include also the Jews scattered abroad? The answer is given in the parable, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them." This proves that Jews only were referred to; for no Gentile had Moses and the Prophets. The number five is in full accord, also. Whereas two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were represented by the one Rich Man, so proportionately the other ten tribes would be represented by five brethren.

And so it was. The Message of the Gospel, which began with the Jews in Palestine, was extended to every land; and the Apostle Paul, in going to any cities amongst the Gentiles, preached first to the Jews, saying, It is expedient that the Gospel should be preached first to you; but seeing you reject the grace of God, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:46, 47.) In other words, the test upon all Israelites was the same.

Thus we are finding a depth of wisdom in Jesus' teachings beyond anything we could even have dreamed. We are finding, too, that the horrible nightmare doctrines of the Dark Ages poisoned our judgments, crossed our spiritual eyesight, and hindered us from seeing the beauty of the Lord's Word. Thank God for the New Day and the light that it is shedding upon the Bible!

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Perea	Forgiveness and faith; unprofitable servants			17:1-10	

Luke 17:1-10

Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

WE ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS—*Reprints*, p. 5445

LUKE 17:1-10.

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—1 Corinthians 1:31.

TODAY'S lesson is in four sections, each apparently distinct and separate. Even the connection in which these words were uttered is not given. Nevertheless, they manifest the Wisdom from Above. We shall consider them in their order.

"It is impossible but that offenses will come." The word offenses more particularly signifies stumblings, or still more literally, ensnarement. The consecrated followers of Jesus are called little ones, because they are New Creatures who have only started in the new way of

full consecration to God's will. "Babes in Christ," St. Paul styles these. (1 Corinthians 3:1.) "Little children," writes St. John. This infantile condition, however, should not continue. There should be growth in grace, knowledge, love. Strength of character should be attained, which would not only be wise, strong and difficult to ensnare, but able also to assist others less developed.

Thus in the Church the more developed ones are styled Elders—literally, elder brothers. Such more particularly represent the Lord amongst the brethren; and Heavenly comfort and advice, reproofs, etc., may at times be sent through these to their younger fellows. The dangers of ensnarement exist because Satan is the prince of this Age, and because he has the majority of mankind more or less under his influence—blinded by error, superstition, sin, etc. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all those who believe not." (2 Corinthians 4:4.) That Jesus did not refer to infants is manifest from the words "One of these little ones which believe in Me."

We may not suppose that Jesus would unjustly condemn or punish anybody for ignorantly or unintentionally offending His followers, His little ones. We must suppose that He meant to caution those who would deliberately attempt to deceive and ensnare, entrap, discourage, His followers, His little ones. We all have heard of instances of deliberate, intelligent plotting against the followers of the Lord; and to whatever extent this may prevail, it has indicated the Satanic spirit.

Sometimes true people of God have been thus ensnared into the service of Satan, as intimated by the words, "His servants ye are to whom ye render service." Saul of Tarsus was thus ensnared and used for a time by the Adversary; and he explains that God had mercy upon him because he did this ignorantly. Had he done it with willful intelligence, we may assume that God would not have had mercy upon him to the extent of rescuing him by a miracle, but that he would have continued in his intelligently wicked way and that it would have been better for him that a millstone had been hung around his neck and he had been drowned in the sea.

This would be because a person thus drowned in the sea would lose merely the present life, and not the future life during the Millennium, after he had been awakened from the sleep of death. He would then have full opportunity for enlightenment through obedience and for recovery from sin and death. But those who intelligently persecute the followers of Jesus and seek to turn them aside from the way of righteousness, pervert their own conscience and so degrade themselves that it will be much more difficult for them to come into accord with the conditions of the New Dispensation beyond the grave. In a word, whoever sins against light and knowledge is endangering his own opportunities for everlasting life.

A Forgiving Spirit Necessary

Verses 3 and 4 are apparently a part of the same discourse recorded in Matthew 18:15-22. The lesson is addressed to the followers of Jesus, not to the world. It relates primarily to their duty toward the brethren of the Household of Faith, but secondarily it has a broader application. It may at times be given this broader application; but the injunction in Matthew 18, that the counsel of brethren be brought in and that ultimately, if necessary, the matter come before the Church, proves to us that it is in reality not intended for any but the Church.

The lesson is mercy—boundless mercy. The basis of the argument is that all need mercy, Divine mercy, because all are imperfect; and in order to assist us in the cultivation of this grace, the Lord has arranged that His blessings to us, His favor, shall be dependent upon our endeavor to exercise this Godlike quality. "Be ye like unto your Father; for He is kind to the unthankful."

It seems strange that our forefathers and ourselves were so deceived by the false doctrines which St. Paul styles "doctrines of devils." (1 Timothy 4:1.) Once we thought of the Heavenly Father as absolutely unforgiving—full of hate for His human creatures, because they had sinned—instead of forgiving their sin. We insisted that the wage, or penalty, of sin must be torment, and that to all eternity. How little we understood the real character of the God of all grace, the Father of mercies!

Some of us, perhaps, endeavored to justify our error by assuming that God Himself was all goodness, kindness and love, but had behind Him an inexorable Law demanding the torture

of His creatures—a Law from which He could not escape, and which bound Him to the doing of things which His own Law condemned in humanity.

Others of us deluded ourselves into thinking that all mankind enjoyed at some time between birth and death a full opportunity for turning from sin to righteousness and of becoming saints. Only of late years are Bible students becoming aware of how absurd is this position. Now we are realizing that, for four thousand years, only the one little nation of the Jews had any knowledge of God, or any promise of eternal life held out to them, or any instruction respecting sin and its penalty. And even the Jews, to whom the Law was given, Jesus and His Apostles declared were blinded by Satan. Jesus, addressing His Apostles, said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." The great nation of the Jews neither saw nor heard. The same is true of nine-tenths of the population of Christendom, not to mention heathendom.

Without the least warrant of Scripture, but in contradiction of it, many of us upheld the terrible theory that all who do not hear of Christ in the present lifetime and also all those who do not become saintly followers in His steps will be eternally tortured at the hands of devils. We now see that the Bible teaches that only a comparatively small class, who now have the hearing ear and the seeing eye and who enter into covenant relationship with God through Christ, can walk in Jesus' steps. For these only does the present life end all opportunity of attaining eternal life. For the remainder of mankind God purposes a future life by a resurrection of judgment.

The resurrection is not merely for the Church class—the First, or Chief Resurrection—but it is for "the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15.) The Church class will come forth to glory, honor and immortality. The unjust will come forth from the tomb to judgments, disciplines, rewards and punishments. It is in order to give them these judgments and opportunities to obtain everlasting life that Messiah's Kingdom will be inaugurated; and it is in order that He may appoint proper judges to assist the people and to reward and punish justly that He is now calling out the Church in the flesh. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Corinthians 6:2.

Faith Power—Credulity Power

A great deal passes for faith which is merely credulity. If some one were to swear to us that the moon is made of green cheese, it would be credulity to believe him—not faith. We should inquire, "Who is it that says this thing, and what does he know on the subject more than we may know?" The faith commended in the Bible is that which relates to things which God has promised. We are encouraged to be full of such faith in God—nothing doubting—not questioning that He is able to accomplish all His good promises.

Our forefathers had too much confidence in men. What they thought was faith was mere credulity. They swallowed the creeds of the Dark Ages; and the more absurd the proposition, the more faith they thought they had. On the contrary, they should have said, "Where is the proof? Where has God declared such things?" Those who defended the creeds cried out incredulously against sober faith, branded it heresy, and many times burned the truly faithful at the stake. The lesson is that we should accept by faith only that of which the Lord has assured us in His Word; and this means that we should be particularly careful that we have the pure Word of God, sifting out mistranslations and interpolations.

In our lesson, the disciples of Jesus were evidently impressed with the grandeur of His teachings, and the difficulties that must lie in the way of the accomplishment of all the wonderful things recorded in the Law and the Prophets, and told by Jesus—respecting His Messianic Kingdom, etc. They therefore asked the Lord to increase their faith. Jesus replied in words that are greatly misunderstood in our day. He said, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say to this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." On two other occasions Jesus made similar remarks respecting mountains, saying that the word of faith would have been sufficient to remove them to the midst of the sea.

What Did He Mean?

Evidently the Master did not mean to encourage the Jews to attempt to command the mountain to be carried into the sea; but rather He

wished them to realize that if they had proper faith in the power of God, and should receive a command from God to move the mountain into the sea, and should give the command with faith, the results would follow. But God gave no such command in respect to the mountains nor in respect to the tree. Hence faith would have no basis for operation in such cases.

The colored brother had the proper thought. When asked what he would do if God told him to jump through a stone wall, he replied, "I would jump at it." In a word, we are to have absolute confidence in the Word of God, not merely to make sure that we have heard and understood His Message. Then we may go forward with mountain-moving faith to accomplish His commands. But God does not command foolish or unnecessary changes. He leaves it for human ingenuity to uproot the trees and to tunnel the mountains, and never gives commands of this kind. And if some human being told us something of the kind, we would be credulous if we believed him. God is not working that way.

Not Profitable To Our Master

Some amongst the followers of Christ, naturally progressive, are sometimes too aggressive, self-conceited. Becoming His disciples does not change these traits instantly. The old things pass away gradually, and the new take their place. A lesson for all of His disciples to remember, but especially forceful to the classes mentioned, is taught in this Study. They must remember that the work of God's grace, of which they are subjects, is His favor toward them; and that their obedience to His commands is primarily for their correction and development, and a future life of blessing. They should remember that even their service for the Lord is a privilege—that God is not profited by their services.

We are all unprofitable servants in the sense that God could just as easily do without us, indeed, could more easily do His work otherwise than through us. He could use as His messengers the angels or the various providences of life. None of us is indispensable to His work and to His glory. Quite to the contrary, the opportunity for entering into the Lord's vineyard and laboring therein is chiefly for our own advantage. The service brings us certain joys which we could not otherwise have. It brings us certain experiences necessary to our own development and qualification for higher services beyond the veil.

As the Apostle declares, "By grace [Divine favor] are ye saved through faith." To some extent the faith is a matter of our own development. However, the Apostle hastens to add that the faith is not of ourselves, that even it is the gift of God—we have not the opportunity of glorying even in our faith. What have we that we have not received of the Lord? The elemental faith was based upon certain knowledge that God's providences brought to us, and possibly we were prepared for even that by a favorable parentage.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Bethany	Lazarus raised from the dead by Jesus				11:1-46
	Jerusalem; Ephraim	Caiaphas' counsel against Jesus; Jesus withdraws				11:47-54

John 11:1-54

Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered, Are there

not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

"I GO THAT I MAY AWAKE HIM"—*Reprints*, p. 4160

JOHN 11:1-57.

"I am the resurrection and the life."—John 11:25.

TOWARD the conclusion of our Lord's ministry the opposition of the rulers of the Jewish Church became very bitter, causing Jesus to leave Judea for Berea. He remained for some little time near the place where John was preaching at the time of his own baptism. It was while he was there that word was received from Martha and Mary at Bethany, saying, "Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick." From this we know that Lazarus, their younger brother, was a very dear friend of Jesus. The message was brief; it did not urge him to come nor ask a miraculous intervention; it merely stated the fact.

In some respects it was a grand model of a Christian prayer. The Lord's people may always go to him with full confidence in his sympathy and loving interest in all of their affairs, temporal and spiritual. At first they may feel disposed to ask that their own wills be done on earth if not in heaven, but subsequently, if their spirit of consecration and growth in grace continue, they should reach the place where, like Mary and Martha, they would be content to state their troubles to the Lord and wait for him, thankfully accepting as wisest and best whatever he may be pleased to grant.

Then Jesus said, doubtless in the hearing of the messenger that he might report the same, "This sickness is not unto death, but that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." We are not to suppose that our Lord was mistaken, that he expected that Lazarus would not die, rather that the result would not be continuous death, knowing that he would awaken him. When, two days later, Jesus proposed returning to Bethany in Judea, and the disciples were fearful, our Lord indicated to them that there would be no particular danger. He foreknew all the circumstances and perceived that the miracle he intended to perform would disconcert his enemies long enough to permit of his return to Berea a little later. He explained to them the reason for the visit saying, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." Later he brought this statement down to their comprehension by saying to them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

There is so much in the view point on every subject. From the standpoint of actual fact, barring the divine purpose of mercy and resuscitation, it would have been proper to speak of Lazarus as being dead in the same sense as we would speak of a brute as being dead. But from the standpoint of faith in God and in the promise made to Abraham, that in his Seed all the families of the earth should be blessed—from this standpoint Lazarus was not dead as a brute beast, but was merely inanimate for a time, awaiting the Lord's due time to call him forth, to re-animate him, to awaken him from the sleep of death. Our Lord stated this on another occasion to the Sadducees, who denied a future life, denied a resurrection, saying, "That the dead are to be raised, Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (Luke 20:37.) Our Lord's argument on this is that if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were dead in the sense that a brute beast is dead, without hope of an awakening, a resurrection, he would not call himself their God. Our Lord closes up the argument by saying that from God's standpoint all live unto him.

And our standpoint must be the divine standpoint; we must learn to think in harmony with this divine testimony. Hence we have hope, not only for Christians, saints who have died in Christ, but we have also hope for the world of mankind—"asleep in Jesus." Their condition would indeed be actual death, the same as a brute beast, were it not that the Lord has provided in Jesus for their resuscitation. But since such provision has been made, we are to think of the world of mankind as not being extinct, but merely asleep. All those, therefore, who accept the teaching of the divine Word, "sorrow not as others who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, let us also believe that those who sleep in Jesus [those who are included in the benefit of his sacrifice, those who are redeemed by the precious blood, all the race of Adam] will God bring from the

dead by him." (1 Thess. 4:13,14.) By him the Church will first be raised up, to be made partakers of his resurrection, the First Resurrection, the Chief Resurrection, sharers of his glory, honor and immortality. By him, then, during the Millennial Age, all the families of the earth shall be awakened, brought forth from *sheol*, from *hades*, brought to a knowledge of the truth—yea, and if they will receive the message into good and honest hearts, they will be lifted entirely out of sin and death conditions up to the full perfection of restitution and life everlasting through him. Well, indeed, may all those who trust in Jesus rejoice in him and sorrow not in the presence of death, as do others.

"Friends Sorrowing And Jesus Glad"

The celebrated Charles Spurgeon, preaching on this subject, took this as the title of his discourse from the text, "I am glad for your sakes I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe; nevertheless let me go unto him." It is well for the Lord's people, when in a time of stress and trouble, sickness, pain and sorrow, to look with faith toward the Lord, remembering that their tears and troubles may be made to them, under the Lord's providence, a great blessing. We have an illustration in this lesson: Martha and Mary, ministering to their sick brother, thought of how the Lord loved him and sent him a message respecting Lazarus' condition, leaving the matter in his hands, trusting to his wisdom and grace, and yet were allowed to pass into the still darker shadows of the sepulchre. The brother died and was buried. Yea, the Master whom they trusted in as the Messiah had not alleviated the sickness, had not hindered the dying, had even allowed several days to elapse without a message to them, and Jesus, speaking of all this, said, "I am glad." How shall we understand this? The explanation is given further in our Lord's words, "I am glad for your sakes." So with us it may likewise be true that the Lord will be glad to permit our trials and sorrows and tears and difficulties for our sakes, that we may thus receive some important lessons which we could not otherwise so well learn. One of our lessons is that we must trust the Lord where we cannot trace him, that we must remember his promise that "all things shall work together for good to them that love him." In the case under consideration the sickness and death of a brother were part of the all things, and doubtless were inscrutable providences to the two sisters. Nevertheless, these very experiences no doubt helped in the working out of valuable lessons, and no doubt were preparations for closer communion with the Lord and for the eternal things.

The noble devotion of the Lord's apostles is well illustrated in the words of one of them: Thomas, addressing his fellow-disciples, urged that they should not abandon the Master, that if he intended to go to Judea they should go with him—"let us also go, that we may die with him." This was the spirit of courage which the twelve shared when they accompanied the Lord, and it helps to reconcile us to their apparent cowardice on the night of his betrayal, a cowardice which was incited by our Lord's own refusal to accept assistance. It was these men who risked their lives to accompany the unpopular Prophet, as they supposed, to death, and who later forsook him and fled. The lesson to us in this connection is that some of us who feel courageous for the Lord and his cause and ready to die therefore, need indeed to watch and pray that we maintain this disposition and not succumb in the hour of stress.

The Jews Wailed, Jesus Wept

It was the custom of the time to have a funeral service of mourning for seven days. Apparently Martha and Mary and Lazarus were of a wealthy, influential family and on the occasion of their bereavement many friends came to sympathize with them, to mourn with them. Jesus did not consider it the part of wisdom to go to the home, which he knew would be crowded with mourners, and then go to the tomb, so he remained a little distance from Bethany and sent word. When the word came that Jesus was nearing, Martha went out to meet him; but Mary, bowed with her grief and perhaps disappointed that the Lord's word, "This sickness is not unto death, but unto the glory of God," had seemingly failed, still sat in the house, went not to meet him, as though by her actions she would say, "We hoped much, Lord, down to the very last, but now it is too late; you allowed the favorable opportunity to pass. We are in the midst of our sorrow. How

could anything now avail us? Lazarus is dead." Martha's greeting, when she came to the Lord, was, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died; but I know that even now whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, he will give thee." There was in this remark something of a suggestion of chiding, as though she had said, Why did you not come? but still I have faith in you, I realize that you are the Messiah. Our Lord's reply was,

"Thy Brother Shall Live Again"

It should be noticed that our Lord did not say, Thy brother is not asleep, thy brother is not dead, but that he pointed her mind to the resurrection. Are we wiser than he? May we, as his disciples, teach anything different or in contradiction to what he said? Martha's answer showed that she understood him well and that she had the general view of all believing Jews at that time, namely, that there was a hope for the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, in the resurrection, at the last day, at the end of the age when the last great day of the great seven-thousand year week shall be ushered in. Our Lord did not contradict her thought, but wished to lead her gradually to a realization of what he desired to do on this occasion and therefore explained that the resurrection power by which all the dead should be awakened in due time was lodged in himself—"I am the resurrection and the life." Every believer in him, even though he were dead, shall yet live, and whosoever then shall live and still believe in him shall never die. Our Lord inquired of Martha if she believed this view of his power and future work. She replied that she did, that she accepted him as the Messiah, the Son of God foretold to come. Then she went secretly to her sister Mary, saying, "The Master is here and calleth for thee."

Whatever disposition Mary had to resent our Lord's apparent indifference and carelessness of their interest, it all vanished now when she heard that the Master had called for her. She went forth to the place where he was, which evidently was in the direction of the tomb, for the Jews who were mourning with her in the house followed her, saying, "She is probably going to the tomb to weep there." And so when later on our Lord inquired, "Where have you laid him," we are not to take it as an indication that he did not know, but rather that it was his polite manner of saying, Shall we now go to the tomb? Lead the way. Truly he who saw Nathanael under the fig tree not only knew that Lazarus had been dead four days, but also knew where he was buried. He who "needed not that any man tell him what was in man" would surely know of lesser matters more easily discerned.

When Mary saw the Lord all thought of resentment fled; she fell at his feet and embraced them and through her tears merely said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother would not have died." The occasion was a soul-stirring one —our Lord's beloved friend in tears at his feet, numerous Jews weeping with her, or, according to the Greek original, wailing. What effect did this have upon our Lord? Was he cold, stern, forbidding? No! True to the record, he was "touched with a feeling of our infirmities." (Heb. 4:15.) He was full of sympathy, he fully appreciated the real meaning of death—that it is a curse, an awful curse, which rests upon our race. He said nothing by way of assuring Mary that Lazarus was in heaven, for he spake the truth, declaring on another occasion, "No man hath ascended up to heaven."—John 3:13.

On the contrary, entering deeply into the affliction that is resting upon our race, under which the Apostle says "the whole creation groaneth," our Lord wept. This verse, "Jesus wept," the shortest in the Bible, brings to us a wealth of assurance that our Lord is sympathetic, that he knoweth our frame, that he remembereth that we are dust; and it is one of the best assurances that he appreciates all that he has promised us in the declaration that our trials shall all work together for good to us if we are his and if we are rightly exercised thereby. It is worthy of note here that while the word used in connection with the weeping of the others indicates wailing, it is not so with the Greek word which refers to our Lord's weeping; he shed tears, but lifted not up his voice in grief; he groaned in spirit and was troubled, he heaved sighs, he entered fully into the sorrow of his friends. And is not this a lesson to all of his followers, that they, with propriety also, may

weep with those who weep, as well as rejoice with those who rejoice?

The Jews who were with Jesus noted and commented upon his sympathy, saying, "Behold how he loved him," but others criticized him saying, This is the miracle-worker. Could he not have helped his friend if he really loved him?

So there are some to day inclined to criticize the Lord for permitting sickness, sorrow and death and who inquire whether the power of God is lacking or the willingness of God lacking that he does not overthrow, restrain these adverse influences now afflicting the human family. The language of faith is—

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face."

The tomb was a grave with a stone at its mouth, and Jesus directed that this should be moved. Of course, the same power that could awaken the dead would have been quite sufficient to roll away the stone also, but it seems to have been a rule with our Lord never to do anything by miraculous power that could as well be done by human agency. We may profitably apply this lesson to all the affairs of life and, in harmony with it, when we come to our Lord with our griefs and troubles and perplexities and ask for his blessing and overruling providences, should not expect any special intervention in matters that are possible to us. Indeed, we doubtless would lose a blessing thereby. Who can doubt that the men who rolled away the stone from the mouth of that sepulchre had a blessing afterward in connection therewith as they thought over the matter or told others that they themselves had rolled away the stone! Who can doubt that it helped to impress the importance of the miracle upon them! Let us, then, do with our might whatever we may be able to do and wait patiently for the Lord in connection with things for which our arm is too short.

"He Hath Been Dead Four Days"

It was the same Martha who a little while before had said, Even now I know that whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, he will hear thee, and who now protested against the moving of the stone from the sepulchre, saying, "Lord by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days." She probably knew that the Lord had awakened Jairus' daughter and the widow of Nain's son, but those were cases in which the animation had been suspended but a little while. In this case, after putrefaction set in, neither she nor others would expect that any power imaginable could recover the dead. It was with this in view, doubtless, that our Lord said beforehand, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that you might believe." It was to be a special lesson not only to his dear friends, Martha and Mary, but also to his dear disciples, and more than this, to all those who would believe through his Word. It was a most stupendous miracle!

Before commanding Lazarus to come forth our Lord prayed audibly before his disciples and before the multitude of mourners. Here our Lord gave sanction to public prayer, showing that when he objected to the prayers of the Pharisees on the street corners, it was because the time and place, etc., were unsuitable and because they prayed to be seen and heard of men. But in his own case he was acknowledging the Father that all those who stood by might take knowledge that not by his own power, but by the Father's power, as the Finger of God, he worked these miracles.

"I know that thou hearest me always, but because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." After this brief prayer he cried with a loud voice, or commanded in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth"—not secret mumbling, not incantations, not legerdemain. Quite to the contrary. And this miracle in various particulars evidently foreshadowed our Lord's coming glorious work, when, surrounded by his glorified Church, the message from on high shall be to all that are in their graves, "Come forth." (John 5:28.) Then Lazarus came forth bound hand and foot, wrapped with linen cloths. We can imagine better than describe the wondrous awe of those who stood by. And it was necessary that Jesus should call them to a realization of their privilege, saying, "Loose him and let him go," for in his burial his jaw had been bound, his limbs wrapped, etc. The miracle was well timed, not only for the benefit of the sorrowing sisters, but also for the benefit of their Jewish friends,

many of whom, seeing this miracle, believed on him; and in the interest of the apostles, also, who would be better prepared thereby for the tests which were to come to them a little later in connection with our Lord's crucifixion.

Meantime, some of the witnesses went their way and related matters to the Pharisees, with the result that the latter became all the more determined that our Lord must die—not because he had done evil works, not because they believed him a bad man, but because they were so thoroughly wrapped up in their own plans and purposes in connection with their nation. Their argument was that if Jesus proceeded with his work it would not be long before the masses of the people would be ready to flock to him, with the result that the Roman government, which had given them much liberty in the control of their national and Church affairs, would take matters entirely out of their hands and thus their rebellion and their government would be entirely overthrown. It seemed to them to be an emergency case which called for drastic treatment. Similar, we believe, will be the attitude of ecclesiasticism a little later on in the present harvest time toward the last members of the Body of Christ. What the Sanhedrin there did in determining to oppose Jesus, the federation of churches will probably do in the way of opposing "Present Truth"—after the federation shall have become thoroughly organized and vitalized. (Rev. 13:15.) The plea was that we must do this for the good of the cause. Their mistake was in too much self-confidence, too much self-reliance upon their own theories as to how the Kingdom of heaven was to be established. The mistake which will be made by the Sanhedrin of our day will be along similar lines. Praying for centuries, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done," they have entirely misconceived the meaning of the words, so that the preludes to the Kingdom will appear to them inharmonious and as causing destruction.

Where Was Lazarus?

We have our Lord's word for it that Lazarus was not in heaven, for he said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven." Indirectly we have the Apostle Peter's testimony also to the same effect, for, speaking of the Prophet David, he declares, "David has not ascended into the heavens." (Acts 2:34.) Where was Lazarus? What account did he give of himself? Not a word is there written on the subject. He had no account to give of himself; he was nowhere, he was dead. Our Lord lifted his eyes in addressing the Father in heaven, but afterwards, when he spoke to Lazarus, he addressed the tomb, "Lazarus, come forth," and the dead came forth from the tomb. This, as we have seen, is a picture, a demonstration, of the power of the Lord to testify in advance of how he eventually will be the resurrection power to the whole world. And he himself describing that coming exercise of power represented it in the same general tenor, saying, "Marvel not at this: the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth" (John 5:28), some to full perfection in the First Resurrection, the remainder to be merely awakened as was Lazarus, but, unlike him, to be then granted an opportunity for *anastasis*, raising up completely out of sin and death conditions to the full perfection of human nature—a resurrection by judgments or disciplines, rewards and stripes.

According to the erroneous view which has become so popular throughout Christendom, Lazarus, who was a special friend of Jesus and one whom he loved, must have been in heaven—not in either purgatory or hell. But how strange it would be, if after he had been in heaven for several days, Jesus should do him the unfriendly act of calling him back to earth life—and with what haste he must have returned if he laid aside a crown or palm or harp! No! no! All this belongs to the foolish imagination and is thoroughly out of harmony with the precious lesson of our Golden Text—that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. By his death he secured for Adam and his race a right to re-live and the resurrection power is that by which he will bring mankind forth from under the dominion of death. Lazarus lost consciousness in his sickness at the time of his death, and received consciousness again at the moment of his awakening. In this interim of four days he was in death, asleep; as Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." He was not awake in any sense of the word; as Jesus testified, "I go that I may awake him," and, as the Scriptures elsewhere declare, "The dead know not anything," "There is neither wisdom, knowledge nor device in *sheol* [*hades*, the tomb, the sleep of death], whither thou goest."—Eccl. 9:5,10.

We can fancy the awakening of the whole world, and what a joyful occasion it will be, as one after another they all come forth from the great prison-house of death to be received and welcomed by their friends, and to find the earth enjoying a large measure of restitution blessings and progressing gradually toward the full perfection of Eden, and their friends so far advanced along the way toward perfection and themselves surrounded by the blessings and privileges and opportunities which the Kingdom will afford, with the light of the knowledge of God flooding the whole earth! Oh, how different this will be from what the heathen have been taught and imagined respecting the crossing of the river Styx or their re-incarnation in other forms of animal life! Oh, how different it will be for many who have heard the false doctrine of eternal torment or purgatorial anguish and who died in terror lest this should be their portion! What thankful hearts toward God they will have! Perhaps Satan's lie may eventually redound to the glory of God, and perhaps this is why the Lord has been silent for so long and has permitted his holy name to be so smirched and slandered and his character so traduced!

"The Resurrection And The Life"

There is a still deeper thought connected with our Golden Text which we must not pass by. It is this: We who now believe in the Lord and are thereby justified through faith in his blood, and who have heard the call to glory, honor and immortality and who have accepted the same by a full consecration to the Lord—we are sometimes spoken of as already having a new life, the resurrection life, as already having passed from death into life. This, of course, is a figurative use of the words resurrection and life. Reckonedly, we have left the old nature and received the new nature from the Lord through the begetting of the holy Spirit, and it is this new nature which is to be perfected in the First Resurrection. And since our human natures are reckoned dead from the moment that we are begotten of the Spirit, it is quite reasonable and proper that the Scriptures should speak of our present condition as a resurrected condition; that we have risen out of the old order of life and hope and aim to new conditions; that we have started on the new way to life; that the present experiences are transforming, and that the grand consummation of all this transformation will be the actual change from weakness to power, from the natural body to a spiritual body, from dishonor to glory, when we shall participate actually in the glorious change of the Lord's resurrection.

Let us strive to enter into this rest, this blessing! Faithful is he who has called us to so high a station and privilege, he will also do for us exceedingly, abundantly better than we could ask or think, according to the riches of his grace. "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3:21,23.) In the meantime, to us who live this figurative resurrection life, the Apostle's words are applicable, For me to live is for Christ to live, for he is represented by us; we are his ambassadors. Meantime we are also to remember that our resurrection hopes are in him; as it is written, "Your life is hid with Christ in God," and, "when he who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory."

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Samaria; Galilee	Heals and teaches en route through Samaria, Galilee			17:11-37	

Luke 17:11-37

And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a

Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day. But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

"WHERE ARE THE NINE?"—*Reprints*, p. 5453

LUKE 17:11-19.

"Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this alien?"—Luke 17:18.

THE ESSENCE of our lesson for today is gratitude. It is a most reasonable trait of character and is frequently found even in the brute creation. It is impossible to imagine a perfect human being or an angel acceptable to God without this quality. We might almost say that the degree of our acceptance with God is measured by our gratitude. It leads to obedience to the Divine laws and regulations, whether understood or not. It leads to self-sacrificing labors in the service of God, and according to a Divine automatic arrangement has its blessings.

Our lesson tells us that the Savior was approaching Jerusalem by way of Samaria and Galilee. It is surmised that this was His last journey to Jerusalem, which eventuated in His death. His fame had spread abroad; and ten lepers sitting by the roadside heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. Immediately they called to Him as loudly as the hoarse whisper of their disease would permit. Ordinarily their appeal was for money; but in this case it was, "Master, have mercy upon us!"

Lepers are a class greatly to be pitied. Their disease has long been considered incurable, and hence in the Bible it is symbolically used to represent sin. It is an infection which seems to corrupt the blood. The joints twist, decay and slough off. Under the regulations prevailing at the time of our lesson, lepers were forbidden to enter the cities, under the penalty of thirty-nine strokes from a rod. They had no means of earning a living, and were always dependent upon the charity of their friends or the public. Nor were they allowed to approach others nearer than about one hundred and fifty feet,

for fear of contamination. Theirs was a living death.

The ten mentioned in this lesson were drawn together by their common trouble which ignored the racial barriers between Jews and Samaritans. In answer to their cry for help, Jesus, although full of compassion, seemed to treat their appeal coldly. He merely said to them, "Go show yourselves unto the priests." According to God's arrangement with the Jews under their Law Covenant, they were to have no sicknesses except as these should represent sins; and the priests were to pass judgment upon cases of leprosy, determining whether or not the disease were indeed leprosy, etc. Our Lord's direction that the lepers go and show themselves to the priests implied a healing, and suggested that by the time that they should reach the priest they would be ready to have him pronounce them clean.

The lepers must have had considerable knowledge of the power of Jesus, and must have exercised great faith; for instead of crying out for instantaneous healing, they followed His direction and started for the priest to have an inspection. Doubtless they hoped that by the time they should reach him they would be well and would receive a bill of health. They had gone but a short distance when they found themselves cured. We can well imagine with what joy they hastened to have the priest approve them in order to return to their families, their business, etc. Surely they almost ran, as they felt the exhilaration of the cleansed blood! But one of them slowed up and then turned back; probably the others in their exuberance did not notice this. Back he came and fell at the feet of Jesus, giving Him thanks. His was a grateful heart, and we cannot doubt that he will receive a blessing eventually, though he did not receive it then, for he was a Samaritan, an alien, a foreigner from the commonwealth of Israel.

Another Crumb of Favor

In his case, the healing was a "crumb from the children's table;" for the rich man had not yet died—God's favor had not yet departed from Israel. Jesus had not yet uttered the fateful words, "Your House is left unto you desolate." Nay, the favor to Israel continued three and a half years after their House was left desolate—individual favor. It was three and a half years after the death of Jesus before the individual favor to the Jews terminated to such an extent as to permit the Gospel to go to the Gentiles—Cornelius being the first to be accepted into fellowship with God.—Acts 10.

Had the returning one been a Jew instead of a Samaritan, no doubt he would have been invited by Jesus to become one of His followers—"Come, take up thy cross and follow Me!" But because he was a Samaritan, Jesus merely said to him, "Arise and go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." We cannot doubt, however, that the Lord's providence followed this grateful Samaritan; and that when the time came for the opening of the door to the Gentiles, he was amongst those who gladly received the Message, and made a consecration to become an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ our Lord to the Heavenly inheritance.

We are not to understand that our Lord's words, "Thy faith hath made thee whole," meant that it was the man's faith aside from Divine Power that made him whole, but rather that it was the Master's using the Divine Power in connection with the faith of the individual. The Power of God and the faith of the man cooperated for his healing. They did the same for the nine others who were healed. They also had faith and were healed, and as Jews under the Law Covenant, they had more ground for asking forgiveness and healing than had the Samaritan.

Ten Healed—Where Are The Nine?

Jesus called public attention to the fact that ten were healed, but that only one had returned to give glory to God. True, He had not asked them to come back and offer praise and acknowledge the Divine Power wrought through Him! True, they did what He told them to do—went and showed themselves to the priest—and no more, going then about their business.

Why did He not, before granting the healing, bargain with them, saying, If I heal you, will you consecrate your lives and become My disciples? Undoubtedly they would have agreed to this arrangement. Who would not agree to any terms to be rid of so loathsome and incurable a disease? Why did not Jesus take this method

of adding to the number of His disciples? Undoubtedly the answer should be that He was following the spirit of the Father's dealings, which He expressed in the words, "The Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth." As the Father seeks no others, so the Son seeks no others.

In this respect the preaching of Jesus and the Apostles is in strong contrast with much of the preaching of evangelists, revivalists, etc. Never did Jesus or the Apostles urge worldly people to become disciples of Christ. They merely preached, or declared, certain great facts, and accepted those who came under that kind of preaching, influenced by the great facts set forth. They reasoned of sin, of righteousness and of a coming time of decision, or judgment, and left the matter with the individual conscience. They stated that those who forsake sin and turn to God may have forgiveness and reconciliation through the merit of the blood of Christ. They told of a High, or Heavenly, Call for all such penitents who would consecrate their lives wholly to the service of God, Truth and righteousness, willing to endure hardness as good soldiers.

We remember that on one occasion Jesus apparently reproved even a spirit of enthusiasm that might becloud the cool judgment, saying, "Sit down and count the cost." (Luke 14:28.) It has pleased God through the preaching of the Truth to call out the class which He desires to be joint-heirs with His Son. They are not to be brought into the family of God by prayers or by excitement, but by the declaration of the Divine terms and conditions. To such as accept the grace of God the urgent message goes out that they receive it not in vain; that, having put their hand to the plow, they do not look back; that, having enlisted as good soldiers of the Cross, they endure hardness, rejoicing in the privilege of service and sacrifice.

The point we make is that according to the Bible, no attempts were ever made by Jesus and His Apostles to obtain recruits for the army of the Lord by a "hip-hip-hurrah" process. In this we are not criticizing others, but merely calling attention to facts which have much to do with the guidance of all God's people who seek to know and to do His will.

Other Tens, Hundreds, Thousands

Let us view the incident of our lesson symbolically. Let the lepers represent sinners who, coming to realize themselves unclean, cry out to the Lord for cleansing, thus impliedly acknowledging His greatness and power as the Son of God, through whom only is forgiveness of sin, and impliedly declaring themselves as desiring to be His followers, His disciples, persuaded that sin is injurious and resolved thereafter to walk in the Lord's footsteps, fighting against sin in themselves and everywhere. How many of the tens, the hundreds, the thousands, whose devotion and faith the Lord has accepted—how many whom He has healed, forgiven and received according to their profession of discipleship—really have become His true followers?

How many who have declared to the Lord their unhappiness, their desire for forgiveness of sins, and promised life-long gratitude and devotion to Him, to have His favor, have forgotten their privileges; and after receiving a blessing have gone, one to his field, another to his merchandise, another to pleasure, another to formalism! How few have remembered their prayers to the Lord for mercy, their resolutions in respect to what they would do if their prayers were answered!

A Revival Is in Order

Many Christian people are growing in the opinion that we are living today in a time of crucial trial as respects those who have made a covenant with God. They believe that we are nearing the time when the Church, the Body of Christ, will be received by the Lord in the Resurrection change to be His Bride. As the Apostle wrote, "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." The call of this Gospel Age has been to the finding of these who are to constitute the Bride class, the associates of Jesus in His Kingdom.

Of the Jews Jesus said, in a time of testing in the end of their Age, "They knew not the time of their visitation." Only the comparatively few were in the heart condition of nearness to God which enabled them to understand the character of the times in which they were living and the change which was in progress. The thought is that a similar change is upon us now, which

is being discerned by those who have had the eyes of their understanding opened.

The Samaritan in our lesson seems to represent a class of grateful followers of the Lord who seek to give Him glory in their words, thoughts and doings, while the majority of those who have similarly received His favor are disposed to pursue the ambitions and pleasures of the present life. Neglecting to take the path which the Master trod, they will not reach the glory, honor and immortality which He attained and to which He has called this class. A lower place must be for them. In a little while, according to the Bible, the glories of the Kingdom will be revealed to an astonished world, but the glories of the present condition of affairs will fade away.

The true Wisdom that cometh from Above was manifested by our Savior, who counted not His life dear unto Him, who freely made Himself of no reputation that He might do the Father's will, and who is now highly exalted as a reward. St. Paul expressed the same thought, saying that he counted all things as but loss and dross that he might win a place in the Body of Christ—the Church in glory beyond the veil. Great as will be the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom to the world, the blessings which the Church will have will be transcendently better.

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM TO BE INVISIBLE—*Reprints*, p. 5455

LUKE 17:20-37.

"Behold, the Kingdom of God is in your midst."—Luke 17:21.

OUR UNDERSTANDING of the Master's words depends considerably upon the setting in which we see them. John the Baptist preceded Jesus and preached the Kingdom of God at hand. In due time he pointed out Jesus as the Messiah that should come, the Lamb of God. After waiting for months for Jesus to establish Himself as an earthly king, and finding instead that his own work was closing, he was put into prison by Herod. John then sent to Jesus to inquire whether or not He was the One that should come or whether they should look for another. He was disappointed in not seeing evidences of the Kingdom, as he had expected.

The Scribes and the Pharisees heard of the claim that Jesus was the long-promised King who would set up His Messianic Kingdom, and they derided Him. They looked at His motley company of followers—publicans and sinners as well as honorable people, but none of special rank, influence or wealth. They considered Jesus a deceiver and His followers dupes. Our lesson tells how they attempted to expose what they supposed was a deception of Jesus, thus to turn away the delusion of His followers. Therefore they asked Him in public the question, When will God's Kingdom come? How long will it be before you set it up?

Doubtless they purposed to entrap Jesus; for if He should say, A long time, His followers would be disheartened; if He should say, A short time, they would proceed to query, Where will You get Your army? How will You pay Your soldiers? How will You supply them with food? Will You go to Rome to battle with the powers that be, that our whole nation has been unable to cope with? etc.

But these Pharisees got only as far as their first question, because the answer to it confuted them, and no doubt perplexed them. Jesus answered that God's Kingdom would not come with observation; that is to say, when the Kingdom should come, people would not see it. Proceeding, Jesus elaborated, saying that when the Kingdom of God should be established, people would not see whether it was here or there; for the Kingdom of God would be the Power of God exerted everywhere in the midst of the people.

Our translation is faulty, though evidently not intentionally so, when it reads, "For, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you." The translators, had they noticed carefully, would have been on guard against saying that the Kingdom of God was within those Pharisees that Jesus had designated hypocrites, whited sepulchres, etc. A closer examination of the original would have shown that the text would better be translated, "The Kingdom of God is in your midst."

A kingdom is always represented by its king. Jesus, as the King, was present in their midst, but they did not recognize Him. "There standeth One among you whom ye know not." Similarly, all through the Gospel Age, the Church of Christ, His "Body," has been undiscerned by the world. "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not." For eighteen hundred years this has been true in this sense; but Christ and the Church in the flesh are not the Kingdom of God in the full, proper sense that the Bible promises it—a Kingdom of power and great glory. Christ and the Church have been only the incipient Kingdom, an embryotic Kingdom —the Kingdom class, preparing for investiture of authority in God's due time, which we believe is now near.

This Kingdom is to be a spiritual one, and hence its rulers will be as invisible as are the angels and the Heavenly Father. Jesus declared, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more." What was true of the Head will be true of every member of the elect Body of Christ, the Church. "Changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," the world will see them no more; "for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," and flesh and blood cannot see that which is spiritual.

During the Millennium, the Kingdom authority and power of God through Christ and the Church will be exercised amongst men; and yet they will not see it with the natural eye, but merely with the eyes of their understanding. All the blind eyes will be opened. Thus every eye will see that the Kingdom is established; and every one will understand that He who suffered has entered into His glory, that the Church, His Bride, is with Him in glory, and that the blessings of the Millennium proceed from them.—Revelation 20:6.

"Days of The Son of Man"

Turning from the silenced Pharisees to His disciples, Jesus said, "The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it." This was astonishing news to the faithful. Yet they were accustomed to hearing from the Master things which they could not understand; such as that they must eat of His flesh and drink of His blood, that He must be crucified, etc. They took all these things figuratively and wondered what might be the real interpretation. How could Jesus be the great King, as they had expected, and yet they not see Him and His days?

Jesus continued to discuss the enigma, saying, "They shall say to you, See here; or, See there: go not after them, nor follow." In a word, do not believe anybody who will thus tell you about My Second Coming; do not be deceived into believing that I will come in any such manner. I will tell you how I shall come: "As the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, and shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of Man be in His Day."

This astounding statement is better understood when we translate the Greek noun *astrape* as "shining" instead of "lightning"; for evidently it refers to the sun, which rises in the east and sets in the west, shining out of the one part of the heaven even unto the other. But how will this represent the Son of Man in His Day? How will He be like the sun? We answer that the Day of Christ is a thousand-year Day, the Millennium; and our Lord's statement was one of the "dark sayings" of which Jesus said, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now," and promised that in due time the Holy Spirit would grant them an enlightenment, that all of His words might be clearly understood. This portion, now due to be understood, is therefore becoming clear to those of spiritual discernment.

Then, that they might gradually learn that these things belonged to a distant time, Jesus explained that first He must suffer many things and be rejected of that nation. Coming back to an explanation of what would be the signs of His presence, in answer to their question as recorded in Matthew 24, He declared, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man."

Here we have something definite, concrete. We know what to look for at the time when the Kingdom will be due for establishment—the time when the Sun of Righteousness will begin to shine forth from one end of heaven to the other. The signs of the times will not be in the outward condition of the world; for on the contrary everything will be going along in as quiet and orderly a manner as ever, just as in the

days of Noah, just as before the Deluge came, and just as in the days of Lot, before the destruction of Sodom—they ate, drank, married, built, bought, sowed, planted, as usual. These things are not signs of wickedness, but are mentioned to show us that there will be no outward sign to indicate to the world the time of the Second Presence of Christ, when He will begin to deal with the world and to set up His Kingdom.

The Deluge And Sodom's Destruction

Why introduce these two pictures—the Deluge and the destruction of Sodom—in conjunction, while talking of the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom, which is to bless the world? The answer is that the Bible everywhere foretells that although Messiah's Kingdom is the great provision of God which will lift the curse and bring in blessings world-wide, nevertheless it is to be established upon the wreck of our present institutions. And it is this wreck of social, financial, political and religious institutions of the present time that Jesus illustrated by the Deluge and the destruction of Sodom. And His own presence preceding this Time of Trouble is to be unseen to the world, unknown to the world, unsuspected, unbelieved, until the cataclysm of trouble precipitates with suddenness.

This is not a charming picture. We are glad that we may turn from it, and note the silver lining of the cloud, and the glorious blessings which will speedily follow the establishment of the Kingdom on the ruins of our human failures.

Emphasizing the suddenness with which the calamity will overtake the world, Jesus said that on the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained down fire and brimstone from heaven; and He declared that thus it will be in the Day when the Son of Man is revealed. The Greek text shows a difference between the *Parousia*, or presence, of Christ before the Time of Trouble, and the later *Epiphania*, or revealing.

The description of the revealing of Christ is given in the words, He shall be revealed in flaming fire. (2 Thessalonians 1:7,8.) Indeed, that Time of Trouble is frequently described symbolically in the Bible as a burning of the world—so much so, that all the creeds of Christendom express the thought that the earth is to be "burned." They overlook the fact that the heavens are to be "burned" also.

In the symbolical usage of the Bible, the earth represents the social order of human affairs; the sea, the restless, discontented masses; the heavens, the ecclesiastical powers. St. Peter tells us that all these will pass away with a great confusion, and that instead will come the new heavens and the new earth which God has promised. (2 Peter 3:10-13.) The new heavens will be the new ecclesiastical society—the Church in glory, joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom. The new earth will be the new social order which Messiah's Kingdom will establish.

Saints On The Housetop

Again recurring to the period in which He will be present before being revealed "in flaming fire," the Lord seems to assure us that all of His faithful ones will die, and be changed in the moment of dying, before the great trouble, the symbolic fire, will consume present institutions. In figurative language He says that in that Day (of His *Parousia*, presence, before His *Epiphania*, revealing) those on the housetop, with their goods in the house, should not leave to take them out. What is here meant?

Briefly, we believe that the house represents the House of God, and those on the housetop represent the most saintly of the people of God. At that time such will come to realize the necessity for flight; and the question will arise, How much of their stuff, their valuables, will they seek to save? They are warned not to seek to save any of the stuff—considerations of social privileges, honor of men, sometimes titles of small offices; such as vestryman, deacon, elder, minister, etc. An attempt to save any of these things will mean disappointment. Everything must be forsaken, else the test of that time will not be successfully passed.

Likewise, any in the field must not turn back. The field represents the world. And any of the Lord's people who have gone out into the world—who have left the church nominal—are not to go back; but learning the truth of the situation they are to flee to the Lord from the field.

St. Matthew's account speaks of special troubles at that time upon such as are with child

and give suck, which we believe is also symbolical, and refers to Christian people, seeking to convert the world and to teach beginners. These will be in special travail of soul, because of the change of dispensation and the call, "Come out of her, My people." It will be especially difficult for such to hear and to obey that call.

In the flight from Sodom, Lot and his family were warned to make haste, and not even to look back to the things that were to be destroyed. So the Lord's people are not to look back at the things to be destroyed. Give them no thought. "Flee out of Babylon!" "Deliver every man his own soul!" Lot's wife, disobeying, looked back longingly to the things of destruction, and failed to escape. The Lord applies this illustration to His people, and urges that their flight be with a full renunciation of the things of the present time. Whoever shall seek to save his life must lose it. Whoever will lose his life will thereby be preserving it—gaining the everlasting life.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Samaria or Galilee	Illustrations: importunate widow, Pharisee and tax collector			18:1-14	

Luke 18:1-14

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING, AND HUMBLY—*Reprints*, p. 3841

LUKE 18:1-14.

"God be merciful to me a sinner."

AGAIN WE have a lesson on Prayer, from various standpoints. The disciples needed to learn certain lessons respecting prayers, and our Lord gave the instruction through two interesting parables. The first lesson was respecting persistency: that they should continue to pray and not faint, nor grow disheartened and discouraged because of the delay in the answer. They were to be assured of the real character of our God, of his willingness to hear their petitions and to give them all necessary good things in the proper manner and at the proper time. The delay of the answer was to work out for them a blessing of increasing faith and trust.

The Unjust Judge

The parable illustrating this represents a judge in an oriental country, void of reverence for either God or man—ready to defy divine

commands and to violate public opinion in the attainment of his selfish ends. Judges in Christian lands we believe to be honorable and trustworthy: we recognize this as the rule and anything else as the exception; but in oriental lands it is often regarded as a matter of course that officials will indulge in graft of every kind, and that whoever is in office is there for personal benefit and profit. In olden times, indeed until within the last century, judges were to a large degree lawmakers as well as executives. Today in civilized lands these functions are separate, the lawmaking or legislative department of the government being entirely separate from the judicial and executive departments, much to the advantage of the public and to the forwarding of the ends of justice.

Before the unrighteous judge of the parable came a widow who was suffering from certain indignities and injustices from which she desired to be relieved by the judge. Since she was not wealthy and could not bribe him, since she had little influence, her demands for redress and justice were ignored. However, she was persistent until finally the judge, admitting to himself that it was not love of justice on his part but merely selfish desire to avoid further trouble, took up her case and granted her the necessary assistance and justice.

God Not Unjust Though He Delay

The parable does not compare this unjust judge with our heavenly Father, and thus imply that the latter is an unjust judge. On the contrary it contrasts the two and gives us the thought, the lesson, that if an unjust judge would finally grant relief simply from selfish motives, surely our heavenly Father, who is neither unjust nor unloving nor careless of the interests of his people, will heed their prayers. If, therefore, a matter be one that in our judgment is very importune, demanding our earnest prayers, and if the answer to those prayers be not quickly forthcoming, we can neither conclude that God is an unjust judge who cares not for us because we cannot bribe him nor otherwise advantage him, nor are we to think of him as selfishly careless of our interests except as we would bother him; but we are to think of him as our loving heavenly parent, whose arm is not shortened that he cannot assist us, whose love for us is not deficient but strong, who loveth us as a father pitieth his children, and, on the strength of our knowledge of God's character and trust in his faithfulness, we are to have patience, and to trust the fulfillment of our petitions to his wisdom, love and power, knowing that all things shall be made to work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose.

Our Lord in applying the parable says, "And shall not God avenge his elect which cry to him day and night?" though he manifest no special haste in the matter. The lesson is that we are to have confidence in God and in his promise that eventually the right shall triumph. This confidence is to amount to an absolute faith which will grasp the promises, never doubting but merely waiting. Those who thus come to God in faith and trust may come repeatedly and be refreshed at every coming, because they come not with a hope of changing the Almighty, altering any of his plans and arrangements, which they recognize as righteous altogether: but, on the contrary, they come because they believe his promises and because they desire to rest and comfort their hearts by communion with him, by assuring their hearts in prayer that the Father himself loveth us and that he has a due time for the deliverance of those who are his from the bondage of the Adversary, of sin and death. The time may seem long, but if the proper faith be exercised a blessing will come with every step of the delay that will more than compensate.

Our Lord concludes this parable by saying, "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." This may mean that when the Lord's time shall come for the delivering of his people he will make a short work with the great Adversary and all the machinery of unrighteousness which, under the prince of this world, has come to occupy so prominent a place in the affairs of life—in opposing truth, righteousness, etc. Or on the other hand it might be understood to mean that the Lord will really not long delay in bringing in his Kingdom of righteousness. From the human standpoint the more than eighteen centuries from the time our Lord redeemed the world until now, the time for the setting up of his Kingdom, seems a long time: How could it

be spoken of as "speedily"? We reply that "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years": hence from this standpoint the whole period would be less than two days. What we need today is to take the Lord's standpoint in viewing matters. Both views are Scriptural, and therefore we need not dispute as to which one the Lord intended. Possibly he meant that we should take both.

Shall He Find The Faith?

Separate and distinct from the parable the Lord interjects the statement, "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" The intimation is that at the second coming of the Lord for the establishment of his Kingdom the true faith would be seriously lacking, almost extinct—just as at the first advent we read, "He came unto his own [people] and his own received him not." So, in the end of this age, our Lord's second presence for the establishment of his Kingdom will similarly try and test nominal spiritual Israel. Again he will come unto his own and his own will receive him not—he will not find the necessary faith in the earth. However, as respects the first advent we read, "But to as many as received him to them gave he liberty," etc. So at the second advent, to as many as have faith and receive him, to these also similarly he will grant a special blessing.

Associating these words with the parable foregoing the implication is that the Church, the very elect, the little flock, throughout the Gospel age will be expected to look to the Lord continually for help and deliverance, but that they will not actually be helped or delivered until the First Resurrection, at the Master's second advent, at the time he will set up his Kingdom. It is in line with this that the Apostle exhorts us saying, "Brethren, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." (Rom. 12:19.) Hence we find the Scriptures throughout indicating clearly that the second advent of our Lord will be a time of tribulation to the world in general, a day of vengeance, a day of rectifying the wrongs of the people. Thus through the Prophet the Lord declares, "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year [time] of my redeemed is come;" and again, "It is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion."—Isa. 63:4; 34:8.

Taken as a whole, the lesson to the Lord's people through this parable is that we are to have patience, not attempt to render vengeance upon our opposers, but to love our enemies and to do good to them that despitefully use us, and to look to the Lord for such relief as he sees proper to send; and though we find the full measure of relief long deferred, we are to have rest and refreshment through faith that the time is coming when all the gracious promises will be abundantly fulfilled, "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

Those who believe little of the Lord's promises, who trust him little, will pray to him little, will exercise little faith, and will have little joy and blessing in consequence. Those, on the contrary, who have faith, and who go continually to the throne of grace and appreciate the Lord and trust in the glorious outcome of their prayers and labors, will have joy now and fullness of joy by and by.

Prayers of The Self-Righteous Not Acceptable

The Pharisees were a very moral class amongst the Jews, devout, at least outwardly, very exact, though inwardly, the Lord tells us, they were far from right. He alone was competent to make the terrible arraignment that they were like sepulchers, beautifully whitened on the outside but inwardly full of corruption. There is a similar class in Christendom today, who are outwardly moral, very particular, exact, scrupulous, and yet not pleasing to the Lord. They are proud of their righteousness, and seem to fail to realize that if they are naturally less depraved than some others they have nothing therein to boast of, because they are still far from being actually perfect. This parable is intended to show that God would look with more sympathy, more compassion, upon the more depraved man if he were the more honest and more humble rather than on the morally better but less humble.

The parable pictures two men going up to the Temple according to the Jewish custom to pray: the one was a self-righteous Pharisee, a moral man, in many respects a good man, but very conscious of all his righteous deeds and perfunctory observances of divine rules; the other

man was of a lower class and cast, who had more weaknesses and blemishes and who realized his condition. The Pharisee, we are told, stood and prayed with himself: apparently his prayers did not ascend to the Lord, and it would be strictly true, therefore, to say that he prayed with himself, heard himself pray, congratulated himself in the prayer, and rejoiced in his own self-consciousness generally. His prayer was not the kind which the Father invites, for he seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth; and it seems impossible for any one to come before the Lord in a proper manner who does not appreciate his own weaknesses, imperfections, blemishes, and acknowledges these and seeks the divinely arranged means for covering them.

Prayer of The Self-Righteous

The Pharisee said, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." It is quite true that such a prayer uttered truthfully would imply a compassion of heart for which we might well give thanks to God. All Christians by virtue of their relation to God, the covering of their sins, the begetting of the Spirit, the transforming work progressing in their hearts, have every reason to give thanks to the Lord that they differ from the majority of their fellow-creatures. But they have nothing whereof to boast, for, as the Apostle remarks, What have we that we have not received from the Lord? Who hath made us to differ? (1 Cor. 4:7.) If, therefore, the difference between ourselves and others be recognized as of the Lord and his work of grace in us and not of ourselves, this is the proper attitude of heart, and all who have this realization may properly enough give thanks to the Lord that in this respect they are different from others because he hath made us to differ, because by his grace we are what we are.

The difficulty with the Pharisee of the parable was that he prayed with himself, congratulated himself, and merely pretended to give thanks to the Lord for these differences. He did not thank the Lord that he had made him to differ, but thanked the Lord that he had made himself to differ—he was trusting in his own works of the flesh, which could never be acceptable to the Lord, and was, therefore, as a Pharisee, rejecting the imputed righteousness of the Atonement Day sacrifices. The condition would be similar today to us if we boasted in ourselves in any sense or degree. Such a man offering such a prayer should know that it does not go to God, that it was merely self-adulation and that he profiteth nothing by it. We are in the right attitude when we realize that our sufficiency is of God, who has made us to differ and who keeps us by his own power, covers us with the robe of Christ's righteousness and is preparing us for the glory, honor and immortality which he has promised us if we are faithful in obedience to his lessons and guidance.

All the Lord's people should be able to assure themselves at the throne of grace that they are not extortioners, not unjust, not adulterers, nor like other men. This is all in harmony with our Lord's declaration, "If ye were of the world the world would love its own: but because ye are not of he world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." We are to be glad if we find these evidences of our separateness from the world, but we are not to boast of them nor to consider that they are of our own institution nor attempt to take credit for them. As already shown, we are what we are by the Lord's grace.

The Pharisee as a part of his boast claimed that he fasted twice in the week, as well as gave tithes of everything that he acquired. In this fasting he was going beyond anything that the Law required, and doubtless felt that he was to be especially commended therefore. But not so from the Lord's standpoint—works can never justify us. If we were to fast, starve ourselves to death, it would not be meritorious; no works can be of value except as based upon proper recognition of our own imperfections and proper acceptance of divine justification, which is granted to us now through faith in Jesus, and which in that day was typically imputed to all the members of the Jewish nation through the typical sacrifices of their Day of Atonement. As for fasting, the Lord's people today will find plenty of things from which they may well fast. Fasting simply signifies self-denial, and self-denials of food are not the greatest nor the most estimable in God's sight, we may be sure. There are other desires of the flesh which all who are the Lord's true followers are to strive to control and diminish and starve out, that they might

proportionately flourish and be nourished spiritually and made strong.

Boasting of Giving Tithes

The tithe-giving was proper. God had enjoined, as a mark of respect for him, that one-tenth (or tithe) of all increase of herd or flock or field should be set apart peculiarly to his service: and obedience to this arrangement was nothing to boast of, particularly when it is remembered that the Lord is the bountiful giver of all good. Where then was the room for pride and boasting in connection with such tithe-giving? It showed a self-satisfied condition of heart, unready to make the still greater consecration required of all who would be accepted as members of the house of sons, the followers of Jesus, who are expected to consecrate their **all** to the Lord, and thenceforth to act as stewards who will be prepared to give an account of the use of every dollar, every talent, every opportunity. Are the saints inclined to boast of their self-denials or services? Let them reckon the matter carefully and see how little the most energetic is able to accomplish, and then doubtless with shame many will confess how little of all they desired to accomplish they have been able to render unto the Lord.

"God Be Merciful To Me A Sinner"

The publican was a sample of those who made no profession of great piety. Humble-minded people, they realized that they did not live up to the grand requirements of God's perfect Law, and, discouraged by the assertions of the Pharisees that they could obey and live up to those requirements, these more humble-minded ones were often in a discouraged attitude, and sometimes in consequence lapsed into carelessness and sinful ways. In the parable the publican stands afar off; he did not approach close to the holy precincts of the Temple; he stood at a goodly distance. He recognized the great difference between God's perfection and his own personal unworthiness, imperfection and sinfulness. He smote upon his breast, upon his heart, as though indicating that he accepted the divine sentence of death as well deserved, merited, yet he appealed for mercy—Lord have mercy upon me, I am a sinner! Although outwardly not as moral nor as good a man as the other, judged by any human standards, inwardly, from God's standpoint, his was the better heart of the two, the more hopeful. He was not trusting in himself, and was in a better condition, therefore, to receive the grace of God upon the only terms upon which it could be obtained, humble faith. Our Lord indicates that of the two this one—outwardly less noble, less moral—was inwardly more acceptable to the Father, justified rather than the Pharisee. And then, as a lesson based upon this, comes the word,

"Everyone That Exalteth Himself Shall Be Abased; And He That Humbleth Himself Shall Be Exalted"

Is it not remarkable that so frequently throughout the Scriptures the Lord calls attention to the great necessity for humility, assuring us that without it, whatever may be our conditions, our qualifications, we could by no means enter the Kingdom. In the parable just considered this quality of humility is illustrated in the publican, the lack of it is illustrated in the Pharisee. To reason the matter out we can see that only the humble minded could possibly be prepared to confess themselves sinners and unworthy of divine favor and love, needing justification, forgiveness, provided for us in Christ. Not only so, but even after exercising such humility and coming to the Lord and being accepted of him, if the humility be lost our gracious standing in Christ is forfeited. Pride signifies self-satisfaction, and the corresponding ignoring of the all-sufficiency of our glorious Head, who said to us, "Without me ye can do nothing."—John 15:5.

Alas, that so many of those who have some knowledge of God and of his plan of salvation are hindered from laying hold in a proper manner by a lack of humility and readiness to see their own faults, confess them and to accept divine mercy and grace. Alas, also, that so many, after having exercised faith and been washed from their old sins, are through lack of humility led to haughtiness, high-mindedness, which in one way or another is sure to work injury to us as New Creatures—sure to blast the prospect for a share in the Kingdom in which only those who humble themselves shall be exalted.

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Perea	Swings down through Perea; teaches on divorce	19:1-12	10:1-12		
	Perea	Receives and blesses children	19:13-15	10:13-16	18:15-17	
	Perea	Rich young man; illustration of laborers in vineyard	19:16–20:16	10:17-31	18:18-30	

Matthew 19:1-30

And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan; And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there. The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it. Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence. And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

Matthew 20:1-16

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Mark 10:1-31

And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again. And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus

answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.

Luke 18:15-30

And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein. And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved? And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee, And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

THE CAMEL AND THE NEEDLE'S EYE—*Reprints*, p. 4658

MATTHEW 19:13-26.

"Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

EN ROUTE toward Jerusalem the Master was met by mothers desiring to have his blessing upon their children. The Apostles, realizing the greatness of their Master and the importance of his time, forbade this and rebuked the mothers. When Jesus heard, he called them and said: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for such is the kingdom of heaven," and he put his hands in blessing upon their heads.

From this we are not to understand that the Kingdom of Heaven will be composed of little children. This erroneous idea has gone broadcast, and such an impression respecting the Kingdom has thus resulted. On the contrary, no little children can get into the Kingdom. Only those who have the hearing of faith are even "called" to the Kingdom and its glories. Our Lord's blessing upon little children merely signified his sympathy and love and his appreciation of the purity and innocence of childhood.

Those who will be of the Kingdom of God must be like little children in the sense of being simple hearted, true, honest and trustful of their heavenly Father—of such-like will be the inheritors of the Kingdom.

Another account tells us of Jesus' further words to the effect that all who would be his disciples must become **as** little children—must be **like** little children in guilelessness, faith, etc. But those who will be heirs of the Kingdom will all be "overcomers." Such take up their cross and follow the Lord whithersoever he leaeth. As our Lord could not have taken up his cross when he was a boy of nine, so likewise children cannot become the followers of Christ in the Scriptural sense until they have reached the age of discretion, which with some may occur much earlier than with others. We have known children of twelve years or thereabouts to give excellent evidence of faith, obedience and consecration to the Lord's will and evidence of being begotten of the holy Spirit. These, of course, but no other children, could have hope of sharing with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom.

The Young Nobleman's Test

On his journey our Lord was accosted by one who said, "Good Master, what good things shall I do that I may have eternal life?" He had the right idea, namely, that eternal life is the grand desideratum, the grand hope of all hopes before the human family. We are glad of the question, for it brought forth the inspired answer, in which everybody is interested. What is the value of the present life, except as it leads us up the passageway to eternal life? How utterly lost we should feel if assured that at death we would be blotted out forever! How little in this life would be worth consideration—how little it could do toward filling the longing of our hearts, which yearn for eternal life!

Our Lord parried the question, in order to draw out the young man and make him commit himself. "Why do you call me good?" Why do you acknowledge me as a good teacher? I am either the Messiah, as I claim, or else an impostor and far from good. Do you accept my Messiahship? If you do not, how can you call me good or acknowledge that anything could be good that does not proceed from God, the Fountain of all goodness? But answering your question; if you would enter into eternal life, keep the commandments. The young man replied, Which? The Master answered, "Thou shalt do no murder, nor commit adultery, nor steal, nor bear false witness, but honor thy father and thy mother and love thy neighbor as thyself." The young man replied, "All these things have I observed from my youth. What lack I yet?"

He was a model young man and Jesus loved him. Evidently he was keeping the Jewish Law to the extent of his knowledge and ability. He thought that he was loving his neighbor as himself; but this was a mistake which the Lord disclosed to him by the following suggestion: "If thou wouldest be perfect, go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" instead of on earth; sacrifice also your earthly reputation and become my follower.

Ah, how the Lord knew to put his finger on the sore spot! The young man had come to him very boastful, very sure that if any one in the world was seeking to be in harmony with the Divine arrangement he was that one. He came for the Master's approval, that he might hear him say, "You are the one exception to the rule." The Lord did not say, "If you love your neighbor as you love yourself you will at least put forth an effort to make that neighbor as comfortable as you desire to be comfortable." He was content to be very rich, while some of his neighbors whom he thought he loved as he loved himself were very poor—abjectly, sorrowfully so. When Jesus discovered to him the difficulty of his situation, he grasped it at once. He saw himself as never before. It became a new test with him. Thus it is with all. A previous lesson showed us the Kingdom as a great prize, a pearl of great value, a treasure, which to possess, will cost all that we have; and this lesson points out the same fact.

Let us not make the mistake made by some, and suppose that the young man who lived so honorable a life and failed to gain heaven, would be thrust down into eternal torment because he did not sacrifice his **all** to become the Lord's disciple. His loss of the Kingdom was a sufficient penalty without suffering eternal torment in the future. Such members of the hu-

man family, under the blessed conditions of the Millennial Kingdom, will doubtless make very rapid progress and will obtain eternal life on the plane of human perfection, though not worthy of the Kingdom honors which belong only to the elect. And the elect are those only who are gladly sacrificing their lives and their all to gain the great prize.

Passing Through The Needle's Eye

Our Lord commented upon the matter to his disciples and added that the rich must have great difficulty in connection with their endeavor to enter the Kingdom. He said, sympathetically, rather than in a denunciatory manner, "It is easier for a camel to go through the needle's eye than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God." This astonished the disciples very greatly, for they knew that the majority of the religionists of their day belonged to the wealthy class, the Scribes and the Pharisees. They replied, "Who, then, can get into the Kingdom, if these cannot?" Our Lord's reply was, "With men this is impossible, but not with God." Men would be inclined to say that God would find no one for the Kingdom at all if he rejected the rich.

In a word, no **rich** man can get into the Kingdom. He must give up everything to the Lord or else be barred from a place in the Kingdom. The terms of acceptance are the same to the rich as to the poor. He who would have the "pearl of great price" must sell all that he has in order that he may obtain it. The rich must give up all to the Lord, and then as stewards of their riches will be held responsible for their stewardship.

The following little poem describes the needle's eye, or small gate beside the larger gate, through which the camels might pass into the walled city after sundown and without any of their burden. So the rich by unloading and becoming poor may get into the Kingdom—

Through The Needle's Eye

"Tall was my camel and laden high,
And small the gate as a needle's eye.
"The city within was very fair,
And I and my camel would enter there.
" 'You must lower your load,' the porter cried,
'You must throw away that bundle of pride.'
"This I did, but the load was great,
Far too wide for the narrow gate.
" 'Now,' said the porter, 'to make it less,
Discard that hamper of selfishness.'
"I obeyed, though with much ado,
Yet still nor camel nor I got through.
" 'Ah,' said the porter, 'your load must hold
Some little package of trust-in-gold.'
"The merest handful was all I had,
Yet 'Throw it away,' the porter bade.
"Then lo, a marvel! the camel tall
Shrank to the size of the portal small,
"And all my riches, a vast estate,
Easily passed through the narrow gate!"

LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD—*Reprints*, p. 5473

MATTHEW 20:1-16.

"He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good,
and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Matthew 5:45.

THIS PARABLE is difficult of interpretation so as to make all of its facts find fulfillment. The Great Teacher gave it as a parable of the Kingdom; hence we know that it applies to the experiences of the Church during this Gospel Age. If we were to apply the different intervals mentioned to different epochs in this Age, we would have difficulty; for the Apostles and others, called early in the Age, did not live and labor throughout the entire period. Again, in so applying it, we would face the proposition that only those at the beginning of the Age had definite promise as respects a reward—that all others got merely the assurance that they would receive what would be right.

Another difficulty which we would encounter in interpreting the parable is how to apply the murmuring of those who were first called and last rewarded. Other Scriptures show us that the Apostles and others first called in the Gospel Age will experience their resurrection change before those who will be living at the

Second Coming of Christ. St. Paul declares that the dead in Christ shall rise first, and that then those of us who are alive shall be changed. Furthermore, it would be unthinkable that the Apostles and others of the early Church would murmur at the reward to be given them.

All of these difficulties must be borne in mind when we attempt to find a solution of this parable that would fit the experiences of the Church as a whole during the Gospel Age.

If we attempt to apply the parable to the individual experiences of God's people, we have trouble also. Applying it thus, we might say that those who begin a Christian life early, and are found faithful in the Lord's service at the evening-time of life, would be the ones first called and promised a reward. Others coming in later, and serving the Lord's cause with only a portion of their time, strength and talent, would correspond to those who heard the later call—some even at the eleventh hour. If we interpret the parable as meaning that all these will get a similar reward regardless of the time spent in the Master's service, we would still have difficulty with the fact that those called earliest murmured, complained, were dissatisfied.

On the contrary, we are surely convinced that any who would murmur against the Lord's will and His just and loving arrangements for His people, will never obtain the Kingdom reward beyond the veil. We may feel assured that any who receive the Master's "Well done" and the resurrection change will be far from murmuring. They will rejoice and be glad, and feel more than rewarded for every little service and sacrifice. How then can we apply this parable consistently, in harmony with the teachings of other Scriptures respecting the reward of the Kingdom class? We can think of only one way, and that is to apply the parable entirely to present-life experiences of the Kingdom class, especially of those who will be living at the close of this Gospel Age.

Partly Applicable to The Jews

For sixteen hundred years and more the Jews waited for the First Coming of Messiah and the blessed opportunities which then would come. When Jesus began His ministry, He preached, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," and gave the Jews the privilege of entering into it. That privilege was a "penny," or a reward for their faithful endeavor to keep the Law all their lives. But when the offer of the Kingdom was promulgated, some publicans and sinners were attracted—some who had previously neglected God's service and labors in the vineyard. These new laborers were received by the Lord Jesus and given an opportunity to become His disciples.

The privilege of discipleship was the penny, or reward. The Scribes and the Pharisees, who had been faithful to the Lord God all their lives, considered that they should have had some pre-eminence or preference over the publicans and sinners; and they murmured at any arrangement as unfair which would not give them the first opportunities of the Kingdom. If publicans and sinners were to obtain the blessed privilege of discipleship with Messiah, then surely, they thought, some still higher favor should come to them. They murmured that Jesus received publicans and sinners and ate with them.

One of the Master's parables was intended as a special reproof to the Pharisees along this line. The prodigal son represented a class of Jews not living up to their privileges, while the elder brother represented those who had continuously sought to be earnestly and actively engaged in the Father's business. When some of this prodigal class received the Message of God's Love from the lips of Jesus and His disciples, and returned to the Father's House and were treated graciously and given the same privilege of sonship as those who had not gone astray, but who had labored faithfully, the elder-brother class was offended. They murmured, and refused to participate in the feast. Thus there were some who were first in opportunity, but who were last so far as the blessing was concerned, and others who were last and least found opportunity for receiving the Divine blessing sooner and more effectively.

Applicable Also to Christians

The general lesson of the parable would seem to be that we should appreciate the fact that whatever God has to offer is a gift. We should enter His service with loving loyalty to principle, to righteousness. If we have served many

years, that privilege of service should be esteemed; and our interest in the Lord's cause should make us happy. From such a standpoint of appreciation of the privilege of service, we should be glad to see the Lord's work carried on, glad to see others enter the service and glad to see them get the same reward that we hope for ourselves. Only those who have such a broad spirit, such an appreciation of the privileges of the vineyard, such a sympathy for "as many as the Lord our God shall call"—only these will be fit for the Kingdom proper and in readiness to receive the special privileges of knowledge and opportunity when the Kingdom is ready to be announced.

As the typical kingdom was offered to the Jews in Jesus' day, and as those who were newest in Divine service received the same opportunities for a share in the Kingdom with those who had been long engaged, so apparently it is to be in the end, or Harvest time, of this Gospel Age. Those who have all their lives been seeking to be faithful to the Lord and to serve His cause should remember that they have had that much more of privilege and blessing. If some shall enter the Divine service later, they should be rejoiced with as fellow-servants.

Indeed, all who are servants, according to the Word of the Lord, should be praying the Master to send other laborers into the vineyard, instead of feeling jealous of any others who might come. And as greater knowledge of Present Truth is now coming as a reward to all who labor at all in the vineyard of the Lord, let us not be surprised if this shall be equally distributed to those who have come in recently and to those who have been a long time in the Master's service.

Let us rather rejoice in the Lord's ways. Let not our hearts be angry because of His graciousness to those who have come into the service even during the eleventh hour. Are they not brethren? Under the terms of the Golden Rule should we not wish them to have the same blessings that we enjoy? Any aloofness on the part of those who have been longer in the Lord's service—any feeling on the part of such that they must have more manifestation of the Lord's favor now—is evidently wrong. The Lord would have us more like unto Himself. And this is the suggestion of those who have selected the Golden Text for this lesson. Be ye like unto your Father; for He is kind to the unthankful. "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Matthew 5:45.

Lessons of The Golden Text

More and more we are learning that in a very large and important sense our forefathers during the Dark Ages lost the proper conception of God's character and of His Plan for human salvation. Instead of picturing Him in the creeds as loving and gracious, they portrayed Him in very different colors. The creeds of the Dark Ages, which have been handed down to us, have given us colored and distorted views of the teachings of the Bible. Only in recent years are Bible students beginning to discern this fact. Nearly all people of intelligence have now cast away the creeds as irrational in the general trend of their teaching—in their representation that God from the beginning purposed a Hell of fire and everlasting torture for nearly all His human creatures, numbering thousands of millions, and a Paradise of bliss for only a saintly handful, an elect few.

But alas, while we have been realizing the errancy of our creeds, and have been discarding them, many of us have failed to notice how different their teachings are from the teachings of the Bible! But the Bible is being sought after again. The colored creed-spectacles which distorted our view are being broken to pieces. We are learning to read the Bible in its own clear light, and a blessing proportionately is coming to us.

Notice, for instance, this text: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven." Brother Calvin, Bloody Mary, and thousands of others during the Dark Ages, committed horrible atrocities in the name of religion, in the name of Jesus, in the name of the Father, thinking that they were copying God, being like their Father in Heaven. But alas, they knew Him not aright! They had been following demon-drawn pictures which represented the almighty, gracious God, the Father of Mercies, as most devilish in His plans and arrangements for His human creatures. Now we are seeing what Jesus really meant when

He said, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven." Now we are including the remainder of His statement: "for He is kind to the unthankful"; and "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Two of the very noblest of Jesus' disciples caught the wrong thought, even though they were for awhile personally present with the Master. How much more should we excuse those who, during a long period of energetic creed-making and of neglect of Bible study, lost all proper conception of the Divine character!

The two disciples referred to were James and John, the sons of Zebedee. When the Lord and His disciples had run short of food, James and John went to a city of Samaria to purchase bread. The Samaritans inquired why Jesus did not come to their city to heal the Samaritan sick, as well as the Jews. When they learned that His mission for the time was exclusively for the Jews, they were offended and said: Buy your bread from Jews, then; we will sell you nothing. Then it was that James and John, indignant that their Master, the Heir of all things, should be thus dishonored, asked permission of Jesus to call down fire upon the Samaritans, to consume their city. These disciples thought that they had the spirit of God. But Jesus said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

And if these two dear disciples needed to be corrected—needed to be shown that they had a wrong spirit in wishing to destroy the Samaritans—how much more would Jesus' reproof be appropriate to those who in the name of God would consign all opponents to an eternity of torture!

But such were some of us, in our ignorance, in our superstition, in our creed-intoxication—as a result of drinking the wine of false doctrine. (Revelation 17:1-5; 18:3.) Thank God for the deliverance! Praise His name for the saner views coming to His people! The dawning of the Morning of a New Dispensation is giving enlightenment. The Sun of Righteousness is rising; the hobgoblins of the past are fleeing before its illuminating rays. "Tell the whole world these blessed tidings."

The Glorious Character Of Our God

Now when we read our Golden Text we see that it tells us that as our God is gracious, loving, merciful, kind, even to the unthankful, even to the unjust, even to sinners, so we should be kind, generous, loving, should do good unto all men as we have opportunity, and especially to the Household of Faith. This view of God appeals to our hearts; and the more we study this God of Love, the more we realize that He is the only loving and true God, and that all of our previous misconceptions were unreal, unloving, untrue—gods of our own manufacture—and the more do we see that civilized lands have made creed idols with pen, type, ink and paper, more horrible than any which the heathen ever made of iron, stone, brass or clay.

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." If the ideal of his heart, the God that he worships, is cruel, vengeful, hateful, devilish, it would be a miracle if that man or woman worshiping such a false deity would not become more or less contaminated and be led into more or less of wrong thinking and wrong doing. But when we get before the mind's eye the loving and true God as our ideal, we are more and more changed and transformed day by day as we discern our Maker's gracious character. Unconsciously we copy this high ideal, and more and more become transformed through the renewing of our minds, and more and more prove the good and acceptable and perfect will of God in our daily lives.

Let us hold fast that which is good—the sure Word of God. Let us discard the human theories of the Dark Ages, which greatly misrepresented to us the Divine Message. Thus we shall be giving heed to the Master's words: "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."

"Who trusts in that Word has the sweet hope of life,
An end of confusion and error and strife.
Its grace it imparts to the truth-seeking soul,
Who humbly submits to its righteous control."

Date	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
32	Probably Perea	Third time Jesus foretells his death, resurrection	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34	
	Probably Perea	Request for James's and John's seating in Kingdom	20:20-28	10:35-45		
	Jericho	Passing through Jericho, he heals two blind men; visits Zacchaeus; parable of the pounds	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35–19:28	

Matthew 20:17-34

And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem: and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again. Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshiping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

Mark 10:32-52

And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again. And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to him, and saith

unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

Luke 18:31-43

Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken. And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

Luke 19:1-28

And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, A certain noble man went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be

called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou laidst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me. And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

THE GREATEST—THE SERVANT—*Reprints*, p. 4668

MATTHEW 20:17-34.

"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many."

AMBITION moves the world—selfish ambition. A certain kind of ambition—to please God and to have his rewards, is encouraged by the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word. Think of the promise held out to the consecrated, self-sacrificing followers of Jesus—that, if faithful unto death, they shall receive the "crown of life," immortality, and attain a place with their Master in his Throne—as participants in the glories and honors of his Kingdom! There is no earthly appeal to ambition so strong as this, which comes from the Creator to such as have the hearing ear of faith. Nevertheless, the ambitions awakened by these promises, we are warned, might become our snares. The very condition upon which we may attain the Kingdom is our faithful endurance of shame, contempt, misunderstanding, and our demonstration to the **last** of humility and absolute loyalty to God and full resignation to his providences. Whoever would reign with Messiah in his approaching Kingdom, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven," must humble himself under the mighty hand of God, that he may be exalted in due time.—1 Peter 5:6.

The prospect of the Kingdom was bright before the minds of the Apostles, even when Jesus was foretelling his ignominious sufferings and death; so that two of his beloved followers, James and John, through their mother, importuned a promise that they should sit, the one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of the Great King when his Kingdom should be established.

This request drew from the Great Teacher the suggestion that his loving and ambitious disciples had, perhaps, not fully counted the cost of such exaltation. He inquired if they were willing to drink of his cup of ignominy and reproach, and if they were willing to be baptized with his baptism, into his death—the sacrifice of all earthly interests. They had counted the cost, and promptly responded as to their willingness. They had learned well the lessons of the Great Teacher. He assured them that with this willingness of mind the privilege would be theirs of sharing his ignominy and his death and of sitting with him on his Throne. But as respects the chief positions, they were not at his disposal. At the conclusion of the testings of his people, those positions of highest honor in the Kingdom next to himself will be given according to the just standards which the Father has prepared and established. How we can rejoice with those Apostles in the fullness of their con-

secration and in the assurance of the Master! And we also should strive by faithfulness to attain a place with the Master in his Throne, as members of his Body, the Church.

The ambition of James and John was shown in their desire for places of special nearness to the Lord. Jesus did not reprove them specifically, but indirectly. When the other ten heard how these two had sought to bespeak the chief places of honor they were indignant. The Master took advantage of the incident to show how different is God's judgment from that of men. With men the aggressive and powerful hold the lordship and dominion over the others, but in the Divine arrangement the order is reversed. God will honor most and put in the highest positions, the humble, the submissive, the meek. On this incident the Lord based a general instruction to his followers on the necessity for humility. We are to take the Divine standpoint and honor most in the Church those who most serve the Church, and not those who demand service and honors and seek self-exaltation. Our Lord pointed to his own course as an illustration: they acknowledged him as their Master, and yet no one served them so much as did he. Indeed, he came into the world not to be served, but to serve others, even to the extent of laying down his life as the ransom price for many, for the world, to be applied for their release from sin and death condemnation in God's time—during the Messianic Kingdom.

Blessing The Blind And The Poor

Journeying on the Master had an opportunity of exemplifying his position as a servant. Two blind men, learning that he was passing, exercised such faith that they hailed him as the Messiah, the Son of David, entreating Mercy, Help, Relief. Instead of passing them by, saying, You are only blind beggars, anyway, the Master stopped and called them to him and, in response to their request, touched their eyes, and immediately they received sight. Other Scriptures indicate that the Great Teacher's miracles were not performed without cost to himself, "Virtue (vitality) went out of him and healed them all."—Luke 6:19.

He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, humbling himself to serve the humblest and poorest unfortunates! Here we have an illustration of the spirit of meekness, the spirit of service, which must characterize the hearts, and, in some degree, control the lives of all true followers, disciples, of the Great Teacher. If it is not in our power to open the eyes of the physically blind, it is in our power to help many to a clearer insight into the things of God which the natural eye hath not seen, nor ear heard—the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him and that, loving him, follow in the footsteps of Jesus. (1 Cor. 2:9.) Let us, then, seek the true, God-given ambition; but let us specially seek to know and to do the will of our Father in heaven.

JESUS PRAYING IN THE GARDEN
And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying,
O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:
nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. (Matthew 26:39)

JESUS FINAL MINISTRY AT JERUSALEM

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 8	Bethany	Arrives at Bethany six days before Passover				11:55–12:1
Nisan 9	Bethany	Feast at Simon the leper's house; Mary anoints Jesus; Jews come to see Jesus and Lazarus	26:6-13	14:3-9		12:2-11
	Bethany-Jerusalem	Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem	21:1-11,14-17	11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
Nisan 10	Bethany-Jerusalem	Barren fig tree cursed; second temple cleansing	21:18,19,12,13	11:12-17	19:45,46	
	Jerusalem	Chief priests and scribes scheme to destroy Jesus		11:18,19	19:47,48	
	Jerusalem	Discussion with Greeks; unbelief of Jews				12:20-50
Nisan 11	Bethany-Jerusalem	Barren fig tree found withered	21:19-22	11:20-25		
	Jerusalem, temple	Christ's authority questioned; illustration of two sons	21:23-32	11:27-33	20:1-8	
	Jerusalem, temple	Illustrations of wicked husbandman, marriage feast	21:33–22:14	12:1-12	20:9-19	
	Jerusalem, temple	Catch questions on tax, resurrection, commandment	22:15-40	12:13-34	20:20-40	
	Jerusalem, temple	Jesus' silencing question on Messiah's descent	22:41-46	12:35-37	20:41-44	
	Jerusalem, temple	Scathing denunciation of scribes and Pharisees	23:1-39	12:38-40	20:45-47	
	Jerusalem, temple	The widow's mite		12:41-44	21:1-4	
	Mount of Olives	Prediction of Jerusalem's fall; Jesus' presence; end of system	24:1-51	13:1-37	21:5-38	
	Mount of Olives	Illustrations: ten virgins, talents, sheep/goats	25:1-46			
Nisan 12	Jerusalem	Religious leaders plot Jesus' death	26:1-5	14:1,2	22:1,2	
	Jerusalem	Judas bargains with priests to betray Jesus	26:14-16	14:10,11	22:3-6	
Nisan 13	Near and in Jerusalem	Arrangements for the Passover	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Passover feast eaten with the twelve	26:20,21	14:17,18	22:14-18	
	Jerusalem	Jesus washes the feet of his apostles				13:1-20
	Jerusalem	Judas identified as traitor and is dismissed	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21-30
	Jerusalem	Memorial supper instituted with the eleven	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:19,20, 24-30	[1 Cor. 11:23-25]
	Jerusalem	Denial by Peter and dispersion of apostles foretold	26:31-35	14:27-31	22:31-38	13:31-38
	Jerusalem	Helper; mutual love; tribulation; Jesus' prayer				14:1–17:26

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
	Gethsemane	Agony in the garden; Jesus' betrayed and arrested	26:30,36-56	14:26,32-52	22:39-53	18:1-12
	Jerusalem	Trial by Annas, Caiaphas, Sanhedrin; Peter denies	26:57–27:1	14:53–15:1	22:54-71	18:13-27
	Jerusalem	Judas the betrayer hangs himself	27:3-10		[Acts 1:18,19]	
	Jerusalem	Before Pilate, then Herod, and then back to Pilate	27:2,11-14	15:1-5	23:1-12	18:28-38
	Jerusalem	Delivered to death, after Pilate seeks his release	27:15-30	15:6-19	23:13-25	18:39–19:16
~3 pm Friday	Golgotha, Jerusalem	Jesus' death on the cross and associated events	27:31-56	15:20-41	23:26-49	19:16-30
	Jerusalem	Jesus' body removed from the cross and buried	27:57-61	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:31-42
Nisan 15	Jerusalem	Priests and Pharisees get guard for tomb	27:62-66			
Nisan 16	Jerusalem and vicinity	Jesus' resurrection and events of that day	28:1-15	16:1-8	24:1-49	20:1-25
	Jerusalem; Galilee	Subsequent appearances of Jesus Christ	28:16-20	[1 Cor. 15:5-7]	[Acts 1:3-8]	20:26–21:25
Iyyar 25	Mount of Olives near Bethany	Jesus' ascension, fortieth day after his resurrection	[Acts 1:9-12]		24:50-53	

John 11:55 to 12:11

And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should show it, that they might take him. Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always. Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

Matthew 26:6-13

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did

it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Mark 14:3-9

And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she broke the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

PERFUME VERY PRECIOUS.—*Reprints*, p. 3534

JOHN 12:1-11.

"She hath done what she could."—Mark 14:8.

IT WAS Saturday night, as we reckon it, the evening following the Jewish Sabbath day—after six p.m.—that Jesus and his disciples and Lazarus, whom he had previously awakened from the sleep of death, with some other friends of the family, sat down to a feast prepared in special honor of Jesus at the home of his friends, where he was always welcome and where he stopped more frequently than at any other house during the period of his ministry, so far as the records show. It was at Bethany, the home of Lazarus and Martha and Mary. It was called the house of Simon the leper, one supposition being that Simon was the father of the family, and another that he was the husband of Martha, who at this time was a widow.

Our Lord and his disciples were en route for Jerusalem, and Bethany was on the way, in the suburbs. They probably arrived on what would correspond to our Friday, or the Jewish sixth day of the week. Expecting them, Martha and Mary had provided quite a sumptuous feast, and, in harmony with the Jewish rules governing in such cases, the dishes were evidently prepared in advance, as Sabbath labor was prohibited. No account is given us of that Sabbath day at Bethany, but we can well imagine the delightful social intercourse between the dear members of that family and the Lord and his chosen apostles.

Jesus in Social Life.

The Master's words of wisdom and love are not recorded, but we know on the best of authority that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Hence we may know that the day was not given over to frivolity of word or conduct, but to rest, spiritual enjoyment, which minister to the refreshment of all in the right attitude of heart. The same rule applies to all of the Lord's followers wherever they may be, whatever may be their vocation or surroundings. Out of the good treasure of their hearts they can bring forth nothing else but good things, and if any be otherwise minded let him beware, and correct the difficulty of the heart and not merely of the head.

We can imagine better than we can portray the loving sentiments of Lazarus and his sisters toward Jesus, the one they esteemed so highly, the one who, by calling Lazarus forth from the tomb, had demonstrated his Messiahship and that in him was the resurrection and the life power. This was probably the first visit the Lord had made to the Bethany home since that great event.

Apparently our Lord had friends in various walks of life; a few were rich, some were poor, some in moderate circumstances. The Bethany household was apparently of a comfortable

class, as was evidenced by the fact that they had their own home, that they had their own tomb, and that on this occasion Mary was able as well as willing to spend a considerable sum of money in doing honor to the Lord by anointing him with the very precious spikenard. This reminds us of the prayer of one of old, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." Riches are a great snare to the many, and the Lord's word assures us that not many rich will enter the Kingdom. The attractions of the present life to them will prove too powerful and hinder their fulfillment of their consecration vows—to sacrifice their all, to lay all at Jesus' feet, to become merely his stewards in the use of their temporal opportunities and blessings, and to use these wisely in his service and in such a manner as to demonstrate the love and loyalty they have professed.

In many respects to have a moderate competency in life is very desirable, permitting a more generous treatment of others, greater hospitality, etc.; yet even moderate prosperity seems to be more than the majority can stand and yet be faithful. Consequently we find in fact what our Lord declared, namely, that the heirs of the Kingdom are chiefly of the poor of this world—chiefly of those who have little and who have little hope for getting more, and whose minds consequently are more readily turned to the heavenly things which the Lord has promised to those who love him supremely.

To whatever extent, therefore, we have comfortable surroundings, such as were possessed by the Bethany household—to whatever extent we have the good things of this present life—in that same proportion we need to be specially on guard against the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches and the ambitions and hopes and aims of the world, lest these should lead our hearts away from the loyalty and devotion to the Lord and his cause which full faith and trust should inspire and sustain. Evidently it is possible to be poor in spirit without being actually in poverty, but the more there is of earthly prosperity apparently more grace is needed to keep us in the narrow way.

"Ointment of Spikenard Very Costly."

The two sisters evidently had the matter planned between them: Martha served at the table and Mary served in an especial manner with the ointment. Oriental tables were a combination of couch and table, and the guests were properly described as reclining at a feast. It was customary to rest the forepart of the body upon one elbow while using the other hand to convey the food to the mouth, etc. Our Lord thus reclining, both his head and his feet were very conveniently accessible to Mary, who proceeded to anoint first his head and afterward his feet with the ointment.

The word ointment gives rather a misimpression; the word perfume would more nearly describe the liquid used. Its value is incidentally mentioned as more than three hundred pence (v. 5). These silver pence represent about sixteen cents each, and thus estimated the alabaster flask of perfume was worth about forty-eight dollars; but counting each penny or *denarius* as a day's wages at that time (Matt. 20:2), the three hundred pence would be equivalent to a year's wages of a working man, or about three hundred dollars to six hundred dollars as compared with our day.

This was very precious ointment indeed by whichever calculation we reckon it, yet that the statement is not overdrawn is attested by ancient literature. For instance, we are told that Horace offered to give a cask of wine for a very small box of spikenard—Odes, Ovid, IV, XII, XVII. A perfume even in our day has been rated as high as $100 per ounce, namely, attar of roses. At this price, Mary's "pound" would have been worth $1,200.

"She Hath Done What She Could."

The use of such expensive perfumes was very rare: indeed, even the emperors used it sparingly, but when used it was generally poured upon the head. Mary followed this custom in pouring it upon the Lord's head, as Matthew and Mark recount; but having done this, she proceeded to his feet and anointed them with the perfume, and then wiped his feet with the long tresses of her hair. What a picture of loving devotion is here given us! The feet, always recognized as the humblest and lowest members of the human frame—the hair of the head, especially of woman, always recognized as a special treasure and glory to her—here thus brought together in a way which signified that Mary esteemed her

Lord and Master as infinitely above and beyond her. She had recognized him first as the most wonderful of men, speaking as never man spake; she had come afterwards to understand that he was a great teacher, especially sent at a special time; and finally, through the awakening of Lazarus from the sleep of death, she had evidence that the power of the Almighty was in him, that he was none other than the Son of God, and she appropriately did him the reverence due to his exalted station.

She could not put him on the throne of earth, but she would show that she was his devoted servant forever; she could not glorify him before all the people of Israel, but she could glorify and honor him in her own home; she could not tell his praises and sing his worth, but she could sing and make melody in her own heart, and pour upon him a perfume which not only filled her home with its sweet savor, but which has yielded a tender fragrance to the honor of womankind in general from her day to the present time. "She hath done what she could," said the Lord—she has shown her devotion to the best of her ability. How true the remainder of our Lord's prophecy on the subject, "Wherever this Gospel is preached, this thing shall be told as a memorial of her." A sweet memorial of a sweet character and loving heart. Considered in the light of the odor and blessing and refreshment which it has shed upon all of the Lord's people throughout this Gospel age, Mary's alabaster jar of precious perfume, very costly, has proven to be extremely cheap.

"Might Have Been Given To The Poor."

Our lesson says that Judas protested against such a waste of money, and explains that it was not because he cared so much for the poor, as that he was a thief and regretted that the amount spent for the perfume had not been handed to him as the treasurer for the group of disciples, so that he might have misappropriated it to himself. This thought is more particularly shown in the revised version, which renders it, "He was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein." Matthew says "the disciples"—Mark says, "There were some"—but John mentions Judas only as doing this murmuring against the expense involved in Mary's service to her Lord. Quite probably all the accounts are correct. Judas, no doubt, was the instigator of the murmuring, some more quickly and more thoroughly shared his sentiments, and the remainder of the apostles, probably influenced by the majority, were inclined to yield and to agree that the extravagance was wrong. But Jesus set the whole matter at rest in a few words, saying, "Let her alone; against the day of my burying hath she kept this. The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always."

Many of the Lord's disciples today need to reconstruct their ideas on the subject of economy. True, it is necessary for us to be provident not wasteful, and economical not extravagant. Our Lord frequently inculcated this lesson, as, for instance, when he directed the gathering up of the fragments of broken food after feeding the multitude. But there is a proper place to draw the line. The person who is economical and penurious in his dealings with the Lord is sure to be the loser thereby, as the Scriptures declare, "The liberal soul shall be made fat;" and again, "There is he that scattereth yet increaseth, and there is he that withholdeth more than is meet [proper] and it tendeth to poverty."

It is a different matter for us to learn to be economical in respect to our own affairs and to be liberal to the extent of extravagance in matters which pertain to the Lord and his service. We sometimes sing, "Thou art coming to a King, large petitions with thee bring," but he who brings large petitions to the throne of grace should be sure also that he bring with him a large alabaster box of perfume for the Lord—not hoping thereby to merit the Lord's favor nor to perfume his requests, but as a mark of his appreciation of blessings already received. Those who bring the alabaster boxes of perfume of praise and thankfulness very generally have little to ask. Rather they realize that they are already debtors to such an extent that they can never show properly their appreciation of divine favor. Properly they recognize that day by day they are receiving at the Lord's hands exceedingly and abundantly more than they could ask or wish, and that in the spiritual blessings alone they have what satisfies their longings as nothing else can do. Such more

nearly follow the course of Mary and bring alabaster boxes of perfume to the Lord—their prayers and thanksgiving of heart; and asking nothing, but giving thanks for all things, they receive from the Master such an outpour of blessing that they are not able to contain it.

Those who view the matter rightly must certainly feel that none of us have anything worthy to present to our Lord—that our very best, our most costly gifts or sacrifices, are not worthy of him and but feebly express the real sentiments of our hearts. How glad we are if our humble efforts are accepted of the Lord, and how we hope that ultimately we shall hear the same sweet voice saying of us, "He hath done what he could," "She hath done what she could."

The poet Tennyson beautifully pictures the scene we have been considering in the following lines—

"Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And He that brought him back is there.

"Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

"All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
With costly spikenard and with tears."

The Poor Ever With Us.

Our Lord's prophecy that poverty would continue throughout this Gospel age has been amply fulfilled. Looking forward into the future, we rejoice to know that then, under the reign of the Kingdom, there will be no more poor, no more sorrow, no more want. "Every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree, with none to molest or make him afraid." Those changed conditions will not be the result of human evolution, human theories, co-operative societies, unions, trusts, etc. All these various panaceas for making everybody rich and comfortable and happy have failed in the past and will continue to be failures in the future. Because of sin warping and twisting the very fibers of humanity, and through selfishness and ambition and desire working upon the warped and twisted elements of humanity, pain, suffering and want are sure to continue as long as sin continues. And sin is sure to continue until the great Messiah takes to himself his great power and reigns, and subdues sin and all that is contrary to righteousness and truth and establishes the latter upon the earth.

Until that glorious day shall come, all through the night of weeping, for now more than eighteen hundred centuries, the poor have been with us and many of them have been the Lord's precious ones. Poverty has proven itself a blessing in many ways in many senses of the word under present conditions. Not only does the fact of poverty and the fear of poverty help to keep many in line and make them active in the battle of life, and thus develop in them overcoming qualities, but, on the other hand, the fact that there is poverty, the fact that we have friends and neighbors who need our care and need assistance, is a blessing to those who are more comfortably situated themselves, in that it develops their sympathy, patience, love, their desire to do good, their desire to help. He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord and the Lord will repay him. This promise is so rich and so plainly stated that the wonder is that there are not more willing to make investments in harmony with it, and to realize that the Lord not only repays, but gives large interest.

"Me Ye Have Not Always."

The opportunity for honoring the Lord was limited—a little while and his sufferings would be ended and he would be glorified, beyond the evil, beyond the power of human attention. It was appropriate then, when viewed from the right standpoint, that Mary should spend a great price upon her Lord—that the head upon which fell the slanders and anathemas of the chief priests and doctors of divinity of that day, and upon which shortly the crown of thorns would be placed, should now be honored by one amongst a few of those who realized his true worth, his true grandeur, his Kingship, that he was indeed the Son of God. It was appropriate, too, that those feet which had trodden the valleys and hillsides of Palestine, and that were so weary at times, and that symbolized the feet of

consecration treading the narrow, rugged way, and that so soon would be pierced with the nails on the cross, should now be highly honored by one who appreciated and trusted them, who loved them and who was seeking to walk in the Master's steps.

When we get the right view of the matter, we can indeed sympathize with our Lord's expression, "Let her alone," Trouble her not, Take it not from her—as though when the first motion was made to use the spikenard the apostles had wished to have it spared that they might sell it, and as though our Lord hindered them from using persuasion to that end, saying, Let her alone, do not hinder her.

Spikenard Mary represents one of the most beautiful elements of Christian character amongst the Lord's people from that day until the present. For be it remembered that the entire Church of Christ in the largest sense is the "body of Christ," as expressed by Jesus and also by the apostles. The Mary class, who would rather purchase perfume at a great cost whereby to serve the anointed Church, the body of Christ, than to spend the same upon themselves, is still with us, and has been of the Church for these eighteen centuries. Not only was the Head of the body anointed, perfumed, honored, comforted, cheered, but all of the members since have likewise received a blessing from this class, this spikenard Mary class. It is composed not always of the orators, the wealthy or the wise—its ministry is unostentatious and to many, especially of the world, it seems foolishness and waste—but the Lord appreciates it, and so do the members of his body who are comforted and refreshed thereby. Blessing be upon this Mary class!

Honor to Members—Honor to Head.

But if there have been members all the way down who have been comforted in this way, should we not expect some particular blessing of the kind in the end of this age, upon the "feet" members? According to our understanding we are now in the closing of this age—the Head has been glorified, many of the members of the body have passed beyond the veil, and only the feet are here. Perhaps this very picture of Mary's anointing the feet of our Lord as well as his head constitutes a type or picture of what we may expect in this present time. And here comes in a beautiful feature of the divine arrangement—we may all be of the Mary class as well as of the feet class. In other words, each member of the body of Christ may to some extent serve the fellow-members of the body, the fellow-members of the feet, as Mary served the feet of Jesus.

Let each one of the Lord's true people as he studies this matter conclude that by the grace of God he will join the Mary class, and purchase spikenard very costly and lavish it upon the feet of the body of Christ—the Church—the true members. This will mean love, sympathy, kindness, gentleness, patience and assistance and comfort. It will mean large and growing development in all the fruits and graces of the Spirit, whose combined name is Love.

Dear readers, let us each remember that while it is impossible for us to do as Mary did in this lesson, it is the privilege of each to do still more important things for each other, for the brethren of Christ now in the world, the feet members of his body. Hers was a literal perfume and in time lost its virtue; but the little acts of kindnesses and helpfulness which we may render one to another will never lose their merit in the estimation of our Lord, and never lose their fragrance to all eternity in the estimation of each other. The little things of life, the little words, the little tokens, the kind looks, the little assistances by the way, these and not great things are our possibilities, our perfumes, the one for the other.

"Wash One Another's Feet."

The washing of the feet in olden times in oriental lands was very necessary to the comfort, and hence to wash one another's feet would signify to comfort and refresh one another even in the most menial services. This is the essence of our Lord's lesson to us, that we should be glad for any opportunity for serving one another, for comforting and helping one another, however menial the service. Apply this now to the expression of our lesson. Mary washed our Lord's feet with perfume, and the Mary class, the most loving and devoted class in the Church, are to help one another, to wash one another's feet; and they are to do so not in the rudest and clumsiest manner imaginable, but,

inspired by love and devotion one to another, they are to wash one another's feet with the kindness and sympathy and love and appreciation symbolized by Mary's spikenard; and their comforting of one another is to be with that love and solicitation which was represented by Mary's using the very locks of her head for her Master's feet.

We see some evidence that this love, this spikenard-Mary love and sympathy, is growing amongst the members of the Lord's body; that as they perceive the animosity of the world and the flesh and the Adversary against the Lord's anointed they are all the more devoted one to another, and all the more disposed to honor one another with care and love and sympathy, and to speak and act generously and kindly one toward another. We are glad of this—we know of no better evidence of growth in grace on the part of the consecrated. Let the good work go on until we shall have filled the house with the perfume of love, until the whole world shall take knowledge of how Christians love one another—not in a narrow or partisan sense, but in the broad sense that Christ loved all who love the Father and all who sought to walk in the Father's ways.

Let Us Do It Now.

If Mary had waited another week she might have used the perfume upon herself but not upon the Lord—within a week from the time of this incident our Lord was buried, the tomb was sealed, the Roman Guard stood before it and there would have been no opportunity even to have poured it upon his dead body. How much better that she improved the opportunity, that she showed the Lord her devotion while he was still her guest. The parallel is here: it will not be long until all the members of the body of Christ will have filled their share of the sufferings and have passed beyond the veil "changed."

Wisdom tells us that we should not delay in bringing our alabaster boxes of ointment and pouring their contents upon our dear ones of the body of Christ, the feet of Christ. No matter if they do not notice us, or think of us, or pour any upon us as members of the feet; let us do our part, let us be of the Mary class, let us pour out the sweet perfume upon others, and the house, the Church of the Lord, will be filled with the sweet odor, even though some disciples might mistakenly charge us with being extravagant with our love and with our devotion, not understanding that the Master by and by will say again, "Let her alone, she hath done what she could." Our Lord's estimate of this spikenard and anointing is that it is all that we can do—nothing could be more or better. It indicates love, great love—and "love is the fulfilling of the law."

"Let us consider one another," said the Apostle—consider one another's weaknesses, consider one another's trials, consider one another's temptations, consider one another's efforts to war a good warfare against the world, the flesh and the Adversary—consider one another's troubles in the narrow way against opposition from within and without, and as we do so it will bring to our hearts sympathy, a sympathy which will take pleasure in pouring out the spikenard perfume, very costly, purest and best, upon all who are fellow-members of the one body.

Some one has spoken of the great "Society of Encouragers" who do so much to help encourage and uplift the footsore and weary in the pathway of life. It is not a great society so far as members are concerned, but it is a great society from the Lord's standpoint and from the standpoint of all who have been helped and encouraged by it. Spikenard Mary might have been said to have been a prominent member in this society of encouragers. We may well imagine that as our dear Redeemer was thinking of the severe trials, including the cross, of the week already begun, Mary's manifestation of love and devotion would come to him as a special encouragement and refreshment of spirit. So few seemed to understand him! even his disciples did not appreciate the situation. Here was one who at least loved him, had confidence in him. No doubt it gave him courage for the remaining days of his journey.

The Truth Tersely Stated.

Respecting the propriety of using present opportunities for the comfort and encouragement one of another, a writer has pointedly said:

"Don't keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up till your friends are dead. Fill their lives with gladness. Speak approving, cheering words while they can hear them … If my friends have alabaster boxes full of the fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them. … I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. … Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."

Mrs. Preston's poem, "Ante Mortem," expresses the same thought thus—

"Had I but heard
One breath of applause, one cheering word
One cry of 'Courage!' amid the strife,
So weighted for me with death or life
How would it have nerved my soul to strain
Thro' the whirl of the coming surge again."

Sacrifice of Sweet Odor.

The Apostle, speaking of the ministries of the Church one for another, says that ours is a sacrifice of sweet odor unto God, but again he adds that the Gospel referred to is of life unto life to some and of death unto death to others. That is to say, good deeds, kind words and efforts will be appreciated by those who are in the right attitude of heart to appreciate them, while on the contrary the same good deeds will arouse offence and constitute a bad odor to those who are in a wrong condition of heart. How often have we seen it so, that with our best endeavors to serve the feet of Christ some have been comforted and refreshed, others have been angered —to one the effort was a sweet odor, to the others it was an offensive odor, because of their wrong attitude of heart toward the Lord and toward the body of Christ—because, perhaps, of their ambitions or whatnot that were interfered with.

It was just so at Bethany: the sweet odors that filled the house, and the blessing and refreshment that came to Mary in connection with the ministration, had a very different effect upon Judas. He was angry; his selfishness hindered his appreciation of the honor done to the Lord; he could think only of himself and what he had hoped to get out of the transaction, and how, so far as he was concerned, the whole matter was a waste. The sourness that came to his heart because of its wrong attitude is indicated by the testimony that he straightway went to the chief priests to bargain with them for the betrayal of Jesus. Let us, then, dear brethren, see to it that our hearts are in a loving attitude toward the Lord and not in a selfish attitude—that we appreciate everything done in his name and for his body, and that we be not self-seeking. Otherwise the result will be with us the savor of death unto death, as it was with Judas.

This concludes our lesson. It was the next day probably that the Jews began to gather in considerable numbers to see Jesus and Lazarus, and to take counsel respecting the putting of them to death—"for the good of the cause." And, by the way, let us remember that the "good of the cause" has nearly always been the basis for every mean and despicable act against the Truth from first to last. Let us beware of such a sectarian spirit; let us see to it that our love for the Lord and all of his brethren is sincere, and not a personal and selfish one for ourselves or some denomination, otherwise we know not into what evils we might be led.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 9	Bethany-Jerusalem	Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem	21:1-11,14-17	11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
Nisan 10	Bethany-Jerusalem	Barren fig tree cursed; second temple cleansing	21:18,19,12,13	11:12-17	19:45,46	
	Jerusalem	Chief priests and scribes scheme to destroy Jesus		11:18,19	19:47,48	

Matthew 21:1-19

And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. ... And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there. Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever. And presently the fig tree withered away. [vs. 12,13] And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Mark 11:1-19

And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him. And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed them in the way. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest. And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and

into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve. And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard it. And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine. And when even was come, he went out of the city.

Luke 19:29-48

And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, 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. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

John 12:12-19

On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him. The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

OUR LORD'S TYPICAL TRIUMPH.—*Reprints*, p. 1794
MATTHEW 21:1-17; LUKE 19:29-48; JOHN 12:12-19; MARK 11:1-11.
"Hosanna: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

THE LESSONS of this quarter carry our minds step by step through the painful scenes attending the last days of our Lord's life in the flesh, ending with his crucifixion, and then introduce us to the risen Lord, mighty to save, having the keys of death and the grave. In the course of the last quarter we saw his rising popularity with the masses of the people, attracted by his miracles and astonished and fascinated by his teachings; and, with them, we have marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, and have hung upon his words, and our hearts have burned within us while the spirit of God has applied to us also the balm of his counsel. And now as we mentally proceed with him through the last few days of his human life, let its solemn scenes bring our hearts into yet closer fellowship and sympathy with that wealth of love and tenderness which so freely sacrificed all things for our sakes.

Three and a half years of public teaching and works which testified to the truth of his claims as the Messiah, ending with the raising of Lazarus from the dead, culminated in a seeming triumph which raised high the hopes of his disciples and of many in Israel that now their king, their Messiah, had indeed come and that the glory of Israel foretold by the prophets was soon to be realized. In this state of the public mind the Lord saw his opportunity to fulfill the prophecy of Zech. 9:9, by publicly essaying to assume the kingly office. And not only were the circumstances thus propitious, as foretold, but the time had come.

According to God's covenant with their fathers (Acts 3:25,26), the gospel of the Kingdom was to be to the Jew first. Yet God knew beforehand that, as a nation, they would neither appreciate nor accept it, and by his Prophet foretold that only a remnant of the nation would prove worthy of the covenant favor, and that the rest would be blinded (as they were by their prejudices and hardness of heart), while the great covenant blessing would be accepted and realized by some from among the Gentiles, who should be accounted the seed of Abraham to whom pertain the promises,—children not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, having the faith of Abraham; for, as Jesus said, God was able of the very stones to raise up children unto Abraham.—See Rom. 9:27; Isa. 10:22,23; Rom. 11:7, 11,12; Acts 13:46; Gal. 3:9,16, 28,29; Matt. 3:8,9.

It was on account of this covenant of God with their fathers that Jesus, instructed by these and other prophecies, offered himself thus to fleshly Israel as their King, although he knew that, while the masses would give him a royal welcome and hail him with hosannas, their unstable and fickle minds, swayed by their false teachers and unwilling to act upon their convictions in the face of opposition, would, only a few days later, cry, Crucify him! crucify him!—John 12:1,12,13; 19:6,7,14, 15.

Why then, is it asked, did Jesus go through this form of assuming kingly authority when he knew how it would result? We answer that, according to the teachings of the Apostle, this action was performed as a part of that great system of types which foreshadowed good things to come.

This triumphal entry into Jerusalem, together with its chronological order, prefigured the coming of Christ as king, in the end of this Gospel age, which is the antitype of the Jewish age, the two being exact parallels in both time and circumstances.† According to this remarkable parallelism we find the year 1878 A.D. to be the point of time in this age when the king, our risen Lord, was due actually to take his great power and begin his reign.

That such is the accomplished fact we have no hesitancy in stating. We have ample proof from the sure word of prophecy‡ that the time is at hand for the setting up of the Kingdom of God in the earth under the dominion of his

† See *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 2, chap. 7.

‡ See *Studies in the Scriptures*, volumes 2 and 3.

Anointed—the Church. Around this fact cluster truths of deepest moment, not only to Christians, but to the whole world, if they were only wise enough to hear and heed.

Many are blinded to the fact of the Lord's presence, so clearly indicated in the Scriptures, by their misapprehension of the manner of his coming. Expecting to see him in the flesh, and his coming to be announced by the blast of a literal trumpet and visible to the natural eye in the literal clouds, they are unable to see, to recognize, him as having come and as now present, not in the flesh, but a spirit-being, invisible to the natural eye, yet clearly attested to the eye of faith by the sure word of prophecy, and to discern his presence and power in the midst of the clouds of trouble now so rapidly casting their dark shadows over the whole world. Nevertheless, these are facts, and of most solemn import, especially to all that name the name of Christ. You that are faithful they bid to "look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28); while you, professed Christians who have grown lukewarm and indifferent, and you that are of the world seeking to satisfy your soul's cravings with the husks of worldly pleasure, all unmindful too of the cries of the oppressed and the woes of the suffering, you they bid beware of "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation"—a trouble even now imminent.—Dan. 12:1.

The authoritative course of the Lord upon this occasion, in overthrowing the tables of the money-changers in the temple (Matt. 21:12,13), saying, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves," as a typical act, indicates what is elsewhere also stated, that in the end of this age judgment begins with the professed house of God (1 Pet. 4:17), and his great displeasure against those who make merchandise of the truth.

Then followed the healing of the lame and the blind who came to him in the temple (Matt. 21:14), showing how the spiritually lame and blind in the church here may also be blessed by his healing touch.—Rev. 3:18,19.

And when the chief priests (Matt. 21:15,16; Luke 19:40) expressed their displeasure against those who glorified the new king (as the chief priests—the clergy—do today against those whose blindness and lameness the Lord has healed), Jesus said, "I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Why? Because the Prophet Zechariah (9:9) had foretold the shouting and rejoicing, and now the time had come and the prophecy was sure to be fulfilled—"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee," etc. So it was in the type then; and so it is in the antitype now. As truly and as necessarily as there was shouting and rejoicing there, so there is and must be now. Great is the joy now among the saints as they recognize the King; and their proclamation of his presence and Kingdom is the "shout," heard, if not believed. "Yea," said the Master, "have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" Even so is it now also in this antitype of that day; for it is not from the chief priests, the clergy, of today that the hosannas rise in recognition of the King's presence and power here, but out of the mouths of the common people—"of babes and sucklings" are heard the notes of praise and jubilee—"Hosanna to the Son of David" who has come to reign, and who is even now setting up his Kingdom.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 10	Jerusalem	Discussion with Greeks; unbelief of Jews				12:20-50

John 12:20-50

And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor. Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spake of him. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

CHRIST THE MAGNET—"I WILL DRAW ALL MEN."—*Reprints*, p. 2757

JOHN 12:20-33.

"We would see Jesus."

OUR LORD continued his teachings in the Temple daily after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the ass,—going to Bethany at night, and returning to the Temple each morning during the few days that intervened prior to his arrest and crucifixion. It was at this time that certain Greeks sought an interview with Jesus, and made known their desires through Andrew and Philip, who were probably the only two of the disciples who spoke the Greek language, they coming from a city (Bethsaida) in which the Greek language was considerably used, and their names are of Greek origin. It was most natural, therefore, that these two should be the mouthpieces of the visitors, to communicate their wishes to our Lord. The reason for the request doubtless was that our Lord at this time was in a part of the Temple inaccessible to any except Jews by birth, and these Greeks were Jewish proselytes, hence were not permitted to approach nearer the holy places than the Court of the Gentiles. Their request therefore meant that Jesus should come out to where they were for an interview.

What may have been the object of their visit we are not told; nor do we presume that our Lord's words recorded in the succeeding verses of our lesson were addressed to the Greeks, but rather that a break in the narrative occurs. Our Lord doubtless responded to their request for an interview, but the substance of their converse has not been considered necessary for the Church, and hence has not been recorded. It may not be amiss, however, to mention that Eusebius, a church historian of early days, relates that an embassy was sent to Jesus by the king of Edessa, Syria, inviting him to take up his abode with him, and promising him a royal welcome. It would not be surprising if there were truth in this statement, but we know well that our Lord would refuse any such overtures, for he himself had plainly declared to the disciples when he sent them forth, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

God had blessings in store for all the families of the earth; but not yet, and not in this way. All things must be done in a divine order and according to the divine plan, which provided for the selection of the Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16,29) before the general blessings could come upon the world; and the offer of membership in this Seed of Abraham must, according to divine arrangement, be to the Jew first.

It was probably after the interview with the Greeks had ended, and while the hearts of the apostles were beating fast with anticipation that finally the world was waking up to recognize their Master in his true light, and would shortly exalt him to the high position foretold for the Messiah, and while their hopes on their own behalf were also running high that they should be joint-heirs with him in the Kingdom, that Jesus uttered the words constituting the remainder of the lesson. It was a good opportunity for him to show them how his sufferings of the immediate future were the foundation upon which all the future glory must rest. He well knew what bitter disappointments and heartaches would come to his faithful few when they would realize the literalness of what he had already told them respecting his death. He would give them some suggestions which would be helpful to them subsequently, and enable them to look through the sufferings to the glories in reservation, unseeable except with the eye of faith.

It was, we believe, with this thought in mind that our Lord declared, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." The disciples at first would take this as intimating his earthly exaltation; but he speedily drew their attention to the fact that while the beginning of his glorification was near, it must be preceded by the suffering of death. His glorification began in his resurrection from the dead, when he was raised in incorruption, in power, a glorious spiritual body—"a quickening spirit," as the Apostle explains. (1 Cor. 15:42-45.) This glorification was enhanced when he was received up into glory in the Father's presence, there to appear on our behalf, and at the right hand of divine power to wait for the appointed time when he should take unto himself his great power and reign as King over all the earth, which he had redeemed with his own precious blood.

"The Hour Is Come!"

The expression, "The hour is come," is not necessarily to be understood as signifying sixty minutes; just as the word "day" does not always signify twenty-four hours, but a comparatively short period or epoch, as, for instance, "Noah's day," "Moses' day," "Jesus' day," etc. As compared with "Jesus' day" the experiences referred to were properly enough said to be occurring in that "hour," or short time.

Having thus assured them that the beginning of his glorification was not far distant, our Lord makes very impressive the necessity of his death, by saying, "Verily, verily,"—that is, Truly, truly, most positively, emphatically, I give you the illustration that my glorification, according to the divine arrangement, must come through my death, even as a grain of wheat would remain but one grain unless it were planted, and through the dying of one grain life and being were given to a number. Had our Lord chosen to do so, he at one time had the privilege of remaining alone,—of not dying on our behalf. Had he followed this course we would still have been unredeemed and he could have brought forth no fruitage. But he had consecrated his life; he had voluntarily engaged to sacrifice himself on behalf of Adam and his race, in compliance with the Father's will, and hence he declares that if **now** he would love his life he would lose it; that on the contrary, instead of seeking to save himself he must indeed hate or **despise** the present life in comparison with the future and eternal one which the Father had promised him as a reward for obedience unto death.

It will be noticed that in this understanding of it, this 25th verse is applicable to our Lord alone, and not to his followers, for they had no life to lose; they and the whole world were dead, under condemnation of death, because of father Adam's transgression. Our Lord alone had life, which he had a right to lay down or exchange in order to keep it unto eternal life. Such privileges could not come to his followers until first Jesus had given his life "a **ransom** for all." Then as soon as the ransom was given and had been accepted of the Father, the redeemed ones (believers justified by their faith) could be reckoned as having life-rights which they would be privileged to consecrate upon the Lord's altar, and to exchange for the heavenly life, following in the footsteps of Jesus.

And in full accord with this interpretation is the next verse, which distinctly speaks of Jesus' followers, saying that all who desire to serve him, and to be with him, must follow him—follow him in this experience, which he, as the Forerunner in this way, was already passing through; viz., the consecration and then the despising of his earthly existence, as compared with the spirit life and heavenly glory promised.

It is to their great disadvantage that Christian people so generally fail to discern that there are to be several different classes of saved ones—the overcomers, the great company and the restitution class. The benevolently disposed of those seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, in earthly self-denials and sacrifices, and in despising the present life in comparison with the future one promised, are robbed of much of their joy and peace and consolation by the thought that only such footstep-followers can ever be with the Lord and honored by the Father; for they realize that such servants constitute a "little flock" indeed. The effect of their ignorance of the divine plan is, with many, a hardening of heart in an attempt to be more like what they understand God to be, as expressed in what they believe to be his plan of eternal torment for all except the little flock. Others, on the other hand, cultivating their benevolence, refuse to believe that the way to this association with Jesus and the divine glorification is so narrow—they widen it more and more to take in their friends, their families, their neighbors, and as many as possible of the heathen; and thus, unconsciously perhaps, gradually but surely they lower the standard of true discipleship, not only for others but also for themselves: they become more and more satisfied with outward forms and ceremonies and platitudes and moralities, and come more and more to consider that their former views were incorrect—when they supposed, in harmony with our Lord's words, that all who would be with him and be honored of the Father, must take up his cross and follow in his footsteps.

The light of this harvest-time now shining upon the divine Word and plan makes clear to us, not only the height of the calling of the "elect" Church to joint-heirship with her Lord in his glory, but also the reality of the fact that all who would share that glory in the future, must suffer with him in the present life—must be crucified to sin and to self and to the world; must rise to newness of life in Christ Jesus reckonedly now, actually, if faithful, in the first resurrection. But this harvest light makes clear to us also that the class now called, now intended of the Father to be joint-sacrificers with his son and joint-heirs with him of his glory, is altogether but a small fraction of the human family, and that the others who receive not this high calling are to be otherwise blessed in due time under the Millennial Kingdom, by the glorified Jesus and his glorified Church and Bride.

Those who have this light and appreciate it are saved from the discouragements common to others. They can see the reasonableness of making the way to so high a station as that to which they are called a very narrow one, which will admit at its opening only those who are justified through faith in Christ and who are desirous of pleasing and serving God, and which, at its furthest end, will admit to glory only those who have passed faithfully through the experiences of this time, and are found in heart and character copies of God's dear Son.—Rom. 8:29.

"Now is my soul troubled"—my feelings are turbulent; I am in a commotion. Shall I pray, Father deliver me from this hour? Shall I not, on the contrary, remember that for this very cause I am come to this hour, that I might endure, and that willingly, rather than ask to be delivered? I might ask the Father for a certain kind of deliverance which would not invalidate the engagement which I made, that I would give my life in obedience to his will. I might ask him to permit some calamity to befall me which would result in my death and thus save me from the peculiarly trying and ignominious conditions incident to my apprehension and execution as a criminal—as the worst kind of a criminal, a blasphemer against my Heavenly Father. Such a deviation would seem to me not an unreasonable concession for one who has shown his faithfulness to the Father's will in all things. And yet I will not ask even this concession. Rather, I will submit my will to the Father's will most absolutely, and carry out to the very jot and tittle the spirit as well as the letter of my covenant. Let the Father's will be done in every particular; it must be the wisest and best, else it would not be his plan. It is for this very purpose that I came to this hour, that I might manifest, demonstrate, to the Father my devotion, my most implicit obedience to his will. Proceed, Father! Glorify thine own name and in thine own way, at whatever the cost to me!

Then a voice was heard, a voice which some understood and which others misunderstood, as is always the case with the voice of God. The world heareth no message; believers hear the message partially; but the begotten sons, in perfect accord with the Father, hear and understand fully. No doubt our Lord received a blessing through this message from the Father, and yet he assures us that it was not specially sent for him, but rather as a demonstration for the benefit of the disciples—that they might note that God attested his teachings. God does not today speak to his people by such an audible voice; but he speaks none the less forcibly to us—through his Word and through his providences. Yet now, as then, some hear and appreciate more than others. Some, who have the word of God in their hands appreciate it only as another book, and likewise discern not God's providences in the affairs of his people. Others see in the Lord's Word a message, a good message, and reverence the book and see in his providences something of the divine care and provision in connection with the body of Christ. But only the spirit-begotten sons, the members of the body of Christ, today, like the Head eighteen hundred years ago, hear the Father's Word, with distinctness and clearness and understanding. These also note divine providences, and are enabled to rejoice in them, and to realize that all things are working together for good to them because they love God, and have been called according to his purpose, and are in the way of responding to that call, seeking to make their calling and their election sure.

The Prince of This World.

When our Lord said, "**Now** is the judgment of this world,—**now** shall the prince of this world be cast out," he evidently meant by **now** the same as in his previous expression, **"The hour is come."** But a little space of time **now** intervened until this would be accomplished. The judgment of this world, so to speak, was in the balance and would speedily be decided. The first trial took place in Eden, father Adam being the one who was on trial, and the world of mankind, still in his loins, was in a certain sense on trial, in the balance, with him. That trial, as we know, resulted in disaster to Adam and all his posterity. "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 [through inherited weaknesses] are sinners." (Rom. 5:12.) That judgment (trial and sentence) of the world was unto death; and Adamic death had reigned up to the time that our Lord spoke, for 4161 years. But now under divine providence, under the grace of God, a substitute or **ransom** had been found, acceptable to God, and willing to give his life a ransom for Adam and his race. This one was now on trial, and the fate of the whole world was in the balance and depended upon his victory. Hence, as our Lord expressed it, **now** the world's *krisis*, or trial, was at its climax, and his decision to be faithful to the Father's will, and to despise the present life in obedience to that will, determined that trial favorably to the world; for the Apostle declares that as the world's condemnation was unto death through Adam, so the world's justification is unto life through Christ—that so far as the divine law was concerned Jesus paid the full penalty for the whole world, and hence will have both the right and the opportunity, not only to rescue mankind from the tomb by an awakening, but also to rescue fully and completely so many as will accept the favor, by raising them up fully out of sin and death to perfection and harmony with God during and at the close of the Millennial age.—Rom. 5:18,19.

Our Lord's other statement is quite in accord with this: "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." That is to say, the trial now in progress in my own person will result not only in a reversal and cancellation of the divine sentence of mankind unto death, but it will also result in the overthrow of the present rule of evil in the hands of Satan, the prince of this world. He shall be cast out; he shall be chained for the period of my Millennial reign, and shall subsequently be destroyed. Since the whole matter of the world's judgment and the removal of its present captor through sin was dependent upon our Lord's victory, it was quite proper that he should date all those results from that "hour," notwithstanding the fact that it would be centuries before these things would be accomplished;—the binding of Satan, the release of mankind from the Adamic sentence through the instrumentalities of the Millennial Kingdom (Christ and the glorified Church), into the glorious liberty (from these things) which belongs to all sons of God, —whatever their plane of being. Not that we are to suppose that all men will avail themselves of these heavenly mercies and privileges, but that all are to have a full opportunity to do so; so that whosoever will die the Second Death will die for his own sins and not through inherited imperfections—not because the fathers ate the sour grape of sin.—Jer. 31:29,30; 1 John 5:16.

When Christ Will Draw All Men.

The statement of the next verse is in absolute accord with this: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto [toward] me." While, as the narrator records, these words signified by what manner of death Jesus should die—lifted up on the cross—nevertheless, they meant more than this. They meant, also, If I shall faithfully give my life according to my covenant, and shall receive of the Heavenly Father the high exaltation or lifting up which he has promised, that exaltation will bring with it the power to bless all the families of the earth; first, according to the Father's will and prearrangement, he himself will draw unto me a Church or Bride; I will not draw these, but the Father: "No man can come unto me [in the present time, in the narrow way] except the Father which sent me draw him, and I will **raise him up** [exalt him] at the last day"—the Millennial day, "early in the morning" of that day.—John 6:44; Psa. 46:5.

And when these shall have been thus exalted as members of my body, raised up as sharers

with me in the first resurrection, then I will begin **my** drawing work, which will not be confined to a special class, a Royal Priesthood, like the Father's drawing. Mine will be a general drawing: I will draw all men; it will be a universal opportunity to come unto me and receive from me, as the Father's representative, full remission of sins that are past, and such instructions in righteousness, such chastisements, such experiences, such judgments, as will tend to lift them up, up, up, to the glorious condition of human perfection from which all fell through Adam's transgression, and the right to restore to which I gained for them by not counting my earthly life precious unto me, but instead by despising it, that I might redeem men and gain this high heavenly condition in which, according to the divine arrangement, I and my servants who will be with me, and whom the Father will honor also, and whom I will call my Bride and brethren, and joint-heirs, shall bless all the families of the earth.—Rev. 22:17; Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:16,29.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 11	Bethany-Jerusalem	Barren fig tree found withered	21:19-22	11:20-25		
	Jerusalem, temple	Christ's authority questioned; illustration of two sons	21:23-32	11:27-33	20:1-8	
	Jerusalem, temple	Illustrations of wicked husbandman, marriage feast	21:33–22:14	12:1-12	20:9-19	

Matthew 21:19-46

And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever. And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things. But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him. Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted

a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

Matthew 22:1-14

And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son. And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

Mark 11:20-25,27-33

And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. … And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I

do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed. And they answered and said unto Jesus. We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

Mark 12:1-12

And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the wine vat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some. Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. And have ye not read this Scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

Luke 20:1-19

And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders, And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority? And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was. And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things. Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty. And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out. Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid. And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

MISIMPROVED OPPORTUNITIES TAKEN AWAY—*Reprints*, p. 4678

MATTHEW 21:23-46.

"Therefore say I unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you."

IN this Study the Great Teacher in two parables portrays the mistake made by the religionists of his day. The understanding of these parables gives a clearer insight into the cause which led to the rejection of Israel for a time from Divine favor. Incidentally, too, we are to remember that nominal fleshly Israel was a prototype of nominal Christendom. Hence we may look for somewhat similar conditions and dealings now in the "harvest" time of this Christian Age.

To get the force of the Lord's teachings here and everywhere it is necessary to remember that the Jewish people had been promised the Kingdom of God, of which David's Kingdom was a type on a small scale. For centuries they had been expecting a great King, Messiah, whose coming would exalt them and bring them into prominence as God's Kingdom. John the Baptist, when he came to introduce Messiah, told the Jews that unless they would repent and come back, to the extent of their ability, into harmony with God and the Law they need not expect to share in the Messianic Kingdom. Jesus told the people that unless their righteousness should exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, they should in no wise enter into or become members of the long-waited-for Kingdom. (Matthew 5:20.) The two parables of this Study illustrate what stood in the way of the majority.

Work Today In My Vineyard

The Jewish people professed to be God's people, willing to do him service. They were treated, not as mere slaves, but, rather, like sons. All were told to go and work in God's vineyard; but they divided into two classes, represented by the two sons, in our first parable. One of these sons represented the outwardly religious, pious, who said, Yes, we will serve God. However, they did not really seek the Divine service, but rather the service of their sects and parties and their own personal aims, honor, influence and preferment. The other class of Israelites, represented by the other son of the parable, made no pretense of serving God, and were branded as publicans, sinners, harlots. Nevertheless, when Jesus appeared, when John's message went forth, and afterwards the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles, these same publicans, sinners, harlots, were the ones ready to receive him, while the religious, finding that his message was in conflict with their teachings, repudiated him. Thus one of the charges against Jesus was, "He receiveth publicans and sinners and eateth with them."

"Friend of Sinners was his Name"

The second parable represents God as the owner of a great Vineyard, in all respects well appointed and furnished for his purpose. This Vineyard represents the Jewish nation and the Divine promises made to that people—the Law and all the arrangements of the Law Covenant, for their development. This Vineyard the owner let out to husbandmen, whose duty it was to care for the vines and the fruitage and to render to the owner the results, except a portion which they might keep for themselves. These husbandmen were the prominent religionists, of whom Jesus said, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do." (Matt. 23:2,3.) The owner properly required returns on his property and sent servants to receive his share of the fruitage. But the husbandmen, instead of giving them what was due their Master, abused them by beating, killing and stoning them.

These servants were the prophets of old, sent to Israel. They should have received the kindest treatment and an abundance of fruits of meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., but, instead, they were treated as intruders by the leaders of Israel. Some of them were stoned, some beaten, some murdered, some sawn asunder. Some wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins and dwelt in dens and caves of the earth, because not appreciated. They were not treated as representatives of the owner of the vineyard. Finally the owner sent his Son, saying, "They will reverence my Son." But these same husbandmen, the religionists of our Lord's day,

took counsel to kill him and to seize his inheritance. They somehow got the impression that they could lord it over God's heritage and that anybody reproving them or showing up their hypocrisies or liberating the people from subservience to them, whoever he might be—even the heir—they were at liberty to kill. They crucified him.

What may we presume the owner of that Vineyard would do to those wicked husbandmen who, forgetting the ownership of the vineyard, were using it as their own, mistreating his servants and crucifying his Son? The Great Teacher put the question to his hearers, and the answer promptly came that the owner would destroy those wicked men and let out his Vineyard to others who would render him its fruitage.

This is just what happened. The scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law who were using God's promises and blessings and their opportunities selfishly and in disregard of the Almighty—these were dispossessed. Their government was destroyed and Divine favor and privileges as God's mouthpieces, which they once enjoyed, were taken from them and given to others—to the Apostles and their associates, during this Gospel Age.

However, as fleshly Israel was a type or picture of nominal Spiritual Israel, we may not have to look far to find a very similar condition of things today. Today also we see some high in official position as representatives of God and his Word using their positions to entrench themselves, to hold power over the people, to carry out their own schemes. These are inclined to speak harshly, yea, to "murder" any who come amongst them meekly, humbly, in the name of the Lord. They do not literally kill them nor "shoot them full of arrows," but they do behead them in the sense of ostracism. And they do shoot out at them the arrows of bitter words, slanders, etc.

What will the Husbandman do with such servants? The answer is again that the opportunities which they have enjoyed will be taken away from them. Thank God that the next step in the program will be that the King's Son and all of the misused servants associated with him will constitute the new "Kingdom of God's dear Son" "under the whole heavens." Matters will be no longer entrusted to any but the tried, proven, faithful.

Jesus, the rejected, "is become the chief corner-stone" of the great Temple of God, which is the Church. As the privilege of being God's embryotic Kingdom was taken from the Jews and given to Christ and the Church, so presently his embryotic Kingdom will be taken from earth entirely—his faithful will be received to the heavenly plane and power and great glory.

Whoever stumbled over Jesus suffered loss in the sense of being broken, but not beyond possibility of repair. "But upon whomsoever this stone (Messiah) shall fall, it will grind him to powder" in the Second Death.—Matt. 21:44.

THE WEDDING FEAST—*Reprints*, p. 5510

MATTHEW 22:1-14.

> "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not!"—Luke 13:34.

HERE WE have another parable of the Kingdom. Today's lesson shows that the promises of God and His providences toward Israel under the Law Covenant were all designed to fit and prepare the Israelites to be God's holy nation, and especially to provide at the coming of Christ a sufficient number to constitute the elect Church, Messiah's joint-heirs in the Kingdom—His Bride. The parable shows that only a few were "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile—not enough to constitute the Kingdom class; hence the call of this Gospel Age, selecting from the Gentiles a sufficient number of saintly characters to be joint-heirs with the Jewish remnant in the Messianic Kingdom.

The Kingdom of Heaven, otherwise styled the Kingdom of God, is not to be an earthly Kingdom, but a Heavenly one, whose Ruler, the glo-

rified Christ, will not be an earthly king, but a Heavenly Being of the highest rank—of the Divine nature. This Kingdom, representing God and the Heavenly rule, or dominion, is to be established amongst men for the eradication of sin. Its first work will be the binding of Satan, the "Prince of this world." Afterward all the works of darkness will be overthrown. The overthrow will at first cause a great Time of Trouble, following which, as the Reign of Righteousness progresses, the curse in its every form will give way before the blessings of Messiah's Kingdom—until there shall be no more curse, no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying.

But before this Heavenly Kingdom can be established, it is a part of the Divine decree and arrangement that there shall be a Bride class selected from amongst men. These are begotten of the Holy Spirit and are God's workmanship, in whom He works by the exceeding great and precious promises of the Scriptures and by the providences of life. Thus they are being transformed in mind and made ready for the glorious birth-resurrection by which they will be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," from earthly nature to Heavenly nature. Thus they will enter into the joys of their Lord by becoming His Bride class, His joint-heirs in His Kingdom.

Application of The Parable

For the development of this Kingdom class the world has now been waiting since the days of Jesus, when by His death He opened up a new Way of Life and became the Advocate before the Father for all those desirous of being His disciples, His joint-heirs, His Bride.

Today's lesson takes up the Kingdom project at the time of our Lord's earthly ministry. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power [liberty or privilege] to become sons of God."—John 1:12.

Jehovah Himself is the King who made a marriage for His Son—arranging before the foundation of the world that there should be certain joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom. This marriage, of course, could not take place until the King's Son had come into the world and had made the way for His followers and for the Kingdom of which He is to be King.

At the appropriate time God sent His servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; but they would not come. John the Baptist and his disciples did this work of calling to the attention of the Jewish people the fact that the King's Son was in their midst. He said, "There standeth One among you whom ye know not." (John 1:26.) Again he said, "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom, who standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled." (John 3:29.) John rejoiced to hear the voice of the Bridegroom. Prophetically he foretold that the calling of the Bride class had come, although he himself could not be a member of it.

Made Light of The Message

Again other servants were sent forth. Jesus sent His disciples to the Jews, saying, "Tell them that are bidden, Behold, I have prepared My dinner; My oxen and My fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage" feast.

But was the Message of Jesus and His disciples received? Nay! The people, under the guidance of the Scribes and the Pharisees, the theologians of that time, made light of the Message and went their way—one to his farm, another to his merchandise, saying, We do not believe this Message respecting the Kingdom. Some did even worse than this. They entreated these servants shamefully, spitefully, and slew them. Not only was Jesus slain by the unbelieving ones who had been invited to the feast, but His faithful disciples also were evilly treated and slain.

Then, as seen in another parable, Jehovah was wroth with that people Israel, and sent forth His armies, destroyed those murderers and burned up their city. The fact that it was the Roman army under Titus which destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70 did not make it any less the army of Jehovah, for He is able to make the wrath of man praise Him and able to use whom He may please as His messengers, or servants.

Gentiles Called To The Wedding

Meantime God said to His servants, the Apostles, and to others through them, The wedding is provided, but the Jewish nation, which was especially invited, have not been found worthy of the honor. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage feast. So those servants went into the highways and gathered together as many as they found, and brought them in. Thus the wedding was provided with guests.

Highways represent public concourse, the world over. The Lord's ambassadors were no longer to restrict themselves to Jews, but were to make known to every people, kindred and tongue, the fact that God is now calling out of the world a little company, lovers of righteousness, to be followers of the Lamb and eventually to become joint-heirs with the Redeemer in His Kingdom. Be it noted that these ambassadors were not to intercept all the people in the highways, but merely to urge upon all those whom they met in the concourse, the great privilege of the open door to the Wedding Feast.

These were not all saintly, good; some of them, on the contrary, were bad. The Apostles explain this, saying that not many great, not many rich, not many noble, but chiefly the poor, the mean things of this world, hath God chosen. The Apostles speak, along the lines of our lesson, of the class that God is selecting from the world. No matter how mean, no matter how degraded, no matter how ignoble by nature—all who are willing to receive the grace of God may be made suitable for the wedding by the covering of the wedding garment, the Righteousness of Christ.

Indeed, however noble or worthy many are naturally, they are still not fit for the presence of the King. All who attend this wedding must have on the wedding garment—must be covered with the merit of Christ's Righteousness. The wedding is thus furnished with guests—all that the King had intended —every place filled. Thus and otherwise does the Lord indicate that the number of the Elect is a definitely fixed one; and that as soon as the special number has been found, the call will cease.

Inspecting The Guests

The custom of the Jews, arranged by Divine providence doubtless, was that at every wedding feast each guest was to put on a white wedding garment, covering his own garments. Thus all at the wedding were on an equal footing as respects dignity, because they were the guests of the host. So all who come to God's great Feast provided through Christ must come, not through any worthiness of their own in the flesh, but acknowledging that they have an insufficiency of merit to be acceptable to God, and must accept the merit of Christ as making them worthy of the honor to which they aspire in responding to this invitation.

Each guest entering the house was supplied with the robe, and was expected to put it on immediately. For any one to appear without that wedding garment would be a mark of disrespect to the host who had provided it. Indeed, for any one to appear at the wedding without the robe would imply that he had taken it off; for no one was admitted without the robe. This is the picture given us in the parable. A guest was found there who had not on the wedding garment—one, therefore, who in disregard of his host had removed his wedding garment, the wearing of which was the condition of his admission.

The words, "When the king came in," signify an inspection just prior to the feast. Since the King of the parable is Jehovah Himself, this would seem to mean that God takes note through the exhibition of Divine Justice in some manner of any one professing loyalty, yet disregarding the merit of Christ's death. Or, Christ might properly be understood to be referred to as the King in this instance; for at His coming He is to be invested with Kingly authority and power by the Heavenly Father, as our Lord Himself indicates in the parables of the Pounds and the Talents. At His Second Advent, therefore, He tells us, He will Himself inspect all those who pose as being His faithful servants—all those who are desirous of enjoying the Wedding Festival.

The man found without a wedding garment in the presence of the king we should understand to represent a class, and not merely one individual. So we might find just such a class

today, professing to be followers of Christ, professing to be waiting for the marriage of the Lamb, professing to hope to enter into the joys of their Lord, yet telling us that they are no longer trusting in the merit of Christ's Sacrifice for their standing with the Father. These have rejected Jesus as their Savior, their Redeemer, the Atoner for their sins. They merely retain Him as their Teacher, and then, apparently, accept only a part of His teachings.

These are manifestly unfit to be members of the Bride of Christ. Only the loyal, only the faithful, are to be of that class. The parable shows that all those who reject the merit of Christ's Sacrifice will be rejected from the Kingdom class. They are unable to say how they came in without a "wedding garment"; for they did not come in without it. No one was ever admitted into the fellowship of the Spirit in the Church which is the Bride of Christ without first having on the wedding garment of Christ's merit, covering his imperfection. Those admitting thus that they have taken off the wedding garment are cast out summarily. The king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The Outer Darkness

When our minds were filled with hallucinations of the Dark Ages, we read into this and into other Scriptures what they do not contain. We assumed that the class represented by the man without the wedding garment would be cast into eternal torment, and there suffer to all eternity. But now, examining the Scriptures more carefully, we have perceived that as all of these guests at the wedding came into the light of the wedding chamber from the darkness of the outside world, so the casting of one of them out of the light into the outer darkness would merely mean the taking from such a one the knowledge and the joys represented by the wedding-chamber light.

As for the outside world, we know that the Apostle John declares that the whole world lieth in darkness, "in the Wicked One." We know also that as soon as the Bride class shall have been completed, a great Time of Trouble will prepare the world for the blessings of Messiah's Kingdom later on. During that trouble all those who are in the darkness will have weeping and gnashing of teeth—discontent, anguish, disappointment, etc., connected with the overthrow of many of their wrongly based human hopes and expectations.

Our Lord concluded the parable with the statement, "For many are called, but few are chosen." This does not mean, as we once supposed, that only an Elect few will get any favor from God in the future, and that all the remainder of mankind will be eternally tortured. We must read it in harmony with the context. The Jewish nation was called, or invited, to the wedding—and failed, except the few "Israelites indeed." For eighteen hundred years the Message has gone out into the highways, to one nation after another of the Gentiles, until many have more or less heard the call of the Gospel Age. Yet only a few have accepted and have therefore come into the elect condition. And of those who come into this elect condition there will still be a class not properly appreciative which will be cast away, or rejected.

Again the Master drew attention to the matter, saying, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." The Little Flock, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, will through their faithfulness become God's chosen people, His elect Church, the Bride of Christ. Then, later on, they with their Lord will be the Heavenly Father's Agency for blessing all the non-elect with the glorious opportunities of Restitution to all the earthly blessings and good things lost through Father Adam's disobedience and fall. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs."

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 10	Jerusalem, temple	Catch questions on tax, resurrection, commandment	22:15-40	12:13-34	20:20-40	

Matthew 22:15-40

Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left him, and went their way. The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine. But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Mark 12:13-34

And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words. And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marveled at him. Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed. And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise. And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err,

because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven. And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err. And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

Luke 20:20-40

And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor. And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly: Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no? But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's. And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's and unto God the things which be God's. And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marveled at his answer, and held their peace. Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection: and they asked him, Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him. Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said. And after that they durst not ask him any question at all.

THREE TEMPTING QUESTIONS—*Reprints*, p. 4686
MATTHEW 22:15-22;34-46.
"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

THE Pharisees and Sadducees of our Lord's day were the leaders of religion. They had formed a trust or federation, so to speak, and rarely made an attack upon each other, although their doctrines were directly opposed. The Pharisees acknowledged God and the prophets and the Law, and believed in a future life by a resurrection from the dead, and believed in a coming Messiah to exalt their nation and through it to bless the world. The Sadducees believed nothing of the kind—they were agnostics, Higher Critics. They were making the best of the present life, doubting any future existence. The Pharisees opposed Jesus because he did not acknowledge them, but criticized them, and showed the hypocrisies of their claims to be perfect and holy in the keeping of the Law, and reproved them for their lack of sympathy with the poor and less pretentious.

The Sadducees opposed Jesus because, from their standpoint of unbelief, he was a fraud. But even as a fraud they would not have bothered themselves to oppose him, only that they perceived that he was gaining an influence with the people—an influence which they feared might, sooner or later, lead to some disturbance of the peace and unfavorably influence the conduct of the Roman Empire towards the Jews. So while the Sadducees and Pharisees both opposed Jesus, their opposition was for different reasons.

The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and the crying of the multitude, "Hosanna to the Son of David," the Messiah! awakened envy in the minds of the Pharisees. But in the Sadducees it produced a fear that the common people should become so aroused as to involve their nation in some strife with the Empire. The Pharisees strove to turn away the sympathy of the people from the Great Teacher, and, to this end, sought to catch him in his words by putting the question,

"Is It Lawful To Give Tribute?"

They reasoned that if Jesus would say, It is **not** lawful, they would have little difficulty in having him arrested as a leader of sedition and thus compel Pilate to put him to death. They reasoned further that if Jesus should answer that it **was** lawful to give tribute to Caesar he would thereby alienate the sympathy of the multitude, which cried "Hosanna!" after him; for the Jews held, almost superstitiously, the idea that they, as God's Kingdom, must not pay tithes to any earthly Kingdom—that it would be irreverent to do so, excepting under compulsion. We notice how artfully they endeavored to ensnare the Master by complimenting him upon his truthfulness, saying, "Master, we know that thou art true!" Not only so, but they sought to impress upon him their appreciation of him as a Teacher—that he would teach the light, the Truth, at any cost. And so they said, "Thou teachest the way of God in truth!" And further, they fortified their position by saying, "We know that thou regardest not the person of men!"

These treacherous compliments were intended to ensnare him, but he promptly answered, "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" Why do you veil your base designs under guise of speaking for the Truth? "Show me the tribute money." This was, literally, the census coin in which the tax was to be paid. They handed him a *denarius*, the usual wage for the day laborer, corresponding in value to about seventeen of our cents. Jesus asked, "Whose is this image and superscription?" They answered, "Caesar's." Jesus replied, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." No wonder the wily Pharisees were troubled to know how to catch him in his words! On the contrary, they were caught; for all of their complimentary remarks stood to his credit in the minds of the common people.

Whose Wife Shall She Be?

Next, the Sadducees, the agnostics, tried to entrap the Great Teacher by asking one of their stock questions. Seven different brothers in turn married the same woman and all died before she did. To which of them will she be wife in the resurrection? They did not ask, To which will she be wife in heaven or Purgatory or eternal torture, for neither Jesus nor the Jews held any such teaching. The Pharisees and Jesus taught the resurrection of the dead,

and it was against this teaching that the Sadducees aimed their sarcastic question.

Note the majesty of the Master's answer: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God!" You do not understand the Scripture teaching respecting such questions, and you are ignoring in your question the great Divine power which, at that resurrection time, will be exercised and will straighten out all the difficulties of the situation. Then the Great Teacher proceeded to inform them that such as would (gradually) attain to the resurrection, such as would get a complete raising up out of sin and death conditions, would "neither marry nor be given in marriage," but would be sexless, as are the angels. Thus the supposed great and unanswerable question of the Sadducees fell flat and their ignorance was exposed.

Which Is The Great Commandment?

Next, one of the Doctors of the Law endeavored to entrap the Lord on a question of the relative importance of the Divine commandments, asking which Jesus considered the great one of all. The Great Teacher promptly divided the ten commandments into two, according to the Law (Deut. 6:5), and answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." This is the first and great (chief) commandment. And the second is like unto it—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." What could the Lawyer say to such a summarization of the Law? He had nothing left to say. He was answered as never before.

Then Jesus Turned Questioner

The Great Teacher asked the Pharisees, "What think ye of the Messiah? Whose Son is he?" They answered, "The Son of David." The Teacher then queried, "How then doth David in spirit (prophetically) call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then calleth him Lord, how is he his Son?"

Of course the question was too deep for the Pharisees. The Great Teacher could answer all of their questions, but they could not answer his. How beautifully clear we see it to be that the Messiah, according to the flesh, was born of the lineage of David, but that God's purposes were not fully accomplished in Messiah of the flesh—that he lay down his flesh, sacrificially, and was raised from the dead to the plane of glory, honor and immortality, "far above angels, principalities and powers." We perceive that in the days of his flesh he was the Son of David, but that in his glorification he is David's Lord in that David will receive through him, in due time, not only resurrection from the dead, but also the blessings of participation in the Messianic Kingdom. The father of Messiah in the flesh will thus become the son of the Messiah of glory, whose earthly life is to be the restitution price for the whole world, including David. Thus it is written, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes (rulers) in all the earth."—Psa. 45:16.

An Illustration in an Earthly Prince

At a German function in Berlin the story goes that a Colonel met a young officer unknown to him whose only decoration was a large medallion set in brilliants. The Colonel inquired, "Lieutenant, what is that you have on?" The young man replied modestly, "An order, Colonel." The Colonel replied, "Not a Prussian Order; I know of none such." "An English Order, Colonel," said the young man. "And who in the world gave it to you?" asked the Colonel. The reply was, "My grandmother." The old Colonel began to think that the young man was making game of him and inquired, "And who may your grandmother be?" To his utter astonishment and dismay the answer was, "Queen Victoria, of England." Here was a Prince in disguise. And so Jesus was the great King of Glory in disguise. "He was in the world and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."—John 1:10.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 11	Jerusalem, temple	Jesus' silencing question on Messiah's descent	22:41-46	12:35-37	20:41-44	
	Jerusalem, temple	Scathing denunciation of scribes and Pharisees	23:1-39	12:38-40	20:45-47	
	Jerusalem, temple	The widow's mite		12:41-44	21:1-4	

Matthew 22:41-46

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him, Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

Matthew 23:1-39

Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our

fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zechariah son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. 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 hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Mark 12:35-44

And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, the LORD said to my LORD, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly. And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation. And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

Luke 20:41 to 21:4

And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son? And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son? Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples, Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; Which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation. And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

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MARK 12:28-44.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."—Luke 10:27.

ON THE question day when the Doctors of Divinity sought to entrap our Lord many questions were asked. A week ago we considered one. The final question constitutes today's Study. A Scribe, a man of more than average education, had heard the various questions propounded and had perceived how well our Lord had answered them. Then he essayed a question—quite probably in all sincerity, and not with a view to entrap Jesus. He asked, "What is the chief commandment of all?"—doubtless referring to the Decalogue. Jesus replied that the first, the chief, of all the commandments is, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is One Lord; and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the chief commandment."

Our Lord here made a quotation from the Old Testament. (Deuteronomy 6:4,5.) How wonderfully comprehensive the statement! Who today, hundreds of years afterwards, could more completely epitomize the great truth of this text? Heavenly Wisdom was manifested in its first statement. The same Heavenly Wisdom was manifested in our Lord's reference to it. He added nothing, because nothing could be added.

Moreover, we are daily seeing more clearly the force of this expression—Love. Love is the principal thing! Many in times gone by, according to the creeds professed, might have changed this statement to read that we should dread, fear, tremble; for the Almighty God of the Universe, we were told, had a great hell of torture prepared from before man's creation, in which He purposed that the great majority of humanity should be eternally tormented. But that was in the creeds. The Bible stands out distinctly separate from all human creeds and superstitions, and tells us that God is Love, that He is the Father of Light and Mercy, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift.

The Bible, too, tells us of the Divine forgiveness, Divinely arranged for through the precious blood of Christ from before the foundation of the world. It tells us also that this forgiveness of sins is not merely for the Church, the Elect, the little handful now being called out from the world; but that eventually the Love of God will be manifested to all of His creatures, to the intent that, coming to a knowledge of that love in due time, they may renounce sin and accept the Divine provision—receiving in return under Messiah's Kingdom the great blessing of Restitution of mental, moral and physical perfection, lost through Father Adam's disobedience.

The Second Commandment

Jesus proceeded beyond the question, and declared that the Second Commandment stands related to the First; namely, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Again we stand all astonished with wonder at how much is stated in very few words. Many a volume is written that contains far less. No other religion than that of the Bible reveals such a God of mercy and compassion, as manifested by His loving provision for the welfare of His creatures. No other religion even hints at love in return. No other religion suggests so high a standard of dealing with our fellow men.

This Law of God, now nearly four thousand years old, was probably more or less made known through the Jews to other nations and peoples (Deuteronomy 4:6-8); but none of them grasped its true import. The closest approach to this sentiment is probably found in the writings of Confucius, to the effect that one should not do to others what he would not have others do to him. But oh, what a contrast! One is merely a negative statement; the other is a positive one—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Truly, there is something about the Law of God which stamps it as Divine. How beautiful the world would be, with all its thorns, thistles and difficulties, if men were only able and willing to live up to these two grand Laws—each man loving the Heavenly Father supremely, serving Him with every power and talent, and loving his neighbor as himself, seeking to serve that neighbor as he might have opportunity! That would be Paradise. Thank God, this is just what we are assured the world will yet be, when the Messianic Kingdom is established.

The Divine arrangement which provided the death of Christ as an offset for Adam's sin has also provided the Reign of Christ as the offset

of the reign of Sin and Death. And the Divine promise assures us that ultimately all who love and desire righteousness and truth shall be blessed and perfected, and shall have everlasting life. It assures us also that the earth, God's footstool, will be made glorious, during the thousand years of Messiah's Reign; and that eventually all lovers of sin, refusing to make progress in righteousness, will be destroyed from amongst the people in the Second Death. Thus will the happy Day be ushered in for which we have so long prayed: "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven." Then will be fulfilled the promise that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, and the whole earth be filled with the glory of God.

"Not Far From The Kingdom"

The Scribe was impressed, and conceded the truth of Jesus' answer. He said, "Master, Thou hast said the truth; for there is one God; and there is none other but Him; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

"And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, Thou are not far from the Kingdom of God!" By this the Master meant that the Scribe was very near to the point where he might become one of His disciples—one of those waiting for the Kingdom, hoping for it, striving for it, preparing for it. It was such "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile, that Jesus especially sought to gather from amongst the Jewish people, preparatory to throwing open to the Gentiles the door to Kingdom privileges. The Jews understood that at His coming Messiah would select a Kingdom class, to which would be granted Divine power. This is just what Jesus was doing. His words, His teachings, were drawing some and repelling others.

All the sincere, all the honest-hearted, are like this young Scribe—not far from the Kingdom. If their honesty, their sincerity, lead them to zeal to know and to do the will of the Father, then they will be blessed; for "the secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His Covenant."

"God looketh on The Heart"

The Temple at Jerusalem was still new, and money was needed for its maintenance, etc. The people were privileged to contribute, and apparently did so with willing hearts. However much misled by the traditions of the elders—otherwise the teachings of their forefathers—however confused they were by the misleadings of their blinded Doctors of Divinity, they had a desire to serve God and to worship Him. This was manifested by their readiness to bring their money and to cast it into the treasure boxes of the Temple, which stood near its doorway.

Jesus was sitting opposite these treasure boxes, and took note how all classes contributed—the rich of their abundance, the poor of their penury. There came along a widow who put into the treasure box two mites—the smallest copper coins in circulation—each one worth about one-eighth of a cent. We need not assume that the poor widow put this in in an ostentatious manner; for the coins were too small to boast about. We shall assume that Jesus, by Divine power, knew the woman, her circumstances and the amount of her gift. He made it a text for a little sermon to the Apostles. He declared that yonder poor woman had made a larger contribution in the sight of God than had anybody else who had contributed. To their wonderment He explained that she had practically cast in all that she had—her living—while the others had merely contributed certain portions from their abundance—portions the loss of which they perhaps would not seriously feel.

This little incident shows us the Lord's appreciation of sacrifices and services. It is not the great things that any of us do, or attempt to do, that the Lord highly esteems. The very small affairs of our lives, the very small sacrifices, the very small self-denials, that in the world's sight would be nothing, in the Master's sight will be great, if they denote love, devotion and self-sacrifice to the Lord and His Cause.

Moreover, the Lord knew that the woman was giving money to an institution which was repudiating Him and which shortly would be destroyed because of being unworthy to continue. But whatever might be the condition of others, the Lord looked at the heart of this contributor and the motive for the gift—"She hath done what she could." For aught we know she became ultimately a disciple. It is of just such self-sacrificing material that the Lord makes disciples.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
	Mount of Olives	Prediction of Jerusalem's fall; Jesus' presence; end of system	24:1-51	13:1-37	21:5-38	
	Mount of Olives	Illustrations: ten virgins, talents, sheep/goats	25:1-46			

Matthew 24:1-51

And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the

coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:1-46

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou 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. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, 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. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the

talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 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: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Mark 13:1-37

And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled? And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, let (him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains: And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house: And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. For in those

days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not: For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things. But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

Luke 21:5-38

And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not a hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for

the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. And in the daytime he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS—*Reprints*, p. 3867

MATTHEW 25:1-13.

"Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh."

PROBABLY on the last Sunday of his earthly ministry our Lord foretold the destruction at Jerusalem, the scattering of his followers, a long period of wars, rumors of wars, etc., and finally his second coming, as recorded in Matthew, 25th chapter. This information was most appropriate to the apostles at this very time, for their expectation had run in a different direction—they had been expecting the exaltation of the Lord as the Messiah, and that Jerusalem would be the seat of his empire. They had asked, When shall these things be? and, What shall be the sign of thy presence? and Jesus, in his great prophecy of Matthew 24, had explained these matters, indicating to them that his second coming would be in strenuous times, when, if it were possible, the very elect would be deceived—in which, as it was in the days of Noah, so it would then be in the days of the Son of Man, that the multitude of the world would be eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, and be unaware of the storm impending and the consummation of the age preparatory to the beginning of the new age, of his Kingdom.

To impress the matter upon their minds, he gave the parable of the ten virgins—five wise and five foolish. The scene of the parable is laid near to the close of the Gospel age, as is indicated by its opening statement, "**Then** shall the Kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom." The parable has not been applicable all the way down through the Gospel age, but to our understanding is applicable now, because we are living in the end of the age, at the time when the Bridegroom will be present—at the time when the wise virgins will go in to the wedding and the foolish will be excluded. The understanding of this parable at the present time, therefore, should be meat in due season to all who are the Lord's true followers.

Throughout the Scriptures the Church is represented as a Bride in preparation for her marriage. The Bridegroom uniformly is the Lord Jesus, to whom belongs the entire inheritance, and the opportunity granted to the Lord's followers in the present time is that of becoming his Bride and joint-heirs. They have no status or relationship to the King eternal except as they obtain it by union with the King's Son. The type of this in the Old Testament is a very beautiful one: Abraham typified the Heavenly Father, very rich; Isaac typified our Lord Jesus, the seed of promise, the heir of all; Abraham's servant, sent to call a wife for Isaac, beautifully typified the holy Spirit, which, during this Gospel age, has been selecting the Church, of which the Apostle says, I have espoused you as a

chaste virgin unto one husband, which is Christ.—2 Cor. 11:2.

Throughout the Gospel age this Church, under the guidance and protection of the holy Spirit, has been approaching the Father's house of many mansions, the heavenly Kingdom, the glorious conditions promised in joint-heirship with the Bridegroom. If we rightly understand the matter we are now at the end of the journey, and the Bride class, typified by Rebecca, is putting on the vail and alighting from the camel and being received by the heavenly Bridegroom. As the entire matter has occupied a long period of nearly nineteen centuries, so the coming features are occupying several years for their accomplishment. Soon the Bride will be with the Bridegroom and in the Sarah tent—joint-heirs with him in the Abrahamic Covenant. It is in harmony with this that the Apostle assures us that "if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29.

Several of the Lord's parables related to this marriage of the King's Son, and his last message to the Church tells us of how ultimately the Bride, the Lamb's wife, shall shine forth resplendent in the Kingdom, and she is symbolized by the New Jerusalem. The announcement is there made, too, of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb after the Bride, the Lamb's wife, shall have made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7-9.) John the Baptist as a prophet referred to this relationship between Christ and the Church, saying, "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom when he heareth his voice rejoiceth greatly. This my joy is fulfilled." John realized that he was neither a member of the Bride class nor was he the Bridegroom. He recognized Jesus as the Bridegroom, and was glad to be honored of God as the servant of the Bridegroom and Bride to give the introduction. The high position John will occupy in the future, as one of the faithful prophets of whom our Lord said there was none greater, is assured; but we have the Lord's assurance that the least one, the humblest one in the Bride class of this Gospel age, the least one in this Kingdom class, will be greater than John the Baptist, because these are to be joint-heirs in the Kingdom, partakers of the glory, honor, immortality, while John and the faithful of the past will be upon the earth plane as representatives and princes of the Kingdom amongst men.—Matt. 11:11; Heb. 11:39,40; Psa. 45:16.

Two Classes of Virgins

Having the parable then located before our minds as belonging somewhere about the present time, we note the fact that it refers only to virgins—pure ones. The parable does not refer to the world at all, nor even to nominal Church people. Both of its classes represent Christians, the Kingdom of heaven class, believers, consecrated believers, believers who have heard the Gospel of the Kingdom, who are expecting the King at his second advent and who have lamps, and who get from their lamps light, information and instruction. These two classes of pure ones, separate from the world, informed respecting the Bridegroom's coming and Kingdom and waiting for them, represent the two classes of the consecrated—the "Little Flock" and the "Great Company," the "more than conquerors" and the conquerors "through great tribulation." (Rom. 8:37; Rev. 7:14.) These are the same two classes that are represented in the Tabernacle type by the two goats, one of which became the Lord's goat for the sacrifice and the other the scapegoat, only that in the Tabernacle type the goats represented the two classes all the way down through the Gospel age as well as particularly at its close, while the two classes in the parable under consideration represent the Church only in the present time in the end of this age.

Evidently the Lord's object in giving the parable was two-fold: first, to give a salutary lesson to the apostles and the entire Church of this Gospel age on the necessity for alertness, watching and praying, anticipating and preparing for the coming King and his Kingdom that they might be constantly ready for a share therein. Second, the parable was specially intended for us living in this time, to let us see that it would not be sufficient to be hoping and praying for the Kingdom and in a general way expecting the Bridegroom, but that we must be so alert and so full of enthusiasm for the event that it would lead us to make the wisest possible preparation for it, that we might not be disappointed at the final moment.

Second Adventists in The Parable

True to the picture of the parable, a movement took place amongst the Lord's people of all denominations in the last century, which culminated in what was known as the Second Advent movement. The virgins, the pure ones amongst Christians all over the world, were aroused with the thought that the coming of the Bridegroom was near, and a general lamp trimming, a general investigation of the Bible especially on that subject resulted. True to the parable, the expectation of those dear people was disappointed—"the Bridegroom tarried," and while he tarried "they all slumbered and slept." The lamps were measurably neglected and a general stupor fell upon this class. Indeed we may properly enough agree that many of the virgins not only slept but dreamed most peculiar, fantastic and unreasonable things. But by and by came the midnight announcement, "Behold the Bridegroom!"

This cry has been going forth ever since A.D. 1874, and in response to it all of the virgin class everywhere are awakening and a fresh examination of the divine Word is in progress, the lamps are being trimmed. Amongst those who hear the announcement are some who insist that it is a false cry: they have become so drowsy, so overcharged with the cares of this life, so comfortably nestled, that although they love the Bridegroom and desire above all things to be ready to receive him, they are unprepared, refuse to investigate, and merely murmur to themselves, "Yes, we love the Bridegroom, we will surely be ready to receive him, we have long been waiting for him, but not yet, not yet. Soul, take thine ease; no one knows anything about the matter; those who are announcing the Bridegroom are surely in error."

As days and weeks and years roll by more and more of the virgins awaken, and as they do so the investigation begins, the trimming of the lamps. Then it is discovered that some, who thought they were ready to enter into the joys of their Lord, find that they are deficient in the all-important oil, which represents the holy Spirit, and from which alone comes their enlightenment. The delay of the Bridegroom thus serves as a test to the virgins invited to go in with him to the marriage—the delay serves to prove who are the wise and who are the foolish. A certain amount of oil, a certain amount of consecration, a certain amount of the holy Spirit, was necessary to be counted in with the virgins at any stage; but a larger measure is necessary now in the time of the actual presence of the Bridegroom, in the time of actual joining in the procession—more truth, more light, are now due, and must be possessed by those who would go in to the wedding.

The virgins merely represent the Lord's people in general at this time, so that many are now amongst them who had nothing to do with the Adventist movement of 1844. However, the general spirit must be the same, love for the Bridegroom, expectancy of his presence in the Kingdom and a desire above all things to be prepared to enter in with him before the door is shut. The question now then is, Who has a sufficiency of oil, of light, of the holy Spirit, from which this illumination proceeds, to be able to stand in the procession of the virgins who will enter in with the Bridegroom before the door closes? It is an important question, and one which appeals to every one who has his lamp burning. How necessary that we see to it that we have a good supply of the Spirit of the Lord—the spirit of meekness, patience, gentleness, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love. We may be sure that unless we have a good supply of these our lamps will go out.

"Give Us of Your Oil"

To illustrate this holy Spirit, this spirit of consecration which all of the wise virgins must have in full measure in order to maintain their light and their place in the Bridegroom's favor and to gain an entrance to the marriage, the Lord in the parable represents the foolish virgins as asking the wise for some of their oil, and then shows the impossibility of its being thus obtained from one another. The fruits and graces of the holy Spirit cannot be had for the asking; they must be bought in the market of experience—they are of gradual growth and cost painstaking care of words and thoughts and doings. It is because these fruits of the Spirit are so difficult of attainment and cost such a price of self-sacrifice and sacrifice of worldly interests that they are valuable in the Lord's sight.

None can get too much of this holy Spirit, none can secure an over supply for his own use so that he could supply others from his abundance. The Bridegroom has made in advance abundant provision by which all those who are invited to go in with him to the marriage may be properly equipped, not only with robes and lamps, but also with the oil; and if any are careless in the procurement of the oil, they thus indicate their unfitness to be of the class who are to enter with the Bridegroom before the door is shut. This is the essence of the Lord's instruction by this parable—that those who hope to enter into the Kingdom and share its glories with him must expect to make preparation in advance. If they wait until the moment for the door to close, however willing they may be, however anxious, they will not be prepared—the preparation requires time, patience, care.

We meet continually those who give evidence of being true Christians, "virgins," pure of heart, of intention, who are considerably interested in the heavenly Bridegroom, in the gathering for the marriage supper, but who have little light upon these interesting subjects. They sometimes say to us, "Give us of your light, tell us how you know these things, why you feel so sure about them while others are asleep. We are awake enough, but our lamps give no light." We answer that it is impossible to give them faith in these things by proxy; that there is only one way to obtain the light, and that is through a patient, persevering study of the divine Word under the guidance of the holy Spirit. We inform them that patient perseverance in well doing, in Scriptural study, in cultivating the fruits and graces of the Spirit, are necessary in order to have this oil and its light. They express regret, for they are so overcharged with the cares of this life or the deceitfulness of riches, or family pride, or what not, that they have not the time to give to their spiritual development and the study of the Word. We are sorry and disappointed at such; we would that they could enjoy with us the blessings of a good supply of oil and the clear light of our lamps as they are now shining. We can do no more than tell them how and where the oil, the light, must be obtained. We must go on in our personal preparation and in our hastening to hold up our lights in our salutation of the Bridegroom, and expressions of joy in connection with his presence and the anticipated entrance with him to the marriage.

"And The Door Was Shut"

To our understanding the wise virgins have been entering into the marriage since the autumn of 1878, A.D., and are still entering in—passing beyond the vail, changed in a moment, "in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15:52.) Soon the entire First Resurrection will be complete, the last member being changed. Then and there the door will be shut and no more will be permitted to enter. Thank God that this does not signify so dreadful a condition as some of the Lord's dear people think. It does not mean the close of the door of hope, and that all outside, the foolish virgins as well as the world, will go down to hopeless despair in the Second Death. It does mean, however, the close of the great and grand opportunity which will never open again—it signifies the completion of the Kingdom class, the Bride class, the close of the narrow way to glory, honor, immortality and jointheirship with Christ.

The foolish virgins go and buy the precious oil and get their lamps trimmed and burning, but too late for the marriage, too late to be of those who will be the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And thus in the parable it is represented that when they knock the Bridegroom will say, "I do not recognize you as being members of the Bride class; you must not come in." Instead of entering into the joys of the Lord with the others they will be permitted for a time at least to have their portion in the great time of trouble which will then prevail throughout the world; weeping and gnashing of teeth, sorrow, disappointment, chagrin, will be the portion not only of the foolish virgins but of all the families of the earth in that time. We are glad to know that that great day of trouble will prepare the world of mankind for the glorious conditions of the Millennial Kingdom, which will then shortly be ushered in. The Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in its beams, and many people shall go and say, "Come, let us go up 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 Kingdom, the heavenly Kingdom], and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem

[from the earthly representatives of the heavenly Kingdom]."—Mal. 4:2; Isa. 2:3.

How inconsistent the thought that the folly of these virgins should not only exclude them from the Kingdom blessings, but that even after they get the oil of the holy Spirit later on they should be consigned to an eternity of torture or loss! How unreasonable! how inconsistent! On the contrary, how much in harmony with the general divine character and program is this parable as we have here pictured its fulfillment. We can sympathize with the foolish virgins while we cannot commend them, but must reprove them. We can look forward to the time when they, as the great company of Revelation 7, shall wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, and be ushered into the presence of the Lord and the Bride and become, as represented in Psalm 45, the virgins, the Bride's companions and co-laborers in the Kingdom work—servants before the throne, where they might have been, by proper love and zeal and knowledge in the present time, members of the Bride class, in the throne.

"Neither The Day Nor The Hour"

Our Lord concludes the parable with the words, "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." The revised version omits from verse 13 the words, "wherein the Son of man cometh," because these are not found in any of the old Greek MSS. The thought, however, is practically the same —Watch, because ye know neither the day nor the hour in which this parable will be fulfilled. The watching, no doubt, has been beneficial to the Lord's people all through the Gospel age, and is still more profitable to the wise virgin class of the present day, because it explains to these their circumstances, conditions, etc. All of the wise virgin class should be in the attitude commanded in this parable; they should have a knowledge of the fact that the Bridegroom is coming; they should have lamps and a full supply of oil. Those living in this ready condition will be neither alarmed nor surprised at the message when they hear it as it is now going forth, "Behold the Bridegroom is present." We are living in the *parousia* (presence) of the Son of Man —the wise virgins are already falling into line in the procession and entering in to the marriage; the full number will soon be found and the door will be shut. All in this watching attitude of heart, with the full measure of the Spirit of the Lord in their hearts will be very quickly attracted by the first intimation that the Bridegroom is present. These, trimming their lamps, examining the Scriptures, will quickly discern the truthfulness of the announcement, and speedily prepare and take their places with the wise virgins. The announcement, the truth upon this subject, is indeed a testing, proving which of the professed virgins of the Lord have the oil in their vessels, the right spirit of humility, patience, love, devotion, interest in the things of the Bridegroom. Such and such only are desired by the Bridegroom or will be permitted to enter.

In view of this it is evident that our work in the present time is not only to proclaim the Bridegroom's presence but to assist those who have the oil in their vessels to trim their lamps. If it is not already too late to go to buy the oil it soon will be, and hence our special care should be in respect to those who have the oil of the Lord's Spirit but who are still asleep or drowsy and need to have an announcement of his presence brought kindly, patiently, perseveringly to their attention.

It is not the supposition of the parable that when the time comes that the Bridegroom's presence is announced the virgins will not know of it. How could they trim their lamps and go out to meet him and go in with him without assurance of his presence? The watching suggested therefore by our Lord refers to the time **prior** to the presence. Those virgins who realize that the Bridegroom has come, those who have trimmed their lamps, those who have joined his procession, are not watching for his **coming**, but know of his **presence**, because that day and hour has come and has not found them unprepared, without sufficient oil.

Let us praise God for the blessings and mercies already ours, and go on faithfully rejoicing in the light of our lamps and in the anticipation of the glorious nuptial feast and the later glorious work, with the Bridegroom, of blessing all the families of the earth. He that hath this knowledge will by it be separated more and more from the world and its spirit, and be gradually more and more transformed from glory to glory in the likeness of the Bridegroom.

"TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS SEVERAL ABILITY."—*Reprints*, p. 2764

MATTHEW 25:14-30.

"So, then, everyone of us shall give an account of himself before God."—Romans 14:12.

IT WAS ON the way from Jericho toward Jerusalem that our Lord gave the Parable of the Ten Pounds, delivered one each to ten servants. (Luke 19:11,12. See our issue of Dec. 1.) The Parable of the Talents which we are now considering is a different one in several particulars, tho bearing close resemblance to the other. It was part of our Lord's teaching to his disciples during the few days preceding his crucifixion, probably the Tuesday preceding it, on the evening journey from Jerusalem to Bethany. This parable illustrates to us the differing abilities of God's people in respect to his service, and how each is accountable according to his ability, and that the same results are neither required nor expected from all, but simply faithfulness by each in the use of that ability and opportunity which he possesses.

The Revised Version notes the fact that the words, "the Kingdom of Heaven," in the opening verse, are not found in the ancient MSS., but this does not interfere with the thought that it is the Kingdom of Heaven in embryo (the Church) that is discussed, and that is likened to these servants who receive the talents; for this parable, it is to be remembered, followed immediately the Parable of the Ten Virgins, which is declared to be an illustration of the Kingdom. The Parable of the Talents, therefore, merely continues the thought respecting the Kingdom class, making these fresh observations respecting it.

Altho a number of servants are implied, yet only a sample illustration of three is given, leaving it to be inferred that the others were more or less distinctly represented in these three, without attempting to show or to teach which of the classes would predominate. In this respect also this parable corresponds to the Parable of the Pounds. This parable was evidently, like the other, to prepare the minds of the apostles for our Lord's departure from the present life—to the "far country," heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God to present on behalf of mankind the sacrifice for sins which he was about to accomplish at Calvary; and incidentally to be crowned, highly exalted and honored far above angels, principalities and powers, at the right hand of divine favor, and there to remain till the appointed time for him to take possession of his Kingdom under the whole heavens, to subdue it and to bring it into full accord with the divine government, that God's will should be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

The expression "far country," would give the thought of a considerable time to elapse between the Master's leaving and his return to establish his Millennial Kingdom. Meantime the apostles were to understand that they themselves were his servants to whom he entrusted his property, and that he would expect them to be faithful in guarding all of his interests and affairs, and promoting the same according to their several abilities. But since the parable covers the long period of eighteen hundred years, and looks down to certain servants living at the time of the Master's return, it is evident that it was intended to include, not the apostles only, but, as our Lord's prayer expressed the matter, "All those who shall believe on me through their word." We are to notice distinctly that the parable does not concern the world; nor do the decisions mentioned as taking place at the second coming of our Lord in any sense of the word represent decisions respecting the world, but merely decisions respecting the Church. Nor are we even to understand that the parable includes the general "household of faith;" but simply and only the specially consecrated servants of the Lord, to whom he has committed certain responsibilities; viz., those only who have been begotten of the holy spirit.

In the early Church, following the Pentecostal outpouring of the holy spirit, every consecrated believer received a gift or talent, and some received many of these, as the Apostle says: "The manifestation of the spirit [a portion, at least one talent] is given to every man [in this consecrated Church] to profit withal." Each

had a responsibility in proportion as he had talents or gifts of the spirit, and hence the Apostle Paul, having more than the others, had a greater responsibility because he had greater opportunities; and we judge that he measured up to these responsibilities in a manner most acceptable to the Master. (1 Cor. 14:18.) But those gifts must have ceased within a short time after the death of the Apostles, because we most clearly find that the gifts of the spirit were imparted to believers only through the laying on of hands of the apostles—that they did not come supernaturally from God to every individual,—and that those who possessed the gifts themselves, except the apostles, could not communicate them to others.—Acts 8:12-20.

The object of those gifts, as we have already seen, was the establishment of the early Church, but with its establishment their necessity ceased, and hence the gifts ceased in that form, and have since continued with the Lord's people in a very different form; that is to say, since then the **natural** gifts or talents which each person possesses through birth, education and training are reckoned, when he is consecrated to the Lord and accepted by him, as being owned or possessed by the man's new or holy spirit, and hence are reckoned as talents or abilities committed to his care, and for the use of which he will be held responsible in the outcome. If he remained one of the world he would have other responsibilities, but no such as are implied in this lesson, which represents only the responsibilities of the consecrated servants in the use of their Master's spiritual goods.

We may safely say that there are comparatively few five-talent servants amongst the Lord's people: the majority of the saints may safely be considered as being of the one- and two-talent classes. There are not many five-talent people in the world anyway, and it would appear that the world, the flesh and the devil bid so high for the services of these few that the number of them to become the Lord's servants, and to make consecration of their five talents fully and exclusively to his service, is comparatively small—"not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble."

The parable shows that five-talent people amongst the Lord's servants are not to measure themselves with others and to say, I have done enough; certainly more than A., who has one talent, but as much as B., who has two talents. Rather, each disciple is to seek to know truthfully just what talents of natural ability and opportunity the Master has committed to his care, and to seek to use everyone of these as fully, as thoroughly and as constantly as possible, so that the results may be much fruit, much praise, much service, much honor to the Lord. And as this parable should be a check upon those servants who have five talents, to hinder them from taking a slothful view of the matter so it should also be an encouragement to those having fewer talents of ability and opportunity, showing them that the Lord will not expect as great things from them as he would expect from those having greater opportunities and greater natural talents. It teaches such that they should do with their might what their hands find to do, and realize that this reasonable service is what the Lord expects and what he proposed to reward in each. The servant who had only one talent of ability and opportunity should have felt equally his responsibility, and might equally have had the Master's approval had he been faithful, in which event, no doubt, his one talent would have increased to two.

Our Lord's arrangement of the parable, that the person who received the one talent was the one who digged in the earth and buried it, should not be understood to mean that the one-talented people are more likely than others of the Lord's servants with more talents to thus neglect and misuse them. So far as observation teaches, we might conclude that proportionately as many of the two-talented and five-talented dig in the earth and hide their talents, as of those who possess only one; and of course their so doing would be proportionately more blameworthy than that of the one-talented man. Why, then, is the one-talented man chosen as an illustration of these talent-burials? We answer, that it is to show the responsibility of those who have least—that the Lord expects even the least of his consecrated people to know of, and to use the talents he has in his possession, and that he will not hold guiltless even

those who have the smallest ability to serve him and his brethren and his truth and who neglect to use it. As the responsibilities accompanying a larger number of talents would be greater, so the losses in their case would be greater, and thus the punishment more severe.

"After a long time the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." By these words our Lord gave to the disciples as clear an intimation as was proper of the fact that they were not to expect him to return and reckon with them in a very few days, a few months or a few years; but when they subsequently asked him respecting the particular time, he refused them, saying that it was not for them to know the times and the seasons, which the Father had put in his own power. And so for eighteen hundred years the Lord's people have been left without clear information on this subject. This, however, does not militate against the thought that it is the privilege of God's people **now** to know something of the times and seasons, because the due time has come in which the Father wishes to communicate these;—the time mentioned through the Prophet Daniel, when the [truly] wise shall understand, as we saw in the preceding lesson.—Dan. 12:10; 1 Thess. 5:4; John 16:13.

There is no intimation in the parable that the disciples would die and **go to** their Lord, and be reckoned with and rewarded then, as many believe to have been the case. The Scriptures are harmonious and consistent with themselves in their teachings, and not only declare that "David is not ascended into the heavens," and that "no man hath ascended up to heaven" save Jesus, but they declare also that **our Lord will come** a second time, to receive his people unto himself and to then reward them. The Apostle Paul, who was one of these five-talented servants, declares respecting himself, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me [in reservation, in waiting] a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me **in that day**, and not to me only, but also unto all them that love his appearing."—2 Tim. 4:7,8; John 3:13; 14:3; Acts 2:34.

To our understanding we are now living in "the days of the Son of Man," and he is now reckoning with his servants in this the day of his revelation. We understand, according to the Scriptures, by faith and not by sight, that the reckoning was to begin with those servants who had fallen asleep, and that "we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord" should not prevent or hinder them, nor take precedence to them in this matter of being reckoned with and rewarded. (1 Thess. 4:15-17.) To our understanding, as already shown in the *Studies in the Scriptures* series, 1878 marked the date for our Lord's assumption of Kingly authority and his judgment upon Babylon the Great, characterizing her as "fallen," and calling for all the people of God to come out of her: and that it marked also the date for the faithful overcomers of the past to have a share in the first resurrection—to enter into the joys of their Lord, and hear his words, "Well done, good and faithful servants." In harmony with this, it is our understanding that all of this class are now enjoying the glory, honor and immortality promised to the faithful. This work of judging the **servants** is totally distinct from the judging of the **world**—the world's judgment is very different everyway, and is to take place during the Millennial age, and is represented in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, the scene of which is located "when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of his glory," at which time the faithful servants of the present age, whose trial is now in progress, and whose reckoning and rewards are shown in the parable of the lesson, will sit with the Lord in his throne as he has promised.—Rev. 3:21.

As other Scriptures show, "we who are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord" will not be omitted from the company of the glorified, altho our being alive will not give us precedence to them. The inspection and rewarding of the Lord's servants having begun in 1878 as respects those that had fallen asleep, is since progressing in respect to those who remain: these are granted a reasonable time in which to finish up their contract of full consecration,—to become **ripe** "wheat"—and to render up their accounts. Each of the elect now, as he finishes his course, reports immediately, and does not

need to "sleep" in death, to wait for the coming of the King, but is immediately, in the moment of death, changed, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," experiencing fully and instantly the first resurrection blessing of glory, honor and immortality—in the moment of death.

Realizing from this view of the parable that the Lord's people of today are represented in it, it is for each one of the consecrated (while yet it is called day—before the night cometh) to make a full and thorough inspection of himself: and to determine to what extent he has talents, abilities, privileges, opportunities, to serve the Lord, and to what extent he is using these; and to remember that his share in the reward depends upon his faithfulness in the use of his talents. There may be instances in which persons of five talents will use three of them faithfully in the Lord's service, and bury the other two in business and cares of this life—"in the earth," in earthly affairs. There may be instances in which those who have two talents use one for the Lord's service and bury the other one; but the fact that our Lord does not give such illustrations would lead us to question the probability of such a course. Some might **plan** certain things respecting two talents for heavenly things and three for earthly things; or of one for earthly things and the other for heavenly things; but the result probably would be either that he would become thoroughly immersed in the earthly things, and bury all his talents there, or else that his heart would become so thoroughly infused with the Lord's spirit and the desire to serve his cause that all of his talents would be thus employed. This tendency and result is implied by our Lord's statement on another occasion: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "No man can serve two masters." Experience and observation corroborate this; and hence as a rule we find that people are either cold or hot in spiritual things; either it is the Kingdom of heaven first and far above all other considerations, demanding and receiving the very best we have of time, energy and influence; or else the Kingdom of heaven is neglected and forgotten, and time and influence are spent in money-getting or other selfish and earthly occupations of mind and body.

The lesson of this to every one of the Lord's consecrated people is plain: we are to "seek first [chiefly] the Kingdom of God." It is to be our chief concern and to receive from us all the time, attention, thought, energy, influence and means we have—the things **needful** for the present life being understood to be excepted; and our love and zeal will be manifested by the proportion of these even, which we are willing to sacrifice in the interest of heavenly things.

The reward given to the faithful servants was the same in each case—the entering into the joys of the Lord; and we may reasonably understand that this will mean that the cup of joy to each will be full. In this, too, we have a great encouragement for all, and one which perhaps is specially needed by the majority of the Lord's servants, who possess only one or two talents of opportunity, etc. They have an equally good opportunity of entering into the joys of the Lord as tho they had five or ten talents; and the reward, "Well done, good and faithful servant," will be truly meant for, and as fully appreciated by the one as the other.

The reward to these servants is in full harmony with the foregoing application of the parable, and shows that during the Millennial age the faithful servants, the "elect" of this Gospel age, will be the rulers of the world, "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord" in his Kingdom, and upon his throne of rulership; for the reward specifies, "Thou has been faithful over a few things; I will make thee **ruler over** many things." If the parable were intended to represent the world's judgment, such a conclusion would be inappropriate, because by the time the world's judgment will have ended there will no longer be necessity for rulership in this sense; for, as the Apostle declares, Christ shall reign [during the Millennium] until he shall have put down all authority, etc., and then he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. The **rule**, or reign of righteousness, the Mediatorial Kingdom, is to be established during the Millennial age,—thus to overthrow the rule of unrighteousness now prevailing amongst men, and to lift mankind in general out of the present condition of sin and death—to deliver as many of them as will accept the deliverance from the power of Satan into the

liberty of sons of God. And with the accomplishment of this work the time for all such ruling will be at an end; hence this parable is a strong lesson in support of the pre-millennial coming of our Lord and exaltation of his faithful, the elect Church.

The servant who hid his talent in the earth, and who failed to use it, endeavored to justify his course by blaming the Master with being too hard and exacting. And so it is with many, who, having taken upon themselves the vows of consecration to the Lord, subsequently fail to perform them. They are disposed to blame the Lord rather than to blame themselves; and this course indicates what their real lack is,—Love. They do not love the Lord fully, truly, sufficiently, and their course reveals this fact. Had they loved him they would have delighted to do to their ability his will; and only such are blessed with rewards.

The punishment of those who failed to perform their covenant as servants, who failed to use the talents provided for them under this covenant, is shown to be great loss;—but not the loss which many suppose, whose minds are blinded by the theory that eternal torment is the wages for sin, and that it is visited upon all except the "overcomers" of this Gospel age. Such claim that the unfaithful servant would be delivered over to Satan and be tortured in flaming fire, and so blind are many of the advocates of this theory that they read all this into our Lord's statement in this very parable; but instead of mentioning flames of fire, which would surely make the place **light**, our Lord mentions **darkness** as his portion—"outer darkness." Neither does our Lord mention the demon-tormentors, generally believed in.

We offer another and much more reasonable, much more consistent, interpretation of our Lord's words. The servant who fails to use present privileges of consecration and service and sacrifice will find the opportunity taken from him. He will have it no more; neither will he have any share in the reward given to the overcomers;—he will suffer this great loss. He is represented as going into "outer darkness," implying that he had already been in the light of divine favor, blessing, privilege, knowledge of divine things;—that he would lose this enlightenment, and that his understanding would become darkened as respects spiritual things. It is "outer darkness," because it is the darkness common to and resting upon the whole world of mankind;—only the consecrated, accepted of the Lord, being permitted to come fully into the clear light of the knowledge of the Lord and of his plan now shining. Any others than these, upon whom this light may temporarily fall, have it only in a secondary sense, at very most, and see not the glorious things themselves, but merely, so to speak, their reflections. The unfaithful servant is to be cast completely out of all favor; even the reflected light will be obscured from his vision, and he will find himself, now or shortly, in the darkness of the world as respects the divine plan, work, etc. And there he will share with the world in its great time of trouble with which this age is about to close, a time of trouble which is fittingly pictured in the parable by the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS.—*Reprints*, p. 2606

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment,
but the righteous into life eternal."—Matthew 25:31-46.

WHILE THE Scriptures, as we have shown, do not teach the blasphemous doctrine of everlasting **torment**, they do most emphatically teach the everlasting **punishment** of the wicked, the class represented in the parable as "goats." Let us examine the parable, and then the sentence pronounced at its close.

It has been truly said that "Order is Heaven's first law;" yet few, we think, have realized how emphatically this is true. In glancing back over the plan of the ages, there is nothing which gives such conclusive evidence of a Divine Director as the order observed in all its parts.

God has had definite and stated times and seasons for every part of his work; and in the end of each of these seasons there has been a finishing up of its work and a clearing off of the rubbish, preparatory to the beginning of the

new work of the dispensation to follow. Thus in the end of the Jewish age order is observed—a harvesting and complete separation of the "wheat" class from the "chaff," and an entire rejection of the latter class from God's favor. With the few judged worthy in the end of that age, a new age—the Gospel age—began. And now we find ourselves amidst the closing scenes, the "harvest," of this age: the "wheat" and the "tares" which have grown together during this age are being separated. With the former class, of which our Lord Jesus is the Head, a new age is about to be inaugurated, and these "wheat" are to reign as kings and priests in that new dispensation, while the "tare" element is judged as utterly unworthy of that favor.

While observing this order with reference to the Jewish age and the one just closing, our Lord informs us through the parable under consideration that the same order will be observed with reference to the age to follow this Gospel age.

The harvest of the Jewish age was likened to the separation of wheat from chaff; the harvest of this age to the separation of wheat from tares; and the harvest of the Millennial age to the separation of sheep from goats.

That the parable of the sheep and the goats refers to the Millennial age is clearly indicated in verses 31 and 32—"**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." As in the present age every act of those on trial (the Church) goes to make a part of that character which, in due time, will determine the final decision of the Judge in our case, so will it be with the world (the "nations") in the age to come. As in the present age the trial of the majority of the individual members of the Church ends, and the decision of their case is reached, long before the end of the age (2 Tim. 4:7,8), so under the Millennial reign the decision of some individual cases will be reached long before the end of the age (Isa. 65:20); but in each age there is a "harvest" or general separating time in the end of the age.

In the dawn of the Millennial age, after the "time of trouble," there will be a gathering of the living nations before Christ, and, in their appointed time and order, the dead of all nations shall be called to appear before the judgment seat of Christ—not to receive an immediate sentence, but to receive a fair and impartial, individual trial (Ezek. 18:2-4,19,20) under the most favorable circumstances, the result of which trial will be a final sentence, as worthy or unworthy of everlasting life.*

The scene of this parable, therefore, is laid after the time of trouble, when the nations shall have been subdued, Satan bound (Rev. 20:1,2) and the authority of Christ's kingdom established. Ere this, the bride of Christ (the overcoming Church) will have been seated with him in his throne of spiritual power and will have taken part in executing the judgments of the great day of wrath. Then the Son of man and his bride, the glorified Church, will be revealed and be seen by men, with the eyes of their understanding and shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13:43.

Here is the New Jerusalem as John saw it (Rev. 21), "that holy city **[symbol of government]** … coming down from God out of heaven." During the time of trouble it will be coming down, and before the end of it, it will have touched the earth. This is the stone cut out of the mountains without hands (but by the power of God), and it will then have become a great mountain (kingdom), filling the whole earth (Dan. 2:35), its **coming** having broken to pieces the evil kingdoms of the prince of darkness.—Dan. 2:34,35.

Here is that glorious city (government), prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2), and early in the dawn of the Millennium the nations will begin to walk in the light of it. (Verse 24.) These may bring their glory and honor into it, but "there shall in no wise enter into it [or become a part of it] anything that defileth," etc. (Verse 27.) Here, from the midst of the throne, proceeds a pure river of water of life (truth unmixed with error), and the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and take it freely. (Rev. 22:17.) Here begins the world's probation, the world's great judgment day—a thousand years.†

But even in this favored time of blessing and healing of the nations, when Satan is bound, evil restrained, mankind in process of release from the grasp of death, and when the knowl-

† See *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 1, chap. 8, "The Day of Judgment."

edge of the Lord fills the earth, two classes will be developed, which our Lord here likens to sheep and goats. These, he tells us, he will separate. The sheep class—those who are meek, teachable and willing to be led, shall, during the Millennial age, be gathered at the Judge's right hand—symbol of his approval and favor; but the goat class, self-willed and stubborn, always climbing on the rocks—seeking prominence and approval among men—and feeding on miserable refuse, while the sheep graze in the rich pastures of the truth furnished by the Good Shepherd —these are gathered to the Judge's left hand, the opposite of the position of favor—as subjects of his disfavor and condemnation.

This work of separating sheep and goats will require all of the Millennial age for its accomplishment. During that age, each individual, as he comes gradually to a knowledge of God and his will, takes his place at the right hand of favor or the left hand of disfavor, according as he improves or misimproves the opportunities of that golden age. By the end of that age, all **the world** of mankind will have arranged themselves, as shown in the parable, into two classes.

The end of that age will be the end of the world's trial or judgment, and then final disposition will be made of the two classes. The reward of this "sheep" class will be granted them because, during the age of trial and discipline, they cultivated and manifested the beautiful character of love, which Paul describes as the fulfilling of the Law of God. (Rom. 13:10.) They will have manifested it to each other in their times of sorest need; and what they will have done for one another the Lord will count as done unto him, counting them all as his brethren—children of God, though they will be of the human nature, while he is of the divine.

The condemnation of the "goat" class is shown to be for the lack of this spirit of love. Under the same favorable circumstances as the "sheep," they willfully resist the moulding influence of the Lord's discipline, and harden their hearts. The goodness of God does not lead them to true repentance; but, like Pharaoh, they take advantage of his goodness and do evil. The "goats," who will not have developed the element of **love**, the law of God's being and Kingdom, will be counted unworthy of everlasting life, and will be destroyed; while the "sheep," who will have developed God-likeness (love), and who will have exhibited it in their characters, are to be installed as the subordinate rulers of earth for future ages.

In the end of the Millennial age, in the final adjustment of human affairs, Christ thus addresses his sheep: "Come, ye blessed, … inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

It is manifest the "sheep" here addressed, at the close of the Millennium, are not the sheep of the Gospel age, the Gospel Church, but those "other sheep" to whom the Lord referred in John 10:16. And the kingdom prepared for them in the divine plan, from the foundation of the world, is not the kingdom prepared for the Gospel Church. The Church will receive her kingdom at the beginning of the Millennium; but this is the kingdom prepared for the "sheep" of the Millennial age. Their kingdom will be the dominion of earth which was originally given to Adam, but which was lost through sin, and which is again to be restored when man is brought to perfection, and so made fit to receive and enjoy it. That dominion will not be a dominion of some of the race over others, but a joint dominion, in which every man will be a king, and all will have equal rights and privileges in appropriating and enjoying every earthly good. It will be a sovereign people—a great and grand republic on a basis of perfect righteousness, wherein the rights of every man will be conserved; because the golden rule will be inscribed on every heart, and every man will love his neighbor as himself. The dominion of all will be over the whole earth, and all its rich and bountiful stores of blessing. (Gen. 1:28; Psa. 8:5-8.) The kingdom of the world, to be given to the perfected and worthy ones of the redeemed race at the close of the Millennium, is clearly distinguished from all others by being called the kingdom prepared for them "from the foundation of the world," the earth having been made to be the everlasting home and kingdom of perfect men. But the kingdom bestowed upon Christ, of which the Church, his "bride," becomes joint-heir, is a spiritual kingdom, "far above angels, principalities and powers," and it also shall "have no end"—Christ's Millennial Kingdom, which **will end**, being merely a beginning of Christ's power and rule. (1 Cor. 15:25-28.) This endless heavenly, spiritual kingdom was prepared long before the earth was founded—its inception being recognized in Christ, "the beginning of the creation

of God." It was intended for Christ Jesus, the First Begotten; but even the Church, his bride and joint-heir, was chosen or designed also, in him, **before** the foundation of the world.—Eph. 1:4.

The kingdom or rule of earth, is the kingdom that has been in preparation for **mankind** from the **foundation of the world**. It was expedient that man should suffer six thousand years under the dominion of evil, to learn its inevitable results of misery and death, in order by contrast to prove the justice, wisdom and goodness of God's law of love. Then it will require the seventh thousand-years, under the reign of Christ, to restore him from ruin and death, to the perfect condition, thereby fitting him to "inherit the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world."

That kingdom, in which all will be kings, will be one grand, universal republic, whose stability and blessed influence will be assured by the perfection of its every citizen, a result now much desired, but an impossibility because of sin. The kingdom of Christ during the Millennium will be, on the contrary, a theocracy, which will rule the world (during the period of its imperfection and restoration) without regard to its consent or approval.

The brethren of the Gospel Church are not the only "brethren" of Christ. All who at that time will have been restored to perfection will be recognized as sons of God—sons in the same sense that Adam was a son of God (Luke 3:38)—**human sons**. And all of God's sons, whether on the human, the angelic or the divine plane, are **brethren**. Our Lord's love for these, his human brethren, is here expressed. As the world now has the opportunity to minister to those who are shortly to be the divine sons of God, and brethren of Christ, so they will have abundant opportunity during the age to come to minister to (each other) the human brethren.

The dead nations when again brought into existence will need food, raiment and shelter. However great may have been their possessions in this life, death will have brought all to a common level: the infant and the man of mature years, the millionaire and the pauper, the learned and the unlearned, the cultured and the ignorant and degraded: all will have an abundant opportunity for the exercise of benevolence, and thus they will be privileged to be co-workers with God. We are here reminded of the illustration given in the case of Lazarus: Jesus only awakened him from death, and then were the rejoicing friends permitted to loose him from his grave clothes and to clothe and feed him.

Further, these are said to be "sick and in prison" (more properly, under ward or watch). The grave is the great prison where the millions of humanity have been held in unconscious captivity; but when released from the grave, the restoration to perfection is not to be an instantaneous work. Being not yet perfect, they may properly be termed **sick**, and **under ward**: not dead, neither are they yet perfected in life: and any condition between those two may be properly symbolized by sickness. And they will continue to be under watch or ward until made well—physically, mentally and morally perfect. During that time there will be abundant opportunity for mutual helpfulness, sympathy, instruction and encouragement, and any failure to assist will mark a lack of the Lord's spirit of love.

Since all mankind will not be raised at once, but gradually, during the thousand years, each new group will find an army of helpers in those who will have preceded it. The love and benevolence which men will then show to each other (the brethren of Christ) the King will count as shown to him. No great deeds are assigned as the ground for the honors and favors conferred upon the righteous: they will have simply come into harmony with God's law of love and proved it by their works. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), and "God is love." So, when man is restored again to **the image of God**—"very good"—man also will be a living expression of love.

"Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," does not signify a rule independent of the divine law and supremacy: for although God gave earth's dominion to man at first, and designs restoring it to him when he has prepared him for the great trust, we are not to suppose that God intends man to rule it, otherwise than as under, or in harmony with, his supreme law. "Thy will be done in earth as in heaven," must forever be the principle of government. Man thenceforth will rule

his dominion in harmony with the law of heaven—delighting continually to do his will in whose favor is life, and at whose "right hand [condition of favor] there are pleasures forevermore." (Psa. 16:11.) Oh! who would not say, "Haste ye along, ages of glory!" and give glory and honor to him whose loving plans are blossoming into such fullness of blessing?

Let us now examine the message to those on the left—"Depart from me, ye cursed" (condemned)—condemned as unfit vessels for the glory and honor of life, who would not yield to the moulding and shaping influences of divine love. When these, "brethren," were hungry and thirsty, or naked, sick, and in prison, ye ministered not to their necessities, thus continually proving yourselves out of harmony with the heavenly city (Kingdom); for "there shall in no case enter into it anything that defileth." The decision or sentence regarding this class is—"Depart from me into everlasting **fire** [symbol of **destruction**], prepared for the devil and his angels." Elsewhere (Heb. 2:14) we read without symbol that Christ "will **destroy** … him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

"And these [the "goats"] shall go away into everlasting [Greek, *aionios*—lasting] punishment, but the righteous into life eternal [Greek, *aionios*—lasting.]" The punishment will be as lasting as the reward. Both will be everlasting.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 12	Jerusalem	Religious leaders plot Jesus' death	26:1-5	14:1,2	22:1,2	
	Jerusalem	Judas bargains with priests to betray Jesus	26:14-16	14:10,11	22:3-6	
Nisan 13	Near and in Jerusalem	Arrangements for the Passover	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Passover feast eaten with the twelve	26:20,21	14:17,18	22:14-18	
	Jerusalem	Jesus washes the feet of his apostles				13:1-20
	Jerusalem	Judas identified as traitor and is dismissed	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21-30
	Jerusalem	Memorial supper instituted with the eleven	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:19,20, 24-30	[1 Cor. 11:23-25]

Matthew 26:1-5,14-29

And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people. … Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him. Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou

hast said. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Mark 14:1,2,10-25

After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people. ... And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him. And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And whereso-ever he shall go say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I? And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born. And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

Luke 22:1-30

Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude. Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them,

saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

John 13:1-30

Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

THE LAST SUPPER—*Reprints*, p. 3363
MATTHEW 26:17-30

JESUS AND the apostles came to Bethany, near Jerusalem, that they might eat the Passover Supper in the holy city, and that our Lord might suffer at the hands of his enemies, as he had foretold his disciples—that thus he might accomplish an atonement for the sins of the people. His arrival was just a week before his crucifixion. The following day at the supper Mary anointed him. On the next day he rode on the ass into Jerusalem, was not received, wept over the city, and said, "Your house is left unto you desolate." On the following day he visited the temple, driving out the money changers with the scourge of cords. The next day he gave his last public teaching in the temple, declaring himself to be the light of the world. Every night he seems to have returned to Bethany to the house of Lazarus and Martha and Mary, which was also the home of himself and the apostles whenever they were in that vicinity. The next day, Wednesday, the Lord remained in Bethany in retirement, and on Thursday sent two of his disciples to make ready the Passover, which was eaten by himself and the twelve that night—"the same night in which he was betrayed."

The feast of Passover lasted a week, and was one of the most important celebrated under the Jewish arrangement. During that week, leaven, as a type of sin, was carefully put away from all the food and destroyed in every house, in intimation of the holiness and purity, the unleavenness, of the Lord's people—spiritual Israel—typically represented by natural Israel. The whole week was a festival of rejoicing because of God's deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. The feast-week began on the 15th day of the first month, Jewish reckoning, but it was preceded on the 14th by the killing of the lamb, and the sprinkling of its blood upon the doorposts of the houses, as a memorial of what took place in Egypt on the night in which the Lord spared the first-born of Israel under the blood and slew the first-born of the Egyptians, and thus made the latter willing to let his people go free. It was for the eating of this memorial lamb on the night previous to the beginning of the Passover feast-week that our Lord sent his disciples to make ready, as explained in our lesson.

Luke tells us that it was Peter and John who were sent on this mission, and Mark tells us that they were to know the man at whose house the feast would be held by his carrying a pitcher of water. It has been surmised by some that the house was that of Mark's mother, Mary, and that the upper room thus used was the same one in which the apostles subsequently met and where the pentecostal blessing was poured out upon them. We do know that it was at the house of this Mary that many gathered to pray for the release of Peter from prison. It was a "large upper room" and was already prepared with a suitable dining couch of proper dimensions. It has been surmised that Jesus took this indirect way of indicating the place that Judas might not be informed until the time for the gathering, so that there might be no interruption of the feast and our Lord's subsequent discourses, recorded in John 14:17, on the part of those who were seeking his apprehension. Peter and John made ready the Passover in the sense of furnishing and preparing the lamb, the unleavened bread, bitter herbs and the fruit of the vine, and in the evening at the appropriate time the entire company gathered for the celebration.

A Lesson in Humility.

Luke only records (22:24-30) that there was strife amongst the apostles on this occasion, though John (13) also implies this. We are not to suppose that the apostles were actuated wholly by ambition and selfishness. We may well suppose that the strife was for position of nearness to the Master because of their love for him. The Lord improved the opportunity to give them a most wonderful discourse, which doubtless lasted them through the remainder of their lives. They had arrived late in the afternoon, over dusty roads, and, not being of the wealthy class, no servants were there to receive them and to wash their feet; and instead of thinking to do this one for another, to their mutual comfort, they had been striving with one another for favored positions at the table, John evidently gaining the most desired position next to the Master—possibly accorded him because he was not only a relative, and one whom Jesus specially loved, but also because he was the youngest of their number.

The customs of olden times differ from those of the present in many respects. In eating they reclined on a couch surrounding a table. They leaned on their left elbow and used the right hand for conveying food to the mouth; thus their heads were brought comparatively close together, while their feet extended out behind over the couch. Apparently permitting the dispute to run its course and the supper to begin, Jesus arose, and going behind them began to wash the feet of one after another of them. Such a service rendered to them by the Master was of course a severe reproof. They should have thought of washing his feet and each other's and now probably wished that they had done so, but at the time each was apparently intent upon establishing the fact that he was in no degree inferior to the others. They had forgotten so soon the lesson of a short time before—that he who would be greatest amongst them should be servant of all. Our Lord here had the opportunity of illustrating this very matter: he was willing to serve them all, was continually serving them all in the spiritual things, and hence they regarded him truly and properly as their Master; but now he showed them his humility to the extent that he was willing to serve them in the most menial capacity also. Valuable lesson! May it never lose its import amongst the Lord's true followers. Some, however, have erred in supposing that this became an institution or ordinance similar to the Lord's Supper and baptism: to our understanding the lesson to be conveyed by this symbol, and its application to each of us at any time and at any place, would be that we should seek to render some useful service to the brethren regardless of how menial it might be, and that so doing to them it would be reckoned of the Lord as though done unto him.

"Better That He Had Not Been Born."

It was while they were at supper that Jesus, appearing very sorrowful, gave as an explanation that it would be one of his own chosen twelve that would betray him and thus become accessory to his death—one of those who dipped with him in the dish, partaking of the same supper, the same bread, the same roasted lamb. Then he pointed out that although this was all written, and thus no alteration would be found in respect to the divine plan, nevertheless it signified a very gross breach of friendship—one sad to contemplate. It really made no difference to the Lord, so far as his intention and consecration were concerned, whether he were apprehended by the rulers without any betrayal or whether the betrayal were by a comparative stranger or by a disciple: the fact would make no change in the divine arrangement; but it was a cause for great sorrow that it should be one who had been a bosom friend and disciple.

"It had been good for that man if he had not been born," implies to us that, from the Lord's standpoint, Judas had already experienced so large a measure of knowledge and opportunity for better things that his responsibility for his act was complete, and that there would be no hope for him at any time in the future. We will certainly have no objection to it if the Lord should find some excuse for granting Judas a further opportunity for correcting his character, but we see no Scriptural reason for thinking there will be such further opportunity. From our standpoint it appears as though he sinned against great light, experience and knowledge—contact with the Lord and under the

power of the holy Spirit—one of those commissioned to heal diseases and cast out devils in the name of the Lord, and as his representative, and using his power. His end was a sad one: every suicide by his act confesses his wish that he had never been born.

"Lord, Is It I?"

Another account tells us that each of the disciples inquired of the Lord. "Is it I?" and last of all Judas. The others felt sure that they had nothing to do with it and wished the Lord to confirm their innocency, and the eleven having asked and no response from the Lord indicating their culpability, the implication would be that Judas was the one; yet such was his spirit of bravado that he also asked the Master, "Is it I?" Jesus answered him, "Thou hast said," or "It is you." How noble was the Lord's reproof; he could have scarcely said less—not a threat, not an imprecation, not a manifestation of bitterness, but merely an expression of sorrow and of pity. What a lesson for us! Our enemies are to be pitied, not hated; to be blessed as far as we are able, but never to be cursed. It is well for all of Jesus' disciples to watch and pray against any Judas-like disposition to sell the Lord or his Truth or his brethren for money or other selfish considerations. Knowing that there will be others of the Judas class, let us guard our hearts and ask, "Lord, is it I?"

While they were eating the Passover Supper prescribed by the Jewish Law, or rather while they were still at the table after they had finished the supper proper, Jesus took some of the remaining bread—which in shape at least more particularly resembled what we today would call crackers—he blessed it, broke it and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take, eat, this is my body." Another evangelist adds, "broken for you." Romanists and some Protestants claim that in consequence of the form of this statement, "this is my body," and the next statement, "this is my blood," we should understand that whenever the memorial bread and fruit of the vine have been consecrated they are changed from being bread and wine and become the actual body of Christ and his actual blood. We dissent from this as being most unreasonable and most untrue; the bread and the wine merely symbolized or represented the body and blood of our Lord. In absolute proof of this note the fact that our Lord at the time he used these words had not yet been broken and his blood had not yet been shed. Hence to have used these expressions in any other way than the way we do use them, namely, as meaning that the bread and the wine **represented** his body and his blood, would have meant to misrepresent the truth—to have falsified; and we cannot perceive that this was done or would have been proper to have been done by the Lord or any of his followers.

The bread, as our Lord explained, represented the bread from heaven—his flesh which he sacrificed for the sins of the world. He invites all of his followers to eat of it, and we partake of his flesh when we appropriate to ourselves the blessings, the mercy, the grace secured by the breaking of his body. We thus appropriate to ourselves the benefits of the sacrifice which secures to us the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with the Father.

"The Blood of The New Covenant."

He took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to the apostles, saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins." This represents my blood—it will continue to represent my blood with you and with all my dear followers at all times, and will be to you on such occasions a reminder of my death and of the covenant which was thus sealed between God and sinners by myself as the great Mediator between God and man.

The New Covenant or New Testament sealed by the blood of Christ is the one that is mentioned throughout the Old Testament and referred to by the Apostle in his letter to the Hebrews (8:6-13; 10:29; 12:20). It supersedes the Law Covenant. The latter, mediated through Moses, provided that whosoever would do the commandments of the Law should have everlasting life; but the New Covenant provides for mercy, and, recognizing the fact that in our fallen condition we cannot do the things we would, the Mediator of the New Covenant, by his death on behalf of the people, is able to keep Justice whole and yet deal with us according to our intentions instead of according to our actual accomplishments, and meanwhile to lift man-

kind up, up, up, out of degradation to that plane or condition of being where they will be able to do perfectly all the good desires of true and honest hearts.

The Apostle Paul shows us that this bread and cup had a still further and broader signification. He it was who had so clear an understanding of the "mystery"—Christ in you—that we are members of the mystical body of Christ, participators now in his sufferings, and, if faithful, to be members of his glorious body and participators also in his glory. From this standpoint, as the Apostle explains, the broken loaf represents not only the breaking of the Lord Jesus personally, but the breaking of all his mystical members throughout this Gospel age; and the drinking of the cup was not only his own participation in death that he might thus seal the New Covenant on behalf of mankind, but that his invitation to us to join with him in partaking of the cup, "Drink ye all of it," implied that we could have participation with him in the sufferings and death in the present time—participation with him in the inauguration of the New Covenant conditions during the Millennial reign. How grand is the thought, how deep, how broad! What a wonderful privilege that we should be permitted to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ and to look forward to a participation in his glories in the future. From this standpoint we see fresh force in his word to the apostles noted in a previous lesson, namely, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" As not every one is worthy to be invited to such participation, so also not every one who is invited will so appreciate the privilege as to participate in this matter joyfully and gratefully. Let us each resolve and say to the Lord, as did James and John, "Lord, we are able"—we are willing. By thine aid we will come off conquerors and more than conquerors.

The New Wine—The Joys of The Kingdom.

Our Lord declared that he would no more participate in the fruit of the vine until he would drink it new in the Kingdom. The thought is not that he would drink new or unfermented wine in the Kingdom with them, but that until in the Kingdom the new or antitypical thing represented in the wine would not be fulfilled. When the Kingdom shall come all the sufferings and trials of the present time will be past, the treading of the winepress, the wine making, will all be over, and instead the wine shall be that of joy and exhilaration, representing the joys and the blessings beyond imagination or expression that will be the portion of all those who truly have fellowship with our Redeemer in the sufferings of this present time and also in the glories that shall follow. The Kingdom time is very close at hand now—certainly 1800 years and more nearer than it was when our Lord spoke these words—and the evidences of its steady inauguration are multiplying on every hand. Our hearts should be proportionately rejoicing in anticipation and we should proportionately be faithful in the present time in the drinking of the cup of sorrow, suffering, shame and contumely, and thus testifying of our love and our loyalty.

Following this was the discourse which has blessed so many of the Lord's people down through intervening centuries recorded by John (chapters 15, 16, 17). Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives—to the Garden of Gethsemane and to fresh trials upon all of the disciples. So it has seemed to us that with every recurrence of the Memorial season, and every fresh symbolization of our pledge to the Lord, come fresh trials, fresh testings, fresh siftings upon the Lord's people. Who shall be able to stand? Let us hold fast the confidence of our rejoicing firm unto the end, hold fast the faithful Word, hold fast the exceeding great and precious promises, hold fast to our Passover Lamb, our Deliverer!

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Denial by Peter and dispersion of apostles foretold	26:31-35	14:27-31	22:31-38	13:31-38

Matthew 26:31-35

Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

Mark 14:27-31

And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

Luke 22:31-38

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

John 13:31-38

Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

SELF-CONFIDENCE IS WEAKNESS—*Reprints*, p. 4711

MATTHEW 26:31-35,69-75.

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed least he fall."—1 Corinthians 10:12.

ST. PETER has proven to be one of the most helpful of Christ's twelve Apostles, and the secret of his assistance lies in the Scriptural revelation of his human nature, its strength and its weaknesses. He was the first of the twelve Apostles to acknowledge the Master as the Messiah, the Sent of God; he was the first of the twelve to deny him. He was the only one of

the twelve who drew his sword in the Master's defense and the only one who, later, swore that he never knew him. By Divine arrangement, to him were given the keys with which to open the door to the High Calling—to the Kingdom. At Pentecost he used one of the keys of power and boldly proclaimed to the Jews the opening of the way to glory, honor and immortality. A little later, at the appointed time, he opened the door to the same High Calling for the Gentiles when, by his preaching, Cornelius, the first Gentile acceptable to God, was received and begotten of the holy Spirit, this fact giving evidence that the middle-wall of partition, previously separating Jew and Gentile, had been broken down. Yet, after all this knowledge and special opportunity, this great man subsequently dissembled to the extent of ignoring God's grace to the Gentiles as being sufficient, discriminating between Jews and Gentiles and their equality before the Lord.

But in all these experiences St. Peter displayed the fact that his heart, at its core, was loyal to God, to truth, to righteousness, and that the weaknesses, the faults, the blemishes of his character were of his flesh and not of his real heart intention. For his denial of the Master he wept bitterly. And for his failure to recognize the Gentiles he made full reparation most humbly. The same exhibition of human nature which makes St. Peter attractive is that which made David, the Prophet and king of Israel, attractive. He was not so saintly that he could not make a mistake. He was not so far above the remainder of humanity that they could not realize in him a fellow-creature. Yet withal he was not so debased as to make him abhorrent. His weaknesses were fully offset by the abundant evidence of his heart-loyalty to God and to righteousness. His very experiences in stumbling and recovery have so saturated his Psalms that they touch a responsive chord in nearly every heart which is loyal to God and which has had any degree of experience with sin and weakness—its own and those of others.

How Others Saw St. Peter

Peter remains even today the most fascinating of that band of men who surrounded our Lord in the days of his earthly pilgrimage. G. C. Morgan said of Peter: "Now I am convinced that in Peter we have the greatest human revealed in the New Testament. I do not say the greatest man in his achievement or in one particular capacity of his being, but the most wonderful revelation of human nature. This man of intelligence was perpetually making blunders. This man of emotions was guilty of such impulse that he worked harm in the very cause he desired to help."

Of St. Peter Southouse says: "Peter was an average man, and for this reason he comes nearer to us than some of his colleagues do. But average men have their splendid moments, such as when St. Peter tried to walk on the water, for in this action he tried to do a thing for which he seemed to have no abilities. He set out to do some thing of which he had no experience. A swift glance amongst the men and women whom we know will be enough to prove that it is never safe to prophesy the achievements of which they are capable, for extraordinary things have been done by the last man in the world."

Dr. Davis said about St. Peter: "Peter was intellectual. He asked Jesus more questions than any other of the Apostles. The capacity for asking questions is a revelation of the intellectual. It may also be a revelation of ignorance; but the man who never asks a question is certainly deficient in his intellectuality. … Peter was a man of heart, sobbing and impetuous. His virtues and his faults had their common root in his enthusiastic disposition. It is to his praise that, along with the weed of rash haste, there grew more strongly into his life the fair plant of burning love and ready reception of Truth.

"Take Heed To Yourselves"

One of the great lessons which the Master taught his followers, and which all in the School of Christ must learn, is that, with burning love and zeal for God and for righteousness, we should also have moderation—exercising the spirit of a sound mind. Christ's followers are exhorted to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Their wisdom is not to be merely the selfish kind, which would look out for its own interests, but of the generous kind which looks out for the interests of all, and particularly for the interests of the Lord's cause and for any share therein which he may entrust to us.

In the course of his instructions, Jesus had said to his disciples, in advance of the trying hour of his betrayal—"All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written (in the Prophets), I will smite the Shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again I will go before you into Galilee."—Matt. 26:31,32.

Then spoke the impulsive Peter, "Though all shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." (V. 33) Alas! how little did this courageous man understand the nature of the trials and difficulties immediately before him, or realize the weak points of his own impulsive nature. Yet if we are grieved with his denial of the Master, we must rejoice to note his faith and love and zeal, as manifested in his acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah and his later declaration that nothing should ever shake his loyalty.

However, it is the specially loyal and ardent that the Adversary seeks most persistently to entrap. Thus Jesus, on this very occasion, explained to St. Peter, "Satan hath desired to have thee that he might sift thee" (Luke 22:31); that he might separate you from your loyalty to Christ and discourage you from discipleship, overwhelming you with fear and with your own weaknesses. The Master added, "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." We may well understand that the same loving Master still assists all of his true, warmhearted followers, whatever their weaknesses of heredity. We may well understand, too, that he is able to develop all such into strong characters, if they abide in his love, continuing in their zeal. He is able to make all things work together for their good—even the weaknesses of heredity may work out for the faithful that "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" which the Lord has promised.

"Before The Cock Crow"

The Master discerned the danger of his loving but impetuous follower, and uttered a warning word, that before cock-crowing he would deny his Master. How improbable this seemed to St. Peter! How he courageously declared, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." And so said all of the eleven. Their hearts were good. And the Lord looketh upon the heart. Our study now passes to verse 69. The Master had been arrested. The scattered disciples had fled. St. John, because of an acquaintance with the high priest's family, penetrated further into the palace than St. Peter, who stood in the court-yard. A maid of the palace recognized St. Peter as one of Jesus' disciples and so declared publicly. Fearful that he might share the fate of the Master, St. Peter denied his identity, declaring that he knew nothing about the matter. A little later another declared the same. St. Peter emphasized his denial with an oath, declaring that he knew not Jesus. Later the word spread throughout the court-yard and many took it up, declaring that they believed what the maid said and that St. Peter had the Galilean dialect, anyway. To emphasize the denial St. Peter began to curse, and to swear that he knew not the man. Directly after, cock-crowing began. Then St. Peter remembered the words of his Master, "Before cock-crowing thou shalt deny me thrice."

Alas! he had been too sure of his own stability, too confident of his loyalty. He was entrapped by the Adversary along the very line of his boasting. Another account says that Jesus turned and looked at Peter! That look was sufficient. It spoke volumes to St. Peter's loyal heart. It was not a look of disdain, nor one of anger, we may be sure. It was a look of loving sympathy. It melted St. Peter's heart. He went out and wept bitterly. The followers of the Master today, beset by weaknesses and frailties and temptations of the Adversary, have the lesson of St. Peter's experience as a warning to be confident in the Lord and to look to him for assistance, rather than to be self-confident. And those who fail today have St. Peter's experience as a lesson of the Lord's sympathy and pity. They, too, should weep bitterly for transgressions and repent and profit by their experiences.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Helper; mutual love; tribulation; Jesus' prayer				14:1–17:26

John 14:1-31

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, 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. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

John 15:1-27

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches:

He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. 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. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

John 16:1-33

These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again,

a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, 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. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

John 17:1-26

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

"I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE."—*Reprints*, p. 2453

JOHN 14:1-14

AFTER washing the disciples' feet, and after the sop had been given to Judas, and he had gone out; and after telling the disciples that they all would be offended that night because of him, and answering Peter that he would deny him thrice before the cock crew, we may well suppose that the hearts of the eleven were heavy, disturbed, troubled with fearful forebodings. Had they indeed been deluded, or had they misunderstood the Master when he told them that he was the Messiah, the heir of the Kingdom, and that they should sit with him in his throne? How could they interpret his language, seeing that only five days before he had received the hosannas of the multitude as the Son of David, the King of Israel, when riding on the ass? What could it mean that the Master was now "exceeding sorrowful" and spoke of betrayal, and of their dispersion and of his own death?

It was in answer to these their troubled thoughts that our Lord spoke to them the beautiful words of comfort and consolation recorded in the 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th chapters of John's Gospel, beginning—"Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

The apostles were already consecrated to God as his servants, before they came in contact with Jesus; they already believed in God, trusted in him, were Israelites indeed without guile. This is testified to further by our Lord's prayer, in which he says, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." The trouble in their hearts was not in respect to the foundations of their hopes, for these were all established. They not only knew and trusted God, but knew and trusted also the promises of God respecting the Kingdom and the blessing that should come to all the families of the earth through it. The whole question before their minds was respecting Jesus:—Was he indeed the Messiah, or had they built some false expectations upon his wonderful words and deeds? How should they understand it if now, after three and a half years of ministry he should die at the hands of his enemies, instead of establishing his Kingdom and subduing all things to himself, as they had expected? He had said that he was going away, and that whither he went they could not come. How could they understand these matters, and harmonize them?

They had not yet learned the meaning of the words which early in his ministry our Lord had addressed to Nicodemus—"Except a man be born again, he cannot **see** the Kingdom of God;"—"Except a man be born of water and of spirit, he cannot **enter into** the Kingdom of God." (John 3:3,5.) But these were spiritual truths, and could not be appreciated until Pentecost would bring them the anointing of the holy spirit, and permit them to "comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths" of the divine plan. But they did need some comfort, and the Master proceeded to give them the best and the strongest spiritual food, instruction, that they were able to receive. He had many things to tell them, but they could not bear them then, could not understand them, until the anointing of the holy spirit would prepare their hearts.

Our Lord began by reviving in them their faith in the Father and in his plan, saying, Ye believe in God,—believe also in me: recognize the fact that all of the Father's plan will be accomplished, and inasmuch as you have seen

my loyalty to the Father in word and in deed, and inasmuch as you have seen the Father's power unto good works manifested in me, let faith's anchor hold; continue to trust me, continue to have confidence, and you shall have a blessing; wait for the development of the divine plan, and it will more than satisfy your highest expectations. You are perplexed because I said that I am going away—going to the Father, but let me explain to you that my going is in your interest: I go to prepare a place for you in my Father's house of many apartments; and as surely as I do this I will come again and receive you unto myself, that we may henceforth be together forever.

Thus, in a few words, the Master declared the work of the Gospel age, pointing to his second advent and the glorification of the Church at the end of the age. He did not here stop to give them detailed explanations of the trials of faith and of patience through which they must pass; this he had done on other occasions, warning and cautioning them (Matt. 24); now their hearts were troubled, and he would merely console them with the assurance that his going away was necessary, that his second coming would be certain, and that the gathering of all to everlasting fellowship with him in the mansions prepared was assured.

The Father's House is really the Universe, and figuratively speaking heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool. Divine providence has made abundant arrangement for the everlasting blessedness of all the sons of God. In the divine arrangement a provision had been made for man when in harmony with God, before the fall, but by reason of sin all of man's rights to a place in the everlasting abode of the just had been forfeited, and at the time of our dear Redeemer's discourse he was in the world for the very purpose of redeeming man and all his forfeited rights and possessions. (Luke 19:10; Eph. 1:14.) The purchase had not yet been completed—our Lord intended to finish the arrangements therefor within a few hours at Calvary. But this would cost the sacrifice of himself—the full surrender of the man Christ Jesus as a man, and he could be with them no longer as a man. The hope was that by his obedience to the divine will he should not only redeem Adam and his race by the sacrifice of himself, the man Christ Jesus, but that he would be raised from death to a new nature on a higher plane—the divine nature. Thus it was necessary that he should go away from them as the man Christ Jesus, and that they should see him no more as the man, but that in due time, at his second coming, they also should be "changed" from human conditions to spirit conditions, and "be like him and see him as he **is**."—1 John 3:2.

It was necessary, also, that, after laying down his life, he should ascend to the Father and present his sacrifice as on man's behalf—as man's ransom—and this he did: the Pentecostal blessing was the divine attestation that the sacrifice for sins was accepted of the Father on man's behalf, and that hence the resulting blessing came forth upon all who accepted Jesus as their Redeemer.

The interim between our Lord's death and his second advent is not long from any standpoint of faith. (1) It is not long from God's standpoint, for, as the Apostle Peter declares, "A thousand years are as one day" with the Lord. (2 Pet. 3:8.) (2) It is not long from the standpoint of true believers, for to none of them is the average of life and waiting above fifty years. We are not to take the longest and most incongruous view of this period—not to feel as tho we had been living for eighteen hundred years in waiting expectancy: "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," and sufficient to each individual is his own share in the trials, polishing and preparations for the coming of the Bridegroom to receive him unto himself. While it is an affair of the Church as a whole in one sense of the word, it is an individual affair in the most important sense of the word to each of the Lord's followers.

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." For three years our Lord had been making himself known to his disciples, and also making them acquainted with the Father's character; and hence, when he now informed them that he was going home to the Father, they were to feel that they knew the Father better than ever, and could better than ever appreciate such a home of righteousness and true happiness as he would provide and maintain. Moreover, their experience with the Lord, and under his instructions and leading, had made them acquainted with the way to God, even tho they did not recognize it as such. Hence our Lord's declaration, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life—no man cometh to the Father but by me."

Our Lord was the "Way" in that only through his sacrifice, the "ransom," imputing his merit to sinners, could they be made acceptable to the Father or be received back again into fellowship with him. He was the "Truth" in the sense that

only through his words, his instructions, his guidance, could there be any hope of coming into harmony with the spirit of God, the spirit of truth. He was the "Life" in that all the race was dead, under divine sentence—had forfeited the rights of life—and none could come again into life conditions except through him—through the life which he gave for ours. Thus he is our Ransom, or Way; our Teacher or Instructor in righteousness, in the truth, and our Life-giver;—"Neither is their salvation in any other." "No man cometh unto the Father but by me"—no man need hope for any place in any of the mansions of the Father's house by any other way, by any other truth, by any other life.—Acts 4:12; John 14:6.

And so also Christ will be the Way, the Truth and the Life to the world of mankind in the Millennial age. And as the Lord, by his sacrifice and offering, opened for the Gospel Church, his bride, an abode in the heavenly division of God's mansion, or house, so by the same sacrifice he redeemed and will restore and give to mankind (to as many as obey him—Acts 3:23) a home in the earthly divisions of the Father's house, which will then again become a Paradise of God.

Much as the apostles esteemed the Master, it was difficult for them to grasp the thought of his perfection—that he was the very image of God in flesh. (1 Tim. 3:16.) They had heard him tell, and indeed knew also from the Law, that "God is a spirit"—not flesh, and hence not visible. They had heard him declare previously, also, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, … he hath **revealed** him." (John 1:18.) But they had never grasped the thought that in seeing Jesus they saw the most that was possible to be seen of the divine character—its likeness, its **perfect image** in flesh. It was therefore necessary that the Master should call their attention to this fact, saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He did not mean them to understand that he was the Father, for this he had distinctly disclaimed repeatedly, telling them that the Father was greater, and that the works which he did were done by the Father's power. (John 14:28,10.) Nor did he mean them to understand that in seeing him they had seen an invisible being, as God is invisible. He did mean them to understand that in seeing his character, his motives, his love, they had seen a true expression that most faithfully represented the Father in all these particulars.

He would have them understand the unity subsisting between the Father and himself, his will was buried into the Father's will, he would have no other; "Not my will, but thine, be done." He would have them understand that the Father, by his power, by his spirit, dwelt in him also, so that his words and works fully and completely represented the Father. He declared to them that the works which they had witnessed during his ministry fully attested this power of the Highest resting upon him and operating through him. And this seems to have fully satisfied the apostles, and to have brought rest to their hearts.

As a further explanation of the necessity for his going to the Father, our Lord declares that as a result of his going his followers should do greater works than he had done. It may perhaps be proper to think that some of these "greater works" will occur after the Kingdom has been established—the great work of awakening the world of mankind from the sleep of death and restoring the willing and obedient to the full perfection of human life. That, truly, will be a greater work than our Lord Jesus accomplished at his first advent, for then his greatest work was the awakening of the sleeping ones without bringing them to the full perfection of human nature.

But in our opinion this is not the only sense in which the Lord's followers are to understand that their works shall be greater than those of the Master. The Lord's works were on a fleshly plane as a matter of necessity. The holy spirit had not yet come—could not come until after he had given the **ransom price** and had presented it to the Father, and it had been accepted. Consequently, those to whom he ministered (even his disciples, not being begotten of the spirit) could not be instructed from that standpoint. Their ears were heavy as respected earthly things, but in regard to heavenly things they could understand nothing; for, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is since Pentecost that "God hath revealed them [spiritual things] unto us by his spirit," which "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. 2:10,14; John 3:12.

In the midst of the house of servants, not yet begotten of the spirit—not yet granted the privilege of sonship (John 1:12), our Lord could do and teach on no higher plane than the earthly, except as he "spoke unto the people in parables and dark sayings," which in due time the

Church would understand, under the leading of the holy spirit. It was in consequence of this that our Lord's miracles were all physical, and his plain understandable teachings were all on a plane appreciable by the natural man.

But when the holy spirit was come, after Pentecost, the Lord's people, in his name, and as his representatives, began to do greater, more wonderful works than those which he himself had performed. Did the Lord open the eyes of the blind? His followers were privileged to open the eyes of men's understandings. Did the Lord heal the physically sick? His disciples were permitted to heal the spiritually diseased. Did the Lord cure physical leprosy? It was the privilege of his followers to heal spiritual leprosy, sin. Did our Lord revive the dead? It was the privilege of his followers to preach a Gospel by which many "passed from death unto life" in a much higher sense. And these privileges of these still greater works are yet with the Lord's people. Blessed are those who appreciate their great privileges, and are about the Father's business with energy, with zeal. But those who, having received a talent of the Lord, bury it in the earth—in business, in pleasure, in society—cannot expect to be received of the Master at his second coming, nor to hear him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

As indicating how fully he would still continue to be the active agent of the Father in all things relating to the Church, our Lord assures us that such things as we ask of the Father he **(Jesus) will do for us**, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. The Father hath committed all things into the hands of the Son; nevertheless, in everything the Son acknowledges the Father and gives glory to his name.

"HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER."—*Reprints*, p. 2455

JOHN 14:15-27

CONTINUING his discourse to his troubled disciples at the time of his instituting the Memorial of his own death, our Lord not only promised to come again and receive them to himself in due time, but additionally he promised the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, during the interim of his absence. Since he was about to lay down the human nature he could no longer be with them as the man Christ Jesus—in his resurrection he would become again a spirit being like unto the Father, and could no more be seen by his disciples than the Father could be seen by them, until the time would come when the entire Church, complete, would be "changed," made "like him" (and like the Father) and see him, and be with him, and share his glory. His resurrection "change" made necessary either the leaving of his disciples alone, without any help or aid during the Gospel age, or else that help be granted them in some other manner. The few occasions on which our Lord appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, for a few moments each, were miraculous manifestations, simply for the purpose of assuring them that he was no longer dead, and that having risen from the dead he was no longer controlled by human conditions. Hence, as a part of the lesson, the flesh bodies in which he manifested himself appeared miraculously and disappeared likewise—he came and went as the wind.—John 3:8; Luke 24:26,31; Acts 1:3,4.

The holy spirit would be another Comforter, but the comfort would be of the same kind. Indeed, our word "comfort" does not properly represent the thought of the text, which rather is, to strengthen, to sustain: the holy spirit would not be merely a consoler of woes, a soother of fears, in the sense of our word comfort, but it would quicken their understandings, strengthen their zeal, and energize them for doing and enduring such things as divine providence might permit to come upon them for their correction in righteousness, and in order to make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

The holy spirit or holy influence that should come to the Church and abide with it through the age, to supervise and direct in the interest of the faithful, was to be a representative of both the Father and the Son. Indeed, the thought that the holy spirit is the representative of the Lord Jesus with the Church is so strongly put that sometimes the Lord himself and his spirit or influence are spoken of interchangeably; as for instance, when he said to them, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." (Matt. 28:20.) And again, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to

you [through the holy spirit]." And again, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I [through the holy spirit] in you, … and I will manifest myself to him [through the holy spirit]. … And we [the Father and the Son] will come unto him, and make our abode with him [through the holy spirit]." — Vss. 18,20,23.

Thus it is that those who receive the holy spirit, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, the spirit of the Father, the spirit of Christ, are enabled to **see** Jesus, and have a new life begun in them. (Vs. 19.) They see with the eyes of their understanding, and do not walk in darkness. They **hear** the voice of the Lord, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." They **taste** the good Word of God, and realize that he is very gracious. They **feel** the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, producing in them love for the brethren and all the good fruits of the spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love.—Isa. 30:21; 1 Pet. 2:3; Rom. 5:5; Col. 3:12, 13.

These experiences, however, are promised conditionally—they are not promised to those who have never heard of the grace of God, but to those who have heard, to "as many as the Lord our God shall call," who, hearing his commandments, are moved by responsive love to do them. Such have the Father's love, such have the love of the Son, and such shall have the fellowship both of the Father and the Son through the medium or channel of the holy spirit. This is declared in the 15th and 16th verses, and again in the 21st, 23rd and 24th. Not only are faith and obedience of the heart necessary, before any can come into the spirit-begotten condition, but a continuance and growth in faith and in obedience are necessary in order to a continuance and growth in the spirit of holiness, or the holy spirit, the spirit of fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

It is one thing to have a begetting of the spirit, and quite another matter to attain to that condition urged by the Apostle, saying, "Be ye **filled** with the spirit." (Eph. 5:18.) The measure of our filling will correspond with the measure of our emptying of the spirit of selfwill, and filling with the spirit of faith and obedience. And altho the obedience cannot do otherwise than manifest itself in the daily life, nevertheless it is the obedience of the **intention**, of the **will**, of the **heart**, that the Lord regards in his consecrated people, and not merely the control of the earthen vessel. Hence, some whose hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord may be pleasing to him, while not the most pleasing to some of those with whom they come in contact; while others, "highly esteemed amongst men" because of outward moralities, may be an "abomination" in the sight of God, because of coldness or dishonesty of heart. (Luke 16:15.) Nevertheless, he that hath the new hope in him, and the new spirit, will seek to purify himself, not only in his thoughts, but also in his words and deeds and all his affairs, inward and outward.—1 John 3:3.

It should not be overlooked that, altho the holy spirit, like all other favors, is of the Father, it, like all others of his gifts, comes to us through the Son, and not by any direct relationship between the Father and us. As we saw in our previous lesson that our prayers addressed to the Father are to be answered by the Son,—"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it;"—so we see in this lesson that the gift of the holy spirit comes to us, not because of any direct relationship between the Father and us, but at the instance of our Lord Jesus. "**I** will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter"—at my request and my account the Father will do this for you. (Vs. 16.) The same thought is again expressed in vs. 26, "The holy spirit whom the Father will send in my name."

The lesson to us here is, that our only standing before the Father as yet is a **reckoned one**—in Christ, as members of his body,—our Lord Jesus represents the Father to us and represents us to the Father. The comfort and strength of the holy spirit imparted to us is the Father's, the spirit of truth, all of which emanates from the Father: it reaches us not directly, but only through our Lord and Head, Jesus. In a word, we have no standing whatever with the Father, and will not have any, until by his grace, through our Lord Jesus, we shall have been "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," and by the "change" of the first resurrection shall be perfected in his likeness, which is the divine likeness: then and thereaf-

ter, being actually perfect, and not merely reckonedly perfect, we may have an individual standing with the Father, but not before.

Hence it is that if any one lose his relationship to Christ through the loss of his faith in the precious blood, or through the loss of the holy spirit, through wilful sin, such an one falls out of the protection, the care, the covering of Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant,—and falls into the hands of the living God,—which means a judgment according to facts and works; and to all imperfect creatures this means death. (Heb. 10:31.) Hence also the exhortation of the Scriptures, that we abide in him, that we remain under the blood of sprinkling, that we abide in his love.—John 15:4, 6,10; 1 John 2:24-29.

Our Lord pointedly declares that he who does not seek to please him by conforming to his instructions, thereby manifests that he does not love him. (Vss. 23,24.) Surely there can be no better test of love than devotion, and no better test of devotion than obedience. Our enlightened consciences render hearty assent to the Master's words, and with the Apostle we exclaim, "The love of Christ constraineth us, for we thus judge that, if one died for all, then all were dead, and that he died for all, that they who live [justified and begotten to newness of life] should henceforth not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again."—2 Cor. 5:14,15.

The Master pointed out to us distinctly that in keeping his sayings we are not merely pleasing and obeying him, but that he is in all this matter the mouthpiece of Jehovah, the Father, and consequently that in pleasing and obeying him we are pleasing and obeying the Father. This much he could tell them while still with them, but he had many things that he desired to make known to them, and that were necessary for them to know, but that they could not receive as yet, because the holy spirit had not yet come upon them, and could not until after the ransom sacrifice had been made at Calvary and offered in the Holy of Holies, after he ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us.—John 7:39; Heb. 9:24.

Our Lord's assurance is that this Comforter or strengthener, the holy spirit of the Father, sent on account of and at the instance of Jesus our Redeemer, Mediator and Head, will be our instructor—using various instrumentalities for bringing the instruction to us—the Word of truth, the writings of the apostles, and the various helps and agencies which the Lord, through the holy spirit, has and shall from time to time, as needed, provide to his flock.

How beautiful, how consoling to their troubled hearts, and how refreshing to ours, is the legacy of love and peace left to us by our dear Redeemer, as expressed in the 27th verse! "Peace I leave with you, **my peace** I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This peace and joy which surpasseth human understanding, was not given to the world, nor is it given to the nominal Christian professor, nor to the formalist and ritualist, however zealous they may be. It is intended for and can be had only by those who receive riches of grace through the holy spirit—those who by obedience to the truth and its spirit grow up into Christ their living Head in all things. Such have peace, deep and abiding, and ever increasing proportionately as they come to comprehend with all saints through faith and obedience the riches of divine grace—the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God.

This is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference and carelessness, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ—"my peace." Looking back we can see that the Master preserved his peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice and power, a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord's faithful—that nothing shall be any means hurt his faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes.

THE TRUE VINE AND ITS FRUIT.—*Reprints*, p. 3544

JOHN 15:1-12.

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."—John 15:8.

FOLLOWING the institution of the Memorial Supper, the Lord and his disciples, excepting Judas, who had gone to betray him, went forth from the upper room toward the Garden of Gethsemane. It was while the disciples were troubled in heart in respect to various things the Lord had said unto them and his declarations respecting his coming death, and while the Lord, too, had in mind the parting from his disciples and their future experiences, that he gave them the parable of the Vine. Some have inferred that this, like other of the Lord's parables, was an object lesson—that something seen by them all suggested it. Some surmise that the vineyards on the route offered the suggestion, and others that their journey probably led past the golden gate of the Temple, on which there was a large golden vine, which Josephus describes as having had clusters as large as a man: another Jewish writer declares that its "leaves and buds were wrought in gleaming, reddish gold, but its clusters of yellow gold and its grapestones of precious stones." According to Jewish authorities, this vine kept growing by means of offerings of a leaf or a cluster or a branch by the wealthy, just as some to-day present memorial windows to churches. In any event the Lord and the apostles must frequently have seen this golden vine.

The Lord announced himself as the true Vine and his Father as the true Husbandman who planted the true vine, and his followers as the true branches of that vine. The expression "true vine" suggests a false vine, and this thought is accentuated and elaborated in our Lord's last message to his people in the symbols of Revelation. There he speaks of the gathering of the fruitage of the "vine of the earth," and the casting of the same into the wine-press of the wrath of God at the end of this age. (Rev. 14:19.) There was, therefore, a deeper meaning in our Lord's words, "true vine," than the apostles could have possibly gathered from them. We who are living at a time when both the true vine of the Father's planting and the false vine of the earth, earthly, have developed, have opportunity for noticing the difference between the two vines, and of noticing also that the vine of the earth is a counterfeit of the heavenly vine. In proportion as we see this matter clearly it will assist us not only in the understanding of the Lord's parable, but also in our application of it in our daily lives. We will be in less danger of misunderstanding, misconstruing and being deceived by the false vine, or by the false branches and the false principles represented in connection with its development, for it is not under the divine Husbandman's care.

The True Vine

The vine of the earth is the nominal Christian system organized along the lines of earthly wisdom. Its branches are the various sects and parties of Christendom. Its fruitage is cathedrals, temples, tabernacles, chapels, orphanages, hospitals, etc., political power, honor of men, wealth and social standing. It is great and influential in the world, and has the spirit of the world running through its branches and governing all of its affairs, and brings forth a fruitage which is not entirely bad, but which is entirely earthly, and which is relished and appreciated because it is earthly and practical rather than heavenly. This vine has grown wonderfully, has some three hundred branches and claims four hundred million adherents, and through its untold wealth of property and in its adherents it may be said to practically control the wealth of the world.

Great is the vine of the earth, wonderful in the eyes of men. But the harvesting time will show that these nominal systems are not the vine of Jehovah's right-hand planting (Isa. 60:21), and it is, therefore, the system which the Lord declares he will utterly uproot and destroy, and whose destruction is so graphically described in Revelation. In the wine-press of the wrath of God, in the great time of trouble which is nearing—which we believe the Scriptures to teach will be fully upon the world ten years from now—the blood of Babylon's grapes will mean a flood of trouble and anguish to the world. By that time, however, the true vine and its branches will all have been glorified, and the

results of their proper fruit-bearing will mean blessings to all the families of the earth.

Let us consider carefully the "true Vine" and our relationship as branches of it, and the character of the fruit which the great Husbandman expects, that this last of our Lord's parables may greatly profit us, strengthen us, encourage us, assist us as it was intended that it should.

The Vine of The Earth

In the true Vine the branches are not sects, parties, and it is only by delusions of the Adversary that any who are his people recognize these systems of men. As the apostles were not Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, etc., neither should any of the Lord's followers be such, and it is only because we have been blinded by the Adversary's misteachings that any of the true children of God are in such error, and so we understand this parable and other teachings of the Word. The apostles did not join each other, but each Apostle was united in heart, in faith, in hope, in love, in devotion to the Lord himself. And so we should not join the apostles, nor say, I am of Paul, I am of Peter, etc., but each should individually join the Lord as a member, as a branch; each must have the sap of the vine if it would bear fruit. Sectarian sap is of no value in producing the real fruitage which the Lord desires—it is only a hindrance. By this we do not mean that none of the branches of the true Vine are by mistake associated with the nominal Church system, the vine of the earth. We recognize that this is so, and we also recognize the Lord's voice calling—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues" —the great troubles coming upon her, mother and daughters.

As the branches do not represent denominations and sects, but the individuals who are united to the Lord, so the teaching of the parable is that our Lord does not prune sects and denominations but the individual Christians, whoever and wherever they may be—"The Lord knoweth them that are his." Our Lord's word on the subject is, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth [pruneth] it, that it may bear more fruit." Everything in the Scriptures teaches us that our salvation and our relationship to the Lord are individual, personal matters; that we are not saved by congregations and sects and parties and families, but that individually and personally we must be united to the vine if we would have the sap, if we would have the life, if we would be counted members of the Church, which is his body.

Many Illustrations of Our Oneness

It is remarkable how fully the Lord has covered the whole range of illustration in describing the oneness subsisting between himself and his consecrated followers. He gives us an illustration from the mineral kingdom, saying that we are living stones built together upon him as the foundation and capstone, to be the Temple of our God. From the animal kingdom our Lord drew illustrations of this oneness, likening himself to the good Shepherd and his true followers to the sheep under his care, one with him in fellowship. From the vegetable kingdom he drew the illustration of this lesson—I am the Vine, of which my true disciples are the branches. From the family relationship he drew an illustration of the true husband and true wife, and their complete, thorough union of heart and of every interest. From the family again he drew another illustration representing the Creator as the Father, himself as the elder Son and all of his followers as brethren. From the human body we have another illustration, Jesus himself being the Head over the Church, which is his body, for, as the Apostle declares, we are members in particular of the body of Christ. In proportion as our faith can grasp these declarations, in proportion as we can realize their truthfulness, in that same proportion we may have strong faith and confidence that he who has begun the good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. Whoever of a loyal, obedient heart can exercise faith has thus provided for himself strength and grace for every time of need, for every hour of trial, for every difficulty and perplexity and for all the affairs of life—the ballast which will give equilibrium and enable us to profit by all of life's experiences, the bitter as well as the sweet.

Our Lord's declaration that where two or three of his disciples are met together in his name they constitute a Church or body of

Christ, and he as the head is with them for their blessing in proportion as their hearts are loyal to him and seeking his guidance, leads us to conclude likewise that wherever two or three of his members are there we have a representation of the vine, and they may have all the blessings of branches and all the privileges of fruit bearing. Very evidently, however, the Lord did not wish us to understand that in every little company of those who have named the name of Christ there would be so thorough a purging, so thorough a burning, that only the true branches would remain. His intimation is that he deals with us individually, as well as collectively, and that if we would maintain our personal relationship to him it must be by the receiving of the sap from the vine, the receiving of the holy Spirit, as one of the results of the union and fellowship with him.

So surely as we receive the holy Spirit into good and honest hearts the result will be a tendency to fruit-bearing, but the illustration our Lord gives teaches that some may become true branches in the vine and yet overlook and not possess the fruit-bearing disposition. Sometimes a healthy, strong branch develops from a good stock and root but has no fruit-bearing qualities. The husbandman with a trained eye discerns between buds which would bring forth grape clusters and the buds which would have only leaves. Those which do not have the fruit buds are known as "suckers"—because they merely suck the juices of the vine and bring forth no fruitage such as the husbandman seeks. These are pruned or cut off, so that the strength of the vine may not be wasted in such merely outward splendor, but may be conserved for its purposes of fruit bearing. Evidently a class of true professors resemble these suckers, who selfishly would draw to themselves as much of the righteousness of the Vine as possible, and would make a fair outward show in the world with leaves or professions, but would have no thought of bringing forth the fruitage which the Lord requires and which can only be brought forth through sacrifice.

The Object of Pruning

Aside from the suckers there are branches which, while having fruit buds, would never bring the fruit to a good ripe development if allowed to take their own course and to develop themselves as branches merely, and hence the wise husbandman, noting the bud, is pleased with it, and pinches off the sprout of the vine beyond the bud, not to injure the branch but to make it more fruitful. So with us who have not only joined the Lord by faith and consecration and been accepted as branches, but who as branches desire to bring forth good fruitage, which the Lord seeks in us—we need the Husbandman's care so that we may bring forth the much fruit, so that the fruit that we bear may be more to his pleasement, large fruit, luscious fruit, good fruit, valuable fruit. The methods of the Lord's prunings should be understood by all the branches, otherwise they may be discouraged and droop and fail to bring forth the proper fruitage.

It would appear that the great Husbandman prunes the branches of the Christ sometimes by taking away earthly wealth or property, or sometimes by hindering cherished schemes and plans. Sometimes he prunes us by permitting persecutions and the loss of name and fame, and sometimes he prunes by permitting the loss of earthly friendships toward which the tendrils of our hearts extended too strongly, and which would have hindered us from bearing the much fruit which he desires. Sometimes he may permit sickness to afflict us as one of these prunings, as the prophet declared, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." Many others of the Lord's dear people have found some of their most valuable lessons on the bed of affliction.

Some have written us how they were too busy, too much absorbed in earthly matters and interests that seemed to press for attention, so that they had not the proper time to give to the study of the Divine Plan of the Ages and the cultivation of their own hearts and the bearing of the fruits of the Spirit, and how the Lord in much mercy had laid them aside for a season, and given them the opportunities which they needed for thought and for Christian development, for growth in knowledge that they might have growth in grace. So far, then, from the true branches esteeming the prunings of the Husbandman to be injuries and wounds, they should conclude that according to the good promises of the Word all things are working

together for good to them that love him —to the true fruit-bearing branches of the true Vine. Such prunings, instead of causing discouragements, should be to us, rightly understood, sources of encouragement. We realize that the world is left to itself; that the vine of the earth has not special prunings of the Lord, and that when we have these special prunings it is an evidence that the Father himself loveth us and is caring for our best interests.

"Now Ye Are Clean"

Applying this lesson to his disciples our Lord intimated that the proper pruning work had already been done on them up to date, and in the Lord's providences they had been purged of an unfruitful branch, Judas. He therefore said to them, "Now ye are clean through the word I have spoken unto you" —you are justified and accepted because of your faith, obedience and loyalty. What a joy the eleven must have felt when they heard those words, and what a joy we may properly feel as we realize the truth of the same words applied to ourselves. Praise the Lord for this great gift of his favor through Christ —that we have in him not only the forgiveness of sins and the covering of his robe of righteousness, but that through him we are accepted of the Father as branches of the true Vine, clean through the acceptance of the message or word sent to us. But this is not all, this is merely the beginning. The thing necessary to be remembered is that our ultimate blessing and acceptance of the Father will depend upon our abiding continually in this blessed close relationship of branches in the Vine.

If we will not bear the fruitage we may not remain in this relationship; if we do bear the fruits, if we have that spirit and disposition, and desire the Lord's grace and strength and assistance, his grace will be sufficient for every time of need and we will come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. The bearing of the fruit which the Father desires cannot be accomplished, we cannot be pleasing to him, except as we are related to Christ and as his fruit is born in us by our relationship to him and the power of his Spirit and his Word working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. The assurance is that if we abide in him we will bear much fruit and that without him we can do nothing, have no fruit that the Father will accept.

What is the nature of this fruit-bearing? How may we know the fruitage which the Father seeks? We answer that many, under the misguidance and wrong example of the vine of the earth, incline to think of grand earthly temples, orphanages, etc., as being the fruits which the Lord desires to see well developed. We answer, No. If these were the fruits, then Jesus and the apostles bore no fruits: they built no churches or cathedrals or temples, they neither built nor founded orphanages or asylums or hospitals. If these were the fruitage which the Father seeks, then the Lord and the apostles erred totally. But we hold that they did not err, that the error rather has come from another quarter; that the vine of the earth guided by the spirit of the world has taken a utilitarian direction, and is bringing forth the fruitage of the kind which the world approves.

The World Makes Provision

We are not saying a word against hospitals, asylums, etc.,—we believe them to be very good, very desirable, very proper adjuncts of society and civilization,—but we believe that the world is thoroughly capable of providing for all those things, and that the world is quite ready to provide for them; indeed we find that the world really does make provision as it is. For instance, the various St. Francis, St. James, and St. Agnes hospitals, asylums, etc., Protestant and Catholic, all seek support from the donations of the State for their maintenance and all get them, and the State might just as well, and better in some respects, have full charge of these. And indeed we are not sure but that it does have full charge of them now as fully as possible. Not that we wish to intimate that there are none of the true branches of the true Vine connected with any of these earthly institutions; but we hold that these are not their fruitage according to the Lord's parable, and that if they are members of the body as well as members of Babylon, they must bear the fruit of the Vine of the Father's planting as well as be identified with other good fruits.

The fruits of the Spirit are sometimes taken to be activities in the service of the Truth, as, for instance, the scattering of the Truth, the talking of the Truth, the bringing of some out of

darkness into the light and knowledge of the Truth, the expenditure of money for the publishing of the Truth,—all these are sometimes considered the fruits which the Lord expects of the branches. Not so! The fruits are something still nobler and grander than these things, and are described by the Apostle as the fruits of the Spirit. The Spirit of the Vine must permeate all the branches, and the fruit of the Vine must be in every branch. These fruits of the Spirit are enumerated—meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love; if these things be in us and abound, says the Apostle, they make us to be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

These fruits are all one in some particulars: that is to say, the essence of proper Christian patience is love; the essence of hope and faith and joy is love for our Father, and our confidence in his love, as expressed in his promises to us. So the name of all these fruits and graces of the Spirit is expressed in the one word, Love. These are the fruits which must be found in every branch if it would retain its place as a branch and be of the glorified Vine by and by. Let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that other things will do, and that we may pass the divine inspection without these. The other things, the good works, the seeking of the Truth, the distribution of the literature, etc., are only to be acceptable to the Father in proportion as they are the results of this fruitage in our hearts. The Apostle expresses this forcefully when he says, If I should give my body to be burned and all my goods to feed the poor, and have not love, it would profit me nothing.

The same thought is true in regard to service to the Lord: if we should spend every day and every hour in harvest work, if we should give all our money to printing tracts and books, or use ourselves in any other way for the service of the Lord's cause, it would profit nothing unless it were the result of love in our hearts. We see, then, that the thought is that we must cultivate in our hearts the graces of the holy Spirit, meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., love, and that we must have these in abounding measure to be pleasing to the Lord, to bear "much fruit." The expression of these fruits, therefore, undoubtedly will be through various channels, perhaps of giving goods to the poor, perhaps of such faithfulness in the presentation of the Truth as might lead us to martyrdom, that our bodies might be burned. If the burning of the body or the loss of all our goods comes in such a course through our faithfulness to the principles of righteousness, through our love and loyalty to the Lord, then happy are we indeed.

Withered Branches Burned

The declaration that those who will not bear the fruit of the Vine will be cut off from being branches and will wither and ultimately be burned, seems to imply the second death, utter destruction of the class indicated. This is not the worldly class, for they were never united to Christ, never were branches in the Vine and hence never were on trial in this respect. It refers only to those who have gone the lengths of making a full consecration to the Lord, a full union with him, a thorough consecration and begetting of the holy Spirit. These words, then, seem to correspond with the Apostle's declaration, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The world is not in the hands of the living God, but is at the present time reckoned as dead in Adam, under the Adamic sentence, not being judged by the Lord. The Church only is reckoned as free from Adamic condemnation and placed on trial or judgment, and these only, therefore, could fall out of the hands of Christ, the Mediator, and into the hands of the Father in the sense here indicated. Being cut off from Christ their case is hopeless; for such we can look forward to nothing better than the second death. Even then we are glad that the theory of eternal torment is not true; that when they die the death of utter extinction they have suffered all that God has pronounced, terrible as that loss will be to those who appreciate everlasting life.

This statement about the branches cut off, withered and burned does not seem to take cognizance at all of the household of faith class, which, though believing in Jesus, never comes to the point of becoming branches or members in the Christ. Nor does it seem to take into consideration the great company. Indeed this class is mentioned in but few Scriptures and then obscurely, the Lord thus indicating, we believe, that none were called to such a company. The Apostle speaks of some as being "saved so as by

fire," and a little suggestion in this same line might be taken from the Master's words that, being cut off as branches, they wither and are burned—burned as branches, destroyed as members of the company to which they originally were by covenant attached, but not necessarily destroyed individually to all eternity. The Apostle speaks of this class saying that themselves shall be saved so as by fire, but their works shall suffer loss. Perhaps we should consider these as being included in this manner in the Lord's statement.

Fruits of Membership In The Vine

Our Lord proceeds to tell us what some of the fruits of this union with him will be:—

First, such may ask whatsoever they will and it shall be done unto them. There is only one condition or limitation, namely, that before they are thus prepared to ask they must see to it that they give attention to the Lord's word that they may ascertain what is his will and what they may ask according to his will. Those who abide in Christ must have no will of their own, theirs must be the will of their Head, and their Head has already declared that his will is the Father's will. These, then, are the limitations, that we have the Father's will in our hearts and the Father's promises in our hearts; then our requests will be in conformity to these and the Lord will be pleased to grant all such.

The second fruitage or result will be that the Father will be glorified the more in proportion as our fruit increases, and on these terms our discipleship shall continue, namely, that we shall habitually seek to know and to do the Father's will and to glorify and honor him by lives obedient to his will. Anything short of this would forfeit our discipleship. Not that it would be forfeited instantly, as though the Lord would take occasion to cast us off lightly; but that it is a part of our covenant relationship that we will grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in harmony with God, grow in the fruits of the Spirit, and if we turn from this engagement or contract we cannot be considered as retaining our relationship as disciples, members.

The third fruit or evidence of this membership in the Vine and of our continued growth as branches is stated in verse nine, namely, that as the Father loved the Lord Jesus, the Vine, so our Redeemer loves us, his branches or members. What a wonderful thought this is, that our Master has toward us the same kind of love that the Father has toward him! Could our faith always grasp this thought and maintain this hold, we should indeed have nothing to wish or to fear—our summer would last all the year. The next thought suggested is that having reached, having attained this high position in the Lord's favor, if we are his disciples and truly appreciate what he has done for us in this respect, we will desire to continue in his love. Next in order come the terms and conditions upon which we may continue in that love, namely, that we keep his commandments.

By way of showing us that this is not an unreasonable proposition, our Lord declared that these are the same terms on which the Father deals with him, namely, "Even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." We cannot expect to abide in the Lord's love and be careless of his injunctions. The measure of our faithfulness to him will be indicated by our obedience to him, as the measure of his love for the Father was indicated by his obedience to the Father. The Apostle intimates this same thought and adds a little to it, saying, "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:3). It is not enough that we keep the commandments, but that we keep them lovingly and loyally, of good pleasure, that we do not consider them grievous but rather are to be glad to be in line, in harmony, with all the Lord's righteous provisions and arrangements. Let us all more and more seek this spirit of full heart-harmony with all the principles of righteousness laid down by our Lord Jesus—his commandments.

Our Lord's commandments are not the ten commandments of Moses, but more or less according to the standpoint of expression. They are less in the sense of requirements on our flesh; they are more as respects the requirements on our hearts. Briefly summed up he tells us that his law is love with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength to the Father and for our neighbor as for ourselves. This is possible to our regenerated hearts though not possible to our imperfect flesh. The Lord's requirement,

therefore, is that with our hearts we serve this law of God and with our flesh we shall do to the best of our ability, and we have the assurance that in the resurrection we shall have the new bodies in which we shall be able to serve the Lord thoroughly, completely, satisfactorily.

My Joy Remain, Your Joy Be Full

Our Lord concluded this little lesson, so short and yet so full of meaning and depth, by an illustration of why he gave it, saying, "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be filled full." This is my commandment that ye love one another even as I have loved you." Wonderful words of life are these that have come down to us through the centuries, that have helped to cheer and encourage so many of the Lord's followers in the narrow way.

Many are the objections that are raised to pure and undefiled religion: Some complain that it is gloomy, joyless, a fetter upon heart and brain; that it drives men from every temple of pleasure with a whip of small cords; that it posts notice, "No trespassing here," in every field of enjoyment. Our answer must be that this is a mistake: that these are the words of those who know not, neither do they understand the things whereof they speak. Those who have truly made a covenant with the Lord, who have truly accepted him, who have truly laid down their lives at his feet and become his followers in sincerity, are filled with his joy, as he promised; and it is an increasing joy, which day by day and year by year becomes more nearly complete—a joy which will not be complete, however, until that which is perfect shall come and that which is in part shall be done away, until in the resurrected condition we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known and appreciate to the full the joys of our Lord, hearing his welcome invitation, "Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

We enter now into those joys through faith, through anticipation, through rest of heart, but by and by we shall enter upon them in the actual sense. Meantime it is the world, that has not submitted itself to the Lord, that has not appreciation of the joys of the Lord, that is full of selfishness and ambition and strife and envy; it knoweth us not even as it knew him not; it knows not of our joys in the Master's service even as it never appreciated the joys of our Lord in doing the Father's will, even at the sacrifice of his life.

"As I Have Loved You"

It does not astonish us that the Lord directs that we love one another, but we stand amazed with the thought contained in these words, "As I have loved you." How can we love one another with the same love which the Lord has for each of us? is our first inquiry. We reply that this is impossible at first, but as we become more and more filled with the Spirit of the Lord, we approximate more nearly to this standard of perfect love to all that are his, a love that not only would refuse to do injury to another, but a love which would delight to do good to a brother, yea, to do good at the expense of one's own time and convenience. Thus Jesus loved us all and redeemed us with his precious blood, and to whatever extent we grow in grace, knowledge and love of him, in that same proportion we are Christlike and have a Christlike love. This love is the fulfilling of the Law, and whoever has such a love for the brethren will have undoubtedly a full, sympathetic love for the whole groaning creation, and will be glad to do now the little that is possible to be done on their behalf, and doubly glad that the Lord in his own good time and pleasure has a great and wonderful blessing for every member of Adam's race.

Some one has said, "Do not imagine that you have got these things because you know how to get them. As well try to feed upon a cook book." There is a good and an important thought here: it is very important that we should know these things and understand the Lord's plans and appreciate the principles laid down in his Word, but though we had all knowledge it would not benefit us unless we used it. Let us not think of getting the benefit of the Lord's gracious provisions by merely learning how to get them, but let us take the necessary steps—see that we are fully his, see that we live close to him, see that we are fruit bearers, see that we abide in his love, in the Father's love, in the love for one another, which he has enjoined.

THE HOLY SPIRIT PROMISED—*Reprints*, p. 4164

JOHN 16:4-15.

"I will pray the Father, and he will send you another comforter,
that he may abide with you forever.—John 14:16.

OUR LORD, on the way to Gethsemane on the night of his betrayal, gave the discourse of this lesson to his disciples. He had been telling them what they must expect as his followers; that they would be misunderstood, persecuted, reviled, because of their faithfulness to him and to the brethren whom he represented—"But these things have I told you that when the time shall come ye may remember that I told you of them." (v. 4.) He had not told them of all that they might expect, intimating this when he said, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now." The same may be said to be true of all that ever become the Lord's disciples. They see a sufficiency of light for one step at a time, but the trials and difficulties future are graciously held from them that they may not be overwhelmed by them. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." This was not deception, not the alluring of his disciples into doing something contrary to their wills. At the very outstart the Master assures us that unless we take up our cross and follow him we cannot be his disciples. If we take this step honestly and sincerely we see plenty of difficulty in connection therewith, without knowing particulars of the troubles to come. Indeed, if we knew of our future trials we should be unjustly overwhelmed thereby, since at first we could but imperfectly appreciate the meaning of our Lord's words, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in your weakness," and the assurance that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able, but will with every temptation provide a way of escape. (2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor. 10:13.) Hence, as the Lord's people take one step after another they find these promises quite true; they find themselves sustained, they find they have no more than they can bear, and that although their trials are indeed severer than at the beginning of the way, yet these can be overcome, because of growth in grace and knowledge.

The power by which the Lord would grant his aid to his persecuted followers during his personal absence was something difficult for them to understand. In our lesson the Master makes the matter as plain as possible, calling the power, the influence which he would exert on their behalf the holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the truth. As the influence thus to be exerted upon them would be sustaining and comforting, the Lord denominated this Spirit or power a comforter, a sustainer, a helper. He did not say that he would send another person to deal with them; no other person could deal with them better than himself. It was a spirit, an influence, a power which he would send, and this would fully represent the Father and fully represent himself, so that in having the holy Spirit they would be having the fellowship of the Father and the fellowship of the Son. This holy Spirit is properly enough spoken of in the masculine, even as the Father and the Son are represented in the masculine. As it stands the propriety is obvious.

The Holy Trinity

During the "dark ages" a great deal of confusion of thought prevailed and the clear teachings of the Scriptures were lost sight of. Indeed, the Bible for a time was little in use. The Bishops were credited with being the equals of the apostles in inspiration, under the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession. Hence, when these met in councils their vote or decision on a doctrine was accepted as apostolic, authoritative. Seemingly it was overlooked that the Lord chose but twelve apostles and said nothing about any successors to them, and that in Revelation he intimated there would be no successors when he pointed out the New Jerusalem with twelve foundations only, and in those twelve foundations the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.—Rev. 21:14.

Quite early in the second century the influence of the Grecian philosophy upon the Church is quite noticeable, and various errors became prominent. One of these especially related to our Lord, practically putting him on a par with the Grecian philosophers, Socrates and Plato, and denying his special birth and his pre-human existence. In combating those errors some, loyal to the Lord, went to the other

extreme and declared him, contrary to his own words, equal to the Father. (John 10:29; 14:28.) Next came disputation respecting the holy Spirit, and these same extremists took the ground that there are three gods, the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit, "equal in power and glory."

Peculiarly enough, after claiming that they were equal, which implies that they are not the same in person, but different persons, the claim was made that they are really **one in person**. Of course, such unscriptural, illogical reasoning cannot support itself, and hence those taking this position were driven to various expedients and subterfuges of argument. At times some of them claimed that there are really three Gods in one person, while others claimed that there are really three persons in one God, and not being able to explain either of the nonsensical statements, they have resorted to that word so useful to error and superstition, namely, "Mystery," "Mystery." They tell us that the matter of the Trinity is so mysterious that neither they nor anyone need to understand it. If they do not understand it they, indeed, should not discuss it; but this should not hinder others who can understand it, and who see most clearly that the entire mystery is of their own making; that the Bible teaching on the subject is most clear, simple, harmonious and satisfactory.

When the Apostle discusses the question of God he says to us, There is one living and true God, not three! He proceeds to say that this one living and true God is the Father; then he adds that there is one Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 8:6.) As we have already seen this same Apostle declares that the Father highly exalted the Lord Jesus and gave him a name which is above every name; that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. (Phil. 2:9,10; John 5:23.) This means that there are two persons, for in no other way could one exalt and honor another; and if the Son is to be honored as is the Father it follows, as other Scriptures show, that he is now partaker of the divine nature and that he was exalted to this high honor and dignity—"far above angels, principalities and powers"—as a reward for his obedience to the Father's will, in having come into the world and redeemed mankind at the cost of his own life in pursuance of the divine purposes. This we have already seen from John 1:1—that our Lord, before he came into the world, before the world was made by him as the Father's agent, was the Logos, the Word, the Messenger of the God, Jehovah, and that he was a God, a mighty one, superior to angels, the one "by whom all things were made that were made; and without him was not anything made that was made."

It will be noticed that the Apostle, in speaking of the Father and the Son, refers to them as separate persons, and that he does not refer to the holy Spirit as another God, nor as the third part of God. Not that the Apostle ignores the holy Spirit however, for throughout all of his epistles it is recognized as the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son, representing both Father and Son in the Church. Nor are we to understand that the holy Spirit is a spirit being—as when we read, "God is a spirit"—but that the word used signifies the spirit of a being, the power, influence, will, purpose, strength or whatever proceeds from the person. The holy Spirit is said to proceed from the Father and from the Son as an influence or power, and this influence or power in the Church of consecrated believers operates in turn upon those with whom they mingle. It is always a good and holy spirit or influence, and is thus clearly distinct from the spirit of the world, the disposition of the world, the influence of the world, the spirit of sin, the spirit of anti-Christ, etc.

"The Holy Spirit Was Not Yet Given"

Our Lord gently broke to his sorrowing, bewildered disciples the news of his prospective departure to the Father who sent him. They did not ask where, for they believed his word, that he had come forth from the Father and that he would return to the Father who sent him. But sorrow had filled their hearts. What would they do without the Lord! How could the promise of the Kingdom ever be fulfilled if he went away! Had they been following a delusion for three years? They would not doubt the Lord, but they were perplexed. Our Lord, therefore, explained that if they understood matters properly, it would relieve them of much of their distress, as it really was to their advantage, in their interest, that he should go away. Had he not gone

away it would have been impossible for the Father to beget them of the Spirit and recognize them as sons of God; hence it would not have been possible for them ever to be more than human beings, ever to become spirit beings or partakers of the divine nature, together with its glories and honors. Indeed, without the departure of our Lord it would have been impossible for them to attain even to human restitution, for the entire work of salvation, both as respects the Church and the world, was dependent upon our Lord's fulfilling the demands of justice. On the following day, as the Lamb of God, he died for the sin of Adam, which rested upon the entire race, and on the third day the Father raised him up by his own power. In this great transaction on our behalf a most important work was accomplished; but the benefits of that work, under the divine arrangement, could not come either to the Church or to the world, until first our Lord would ascend on high and appear in the presence of the Father and present the merit of his sacrifice as an oblation on behalf of his people. Had Jesus remained with his followers all through this age, even as a spirit being (as he was with them during the forty days), no one could have been begotten of the holy Spirit. It was necessary for Christ to ascend and present the merit of his sacrifice before we could be accepted and adopted, before we could receive the holy Spirit.

When the apostles received the holy Spirit at Pentecost, they said, "This is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel"—not, This is he who was spoken of by the Prophet Joel. They called it a baptism with the holy Spirit! A baptism with a person is not a conceivable or proper thought; nor could it be a proper thought that the holy Spirit as a person is personally present in each believer's heart! Whenever we attach the thought of personality it implies place. Thus we see that God is a spirit, not that God is spirit; but we do not speak of the holy Spirit as being separate, as though it were a person separate and distinct from the Father and from the Son; it is referred to in the Scriptures as the Spirit of God, belonging to God, emanating from God; a Spirit of Christ, emanating from Christ; a Spirit or influence or power which is all pervasive, which can exercise itself in any place or in any number of places at any time and perform any kind of work or mission. How much more satisfactory is the true thought respecting the holy Spirit than the absurd and unscriptural ones! We might remark in this connection that the word "him" of verse 7 in the Greek could, with equal propriety, be translated "it"—"I will send **it** unto you"—nevertheless, we have no objection whatever to urge against the use of the word Him, since this holy Spirit or influence is of or from him, the Father. Similarly the word "he" in verse 8 could, with equal propriety, according to the Greek, be translated "it."

Not The Spirit of The World

Among the various false ideas of the operations of the holy Spirit is one which claims that the holy Spirit as a person has been busy going hither and thither all through this Gospel Age convincing people of sin and converting them to righteousness. Some go so far in the erroneous thought as to tell us that no one could be converted from sin unless God's holy Spirit miraculously operated upon him. If these thoughts approximated the truth in any degree they would imply that God alone is responsible for the fact that the world is not converted today, because the holy Spirit has failed to do its part in converting and reproving and convicting. But all this is a serious mistake.

The holy Spirit does not operate at all in the hearts of the world; but, as our Lord declares, It shall be in you, his disciples, the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit or disposition of the Son, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of a sane mind, the spirit of holiness to the Lord. None of these qualities of the holy Spirit is found in the sinful world; they belong to and are intended only for the "sanctified in Christ Jesus." The power of God operates upon the hearts that are fully consecrated to him, energizing them, cleansing them, separating them from the spirit of the world and using them in the divine service. The spirit of the world is the spirit of sin and selfishness; the Spirit of the Lord is the spirit of holiness and consecration to the divine will.

"He Will Reprove The World"

How, then, will the holy Spirit in **you** reprove **them**? We answer that all of the Church, begotten of the holy Spirit and thus enlightened, are to let their light so shine before men that it will reprove the world. That which reproves the world is the holiness of the Church. The Spirit of the Lord, the disposition

of the Lord in his people, brings reproof to those who are living in sin. It was so in our Lord's case, as he declared. The Father's Spirit was imparted to him in this special sense at the time of his baptism; as John testified, "I beheld the holy Spirit descending and resting upon him and abiding." He received the Father's Spirit without measure, without limitation, for, as the perfect one, in the image and likeness of God, he could receive the Spirit of God in full measure. We, on the contrary, imperfect, defective through the fall, can receive the Spirit only in limited measure because of our defects—some more and some less; but, thank God, it is the privilege of each to be more and more filled with the holy Spirit and sanctified by it as the days go by. Our Lord's light, which he let shine before men, was a great one. Our lights are feeble in comparison; but we are to emulate our Lord's example, and be more and more filled with the spirit of the truth, the light of the truth, and let it shine forth with wisdom upon all those who are in range of our influence.

The effect of this will be three-fold, as stated in verses 8-11.

(1) "It will reprove the world of sin"—that is to say, it will make the world conscious of its sinful condition; it will show to the world more and more the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Many of the world have so lost the image of God and are so devoid of conscience that they cannot with great distinctness discriminate between honesty and dishonesty, between truth and falsity, between righteousness and sin. The world has been in the habit of measuring itself with itself; but now in Christ and his Church the Lord has established a new standard for the world; and the Church, not only by its words, but also by its actions, is to uphold the glorious standards of the Lord's words along the lines of justice and love.

(2) It is not enough that the world be convicted of sin; it needs to understand something about righteousness, the opposite of sin; that a considerable measure of righteousness is possible and that the difficulty in attaining it is due to the fallen nature. The world is to be convinced that righteousness is the proper standard, the only one which God could recognize, and that in his wonderful plan he has arranged for eternal life to be granted only to the righteous. In this connection it is unavoidable that those who give the instruction, the spirit-enlightened ones, will find it necessary to make clear that no one can come into accord with the Father through any works of righteousness of his own, but that the forgiveness, the covering for sins provided through the merit of Christ's sacrifice is necessary.

(3) The Spirit of the Lord in his people will convince their neighbors, all who come within the range of their light and their message, that the present life is not all that there is, that there is a trial purposed in God's arrangement for the whole world of mankind, a judgment, a test. Whoever hears this message must concede its reasonableness, and it becomes a basis for joy and hope to all those who desire eternal life. Such as are rightly and deeply exercised by these convictions will seek the Lord and his various means of grace in the present life that they may also have their judgment and trial as part of the Church. But such as are not thus exercised or influenced are to be instructed through the Church; in proportion, however, as they have light or knowledge they have responsibility. In God's plan he has provided a day of judgment in the future for the world, in which all shall have full opportunity of being judged, of being tested along the lines of their loyalty to the Lord. Nevertheless their conduct in the present life has to do with that future judgment or trial. In proportion as they may disobey their conscience and fail to follow the leadings of the truth in the present time, they will have stripes, difficulties to overcome in the future, and to whatever extent they now seek to live in accord with righteousness they will lay up for themselves a blessing which shall assist them in that day of judgment.

"Because They Believed Not"

The holy Spirit of truth in the Church will make known to the world that their continuance in the attitude of sinners, "children of wrath," is because they do not believe in and accept of Christ and his meritorious sacrifice for sin. The holy Spirit in the Church will make known to the world that there is such a thing as righteousness, an imputed righteousness which has been secured by our Lord Jesus through his sacrifice, which he presented before the Father. The holy Spirit in the Church will instruct the world that the present order of things cannot continue, that a new order of things will be ush-

ered in at the second advent of our Lord, as he has already redeemed the world, thus securing the legal right to dispossess Satan, the prince of the present order of evil.

"He Will Show You Things To Come"

Our Lord prepared his followers for a still larger amount of instruction after his ascension than they had received from him during his presence. He explains that the necessity for this was their unpreparedness until they should be endued with power from on high. Until this they would be natural men, and, 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." This is the explanation, then, of why our Lord Jesus did not present as deep teachings along spiritual lines as did some of the apostles. It was not inability on his part to present them, but those truths would have been meat out of season to his disciples, which might have choked them, injured them. Hence the deeper things of our Lord's teachings were stated considerably in parabolic form, which would not hurt them at the time and which later they would come to appreciate and understand. Thus he said again, "I have told you earthly things and ye believed not [are unable to receive them], how would you believe if I told you of heavenly things?"—John 3:12.

But the spirit of truth, when it shall come, will guide you into all truth, yet it will be only a channel and not an authority, for it will make known to you various features of the divine plan and these will include things not yet made manifest to you, but which in due time will be brought to your attention through the Word and through the influence of the holy Spirit. I shall be glorified by this holy Spirit, for it will be my things that will be shown unto you, for all things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that he [it] shall take of mine and shall show them unto you. Note in this statement the prominence of the Father. All things are of the Father, but the Father hath made the Son joint-heir with him, his associate, and nothing is said to belong to the holy Spirit, because it is merely the divine channel or agency through which communications, blessings, instructions, etc., will be communicated. The holy Spirit is not a person, but the spirit or influence or power of the Almighty God and his everlasting Son, our Lord. For a full discussion of this subject see *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 5, chap. 8.

"Give You Another Comforter"

Our Golden Text is beautiful, helpful. Indeed, our Lord explains that the holy Spirit as a comforting influence, as a guide, as an instructor and helper to the Lord's people in the narrow way would be a gift from the Father. This agrees with the Apostle's statement in the record of the Pentecostal blessing. Explaining the matter, the Apostle Peter said that our Lord, having been exalted to the right hand of divine power, received this holy Spirit, power, from the Father and shed it forth or sprayed it forth upon his followers at Pentecost. These descriptions fit well to the right view of the holy Spirit, but are very much out of line with the wrong view, that the holy Spirit is a person. How could a person be sprayed or shed forth! How could one equal in authority pray to another that a third one equal to either of them should be shed forth as a gift! The inconsistency of the error is very manifest as soon as our eyes open to its falsity. But how beautiful is the true thought; that as soon as our Lord Jesus had appeared before the Father as our Advocate and had presented at the Mercy Seat the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf, the Father was well pleased to grant his holy Spirit, his holy influence and power upon us, and adopt us into his family and treat us as sons!

How precious is the thought that the Pentecostal blessing was not merely for those who received it, but for the entire Church, as shown in the type! The kings, as well as the priests, in the olden times were anointed, set apart to special service, and Christ and his Church are the true kings and the true priests of the Melchizedec order, through whose ministries as kings and priests all the families of the earth will be blessed. Our Lord is the Head, we are his members in particular. The coming of the holy Spirit upon him to fit and prepare him to be the King, to fit and prepare him to be the Priest of the Melchizedec order, was symbolized in the type by the anointing of oil. Thus the Prophet speaks of this anointing as being poured upon Aaron's head and running down his beard even unto the skirts of his garments. This, as we see, represents the adoption of the holy Spirit, which came upon our Lord Jesus

the Head at his baptism, and which was shed forth at Pentecost upon all those who were ready and waiting to be accepted as his members, and we who since have believed on him through their word have come into membership in the same Body and have received of the same anointing; and "this anointing which ye received of him abideth in you," and shall be in you. This anointing did not represent a person, but an influence and blessing.

What a satisfaction, what a comfort has come to the Lord's people through their privilege of being used by him and adopted into his family by the begetting of the holy Spirit, the adoption of the holy Spirit, the anointing of the holy Spirit, the holy influence, the blessing of the Father and of the Son, guiding our judgments, guiding our hearts, opening to us the Scriptures, causing our hearts to burn within us as we are brought to a still greater appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of our Father's glorious plan of salvation for ourselves and all the families of the earth!

This abiding was not to be a temporary matter, for a day, a month, a year, but to the end of the age, age-lasting, for the entire period. How glad we are that this is so, and how blessed are the instructions and guidance which we have enjoyed! Truly, as our Lord said, the holy Spirit shows us things to come, and explains to us things that are past. How many of our blessings are along the line of appreciation of coming things—the Millennial Kingdom, the times of restitution, the uplifting and strengthening of all the families of the earth!

"I PRAY FOR THEM."—*Reprints*, p. 3551

JOHN 17:15-26

ON THE night of the institution of the memorial of his death, our Lord, so far from being concerned wholly with himself and his approaching crucifixion, was specially thinking of and praying for his disciples. The closing verse of John 16 records his words of admonition, "These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven in prayer for his disciples, saying, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thy own name those whom thou hast given me."

Our Lord's entire life furnishes an illustration of what the Apostle commends to all the Church in the words, "Pray without ceasing." Our Lord evidently was always in that prayerful attitude of heart, which was filled with thankfulness to the Father in respect to all of life's affairs, which recognized his guardian care, which trusted him, confided in him and in every distressing circumstance looked to him to overrule and to cause all experiences to work for good. But our Lord's constant attitude of prayer without ceasing did not hinder his more particular devotions when he turned aside from the affairs of life to speak to the Father in secret—sometimes briefly and sometimes spending a whole night in prayer in the mountain solitude. Though he loved his disciples they were not yet begotten of the Holy Spirit and could not fully comprehend matters from his standpoint. The Father alone was able to comprehend the full situation, and hence the very isolation of our Lord from all human help drew him the nearer and the oftener to the Father in prayer.

So it is or should be with the Lord's followers. Proportionately as we grow in his character likeness we will similarly pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, realizing him as the center of all our hopes and ambitions and joys. And similarly we will avail ourselves of the privilege of more formal approaches to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Similarly also, in proportion as at times we may find that our dear ones either of earthly or spiritual relationship are unable to sympathize with our experiences, we may be profited by such a lack of earthly sympathy in that the

experiences will send us the more frequently to the heavenly Comforter from whom we will derive the greater blessing and joy.

The Church Not The World

In this prayer, as elsewhere throughout the inspired Word, a sharp line of distinction is drawn as between the Church and the world. A great loss is sustained by those who do not see this, for it wonderfully assists in the "rightly dividing of the Word of Truth." "God so loved the world," Jesus "by the grace of God tasted death for every man," and was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, yet he is not of the world, and those who become his disciples are not of the world. "Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world." The losing of the clear line of distinction between the Church and the world has been a serious injury to true Christianity.

The world has appropriated some of the promises and customs and ceremonies which more or less resemble or counterfeit the graces of the Church, and this is called civilization, and thus a large proportion of the world are today mistakenly recognized as part of the Church. This is to their disadvantage, for not discerning that those who are of the Church must be begotten again, that in the resurrection they may be born again, they are merely deceiving themselves. It is a disadvantage also to the true Church, the true followers of the Lord, whose new natures must contend with the weaknesses of the flesh, and whose flesh seeks to justify itself by common custom, and to claim that to go much beyond the common standard is to be fanatical, extremists. The Lord's people need to remember that, judged from the standpoint of the world and the nominal Church, they must be extremists if they would come up to the standards set for them by the Lord and the apostles—standards illustrated in the lives of Jesus and the apostles, in their self-denials even unto death.

Our Lord prayed not for the world, because the Lord's time for dealing with the world had not yet come—would not come until after the selection of the Church, the body of Christ. He prayed for the apostles especially, because they would be his special representatives in the world, and his prayer included also all of the five hundred brethren who up to that time had believed on him with sincere hearts. Not only so, but (v. 20) he extended the petition so as to cover all of a similar class even to the end of the age—all who should believe on him so thoroughly, so sincerely, that their faith would separate them from the world to be his disciples, his followers in the narrow way in very truth.

What He Did Not Pray For

As we look out over the world to-day and take a view of the nominal Christian Church, and attempt to put ourselves in the place of the nominal Christian believer and his professed view of matters, and if, then, we suppose that the Lord prayed for the present condition of things, his prayer would be something like this:

I pray that my followers may become very numerous, very wealthy and very learned, that they may be the notables of the world. I pray that they may be divided up into great denominations, some holding one fragment of truth and some another, blending the same with much of inconsistency and error. I pray that there may be a dignified class, self-satisfied and reverential in form, who may be known as Episcopalians. I pray for another dignified class who will hold the Westminster Confession of Faith, and subsequently in 1902 supplement it with a briefer statement which, in effect, will contradict it. I pray for another great schism under the leadership of Wesley, which shall mingle with its devotions many worldly customs and attractions, and shall prosper greatly and be able to boast the building of one church every day in the year. I pray for another great sect or party of my followers, to name my name and be the followers of Luther. I pray for the great Roman Catholic Church, which will claim to be my kingdom, claim to reign in power and great dignity and honor over the kingdoms of the earth, claim that its head and representative is my vicegerent, the spiritual emperor of the world. I pray that its cunning policy may keep my Word from reaching the public, and that it may represent my great sacrifice for sins in its innumerable sacrifices of the mass, and that it may prosper and "wear out the saints of the most high God."

I pray also for all the little sects and parties and splits, that they may prosper, that each

may think that they have the truth and be satisfied with their creeds, and be hindered from searching the Scriptures to know therefrom the way, the truth and the life. I pray for all these that they may be thus scattered and separated and have fences between each other. I pray further that they may not only have denominational lines to separate them, but, additionally, political lines and lines of national prejudice, so that millions of them of one party or nationality may threaten and make war upon and slaughter those of another nationality or party. I pray that these national distinctions amongst them shall run so high that it will require hundreds of millions of dollars every year for armies and weapons and battleships to fight each other or to threaten each other or to intimidate each other. I pray all this that the heathen world may be charmed with the glorious effect of my teachings upon Christendom, and that all the heathen may say with one voice, Let us also become partisan and sectarian. Let us also arm and fight. Let us also learn of the practices of these Christian nations that they do not have the entire monopoly of profanity and drunkenness and debauchery, that we may share in these.

What Our Lord Did Pray For

Very different was our Lord's petition. His prayer represents his disciples as being a small minority in the world, hated of the world, opposed by the world, misunderstood by the world, not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich, not many noble—chiefly the poor and altogether a "little flock." The characteristics of the disciples whom Jesus personally gathered were to be expected in all who should afterward be gathered to him as his true followers.

Notwithstanding the great array of Christian nations and Christian sects, the Lord "knoweth them that are his;" and in harmony with this prayer he has not during the age separated his people from the world, but left them in the world, merely separating them so far as the heart is concerned—"I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." We are not to say that the evil is good, we are not to say that the world has become saintly; it is still evil. Christendom is practically in the same condition today that Judaism was in when it crucified the Lord and persecuted his followers.

Then the chief sect of the Jews called themselves God's holy people (the meaning of the word Pharisee), and the whole nation stood on a plane of outward morality which the Lord declared was in his sight a farce. He called the leaders whited sepulchers, inwardly full of corruption. He told them that while they washed the outside of the cup they left it filthy within; that while they made broad their phylacteries and prayed in public, in their hearts they were far from a condition of holiness or love—so far that they would be willing to wrongfully take a home from a poor widow if the outward forms of the law permitted and if the transaction would not bring too much reproach. (Matt. 23:14,23-28.) It is much the same today; there is an outward gloss or veneer that in many cases is hypocritical, an outward form of worship, a drawing near with the lips while the heart is far from him, busy with fashion and dress and pleasure and money-making idolatries, if not with grosser sins.

Our Lord prayed that his true followers might be kept by heavenly power free from such conditions—out of sympathy with them, not of them. And we believe this has been true all down throughout this Gospel age. We believe that the Lord's prayer has been fulfilled, and that his scattered little flock, the branches of the true vine, have flourished in heart, spiritually, keeping up a separate life entirely from the nominal system, which is only a part of the world. We believe that the same is true today, and that these in the world but not of it are now, in the harvest time, being called out of Babylon, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." But as the entire number of Israelites who returned from Babylon when the opportunity offered was only about 50,000, so we may expect here that the Lord has so arranged matters respecting the popularity of error and the unpopularity of the Truth, that the number ready and glad to forsake all to follow the Truth and the right will be few.

"Sanctify Them Through Thy Truth"

The prayer, continuing, points out two things—first, how the Lord's followers will be kept, and, secondly, why they will be kept. (1) They will be kept because they are not of the world, because they have taken a positive stand on the Lord's side, because they have reckonedly died to the world and sin and been begotten again of the holy Spirit to newness of life. (2) They will be kept in the world, but not of it, by the power of the Truth in their hearts. The Truth will sanctify or separate them. Not any truth, not all truth, but the Truth—the Truth of the divine revelation respecting the divine character and the divine plan, and their relationship to these. Summing this all up the Lord declares, "My Word is Truth"—the Truth which only sanctifies and separates my disciples from the world.

We are aware that "doctrine" has become very unpopular in every quarter of the world and in the nominal Church. No wonder! The doctrines, the creeds, of the various sects and parties of Christendom are so mingled with error, so offensive to the spiritual senses of the spiritual mind, that they could have no pleasure in partaking of such things from their tables. The prophet describes the matter, saying, "All tables are full of vomit"—every creed formulated in the Dark Ages is necessarily repulsive today. But the Truth, "Thy Word is Truth," never becomes stale, never becomes rancid or offensive; it is still the Bread from Heaven, it is still the Word of Life; and all who are of the Truth, all who have progressed from being merely babes in Christ and by partaking of the meat of his Word have come to an appreciation of it, all who have been weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, can say with the poet respecting the wonderful story of the divine plan,

"It Satisfies My Longings As Nothing Else Can Do"

The Truth has a sanctifying power in the heart because it fills the longings of the heart. Every heart has talents and appeals which demand operation, activity. Something must be supplied to meet the hungerings and thirstings of these various talents and qualities of the mind. If the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word be not received into the heart to satisfy its cravings or longings, it will feed upon other things; and the world, the flesh and the devil are all crowding upon it, offering various attractions, some of which will be received if the heart be not filled and kept filled. Thus our Lord's parable represents a heart swept and garnished, with the devil cast out, and then that heart, still empty, is represented as being re-entered by seven devils. Our hearts need not only to be cleansed from sin through justification of life, through faith in Christ, but they need also to be filled with the Lord himself; and our Lord, who calls himself the Truth, furnishes to our hearts various truths as food, as nourishment, as filling our hearts and satisfying our cravings, and by thus filling he sanctifies those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and thus separates them completely and keeps them separate from the world, its spirit, its hopes, its aims, its ambitions.

God's Power in God's Time

Have we love for righteousness? We cannot hope to find it in the world, nor hope to establish it here under present conditions. We are obliged to admit that nothing short of God's promised Kingdom can establish righteousness; hence our hearts, as Noah's dove, return to the Lord as the center and fountain of righteousness. Have we a desire for peace and joy? Our past experience in the world convinces us that, while the whole world is seeking for happiness, it has not found it. We who have found the Lord have found the secret of happiness, the Christian's secret of having every day a happy one. Do we long for power and influence that we may exercise them for good? The Word of Truth assures us that it is impossible to find them in present conditions, but that we shall, if faithful, attain to the power and glory, honor and immortality, in the First Resurrection, and that then our grandest hopes and ideals will be realized in the Kingdom blessings that will come to all the families of the earth. Do riches seem attractive to us? The Scriptures hold out the true riches, and assure us that in following the Lord all things are ours by faith now, and shall be actually ours by and by, when we become our Master's associates in the heavenly Kingdom.

Our Lord declares, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." It is evident enough how the Father sent the Son, who left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was made flesh and dwelt amongst us; but in what sense are we sent into the world, we who are born of the world? Of course the apostles were specially sent once, but all the Lord's followers are sent in a sense or degree. We are not sent until we are separated from the world to be his in heart and in truth. Then he gave us a commission or a message, a work to do in the world in his name and for the cause which he represents, namely, the cause of righteousness. So, then, the true followers of the Lord are ambassadors for God, representatives for Jesus. As he was in the world, so are we in the world; hence he calls upon us to walk as children of the light, to oppose sin in ourselves, and to use our influence in all proper ways in opposition to sin and in favor of righteousness and truth and right.

Glory Shared With Church

Continuing our Lord declares, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." This seems to carry with it the thought, elsewhere suggested in this prayer, that our Lord had by this time come to a full realization of the Father's plan, namely, that his disciples were to be developed for the purpose of becoming his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, sharers in his glory. At first thought such a sharing of the great glory of the Kingdom might appear to be a lessening of the great glory of Jesus, just as the appointment of the seventy elders of Israel to be associates with Moses in judging Israel seemed at first to be a contraction or diminution of the dignity or authority of Moses.

But as Moses in the type was very meek, and gladly welcomed all the elders to joint-service, saying, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!" (Num. 11:29), so the Lord Jesus, so far from feeling that the gathering out of the Church to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom would diminish his glory, joined heartily in the divine plan, and declares here that he set himself apart, he separated himself from that feature of the glory and dignity of the Father's reward that his followers might have a share in it, that they might become his joint-heirs, being set apart and brought to this honor through the Truth, through the great and precious promises bestowed upon them. This same thought seems to be presented in the words (vs. 22,23)—"The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

The love of God pervades our hearts so that selfishness has no room there, and thus it was that our dear Redeemer, instead of feeling jealous that any others should be exalted to the divine nature, participators in the Kingdom, in this prayer to the Father declares his full acquiescence in the plan, his hearty cooperation, his joy to have it so. What a thought this gives to us as the prospective Bride, already espoused to the heavenly Bridegroom. He is pleased to exalt us from our lowly estate to be one with himself in his Kingdom, in his throne, in his Father's love.

Wonder of wonders! Where will the divine compassion cease! While we were yet sinners, under divine condemnation of death, we were loved and redeemed at a great price; and now, having been redeemed, we hear the voice celestial saying, "Come up higher," yea, even to the throne, to joint-heirship with the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Could we keep ever before our minds this grand display of love and unselfishness how thoroughly it would scatter from the minds of all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son every thought of rivalry one with another. How it would cause us to rejoice in the growing usefulness and advancement in the Lord's service of every member of the body. How we should more and more feel what the Scriptures describe as "in honor preferring one another," and which rejoices in the prosperity of a brother, in his growing usefulness in the Church, in the growing evidences of his favor with God and man. Those who can thus rejoice in the prosperity of the fellow-members of the body have another evidence of their growth in the likeness of our

great and glorious Head. Those who are without this sentiment should strive for it and be very discontented until it is attained.

"That They All May Be One"

The spirit of trusts and combinations which is abroad in the world and which is permeating everything has the effect of combining congregations, combining denominations, and in general is leading on rapidly to the formation of great religious trusts, whose development will be a serious menace to the liberties of the Lord's truly consecrated people, but not an injury to their spiritual interests. On the contrary, it will prove a blessing to the Lord's little flock in that it will more particularly differentiate them and confirm to them the teachings of the Scriptures, separating them the more completely from the nominal systems and the binding in bundles of the tares, giving them the while the confirmations of the Scriptures, which clearly predict this condition in the end of this age as preceding the collapse of great Babylon.—Rev. 18:21.

Our Lord's prayer, "That they all may be one," has been fulfilled throughout the age. All who have been truly his have had a oneness of heart, a oneness of purpose, a oneness of spirit, with the Father and with the Son—a fellowship divine which cannot be produced by earthly creeds and fetters. So it is to-day, and so it is always between those who are truly the Lord's. They know each other not by outward passwords or grips or signs, but by the touch of faith and love which it gives and which each recognizes. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, in that ye have love one for another." "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." True, we love all men and seek to serve all as we have opportunity, but, as the Apostle explains, "especially the household of faith," especially those who love the Lord and are trusting in the precious blood, and are fully consecrated to him and, so far as they are able, doing his will and seeking to further know that will day by day.

This union between those who are the Lord's people is evidently not the union of person. The Lord's followers are not one in person but in spirit. And this is the illustration which the Lord gives of the oneness which exists between himself and the Father—they are not one in person but one in spirit, purpose, will; for our Lord declares that he always does the Father's will, those things which are pleasing in the Father's sight. And thus we abide in his love and abide in him by doing his will, which is the Father's will, and thus Father and Son and the Church, the Bride, are all one—in spirit and in truth.

With Christ, Sharing His Glory

Our Lord's words (v. 24), "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me go with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." This is not a petition, but a declaration of the Lord's will, as though he were saying, Father, I understand that this is thy will in respect to these my followers, and I will it also, acquiescing in this great and liberal arrangement which thou hast made. I will be glad to have my followers ultimately on the same plane of glory with me, and that they may there be blessed by seeing and sharing the glories thou hast conferred upon me whom thou hast loved always even before the foundations of the world —even before the arrangements were made for these my disciples.

The closing words of the prayer are beautiful and give us an insight into the Lord's confidence in the Father and fellowship with him. He knew the Father, and so he has declared respecting us that this is the highest evidence that could be granted us of our acceptance with the Father and of our participation in the life eternal which he has provided, namely, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Our Lord declares, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." And I have made known unto them thy name, thy character, thy greatness, thy goodness, thy love, thy benefactions, and will make known still further as they are able to bear it, as they grow in knowledge of the Truth, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.

How wonderful is this love of God and love of Christ! How impossible it seems for us to measure its lengths and breadths and heights

and depths! Those who have accepted the Lord as their Redeemer and have entered into covenant relationship with him, giving him their little all and accepting from him a participation in all these blessings of his provision, if ever cast down because of weakness or opposition or what not, should call to mind this great love which the Father has for us and which the Son shares, the love which not only redeemed us while we were yet sinners, but which since then has called us to such wonderful blessings and privileges, making us joint-heirs with Christ our Lord, if so be we suffer with him;—this love will not be lightly turned away, this love would chasten us rather than permit us to fall away into the second death; this love will finally deliver, either in the little flock or in the great company, all who continue to trust in Jesus and continue to hold the faithful Word. But in proportion as this love of God dwells in us richly, in proportion as Christ is enthroned in our hearts, in that same proportion we will have a responsive love which will delight to do those things which are pleasing in our Father's sight and acceptable to our Lord, and in the same proportion we will be loth to do anything which would bring a cloud between the Lord and our souls. Let us, then, have fresh courage because of what we discern of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love divine, and let this love of God constrain us to greater zeal and devotion to him and to his cause.

CHARACTER-LIKENESS TO THE LORD—*Reprints*, p. 5358

"I pray for them … that they may be one, … that they may be made perfect in one, … that the world may know that Thou hast … loved them as Thou hast loved Me."—John 17:9,20-23.

THESE WORDS, we remember, were uttered by our Lord on the night of His betrayal, supposedly while on the way from the "upper room" where the Memorial was observed to the Garden of Gethsemane. The ones He evidently prayed for were the twelve Apostles, or rather the eleven, by this time; for in conjunction He says, "I have lost none of them, save the son of perdition." But the context shows that His prayer includes His faithful followers all the way down the Age. He says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for all those who shall believe on Me through their word." He prayed that His followers might be one, even as He and His Father were one—the same kind of oneness, a oneness of mind.

This text is one of the best proofs that the Lord Jesus and the Father are not one in person. He could not have prayed for all of the Church to be one in person. It is a oneness of will, a full harmony of will, a oneness of purpose. The Lord said, "Not My will, but Thine be done." He thus came into full oneness, harmony with the Father—with the Father's will, the Father's Plan. It is not a mutual concession, where each gives up some of his rights in order to become one.

His first work for dealing with the world of mankind—before He would become the world's Savior and the Mediator of the New Covenant—was the election of the Church. This was the work which He had now begun, and He was committing to them the testimony. He desires that all the Church have a oneness of purpose, a oneness of will with His will. And we can see that this could be obtained only in the one way—by fully surrendering our will. And this, the Scriptures declare, is done by becoming dead.

Two Causes of Dissension

A man or woman is merely what his will is and what that will can make out of the body and its circumstances. And so at the very beginning of our discipleship, the first thing is to see that we are dead as respects our will, and alive toward the Lord Jesus Christ. All who do this He calls New Creatures. He grants them the Holy Spirit, that the new mind, the new will, may be theirs. In proportion as they obtain the new mind, the new will, in that same proportion will the oneness with one another exist.

That which causes dissension amongst the Lord's people is either a lack of loyalty or a lack of knowledge. If it is a lack of loyalty, they will

gradually drift away. The Lord does not choose to force any of His family. He is choosing such as worship Him in spirit and in truth, such as are in every respect loyal. He has set aside for the purpose of selecting this class the entire Gospel Age. This work of selecting has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. And this company will be a Little Flock. They will, evidently, be a very select class. They are required to walk by faith, not by sight.

Not many have the loyalty to God and to righteousness to walk that way and to count the world as loss and dross—as nothing, with all its projects. As the disloyal ones leave the ranks, more and more the loyal ones will find themselves drawn together, and more and more of oneness will be found among those who are faithful. This would necessarily be true in every time and in every country. All who are thoroughly loyal would desire to do the Father's will, desire to lay down their lives in the Father's service. And this desire would make them **one.**

Friction Minimized With Maturity

The Lord speaks of their being perfected in one. As each individual member makes progress, he becomes more worthy to fill the place or use the opportunity provided for him. And thus the Body becomes more efficacious. But the thought that our Lord here expresses is rather that of **completeness**. He is referring to the end of the Age, when the work will be completed, perfected, when they will all be one. But the grand consummation will be effected by something which the Lord will Himself do. We find that, necessarily, because of the differences of our flesh, we cannot in everything see exactly alike. Now we can only see more or less obscurely.

At present we cannot see fully and completely. Consequently there will always be more or less friction, even amongst those who are fully consecrated to do the Father's will. This friction should become minimized, as we become mature. But we cannot see eye to eye until the glorious consummation, when we shall have experienced the resurrection change, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." We are to have our trial in these imperfect bodies. And those who show their loyalty in fighting against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, to the end, will be joint-heirs with Christ, sharers in His Kingdom, executors of the Divine Program for the blessing of the world of mankind.

An Astounding Statement

At the *Epiphania*, or bright shining, of the Lord's manifestation, God will have completed His present work of directing the Church, and the world will be informed that they are under a different Dispensation. When the world shall have come to understand the matter fully, they will know the truth of our Lord's words, in His last prayer with His disciples, that the Father loves the Church as He loves the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a very astounding statement. It shows that there is nothing selfish in our Lord. He did not say, "They will always be inferior to Me. They will never have the glory that I shall have."

On the contrary, the Lord Jesus knows that the Heavenly Father will exercise His Love along the lines of principle, character. And all who will be members of the same glorious company must have the same glorious character that our Lord had; that is to say, they must be **loyal to the core**. They must have demonstrated that they loved righteousness and hated iniquity. We read, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Hebrews 1:9.) So He was anointed to be the Head of the Church class. But the Church class are declared in this Scripture to be His associates—not of inferiority, but of common fellowship, being on one plane. And the world will then know that the Father loved the Church as He loved Jesus. We understand that the Church will be on the same **plane** with her Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, we are to keep in mind that God "made Him to be Head over all—God blessed forever!" The Church will never be on an equality of position with Christ.

This is very wonderful to us, that our Heavenly Father should love us as He loved Christ, that the Lord would love the jewel, in the mire or wherever it might be found! The Lord Jesus has been selecting these characters out of the

mire of human sin. And those who prove to be of the "more than conqueror" class—loyal as the Lord Jesus was loyal—the Father will love as He loved the Lord Jesus, and will glorify them with His Son.

" 'When thou passest through the waters,
I will be with thee!'
Sure and sweet and all-sufficient
Shall His presence be.
All God's billows overflowed Him
In th' great Atoning Day;
Now He only leads thee through them
With thee all the way."

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 14	Gethsemane	Agony in the garden; Jesus' betrayed and arrested	26:30,36-56	14:26,32-52	22:39-53	18:1-12

Matthew 26:30, 36-56

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. ... Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

Mark 14:26,32-52

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. ... And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul

is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest; it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand. And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him. And they laid their hands on him, and took him. And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the Scriptures must be fulfilled. And they all forsook him, and fled. And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

Luke 22:39-53

And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him. Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

John 18:1-12

When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have

told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,

THE LORD BETRAYED.—*Reprints*, p. 2467

JOHN 18:1-14

"He is despised and rejected of men."—Isaiah 53:3.

AFTER THE Last Supper, and after his discourse to the disciples respecting the Vine and the branches, came our Lord's beautiful prayer recorded in John's 17th chapter. Then, probably about midnight, Jesus, with the eleven, passed outside the gate of Jerusalem, crossed the little brook called Cedron, and on the farther hill above it entered the olive orchard known as the Garden of Gethsemane: perhaps it was a public garden, or possibly the property of some one friendly to our Lord. What purports to be its site is now maintained as a garden, and has been for centuries. It is in charge of monks who take pleasure in receiving visitors to view it. There are about six or eight very large and evidently very old olive trees in this garden at the present—they give evidence of being at least one thousand years old, but possibly are much older.

While talking with his disciples and praying for them our Lord seemingly was full of good courage: while exhorting them that their hearts be not troubled evidently his own heart was not cast down. But as the little company wended its way to Gethsemane we may well suppose that a great weight fell upon our dear Redeemer's sensibilities. We can imagine him saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." (Matt. 26:38.) The present visit to Gethsemane, therefore, was evidently very different from previous visits. Some appreciation of the momentous occasion was no doubt inspired in the hearts of the Apostles by the Master's dejection, and yet they probably but slightly comprehended what was about to come to pass.

Arrived at the Garden, we glean from other Evangelists that our Lord left eight of the Apostles near the gate, taking Peter, James and John, his closest companions, a little farther with him, and cautioning them all to watch and pray, because it was an hour of special trial. Going a little farther by himself, he communed with the Father in secret. His feelings were not and could not be shared even by his beloved disciples; they could not appreciate the trial through which he was passing; they had not yet been begotten of the spirit. Thus in his most trying hour Jesus was alone—"Of the people there was none with me."—Isa. 63:3.

It is difficult for the majority, even of Christian people, to appreciate the true character of our dear Lord's trial, which in this instance so wrought upon his nervous system as to produce a bloody sweat. Many compare our Lord's course with that of some of his martyr followers who have gone forth into death with remarkable courage, and in contrasting matters they are inclined to wonder why our Lord, who was perfect, should have endured so much more a passion of suffering than his imperfect followers. To grasp the true situation it is necessary that several things be borne in mind:—

(1) For our Lord, who had a perfect right to life, to lay it down in death, was a very different matter from the laying down of a forfeited and impaired life on the part of those who could not hope to keep it long anyway. (2) Our race, already nine-tenths dead, has but a feeble appreciation of the great value of life—all of its experience having been in connection with dying, it has come to regard death with equanimity. But not so our Lord, the "prince of life," who had been with the Father from the beginning, and by whom all things were made—he realized life as a very precious boon, privilege, enjoyment. To him, therefore, death must have

been much more terrible than to us who are already nine-tenths dead, and correspondingly blunted in all of our sensibilities. True he had the Father's assurance that if faithful unto death he should have a resurrection, and unquestionably he believed the Father's promise—all of his course in life gives abundant evidence of his implicit faith in the Father. And yet in his case this must have been a crucial trial to faith, much more so than with us. As we have only a shred of a forfeited life to lay down, so we have on the other hand, not only the Father's promise of a future life through Christ, but we have the example of the Father's power in the resurrection of our dear Redeemer: but our Lord Jesus had no such evidence of the divine power; he himself, according to the divine promise, was to be the "first-born from the dead," a first-fruit unto God of his creatures.—Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 15:20.

But all this had already been counted, weighed and accepted from the very beginning of his ministry. He had already informed the disciples that it was necessary that he should lay down his life for the sheep, and that he was about to do so. (John 10:15.) We are not to assume, therefore, when our dear Redeemer prayed, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me," that he meant if it were possible he might escape dying. He well knew, and had already explained to the Apostles, that the drawing of the world could not take place except he were lifted up as the sin-offering—that it was absolutely necessary that he should die for our sins and enter into his glory.—John 3:14; 12:32.

The cup which he prayed might pass from him, if possible, we must therefore suppose to have been the shame and ignominy of arrest as a law-breaker, a public trial and conviction, and subsequent crucifixion as a malefactor. It was one thing to die for our sins, as men generally die, without special shame or contumely; it was another thing that he should die with such extreme shame, dishonor and contempt. Quite probably in the Father's wisdom this last feature was kept more or less hidden from our dear Redeemer until just about the time of its accomplishment. And apparently our Lord Jesus did not see any absolute **necessity** for his suffering more than the sinner suffered, in order to pay man's ransom price. Hence his prayer for a time was, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The Apostle also notes this distinction, saying, he "became obedient unto death," and then adds "even the death of the cross."—Phil. 2:8.

The death of the cross, with its attendant dishonor, reproach, etc., so far as we may be able to judge, was not necessary as our ransom price, because the penalty did not read, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die with public reprobation and dishonor by crucifixion. Since the penalty was death (Gen. 2:17), we may suppose that our Lord's death by any means would have fully paid man's ransom price. However, the additional features were deemed necessary by the Father, and the "cup" did not pass. The Father required this extreme of obedience as a test, a proof not only to himself but before all his intelligent creatures of the absolute loyalty of heart of his "well beloved Son," upon whom he designed shortly thereafter to confer the great blessing and high exaltation of his own divine nature and joint-heirship in his Kingdom. And the loyalty of our dear Redeemer was fully attested, as the Apostle declares; he "despised the shame," that is to say, the shame was as nothing in his sight in comparison with the accomplishment of the Father's purposes, the pleasing of the Father. (Heb. 12:2.) So long as he thought there was a possibility of the elimination of the shame feature, he was nervously anxious to have it so, if possible; but as soon as he realized that this was not the Father's will his heart instantly responded, "Not my will but thine be done." Decision respecting the Father's will immediately brought strength; he was now prepared for any experience, "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

Meanwhile Judas, who some days before had engaged with the high-priest to betray Jesus, and who left the upper room immediately after the Supper to carry out his nefarious plan, had received of the chief priests and Pharisees a band of men, with a person in charge as an officer, whose mission it was to arrest Jesus in the night and to secure his execution before the Passover. We must wholly disagree with the

common thought that this "band" consisted of an army of three to six hundred Roman soldiers. They certainly acted very differently from soldiers ordinarily under such circumstances. Besides, the record by all of the Evangelists is that this band was sent, not by Pilate nor by Herod, the Roman representatives, but by the chief priests and Pharisees, who we know had no command whatever of the Roman garrison. To our understanding this band which apprehended Jesus was very similar to the one mentioned in John 7:32-46.

It would appear that the Jewish Sanhedrin exercised a certain amount of authority in respect to religious matters, and were permitted to make arrests, but not to execute criminals without the consent of the Roman governor. We remember that the apostles were arrested on several occasions by such officers of the Jews.—See Acts 5:17, 18,22,25-40.

Both Matthew and Mark speak of this aggregation, under officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, as a "multitude," and our Lord's words indicate that they were armed with sticks and swords such as were common to the people in general, and he does not mention spears, which would probably have been a part of the armament of a band of Roman soldiers. This thought is further emphasized by the fact that it was the high priest's servant who evidently made the first assault upon Jesus, and received a blow from Peter's sword. If Roman soldiers had the matter in charge the high priest's servant no doubt would have been less officious.

It is presumed, and apparently on good grounds, that this company seeking Jesus, under the guidance of Judas, went first to the upper room which our Lord and the Apostles had left probably less than an hour before. Finding that Jesus and the eleven were gone, Judas knew that he would be most likely to find them in the Garden of Gethsemane, for "Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples." John's account omits the particulars of the betrayal given by the other Evangelists: possibly the loving disciple felt so much ashamed of the facts that he preferred not to mention them. Certainly very few acts of treachery ever paralleled this one, and all mankind, even in their perverted condition of mind, seem to realize that the position of traitor is amongst the most despicable on the calendar, and such treachery as that of Judas, against such kindness and love and goodness as that of his Master, we may be thankful is not so very common. And yet there are correspondencies in the experiences of the Lord's people, "in perils amongst false brethren." It behooves us each to look to it that we permit nothing akin to the spirit of Judas to rankle in our hearts. Our Lord puts the "members of his body" in such matters on a plane with himself, and assures us that whoever shall injure one of the least of these his brethren, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.—Matt. 18:6.

Of course there will always be a **motive**, good or bad, back of every deed done to the under-members of his body as well as to the Head. To find strong motives is not to find valid excuses for treacheries. So far as our experience and judgment go, the lesson is that such treachery from "false brethren" usually has its spring in covetousness, lust for influence, power or position, and the desire to glorify such unholy ambitions cannot fail to corrupt any heart which entertains them. As one has said—

> "Sow a thought, you reap an act;
> Sow an act, you reap a habit;
> Sow a habit, you reap a character;
> Sow a character, you reap a destiny."

Judas had been doing some of this sowing of evil thoughts for a considerable time before his thoughts took outward shape in evil acts. He was covetous of wealth and of influence; he became the treasurer of the little group of disciples, and the intimation of the Scriptures is that he purloined to his own private uses a portion of the contributions. As usual, his love for money increased the more he exercised it, until he was willing to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver—equivalent to about twenty dollars of our money, tho representing in value of labor a much larger sum. It would seem, too, that Judas was looking forward to the promised Kingdom, and probably anticipated a high position as royal treasurer of that Kingdom.

It is quite possible, indeed probable, we think, that Judas was seriously disappointed in

respect to the result of his betrayal. Apparently he expected that our Lord would deliver himself by miraculous power from the hands of his enemies. This is the most charitable view we would know how to take of his treacherous conduct: it relieves the blackness of the act only a very little, however, for he who would be willing to despitefully use his best friend, even temporarily, for a money consideration, gives evidence of having prostituted every good and noble sentiment of his being to his love of money. Indeed, the love of honor may have had considerable to do with the matter, for he may have hoped by bringing about this crisis that our Lord would be compelled to set up the long-promised Kingdom, or else to own that all his claims and promises were fraudulent.

Judas surely did succeed in expediting matters, and in bringing about the installation of the embryo Kingdom of God; but not in the manner he expected, nor in any degree to his own honor or advantage. Thus it must be with those who receive the truth and who profess discipleship under it—not in the love of the truth, but in the love of honors hoped for, either present or future. Let us all who have named the name of Christ take heed and watch and pray lest there should be in any of us any of the elements of this vile character. And let us remember that there are various secret ways, as well as the more outward ones, in which we may betray the Lord and the "brethren."

The evangelist declares that Jesus knew in advance all things that would come upon him. We are elsewhere told that while he prayed, "There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." (Luke 22:43.) This ministry may have consisted in informing him of the Father's will in respect to what things he should suffer, and how they were to be expected, and this knowledge that the matter was settled, and the assurance that the Father would overrule it all, strengthened his heart and gave him the great calmness which we observe in all his subsequent course.

The "band" sent to apprehend him evidently expected that they might be obliged to seek for him in the shadows of the trees, etc., and hence they were provided with torches and lanterns. Unquestionably they were greatly surprised that our Lord, instead of fleeing from them, advanced to them, and inquired whom they sought. Quite possibly some of those in the "band" had previous knowledge of the Lord—of his miracles, power over devils, etc., and this may have been the reason for their manifestation of weakness in retreat and falling to the ground. Or it is possible that our Lord exercised over them a superior mental power which produced this effect, for the purpose of showing that he had full power to resist them if he had chosen to use it.

The same lesson, we believe, is taught by Peter's use of the sword upon the high priest's servant. We are to remember that one of the Evangelists records that our Lord instructed the apostles to take swords with them, and that when two were found he said, "It is enough." (Luke 22:36,38.) Our Lord had no thought of having his disciples war a carnal warfare on his behalf, as he subsequently stated, "If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." (John 18:36.) The two swords were sufficient to show that our Lord's apprehension was not because there were no means of defense, nor because of cowardice on the part of his disciples, but merely because of his submission—knowing that his hour was come, and that thus it behooved him to suffer for our sins and to enter into his glory.—Luke 24:46.

After this one manifestation of power, as indicating his full ability to cope with that multitude, and indeed his power to have more than twelve legions of angels to defend him, had he so desired (Matt. 26:53), we find our Lord fully submitting himself to capture, merely making condition that the disciples might go their way. How grand the character which at such a moment, under such trying conditions, could so fully forget self and feel interested merely in the welfare of others! How like what we should expect of Him!

"That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me I have lost none." We understand the writer to mean that here again in the Master's course we find an exemplification of his care for his disciples, as enunciated in his prayer just before leaving the upper room. While the thought of his prayer

was chiefly in respect to their spiritual interests, that none of them should be lost, we do well to notice this as a corroborative illustration of our Lord's care of the physical interests of all who become his disciples. Not a hair of their heads shall fall; nothing shall be permitted to injure them—every event and affair of life will be overruled for their highest good.—Matt. 6:32,33.

It was probably when Jesus began to be bound that Peter drew his sword in his defense; perhaps he remembered the Lord's words of a few hours previous, to the effect that his followers would all forsake him, and his own promise, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." (Mark 14:29.) Noble, zealous Peter! We love him for his noble expression of sentiment, and for his heroic defense of the Master with the sword against superior numbers. It is the custom of many to decry Peter's action, as another of his rash errors. We are to remember, however, that the Apostles had not yet received the holy Spirit and therefore could not clearly appreciate the fact that the Kingdom to which they were called is a spiritual Kingdom. Besides, as we have seen, he was merely following the Lord's counsel in taking the sword with him, and evidently also carrying out the divine purpose in using it. We see nothing to blame, everything to commend. It was a sign of larger import than Peter and the others there realized.

But having permitted the matter to go thus far, our Lord restrained Peter, saying, "Suffer yet thus far. Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" And so saying he touched his wounded enemy and healed him. The disciples were to see, understand, be fully assured, that our Lord, in delivering himself to his enemies, did it voluntarily, and hence the proceedings were so pantomimed as to enforce this lesson.

How the grace of humility shines out in all the little affairs of our dear Redeemer's ministry; even at this moment of his surrender to his enemies he does not boast that his course is a voluntary one, nor seek praise as a martyr! He declares the simple truth, that the Father required this of him as an evidence of his personal loyalty to him. He confesses himself a servant of God, a son who learned obedience by the things which he suffered. "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Indeed, this was the strength of his victory—his will was fully submitted to the Father's will, and his faith grasped the fact that the Father permitted no unnecessary evils to come upon him, but only such as he could and would overrule for good.

There is a valuable lesson here for all who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of the great High Priest,—for all the Royal Priesthood. We also are to remember that so long as we abide in Christ, and seek to walk in his footsteps, all the trying experiences of life are carefully measured for us by the Lord—that he does not pour into our cup of sorrow and trial any bitter experiences that are not needful to us, and that will not subsequently work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. (2 Cor. 4:17.) With these assurances, and with the evidences of the Father's faithfulness to our glorified Master and Forerunner, we indeed may have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us in the Gospel.—Heb. 6:18-20.

The healing of the smitten ear, our Lord's last miracle, was most beautifully illustrative of his character and teachings. It exemplified his words, "Love your enemies, do good to them that persecute you." It showed that he was filled with the divine love which his teachings inculcated, and that he had no bitterness toward those who despitefully used and persecuted him.

The binding of our Lord seems to have been entirely unnecessary, except as the "band" might desire to make an exhibition of their prowess to those who had sent them. Our Lord seems to have remonstrated in respect to this, as per the account given in Mark 14:48,49: "Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves, to take me? I was daily with you in the Temple, teaching, and ye took me not. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." It was then that the eleven forsook him and fled. Judas continuing with the band went to the house of Annas the priest, who doubtless had bargained with Judas, and no doubt it was at this time that the thirty pieces of silver were paid over,

Judas having now shown a fulfillment of the contract. Poor wretched man! The Son of man indeed went to death, as it had been written of him, but this made none the less horrible the treachery, the covetousness and murderous spirit that delivered him up to his enemies. So with the members of the body of Christ: it must needs be that offences come—it is a part of the divine plan that the body of Christ should fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of the Head (Col. 1:24)—but this makes none the less sinful the conduct of those who have to do with such betrayals—especially if they be "false brethren" who have enjoyed some knowledge of the truth. In every instance, however, it will be observed that altho the trials worked out blessing for the Lord and will do so also for all the faithful who suffer with him, the rewards of unrighteousness sought by those who take Judas' course never yield them the honors and blessings they coveted, and for which they sold themselves to work evil.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Trial by Annas, Caiaphas, Sanhedrin; Peter denies	26:57–27:1	14:53–15:1	22:54-71	18:13-27

Matthew 26:57 to 27:1

And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, this fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee? Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly. When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

Mark 14:53 to 15:1

And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him

to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But neither so did their witness agree together. And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept. And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.

Luke 22:54-71

Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly. And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him. And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

John 18:13-27

And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then

saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself. The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST ARRAIGNED.—*Reprints*, p. 2469

JOHN 18:15-27.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."—John 1:11.

ALTHO it is declared that all the disciples fled, John points out that Peter and himself followed at a distance. Their deep interest in the Master would not permit them to go to their homes; they must keep him in sight, and note how things would go with him to the very last. They were powerless to assist him against such great odds, and in the face of his own refusal to be assisted, but they were not powerless to love still. John, it seems, was somewhat acquainted at the high priest's palace, and readily gained entrance, not only for himself but for Peter.

But these favors and privileges became tests to Peter, and led to his denial of the Lord. And so it is with some of the Lord's followers of today. When they are by themselves, or with others of like precious faith, they are bold and courageous to confess the Lord and to serve him, but if perchance they get into palaces or amongst the servants and officers and high priests of nominal Christianity they are ashamed of the Master and fear to confess him, lest they should be cast out of the privileges enjoyed in the society of those who have not yet recognized the truth. Far better would it have been for poor Peter had he openly declared, "Yes, I am one of his disciples, and since I presume that none such are wanted here I will go out." How much so honorable and proper a course would have reflected to his credit in the eyes of all just persons, and how much blessing it would have brought to him!

Peter's failure to take the proper course brought him later to a still more trying situation, when a kinsman of the man whose ear he had cut off asked him point-blank the question, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" Matters were getting pretty close for poor Peter. It was more now than a question of leaving the fire and the privileges and honor of the high priest's court: it was now a question of his identity as the one who had defended Jesus with a sword, and hence a question of his own arrest and trial at the same tribunal with the Master. One false step leads naturally to another; to have now declared for Jesus would have been a public testimony that he was a liar, in addition to leading to his apprehension, and so Peter concluded that in self-defense he must not only repeat the lie, and again deny the Master, but to make the matter more strong before his accusers he began to curse and to swear that he knew not Jesus.

Poor Peter! Truly, as our Lord told him, Satan had desired to have him, to sift him, and surely he was being severely sifted at this time. It seems almost a miracle that he recovered his balance and repented and found forgiveness for his sins. It would seem that our Lord's prayer on his behalf operated through his previous

announcement to Peter of this denial, for after he had thus denied, and after he had noticed the cock crow, Peter remembered the Lord's words, "The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." With feelings better imagined than they can be described, Peter hastily left the High Priest's apartments now of his own accord, going out into the shadows of early morning, that he might weep bitterly and entreat the Lord's forgiveness.

There is a lesson for us in the fact that Peter's failure was along the very line of his strength. He was naturally courageous, had boasted of it, and yet failed for lack of courage. "When I am weak then I am strong," implies that he who feels himself strong is really weak, as in Peter's case. Let us all learn to specially guard our supposedly strong points of character, remembering that we have a wily foe. We are to realize our weakness, our vulnerableness at any point, except as we keep watch at every point and rely upon the great Captain of our salvation to assist us.

John does not tell the whole of the story; he omits reference to Peter's cursing and swearing. His love for Brother Peter evidently influenced him to omit that portion of the narrative not absolutely necessary to confirm the Lord's prediction. The account of the cursing and swearing is given by Mark, whose Gospel record is supposed to have been indited by Peter himself, Mark being in a large measure Peter's amanuensis.—Mark 14:66-72.

Jesus was examined of the High Priest: that functionary, however evil and murderously disposed at heart, felt bound to at least preserve the forms of justice, altho from the records elsewhere we know that himself and his associates amongst the priests and Pharisees had already determined that Jesus must be put to death because his influence amongst the people was inimical to their own;—because his teachings cast theirs into the shade and exposed their hollowness, bigotry and hypocrisy. Our Lord answered his questions accordingly; refusing to make any specific explanations he merely referred to his teachings, appealing thus to his rights as a Jew. His answer was the perfectly proper and legal one; he had been arrested without just cause, and the judge was now seeking to **find** a cause. Our Lord merely pointed out that the cause for the arrest must be shown to have been something which preceded the arrest.

It is not necessary for us to suppose that the officer who struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, and reproved him for improper language toward the Chief Priest, was intentionally unjust in the matter. Rather we may suppose that, influenced by his desire to appear zealous in support of the High Priest's position and judgment, this accentuated his mental unbalance as a fallen man, and led him to imagine evil where there was none. This circumstance, however, gives us the opportunity for discerning just what our Lord meant by his expression in the sermon on the mount, "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also." (Matt. 5:39.) Our Lord did not literally turn the other cheek to the man and ask him to smite that also, nor did he even receive the smiting in silence. He was not willing that his good conduct and proper language should be evil spoken of without at least a proper endeavor to correct the matter. Hence he asked his smiter to point out wherein he had spoken evil, and suggested to him that if he could not point out the evil he should acknowledge his wrong in having improperly smitten for an evil which could not be pointed out.

In the light of this illustration the Lord's people are to understand the command, to turn the other cheek, to mean simply that they are not to resist evil with evil; rather, they are to receive more evil than return it in kind. On the contrary, however, they are to resist evil with good; they are to expostulate with evil-doers, as the Master did, endeavoring with kindness and gentleness to have them see the right and the wrong of the questions in dispute.

It would appear that our Lord's trial by the Jews was held before Caiaphas, the acting High Priest, the son-in-law of Annas, the proper High Priest according to the Jewish law; and the fourteenth verse identifies Caiaphas as the one who had previously declared, "'It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' And this spake he not of himself, but being High Priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather

together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."—John 11:50-53.

Here is an illustration of how a great truth may be seen from two opposite standpoints. The prophecy of Caiaphas was strictly true,—in strict accord with all the declarations of the Lord's Word, and was sent through one of the channels which the Lord had been in the habit of using (the High Priest's office) yet the person occupying that office, being out of heart-harmony with the Lord, was out of harmony also with the various features of the divine plan, and became an instigator and cooperator in an evil work, which nevertheless was working out in harmony with the divine foreknowledge and program.

There is a lesson in this also for all of the Lord's people in respect to every feature of divine truth. It is not sufficient that we see certain facts; it is necessary also that we be in heart-harmony with the Lord, else we might, like Caiaphas, aid in fulfilling the Lord's plan but nevertheless taking a wrong position may be bringing ourselves, with others, under a curse, while still cooperating in the fulfillment of the divine plan. Let all who are of the light, and who have received the truth, seek more and more to walk in the light and in the Master's footsteps, carefully avoiding the evils which we see illustrated in the cases of Judas, Peter and Caiaphas.

The trial before the Jews was of three parts:—

(1) The examination before Annas the **legal** High Priest which was wholly unofficial. He sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas the **official** High Priest of Roman appointment, and as such the President of the Sanhedrin, whose court room was probably in the same palace, across the corridor, where Peter stood warming himself.

(2) The preliminary trial before Caiaphas is supposed to have been held between two or three o'clock on Friday morning—the members of the Sanhedrin or Jewish Court having been summoned by messengers as soon as Jesus was apprehended. This hearing was preliminary in the sense that it examined Jesus and formulated and decided upon the charges on which it would convict at the formal meeting at dawn, about five o'clock. For the Jewish law forbade a trial by night.—Luke 22:66-71.

(3) The formal trial before the Sanhedrin at dawn was merely a ceremony—a farce. The determination to kill Jesus having been reached long before his arrest, the matter of his condemnation was rushed through for two reasons. (a) The great Jews feared the common people would defend Jesus against their trumped up charges, which were the only ones even they could formulate. (b) The Passover was at hand and they wanted him killed before it. Ah! how little did they realize that they were being permitted of God to exercise the evil desires of their hearts and thus to fulfill types and prophecies to the very day.

A lesson on this for God's people is, that it is not sufficient that we go through a form or ceremony of justice; nor is it sufficient that we know in advance that we cannot circumvent the divine plan or hinder its fulfillment. Many will find in the day of reckoning and revealing, that they have served God's purposes without honor or profit—in a manner that brought upon them condemnation instead of approval. Even the great Adversary Satan will ultimately find (but not in any degree to his credit or blessing) that all his opposition to God, to Christ, and to "the brethren," has been overruled by divine wisdom and power for **good**, by him who "maketh the wrath of man to praise him."

It is all-important then, that we have more than forms of justice, of righteousness; we must have the **spirit** of righteousness, a **love** of righteousness,—a sincere desire to know and to do God's will, else like as the Jews condemned and killed the Just One we might with forms of justice condemn and injure his "brethren." And to have the desirable condition of **love** for God and for righteousness implies a full consecration of heart to the Lord. Thus every examination of the subject brings us back to the fact that **full** consecration to the Lord, **full** self-surrender to his will as revealed in his Word, is the only proper and only safe course for any to pursue if they would hope to hear the Master's words, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

It was during the interim between the 3 a.m. examination and the 5 a.m. formal conviction of our Lord by his influential enemies, that he was subjected for two hours to the mockery and insults described by three of the

Evangelists. (Matt. 26:67, 68; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63-65.) These insults were committed by the "servants" and well illustrate the fact that low minds delight in the misfortunes of those whom they realize to be their superiors. These servants manifested the **same spirit** as their masters—the chief priests and Pharisees—their methods were ruder because they were more ignorant and coarse. The spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, on the contrary, whether in the educated or in the ignorant, is a spirit of love, of gentleness, of sympathy, of kindness. By their fruits both spirits may be known. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his."

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Judas the betrayer hangs himself	27:3-10	[Acts 1:18,19]

Matthew 27:3-10

Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

Acts 1:18-19

Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.

AN UNFAITHFUL TREASURER'S FALL—*Reprints*, p. 5552

MATTHEW 26:14-25,47-50; 27:3-10.

"Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!"—Matthew 26:24.

JUDAS hailed from the south of Palestine, while the other eleven of Jesus' disciples were Galileans. It is inferred that because of superior business qualities Judas was made the treasurer of the Apostolic company. The friends of Jesus noted the fact that He and His followers needed to give their entire time to the heralding of the Kingdom. It is not strange, therefore, that we read that some voluntarily donated money for their support.

We cannot imagine Jesus and His Apostles begging for money or even "passing the hat" for a collection. To have done so would have been to discount Jehovah's declaration that all the gold, all the silver, and the cattle upon a thousand hills are His; and to imply that He would have need to ask for assistance. On the contrary, the Scriptures tell us that some voluntarily contributed to the Master's support; for instance, Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and others. (Luke 8:3.) Such voluntary donations made it proper that there should be a common treasurer for the company, and that he should be of superior business acumen.

We find no reason for believing that Judas was a bad man at the time of his selection by Jesus to be one of the twelve Apostles. We have every reason to believe that he developed a bad character even under the most favorable influences—in the continual company of Jesus and

the other Apostles, and with the Message of the Kingdom continually in his ears. There was, however, a beginning to his deflection; and the intimation of the Scriptures is that his temptation came along the lines of avarice, selfishness, love of money.

"A Root of All Evil"

Alas, how many honest men have been seduced from the path of righteousness by the love of money! We remember that one of the serious charges which Jesus brought against the Pharisees was that they were money-lovers. It would not seem at all strange if it should prove to be true that the difficulty with many Christians today also is along this line of love of money. It is still true that "the love of money is a root of all evil." (1 Timothy 6:10.) The Apostle declares that through this deception many pierce themselves with sorrows—not always so seriously as did Judas, however.

Judas loved money to such an extent that he was willing to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver which, on the basis of labor, amounted to between two hundred and three hundred dollars in value. Others have loved money to such an extent that they have sold their consciences to gain wealth. Some have sold the Truth for money believing that they would prosper in business better by advocating error. Some have sold the Church for money, and have been willing to preach what they did not believe for the hire of money and the approval of men. Some have sold their nation's interests for money, bartering their patriotism.

Surely there is great need for every one to be on guard against the insidious influence of the love of money. But we should clearly distinguish between money and the love of money; for it is the latter which causes ruin and which entraps and ensnares the soul. Money represents toil, labor, accumulation; and as such it should be valued for the good it can do. But to love money, to serve it, to make it an idol and to allow it to alienate our hearts from God, we should not do. Let us not forget that this love of money was the primal cause of Judas' horrible failure.

A Fulfilment of Prophecy

Not at first, but afterward apparently, did the disciples learn that Judas, who carried the treasurer's bag, was a thief. (John 12:6.) Doubtless even when appropriating the moneys contributed to the support of the little company of disciples, Judas could have some plausible excuse; for sin is always deceptive. Doubtless he would have said, "I laid the money away, thinking that the time would come when the Master and all of us would have greater need for money, and when my provident foresight would be appreciated." Brooding on the subject increased his desire for money, and led his active business mind to hatch out the plot for the betrayal of Jesus.

The record is that when Judas perceived that Jesus had been condemned, he had remorse for his action and took back the money to the chief priests, wishing to undo his deed. They laughed at him, declaring that it was no concern of theirs, but his own, if he had betrayed innocent blood. Because the returned money was "blood money," they could not put it into the Temple Treasury again. Instead, they purchased therewith a piece of cheap land, a potter's field, as a burial place for strangers. Thus they fulfilled to the very letter a prophecy which they had probably forgotten: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed."—Matthew 27:9,10.

The account implies that Judas was surprised when Jesus was condemned. Apparently he surmised that Jesus, brought to the crucial test, would assert Himself as the Messiah and would triumph over His enemies. Judas thus probably thought that he would hasten the establishment of the Kingdom, in which he hoped to share. For his apology in the end he could say, "Well, we are ahead just thirty pieces of silver; and you may thank me for having brought matters to a climax sooner than otherwise." Thus he would have shone as a hero, as well as have demonstrated his financial wisdom and his suitability for the post of Grand Treasurer of the Kingdom. But in addition to all this, apparently he got a little angry at Jesus because the Master had approved of Mary's conduct in respect to the spikenard. It was under the impulse of that resentment that he

first sought the priests and the Scribes to negotiate for the betrayal.

Oblivion—No Hope of a Resurrection

We are not hereby suggesting excuses for Judas. There can be no excuse properly offered for treachery to God and His Cause. We are merely pointing out the fact that every transgressor must first consent in his own mind to his wrong course. In other words, the mind, the conscience, must be perverted before each step of sin. Hence the words of Jesus are fully justified: "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born."—Matt. 26:24.

Such treachery, such willingness to hand over his Friend, his Teacher, and the One whom he had accepted as the Son of God and through whom he had expected the Messianic Kingdom, was perfidy of the worst type. With all the other Apostles, Judas had been called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and to become a sharer with Him in the sufferings and trials incidental to loyalty to the Truth, misunderstood by the people, and if faithful to receive with his Master a share in the Heavenly Kingdom, which is to bless the world. Judas, with the others, had preached the Kingdom, had cast out demons, and had healed the sick, by the power of God operating through the name of Jesus. He had been constantly with the Savior, and knew of the purity of His life, knew of His loyalty to God. Therefore all these things constituted his responsibility and his guilt.

The fact that he suicided implied a fulfillment of Jesus' words—that Judas wished that he had never been born. Every one who suicides declares the same fact. Yet there may be hope for other suicides, because of their ignorance, and because Christ died for all; and they, with others, must surely have a blessing and an opportunity for everlasting life as a result.

But in the case of Judas, all this was discounted by the fact that he had already enjoyed such privileges, opportunity and knowledge, and had sinned against light and knowledge. The declaration that he went to his own place, his appropriate place, does not signify that Judas or anybody else is to be eternally tortured as a punishment for sin. Rather, his own place was oblivion, hopeless oblivion, without prospect of a resurrection. He died like a natural brute beast, nor could argument be shown why such a character, who had enjoyed such privileges, should ever have any future opportunity.

Harmony of Two Records

As to the fate of Judas, one Scripture tells us that he went and hanged himself. (Matthew 27:5.) Another Scripture declares that his iniquity accomplished the purchase of a field; and that, falling headlong, he burst asunder, and his bowels gushed out. (Acts 1:18.) To harmonize these two accounts is very simple. Both are true. To hang himself, he probably chose the branch of a tree overhanging a precipice, where he could the more easily accomplish his purpose. If under the strain the rope broke, we can readily see how his headlong fall took place.

However, the matter of his death is of slight importance. The important thing is to notice how his soul died, in that he lost his relationship with God and with Christ, and all hope therefore of a future life. Yet the Master was gentle toward him to the very last, giving him every opportunity to relent and to retrace his steps, down to the very last act.

The fact that God had foreknown from the beginning that one of the Twelve would betray Jesus, the fact that the purchase of the field with the blood money had already been prophesied, did not alter the responsibility of Judas for his own fall. It was not God's foreknowledge that injured Judas, but his own wrong course; and thus it is with all. God's knowing from the beginning whatsoever will come to pass does not affect us, for He merely knows in respect to us what we will do of our own volition, our own yielding to avarice, to sin.

The testimony that Jesus knew in advance who would betray Him does not prove that Jesus knew this at the time when He chose Judas. He knew that the Scriptures intimated that one of His disciples would betray Him; and from the beginning of the deflection of Judas toward sin, toward avarice, Jesus knew that he must be the one who would commit the traitorous deed; yet in no sense of the word did Jesus' conduct lead Judas to the wrong, but rather forewarned him to the contrary.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Before Pilate, then Herod, and then back to Pilate	27:2,11-14	15:1-5	23:1-12	18:28-38
	Jerusalem	Delivered to death, after Pilate seeks his release	27:15-30	15:6-19	23:13-25	18:39–19:16

Matthew 27:2,11-30

And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. ... And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly. Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had plaited a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

Mark 15:1-19

And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it. And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marveled. Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them. But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him. And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. And the

soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. And they clothed him with purple, and plaited a crown of thorns, and put it about his head, And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshiped him.

Luke 23:1-25

And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Herod with his men of war set him at naught, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves. And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him, and release him. (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

John 18:28-40

Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every

one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

John 19:1-16

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

THE "GOOD CONFESSION" BEFORE PILATE.—*Reprints*, p. 2470
JOHN 18:28-40; 1 TIMOTHY 6:13.
"I find no fault in him."—John 19:4.

PILATE, the Roman governor of Judea, had in his hands the power of life and death. The Jewish Sanhedrin was permitted to govern the country in a religious way, according to Jewish law and custom, but had no power to order public execution. Apparently they did have the power to stone to death for blasphemy (the charge on which they condemned Jesus) as in the case of Stephen (Acts 7:58); and hence we may suppose that they had such a power in respect to Jesus, but failed to exercise it lest the people should resent the injustice. Moreover, quite possibly they realized the wide influence already attained by his teachings, and desired to make his execution as public and as disgraceful as possible—to the intent that his followers might be chagrined and humiliated, as well as himself, because few would care to confess themselves disciples of one who had been publicly executed as a criminal,—condemned by both civil and ecclesiastical judges. Thus they hoped to nip in the bud the new system of religious teaching, which, if it continued, would evidently entirely subvert their own influence with the people. Thus unwittingly these evildoers were carrying out the very arrangements foreordained of God—and doing so in the full exercise of their own evil volition.

As already noted, the formal condemnation of our Lord before the Jewish Sanhedrin occurred at dawn, five to six o'clock, and immediately they hurried him to Pilate's judgment hall,

intent on getting him into the hands of the Roman soldiers for execution at the earliest possible moment, so that the multitudes might realize his case as beyond the power of their intervention. Nor had the Jewish rulers any particular reason to suspect that Pilate would hesitate at all to order an execution. Pilate seems to have had a reputation for cruelty. Philo speaks of "his corruption, his acts of insolence, his habit of insulting the people, his cruelty, his continual murders of people untried and uncondemned, and his never-ending and most grievous inhumanity at all times—a man of most ferocious passions, very merciless as well as very obstinate." Apparently the rulers of the Jews had frequent cause to appeal to Pilate to be merciful, and generally without effect; they seem to have taken for granted that if any prisoner were brought to him with a request for execution he would take pleasure in complying.

We are reminded of our Lord's words to the Pharisees, "Ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity," when we read that these very persons who murderously were scheming for the destruction of the Just One would not enter into Pilate's judgment hall, "lest they should be defiled," and thus be hindered from celebrating the Passover. How wretchedly inconsistent and hypocritical they were! They feared that Pilate's judgment hall, being under jurisdiction of the Gentiles, might have in it some **leaven** (a symbol of sin), and realized not that the real leaven of sin had permeated and thoroughly saturated their own hearts—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife.

What a lesson the Lord's people have here: for we are to remember that these heart-corrupted conspirators were the professed holiness people of their day and church. While it is not in the power of any today to crucify the Lord and put him to an open shame, it is within our power to put to shame, to crucify, his "brethren"—the members of his body. And we fear that some today are doing this with as much self-deception as was exercised by these chief priests and Pharisees who secured our Lord's crucifixion. True, the Pharisees knew not what they did, as Peter says, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17.) And so likewise today any who put to shame the members of "the body of Christ" probably are ignorant of what they do. Nevertheless they put themselves under the Lord's sentence, "It were better that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea." (Luke 17:2.) Let us each therefore beware, and keep the heart, out of which are the issues of life.

Had the hearts of those Pharisees been in proper condition, full of love of righteousness and truth, and appreciative of whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, they could not have made the mistake of rejecting and crucifying the Lamb of God. Similarly, those who have the spirit of love for the brethren will be hindered from becoming in any manner their persecutors. Only such can properly eat of the antitypical Passover.

The Roman governor, knowing of the peculiar custom of the Jews in respect to their Passover time, accommodated himself to their theory and had his chair of state brought outside the judgment hall to what was known as the Place of the Pavement, an elevated platform. Jesus was called up on this platform for examination, while the Jews standing outside of the unhallowed ground made known to Pilate their accusations. They evidently expected that the mere presentation of Jesus as a prisoner for crucifixion would be sufficient. Apparently they had not even expected to be required to make an accusation; hence their answer, "If he were not a malefactor [evil-doer] we would not have delivered him up unto thee." Some have suggested, in harmony with the character of Pilate and his probable disrespect for the Pharisees, that his question rather was, "What accusation do **you** bring against **him**?" as tho he would give the implication that Jesus rather had ground for making accusation against the Pharisees—which of course was the case. The hardened Roman no doubt had become an expert reader of human character, and could readily see that there were no criminal features in our Lord's countenance, and many in those of his accusers.

To the surprise of the priests and Pharisees, Pilate turned Jesus over again to them, saying in substance, This is some petty religious quarrel with which I care to have nothing to do; take the prisoner and do with him according to your own laws and customs—imprisoning him, or causing him to be beaten, or whatever you may think proper, according to your law. But, thirsting for our Lord's death, his persecutors revealed their real condition of heart, saying, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death."

Hard, cruel, unmerciful tho he was, Pilate realized the true situation—that the guilty were pursuing the innocent to death. That he might have the better opportunity for thinking quietly, and also for hearing what Jesus would say in self-defense, Pilate left the Jews and called Jesus unto him into the judgment hall, where they conversed. There must have been something very striking in our Lord's personal appearance to have caused Pilate to consider for a moment the rejection of the demands of the Jewish Court or Sanhedrin, for altho he had full power of life and death it was incumbent upon him, as his first duty, to preserve the peace and tranquility of his dominion; and this implied that in a general way at least he must keep on the popular side, especially when the popular side embraced the chief men of the province, and particularly when those chief men desired the execution of one whom they denounced as a disturber of the peace. Pilate's position was in many respects a delicate one: he must please the government at Rome, and he must avoid unnecessary disputes with the local authorities, who in the present instance were evidently so determined that they would have created a general disturbance rather than that their evil scheme should come to naught. The fact is that six years later these people did send to the Roman Emperor such complaints against Pilate as secured his removal.

Alone with Jesus, Pilate's question was, "Art thou King of the Jews?" The Jews had not made such a charge against Jesus; indeed, they were far from wishing to acknowledge the Galilean as King of the Jews, or as being thus recognized by any number; they had thus far merely charged that Jesus was an evil-doer, an insurrectionist, whose death was necessary to the peace of the nation. It would seem therefore that Pilate had previously heard from some quarter about the riding of Jesus on the ass, and as being hailed by the people as the Son of David a few days previously. That this was not part of the accusation of the Jews seems evident from our Lord's reply to Pilate, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" Are you an interested inquirer after the truth on this subject, or are you merely calling up a matter of which you have heard? Pilate's reply, "Am I a Jew?" was tantamount to saying, What do I know about your Jewish hopes and expectations? I am the Roman governor, and if you are a king it is your own nation and its chief representatives that have delivered you to me. What have you done, if you are their king, that makes your subjects thus disloyal to you? Apparently there is no great danger of your exercising any power against the Roman empire; you are meek, gentle, lowly, unresisting yourself, and your people are crying out against you. King of the Jews, explain this peculiar situation!

Then Jesus explained that his Kingdom is not of this order of things, otherwise he would have servants to fight and to defend him, and would not be as at present, at the mercy of his enemies; and that his kingdom had not yet commenced. Astonished, and perhaps with some degree of sympathy for a great ruler under such humiliating conditions, Pilate asks, Do you then claim that you are a king? Our Lord answers, "Thou sayest," that is, Your statement is correct; I am a King. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."

This was the good confession which our Lord witnessed before Pontius Pilate, to which the Apostle refers. (1 Tim. 6:13.) He confessed his kingship and its divine authority. We are not to wonder that Pilate was incredulous of our Lord's claims to kingship, and that he probably thought him a fanatic. We are rather to remember that remarkably few of those who have heard of Jesus have recognized the truth of this statement that he is **a King**. How few, even amongst professed Christians, recognize the kingly office of our Lord! Many who realize that

Jesus was indeed the Man of Sorrows, acquainted with grief, and some who realize that he died for our sins, have never yet seen that he purchased not only man but the empire originally given to the first Adam. Many can realize our Lord in the attitude of Priest who fail to realize that he is also to be a King, and that throughout the Millennial age he will be a Priest upon his **throne**, "after the order of Melchizedec," his Church and Bride being associated with him and sharing in both his priestly and his kingly offices.

The priestly office speaks mercy, forgiveness and grace to help; but the kingly office is no less essential to the world's salvation—men must be **delivered** from the bondage of sin and death—and must be **ruled** with the iron rod in order to develop them and fit them for life everlasting; and all of this work belongs to him who redeemed us with his own precious blood. It is well that we remember, too, that a very large proportion of our Lord's parables related to the Kingdom in its various stages—now embryotic, by and by to be set up with full power and authority to overthrow evil and to bring in everlasting righteousness.

This Kingdom is to be a Kingdom of truth, of righteousness and of love, working well for its subjects, and our Lord's mission at the first advent was to lay the foundation for that Kingdom by witnessing to the truth—the truth that God is both just and loving, and is willing to receive back into harmony with himself all who love truth and righteousness. It was our Lord's faithfulness to the truth that brought upon him the opposition of those who were blinded by the Adversary, hence his statement that he came to bear witness to the truth is a brief statement of his mission. It was his witness to the truth that cost him his life, and it was the giving of his life in defense of the truth that constituted the redemption price. Similarly all of the Lord's followers are to bear witness to the truth—the truth in respect to God's character and plan—the features of that plan accomplished at the first advent in the redemption of the world, and the features of that plan yet to be accomplished in the second advent, in the deliverance of the world from the bondage of sin and corruption. It is such witness to the truth that is to cost all the true followers of Jesus their lives in presenting themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. Let each one who hopes to be a joint-heir with the Prince of Life in the Kingdom witness to the truth—a good confession respecting the Kingdom, its foundation and ultimate superstructure in glory.

A very short discourse on such a text was quite sufficient for Pilate. He had no desire to enter into a theological discussion, which could only reflect unfavorably upon his own past record. He broke off the conversation suddenly, saying, "What is truth?"—as tho he would say, Who is truthful? Where is absolute justice to be found, absolute truth, absolute probity? And without waiting for an answer he left Jesus in the judgment hall, went forth to the Place of the Pavement, and addressed the waiting Sanhedrin and their multitude of servants and hangers-on, brought with them to give evidence of popular clamor.

Pilate announced his decision, "I find in him no fault at all." Then the Jews, fearing that their prey was about to escape, began to bethink themselves of charges to be formulated. They did not mention the charge on which they themselves had convicted Jesus, falsely, namely, blasphemy; for this would have been no crime whatever in the eyes of the Roman governor. Instead, they made three charges, viz., (1) sedition—agitation of the people against the existing order of things; (2) that he interfered with the collection of taxes, teaching the people that it was improper to pay tribute-money to a foreign power; and (3) that he made claims of being a king.—Luke 23:2.

But now learning that Jesus' home and principal ministry was in Galilee, Pilate thought to relieve himself by referring the entire matter to Herod, who had charge of the province of Galilee, and who was then at Jerusalem, at a palace not far distant. This was the Herod who had caused the death of John the Baptist. Luke tells us (23:8) that Herod was very glad to see Jesus, for having heard much respecting him he hoped also to see some miracle performed by him. Herod questioned our Lord with many words, but received no response whatever, while the chief priests and scribes grew the more vehe-

ment in their accusations, seeing that Jesus denied nothing that they said, and that thus they were not called upon for proofs.

Herod no doubt was piqued as well as disappointed by our Lord's conduct, and unable to gain entertainment from him as expected, he and his guard took sport in mocking the Redeemer's claims of dignity and kingship.

But with a desire to return Pilate's compliment, and perhaps with some little touch of remorse of conscience in respect to the beheading of John the Baptist, Herod disposed of his responsibilities in the case by returning our Lord to Pilate. It was after our Lord's return to Pilate's judgment hall that the latter, apparently as a final effort to appease the Jews, to preserve the peace of the country, and yet to let go one whom he clearly discerned to be innocent, announced that in view of the clamor against Jesus he would cause him to be scourged, altho he found no fault in him. He evidently hoped that by the infliction of the scourging (whipping) and incidental humiliation, that the spirit of malice on the part of the accusers would be satisfied, and that they would peaceably agree to his release. Apparently the scourging was done in some interior apartment by the Roman soldiers; and probably with the full consent of Pilate a cast-off royal robe and a crown of thorns were put upon our Lord. Evidently this proceeding would furnish amusement to the unsympathetic soldiery, and so much shame and contempt cast upon our Lord might at least satisfy his persecutors, if it did not awaken sympathy.

Acting in harmony with this thought, Pilate came again before the Jews, and caused our Lord to be led forth, weak, exhausted and miserable-looking, from the trying experiences of the night, supplemented by the painful and weakening influence of the scourging just received. With his crown of thorns and soiled purple robe he must have been a pitiable sight indeed, and yet the noble outlines of his perfect manhood must still have been striking, and no doubt suggested the words of Pilate which have echoed down the centuries since, "Behold the man!" (John 19:5.) Pilate evidently was impressed with our Lord's personality; never before had he seen so splendid a specimen of the human race. He was such an one as any people might have been glad to honor as their king. He evidently hoped that some impression would be made upon the clamoring throng which accused Jesus. But he was mistaken; they clamored so much the more, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Meantime Pilate's wife had heard of the trial and had sent Pilate word respecting her dream, and advice that he have no part in doing injury to this just person.—Matt. 27:19.

Pilate immediately said to the Jews, Take him and crucify him, if that is your law. But altho thus assured that the Roman governor would not interfere in the matter, the Pharisees hesitated about accepting the proposition; they much preferred that the crucifixion should be in the hands of the Roman governor and his soldiers, lest the friends of Jesus and the multitudes who had been healed and taught by him should come to his assistance and overpower them; hence they answered Pilate that according to their law Jesus should die, because he made himself the Son of God. They perverted the truth in their endeavor to uphold their course, for the Law did not prescribe death as a penalty for the claim of being the **Son** of God. Had our Lord claimed to be the Father he would have come under the terms of the death penalty for blasphemy, but there was no such penalty, nor was it blasphemy, to call himself, as he did, the Son of God.

When Pilate heard of this he was the more alarmed. The features of Jesus were impressive of themselves, but if one possessing such features made the claim of relationship to God there certainly was some ground for fear. Pilate still withstood the Jewish clamor, and sought to release our Lord. Then the Jews, as a last resort, threatened Pilate by implication, crying out, "If thou let this man go thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar." They thus intimated that if Pilate frustrated their designs, and refused to crucify Jesus as they demanded, they would report him to Caesar as an enemy of his empire, a succorer of seditious persons, a fosterer of rival kings in the empire. Pilate could not stand against this argument, and washed his hands in the presence of the multitude, saying by this act, as well as in words, "I

am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." And when the Jews cried out, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," Pilate delivered him to be crucified.—Matt. 27:24,25.

We are not of those who condemn Pilate; he was a servant of the empire, charged with doing everything reasonable to preserve peace in his dominions, and only a clearly enlightened and fully consecrated saint could have been expected to do more than Pilate did for the release of Jesus. Our Lord in no sense intimated guilt on the part of Pilate. The responsibility was assumed by the Jews, and surely its penalty has rested heavily upon them and upon their children for the past eighteen centuries, and even yet their cup of anguish is not filled to the full. "Jacob's trouble" will be no unimportant one in the great time of trouble that is just approaching; but we thank God on their behalf that deliverance is nigh for them, as well as for all others of the groaning creation. How blessed the thought that when they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and wail because of him, it will not be with tears of hopeless sorrow; for the Lord "shall pour upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his first-born."—Zech. 12:10.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE.—*Reprints*, p. 1809

MARK 15:1-15;—MATTHEW 27:1-30; LUKE 23:1-25; JOHN 18:28-40; 19:1-16.

"But Jesus yet answered nothing, so that Pilate marvelled."

SINCE THE informal meeting of the Sanhedrin described in the preceding lesson could not give a legal sentence before sunrise, this morning meeting and consultation were merely for the purpose of ratifying the conclusions then reached. They then delivered Jesus bound unto Pilate, the whole company escorting him thither to make sure that their purpose should be accomplished.—Luke 23:1.

Verses 2-5. The wicked shrewdness of the Sanhedrin, in preferring the charge of blasphemy, for its effect upon the people before whom they desired to appear very zealous for the law, while an entirely different, but equally false, set of charges was brought against him before Pilate, the Roman governor, who cared nothing for their religious ideas, is very manifest. The accusation brought before Pilate involved the charge of treason, a charge most likely to arouse the indignation and wrath of the Roman rulers. They accused him of seditious agitation, of prohibiting the payment of tribute money, and of assuming the title of King of the Jews, and thus apparently of conspiring against Caesar and the Roman government.

While the second charge was entirely false (Matt. 22:21), the other two had an appearance of truth, and to these were added numerous petty individual charges. But to none of them did the Lord make reply, so that Pilate marveled that he made no effort at self-defense in the midst of such danger.

Verses 6-14. The several efforts of Pilate to release his innocent prisoner, who, he discovered, had been delivered to him for envy, were unavailing before the boisterous mob who, instigated by their rulers, loudly clamored for his death, and that by the most ignominious and cruel method, crucifixion, so that his memory should ever be covered with infamy.

Verse 15. Then Pilate, who was influenced more by considerations of policy than of principle, willing to satisfy the people, delivered Jesus to be scourged and crucified, yet at the same time protesting the innocence of his prisoner and washing his hands in token of his own innocence in thus delivering up to them this just person. Not until he himself was threatened by the mob to be reported to Caesar as one hostile to the government and a traitor to his trust in encouraging seditions and conspiracy against the government, did he relinquish his efforts to save Jesus.—John 19:12-16; Matt. 27:24,25.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
~3 pm Fri.	Golgotha, Jerusalem	Jesus' death on the cross and associated events	27:31-56	15:20-41	23:26-49	19:16-30
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Jesus' body removed from the cross and buried	27:57-61	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:31-42
Nisan 15	Jerusalem	Priests and Pharisees get guard for tomb	27:62-66			

Matthew 27:31-66

And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elijah. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children. When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, and departed. And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulcher. Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

Mark 15:20-47

And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross. And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not. And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, Save thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him. And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elijah. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem. And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honorable counselor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marveled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulcher which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulcher. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.

Luke 23:26-56

And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him,

and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things. And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counselor; and he was a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.

John 19:16-42

Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The king of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they broke not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and

his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced. And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulcher was nigh at hand.

CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY.—*Reprints*, p. 1815

MARK 15:22-37;—MATTHEW 27:31-66; LUKE 23:26-56; JOHN 19:16-42.

"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Romans 5:8.

VERSE 22. The sentence of crucifixion having been obtained, the excited mob, inspired with Satanic zeal, hurried the prisoner to the place of execution, which was reached about nine o'clock Friday morning. What an awful night he had passed! Beginning with the sad scenes of the last supper with his disciples, call to mind the agony of Gethsemane, the hurried march to Annas, then to Caiaphas, to Pilate, to Herod and back again to Pilate; how during all the night he was most shamefully treated.—mocked, buffeted, spit upon, reviled, ridiculed, falsely accused and finally crowned with cruel thorns and scourged.

After such experiences it seems marvelous that any vitality remained for the ordeal of crucifixion. It would seem that the intense and long continued nervous strain and weariness and physical suffering would have exhausted the forces of nature; but our Lord, as a perfect man, had extraordinary powers of endurance, though he had voluntarily sacrificed much of physical strength in the labors of his ministry. That he was greatly exhausted, however, is manifest from the fact that the bearing of his cross to the place of crucifixion was imposed upon another.—Luke 23:26.

Verse 23. Wine mingled with myrrh was offered as an anesthetic to relieve the sense of pain. It is said that some of the women of Jerusalem undertook this office of mercy on behalf of criminals to be executed by the terrible methods of the Romans. Jesus acknowledged the kindness of the offer by tasting it, but declined it further, preferring to have his mind awake and clear to the last. Had he taken it, we should have missed the tenderness which committed his mother to the care of John, and those last words so full of meaning to us—"It is finished." And Peter would have missed the look of sorrow that reminded him of the Lord's love and of his disappointment in him, that quickly called him to repentance, and we should all have failed to realize how much the Lord's thoughts were upon others even amidst the agonies of such a horrible death.

Verses 25-28. The crucifixion occurred at about nine o'clock a.m., and ended in death at 3 p.m., the circumstance of the company of the two thieves being in fulfillment of Isa. 53:12—"He was numbered with the transgressors."

The saying of the mocking priests and scribes, "He saved others; himself he cannot save,"—had indeed a deeper significance than they realized. He could not save others and save himself too; for only **by the sacrifice of himself** could he hope to save others; and therefore it was that he bore the penalty of our sins in his own body on the tree; that of himself he laid down his life, which no man had power to take from him except as he permitted it, which willing permission was so manifest in his conduct—in knowingly receiving the betrayer's kiss in Gethsemane; in freely surrendering himself to the Roman soldiers; in maintaining silence in the presence of his accusers; in freely confessing before them his claims of Messiahship, which they counted blasphemy; in

silently accepting the sentence of crucifixion without an effort or a word in self-defense. Truly, "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Why? Because he desired to save others, and knew that their salvation required the sacrifice of himself.

And so, as the Prophet (Isa. 53:5,12) declared, "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." "He poured out his soul unto death, … and bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Oh, what love, what fortitude was here displayed! Yet men "esteemed him smitten **of God** and afflicted." And this was probably one of the severest of our Lord's trials—to be esteemed as an offender against God and as under the divine wrath.

In the same way the afflictions of the Lord's people are often misinterpreted by the world, as well as by the unthoughtful among professed Christians. But let such consider that "the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord;" that all who will live godly shall suffer persecution; that during this age evil is in the ascendancy, and therefore the righteous suffer; that Satan is the prince of this world; and that until he is bound righteousness shall not be exalted. This is the time for the righteous—the embryo Kingdom of heaven—to suffer violence, and when the violent may take it by force. And if Christ our Lord and Head thus suffered, let all who suffer with him for righteousness' and truth's sake be comforted with the same divine assurance that comforted him. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him; … and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."—Psa. 37:6, 7.

Some of the friends of the Lord were also present on this occasion with their love and sympathy—Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the wife of Cleopas, and other women who followed the mob, some of whom probably offered the wine and myrrh, to whose weeping and bewailing Jesus replied, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children; … for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke 23:27-31.) This he said in reference to the atrocities which should mark the overthrow of their nation and the destruction of Jerusalem, which would display the same wicked spirit which was then being manifested toward him. And it was even so; for the troubles upon that people were not alone from enemies without, but also from civil strife; for every man's hand was against his neighbor. It is said that at the time of the siege of Jerusalem hundreds of Jews were crucified at once, and left hanging in sight of the city walls.

Verses 33,34. The darkness that brooded over the land from the sixth to the ninth hour seems to have been a supernatural darkness; for an eclipse of the sun was impossible during the full moon of the passover time. It was doubtless sent as an expression of the divine wrath, and as typical of the darkness of alienation from God into which that long favored nation had plunged by this act.

The expression of verse 34 manifests the dread realization of imminent death. Jehovah's sustaining power must necessarily be withdrawn and the bitter dregs of the cup of suffering be drained to make the sacrifice complete. But when the heart and flesh failed, it was difficult to realize the significance of this: hence the startled inquiry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Through all his sufferings the divine grace had thus far sustained him, but now he must sink beneath the rod and be cut off from the favor of Him in whose favor is life, that so, by his stripes, we might be healed.

Verse 37. This last cry, which summoned and exhausted all the remaining vitality was the last triumph of victorious faith. Though he realized that the divine favor, which had always hitherto sustained his being, must now be withdrawn because he stood in the sinner's place as the vicarious sin-offering, faith, still anchored to the promises of God to be realized beyond the vail of the flesh, sweetly and confidently commended his being to the Father. This the Apostle Peter tells all them to do who suffer for righteousness' sake, saying, "Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."—1 Pet. 4:19.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Nisan 16	Jerusalem and vicinity	Jesus' resurrection and events of that day	28:1-15	16:1-8	24:1-49	20:1-25

Matthew 28:1-15

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshiped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

Mark 16:1-8

And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulcher; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

Luke 24:1-49

Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, And returned from the sepulcher, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. Then arose Peter, and

ran unto the sepulcher; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass. And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and broke, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

John 20:1-25

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and

to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulcher. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter and came first to the sepulcher. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulcher, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulcher, And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for 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. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

IMPORTANCE OF JESUS' RESURRECTION.—*Reprints*, p. 3374
MATTHEW 28:1-15.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."—1 Corinthians 15:20.

FEW SEEM to realize the importance of our Lord's resurrection—its bearing upon the entire Gospel message. The Apostle indicates how much depended upon it when he wrote, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. … They also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Cor. 15:14,18.) The numbers of the Lord's professed followers, clergy and laity, who fail to appreciate the resurrection—who really do not believe in it—is very large. The number who really do believe in it is very small. The majority, under the teachings which have come down to us from the dark ages, fail entirely to realize that death means a cessation of life, and, as the Scriptures declare, "In that very day their thoughts per-

ish." On the contrary, the masses of Christendom have come to believe that there is no death, that the dead are more alive than they ever were before they died. Applying this thought to our Lord, as well as to others, they do not appreciate the Scriptural declaration that "Christ died for our sins and rose again on the third day." They think of him as being alive during that time, and that it was merely his fleshly body that was inanimate in the tomb, and that the resurrection which occurred on the third day was not his resurrection to life, but merely the reanimation of his dead body.

Error Leads To Confusion.

Confused thus by the errors of medieval times, which were adopted by the reformers and are engrafted upon the minds of the civilized world today, the majority of Christian people cannot appreciate the Scriptural declarations respecting the importance of the resurrection of our Lord. Instead of believing the Apostle we have just quoted, to the effect that our faith is vain, our preaching vain, if Jesus did not rise from the dead, the majority of Christendom would be inclined to say just the reverse of this: "What difference would it make to our dead loved ones, what difference would it make to our preaching, what difference would it make to our faith, if Jesus' **body** had been left in the tomb?" Hence, only those who realize that the dead are dead—that they can have no conscious existence until awakened from the sleep of death—can really appreciate the importance of the resurrection.

If Jesus had not been raised up from the dead, we have no basis for the preaching of the Gospel—for the Gospel message is that, by the grace of God, Jesus' death was the ransom price for father Adam and his posterity, and that because Jesus has thus paid the penalty for the whole race and redeemed all from the sentence of death by his own death, therefore, in due time, in God's appointed time, Adam and all of his posterity are to be released from the death sentence, and Christ as the great King is to establish his Kingdom in the world, and through it lift from mankind the burden, the penalty of death, and that then all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth to the glorious opportunities of the Millennial Kingdom—opportunities for reconciliation with God, and release from all the imperfections of the fall. To preach such a Gospel, with the fact before us that Jesus had died and without any proof of his resurrection, would be vain preaching, foolish preaching, deceiving the people. To believe such a Gospel, under such circumstances, would be to brand ourselves as foolish simpletons; and to have any hope that our dead friends could ever be benefitted by a dead Christ would be absurd.

Seeing, then, the importance of the Lord's resurrection, and how every feature of the Gospel is dependent upon this great fact, we understand why it was that the apostles, preaching forgiveness of sins and a future blessing, based everything upon the fact that Jesus not only died for our sins as our ransom price, but that he rose again for our justification, for our deliverance from the sentence, the guilt, the penalty, that is upon us as a human family—the death penalty. No wonder, then, that our heavenly Father arranged that we should have so explicit an account, so detailed a statement of everything pertaining to our Lord's resurrection; no wonder that the evangelists recorded matters with such minuteness, no wonder that in all the preaching of the apostles this great fundamental truth, which was the basis of their own faith toward God, was set before the Church as being all important. From this standpoint the present lesson must be of deep interest to all of the Lord's people for all time—until the outward manifestations of the Kingdom shall attest the things which the household of faith must now accept by faith built upon this testimony.

He Arose on The Third Day.

We concur with the generally accepted—and, we believe, well-attested—view, that our Lord's crucifixion on the 14th of Nisan, Jewish time, corresponded to the sixth day of the week, which we now call Friday. According to the records, our Lord died at three o'clock in the afternoon. Calvary was but a short distance from the gate of Jerusalem, the Temple and Pilate's residence. Hence, Nicodemus and Joseph, members of the Sanhedrin, evidently friendly to Jesus, but not sufficiently convinced of the truthfulness of his claims, or else not sufficiently courageous to lay down their lives with him, had not far to go after noting his death to

secure consent for his burial; and the tomb in which it is supposed he was buried is within a stone's throw of the supposed location of the cross. It has been presumed, therefore, that our Lord was buried about four o'clock on the afternoon of that day, corresponding to our Friday. The next day, which we call Saturday, and which the Jews called the seventh day or Sabbath, began—Jewish time—Friday evening at sundown and ended on what we call Saturday at sundown, and our Lord's resurrection took place early in the morning of the first day of the week, which we now designate Sunday.

Thus our Lord arose from the dead on the "third day." He was in death from three o'clock until six on Friday, all of the night following, all of the next day, Saturday, all of the next night, which, according to Jewish reckoning, was the forepart of the first day of the week. This would not make three days and three nights full, complete—seventy-two hours—but we believe it did constitute what the Lord meant when he declared that he would rise from the dead on the third day. Some, desirous of counting full three days and three nights, have been led to claim that our Lord was crucified on Thursday; but neither would this make three days and three nights—seventy-two hours. In order to have three full days and three full nights we would be obliged to suppose that the Lord was crucified on Wednesday. But all the testimony is against such a supposition and the weight of it decidedly in favor of Friday, and the counting of a part each of three days and nights as being what our Lord referred to. But if any one have a different view from ours on this subject, we will not contend with him: it is a trifling matter, of no importance whatever. Nothing was dependent upon the length of time our Lord would be dead. The important items were that he should actually die, that he should be dead long enough for it to be positively known that he was dead, and that he should rise from the dead.

Destroying The Temple And Raising It Up.

When our Lord spoke in advance, saying, "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up"—"he spake of the Temple of his body." (John 2:21.) But of which body did he speak—of the flesh?—of the body which he took in order that he might be the sacrifice for sin, of the body which he consecrated to death? Was it that body that he meant would be raised on the third day? We answer that that body was not his temple, but merely his tabernacle. Our Lord's resurrection body was not the one which the Jews destroyed, but a spiritual body which they had never seen, but which was revealed to the Apostle Paul as "one born out of due time" when, on his way to Damascus, Jesus appeared unto him "shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday."

It is much more reasonable to suppose that our Lord spoke of his body which is the Church and of which he was and is the Head. The Jews destroyed the Head, and all down through the Gospel age the various members of the body of Christ have been called upon "to suffer with him," "to be dead with him," "to lay down their lives for the brethren." The body has been in process of destruction from Jesus' day until now, and very soon, we believe, the last member will have proven himself "faithful unto death." Now, let us see how the Lord will raise up this Temple of which he was the great foundation stone, and of which the Apostle Peter declares, each of his faithful disciples is a living stone. (1 Pet. 2:4) Considering the time from the Lord's standpoint—"A day with the Lord is as a thousand years"—our Lord died in the year of the world 4161—after four days had passed and the fifth day had begun.

The destruction of the Temple of God, which is the Church, began there in the destruction of the chief corner stone and has progressed since—during the remainder of the fifth day, all of the sixth day, and we are now in the beginning of the seventh day—"very early in the morning." And the promise of the Lord is that the Lord's resurrection shall be completed about this time—"The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (Psa. 46:5.) Thus we view the matter, that the Lord was a part of the three days dead and rose on the **third** day, early in the morning, and that likewise the First Resurrection will be completed—the entire body of Christ will be raised on the third day, early in the morning.

Evidently the matter of the resurrection was beyond the mental grasp of the apostles themselves at the time it occurred. Jesus had fore-

told that he would rise again on the third day, but they had not comprehended the meaning of his words: None of them for a moment thought of his resurrection, but merely of what they could do in the way of embalming his body, and showing to it, as his remains, the same sympathy and love which they would have shown to the remains of any dear friend or brother or sister. Thus it was that being hindered from coming to the sepulcher on the Sabbath day by the Jewish Law, which forbade labor of any kind on that day, the Lord's friends began to gather at the sepulcher, probably by previous appointment, about daybreak, after the Sabbath,—on the first day of the week. There were a number from Galilee, and probably they were lodged with other friends in different parts of the city, and possibly with some at Bethany; hence they went by different routes. The accounts vary, and are yet in perfect accord and all true. They are told from the different standpoints of each writer, and are all the more conclusive to us as evidences in that they show that there was no collision between the writers of the Gospels—no endeavor to state the matters in exactly the same terms, as there surely would have been had the account been a manufactured one, a concocted story.

Arguments Against The Truth Are Weak.

Before the arrival of any of the disciples, while the Roman guard was still on duty at the tomb, an angel of the Lord appeared on the scene and a shock like that of an earthquake was experienced, and the guard, or "watch," became as dead men—almost swooned or fainted—but, recovering, hastened from the spot to make their report to the chief priests, at whose instance they had been appointed to this service. The chief priests induced them to circulate the report that the body had been stolen by his disciples while they slept, and this report was evidently current for quite a time subsequently, as we read, "the saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day"—up to the date of writing Matthew's Gospel, which is supposed to have been written some nine years after the event. Like all arguments against the truth, it was a weak one, but the best they could do. How foolish would be the testimony of men who would say what took place while they were asleep! A bribe was given to the guard as the price of this false statement, and they had the assurance of protection, security against the ordinary penalty for a Roman soldier sleeping while on duty; but then they were not on duty for the Roman government; they were merely a complimentary guard furnished in the interests of the priests and at their solicitation.

Meantime, while the guard was on its way to the priests to report matters, the Lord's friends began to gather, with their love and spices, etc. The women of the company arrived first, and in so doing attested for all time the love and sympathy of their hearts, and honored, yea glorified, their sex in so doing. The three mentioned in our lesson have since had noble mention by the poets of all nations. One has written:

"Three women crept at break of day,
Agrope along the shadowy way,
Where Joseph's tomb and garden lay.

"Each in her throbbing bosom bore
A burden of such fragrant store
As never there had lain before.

"Myrrh-bearers still, at home, abroad
What paths have holy women trod,
Burdened with votive gifts to God!

"Rare gifts whose chiefest worth was priced
By this one thought, that all sufficed:
Their spices had been bruised for Christ."

During the forty days which began that morning, and which ended with our Lord's ascension, he appeared at most eleven times, sometimes to one and sometimes to another, and on one occasion to above five hundred brethren at once. It is quite probable that instead of eleven times there were only seven, and that the other four records were merely differences of description of four of the seven manifestations.

"He Showed Himself By Infallible Proofs."

Our Lord's first appearance was to Mary Magdalene, she out of whom he had cast seven demons and who, from thenceforth, became one of our Lord's most earnest followers. She had much forgiven her; she loved much, and her love had brought her early to the sepulcher. Apparently, Mary Magdalene was the first of the women to arrive at the sepulcher, and

immediately on finding that Jesus was not in the tomb, she hastened to announce the fact to John and Peter. Returning to the sepulcher, later she apparently reached it after the other women had been there and had gone their way, and it was while she was still near the tomb that Jesus appeared to her first of all, as described by John (20:11-18).

Subsequently the Lord met the other women as they were en route to make known the news to the household of faith. He addressed them, "All hail!" which in the Greek was the usual salutation, practically signifying, Rejoice! They fell before him, worshipping him and grasping him by the feet, and appeared afraid that anything henceforth should separate them from him. Our Lord, however, reminded them of their duty toward the brethren—that they should spread the good tidings of his resurrection. The same lesson comes to us, that after we have found the Lord, have come to realize the Truth, we have a great privilege in being permitted to serve it, and a great duty toward the brethren who as yet know not what has caused our hearts to rejoice. We are not to assume that we are to merely hug the Truth to our own hearts, but are to remember that it is also for others, and to take pleasure in dispensing it to them. He who thus serves the Lord and the household of faith is sure to have the greater blessing in the end.

Our Lord's message was to tell the disciples that he would meet them again in Galilee. Thus it was that, after five or six appearances in the vicinity of Jerusalem, our Lord abstained from further appearing to his followers, and they returned to their home country, Galilee, where he met them, as he had engaged to do. We must remember that the most of our Lord's ministry was spent in Galilee and that the majority of the believers were Galileans. It was to be expected that all of the household of faith should have some opportunity for witnessing to our Lord's resurrection, and so the Apostle Paul tells us that in one of these later manifestations in Galilee, "Our Lord was seen by above five hundred brethren at one time; of whom the greater part remain unto this present [the time the Apostle was writing], though some are fallen asleep."—1 Cor. 15:6.

It is necessary that we should note carefully the two objects our Lord had in view in the various manifestations he gave his followers of the fact that he had risen from the dead. The first of these was a demonstration that he was no longer confined to earthly conditions, as they had known him to be during the previous years of acquaintance, but was now, like all spirit beings, able to go and come like the wind—invisibly, secretly. Like all spirit beings he was now glorious. The Apostle explains the resurrection of the overcomers of the Church in 1 Cor. 15:51, 52, and the Scriptural assurance is that in our resurrection we shall be like the Lord, see him as he is and share his glory. The Scriptures also assure us that our resurrection is really a part of his resurrection, a part of the First Resurrection,—that Jesus the Head of the glorious Christ was raised from the power of death, was glorified on the third day after his death, and that early in the morning of the new dispensation the Church will come forth from death in his likeness, sharers in his resurrection.—Phil. 3:10.

Our Lord's Resurrection Change.

This being true, we know that the time when our Lord received his spirit body was at his resurrection and not subsequently; as the Apostle declares, "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened [made alive] in spirit." Speaking of our Lord's humiliation and his subsequent exaltation at his resurrection, the Apostle assures us that our Lord left the glory which he had with the Father and humbled himself to become a man, and that in due time he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross—"wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name." The exaltation came to him in his resurrection change. It was true of him then, as it will be true of all the members of his body in due time, that he was sown in weakness, raised in power, sown a natural [animal, human] body, raised a spiritual body.

This spiritual body of our Lord was just as glorious in the moment of his resurrection as it was at any time afterward or is now. It had all the powers properly granted to spirit beings in harmony with the Lord. He was not, as previously, merely the man Christ Jesus, but was

now the Lord of glory. As such he was able to associate himself with his disciples, either visibly or invisibly, or to appear as a flame of fire in the burning bush, or as a wayfaring man, as he appeared with others to Abraham, or in any manner he might see fit. He was the same glorious being who subsequently appeared to Saul of Tarsus, shining as the lightning, much as the angel appeared when the Roman guard was overcome and fled.

Some, then, may inquire, Why did he not appear to the women and apostles in the same glorious manner, with shining features? We answer that to have so done would have been to hinder the very object he had in view. How could his followers, who were not then begotten of the holy Spirit and consequently were unable to understand spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14)—how could they have understood that a being shining like an angel was the Lord Jesus they had seen crucified three days before? And even if they could have associated the two in some manner, what evidence would there have been for others since? The removal of the remains of our Lord Jesus from the tomb was an essential to the faith of the disciples of that day, and of all who would believe on him since through their word, and manifestations of his being alive from the dead were necessary also to all these. The instructions which our Lord gave, and his expositions of the prophecies, and his application of these to himself, given at that particular time, were necessary as a firm foundation for faith. None of these objects could have been so well served in any other manner as the manner in which they were performed. Our Lord's first appearance to Mary was as a gardener. She recognized him not; neither his clothing nor his features were the same as those she had previously seen, as those she had previously recognized. His clothing was divided amongst the Roman soldiers, his grave clothes were still in the tomb, the body which she saw was a special body and the clothing which he wore was special clothing prepared and used for this special occasion. She knew not her Lord until he adopted a tone of voice which she recognized.

It was the same with the two on the way to Emmaus, later on the same day. Jesus walked with them, but they knew him not; his clothing was different, his features were different, they saw no prints of nails in his hands or in his feet. They asked him, "Art thou a stranger in these parts?" He improved the opportunity for discussing with them calmly, deliberately, carefully, the prophecies relating to himself, expounding these to them so forcefully, so clearly, that their hearts burned within them as they thought of the possibility that the story which they had heard from the women might have been really true—that Jesus was to rise from the dead. Our Lord did not reveal his identity until he was ready to vanish from their sight. When he vanished, his flesh and his clothing vanished, too. The same evening he appeared to the company in the upper room at Jerusalem, the doors being shut. They were doubtless talking about the events of the day and of the preceding day, when, suddenly, Jesus appeared in their midst. He materialized—that is to say, he, a spirit being, came into their midst and there assumed flesh, bone, a complete body clothed. Does some one ask, How could he do this? We cannot answer, but whoever can understand the miracle of the change of the water into wine can as easily understand our Lord's appearance in the upper room, the doors being shut; and how, after the interview, he just as mysteriously vanished from their sight, flesh, bone, clothing, all —the doors still being shut and doubtless carefully barred for fear of the Jews, in anticipation that the hatred which had pursued the Lord to death would fasten itself upon his followers.

Be Not Faithless, But Believing.

A later appearance was in the same upper room probably a week later—again on the first day of the week. Thomas was present: he had been absent on the previous occasion and he could not believe the testimony of the others. Thomas had expressed his doubts most forcefully and had insisted that the others were too easily convinced, but he was satisfied finally when Jesus, appearing to him with the others, requested him to put his finger in the prints of the nails. Did Thomas really see and put his finger into the nail prints of that body of our Lord which three days before had hung upon the cross. We answer No; that body of flesh and

bones could not have come through the door while it was shut. The body which appeared in the upper room was a materialization—actual flesh and actual bones as our Lord said to them, "Handle me: a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." What they saw was not the spirit body, what they saw was the actual flesh and bones. He, the spirit being, was hidden from their sight; he assumed this body of flesh and bones in their midst—created it there and created the clothing also.

Whoever disputes the power of the Lord to create flesh and bones has an equal difficulty in accounting for the clothing; for who will say that it would be more difficult to create the body than to create the clothing inside that room, the doors being shut? Who will say that it would be easier to make clothing vanish into thin air than to make flesh and bones vanish into thin air? The power to do these things is not natural to us, nor can we fully comprehend the matter. Now we see through a glass obscurely, by and by we shall understand how our Lord can do the wonderful things that he is continually doing. For do we not see miracles all about us in nature, in the transpirings of every day? The kernel of wheat—how is it possible that out of that little grain should come a stem, a sprout, a stock and a head full of grain? It is a miracle—something wholly beyond our power to accomplish and beyond our power to even understand. We could make a grain of wheat, we could combine the various elements necessary to it, and could shape them as a grain of wheat is shaped; but our grain, while analyzing the same as that which nature would put forth, would not send out shoots, would have no stock, would bear no grain.

"His Flesh Saw Not Corruption."

It is not for us to say what became of the natural body of Jesus—the one that was pierced. God has not revealed particulars respecting it, except that it did not corrupt. Where then is it? We know not; but he who hid the body of Moses so that none could find it, was likewise able to hide the body of Jesus. (Deut. 34:5,6.) Who can tell but that the uncorrupted body of Jesus is yet to be produced by the Lord as an evidence or testimony of the truth of this whole transaction for the world in all future time. We do remember that the manna with which Israel was fed was wont to corrupt on the second day, except on the Sabbath; but we remember also that a golden pot of this manna was preserved in the Ark incorruptible, as a witness or memorial of the great miracle of the desert. What shall we say, then, respecting this bread which came down from heaven, which is also likened to manna? Is not the Lord equally able to preserve the body of Jesus as a witness, and, although other bodies of flesh are wont to corrupt, may not this one be preserved incorruptible? There is a certain statement in the Scriptures which seems to imply that this same body, spear-marked and nail-marked, is somewhere kept for future exhibit—as it is written, "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced."—Zech. 12:10.

The first five of the Lord's appearances apparently took place during the first eight of the forty days' presence. Thus there was a long wait in which there was no manifestation, and the apostles had abundance of time to think over and discuss the situation. As the majority of them were from Galilee, they probably did not remain in vicinity of Jerusalem more than two weeks after our Lord's last appearance on the eighth day, but betook themselves to their homes, wondering whether or not they would ever see the Master again, whether or not he might appear to them again on their homeward journey or in some other upper room when assembling in Galilee. Perhaps, too, they remembered the message sent to them by the women, that he would go before them into Galilee and meet them there.

A little longer waiting in the vicinity of the old haunts, visited frequently by our Lord and themselves, and the practical affairs of life began to press upon them. Simon Peter was the first to declare his intention of re-entering the fishing business, and others of the apostles, accustomed to the same craft formerly, joined him, and practically the old partnership arrangement was revived as it existed two years or so before, when Jesus called them to apostleship. This was the very condition of things which our Lord foresaw, and we believe that his tarrying forty days after his resurrection before he ascended was in great measure

for the purpose of giving the very lessons which now were called forth. He knew just how discouraged they would feel; that all the hopes and prospects of the Kingdom, as they had previously viewed it, would seem vague and indistinct under the new conditions, and how his followers would not be prepared to go out in the work he intended without further instruction. He was present with them, but invisible, a spirit being, during all these weeks; he heard and noted their queries and explanations, suggestions and conclusions, and was ready to apply the proper lessons at the proper moment.

"Lovest Thou Me More Than These?"

The Lord permitted the partnership in the fishing business to progress and a fresh start to be made. They toiled all that night and caught nothing, and doubtless were still further discouraged, concluding that failure was attending them in temporal matters as well as in spiritual. The opportune moment had come, and Jesus—standing on the shore in another form, in a body of flesh and with clothing, though not his own flesh and not his usual clothing, but specially prepared flesh and clothing—called to the apostles inquiring if they had fish; they shouted back that they had been toiling all night and had found nothing. He suggested the casting of the net on the other side of the boat, although it must have seemed to them foolish, because it would be but a few feet away from where it had already been, and indeed the boat itself was continually turning. Nevertheless something about the stranger on the shore impressed them and they did cast their net on the other side, and immediately the net was filled with great fish. So far as Peter was concerned the lesson was learned already. He remembered a very similar experience they had had at the time the Lord called them to apostleship, and quickly he perceived that the one on shore was the Lord—in another manifestation. Without waiting for the boats, the net or the fish, Peter sprang into the water and swam ashore in his anxiety to be soon with the Lord, and in his realization that this manifestation like the others might terminate suddenly. Besides, Peter was anxious to manifest his love and faithfulness, remembering how not a great while before he had denied his Lord.

It was in connection with this manifestation that Jesus specially directed his words to Peter: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"—these boats, nets, etc. The question addressed to Peter was applicable to all, but of special weight and force to Peter as the elder and leader of all, and the one who had particularly said but a short time previously, "Though all forsake thee, yet will not I." Peter declared his love for the Lord, and was told to feed the sheep and to feed the lambs. The lesson was a timely one and never needed to be repeated. Peter and the other apostles, so far as we know, never subsequently doubted the importance of their mission as apostles, but gave their entire time and energy to the feeding of the sheep and lambs. The miracle witnessed convinced them of the Lord's power either to bless or hinder them in temporal matters, and that equally he will provide for their every interest as his apostles and representatives. The lesson was given at exactly the right moment. Had it been given earlier in their experience it doubtless would have had much less weight: it was the part of wisdom to permit them to become perplexed and to decide on the fishing business, and then on the very first day of their experience to give them this forceful lesson. It was a lesson respecting the resurrection of our Lord and also demonstrated the fact of his change, that he was no longer the man Christ Jesus, no longer subject to human conditions. Again he vanished out of their sight, but made an appointment for the meeting of all at a certain place.

This meeting by appointment was doubtless the one mentioned by the Apostle Paul—the one in which about five hundred brethren witnessed a materialization and manifestation of the Lord. We know not the full tenor of the various lessons taught, but incline to think that the lessons were more of the practical kind than in words—that these manifestations were for the purpose of convincing them of the Lord's resurrection and of his change from earthly to spiritual conditions.

He That Descended Is The Same That Ascended.

The next appearance probably was the one on the Mount of Olives at the time of our Lord's

ascension. Apparently all of the apostles and perhaps others returned to Jerusalem and to the Mount of Olives, their instruction being to tarry at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high. It was while they were present with him receiving final instructions that he was parted from them; the form that they beheld gradually receding into the clouds was received out of their sight. In this arrangement the Lord did the best thing possible to be done for those who had not yet been begotten of the Spirit and who, therefore, could not understand spiritual things. He represented in the flesh the things which really transpired in the spirit. Then the apostles could understand after they had been begotten of the Spirit, and it is from the standpoint of the begetting and not from the standpoint of the natural man that their records come down to us.

The essence of this lesson is as expressed in our Golden Text, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." Others have been awakened from the sleep of death temporarily merely to relapse into it again subsequently, but our Lord Jesus was the first "born from the dead," the "first-fruits of them that slept"—as the Apostle declares, "He was the first that should rise from the dead." His resurrection was the life resurrection—to perfection on the spirit plane. In that he was the first-fruits of them that slept, the implication is that the others slept similarly and are to come forth in the resurrection as spirit beings after the same manner. To be the first-fruits implies that the others will be of the same kind, for although our Lord was the first-fruits of all that slept in the sense that his resurrection preceded all other resurrections, in another sense he is the first-fruits of the Church, which is his body. It is in a still larger sense that the Christ, Head and body, is the first-fruits brought up to life of the whole world; as the Apostle James expresses the matter, "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."—Jas. 1:18.

Thus we see a first-fruits in two senses of the word: as, for instance, we see that strawberries are the first-fruits in the largest sense of the word in that they come before other fruits in the spring—so the expression that the Church is the first-fruits unto God of his creatures does not imply that all will have the same nature. Then again we may speak of the first ripe strawberries as the first-fruits of the strawberries. It was in this latter sense that our Lord Jesus was the first-fruits of the Church; and since the Church is the first-fruits of the whole creation, it follows that Christ keeps this place of primacy, not only in the Church, but in respect to all who will ever be raised up fully out of death into the fulness and perfection of life.

Year 33	Place	Event	Matthew			John
Nisan 16	Jerusalem; Galilee	Subsequent appearances of Jesus Christ	28:16-20	[1 Cor. 15:5-7]	[Acts 1:3-8]	20:26–21:25

Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshiped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

1 Corinthians 15:5-7

And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

Acts 1:3-8

To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

John 20:26-31

And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace, be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

John 21:1-25

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed he himself. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately: and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst

thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

THE CHURCH'S ORDINATION—*Reprints*, p. 5587

MATTHEW 28:16-20; LUKE 24:36-49.

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matthew 28:20.

TODAY'S study relates to the commission, or authorization of service, which Jesus appointed to His Church in His discourses during the forty days following His resurrection. First we have the Master's words on the evening after His journey with two of His disciples to the village of Emmaus, near Jerusalem. Then we have a part of the general commission which Jesus gave just before He parted from His disciples and was received up into Heaven.

The lessons of that journey to Emmaus and of subsequent appearances must have been very valuable to all the followers of Christ at that time. He said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you [while I was yet the Man Christ Jesus, before My resurrection change], how all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

The Evangelist sums up in few words conversation and Scriptural exposition which probably occupied at least an hour. We are not told what these expositions were which opened their eyes of understanding, but we can surmise. He probably explained to them the significance of the Passover lamb that was killed at that time of the year, and showed that He was the Antitype of that lamb. He probably explained to them the true significance of the Passover—that in the type the first-born of Israel were passed over, and subsequently represented by the tribe of Levi, including the priests; and that the antitype of these first-borns is the Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven—all the saintly followers of Jesus who will be of the Royal Priesthood, and the antitypical Levites, their servants, in the work of the world's uplift during Messiah's Kingdom.

The Master doubtless also gave them some suggestions respecting the antitypical Atonement Day and "the better sacrifices"—that He Himself began "the better sacrifices," which would be continued in His disciples; and that, the sacrifices being finished, the Atonement blessings would go forth from the High Priest to all the earth, during Messiah's Kingdom of a thousand years.

Power From on High Promised

Whatever features of the great Plan the Master unfolded, we have the assurance that His auditors were deeply interested. Their sadness disappeared. Their first thoughts were merely that they had lost their blessed Master, His counsels, His instructions; but now, through this enlightenment, their hearts burned with a

fresh inspiration of knowledge. They saw heights, depths, lengths and breadths that they had never dreamed of in God's Plan. They saw that the death of Jesus was necessary for the carrying out of all the hopes and prospects inspired by the promises of God. They saw that they themselves were privileged also, not only to suffer with Him, but also to be glorified.

The concluding part of the Master's Message on that occasion was, "Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you." The Father had promised in various types that the Church, the Bride of Christ, would receive the Holy Spirit from Jesus, their Head. It was typified, for instance, in the holy oil which, poured upon the head of Aaron, typifying Jesus, flowed down upon the body of Aaron, typifying the anointing of the Church.

This promise of the Divine acceptance of the Church was all-important. Without it the disciples would have no commission, and could not be ambassadors for God. Jesus indeed had sent out The Twelve, and afterwards the Seventy; but they were His personal representatives, and He had given them of His own spirit, His own power, by which they worked miracles, cast out devils, etc. But they had never been recognized of the Father. As we read, "The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39.) They must wait for this begetting and anointing of the Holy Spirit. It alone could imbue or qualify them for the Divine service—to be God's ambassadors and representatives.

"Lo, I Am With You alway"

St. Matthew's account of our Lord's benediction upon His disciples and His commissioning of them to declare His Message, is full of interest to us. By His appointment the Eleven met Him in a mountain in Galilee. For a few moments only He appeared to them. They worshiped, some fully convinced, others wavering. It was for the convincing of such waverers that Jesus remained during the forty days. And we are sure that He fully accomplished His work of convincing the Eleven; for they were all of one heart and one mind when they waited in the upper room for the Pentecostal blessing.

Jesus came near to them, and declared that full authority had been given unto Him in respect to both Heavenly things and earthly things. Unless they could realize this, it would be impossible for them properly to represent Him before the world. He had not this power and authority previously, during His earthly ministry. He was then in process of trial as respects His faithful loyalty even unto death, even unto the death of the cross. But after He had demonstrated His loyalty, the Father had raised Him from the dead to a glorious fulness of power. He was thus declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead. He wished His disciples to know that He was no longer under the human limitations or under the limitations of the Death Covenant. That work He had finished. He had entered into the blessing, the reward. He had experienced His change and now had all power, not only in respect to earthly things, but also in respect to Heavenly things.

Prophecy had declared that unto Him all would bow, both those in Heaven and those on earth. He had entered into the condition where this prophecy would soon begin to be fulfilled. He had ascended up on High, where all the angels worshiped, gave heed to Him as the Father's exalted One. Not yet is the latter part of the promise fulfilled—that all on earth should bow to Him. The time for such a recognition will be during His Messianic Kingdom of a thousand years. As now, all who come to a true knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God gladly bow their knee to Him as the Father's Representative, so gladly the world will come to recognize the Only Begotten and render obedience to Him.

Eventually every knee shall bow and every tongue confess; for, according to the Divine arrangement all who fail to appreciate the glorified Son of God at that time will be destroyed—counted unworthy of any further blessings and favor of God, who has bestowed upon Christ all the blessings which He designs for the fallen race.

"Go Ye Therefore, And Teach"

Here is the commission. Primarily it belonged to the eleven Apostles, but subsequently it included St. Paul, who took the place of Judas and who was "not one whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles." (2 Corinthians

11:5.) The Apostles, and they alone, are authorized as mouthpieces of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church to the world. All that has been told us of Apostolic Bishops being successors of The Twelve is false, unscriptural. They had no successors; they are with us yet. The Master's Message through them is given us in the New Testament, of which one of them wrote, "The Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished." (2 Timothy 3:16,17.) To the Apostles was given the great work of inaugurating the Church. They were endued with the power at Pentecost.

But while Jesus appointed especially the Twelve Apostles to be His mouthpieces to the Church, and declared that whatsoever they would bind on earth we might know was bound in Heaven, and that whatsoever they would declare was not bound on earth was not bound in the sight of Heaven, nevertheless the Lord arranged that each member of the Church should be His representative, and that each in proportion to his opportunity and ability might have a share in proclaiming the Gospel Message. Whoever receives the Spirit of begetting, the anointing, is included in the statement of Isa. 61:1-3 as a member of the Body of Christ, under the anointed Head, Jesus.

Thus we read, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath appointed Me to bind up the broken-hearted," etc. Everyone who receives the Holy Spirit is thus ordained, or authorized, to preach, according to his or her opportunity or limitation of circumstances or conditions. One limitation of the Apostle is that the sisters are not to teach in public. (1 Tim. 2:12.) Nevertheless there are plenty of opportunities for all.

Evidently, therefore, a great mistake has been made in the arrangement of a clergy class, who declare themselves to be the only ones who are ordained, or authorized, to preach or to teach God's Message. Jesus and the Apostles knew nothing of a clergy class or of a laity class. On the contrary, our Lord declared, "All ye are brethren; and One is your Master, even Christ." And the Master and His twelve Apostles especially forbade anything approaching a lordship amongst His followers, anything like a clerical class.

The Church's Commission

The Message given is, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples from all nations." The commission is not to make the nations disciples, but, as elsewhere expressed, to gather out of all nations those willing to be disciples of Christ, whether rich or poor, learned or ignorant, noble or base. A disciple of Christ is a follower, one who learns, one who copies. Jesus defined this discipleship, saying, "If any man will come after Me [be My disciple], let him deny himself [set himself aside, ignore himself, his talent, his will, his wealth, his everything—discipleship first], and let him take up his cross and follow Me."

The intimation is that all true followers of Christ, all true disciples, will find the path in which the Lord will lead a difficult one, in which their own wills must be continually crossed, opposed—a way in which they will continually have difficulty according to the flesh. However, the promise is that eventually, "Where I am [in Heaven or in Kingdom glory], there shall My disciple be."

While the Church of Christ has properly viewed water immersion as a symbol of death to the world, death to self, and of rising to newness of life as members of Christ, the Body of Christ, nevertheless the water baptism is only a picture of the true. So here it is stated that our commission is not water baptism, but baptism into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. "Into the name of" signifies into accord with, into fellowship with. All of Christ's disciples are to recognize the Father's name as standing for righteousness; and they are to become dead to every other principle than that which His name represents, and to be thoroughly immersed into that name of righteousness, justice, truth.

Ignoring all other names, such as Lutherans or Wesleyans or Calvinists, or State Church names, such as Roman Catholics or Anglican Catholics or Greek Catholics, these are to be thoroughly immersed into the name of Christ and to recognize His name and to be His members, His Body, His Church. Furthermore, they are to be immersed into the name of, the recog-

nition of, the Holy Spirit—their own spirit, their own wills being dead. Their own aims, hopes and prospects are to be ignored. God's holy will, God's mind, God's holy purpose, are to be their will and purpose.

Thus we see our commission as respects all people of all nations who have an ear to hear our Message. We are to make them disciples and to immerse them into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We are to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Jesus commands. This is the extent of our authority. We are not to organize human systems and to call them kingdoms, churches, or other names. We are merely to prepare the followers of Jesus, co-operating with God, who will work in them to will and to do His good pleasure.

"Unto The End of The World"

"And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." His words have been understood to signify that the world is to come to an end; whereas what the Master really said, according to the Greek, is that He would be with His people, even to the end of the Age—down to the time when this Gospel Age will have accomplished its Divinely purposed mission of gathering out a sufficient number of disciples of Christ to complete the Divine purpose—until the Gospel Message shall have accomplished the sanctification through obedience to the Truth of a proper number to complete the Bride of Christ in glory, the Royal Priesthood. Then the end of the Age will come. Then will come the Master Himself, to gather His Elect, to glorify them with Himself, to establish His Kingdom, to bless the world of mankind—the non-elect.

Year 33	Place	Event		Luke	
Iyyar 25	Mount of Olives near Bethany	Jesus' ascension, fortieth day after his resurrection	[Acts 1:9-12]	24:50-53	

Acts 1:9-12

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also 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. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

Luke 24:50-53

And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

"WHERE HE WAS BEFORE"—*Reprints*, p. 5588

LUKE 24:50-53; ACTS 1:1-11.

"What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?"—John 6:62.

THE forty days which followed our Lord's resurrection were sufficient time for the Divine purpose. The disciples had lost their first bewilderment, created by the crucifixion of the One whom they supposed was about to take the throne to rule Israel and the world. We can see the wisdom of the Divine method of communicating the facts to the disciples. They were not alarmed, as they would have been if Jesus had appeared to them in a light above the bright-

ness of the sun, as He afterwards appeared to Saul of Tarsus. Gradually they learned that their Lord was no longer dead, but alive; and that He was no longer a human being, but now a spirit being—that He was no longer confined, therefore, to the usages of humans, but, like the angels, could come and go like the wind, appearing and disappearing at pleasure.

It was a slow lesson. After the three appearances of the first day, they looked for Him each day until the following Sabbath, when the fourth appearance, or manifestation, was made. This delay only whetted their appetite, their craving, for knowledge respecting Him. Meantime they could, and did, think over all the things which Jesus had said to them during His earthly ministry. They perceived wherein they had mistaken a Heavenly Kingdom for an earthly one—or at least mistook the time of the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom.

The lesson given on the way to Emmaus must have been very impressive. It dealt with the prophecies which related to Jesus, and explained to them how these prophecies were already in fulfillment—some of them already fulfilled, and some of them still future. Well did they remark that their hearts burned within them when He made these explanations!

An Important Lesson

After the four appearances, apparently two full weeks passed without any manifestation. In that time the tension relaxed, and the affairs of earth began to assert themselves. What would the disciples do? Privately they had been thinking of the wisdom of returning to their former employment, from which Jesus had called them to be fishers of men; but none of them cared to broach the subject to the others. St. Peter, always a leader of thought and action, finally declared himself: "I go a fishing"—I am going back to the fishing business. A word was all that was necessary. The others were of the same mind, and the old firm was reorganized.

For just such a decision Jesus had delayed His ascension. He would show them that their continuance in the work of fishing for men could go on in His absence with His blessing. The Master oversaw their interests, and that night gave them "bad luck." They caught nothing. They were discouraged, but it was "good for them." As is written, "All things work together for good to those who love God"—even their financial disappointments.

In the morning Jesus stood on the shore and called to them, asking them whether they had any fish for sale. They replied that they had caught nothing. The Master said, "Cast the net on the other side of the boat." They might have said that such advice was foolish, but they were in the mood to do anything to get rid of their "bad luck." They cast the net as directed, and quickly it was filled with great fishes. Then they knew that the One on the shore must be their risen Lord, who had thus made a new manifestation of Himself to them.

The fishermen hastened to the shore. They had known only one experience like this ever, and that was when on a previous occasion the Master had given them a similar great catch. The boat moved too slowly for St. Peter. He was afraid that somehow the Master would disappear. Girding upon him his fisherman's coat, he swam to the shore. The Master did not leave, but invited St. Peter and companions to breakfast from fish already on the fire.

Here was a great lesson. Their Master could provide cooked fish when necessary, and could give them just as much success as He saw best in respect to their fishing business. He who could thus provide for their needs on this occasion could do so in the future, should He send them forth again, authorized to speak in His name. None of them asked the Stranger His name; for, although His features and His clothing were different, they knew that it was another manifestation of their Lord, who was no longer a human being and who was able to appear in various forms, as He had done.

The lesson taught, Jesus vanished. He had one other meeting with His followers in Galilee. It was a prearranged meeting. Jesus had sent word that He would meet His followers there. St. Paul says that about five hundred brethren saw Him, and were witnesses of the resurrection.—1 Corinthians 15:6.

Our Lord's Parting Instructions

Our lesson today relates especially to the ascension of Jesus. This took place near Jerusalem—at Bethany. Apparently He met with His followers in the Holy City—perhaps at a very

early hour, by appointment. He led them out to Bethany, talking the while, explaining the things that would be to their advantage to know—the things they would need to be thoroughly convinced of before He would leave them, and before they would be in a proper attitude of faith to be prepared for the blessings He had yet to send.

St. Luke, who also wrote the Book of Acts, tells us that the essence of Jesus' teaching during the forty days was in respect to the Kingdom of God. Still they understood not; indeed, it was not possible for them to understand fully until they would receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit. It was toward that point, therefore, that Jesus directed their attention, saying that they should not depart from Jerusalem nor engage in any work of preaching, but should simply wait for the promise of the Father, of which He had previously told them —the gift of the Holy Spirit. He explained that John the Baptist had indeed used the water baptism, but that He intended that all His followers should receive a superior baptism and qualification—the baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost.

On this last occasion, which was probably the seventh manifestation, the disciples had gotten their bearing to such an extent that they asked the very significant question, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" The Kingdom had been taken away from Israel away back in the days of Zedekiah, king of Judah. At that time Jehovah had said that He would overturn the Kingdom until Messiah would come—"until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it unto Him."—Ezekiel 21:25-27.

The disciples considered Jesus to be the Messiah, and thought that the Father's time had come for giving Him the Kingdom. But they had been witnesses to the contrary—that the Kingdom of Heaven had suffered violence at the hands of the rulers, that the rightful Heir to the throne had been slain, and that He had risen from the dead. They had regained their confidence that there would be a King, and they were now inquiring whether it would be at this time or at some future coming of the Master that His Kingdom would be established.

The Master's answer was significant: "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath kept in His own hand"—in His own power. The Master had already intimated to His disciples that at the appointed time they would know the times and the seasons, but it was not due for them to understand those things then. They must wait patiently. The development of patience would do them good, would strengthen their faith, would strengthen their character in general.

For the Father to have made known the long interval of nearly nineteen hundred years before Messiah's Kingdom would be established would not have been wise—would not have been for the good of His people, who would have been discouraged in view of the long delay of their hopes. The Master therefore merely indicated that they must walk by faith and not by sight, and especially that they must not expect to understand anything respecting God's program until after they would receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

After receiving the Spirit, they would be fully qualified to be God's representatives and to speak the Message; and from time to time they would be given the "meat in due season." Thus they would not be in darkness with the world, and the Day of the Lord would not come upon them as a thief in the night or as a snare. The Pentecostal blessing which they received qualified them fully for the work of the ministry, even though it did not cover their natural blemishes; for it was after they had received the Holy Spirit that we read, "The people perceived that they were ignorant and unlearned men."

Our Lord's Ascension

Our Lord's ascension was a spectacular one, so far as His Church was concerned, but not in respect to the world. Of the world He had already said, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more." The world did not see our Lord during the forty days in which He manifested Himself to His disciples; for He showed Himself to none except His faithful, consecrated ones. The ocular demonstrations so helpful to His disciples culminated with an actual ascension of the Lord into the air in the body in which He had just been with them. Because they were not yet spirit-begotten, they doubtless needed just such a manifestation to help their faith, to lead them to understand that

they would see the Master no more until He would come with power and great glory to assemble all His saints to Himself and to bless the world.

Our Golden Text reminds us that Jesus spoke of this ascension beforehand. The ascending up where He was before should not, however, be understood merely to signify a return to a previous place. Rather, it should be understood to signify a return to a previous condition—a spirit condition, which the Master had left to be made flesh, that He might ransom the world.

As Jesus parted from His disciples into the clouds out of their sight, we assume that the body in which He had just appeared was dissolved, or dematerialized. The use of it was merely to help to establish the faith of the disciples and to be a means of instruction, an assurance that Jesus had gone permanently—that they need not expect to see Him further in any kind of manifestation. It was an object lesson.

Manner of Our Lord's Return

One of the evangelists recounts that after Jesus had disappeared angels materialized and addressed them, saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven." This statement has led some to believe that at His Second Advent Jesus will materialize and appear in the flesh; but to our understanding they are laboring under a grave misapprehension. The world is to see Jesus no more; and the Church is to see Him only with the eye of faith until that time when they shall experience their change, in the end of the Age. Then we shall see Him as he is—not as He was; for we shall be like Him. Then we shall know even as we are now known.—1 Corinthians 15:50-52; 1 John 3:2.

It is worthy of notice that the angels laid stress upon the **manner** of the going, and that the manner agrees with what the Bible tells us respecting our Lord's Second Coming. He went quietly, secretly, unknown to the world—He is to return as a thief in the night; and none will know of His return except those whose eyes of understanding will be opened to discern the signs of the presence of the Son of Man. These will be His loyal, saintly few. So Jesus explained, saying that at His Second Coming it would be for a time as it was in the days of Noah—mankind would be eating, drinking, planting and marrying, and would not know of His presence.—Matthew 24:37-39.

OUR LORD'S ASCENSION.—*Reprints*, p. 1415

ACTS 1:1-12.

"When he had spoken these things, while they beheld,
he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."—Acts 1:9.

VERSES 1,2. The writer of the account of the Acts of the Apostles was Luke; and the "former treatise" was that called the Gospel by Luke.

VERSE 3. Although the previous account had covered many of the incidents of the forty days following our Lord's resurrection (See Luke 24), it had by no means told all; and this further account, explanatory of the opening work of the Gospel dispensation, properly linked with the other, tells us that the special theme of our Master in the instructions of those forty days was—"the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God."

Luke does not give us the particulars; but we are safe in assuming that they required considerable instruction, as they not only had the hopes common to all Jews, that God would, under Messiah, exalt Israel to be the chief nation of earth (and use that nation as his channel for communicating his laws to the world, and thus bless all the families of the earth in the seed of Abraham), but they had in mind, too, the special promises which the Lord had made to them before his death: that they should sit on thrones in Israel in his Kingdom. So great a power had these promises of the Kingdom in their minds that they had willingly

left business prospects and endured the scorn of their fellows that they might become joint-heirs with Christ in his Kingdom. And the Master had invariably encouraged these hopes and ambitions. His reproofs were merely against their strifes as to which should be greatest and sit the one on his right and the other on his left in that Kingdom.—Matt. 18:1-4; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 22:24-26.

They had seen all these hopes and prospects dashed when the Lord was crucified. Naturally, therefore, after they realized their Lord's resurrection, their thoughts and questions, and consequently his teaching, would be of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. It was needful to explain to them that the nation of Israel had been rejected from joint-heirship in his Kingdom because, although naturally Abraham's seed, they did not have Abraham's faith, and hence could not be recognized as heirs with Christ of the promise made to Abraham. It was necessary to tell the little handful of faithful disciples ("about five hundred brethren") that they had not been rejected with the nation, but were still recognized as heirs of the Kingdom, although the **time** for **setting up** the Kingdom was necessarily deferred until the full number (predestinated) should be selected. But they would **speedily be recognized** of the Father and granted blessings of the Spirit as sons of God and prospective joint-heirs with Christ, even though their exaltation to the honor and glory of kingdom power would be deferred. Accordingly we read, in

VERSES 4,5, that he instructed them to tarry at Jerusalem, to expect and wait for the begetting of the spirit of God as sons and heirs—pointing out that so it had already been foretold them by himself and by John the baptizer.

VERSES 6-8. But having been thus assured of their divine recognition as prospective joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom "not many days hence" (verse 5), they put the question still close to their hearts—How about the kingdom in the full sense of the word? will it come at the same time? Will it, too, come not many days hence?

The Master's answer was not a reproof, nor even a correction or contradiction of their expectations in general. He merely told them that the times and seasons for the full establishment of the Kingdom God had in his own power, and that it was not then proper for them to know; **but** that they should receive power [**ability** to understand the deep things of God—1 Cor. 2:10—and be guided (gradually, as it would be due) into all truth, and shown "things to come"—John 16:13] after the holy Spirit had come upon them—the spirit of adoption, of sealing, as no longer servants but sons (John 15:15); and then they should be his **witnesses** everywhere—witnessing to the truths which he had taught them: that he is to be the King of the world—Jehovah's Anointed representative, whose kingdom is to be **under** the whole heavens; and all nations and kingdoms shall serve and obey him. They were to witness that God's promises concerning the establishment of his kingdom to bless the world are all true; that our Lord's death was merely a means toward that great end; that it was needful that Messiah should die for the sins of the world before those sins and their penalties could be remitted, and before those sinners could be blessed and restored to divine communion and favor. They were to tell believers to keep on praying as the Master had instructed, saying: Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. They were to witness that none of his words or promises were false, but that all things promised should be fulfilled "in **due** time."

VERSES 9-12. Our Lord's ascension might have taken place without being seen by any; for since his resurrection he is a spirit being, and "a spirit hath not flesh and bones." He was indeed put to death in the flesh, but he was quickened or made alive in spirit. He was there born of the spirit, "the first-born from the dead;" and as that which is **born** of the flesh is flesh, so that which is **born** of the spirit is spirit, and can go and come as the wind, without being seen of men. (John 3:8.) But as our risen Lord, a spirit being, in order to prove his resurrection, appeared at various times and in various forms or bodies (some of which resembled the body of flesh which had been crucified), so he showed himself **in** a body of flesh when he ascended, to prove this fact to his disciples.

We must remember that he was **present** with the disciples for forty days before he ascended, yet was **visible** to them at most only seven times, and for only a few moments each time, during all those days; and to the world he was **always** invisible, as he had said before, "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more." The Apostle Paul, enumerating these manifestations of our Lord after his resurrection, says, "He was seen of above five hundred **brethren**," "and, last of all, by me also." It was the same Jesus who appeared in flesh and **as a gardener** to Mary, who appeared in another form **as a stranger** to the two disciples going to Emmaus, and who appeared in the midst of the disciples while the doors were shut and showed them **a body** of flesh and bones pierced by nails and a spear as an evidence or proof of his resurrection, but who the next instant showed them that he was now highly exalted and **different** from flesh and blood, by **dissolving** the flesh and bones and clothes before their eyes and vanishing out of their sight. It was this same Jesus, no longer flesh and bones but "a quickening spirit," who appeared also to Saul of Tarsus, but without any vailing of the spirit body under a fleshly one, and gave him a glimpse of the glory of a spirit being which felled him to the earth and cost him his sight. (Acts 26:13,14; 9:8.) This is the glorified Jesus, who was raised from death a spirit being (1 Cor. 15:40-44), but who vailed the glories of that spirit-body from his disciples, under bodies of flesh, in order that he might teach them the things pertaining to the Kingdom, who is to come again as the angels declared.

Many stumble over the statement of the eleventh verse—especially our dear brethren who call themselves Second Adventists. They think of the passage as reading—Ye shall **see him come** in like manner as ye have seen him go. But it does not so read. Those disciples who **saw** him go are long since dead, and if others even should **see him come** they would not. But the angels do not say that any one will **see** him come: they merely affirm that the **manner** of his coming will be like the **manner** in which they had seen him go.

Now what was the **manner** of his going? What was there peculiar about the **manner** of his ascension? Whatever it was, that is the peculiarity to be expected as marking his coming again. Let us note again that the manner of his going was quiet, **unseen** by the world, **unknown** to the world, **unbelieved** by the world. It **was known**, however, by the "brethren," it was **manifested** to the "brethren," and it was **believed in** by the "brethren." So his second coming is as a thief—secretly—without outward demonstration—unknown to the world—known only to the brethren who are not in darkness, but who as children of the light are walking in the light. (1 Thes. 5:1-5.) For a fuller explanation of the Manner of our Lord's Second Coming, see *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 2, chapter 5.