

The Word Was Made Flesh

—JOHN 1: 1-18—

Golden Text:— "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

AS a pendulum swinging from one extreme to another, passes the true center of gravity midway, so are the conceptions of Christians in general respecting our Lord: they go to one extreme or the opposite. One extreme view declares our Lord Jesus to have been simply a good man, a member of Adam's race as are others, the son of Joseph; others that he was perfect but not preexistent. Some deny the personality of God, and claim that what is called God is merely an operation of nature—that man is the greatest personal being in existence, and that he was not created but evolved himself from lower conditions. All of these theories we must set aside as being entirely inconsistent with the divine revelation, the Word of God, which teaches us respecting the intelligent Creator that he, in his sympathy and love, provided a Redeemer separate and distinct from our race. The opposite view holds to a personal God, the Creator of all things, and accounts for the honorable station of all Lord Jesus by assuming that he was the Father, but called himself the Son of God in a harmless deception of mankind for a time. It assumes also that he was "incarnate"—that is, that God entered a human body and used it in an obsessional sense.

It would be in harmony with the carrying out of this thought to say that when Jesus prayed to the Father he really prayed to himself,— but in this mild manner deceived because the disciples were not able to comprehend the great fact that he himself was the Father. Pursuing the same line this theory would imply that our Lord on the cross, praying to the Father, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" merely did this for the effect upon the disciples, since he was the Father and could not forsake himself. The same theory carried out supposes that when the body of Jesus died it was merely the moment when God stepped out of it, because it would be claimed that God could not die, and that the universe could not be left even for three days without supervision, and that if God died he could not raise himself from the dead. Therefore this theory compels the thought that our Lord's experiences from first to last were

deceptive. We cannot agree with this thought; it is founded upon several errors, and as a whole is repugnant to reason as well as to Scripture.

Another thought along the same line is that the declaration of the Scriptures that there is but one living and true God is to be accepted in an accommodated sense—that there are really three Gods, but that they cooperate so thoroughly in every plan and purpose and act that they might properly be called one God.

According to this theory one person of the Trinity left heaven, was incarnated, and addressed another person of the Trinity as Father, and prayed to him and not to himself, and declared that the Father was greater than he— though this was not really the truth, since they were all one, according to the Westminster Confession, "equal in power and glory." Nevertheless this view also insists that Jesus, being God, was not made flesh, but merely appeared in flesh in an obsessional sense—in the same sense in which the demons took possession of men. According to this claim this God obsessed Mary's babe and dealt in him until he died, performing through him wonderful works and giving forth wonderful teachings, but being God this one could not die, and therefore did not die at Calvary, but merely allowed the obsessed body to die.

The foregoing statement of the views of Unitarians and Trinitarians is not in exactly the verbiage used by the advocates of these doctrines, but our presentation is truthful, merely stripping their statements of the matter of some of the gloss they would use to hide the difficulties of their theories.

We now come to a consideration of the Bible view of this important subject, which agrees with none of the foregoing. We do not admit that either we or others have a right to ignore the plain statements of the divine Word, but claim, on the contrary, that the Scripture should be allowed to interpret itself, and that what it presents should be accepted by all Christian people without cavil. Let us look at the subject candidly as presented in this lesson.

“IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD”

The first verse of our lesson, although not a bad translation, fails to give to the English reading the force, the significance of the Greek, and gives the implication that there are at least two Gods, whereas the Scriptures declare that “there is one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 8:6.) Nowhere in the Scripture are these said to be equal in power and glory. On the contrary, whether we take the words of the apostles, or the prophets, or of the Lord Jesus himself, they all declare in harmony that the “Father is greater than I.” “I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” (John 14:28; 6:38.) When we read, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God,” that makes two, the Word and the God whom he was with or represented, and then the statement that the “Word was God,” we are thrown into confusion. How could the Word and God be God? It is here that the Greek gives the relief and makes the matter plain. It reads, “In the beginning was the Lord and the Word was with *the* God and the Word was *a* God; the same was in the beginning with *the* God.” If we accept this just as the Greek gives it, with the emphasis of the Greek article in the one place and not in the other, then all is straightened out— is clear. Then we can see that originally there was but the “one God, the living [self-existent] and true God”; that the glorious personage in this verse called the Word or Logos was the beginning of the Father’s creative work.

This is in full accord with the Scriptural declaration that Jesus was the beginning of the creation of God— the “Firstborn of every creature.” (Col. 1:15.) But some one objects,— “You are making Jesus, the Son of God, a created being.” We answer, No; we are making nothing. We are just finding out what the Scriptures say; we are twisting nothing. The fault lies in the error of the “dark ages” in assuming that Jesus was one of three Gods or that he was all of the one God. For neither of these positions is there a particle of Scripture. Let us not be wiser than God. If we accept the Bible as the divine revelation— as the voice from heaven said of our Lord Jesus, “This is my beloved Son, hear ye him” does not the very word son, applied to our Lord, imply that he was not his own father nor coexistent with the Father, but a begotten or subsequent

creation? Surely there is no escape from the simplicity of the Scriptural presentation of the subject. “The same was in the beginning with the God” clearly implies a certain time recognized as the beginning, but so far as the heavenly Father himself is concerned, the Scriptures declare, “From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.” (Psa. 90:2.) In other words, while it may be beyond our comprehension, it is the Scriptural presentation that the Father alone was without beginning, and that the Son was the beginning of the Father’s creative work— created before angels as well as before man.

“ALL THINGS WERE MADE BY HIM”

Let us notice carefully this statement: it refers to the Logos, and is in full harmony with the statement made by the Apostle, “All things are of the Father, all things are by the Son.” (1 Cor. 8:6.) The power was of the Father, but it was exercised through the Son, the beginning of his creation, and hence “without him was not anything made that was made.” What a beautiful testimony! How honoring to the Father! how honoring to the Son! The Father used the Son as his active agent in every creative work— nothing whatever was done without him. Is not this a sufficiency of honor for our dear Redeemer? Is it not as much or more than he ever claimed? In his humility he said nothing about his high honor, which he left to be our Redeemer.

The name he used, “The Word of God,” the “Logos,” was of itself significant, and in full harmony with our interpretation, as all scholars must admit. In olden times the kings kept themselves more or less apart from their subjects; they were rarely seen. It is said that it was a custom for them, when addressing multitudes of their subjects, to sit behind a screen or curtain, while in front of this stood the king’s interpreter or representative, who spoke the king’s words in a loud tone to be heard of all who were there. How beautifully this represents the honorable position of our Lord Jesus. He is the mouthpiece of the Father; he is his representative to every creature, to angels and to men. He is his active agent; by him were all things made, and without him was not anything made.

“In him was life.” Abruptly the writer passes from our Lord’s great work in the creation of all things to his appearance amongst men. He declares, “In him was life;

and the life was the light of men.” Our Lord is here contrasted with other men. He was different from others because he was not born of the flesh, though born in the flesh—that is to say, his life did not come from a human father, though it was nourished, matured, by a human mother. It was this peculiarity which marked him as separate and distinct from all of the race. That perfection of life was in marked contrast with the imperfection of the remainder of the race. The death sentence which passed upon father Adam, and which all of his children increasingly inherit, had brought them down to low mental and moral conditions, while our Lord Jesus, having a perfect life transferred from a heavenly condition, was in consequence very different from others of his people. This life constituted the light amongst men. They perceived that he was a remarkable character—“Never man spake like this man.” “They marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth.” (John 7:46; Luke 4:22.) They had never before seen one in whom was life: all others whom they had met, like themselves, were dying creatures, nine-tenths dead.

“And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.” Not only is it true that the sin-darkened ones of our Lord’s day comprehended him not, nor the light of truth and grace—which shined from him, but it is still true that the darkened class comprehendeth not. “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.” (2 Cor. 4:4.) This is the Apostle’s explanation of the matter—he still blinds the darkened class, and their eyes will not be opened until, at the second coming of Christ, Satan shall be bound for a thousand years; and then, during that Millennial period, under the reign of our dear Redeemer, all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and every creature shall come to a knowledge of the mercy and goodness and love of God, operating through Jesus Christ our Lord.

JOHN, OUR LORD’S FORERUNNER

The people indeed recognized John the Baptist as a notable character and servant or messenger of Jehovah, and this the Evangelist corroborates, saying that he was sent from God to be a witness of that Light. But John’s witness was received by comparatively few, though it was given to all the favored nation to whom the Light was

sent. The fact that John as a servant of God was given that honorable position of identifying and declaring Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, was of itself an assurance that the great One thus introduced and announced was very great in the estimation of Jehovah God, very honorable, the Messenger of the Covenant.

“HE WAS THE TRUE LIGHT”

“He was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” This is a prophetic statement, for our Lord at his first advent did not even enlighten all of his own nation, and made no attempt whatever to enlighten the world of mankind. Nevertheless it is God’s purpose that ultimately all shall see, all shall know of his love and wonderful provision. And our Lord Jesus is that great Light, the great Enlightener, that is yet to enlighten Adam and every member of his race. When amongst men the glorious Light was not fully revealed, even though what the Jews did see caused them to marvel. Our Lord himself, according to the Scriptures, “learned obedience

by the things which he suffered,” and was thereby prepared for his exaltation, his glorification, which he received when he had finished the work which the Father gave him to do—when on the third day thereafter the Father raised him from the dead by his own power, to glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature. Now, in his highly exalted condition, he is still the true Light which shineth with a brightness above that of the sun at noonday. He is to be the great Sun of Righteousness which, during the Millennial age, shall bless and enlighten every man that cometh into the world; and we are given the blessed assurance that the Church, the Bride class, the Elect, will be with him in that glorious mission of blessing and enlightenment.—Matt. 13:43.

“HE WAS IN THE WORLD”

“The world was made by him and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” These words set forth in plain perspective the dignity of the Son of God, who was made flesh and dwelt among us. The world knew him not! and, still more surprising, his own nation, the Jews, knew him not! although they had been instructed from the beginning of their nationality to look for the Messiah, and

although to them a description had been given—not only that he should be very great, but also that he should be born of a virgin and made of no reputation. How they received him not is clearly set forth in the Scriptures: they mocked him, derided him, rejected him; they preferred instead of him Barabbas, the robber; at the instigation of their priests and doctors of the Law they cried, “Away with him! Crucify him!”

But while this was the course of the majority, a few had the eyes to see and ears to hear the message of God’s love which came through him as the Word of God. Of this our lesson tells, saying, “As many as received him to them gave he power [privilege or right] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” These were the “Israelites indeed,” of whom were the twelve apostles and the seventy, also the “500 brethren,” and those Jews subsequently reached on the Day of Pentecost and afterward during the entire harvest of their age. These had formerly belonged to the house of Moses, the house of servants— “For Moses, verily, was faithful as a servant over all his house.” But now, the due time having come, these favored ones saw the true Light, because they were in the proper attitude of heart, and they received from him not only forgiveness of their sins through the merit of his sacrifice, but also the begetting of the holy Spirit— an adoption by the holy Spirit into the family of the sons of God—quite a step above their previous position as merely members of the house of servants, for of our Lord it is written that Christ as a son was faithful over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.— Heb. 3:6.

The following verse (13) emphasizes all this, saying, “Which were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” We render here the term *gennaō* begotten, and not born, as in our common version, for although the same Greek word is used interchangeably as referring to begetting and birth, yet there is that in the construction of the Greek sentence which fixes it here as signifying begetting. It refers to our begetting of the holy Spirit, whereas our birth of the holy Spirit is the Scriptural designation for the resurrection. It was not along family lines of blood relationship, not along fleshly lines of worldly sympathy and judgment, not

according to man’s wealth or wisdom that some were changed from being members of the house of servants and made members of the house of sons of God, under Christ. It was of God that all this came to them, because they were Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile—the very class for whom God had prepared the exceeding great and precious arrangements of his plan. Only such are at present able to appreciate the full riches of God’s grace and loving kindness. As sons of God, as members of the Royal Priesthood, they are privileged to have a greater fellowship in the great High Priest, Jesus, and a greater intimacy with the divine Word than is granted to others. As the Lord expressed the matter, “Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but unto those who are outsiders, these things are spoken in parables.”— Mark 4:11.

“THE WORD BECAME FLESH”

The last verse of our lesson contains much food for thought: from it our Golden Text was selected. It declares that the Word was made flesh. The revised version renders it, “The Word became flesh.” Both are correct, and both contradict the two extremes of view held by Christendom. It was the Word that was made flesh, and hence our Lord’s was not an ordinary birth. On the other hand, note that it does not say that the Word was incarnated or got into flesh or obsessed it, but says quite correctly, “The Word was made flesh” “the Word became flesh.” Let us make no mistake in the reading of this message on this important subject; let us take it just as it is written, without twisting. The lesson is that the great One, the beginning of the creation of God, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, came down from that glorious condition as a spirit being and was made flesh and dwelt among us, as the Apostle says. “The man Christ Jesus” was not an incarnated being, but was himself the One who had been with the Father, and whose nature as a spirit being had been changed, exchanged for human nature as a fleshly being. It was when he made his consecration at thirty years of age and symbolized it in water baptism that he received his begetting of the holy Spirit to a new nature, a spiritual nature, as high or higher than he had before. From that moment on he was the Anointed One, which in the Greek signifies the Christ, and in the Hebrew the Messiah. He was

anointed with the holy Spirit, with the oil of joy above his fellows. And directly after this anointing came upon the Master, he began the work of selecting those who were to be joint-heirs, otherwise styled the members of his Body, the under priesthood, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. In the preceding verse we have seen how some of these "fellows" were given liberty to become the sons of God—to be begotten of the holy Spirit, with a view to their ultimately reaching the same glorious nature.

It is not the Word made flesh that was glorified and exalted; rather the Word made flesh offered up himself a living sacrifice to the Father and carried out that sacrificing covenant, completing it at Calvary when he cried, "It is finished." The sacrifice was finished, the Word made flesh had died, had ceased to be. Neither was that Word made flesh ever revived. No, he gave his life a ransom for many, for Adam and all his race, and never revived as a man, never took back that sacrifice. Hence we may go free. As it is written, "Deliver him from going down into the pit: for I have found a ransom for him."— Job 33:24.

But if the Word made flesh died and did not rise again, what did arise from the dead? and who is the Lord of Glory that now ever liveth? We reply that the Lord of Glory was begotten at the time the Word made flesh offered up himself, namely, at the time of our Lord's consecration and symbolization of that covenant at Jordan. Not the newly begotten Son of God, begotten of the holy Spirit, but the Word made flesh sacrificed himself, gave himself up as a man, with all of his earthly rights and privileges sacrificed on behalf of father Adam for the restoration of Adam and all those condemned to death through him. This New Creature, begotten of God by the holy Spirit, prospered, grew, developed, as the Word made flesh yielded and finally died. This New Creature, which did the sacrificing of the man Christ Jesus, was the One recognized of the Father, the One who gave his flesh for the life of the world. (John 6:51.) This New Creature's life was not given for the life of the world, the New Creature was not sacrificed for sins. No! it was the Word made flesh, the man Jesus, that was sacrificed, while Jesus the New Creature, begotten again, was delivered in the resurrection—raised from the dead on the third day by the Father. He it was who ascended up on high, there to appear in the

presence of God on behalf of the Church, which is his Body, the under-priesthood, and on behalf also of all the household of faith, the antitypical Levites.

Meantime not only the faithful of Natural Israel, but also the called-out ones from amongst the Gentiles have been privileged to walk in their Master's footsteps. True, they had not perfect flesh as he had; true, it could not be said of them as of him that in them was life. But to them was imputed life, because they believed—they were justified through faith, and their sins and imperfections reckonedly covered. Hence from this, the divine standpoint, they were thenceforth like their Lord. They also consecrated their flesh, they also were begotten of the holy Spirit, they also were reckoned as New Creatures, they also crucified the flesh with its affections and desires, they also laid down their lives, their flesh, in death, and to them also was the promise that eventually, as the Father raised up Jesus from the dead, so also will he raise them up in his likeness, in his resurrection—the First Resurrection of the blessed and holy. They like their Lord will never more be of the human nature: when perfected as New Creatures they will be like their Lord, see him as he is and share his glory, because they will be changed—because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of heaven."— 1 Cor. 15:50.

When the Apostle says, "And we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," we may not surely know his thought. He may have meant that subsequent to our Lord's resurrection he and the other apostles had beheld the Lord's glory when he had manifested himself to them; or he may have meant that during the days of his flesh before his sacrifice of it was complete, that they beheld his glory, his honor, his dignity, his perfection, as the earthly image of God—God manifest in the flesh. In any event we may here apply to ourselves, not only a good doctrinal lesson, but also a good practical lesson, for we are amongst those who are hoping to make our calling and election sure, that we may become joint-heirs with our dear Redeemer in his glory and Kingdom. The lesson shows us clearly that if we would be so honored by a share in his resurrection, we must be faithful now and make our calling and election sure by walking in his steps and finishing the

sacrificing of our flesh: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy

and acceptable to God, your reasonable service."— Rom. 12:1.

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PREPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD

—JOHN 1:19-34—

Golden Text:—"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 these 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 veil, 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 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. Trumbull 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 fulfil 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 DAWN-STUDIES, chapter VIII., 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 but, 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 willful 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.

Zion's Watch Tower, January 1, 1908, pages 11-14.

FINDING THE LORD'S JEWELS

—JOHN 1:35-51.—

Golden Text:—“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 or 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 is 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 irrevocable 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 Nathaniel, 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 hopes? 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 not; 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.

Zion's Watch Tower, January 15, 1908, pages 25-27.

CLEANSING THE TEMPLE

—*JOHN 2:13-22*—

Golden Text:—"Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, forever."—Psalm 93:5.

WE are aware that there are many scholars who believe that there were two cleansings of the Temple by our Lord. It is admitted by all that one cleansing occurred at the last Passover which Jesus attended a few days before his crucifixion. This is well attested by Matthew 21:12; Mark 11:15; Luke 19:14. Our lesson is taken from John's Gospel, and because this incident is grouped with others which occurred in the beginning of the Lord's

ministry it is assumed, we believe without sufficient authority, that there were two cleansings, the one at the beginning, the other at the close of our Lord's ministry. It is acknowledged, however, that John's Gospel was written long after the others, and apparently with the intention of supplying certain details that were overlooked by the other historians. To our understanding Jesus began his teachings in a rather quiet manner, reserving many of his mightiest

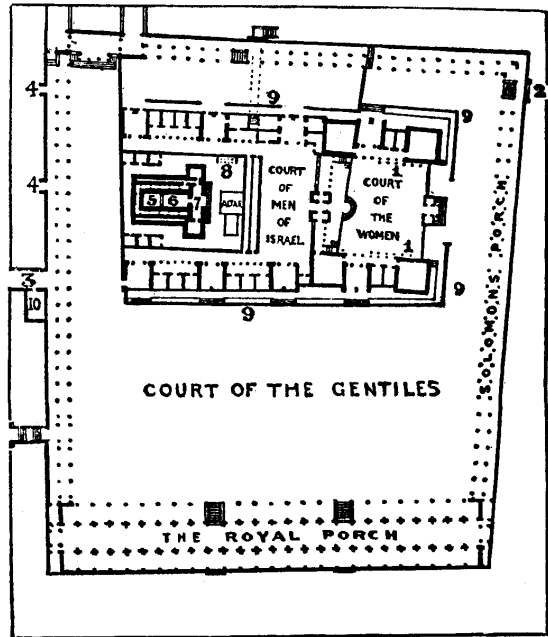
works for the last, amongst others the calling of Lazarus from the tomb, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the ass, and the cleansing of the Temple. This latter act has a peculiar significance when we remember that it followed our Lord's assumption of the office of King— which he did just five days before his crucifixion, when he rode upon the ass in fulfillment of the prophecy, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass." (Zech. 9:9.) Thus recognized by the multitude as the King of the Jews, our Lord exercised kingly authority in the cleansing of the Temple, and was no doubt backed up in the matter by the sentiment of the throng which had just acclaimed him the son of David with hosannas. It was under these circumstances that none attempted resistance.

It was a requirement of the Jewish Law that the devout of the nation should assemble at the Passover season to keep the Feast of Passover in celebration of their deliverance from Egypt and the sparing of their firstborn on the preceding night. Josephus tells us that sometimes the population of Jerusalem on such an occasion was swelled to the number of two millions. Far more than half of these must have camped outside the city, unable to find lodgings within. It was the custom on such occasions to offer sacrifices, some representing thankfulness, some consecration and others contrition. Of course the multitude of strangers from afar rarely brought with them the doves or pigeons or lambs, etc., which they presented in sacrifice. The supply of these animals for sacrifice became quite a business on such occasions. Moreover, there was a certain Temple tax levied, which must be paid in a particular kind of money called the "shekel of the sanctuary." The last coinage of these was in B.C. 140, hence they were quite scarce in our Lord's day and sold at a premium. Roman coin was circulated throughout Palestine in general merchandising, so that when the time came at the Passover for the paying of the Temple tax with the Temple money not only visitors from foreign lands needed to purchase shekels of the sanctuary but also the home folk.

"TAKE THESE THINGS HENCE"

In consequence of these conditions the Temple area became quite a house of

merchandise and moneychanging, and as the necessities of the people were taken advantage of and high prices charged, our Lord called the place a "den of thieves." (Matt. 21:13.) In imagining the scene we are not to think of moneychangers, sheep and dove-traders, etc., in the Temple proper, but in its outer courts, the whole of which was designated the Temple or the house of God.



PLAN OF THE TEMPLE IN OUR LORD'S DAY

This trading was probably carried on in what was known as the Court of the Gentiles. Into the holiest precincts of the Temple proper only the priests were permitted to enter into the enclosure where the altar was located the Levites were also permitted; outside of this was the Court of the men of Israel, and still further out a Court of the women, and beyond this enclosure the Court of the Gentiles, provided to the intent that all nationalities might there congregate for worship. Our Lord referred to this fact saying, "It is written, My house shall be a house of prayer for all nations." (Mark 11:17.) Probably the Court of the Gentiles was little used, as few Gentiles had become sincere converts to Judaism. The size of the court apportioned to them was probably symbolical of the larger proportionate numbers who should ultimately come into the Lord's favor and become true disciples and fellow-heirs with the Jews of divine favor.

It is claimed that any Jew under the Law had the right to do as Jesus did in the matter of driving out the traders, but very

evidently no Jew had previously attempted it. The scourge of small cords could not have done serious damage to anyone, but we do not know that our Lord used it upon humanity. He may have driven out the animals, whose owners would follow him, and it will be noticed that he did not set at liberty the doves, which could not so easily have been recovered, but permitted their owners to take them away. The overturning of the tables of the money-changers would not only stop their usurious exchange business, but keep them busy looking after their coin. We may be sure from the fact that our Lord lived under the Law and obeyed it that his conduct on this occasion was quite within the recognized proprieties, even though it was unusual, and even though he himself had visited the Temple time and again as a Jew, and had witnessed these same scenes but had not interfered with them. This we consider to be a proof that the occurrence took place but once, and that after our Lord had assumed the office of King—just before his crucifixion. Thus the statement, “The zeal of thine house hath consumed me,” was fulfilled.

THE CLEANSING IN THE ANTITYPE

When we remember that the Law was a shadow of better things coming, that the Jewish people typified Spiritual Israel, and that their Temple typified the Gospel Church with its various classes, then we begin to see how we may look here for a parallel of that cleansing work of the Jewish harvest. Those familiar with Volume II., *STUDIES*, will remember that the Jewish dispensation is the parallel to the Gospel dispensation in very many particulars, including that of time and the fact that it ended with a harvest period, and that our Lord at his first advent was the chief reaper in the Jewish harvest, as he is to be the chief reaper in the Gospel harvest at his second advent. We have noted also the fact that the time parallel of October, 1874, corresponds to the beginning of our Lord's ministry at the time of his baptism, and that April, 1878, corresponds to the time of our Lord's acceptance of the office of King, riding upon the ass and receiving the shouts of the multitude, and then proceeding to the Temple cleansing work. Our thought is that the antitypical cleansing of the Lord's Temple has been in progress since the spring of 1878.

Within the hallowed precincts of the nominal Temple of today are many who have

long been making merchandise of their privileges, opportunities and knowledge. All intelligent people well know that religious matters are to a large extent made merchandise of. Amongst the Roman Catholics everything possible is hedged about with penalties and prohibitions and limitations, so that the people are led to believe that they can present nothing acceptable to God except as they receive it through their priesthood. They are expected to pay the priesthood for every birth and the baptism of the child; they are expected to pay at every service, that they may be participants in the blessings of the common mass; they are expected to pay for every blessed scapular sprinkled with holy water; they are expected to pay for every funeral service and for every prayer, as well as for the privilege of being buried in holy ground. In all this we have a close counterpart to that which our Lord denominated a den of thieves, making merchandise of divine things.

As for Protestants, there are many evidences of the same spirit amongst them, but as they represent a more intelligent class, the exactions upon them by the clergy are the more refined. With few exceptions the payment for baptisms and funerals and marriages is apparently left optional. This is the wisest way with this class of worshipers. Neither are there attempts made to collect money for saying masses for the dead, to exact a specific fee from each one occupying a place at a service, though the collection plate is passed with regularity, and frequently strong appeals are made for money, and sometimes with the announcement that nothing inferior to a silver piece will be acceptable. It is to the credit of Protestants that they do not tax the living for prayers and masses for the dead, as do the Roman Catholics. Nevertheless strong impression is sought to be made upon all, that membership, either in a Catholic Church or in some one of the numerous Protestant ones, is necessary to salvation, and that liberality to the Church of one's choice is also a necessity. Although rarely so stated, it is implied that eternal torment is the alternative. We are not inveighing against charity and liberality for the spread of the Gospel of Christ: neither did Jesus say one word against liberal giving on the part of the Jews for the support of the Temple. Our Lord's condemnation fell upon

those who were making merchandise of the opportunity, circumstance and conditions. It is our belief, indeed, that Christian people have been blessed in their response to the numerous demands: nevertheless the principle is all wrong. Whatever is given to the Lord should be voluntarily done, with love for him, with a desire to render unto him the first-fruits, the best of all that we possess, time, influence, money, etc.

“THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY”

The Jews demanded of the Lord by what authority he set up so high a standard as he required of them in the cleansing of the Temple. He answered them, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.” Of course they could not understand that it was one of our Lord’s dark sayings, which is fully comprehended even yet by only a few. The Jews thought our Lord spoke slightly of the Temple of which they were so proud, which just recently had been finished, after being in process of construction for forty-six years. They were incensed at him, and we recall that this was none of the charges against him a few days later. When he was arraigned before the High Priest it was said that he had blasphemed the Temple, spoken slightly of it in declaring that he would raise it up again, if destroyed, within three days. “But he spake of the Temple of his Body.” The disciples evidently got the thought that he referred to his fleshly body as the Temple of God, and supposed that our Lord’s prediction was fulfilled three days after his crucifixion. But we cannot so view the matter. To our understanding the Lord spake of the Temple of his Body—of the Church, his Body—of the Temple of which the Apostle Peter subsequently wrote, that we as living stones are built together upon Christ for a habitation of God through the Spirit. To suppose that our Lord spoke of the fleshly body as the Temple, and to suppose that that fleshly body was raised on the third day, would be to suppose that our Lord did not fully pay over the price necessary for our redemption.

Such a view would contradict his own statement, “My flesh I give for the life of the world.” (John 6:51.) He gave his flesh not only for three days but forever, and he was raised by the Father’s power from the grave the Lord of glory. As the Apostle declares, “Now the Lord is that Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:17); and again, “He was put to death in the flesh but quickened in the Spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18);

and again, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, now know we him so no more.” (2 Cor. 5:16.) The flesh was consecrated to death at the beginning of our Lord’s ministry, and this great sacrifice was symbolized in his baptism. It was the New Creature that was there begotten of the holy Spirit (to which fact John bore witness), which grew during the Lord’s three and a half years of ministry; and it was the New Creature, the Spirit begotten, that was born of the Spirit on the third day, when our Lord arose from the dead. Our Lord’s change was but a sample of that which is to come to all of his true followers, as the Apostle explains, saying, It is sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body, (1 Cor. 15:43, 44.) So, then, our Lord’s body of flesh, destroyed by the Jews at Calvary, was not restored on the third day. No restitution work was accomplished in him, but a complete change, because, as the Apostle declares, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.”— 1 Cor. 15:50.

But, on the other hand, we have the Scriptural declaration that the Church is the Body of Christ, of which the consecrated faithful are “members in particular.” (1 Cor. 12:27.) We see that as human beings our Lord the Head, and all the members of his Body, have been suffering the destruction of the flesh, have been sacrificing their human nature throughout this Gospel Age, and we see that in due time this glorious Church, the New Creation, will in the First Resurrection come forth a glorious Temple of God, composed of living stones and filled with the glory of God. This will be on the third day also, for if we consider the six thousand years past as six days of a great week, and the Millennial Age as the seventh or Sabbath day of that week, we find that it was early in the fifth of these days that our Lord sacrificed, that many of his followers suffered likewise during that and the following sixth day, and that the seventh day, into which we have chronologically entered since 1872, is thus the third day, in which, very early in the morning, the entire Body of Christ, the King of glory, will be perfected. Then the great Temple of God will be complete and ready for the great work of the Millennial Age, the blessing of all the families of the earth, and through it they all may have the opportunity of coming into full

harmony with God and gaining the blessing thereof— eternal life.

Zion's Watch Tower, January 15, 1908, pages 27-31

REGENERATION AND THE KINGDOM

—JOHN 3:1-21—

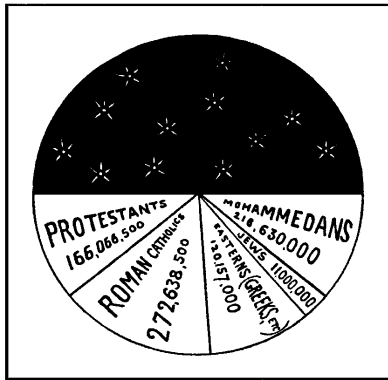


DIAGRAM SHOWING PROPORTION OF HEATHEN TO VARIOUS RELIGIONS TODAY

HIS 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

“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.

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 untrammelled 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 operation 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.

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

“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 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

* DAWN-STUDIES, VOL. V., pp. 189, 192.

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!

* * * * *

"Truth, how sacred is the treasure!
Teach us, Lord, its worth to know,
Vain the hope, and short the pleasure,
Which from other sources flow."

* * * * *

Zion's Watch Tower, February 1, 1908, pages 41-44.

"GIVE ME TO DRINK"

—JOHN 4:19-29.—

Golden Text:—"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 history—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 worshipped 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 reprov'd 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 kindness, 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 water-bucket, 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.

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Zion’s Watch Tower, February 1, 1908, pages 44-47.

THE REWARDS OF FAITH

—**JOHN 4:43-54.**—

Golden Text:—“The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.”—John 4:50.

AFTER spending two days with the Samaritans at Sychar, our Lord proceeded on his journey to Galilee. We have already noticed that this was contrary to his instructions to his disciples, and that the Samaritans, not being Jews, could not at that time receive special blessings— not until the seventy weeks of divine favor set apart for the Jews had been fulfilled, and the door opened to the Gentiles. We can imagine, however, that there was some special reason why the people of this little city were distinctly favored by our Lord, particularly when we remember that on another occasion he declined to go into a village of Samaria, and the people of that village refused to sell the disciples food, and thus incensed James and John to the extent of their suggestion to the Master that fire be called down from heaven to consume the village and its inhabitants. (Luke 9:54.) In Acts 8 and 9:31 we have clear indications that the work of grace flourished amongst the Samaritans very promptly after the door of opportunity swung open to them. No doubt that later fruitage developed from the words of grace and truth which our Lord dropped on the occasion of the visit here referred to. Our Lord and his disciples went into Galilee, notwithstanding the fact that the Lord corroborated the proverb that a prophet has no honor in his own country; but while he would have less honor there in one sense, it was a better field for labor in another sense, because the people, while outwardly less religious than those of Judea, were really in a better attitude of heart to receive the Lord and his truth than those of Judea, who were shackled with sectarianism

and the burdens of the Law imposed by the teachings of the Pharisees.

Although our Lord’s first miracle was performed in Galilee, his first reputation was gained in Judea and at Jerusalem, and now on his return to his home country, he had proportionately more honor than if he had remained, for many Galileans, attending the feasts at Jerusalem, had been witnesses of his teachings and miracles there. Thus he returned again to Cana, the scene of his first miracle, with added honors. We remember that on the occasion of his first miracle, the people said, Is not this Jesus, the carpenter, whose kinfolk we know? How, then, is he a prophet, a teacher? (Mark 6:2, 3.) Now, however, his fame was spread abroad, so that a nobleman living at Capernaum, twenty-five miles distant, learned of his presence at Cana, and made the journey to present a special request for the healing of his son, who was at the point of death. The word rendered nobleman in this text might more literally be rendered king’s officer, and the supposition of some is that this was Chaza, Herod’s steward or chamberlain, whose wife, Joanna, was one of the women who subsequently ministered to Jesus.— Luke 8:3.

CHUZA’S MANIFESTATION OF FAITH

The essence of this lesson is faith, and it well illustrates degrees and development of faith. Knowledge is necessary as a basis for faith, and this Chuza possessed. His faith was manifested in his coming to the Lord and publicly acknowledging his confidence in the Lord’s ability to heal his son. We may well consider that this indicated a good measure of faith to begin with, but our Lord— with no lack of sympathy for a

father's interest in his dying son, but with a desire to develop Chuza's faith—hesitated to go with him, and seemingly objected to so doing, saying, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." (v. 48.) Had Chuza's faith been small, or had he been lacking of humility, he might have had opportunity for a manifestation of incredulity and indignation.

He might have said, I did not believe in you anyway. It was merely a haphazard matter, because the physicians can do nothing further for my son, and I thought that your coming might possibly accomplish something. But now, sir, I see your hesitancy, and interpret it to mean that you occasionally pick out cases where you can effect a healing, where you can apparently effect a miraculous cure; but that in the general run of diseases, where death is at the door, you are as helpless as our physicians. I have at least demonstrated the fraudulency of your general claims. Adieu. But no; Chuza's attitude of heart was different. Our Lord's delay merely increased his urgency. He supplicated, and finally said, "Sir," Rabbi, "come down ere my child die." Don't, please don't wait to discuss a matter of faith if you realize my position as a father and my interest in the subject, but do come now, and render me the assistance, and discuss the philosophy of faith and tell me of my further needs subsequently.

Our Lord's point had been gained. He had tested the nobleman's faith, and had led his mind upward from the mere healing operation to something higher, to the divine power behind it, and to the fact that our Lord's miracles were merely intended to introduce him as the Messiah. But the test of faith was not yet finished, for our Lord, instead of accompanying Chuza to his son's bedside and there performing a cure, merely told him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth"—he will not die at the present time, he will recover. (v. 50.) The word was believed, the importunity ceased, and instead, no doubt, gratitude, thankfulness, was expressed. It is noted that the miracle took place in the seventh hour—1 p.m. It may be presumed that Chuza came the twenty-five miles on horseback that very morning in great haste. It is notable, however, that while he might have returned the same evening at the same speed, that he did not arrive at home until the next day—evidently taking the journey leisurely. Meantime, his servants met him

with the pleasing information that his son was out of danger. He inquired particularly for the time, and they promptly answered, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him;" so Chuza knew that the recovery was the result of our Lord's word and power.

ANOTHER KIND OF FAITH

We read that Chuza "believed, and his whole house." But did he not believe before, when he started to see the Master, when he was speaking with him, when he accepted his reply and started home? Yes, all of those were steps of faith, of belief and obedience in harmony therewith, and attesting the same; but when he arrived home and realized the miracle, it led to a belief in the Lord of a still higher and of a still deeper kind. He now believed, not only that Jesus was able to work miracles, but that he was indeed the Redeemer, the Messiah. His faith at last had reached the heart. No doubt it was as a result of this that his wife, Joanna, in harmony with his wishes, became one of the active supporters of our Lord's ministry.

What lessons of faith can be learned today along the lines of this lesson? We answer that faith today has its various gradations or steps. First of all, we could have no faith except as some knowledge would serve as its foundation. It is written, "Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]" (Heb. 11:6), and only those who please God, who have his approval, will have eternal life. Hence, we know that the heathen, who have no faith in God because they have no knowledge of him, are not accepted, are not justified, are not in any sense of the word saved or approved of God as worthy of eternal life. This settles at once, to all who are guided by the Scriptures, the erroneous supposition that the heathen are going to heaven, because of their ignorance. As the Apostle points out, "How can they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" and how could they hear without some proclamation, either oral or printed? and how can the proclamation reach them except as God be back of the matter and direct it to them, and grant the opening of the eyes of their understanding?

But an elementary knowledge and an elementary faith built upon it is not sufficient—faith must grow, and before it can grow it must lead to some kind of works. Chuza's primary faith led to his journey to our Lord, by which he attested his faith. But generally there must be a necessity, as in

Chuza's case— his son's illness. Some might hear of Christ, though they might never approach did they not realize the necessity; but the same message that tells of Christ points him out as a Savior, and implies that all men are sinners. Only those who realize that they are sinners, only those that desire to escape from sin and death, will be led to investigate and approach the Lord, that they may find relief from their burden of soul.

FAITH COMETH BY HEARING—THE MESSAGE OF GOD

In the first approach of a soul to the Lord it may be necessary that the feeling of need should be intensified; and hence, although the Lord is very merciful and compassionate and forgiving, he permits the penitent one to supplicate, and delays his assurances of forgiveness until matters seem vital to the one who is hungering and thirsting for the divine favor he seeks. Then, as in the case of Chuza, the Lord does not do something outwardly, miraculously proving to us that our prayer has been answered and that we are forgiven, but he merely tells us so, saying, "Thy sins be forgiven thee!"

Where the proper faith is, the results will be similar to those in the case of Chuza—the penitent one will believe, trust, and go his way, thankful and rejoicing. Whoever cannot trust has not yet come to the place where it is proper for him to have the relief. He must first cultivate more faith in the Lord, and to this end he may need a larger knowledge of the Lord and his goodness. He may need to call to mind the Lord's character,— that he is very merciful and of tender compassion; that while declaring that we are sinners, he declares also that he so loved us while we were yet sinners as to give our redemption price. (John 3:16.) He must consider how graciously the Lord has already dealt with many in the forgiveness of their sins, and in the granting to them of his holy Spirit, whereby has been wrought in them the glorious transformation of character, so that the things which they once loved they now hate, and the things they once hated they now love. With these lessons before the heart, and with confidence that the Lord changes not, that he is the same yesterday, today and forever, all sincere seekers of divine favor have an abundance of foundation for faith in their forgiveness and acceptance, and are authorized to have "strong consolation."— Heb. 16: 18.

What should be the result of a true faith which after various difficulties has reached the degree of justification and come to realize the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation to the Father, and the merit of the precious blood, covering all blemishes, future as well as past? As in Chuza's case, his faith bringing him to a condition of discipleship—to a position of believing on a still higher plane than ever before— so it should be with us. A realization of the grace of God in the forgiveness of our sins should lead us to that faith in him, that confidence in his Word, that acceptance of him as the great Teacher, the Messiah, which would believe in him to the extent of accepting all of his gracious provisions and propositions. This would mean that we would turn from the world to become his disciples, to lay our little all on the altar of sacrifice, with full confidence that he who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it in the day of Christ, in the Millennial Age— early in the morning of which the Church, the Bride, is to be helped, delivered, "changed."— Phil. 1:6; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

We trust that the majority of our readers will be able to trace in this lesson their own experiences of justification and sanctification. And what further remains? We answer that next in order comes the testing—a testing of the degree of our consecration, of its genuineness, of the sincerity of our consecration. This is the Christian's life. The earlier steps of faith and justification were merely primary to our standing upon this plane of sanctification— begetting of the holy Spirit to a new nature. The Lord's special dealing during this Gospel Age is with these New Creatures, Spirit-begotten—not that they are many as compared with the world, or even as compared with those that take the first step of faith unto justification. They are a Little Flock, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom—to as many of them as prove faithful. (Luke 12:32.) The Apostle declares of them,

*"ALL THINGS ARE FOR YOUR SAKES"
—2 COR 4:15—*

Everything in the realm of nature and of grace must for the time so operate as to be most favorable to this class, for the Lord has declared that all things shall work together for good for these—"the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) Whatever cannot be overruled for their good must be

hindered, must be stopped, cannot proceed. Little does the world realize the important place in its affairs and interests occupied by this Little Flock; indeed the world knoweth them not, even as it knew not their Lord (1 John 3: 1)—the world reckons them as a part of the filth and offscourings of all things, knows them as fools for Christ's sake. But by and by the veil will be lifted, and the whole world shall understand the mysterious workings of divine providence, for, as the Apostle declares, God, in the ages to come, will "shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Eph. 2:7.

Whoever has a sufficiency of faith to be accepted of the Lord in this class and to be

begotten of the holy Spirit, will still need to grow in grace, to grow in knowledge and to grow in faith, but he will find in the divine provision everything needful to these ends. Hence the Scriptures declare that God is faithful in the matter, and that if any of these Spirit-begotten ones shall fail to reach the glorious outcome of the call, it will be their own fault—because they have neglected or not properly used the divine grace in harmony with the divine injunction. Let our faith abound, dear brethren, and grow stronger and stronger, and to this end let us feed upon the heavenly manna provided us, and make use of the various opportunities for growth, and be not slothful, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

* * * * *

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'Behold, I freely give
 The living water; thirsty one,
 Stoop down, and drink, and live!'
 I came to Jesus and I drank
 Of that life-giving stream;
 My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
 And now I live in Him."

* * * * *

Zion's Watch Tower, February 15, 1908, pages 55-57.

HE WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD

—JOHN 5:1-9.—

Golden Text:—"Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."—Matt. 8:17.

THE records show that our Lord during his ministry wrought thirty-six miracles, separately described, and beside these many others not individually reported, but in groups. The Apostle Peter testifies of this, that he "went about doing good." (Acts 10:38.) Some, however, gain the erroneous view that our Lord's chief work amongst men was to heal their sicknesses. Many who hold this view argue that the chief work of the Church, as his footstep followers, should be the healing of diseases through prayer, etc. This is a serious mistake and betokens a thorough misunderstanding of the Divine Plan of the Ages. Our Lord's mission was primarily to make the great sacrifice for sin, which was the redemption price, and to secure ultimately the release of mankind from the sentence of original sin. As an incidental feature connected with the world's salvation through his sacrifice, he preached the good tidings and called for followers to walk in his steps and to be joint-sacrificers with him,

and thus ultimately to be joint-heirs with him in the work of distributing the blessings and favor of God, secured through his death. The miracles of healing which our Lord performed were incidental to his preaching—as a means of convincing those whom he would invite that he was indeed the Son of God, the Messenger of the Covenant, the Messiah, that they might hear his message, believe it, and become his followers.

Did he heal all the sick? Did he cast out demons from all who were possessed? Did he awaken all the dead? Assuredly not. He merely gave illustrations of the divine power which he possessed, and which he declared would be manifested more fully, more completely, later on—at his second coming. Harken to his words: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his [the Son of man's] voice, and shall come forth." Again it is written respecting our Lord's miracles: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus . . .

and manifested forth [in advance] his glory”—the glory and power which he will possess and exercise to the full in the time appointed of the Father. (John 5:28; 2:11.) Of that future time, when the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, St. Peter speaks, saying, “Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord [Jehovah]; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must receive [retain] until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”—Acts 3: 19-21.

A GREAT MULTITUDE OF IMPOTENT FOLK

These suggestions are amply confirmed by the records of our present lesson. Jesus had returned to Jerusalem on a festival occasion, when, by reason of the multitudes gathered from every part, the Jewish leaders who sought his life would think it unwise to make any demonstration against him for fear of a riotous disturbance. Near the city was a pool of water possessed of certain peculiarities, and bathing in this was reputed to be curative for some ailments. Our common version declares that an angel troubled the waters at certain times, and that it was immediately thereafter that the sick bathed to advantage. This portion, however, is not accurate, is not found in the oldest manuscripts, and is appropriately omitted from the Revised Version. It is presumed that the spring which supplied the pool was connected with a reservoir of gas, which really imparted to the water some curative property. Or possibly it was connected with a siphoning spring which overflowed at times. And the mental impressions upon the bather may have been helpful in many cases. At all events, the record is clear that a great multitude of impotent folk crowded the five porches of this pool. Their infirmities are indicated to have been something akin to rheumatism, paralysis and other muscular or nervous ailments, causing lack of vital power, withering or wasting of the muscles.

It is worthy of note that our Lord did not hunt up and cure all the diseased of Palestine, and that even when he came across them in his journeyings, as in this case, he made no effort to heal all of them. He singled out one individual who had in vain waited for an opportunity to test the virtue of the pool, and who had been ailing

for thirty—eight years. Of him alone he inquired, “Wilt thou be made whole?”—Is it your desire to be healed? The answer was that he had the desire, but had not the ability to take the further steps, nor had he assistance. By these words the Lord awakened in the mind of the poor man desires, aspirations, which had almost died out. He was almost heartsick from deferred hope. Here was a stranger manifesting some interest in his case—a thoroughly new experience. We can imagine the brightening of his eyes, the general alertness in connection with his conversation. Thus he was prepared for our Lord’s words, “Rise, take up thy bed and walk.” Immediately he realized in his muscles and nerves the surging of strength and vitality, and forthwith, almost mechanically, he obeyed and went his way—too much dazed, astounded, to think of inquiring the name of his benefactor, or to offer him his thanks.

We may be inclined to think of his cure as accidental—to suppose that he was thus blessed merely because our Lord happened to pass that way and happened to see him and happened to take compassion upon him. Or we might surmise an arbitrary election in his case. However, we may assume that a still more reasonable view presents itself, viz., that this man in his affliction had been led to a repentance of sin and to a desire for harmony with God, and that as a consequence of this attitude of his heart he was specially favored of God. As corroborating this view, we find it recorded that, shortly after, Jesus found him in the Temple, praying, thanking God for his recovery—probably also offering a gift to the Lord as an evidence of his confession and devotion and thankfulness.

“GO AND SIN NO MORE”

We do well to take note of the broad kindness and generosity of the Master, as exemplified in this case. He did not first discuss the man’s sins and inquire respecting his repentance and his turning over of a new leaf. He did not give him the blessing of healing on condition that he would become a servant of God. He healed him and permitted him to go his way, to take his own course. It was when he had gone voluntarily to the Temple to prayer or to sacrifice, that the Lord came to him, and without chiding for the past, counseled him for the future, saying, “Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” (v. 14). Would

that all of those who are “followers of the Lamb” might learn of the great Teacher how to forgive nobly, with generosity, and when and how to inculcate lessons of reform and admonition for the future.

“HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES”

In these words, the prophet foretold a part of our Lord’s mission. We believe that we are justified in supposing that all of our Lord’s miracles caused him a measure of self-sacrifice, loss of vitality—that he thus daily, little by little, laid down his life. We could suppose divine power granted to him in such measure that by the mere speaking of the word, at no cost to himself, any miracle could have been performed; but our Lord came not into the world merely to exhibit the divine power amongst men, it was also a part of his mission to taste of human sorrows to learn to sympathize with the afflicted, and to lay down his life on man’s behalf. Our supposition is well borne out by the above prophecy—that he would bear our infirmities. (Matt. 8:17; Isa. 53:4.) Additionally, it is confirmed by St. Luke’s statement that “Virtue [vitality, strength] went out of him and healed them all.”—Luke 6:19.

Our Lord’s miracles are much more precious to us from this standpoint than from any other. The gift which costs nothing cannot be so highly esteemed as that which costs much; and since life is our most valuable possession, the giving of it in any sense of the word is the giving of the greatest of gifts. That the three and a half years of our Lord’s ministry did impoverish his strength is abundantly testified to: for instance, when at Jacob’s well he was wearied, but his disciples were not; and again at the close of his ministry, on the way to Calvary, when he was unable to bear his own cross, while the two thieves apparently were able to bear theirs. (John 4:6; Luke 23:26.) His weakness was not the result of inherited blemish or sin, nor the weakness of imperfection, but of sacrifice. From the beginning of his ministry he kept pouring out his life in the interest of those who had an ear to hear, and taking upon himself of the infirmities, the weaknesses, of those he healed.

HIMSELF BARE OUR SICKNESSES

We do not know that our Lord was sick with any of the ordinary maladies. His perfect organism would apparently be proof against the intrusions of special diseases.

Rather it would appear that his healing of diseases merely exhausted his vitality, and thus left upon him the weight of our sicknesses. All of the sick, the afflicted of the Lord’s followers, can look up to him with a realization of his sympathy, for it is written, “In all their affliction he was afflicted.” (Isa. 63:9.) “Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows”; but we are not to receive the mistaken view entertained by some that our Lord bore the sicknesses of all those who would ever be his disciples, so that it would never be necessary for them to be sick or feel any pain. Quite to the contrary of this, the sicknesses which our Lord bore were those of the world, and not those of his special friends and disciples. We have no record that he healed any of his followers. The lesson therefore is to the contrary, that as he bore the infirmities and cares and griefs of others, his followers are to emulate his example and his Spirit, and from similar motives of generosity and kindness are to be burden-bearers, helpers, self-sacrificers. As the Apostle suggests, “We ought [also] to lay down our lives for the brethren.”—1 John 3:16.

The Scriptures clearly show that, so far from the followers of Christ being exempted from persecution, affliction, sorrows, trials, difficulties, they are to know indeed that the Father “scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” (Heb. 12:6.) We are to understand that as it was expedient that the Master should pass through such experiences of self-denial and self sacrifice, it is expedient also that all who would be acceptable to God as members of the Bride should be similarly touched with a feeling of the world’s infirmities, and have sufficient sympathy to voluntarily bear some of the sorrows and griefs of those about them. (Heb. 4:15.) Thus it is written, “If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.” (2 Tim. 2: 12.) Those who anticipate that the followers of the Lamb are to be borne to Paradise on flowery beds of ease, and not a wave of trouble roll across their peaceful breasts, are surely mistaken. Generally they have not read aright the Master’s description of the experiences of those who would be his footstep followers, who are enjoined to take up their cross and follow him.—Mark 10:21.

SPIRITUAL INFIRMITIES AND SICKNESSES

But while we may properly enough apply the prophetic testimony to the infirmities and sicknesses of those whom Jesus healed

at his first advent, we should not think of these as having the full import of the prophecy, but rather indeed as a small part thereof. What were all the sicknesses and infirmities that Jesus healed at his first advent in comparison to all the sicknesses Or the twenty thousand millions of the world's population? What was the awakening of the three from the dead in comparison to that of the mighty host which shall be brought forth from the prison-house of death, the grave? Surely there is a deeper, a wider significance to this prophecy. The infirmities and sicknesses of the whole world are part and parcel of the penalty of original sin. That penalty is death, and it rests upon the whole human family; and the infirmities with which we are born and the sicknesses acquired are merely so much of death working in our race. Our Lord bore all of this for the whole world in the sense that he by the grace of God tasted death for every man. (Heb. 2:9.) As the Apostle Paul explains, death passed upon our race as the result of sin; and hence, all being sinners, all have infirmities, sicknesses and dying conditions.— Rom. 5:12.

It is when we get this broad Scriptural view of the Divine Plan of the Ages that we find satisfaction for head and for heart, and a harmony which touches and explains every feature. of the divine revelation. Through the first Adam sin, condemnation, was precipitated upon the entire human family—and his bride, mother Eve, was a participant

with him in the entire matter. So in due time God provided Jesus, the Redeemer, who paid Adam's penalty with the sacrifice of his own life. He in consequence was highly exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, a King and Restorer, a Priest upon his throne, to grant forgiveness and uplifting influences to Adam and all involved through him. And now, preparatory to that general blessing of the world in harmony with the divine plan, a Bride for Christ is being selected from amongst mankind; but before she can share with her Lord the glories of the spiritual plane, the divine nature— glory, honor and immortality— she must be tested, and the test is that she must manifest the same spirit that actuated, that controlled her Lord, the Redeemer. For this reason it is that her call is during this present evil age— that the trials, the difficulties, the sorrows, the pains attendant upon sin shall serve to test her loyalty to righteousness and her spirit of devotion and of love. Under her Redeemer's guidance she is being taught the necessary lessons to fit and prepare her for the glorious joint heirship. Yet nothing connected with her call is compulsory— and hence, many have been called in comparison with the few that will be chosen. Therefore, all who would make their calling and election sure must be faithful in following in the footsteps of the Redeemer, heeding carefully his counsel, and availing themselves of his assistances by the way.— Matt. 22:14; 2 Pet. 1:10.

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Zion's Watch Tower, February 15, 1908, pages 57-61

“GIVE YE THEM TO EAT”

—JOHN 6:1-21—

Golden Text:—“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd.”—Isa. 40:11.

THE incidents of this lesson are accredited to the early part of the third year of our Lord's ministry, in the spring, nearing the time of the Passover. John the Baptist had been in the prison at Macherus for about a year and had just been beheaded by King Herod. The ministry of John, followed by the ministry of Jesus, had greatly awakened the Jewish mind on the subject of the imminence of the Kingdom of Messiah. The imprisonment of John had more or less surprised and stunned the people. John himself, after being imprisoned nearly a year, had sent some of his disciples

to inquire whether or not Jesus was the Messiah, whether or not he was merely the forerunner of some greater one. This was the truth: Jesus in the flesh, the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, was merely the forerunner of the heavenly Lord who, after gathering from amongst mankind his Elect Bride, will come in power and great glory and assume the reins of the world's government for their blessing and uplifting out of sin-and-death conditions. But Jesus did not enter into an explanation of these things, because they were not meat in due season then. He contented himself with

sending the message that the sick were being healed, the devils were being cast out. The good message of the Gospel was being freely preached—all that could then be done, all that was possible to do up to the time of the finishing of the sacrifice at Calvary and its acceptance on the part of Jehovah when our Lord ascended up on high to appear in the presence of God on behalf of believers—to make atonement for their sins, to effect a reconciliation for them with the Father, and to secure for them the begetting of the holy Spirit, which began at Pentecost.

Subsequently the beheading of John the Baptist spread a measure of consternation amongst those who had appreciated his ministries, including those who recognized the Lord as the Messiah. The religious sentiment of the most religious people was greatly shocked, and considerable excitement prevailed. What might not Herod do next? Would our Lord be safe? Would his apostles, those who trusted in him to save? The matter aroused greater interest and drew larger crowds to the preaching of Jesus, for, according to the Jewish custom, hundreds of thousands were en route to the usual Passover festival at Jerusalem. Business was practically suspended by a considerable proportion of the population, and as some departed others were coming, and thus our Lord and his apostles were kept for a time extremely busy. It should be remembered, too, that during the year of John's imprisonment our Lord sent forth his disciples and afterward the seventy also, two by two, into various cities of Judea and Galilee, and that they preached repentance and the Kingdom of heaven at hand, and incidentally referred to their Master Jesus as the Messiah. No wonder, then, that hundreds hung upon the Master's words and queried respecting his Messiahship, Is this indeed the very Christ, the true Messiah?

DEPARTED INTO A DESERT PLACE

It was under these circumstances that our Lord with his disciples withdrew in their boat to a desert place across a portion of the Lake of Galilee. They went not to a sandy desert, but to a desert part of the coast, away from the cities and from the large multitude which had gathered. They landed near Bethsaida, the home of Philip, one of the disciples, at the north end of the Lake. Some of the multitude were so deeply interested that, noting the direction in which the boat

was steered, they traveled afoot, a considerable distance, to the same place. Other multitudes coming along the road towards Jerusalem heard also of the presence of the great Teacher in that vicinity and tarried. Presumably our Lord discoursed to them on various topics not recorded. The point of our lesson, the incidents upon which our lesson is based, occurred toward nightfall. The people evidently were so engrossed in what they heard that they were forgetful of their own physical necessities, and our Lord was also apparently neglectful in that he continued to preach to them until the disciples, realizing the situation, suggested telling the people that he would talk to them no more, that it was time for him to move on to the next village, Bethsaida, for refreshment. Apparently the people supplied their simple wants from village to village instead of carrying provisions with them.

“WHENCE SHALL WE BUY BREAD?”

We note our Lord's wise method of instruction. He stimulated thought. Instead of sending the multitude away he proposed to Philip, whose home town was nearest and who therefore would be supposed to be best acquainted with the vicinity, that out of their common funds they would do well to purchase a free luncheon for the multitude, and inquired where the purchase could best be made. Philip was very matter of fact, and evidently had a good business head, replying at once, “Two hundred pennyworth [thirty-two dollars' worth] of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.” His suggestion was that this would be a considerable sum for them to spend, and that less would do no good. The apostles all joined in this sentiment, according to Luke's account, saying, “Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the towns and country round about and lodge, and get victuals.” Pressing the point a little closer Jesus said, They need not go away; give ye them to eat. To this the apostles remonstrated according to Mark, “Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread and give them to eat?” Is this what you wish us to do? We are ready to do it if you tell us plainly. Jesus replied, according to Mark, “How many loaves have you? Go and see.” Andrew, returning from investigating and speaking for all said “We have found a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fishes, but what are these

among so many?" The loaves of that country and time were about the size of a small flat pie and very similar in shape, and the kind of fish described by the Greek word used implied very small fish like herring.

Jesus directed that these supplies be brought to him, and probably they were purchased from the boy. The process of questioning had the effect of stimulating the minds of the disciples, so that by this time, when Jesus said, Cause the multitude to sit down in ranks or rows, in groups of fifties and hundreds upon the grassy slopes, the disciples were ready to obey, even though they could not as yet comprehend fully the purpose of the command; and the confidence of the people in Jesus and his apostles is clearly manifested in the fact that at the late hour they were willing thus to be directed. They had confidence in the Lord up to the point of credulity, and their faith had its reward.

GIVING THANKS ALWAYS FOR ALL THINGS

First of all our Lord gave thanks, lifting up his eyes to heaven. What a lesson he thus set for his disciples and for the multitudes and for all since who regard him as the Sent of God. If the Master himself thus acknowledged that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Lights, how much more should all we, who by nature were children of wrath but have been reconciled through the precious blood—how much more should we remember the message, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths." (Prov. 3:6.) Our blessing of the bread does not indeed increase its quantity, its bulk, but surely it does increase its value, its efficiency. The peace, the rest, the contentment which comes from a proper acknowledgment of divine mercy is of itself a good preparation for our nerves and all our energies as we partake of food. Proportionately the thankful Christian should be less troubled with nervous dyspepsia than are others of the same physical and nervous temperament. Besides this we advise that the Lord's consecrated little ones everywhere, so far as conditions will permit, should follow the custom of the Bible House family, and break together the spiritual manna and feast thereon at the same time that they partake of the earthly food.

The Lord's blessing was followed by the breaking of the barley loaves and fishes and

the distribution of the same to the twelve apostles, who in turn delivered them to the multitude, probably through chosen representatives of each company of fifty and a hundred. Thus the distribution was quickly accomplished and a bountiful luncheon enjoyed. But the lesson did not end there, for our Lord instructed the apostles to take their handbags or baskets and gather the fragments, that nothing be wasted, and a sufficient supply was found to fill the twelve baskets. The miracle astonished all and especially impressed, we may be sure, the apostles. It is not for us to explain the miracle, though miracle it would still be even if we were able to explain it. It is for us to recognize that God is the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and that miracles are in operation about us every day: the seed germinates and grows, we know not how; but seed sowing and harvesting are intimately associated, and we can trace the results, but the process by which the five loaves and two fishes were so increased in bulk we cannot trace; hence we speak of this as a miracle—that is, an operation of divine power beyond our comprehension more than are the average affairs of life. It is well for us to note how little we know at best, and how many miracles are happening about us all the time. We can analyze a grain of wheat and could construct something very closely corresponding, but we could give it no life, no germ, no power to produce. We see the corn and the oats and realize that they are valuable for food for man and for beast, but it is beyond our power to comprehend their transformation into human flesh and form, as well as into the flesh and form of swine and cattle of all kinds with their various peculiarities of skin, hair, feathers, hoofs, horns, etc. These are miracles, too, but so common that we overlook them.

THE LESSON OF SUPERNATURAL POWER

A lesson which undoubtedly came to the disciples and to the multitude in connection with the miracle we are considering was that Christ had superhuman powers which attested him as Messiah, the Sent of God, for "no man can do these miracles which thou doest except God be with him." Again, it was, especially to the apostles, a lesson of the Lord's ability to care for them as his followers, under all circumstances, under all conditions, and this lesson continues with all of his followers since. Our Master is still able both in temporal and in spiritual

matters to do for us exceedingly abundantly more than we could ask or think— "No good thing will he withhold from those that walk uprightly," from those who are his true followers. Their best interests— will be preserved and conserved. We may safely take from this matter a lesson in faith— "Greater is he that is on our part than all they that be against us." As the apostles learned this lesson, the very fear of Herod and what he might do to Jesus or to them gave way, and they were ready by nightfall at the command of our Lord to return again to the vicinity of Capernaum. Jesus himself appears to have retired for secret communion with the Father. He sent the disciples before, not only as a test of their obedience, but also that he might give them a still further demonstration of the divine power which attended him. The sea was boisterous; they were delayed in reaching port, and were rowing— presumably because of contrary winds— when behold Jesus approached the ship walking upon the waters. He quieted their fears by the declaration, "It is I, be not afraid." They received him into the ship and immediately they were at land.

Was there a picture in this experience? Did it represent the boisterous and troubled experience of the Church throughout this Gospel Age? Did it represent that at the end of the age, in the midst of a great storm, the Lord would appear to his people, and that upon being received by them their outward troubles and difficulties would completely vanish, only by reason of their fellowship with him and the grace and peace which he would give through his message, "Be not afraid"?

NOT A MISSIONARY LESSON

The committee arranging these International lessons designed and requested that this lesson should be used as a missionary lesson to the intent that the cause of foreign missions might be brought prominently to the attention of the Lord's people everywhere. We are glad of this; we have great sympathy with every sentiment and effort looking toward the uplift of mankind out of degradation and sin into the light and the truth, and thus into harmony with God.

Many have misinterpreted our views respecting missionary work in foreign lands. We think it much to the credit of missionaries that they have been willing to leave their homes and money-making

opportunities to engage in the missionary work, even though many of them have gone with full assurances of as good or better comforts than they enjoyed at home, and even though the greater part of missionary work is no more religious than is the teaching of the public schools in their home land, or the practice of medicine and hospital work done by many physicians in civilized lands. Surely the poor heathen greatly need civilizing influences, medical assistance and better education. We are glad that they are getting them.

What we object to in respect to these foreign missions is:—

(1) That the same imperfect Gospel, or mixture of truth and error, is presented to the heathen that is presented here in the home land; and (2) because the idea prevails that this is God's method for fulfilling the item of our Lord's prayer which declares, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." We object to this view because it is thoroughly unscriptural, and, as we have repeatedly pointed out, is thoroughly irrational. Our Post-Millennial friends, while telling us that they are striving to convert the world and thus to establish the will of God on earth even as it is done in heaven, prepare statistics which show to everybody that the number of the heathen in the year 1800 was approximately 600,000,000, and that their number today is approximately 1,200,000,000— just double. Is it not foolishness to insist on mission work from this standpoint? Let the mission work go on, but let it be viewed from the right standpoint. Who is so blind as not to be able to see that if the whole heathen world were converted to the same measure of civilization and Christianity as is possessed by so-called Christendom, it would still be in a wretched plight, as witness our Lord's address to the latter in its last stage, the Laodicean period, I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, that thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see, for thou art poor and miserable and blind and naked.— Rev. 3:17, 18.

Let us have the right Scriptural view of matters, namely, that God during this Gospel Age is seeking a "Little Flock," the "Very Elect," and is gathering them from every nation, people, kindred and tongue.

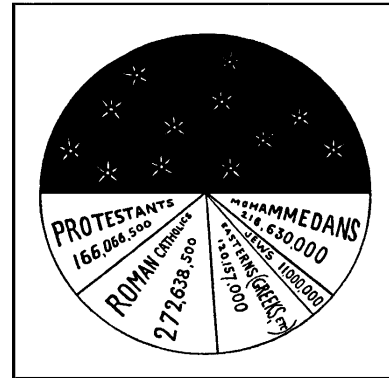
These are to constitute with their Lord and Bridegroom the Seed of Abraham, through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. Let us see that this is what the Apostle says, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) Let us see that the Kingdom is to be given to this Seed of Abraham; that Christ and his Elect Church, his Bride, are to constitute the Kings and Priests who shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:10), and through whom, as the Melchizedek order of priesthood, every son and daughter of Adam may have fullest opportunity of attaining a full salvation from sin and from death—a full release from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God! Let us see that those who shall ultimately prove incorrigible shall not be eternally tormented, but, as the Scriptures declare, shall be "punished with everlasting destruction," "destroyed from amongst the people!" (2 Thess. 1:9; Acts 3:23.) Those whose eyes are anointed with the unction from the Holy One to thus see the divine plan, realize well that God is not now engaged in the work of saving the world, but merely, as the Scriptures put it, "taking out of the nations a people for his name"—to bear his name, to be the Bride of Christ; and they all know that the Gospel can have no other meaning to the heathen than it has to the Christian nations.

DISCOURAGEMENTS FROM ERROR

No wonder thinking people who do not see the true plan of God in respect to the gathering of the Elect, and who have previously been zealous for the heathen under the erroneous belief that all except the converts of Christianity were doomed to an eternity of torture, are now ceasing to believe in eternal torment, and are going to the other extreme in supposing that nearly all the heathen go to heaven when they die, and that heaven has a vast slum district for their reception and education—no wonder that these are losing their zeal for foreign missions, that the money is coming proportionately more slowly, and much of it from those who are interested in the heathen from a humanitarian rather than from the religious standpoint!

It is pathetic to notice how otherwise honest and intelligent people have deceived themselves and others respecting the true situation of affairs in the world. We reproduce a diagram, published by "The

Young People's Missionary Movement," which shows the abject darkness of the heathen, enlightened only here and there by missionary endeavors, represented by stars. It is shown as a cause for further missionary effort. But look at the other half, represented



in pure white:—

Protestants	166,066,500
Roman Catholics.....	272,638,500
Easterns, Greek Catholics, etc....	120,157,000
Jews.....	11,000,000
Mohammedans	<u>216,630,000</u>
Total	786,492,000

But how fair is this statement? How true is it? On the diagram it is represented as one-half, yet the total of the world's population today is recognized as about 1,700,000,000, so that really a much larger proportion of the picture should show black. But let us examine more carefully who are the Mohammedans. We regret to say that a good many Christian people would not know but that they were another denomination of Christians—like the Mormons, for instance. But instead they are heathen in the sense of not recognizing Christ, respecting whom the Apostle says, "There is none other name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.) Are they not as much unsaved as are the ones represented by the black portion? Are they not as much in the dark? Have we any reason to suppose that they are any more honest? And what about the Jews? Are they saved from the Christian standpoint? On the contrary both Catholics and Protestants deny this, and missionaries and mission stations are now in operation amongst both Jews and Mohammedans with a view to their conversion, just as with the heathen.

Examining still more closely we find that the nearly 400,000,000 of Roman and Greek Catholics are also subjects for mission work

by Protestants, that Protestant missions are maintained even in the city of Rome itself and in various Catholic countries at the expense of the Protestants residing in Great Britain and the United States, with a view to counteracting, they tell us, the influence of "Anti-christ." How does it come that the good, honest people, so zealous to save others, have presented so misleading a picture of the state of the world? We answer, it is because their theology is wrong. After nearly nineteen centuries of endeavor they can scarcely give up their position that God has appointed that the truth shall in this way reach and convert the whole world, thus bringing about a reign of righteousness in which God's will shall be done on earth as in heaven. Their theory has been badly shattered and shaken by the truth on the subject. They want to make the picture as favorable as possible for their theory. They are scarcely conscious of the dishonesty they are thus practicing in the name of the Lord.

But look still more closely at the only division of the diagram we have not yet considered, the section showing the Protestants. Surely, says some, you will concede that at least this portion of the diagram is right. Alas, we reply, we wish that we could think of the Protestants of the world (166,066,500) as being saints of God, in whom his will is done on earth as in heaven—or even to the extent of their imperfect ability. We cannot so think; we cannot delude ourselves thus. We regret the lack of conscience on the part of those who made the diagram, and on the part of many others, which hinders them from being honest with themselves on the subject. For the purposes of such enumeration not even Church membership is taken, although everybody of reasonable judgment would admit that nominal Church membership would be a poor proof of saintliness. The number is made up of everybody living in civilized lands who is neither a Jew nor a Roman Catholic. As Bishop Foster once suggested it includes not only the black but the ringstreaked and speckled, the number of the white, the saintly, being extremely small.

AWAKE, OH ZION, PUT ON THY STRENGTH!

"Blow ye a trumpet in Zion!" It is time that all of God's true people, whoever and wherever, Catholic or Protestant, should awake to a realization that we have been living under a great delusion—under a total

misapprehension of the divine Word first started in the "dark ages." It is time that all the saints should come clearly to understand that their hope is not in the conversion of heathendom, but in the second coming of the Lord and the gathering of his saints, and their change to his likeness in the First Resurrection, and in the Kingdom, the dominion over the earth which will then be established through them—the Millennial Kingdom. Then and by that power Satan will be bound for the thousand years, that he may deceive the nations no more, that the blindness that has been upon not upon heathendom but only Christendom may pass away, and that the true light may shine forth—the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in its beams. It is for this Kingdom that we are to pray, with the realization that when it shall come the result of its rule shall be the complete abolition of sin and death and the establishment of a reign of righteousness in the world, even as it is in heaven.

The present mission of the Church is, as the Scriptures declare, to "make herself ready." This includes a knowledge of Christ, and the extending of this knowledge as far as possible, a knowledge of our justification through faith in his blood, and a knowledge of our call to joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom, and a knowledge that faithfulness to this call will mean a full consecration on our part to serve the Truth, to live the Truth, to suffer for the Truth, and that to the called, the chosen and the faithful the Kingdom is to be given at the second coming of our Lord, and that the attainment of that position of joint-heirship in the throne is dependent upon our willingness to stand for the Truth and for the Lord, to endure hardness as good soldiers, and to lay down our lives for the brethren, thus suffering with Christ that we may also be glorified together.

The Church's mission is not different from that of her Master, except that it is world-wide instead of being confined to the Jewish nation. Each one who receives of the holy Spirit is represented by the Lord as being a candle, a little light in the world, and each is to let his light shine before men. It is for the Lord to supervise the general interests of these lights, and to send them hither and thither as it may please him unto "even so many as the Lord your God shall call." (Acts 2:39.) It is quite proper that Christian people everywhere should have their attention

called to the real significance of their justification, their sanctification, and the proper characters they should develop in order to make their calling and election sure. Whoever is thus engaged is about the Master's business, and is therefore one of his mission workers. Each should now be laboring in that corner of the harvest field where he has the best opportunity for serving the cause, and this would mean that after witnessing for the Truth in our own neighborhoods we may carry the message as much as possible into other neighborhoods, into other cities, into other states, into other lands. Thus, as the number of lighted candles increases under the Lord's providential arrangement, some would probably be lighted for other lands— not to convert all but, as the Scriptures declare, to bear witness to the Truth.

OUR LESSON'S MISSION PICTURE

The lesson represents well the view we have set forth, but does not at all represent

Zion's Watch Tower, March 1, 1908, pages 72-76.

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"

—JOHN 6:26-37.—

Golden Text:—"Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life."

AFTER partaking of the miraculously provided supper, the multitude, evidently according to their habit, lay down in the fields, wrapping themselves in their outer garments. Indeed, this is even today a prevailing custom in Palestine with the poorer people when on a journey. In the morning they looked about for their benefactor, evidently expecting to find Jesus in the same vicinity, and no doubt also expecting that he would miraculously provide for their breakfast. But not finding him nor the boat in which the disciples had come they journeyed onward towards Jerusalem, but still on the look out for the reputed Messiah. When finally they came upon the Lord and his company they told of their search—and our lesson for today begins with our Lord's reply, You seek me not because of the miracle, but because of the satisfactory and free supper which you received. Here we perceive the wisdom of the Lord in not pressing matters too earnestly. He preached no sermon when he performed the miracle, but allowed it to have its effect; but now, instead of working another miracle,

the view of mission work generally entertained. It will be noticed that those who were fed were not heathen but Israelites, the people of God— then in covenant favor. It should be noticed secondly that Jesus dealt first with his disciples, who represented the Elect, his chosen ones. To these he gave the bread he broke, which, after the multitude were seated, was distributed amongst them. So the Lord has now called the Church to be his Elect, and broken for them the bread of life or Truth, and by and by in his own due time the whole world of mankind, including those who have gone down into the prison-house of death, shall all come forth— every man in his own order, in his own rank, in his own company, and then the multitude will be ready for the food, and it will be given them, and they shall have an abundance and to spare.

he preached a sermon, using his miracle as a text.

His reproof was not harsh, although it was quite pointed: Strive not for the food which perisheth, but for that kind which will produce everlasting life. This is the kind which the Son of man is prepared to give unto you. for him the Father, even God, hath sealed, indicated, marked as his appointed channel for blessing. The lesson contained in these words is obvious, and is as applicable today as then. The trouble with the whole world is that they have either earthly aims or no aims at all, and of the two conditions the latter is the worse. It is the people with aims, with purposes in life who are accomplishing something in themselves and for others. These are the worldly wise, who make two blades of grass grow where one grew before, who build factories and works and conduct large enterprises, and to whom in large measure civilization owes so much. They have ambition to be rich or to be wise or to be famed, and these ambitions spur them on to works.

But, alas! the great majority of mankind are in a much worse case, for without

ambition they are merely eating to live and living to eat—merely animals of a higher intelligence. They labor for the meat that perisheth—it is their aim, their goal; and sometimes includes the inebriating cup, which steals from them whatever of sense they may have. Our Lord would have his hearers, including all his followers down through the age, note this message from his lips: that although the meat that perisheth is necessary under present conditions, those who are his followers will remember that their heavenly Father knoweth they have need of these and will not suffer them to come to serious want. And thus being without anxious care for the bread that perisheth they might turn their entire attention not to earthly but heavenly ambitions—the noblest, the grandest of all they might aspire to, because such blessed children come within the range of divine blessing of life everlasting. The meat, the food that would develop in them such an ambition and lead to its satisfaction, would be food indeed and well worthy of every exertion to obtain it.

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

The discourse had its effect; the people realized that they were leading comparatively aimless lives, or that their aims were earthly and therefore would perish with their dying, and they asked the Lord what kind of work or labor he meant they should perform to secure the food that would bring the divine favor and gain them eternal life. What do you mean by works that would please God? This is just the point that Jesus wished to bring them to and that he wished to answer. He replied that the work for them to do at once was to exercise faith in him as the Sent of God—the Messiah. But they replied, What reason have we to think of you as the Messiah? Work for us some conclusive sign that will prove that you are Messiah and we will believe. The fact that you fed five thousand of us last evening with five loaves and two small fishes does not prove your Messiahship. Messiah is to be like Moses, only greater than Moses, and the miracle you performed is not as great as some that Moses performed. You furnished five thousand one meal and had the loaves and fishes to start with, but Moses fed our fathers for years in the wilderness without any bread as a start. The manna which he provided came down from heaven; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to

eat." They were good reasoners in some respects—they were not going to be too easily converted, they wished to be thoroughly convinced before they would believe Jesus to be the Messiah; they had heard of others who had been deceived by false Messiahs; they were intending to stick close to the Scriptural record and to see that the one they would accept as Messiah must be greater than Moses, able to feed them and all the people every day—and with bread superior to that which Moses gave in the wilderness.

Then was Jesus' turn to expound his teaching and to show that the comparison as between himself and Moses was not as to who would give a finer kind of earthly food and more of it, but that he would give a heavenly food, a spiritual food, which would secure to them a heavenly life. He therefore called attention first of all to their mistake in thinking the giving of the manna to be the work of Moses, saying plainly, It was not Moses that gave the bread from heaven, but my Father; do not credit that to the wrong source. Moses was indeed an honored servant of the Lord as the Lawgiver of Israel, but he neither gave the manna nor sent it. My Father who sent that manna in the wilderness has now sent another kind of bread, another kind of food, another kind of manna from heaven—not literal, but symbolical. The bread which God is now about to send to his people, also comes down from heaven and is intended to be the Bread of life for the whole world—not merely day by day for a few years, but for life everlasting.

"EVERMORE GIVE US THIS BREAD"

The lessons were going home to their hearts, as we know by their reply, "Lord, evermore give us this Bread." We note the similarity of expression here with that used by the Samaritan woman to whom the Lord mentioned the gift of life under the figure of the water of life—"Evermore give me this water." The answers in both cases show us the longings of the people of that time, both Jews and Samaritans, for something superior to what they had. As the poet has declared, "There are longings infinite in the human mind"—longings for life eternal. From remote times history tells us of how people in every clime have sought for health-springs and health-foods that thus they might have a longer continuance of the present life and, if possible, an annulment of

death entirely. All realize that this has not yet been attained, and the war still goes on. It is on the strength of such longings of the soul for continued life that patent medicines thrive. We are glad that there is such a longing in the human mind for a perpetuation of life; it becomes, as in this case and in the case of the Samaritan woman, a basis for further investigation for the eternal life which the Lord proffered.

Our Lord replied, "I am the Bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Again our Lord's words would undoubtedly be beyond the depth of the people's understanding. We can imagine their consternation, and to assist us in sympathizing with them we should remember that they were not Spirit-begotten, because Pentecost had not yet come "the holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39.) Indeed, we find that this question is a very abstruse one with many of the Lord's people today, and few comprehend it with any clearness except the Spirit begotten. Let us make the matter as plain as possible by continuing the investigation of the context. Therein Jesus explains that he himself had come down from heaven—not merely like the manna from the clouds, but from heaven itself, having laid aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, having humbled himself to an exchange of his previous spirit nature for the earthly nature in which he was then addressing them—the man Christ Jesus. But they could not eat him while he was alive, nor could they even understand what he meant when he said, "My flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed," and they reasoned, Will this man give us his flesh to eat? Is that what he means? The lesson was too deep for them; but, thank God, not too deep for us. As then some of the disciples forsook Jesus and walked no more with him, saying, "This is a hard saying, who can receive it?" so today there are some who cannot receive this teaching, which is the fundamental one of the Gospel of Christ. Whoever cannot receive this lesson cannot receive the other lessons which are built upon it. Our Lord further explained, "My flesh I will give for the life of the world." He had not yet given his flesh, though he was in the process of giving it; he was drawing out its vitality, its strength, in their service, but would complete the work of

his sacrifice by surrendering his all to death—even the death of the cross. And this he did later.

"WE EAT HIS FLESH"

We do not eat the flesh of Jesus literally—we eat it by faith; that is to say, we appropriate by faith to ourselves the merit, the efficacy which was in his flesh and which he surrendered to death on our behalf. But why was this, and what did he surrender, and how do we partake of it? We answer that Adam as the head of the race had forfeited his life through disobedience and hence, instead of being able to propagate a race of perfect beings in harmony with God and privileged to have eternal life, his offspring was like himself, dying, unworthy of eternal life. In God's arrangement a redemptive sacrifice was necessary—some one must take Adam's place, suffer death for him in order to release him and to justify his race from the original sentence. No human being could be found who was perfect and who could give to Justice a ransom for his brother—for all were sinners, coming short of the glory, the perfection, which God recognizes as essential to eternal life. It was to meet these requirements that God made the arrangement with his Son by which the latter freely, gladly, for the joy set before him, died, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. (1 Pet. 3:18) So, then, it was our Lord's flesh or human nature that was given for Adam and his race, and hence given for the life of the world, that the world of mankind might be recovered from under the sentence of death. Thus Jesus, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man and we are all redeemed, not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood [life] of Christ, as a lamb without spot or blemish.— 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.

We see, says one, how it was necessary for Christ to be made flesh and how it was necessary for him to give his flesh for the life of the world by going into death, but how shall we eat his flesh? is the question. Ah, we answer, the matter, as put in that figurative form, is beautifully simple and meaningful when we understand it. The eating of the Lord's flesh must be an individual matter on the part of all those who would benefit by his sacrifice. The eating represents the appropriating by faith. Thus, when one comes to an understanding of the fact of the redemption and believes

therein and goes to God in prayer and by faith accepts the forgiveness of his sins and reconciliation with God, he in so doing is eating the flesh of the Son of man; he is partaking of those benefits or advantages which our Lord's flesh or sacrifice secured.

JUSTIFIED BY OUR "EATING"

The result of such eating by faith signifies the appropriation to one's self of all the blessings and privileges which our Lord possessed as a perfect man; it implies our justification on the human plane, our relationship to God as those whose sins are graciously overlooked or covered and who have joy and peace and fellowship with God through faith in the precious blood. We are to continue to eat that we may grow stronger and stronger—that we may be able to appropriate more and more the wonderful blessings and privileges, relationships and divine favors which belonged to our Lord, but which he surrendered on our behalf and on behalf of all the members of Adam's race. Additionally, those who are rightly influenced by the eating—those who are drawn nearer to the Lord and led to a full consecration of their all to him—these receive a special invitation during this Gospel Age to drink of his blood. The blood is the life in Scriptural language, and hence ordinarily the Jews were not to drink blood; to do so would make them guilty or responsible for the death of the person or creature. Thus the Jews said of our Lord, "His blood be upon us"—we assume the responsibility of his death.

And thus also the Apostle explains that those who partake of the blood of Christ symbolically in the communion cup are symbolically representing themselves as being guilty of the blood of Christ, guilty of the death of Christ—unless they partake of it with the proper, the intended signification. What is that intended signification? We answer that our Lord stated the matter at the last Supper, saying to his disciples, "This is the cup of the New Covenant in my blood—drink ye all of it." This cup of the fruit of the vine represents my blood, my death; by it the New Covenant will eventually be sealed, and I invite you who believe on me to partake of this with me, to partake of this not as those who caused my death, but as those who voluntarily gave up their own lives and joined with me in this death, in this self-sacrifice. As you partake of this cup with me it signifies that you lay down your

lives as I laid down mine and that you become participants with me in this cup which speaks, which means the great sacrifice, the great life given through which the New Covenant will be established, under which all the families of the earth will be blessed.

So, then, under the guidance of the holy Spirit through the words of the Apostle we may see a depth of meaning in our Lord's words which the people whom he addressed did not comprehend. Indeed, we believe that while our Lord addressed these words to the Jews he intended them more particularly for us to whom they have been communicated and by whom they have been more fully understood. We rejoice, then, in the justification which we have through partaking of his flesh—through being justified by the sacrifice of his humanity—our appropriation of our share of human justification. And we rejoice also that eventually the whole world shall be privileged to eat of that flesh—to accept the grace of God in the cancellation of their human sins and weaknesses, and to realize that all those blessings of restitution times, the blessings of the Millennium, will come to them because Christ died for their sins, because he gave to them his flesh to eat. The whole world is to eat of that Bread, and, as the Apostle intimates, the Church is now privileged to be a part with the Lord in the Loaf that is being broken, as well as to be participants in the cup of ignominy and self-sacrifice which the Father poured for him and which he permits us to share with him—for if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, if we be dead with him we shall also live with him, if we drink of his cup we shall also share in his joys in the Kingdom by and by.—2 Tim. 2:12.

WHOM THE FATHER GIVETH SHALL COME

The multitude who had eaten of the bread the night before, and who now had received the explanation respecting the higher food necessary to eternal life, did not believe, although they recognized Jesus as a very wonderful personage indeed, and probably, like another multitude, were ready to declare, "Never man spake like this man." (John 7:46.) Was our Lord disconcerted and disappointed because these thousands of Israel, heirs of the promises, received him not, heeded not his message? Nay, verily! Nor should we his followers think strange of it that in this harvest time the divine

message should be incomprehensible to the great majority of the household of faith of our time. We read nothing of our Lord's becoming excited to a frenzy and appealing to the people and teaching them that they were about to fall into an eternity of torture if they did not receive him. We read nothing about the apostles going out amongst them and urging them to a mourner's bench. Quite to the contrary of all this. Jesus evidently expected that few would believe; he even turned to his disciples and said, "Will ye also go away?" But they answered, No; to whom should we go? from you we have the message of eternal life which comes from nowhere else. Master, we will stand by you; we could not do otherwise, our every interest is bound up in this glorious message which we have heard from your lips. We are ready to die with you, to drink of your cup.

Instead of manifesting any perturbation our Lord said to the multitude, This is what I told you before; ye have seen me, ye have believed not. Why? Because ye are not of the flock of sheep whom my Father hath given me to lead at the present time. Other sheep I have which are not of this flock; by and by I will attend to them. But now, "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"—reject. What is this if not an election, a selection? How much in harmony it is with what our Lord uttered in his prayer on the night before his crucifixion, "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me . . . 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 [then, later] believe that thou hast sent me!" (John 17:9, 21.) As our Lord was not expecting all to come to him and to accept of his gracious offer and God's gracious provision in him and thus to be justified through eating his flesh, so he could not expect either that many would go on still further and make the consecration to walk in his steps in the narrow way and thus be partakers of his cup and prospective joint-heirs with him. Oh, no! these in all, from first to last, are but a Little Flock, but a very blessed Little Flock to whom, as the Master declared, the Father will give the Kingdom. (Luke 12:32.) And when they shall be changed and are like their Master and shall receive the Kingdom power and glory and dominion—then will come through that Kingdom the overthrow of the prince of

darkness, the prince of this world; the overthrow of sin and the work of blessing, enlightening and uplifting all the poor world of mankind who are not now called and drawn by the Father!

Note our Lord's words in this connection, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him." (John 6:44.) There is an exclusiveness about this: the time had not yet come, mentioned in Revelation, when the water of life shall flow freely, and whosoever will may come. (Rev. 22:17.) That glorious time belongs to the Millennial Kingdom and not to the present time, which is devoted to the election or selection of the Bride class of joint-heirs which the Father is now drawing, calling, sealing. Mark the distinctive difference between this drawing of the present time by the Father and that later drawing of the Millennial Age, which will not be by the Father but by the Son, and which will not be exclusive but inclusive, including all mankind. Harken to our Master's words to this effect, that "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32.) All men are not yet drawn to the Lord. Why? Because the lifting up is not yet complete. The Head was lifted up not only at Calvary but was subsequently highly exalted as a reward, and the members of his Body, the members of the Bride class who follow in his steps, must finish their course and also be highly exalted as his joint-heirs before the lifting-up process will be complete.

With that glorious "change" of the First Resurrection the Millennial Kingdom will be ushered in and during that wonderful reign of righteousness, that shining forth of the sun of light and truth for the blessing of the world, all mankind will be drawn away from sin and selfishness, away from sickness, pain and sorrow, away from everything that is evil, toward the Lord, that they may partake of his flesh indeed and have eternal life with all the blessings of restitution which God has provided through the great Redeemer. We are not in this teaching Universalism, for as many of those who are called and drawn now to be of the Bride class can, and many do, resist the drawings, or, as the Apostle says, "receive the grace of God in vain." So it will be possible to resist the drawings of the Millennial Age, as is pointed out in the Scriptures in various statements, of which this may suffice, "It shall come to pass that the soul that will not

hear [obey] that Prophet, shall be destroyed from amongst the people”—in the Second Death, without hope of any recovery. Note again the Lord’s promise to these Elect ones whom the Father now draws and who now come and feed upon our Lord’s flesh and who drink of his cup, his blood, and participate with him in his sacrifice. Their hope is stated in these words, “I will raise him up at the last day.” The last day, the great seventh day, the Millennial day. Ah, yes! We remember it is written respecting the Church, the Bride class, “God shall help her right early in the morning” (Psa. 46:5)—the morning of that Millennial day. The six days, epochs of one thousand years each, from Adam have passed, the seventh is already dawning and the time is near at hand when the Bride, all glorious, shall be presented to the great King, the Father, by the great King, his Son, our Lord—“with

gladness and rejoicing shall she be brought: they shall enter into the King’s palace.”—Psa. 45:15.

“I WILL IN NO WISE CAST OUT”

How glad we are that our dear Master added these words. Without them we might have doubted the efficacy of the calling and the drawing which we receive; and some might have said, Yes, I was indeed drawn, but evidently the Lord Jesus did not count me worthy of a place amongst his followers. He here assures us that the drawing of the Father which brings us to him with a desire to be his disciples will insure for us his aid, his succor, his assistance, his acceptance. Thus we may know that if we fail of the grace of God now provided for us in the high calling, it will be our own fault, because of failure to give heed to the voice of the Shepherd and to walk in his steps.

“Come all ye saints, to Pisgah’s mountain, Come view our home beyond the tide: Millennial Canaan is before us, Soon we’ll sing on the other side.

O ! There see the ‘white throne of glory,’ And crowns which the saints then shall gain, And all who shall love Christ’s appearing, Shall be blessed in that glorious reign.”

Zion’s Watch Tower, March 1, 1908, pages 76-79.

“I WAS BLIND, I NOW SEE”

—*JOHN 9:1-41.*—

Golden Text:—“I am the Light of the world.”—V. 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 every 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 worshipped 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 entrapped 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 heir

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.

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Zion's Watch Tower, March 15, 1908, pages 92-95.

THE SHEPHERD, THE DOOR, THE FLOCKS

—**JOHN 10:1-18.**—

Golden Text:—"The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—V. 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 fulfil 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 drinking, 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 veil 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!

Zion’s Watch Tower, April 1, 1908, pages 102-106.

“I GO THAT I MAY AWAKE HIM”

—JOHN 11:1-57.—

Golden Text:—“I am the resurrection and the life.”

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 here 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 in deed 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 therefor, 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 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 to 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 criticised 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 criticise 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 sepulcher, 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.

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Zion's Watch Tower; April 1, 1908; pages 106-109.

JESUS ANOINTED AT BETHANY

—**JOHN 12:1-11**—

Golden Text:—“We love him, because he first loved us.”—1 John 4:19.

THE last week of our Lord's earthly ministry was a busy one. The sixth day previous to the Passover was the Jewish Sabbath, which ended at six o'clock in the evening, and it is possible that it was at that time that our Lord and his disciples were entertained by Martha and Mary at “the house of Simon the leper”—probably their father. Lazarus, their brother, whose recovery from death was noted in the previous lesson, was also one of the table-guests.

Our Lord knew that the time of his death was near at hand, and he had given intimations of this to his beloved disciples, but they were so accustomed to having him say wonderful things beyond the power of their comprehension that they probably failed to realize their closeness to the great tragedy of Calvary. This need not surprise us when we remember the Scriptural declaration that our Lord spake in parables and dark sayings—“and without a parable spake he not unto the people.” For instance, his declaration, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” And again, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man shall eat of this bread he shall live forever.” And again, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.” (John 2:19;

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.”

6:51, 53.) Having in mind such unusual language, the apostles would be entirely excusable in doubting the proper meaning to be attached to our Lord's declaration, “The Son of man must be lifted up,” and other similar expressions foretelling his death.

Before coming to the consideration of the Bethany supper and the anointing on that Sabbath evening, let us have before our minds the incidents of the days following it, that we may be able to appreciate our Lord's declaration that the anointing with the spikenard was preparatory to his burial. The next morning (the first day of the week, now usually called Sunday), having sent after the ass, our Lord rode upon it to Jerusalem. The people, recognizing the wonderful miracle wrought upon Lazarus, congregated and hailed him as Messiah, the Son of David, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah (9:9), and strewed clothing and palm branches in the way (hence this is generally known as Palm Sunday). It was on this occasion that our Lord wept over Jerusalem, and declared, “Your house is left unto you desolate.”—Matt. 23:38.

It is supposed that it was on the second day (Monday) that our Lord scourged the money-changers out of the temple, and taught the people there; and we gather from the narrative that it was in his journey on

this day that he pronounced the curse upon "the barren fig tree," supposed to represent the Jewish nation—barren of fruit and therefore rejected. It would appear that the third day (Tuesday) was again spent teaching in the temple, answering questions, etc., and that evening, as they returned again to Bethany, he discoursed with his disciples respecting the great events near at hand. The fourth day (Wednesday) apparently was spent quietly at Bethany, and on the fifth day (Thursday) the disciples made ready the Passover supper which was eaten after six o'clock that evening—the beginning of the sixth day (Friday) according to Jewish reckoning—the 14th of Nisan. The Gethsemane experiences followed that night and the trial before Pilate the next morning, and the crucifixion later.

"BE NOT FORGETFUL TO ENTERTAIN"

Now we come back to witness the hospitalities extended to our Lord six days before the crucifixion, at the house of Simon the leper, the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus. We are to remember that our Lord was a visitor in those parts—his home, to the extent that he ever had one, being in Galilee, where the most of his time was spent. "He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." (John 7:1.) But now the time for his sacrifice had come, and in harmony therewith he came amongst his enemies—although it was known that prominent Jews sought to kill him and also sought the death of Lazarus, who was a living witness to his Messianic power.

We may suppose that this was no ordinary supper, but in the nature of a feast or banquet in our Lord's honor. Nevertheless, one incident connected with it so outshone all its other features that the narrator mentions it alone—the anointing of our Lord with the "spikenard ointment, very costly." Our Lord himself declared, "Whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." (Mark 14:9.) It is entirely proper, therefore, that we should examine with some particularity the details of this service so highly esteemed by the Master.

Prof. Shaff says, "By the 'ointment' we are to understand rather a liquid perfume than what we commonly know as ointment." The alabaster box was rather in the shape of a flask or vase, and the breaking of the box (Mark 14:3) signifies the opening of its tyings

and seals by which the precious odors were confined. Judas' words of dissatisfaction furnish us a clue respecting the costliness of this perfume, for he says that it "might have been sold for three hundred *denarii*." A *denarius*, translated "penny" in v. 5, is represented as being the average daily wages at that time—"a penny [*denarius*] a day." (Matt. 20:2.) If we compare these values with present money values, counting farm labor at fifty cents a day (which is certainly a moderate valuation), the three hundred *denarii* would be the equivalent in wages of one hundred and fifty dollars of our money. Thus we see that the perfume was indeed "very costly." There was nearly a pint of the perfume, a Roman pound being twelve ounces. Nor need we question the possibility of perfumes being so expensive, for even today we have a counterpart in value in the attar of roses made in the far East. It is claimed that four hundred thousand full-grown roses are used to produce one ounce of this perfume, which, in its purity, sells as high as one hundred dollars an ounce, or twelve hundred dollars for the quantity used by Mary in anointing our Lord. It is said that Nero was the first of the Emperors to indulge in the use of costly perfumes for his anointing; but one much more worthy of tribute, homage and anointing with a sweet perfume was the One whom Mary had the honor to anoint. He was—

"PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH"

Judas was first to object to this as a waste, the difficulty with him being that he loved the Lord too little and money too much. The amount that love is willing to expend for others is, to some extent, at least, a measure of the love. Another Evangelist informs us that several of the disciples, under the influence of Judas' words, took the same view of the matter and spoke disapprovingly of Mary's action. The Apostle John, however, takes this opportunity to throw a little sidelight upon the character of Judas—more than is apparent in the common translation of v. 6. His declaration is, "Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the box, and stole what things were deposited in it."—*Diaglott*.

Our Lord's words, "Let her alone!" were in the nature of a severe reproof to those whose sentiments of love had no other measure than that of money. It was indeed true that there were plenty of poor, and there would

still be plenty of poor, and plenty of opportunities to minister to them; but the opportunity to specially honor the Lord, and to pour upon him the fragrant odors so beautifully expressive of Mary's love and devotion, would not be for long, and our Lord declares that the circumstances fully justified the costly expenditure. He shows himself out of sympathy with the sentiments which balance themselves too accurately with money values. Moreover, we may esteem that in many instances like the one here recorded the persons who are so careful lest money should be spent except for the poor are often like Judas, so avaricious that very little of whatever money gets into their possession reaches the poor.

On the contrary, it is the deep, loving, benevolent hearts, like that of Mary, which delight in costly sacrifices at times, which also are likely to be deeply sympathetic and helpful to the physically poor. And in our ministrations to others we are not to forget that money is not the only thing of which people are sorely in need—some need love and sympathy who do not need money. Our Lord was one of these: his own heart, full of love, found comparatively little companionship in the more or less sordid minds of even the noblest of the fallen race represented amongst his apostles. In Mary he seemed to find the depth of love and devotion which was to him an odor of sweet incense, of refreshment, of reinvigoration, a tonic: and Mary apparently appreciated, more than did others, the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Master's character; she not only delighted to sit at his feet to learn of him, but now delighted, at a great cost, to give him some manifestation of her devotion, her love.

She poured the perfume first upon our Lord's head (Mark 14:3), the usual custom, and then the remainder she poured upon his feet. But the Apostle John, in recording the matter, seems to have forgotten entirely the anointing of our Lord's head, so deeply was he impressed with the still more expressive devotion manifested in the anointing of the feet and the wiping of them with the hairs of her head. It is indeed a picture of love—a devotion well worthy of being told as a memorial.

ACTIONS LOUDER THAN WORDS

Some one has said:—

"She took 'woman's chief ornament' and devoted it to wiping the travel-stained feet of

her Teacher; she devoted the best she had to even the least honorable service for him. It was the strongest possible expression of her love and devotion. She gave her choicest treasures in the most self-devoted manner. She was bashful and retiring, and could not speak her feelings, and therefore she expressed them in this manner."

We are not surprised to learn that the whole house was filled with the odor; and we doubt not that the odor remained for a long time: but far more precious than that was the sweet odor of Mary's heart-affections which the Lord accepted and will never forget, and the sweet odor of her devotion which has come down through the centuries to us, bringing blessing to all true hearts who have honored her service and desired to emulate her conduct.

"UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE"

It is not our privilege to come into personal contact with our dear Redeemer, but we have, nevertheless, many opportunities for doing that which to some extent will correspond to Mary's act—it is our privilege to anoint the Lord's "brethren" with the sweet perfume of love, sympathy, joy and peace, and the more costly this may be as respects our self-denials, the more precious it will be in the estimation of our Elder Brother, who declared that in proportion as we do or do not unto his brethren, we do or do not unto him. (Matt. 25:40, 45.) Moreover, he represents these "brethren" in a figure as "members of his Body"; and from this standpoint we see that, while it is not our privilege to pour the perfume upon the Head of the Body—now highly exalted far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named, next to the Father—it is our privilege to pour the perfume upon the feet of Christ, the last living members of his Church of this Gospel Age.

We know not to what extent the closing years of this Gospel Age may correspond to the closing days of our Lord's ministry; we know not how similar may be the experiences of the "feet" of the Body of Christ to the experiences of the Head of the Body; we do know, however, that in any event it is our blessed privilege to comfort one another, to encourage one another, to sustain one another, in the trials incident to our "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24.) And to whatever extent we would improve these opportunities as did

Mary, we must first appreciate them as she did.

“LOVE BEGINS AT HOME”

Nothing in this suggestion is intended to imply any neglect of the members of our natural families “according to the flesh”; attentions to these are proper always, and are generally so understood, and should more and more be appreciated and used in proportion as the Lord’s people receive freely and fully of his spirit of love—kindness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering. But we emphasize that which the Scriptures emphasize, namely, that our interest and efforts are not to be confined to those of fleshly tie, but, on the contrary, are to be “especially to the household of faith.” (Gal. 6:10.) There will be other and future opportunities of doing good to mankind in general, but the opportunity for serving “the Body of Christ” is limited to the present age.

Apropos of this propriety of doing good to others—expressing our love by our conduct as well as by our words, to the members of our families as well as to the members of the

Body of Christ—we quote the words of another:

“The sweetest perfume that the home circle ever knows arises from deeds of loving service which its members do for each other. The sweetest perfumes of our homes do not arise from elegant furniture, soft carpets, elegant pictures, or luxurious viands. Many a home, having all these, is pervaded by an atmosphere as tasteless and odorless as bouquets of waxen flowers.”

Another has said:—

“If my friends have alabaster boxes full of fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I should rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I might be refreshed and cheered with them while I need them. . . . I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. . . . Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road.”

Zion’s Watch Tower; April 1, 1908; pages 109-111.

“HUMBLE YOURSELVES, THEREFORE”

—**JOHN 13:1-15.**—

Golden Text:—“A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.”—John 13:34.

OUR Lord’s ministry was about ended. He met with his twelve chosen disciples to celebrate the Passover supper, declaring, “I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” (Luke 22:15.) The passover lamb which they were to eat typified our Lord himself, and the eating of it by his disciples represents how believers of the Gospel Age feed upon Christ in their hearts, and by faith appropriate to themselves the blessings secured to them through his death, “For even Christ our Passover [Lamb] is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast.” (1 Cor. 5:7,8.) But, inasmuch as Jesus was the antitypical Lamb, it was appropriate that the type should be discontinued; and hence it was that our Lord, following this last typical Supper, instituted the Memorial Supper of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine as representing the antitype—his broken body and shed blood.

According to the Jewish custom the Passover supper was celebrated by families,

and the twelve apostles, specially chosen by our Lord and giving their allegiance to him as their Head, constituted the nucleus of the family of God—whose hearts and hopes and aims were one—for “ye are all called in one hope of your calling.” (Eph. 4:4.) Judas was not excluded, although our Lord evidently knew beforehand that it was he who should betray him. This furnishes us the lesson that, as followers of Christ, we should not judge one another’s hearts, nor surmise evil. After the evil of the heart has manifested itself in words or deeds is quite time enough to separate ourselves from others who profess the Lord’s name and desire to fellowship with us. True, the evil begins in the heart, before the outward act, but we should always hope that the brethren may gain the victory, and should seek to do nothing to stumble any, but everything to help them to overcome the influence of the Adversary and the weaknesses of their own flesh.

John does not give a particular account of the Passover supper, but seems to bring in merely certain valuable features and lessons connected therewith and omitted by the other evangelists. His declaration is that our Lord knew beforehand that he had reached the end of his earthly career and was specially solicitous of improving the closing hours with his particular, chosen friends and companions by inculcating some good lessons. "He loved them to the end"—completely, fully; his own sharp trials, present and approaching, did not distract him nor absorb his attention. He was, as heretofore, still thinking of and endeavoring to bless others. Nor need we suppose that this love for the twelve applied to them exclusively; rather that he viewed the twelve as the representatives of "them also which should believe on him through their word"—as he expressed the matter in his prayer to the Father. With this view in mind we can realize that what our Lord said and did to the apostles was intended to be applicable and instructive to all who have been his since then.— John 17:20.

SELF—SEEKING A MISTAKE

From Luke's account it would appear that on this occasion there was a strife amongst the apostles, a contention respecting which of them should be esteemed greatest. (Luke 22:24-31.) This strife may not have been solely one of selfishness, in the evil sense of the word, but, partially prompted by love for the Master, it may have been in respect to their several positions at the table, the coveted position possibly being closeness to our Lord's person. We remember how James and John had made request that they might be on the right and on the left of our Lord in the Kingdom, and we remember that in connection with this narrative it is declared that John was next to our Lord, and leaned upon his bosom.

Quite possibly this dispute respecting greatness arose in part from the fact that they were not in this instance treated as guests, but merely had the upper room put at their disposal; having no host, no provision was thereby made for the usual washing of the feet, and it was neglected. The matter of feet-washing in eastern countries, when sandals were worn, was not merely a compliment, but a necessity, the heat of the climate, the openness of the sandals, and the dust of the roads, making it almost indispensable to comfort that the feet

be bathed on arriving at the house after a journey. Apparently this question as to which of the twelve was greatest, and as to which should perform the menial service of feet-washing for the others, had developed the fact that none of them was anxious to take the servant's position.

Apparently our Lord permitted them to thus disagree, without settling their dispute, without appointing any of their number to the menial service. He allowed them to think the matter over—time to relent and reconsider—and they even proceeded to eat the supper, contrary to custom, with unwashed feet.

Then it was that Jesus arose from the supper, laid aside his outer garment, and attaching a towel to the girdle of his undergarments, took a basin and a ewer for the water, and began to pour the water and wash the feet of his disciples. It was not the custom of the East to pour the water into the basin and put the foot into the water, but to pour the water upon the foot being washed; thus each had clean water, and little was wasted—for water is much more scarce and precious there than with us. We are to remember also that in the East at that time tables and chairs such as we use were not in vogue. On the contrary, the tables were low and shaped somewhat like a horseshoe, and those who sat really reclined, lying upon the table, with the left elbow resting upon a pillow or divan, their heads toward the inside of the horseshoe, where there was a space provided for the food, and also a space for a servant to enter and place the food. Thus it will be seen that the feet extended backward, and could quite easily be reached without disturbing those who were eating.

"YE ARE CLEAN, BUT NOT ENTIRELY"

Our Lord very evidently had already washed the feet of several of the disciples before he came in turn to Peter. Seemingly none of them offered objection, although no doubt the thought of their own contentions upon this subject, and unwillingness to serve one another, brought them blushes of shame and confusion of face. But when it came to Peter's turn he protested. It would never do, he thought, to permit our Lord to perform so menial a service. He asks, "Lord, dost *thou* wash *my* feet?" But our Lord did not stop to reprimand Peter—to give him a thorough "setting down" and scolding, as some of his followers might be inclined to do under such circumstances: he merely

insisted on continuing, and treating Peter the same as the others, saying that he would explain the matter later, and that if he washed him not, he could have no part with him.

One cannot help admiring the noble traits in Peter's conduct, even though with the same breath we be forced to acknowledge some of his weaknesses; and herein all the Lord's followers find a lesson of encouragement, for though they find weaknesses and imperfections, if they find also the heart-loyalty to the Lord which was in Peter, they may continue to have courage and hope and to press on as did he, from victory to victory, and at last to have the prize, the reward of faithfulness.

When Peter learned that there was more meaning to the washing of the feet than merely its kindness and comfort, and its reproof of the lack of the spirit of humility amongst the disciples, he wanted, not only his feet, but also his hands and his head washed. Noble, thorough-going, whole-hearted, fervent Peter! But our Lord explained that this was not necessary, saying, "He who has been bathed has no need except to wash his feet, but is wholly clean." (V. 10—*Diaglott.*) Public baths were in use at that time, but even after having taken a general bath, on return to the home it was customary to complete the matter by washing the feet; and this seems to be the inference of our Lord's remark. The apostles had been with our Lord, for three years, and under the influence of his spirit of love, meekness, gentleness, patience, humility, had been greatly blessed— by "the washing of water through the Word" spoken unto them.— John 15:3; Eph. 5:26.

HUMILITY DESPISED BY THE WRONG-HEADED

There is an intimation in the Lord's words that the spirit of pride which had manifested itself among them had been inspired to some extent by their treasurer, Judas,— as evil communications always are corrupting. (1 Cor. 13:33.) This final lesson from their great Teacher was a very impressive one upon the eleven, whose hearts probably were in the right condition to receive the reproof and the lesson; but upon Judas, although his feet also were washed, the effect evidently was not favorable. The spirit of evil which had entered into him before the supper— the desire to obtain money, and the proposition to obtain it by betraying the

Lord, evidently continued with him, and instead of being moved aright by our Lord's humility and service, he was the more moved in the opposite direction— to think little of him. So it is with all who have professed the Lord's name in every time. Those instructions, examples and experiences, which are working out blessing and proving beneficial to some, are proving injurious to others. The Gospel, in its every phase, is either "a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death." As it was God's goodness and mercy that hardened Pharaoh's heart, so it was the love and humility of Jesus that hardened Judas' heart, and these principles are still at work, and may be witnessed in the harvest siftings today.— 2 Cor. 2: 16; Exod. 7:13.

After accomplishing the work of washing the feet of all, our Lord resumed his outer garment and reclined again at the supper (this was the Passover Supper— the Memorial Supper of bread and wine being instituted afterward). Our Lord now improved his opportunity and explained to them the meaning of what he had done. He pointed out to them that this menial service did not signify that he was not the Lord and Master, but signified that as Lord and Master he was not unwilling to serve the lesser members of Jehovah's family, and to minister to their comfort, even in the most menial service; and that they should not have been unwilling, but glad to render such service one to another.

The example which our Lord set was not so much in the kind of service (feet-washing) as in the fact of service. Nothing in this example, as we understand it, was in the nature of a ceremony to be performed by the Lord's people annually, weekly, monthly or at any other time; but the principle of his service constituted the *example*, and is to be observed amongst his followers at all times— they are to love one another and to serve one another, and to consider no service too menial to be performed for each other's comfort and good.

Those who have interpreted this to signify a ceremony similar to the symbolical ceremony of the Memorial Supper and the symbolical ceremony of Baptism, are, we think, in error. There seems to be nothing symbolical in it. It is merely an illustration of the principle of humility which is to attach to every affair of life. If any of the Lord's people need washing, or need any other

assistance of a menial character, their brethren should gladly and joyfully serve them; and whosoever possesses the spirit of the Lord will surely render such service; but to insist, as some do, that each of the Lord's people should first wash his own feet and have them clean, and then that each should wash one another's feet ceremoniously, is contrary to his *example* which he instructs us to follow. The example was a *service*, and not an inconvenience and ceremony.

Once a year, on the day before "Good Friday," the pope washes the feet of twelve aged paupers, who are brought from the streets and duly prepared by a preliminary washing in private. The pope's ceremonious washing is done in the presence of many notables. A similar ceremony is performed annually by Emperor Francis Joseph of Austro-Hungary. Neither of these ceremonies, however, is, to our understanding, according to our Lord's example, but contrary to it—likewise the ceremonious washing performed by some denominations of Christians.

All who are truly the Lord's followers should heed carefully and follow exactly the true example of the Master's spirit of meekness, humility and service to the members of his Body. The whole thought is

contained in his words, "The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things [if you appreciate these principles applicable to all the affairs of life], happy are ye if ye do them [if you live according to this rule, loving and serving one another]."— Vs. 16, 17.

Feelings of emulation, strife and vain-glory seem to specially beset those of the Lord's people who are possessed of any degree of talent or ability or honorable situation in life, and especially those who are in influential places in the Church. These, therefore, need to be specially on guard against these besetments of the flesh, remembering that, as some one has said, "There is a pride that looks *up* with envy, as well as a pride that looks *down* with scorn." The Lord's followers are to remember that pride in any person, in any station, respecting any matter, is highly reprehensible in God's sight and displeasing to him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble." Hence, all who would abide in the Lord's love have need to be very careful along this line—to keep very humble, very lowly in conduct, and particularly in mind.— Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5.

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Zion's Watch Tower; May 1, 1908; pages 132-135.

"IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE"

—**JOHN 14:1-14.**—

Golden Text:—"In my Father's house are many mansions."

AFTER the Lord had washed the disciples' feet, and had given the sop to Judas, who then went out, and he had told the disciples that they all would be offended that night because of him, and had answered Peter that he would deny his Lord 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 would go they could not come. How could they understand these matters and harmonize them?

“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN”

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 should 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

Figuratively speaking, heaven is God’s 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 at Calvary within a few hours. 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 should 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 a 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 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 the blessings which came forth upon all who accepted Jesus as their Redeemer were the result.

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 though we had been living for eighteen hundred years in expectancy: "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," and sufficient to each individual is his own share in the trials, polishings 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.

THE NEW WAY OF LIFE

"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, including his instructions and leading, had made them acquainted with the way to God, even though 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 there 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 the 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.

“GREATER WORKS SHALL YE DO”

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 some 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—none yet begotten of the Spirit, none 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 should understand, under the leading of the holy Spirit. It was in consequence of this that our Lord’s miracles were all physical, and that 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 understanding! 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 the 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.

Zion's Watch Tower; May 1, 1908; pages 135-139.

THE HOLY SPIRIT PROMISED

—**JOHN 16:4-15.**—

Golden Text:—"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 prehuman 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 ushered 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 *SCRIPTURE STUDIES*, Vol. V., Chap.

VIII.

“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!

* * * * *

“Holy Spirit, faithful guide
Ever near the Christian’s side,
Gently lead us by the hand
Pilgrims in a desert land.

Weary souls for aye rejoice,
While they hear that sweetest voice,
Whisper sweetly, Trav’ler come!
Follow Me, I’ll guide thee home.”

* * * * *

Zion’s Watch Tower; May 1, 1908; pages 139-143.

OUR LORD BETRAYED AND DENIED

—**JOHN 18:1-27.**—

Golden Text:—“Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men.”—Matt. 17:22.

TODAY’S lesson constitutes one of the saddest chapters in history. It reveals to us the depths of human ingratitude, selfishness, weakness, and fear to a remarkable degree. Nevertheless, it is a most helpful lesson to those who are in the right attitude of heart to receive it, because it warns against weaknesses more or less common to all and against dangers to which all are exposed. It emphasizes our Lord’s words to the twelve apostles, words which are applicable also to all of his followers—“Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” And in respect to the Apostle Peter’s experience and our Lord’s magnanimity in dealing with him, the lesson gives encouragement to others who, like Peter, have strayed from the right path unwisely.

To get the proper bearings of this lesson we go back to the early hours of the same evening when Jesus and his chosen twelve met to eat the Passover Supper. For three years our Lord had been training those twelve men, preparing them to be his representatives in the world, his mouthpieces to the Church. They had seen his power, known his teachings and

themselves had exercised the power of healing and casting out devils, his power operating through them. He had been on the alert to instruct them as to the need of humility; that they must become as little children, simple, earnest and obedient in order to be fitted for the Kingdom which they were called to share with him. On several occasions he had been obliged to call to their attention the necessity for meekness and humility, as he perceived the spirit of ambition and rivalry amongst them. On this last evening which he would spend with them in the flesh he had noted with regret that when assembling for the Passover Supper they had neglected the usual hospitalities of the time not only toward each other but also toward him, their Leader, their Master whom they professed to believe was the special Son of God, the Messiah. They had neglected to wash one another’s feet and his feet, a custom, almost a necessity to comfort in that dusty land, where sandals are worn instead of shoes.

“I, YOUR LORD—SERVANT OF ALL”

Forgetful of his own weight of care and sorrow, and anxious for the welfare of his followers, Jesus improved the opportunity to

teach them all a great lesson in humility. He took water in a basin and a towel and did the feet-washing, while the disciples, ashamed, confused, knew not what to say or do under the circumstances, except Peter, who protested that he could not thus have the Master act as his servant; but when Jesus explained that there was a symbolical meaning to the matter, Peter also was anxious for the washing. Lest they should fail to get the lesson, our Lord, after he had finished, explained it, saying, If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, have displayed humility and willingness to serve any of you in the most menial capacity, you surely ought to be willing to follow the same example with one another, and to perform the most menial service for one another, even to the extent of washing one another's feet, as opportunity may offer.

It was not long before this that Jesus, talking to the apostles, told them plainly that he would be delivered up to the authorities and that the disciples would all forsake him. This seemed a hard statement to the apostles; an intimation that Jesus lacked confidence in them, and it was the impulsive Peter who spoke up and declared that although all should deny the Lord and forsake him he would never do so. It was then that our Lord prophetically told him that before the second cock crowing at night he would deny his Master, and assured him that Satan desired to capture him, but that he was praying for him that his faith would not fail. Surely these statements were of value to the Apostle in his hour of temptation; surely they helped to put all the apostles on guard against what was to be expected.

“LORD, IS IT I? LORD, IS IT I?”

Proceeding further in his cautioning our Lord declared, “Verily I say unto you, one of you shall betray me!” What consternation must have prevailed! Could it be that amongst those who were so highly favored of the Lord and so long associated with him there could be one so base as to deny his Lord?

Let us not lose the force of this lesson; let us remember that the Lord's disciples down through the Gospel Age have been as the Apostle here declares of the twelve, “Men of like passions with you,” men from the common walks of life, neither above nor below the average standard of human imperfection! Let us remember that the

same Lord who cautioned those twelve respecting the trials coming upon them is still mindful of his Church, his flock, and we may suppose especially mindful of all who are in any prominent place of responsibility amongst the brethren. He still guards us, warns us, seeks to keep us from falling under the power of the Adversary. He still prays for his faithful, those who at heart are loyal to him, but who have weaknesses of the flesh which are liable to make their temptations more severe. As our Lord's interest in and efforts for the apostles increased as they neared the special hour of their temptation, so we may be sure that it is also with respect to his Church in general today, when the last members of his Body, the “feet of him,” are approaching the crucial hour, “The hour of temptation that cometh upon the whole world to try them.”— Rev. 3:10.

The Master does not speak to us in audible tones, as he did to those twelve, but has he not spoken to us with equal force and earnestness? Do not the words and actions of the Lord to those disciples come to us today with the same lesson and with as much force as they bore to them? Have we not, in addition to these examples and warnings, special declarations of the Scriptures respecting the end of the age? Did not our Lord, in the parable of the suitable and unsuitable fish, explain to us that in the end of this Gospel Age there would be a separation of those in the Gospel net? Does he not again in the parable of the wheat and tares tell us of the separation due to take place in the harvest time of this Gospel Age, when only the true and the ripe wheat will be gathered into the barn? Does he not through the Apostle forewarn us that in the end of the age perilous times shall come because men will be lovers of their own selves— selfish, ambitious— lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God? (2 Tim. 3:1, 2.) Does he not tell us that it would be at the time in the divine plan when God would send [permit] strong delusions, so that all might believe a lie who shall not have received the truth in the love of it and with zeal?— 2 Thess. 2:11.

“THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION THAT SHALL TRY”

Does he not also tell us that the temptations of this hour will be such as would, if it were possible, deceive the “very Elect,” but that in their case it will not be

possible because of their love, their zeal and the consequent blessings and privileges that divine favor will provide for them! And if to Peter special encouragement was given—"I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not"—have we not a full equivalent of this in the Scriptural assurance, "Lo, I am with you alway," "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in your weakness"? (Matt. 28:30; 2 Cor. 12:9.) Surely we have much advantage every way over the apostles in their trial, and this advantage is emphasized in the fact that their trial came upon them before their anointing with the holy Spirit, whereas our testings come to us at the time we are of the anointed Body. When we now look out into the future and hear the message, "The morning cometh, but a night also" (Isa. 21:12), we may well be forewarned as to what to expect in that short night of trouble which will affect the consecrated followers before it reaches the world in general. We must expect in this hour of trial that "a thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee"; yet we must remember that this promise is limited to the class specified, to those who have made the Lord, even the Most High, their refuge and habitation; for no evil can come nigh their dwelling place. (Psa. 91:7, 9.) Therefore, dearly beloved, putting on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in this evil day, we will need to watch unto prayer for ourselves and for those over whom the holy Spirit hath made us overseers, that we may feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with the blood of his own Son.—Acts 20:28, *Diaglott*.

As the eating of a meal together was a pledge of faithfulness, so for the Master to dip a special sop was a special mark of favor, and this was given to Judas at the supper to indicate the one who would betray the Lord. We can better imagine than describe how the apostles, in various tones, asked the Lord, "Is it I?" and how Judas likewise asked the same question! We can imagine the look of our Lord's eye as he gave him the sop, saying in action and look, Judas, why do you resist the loving kindnesses which I have bestowed upon you? You have professed to be my friend and disciple; I surely have done the part of a friend toward you. That glance and that sop should have overwhelmed the selfish Judas, but as the mercy of the Lord, in the taking away of the plagues from

Pharaoh had so much the more hardened Pharaoh's heart, so every additional manifestation of our Lord's humility and kindness seems to have had the effect of hardening the heart of Judas. In answer to our Lord's glance and sop Judas, so far from repenting, was more embittered, more determined to carry out his program. It shone in his eye; our Lord read his thoughts and answered in the words, "What thou doest, do quickly."

Let us not lose the lesson in its application and bearing upon the Lord's people of today. If any amongst the consecrated are cultivating selfishness and personal ambition, they are preparing themselves for such a termination as that of Judas. The influence of the spirit they are cultivating will lead them further and further from sympathy with the Lord's cause and the faithful brethren until, like Judas, they shall be ready to sell the truth for a little personal advantage. And when such a condition of heart has been reached by those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, no power will hinder them from going to the limit of their evil course. Their minds become so poisoned against the truth that the very sops of favor animate them the more toward evil. As in Judas' case we read that then Satan entered into him, so with a similar class here; we may expect the Adversary to get fuller power and control over them.

THE LESSONS OF GETHSEMANE

One would think that the impressive lessons of that night would have so filled the minds of the apostles and made them so alert that sleep would have been far from their eyes. But not so; they scarcely understood how to take the Master's words; he had said so many remarkable things which they did not comprehend; it seemed so incomprehensible that he who had come to be the Messiah and reign should be betrayed and crucified, and that they whom he had promised should sit with him in his throne should all forsake him and flee. Hence the repeated instruction that they should watch and pray made little impression. Even the three special friends of Jesus, the ones whom he made his special confidants and took with him to the Mount of Transfiguration on another special occasion without the others—even these three slumbered, except as from time to time

the Lord visited them and awakened them and they noted certain incidents which they recorded for us.

“LEST ANY ROOT OF BITTERNESS SPRING UP”

How is it now? The night of trouble nearing, the hour of trial that shall try all that dwell upon the face of the whole earth coming close, and with the many warnings of the Master through the Word that we should watch and pray lest we enter into temptation!— how is it with us? Alas! many of those who, like Peter, James and John, have been specially favored of the Lord, especially near to him, fail to realize the importance of the time in which we are living, fail to realize that the foretold temptations are about to come upon them and that, like Peter, they will be in great danger of being swept away, sifted out from amongst the Lord’s faithful.

We can imagine our Lord’s condition to some extent. His great hour of trial was upon him; he realized it to the full; it meant not only that his own faithfulness, past and present and on the day following, would decide respecting his loyalty to the Father and his right to obtain the high reward of glory, honor and immortality, but it meant additionally that the interests of the whole world of mankind were in the balance! Victory would mean eventually the deliverance of all the prisoners in bondage; to sin and death; failure would mean the loss of everything! Can we wonder that his soul was exceeding sorrowful, and that in his intensity of feeling bloody perspiration oozed from his pores? Ah, dear Master! Well was it written of him, “Of the people there was none with me.” Even his most intimate and most beloved disciples failed to appreciate the conditions and to render him the sympathetic aid which he craved. What would those disciples afterward not have given to have had back the opportunity of ministering to their Lord in his hour of trial! What a privilege they let slip! There is a lesson here for us also, for although the Master is not in the flesh and will suffer no more, some of his members are still in the flesh, some who must suffer with him if they would reign with him. Our sufferings are not all just like those of the Master, nor are they just the same with each of us; each has his own experiences to prove, to test, to fit, to polish him that he may be made meet for the Master’s use. Have we, each for the other, that sympathy, that yearning love

which would lead us to help one another and to bear one another’s burdens and thus to fulfil the Law of Christ, the Law of Love? or have we the Judas spirit to injure? or have we the spirit of slothful indifference and lack of appreciation which would lead us to slumber while the interests of others of the Body are at stake, while the brethren are suffering and are in trial? Our practical answer to these questions the Lord is looking for, and his love and his favor will be upon those who manifest most of his Spirit. To us much has been given, in that the hour of testing along these lines comes to us after we have received the anointing of the holy Spirit. Of us correspondingly more will be expected— “We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

AN ANGEL MINISTERED UNTO HIM

When our Lord in his agony prayed the Father, “If it be possible let this cup pass from me,” we are not to suppose that he meant the cup of death, for he had already explained to his disciples that this death was necessary, and that he had come into the world for this very purpose. What, then, was the cup which he asked might pass from him? We reply that quite probably he referred to the particular ignominy which would be associated with his crucifixion; which would attach to his execution as a blasphemer against God and between two thieves. Another Scripture gives us to understand that the severity of our Lord’s anguish was in respect to his own faithfulness, upon which depended his resurrection. If he failed in even one little item, one jot or tittle of the Law, his own life would have been condemned and forfeited as much as was Adam’s and as a result he would have had no resurrection and no future life, and the whole work, for which he had come into the world, would have been a failure. The Scripture we refer to says, “Who in the days of his flesh offered up strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from [out of] death. And he was heard in respect to the thing which he feared.” Although none of his disciples gathered around him to assure him that he had been without spot and blemish and that every act of his life had been in full conformity to the divine will, God more than made up to him such encouragement by sending specially an angel, who ministered unto him, who served him in respect to the thing which he feared, who therefore must

have given him assurance from the Father that he had been faithful, that he was approved.

On the strength of that assurance our Lord arose firm, calm, strong for all the coming events of that night and the next day up to the moment of his death. And so it should be with us: Properly there should be some anxiety in respect to the future; the Lord will not be pleased if we are careless as respects the matter of making our calling and election sure. We are to appreciate life, and particularly the life more abundant which has been promised to us if we prove faithful. We are so to appreciate this that our eyes will be toward the Lord for such ministrations of his love and favor as will give us assurance that we are still his and that the glorious hopes and promises are still ours. And his assurances or comfort may not come through earthly ministrations; the Lord himself will see to it that every member of his Body who is deeply earnest and anxious on the subject will have the proper witness of the Spirit, the proper testimony to his heart of his continued acceptance and faithfulness.

JESUS BETRAYED WITH A KISS

Treachery is universally despised and properly so, hence Satan, the traitor to God, and Judas, the traitor to our Lord Jesus, stand out prominently as representatives of that condition of mind and heart which should be shunned by all, the condition of heart which the Lord declares merits and shall have the Second Death, everlasting destruction. From the various Gospel records we find that Judas, leaving the company of the Lord and the eleven apostles, went again to the Chief Priests, with whom he had already been in conference. He finished the bargain and became the guide of a band of temple guards or temple policemen and their followers. These, armed with their clubs or maces, took with them lights needed for the searching of the foliage, although the moon was at its full. From the standpoint of the rulers the midnight hour was the most favorable because a large concourse of people then in Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover included many who knew Jesus and had been witnesses of his miracles and his arrest in day time might have led to a tumult. Our Lord probably went to the Garden because it belonged to a friend and because in the open his disciples would have a better opportunity for escape

from arrest; though it does not appear that there was any special endeavor to make an arrest, except that mentioned by Mark of a young man who followed with the crowd as they led Jesus away and who had on a long, loose garment, and when they laid hold upon it he fled from them naked. This is supposed to have been John Mark, the writer of the Gospel of Mark, and that he lived on the premises of which the Gethsemane Garden was a part.

Our Lord's agony, prayer and comforting at an end, he returned to the apostles, saying, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." Your opportunity for watching with me or speaking a word of comfort has passed; your opportunity for waking your own hearts and minds to prayer as a safeguard against coming trials and testings is past. Behold the band of those who will arrest me! A little ahead of the band came Judas, who indicated the Master by the traitorous kiss, which John, for very shame, did not record. Judas, finding his deception recognized as the Master said, "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" left him and joined the band who had come for his arrest, while Jesus, coming out of the cover into the open, said, "Whom seek ye?" After he had answered their reply, saying, "I am he, let these my friends go their way," we read that the men went backward and fell on the ground. This was doubtless the result of a power our Lord exercised upon them, the power by which he might have resisted them entirely had he so desired. What he did was sufficient to show them and his apostles that his surrender was not one of necessity, but that the Father's will might be done.

Awhile before Jesus had said that they should have some swords, and, finding that there were two, he said they were enough. The Apostle Peter was evidently the bearer of one of these and as the armed men approached the Lord, Peter used the sword and smote off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the High Priest. This incident was evidently of the Lord's intention to show that his surrender was not because of cowardice on the part of the disciples or himself. It also furnished the opportunity of healing an enemy by our Lord's touch and the opportunity of saying to Peter, "Put up thy sword; they that take to the sword shall perish by the sword"; in other words, My followers are not to fight with carnal

weapons, my Kingdom is not to be established in this manner.

Annas had been the High Priest for a number of years and had been followed in the office by several of his sons and now his son-in-law, Caiaphas, filled the position. Nevertheless, Annas in a certain sense was recognized and hence our Lord was first taken before him. Annas questioned him but did not attempt a judicial investigation. This was had before Caiaphas and apparently in another part of the palace of the High Priest.

It was apparently while our Lord was being examined by Annas that Peter, who warmed himself at the fire, was questioned three times respecting his identity with our Lord as one of his followers and three times he denied and directly the cock crowing began. Peter heard it, and our Lord, while being led from the presence of Annas to the judgment seat of Caiaphas, looked upon Peter. What a sermon there was in the glance toward Peter! He who had boasted of his courage that he never would deny the Lord

had failed. How much weaker he was than he had supposed! How the Lord's prophecy had come true, Before the second cock crowing thou shalt deny me thrice! He went out and wept bitterly, sick at heart and thoroughly ashamed of himself, resolving, no doubt, that he would be less boastful in the future and do more of the watching and praying which the Master had enjoined.

We know not how close parallels to some of these experiences may lie before some of the Lord's dear people now. But let us hope that if any of us should come so sadly short of our own hopes and privileges that the Master would not only pray for us, as he did for Peter, but that he would turn upon us also his glances of reproof, of chiding, and also such glances as would remind us of his sympathy and love that we might not be overwhelmed with our own sense of weakness and shame, but that our repentance, unlike that of Judas should be like that of Peter, sincere and acceptable to the Lord.

* * * * *

“He suffered much for me
More than I now can know,
Of bittr'st agony;
He drained the cup of woe;

He gave His life for me,
How grateful I should be!”

* * * * *

Zion's Watch Tower; May 1, 1905; pages 140-143.

AS A DECEIVER, YET TRUE

—**JOHN 18:28-40.**—

Golden Text:—“Everyone that is of the Truth heareth his voice.”

OUR LESSON relates to the trial of Jesus in the judgment hall of Pilate's palace. He stood before the representative of the greatest empire in the world, greatly disadvantaged yet remarkably calm and self-possessed. It was still early in the morning, probably eight o'clock or earlier. There had been no intermission of the strain upon Jesus' nerves from the time that he ate the Passover with his disciples, then washed their feet, then instituted the Memorial Supper as a symbol of his own death, the breaking of the bread of life to his followers. Then he bade Judas do whatever he intended to do, knowing full well the results. Then he talked to his disciples en

route to Gethsemane about the vine and the branches, and prayed for them as in John 17, and, reaching Gethsemane, was in an agony of prayer on his own account, anxious to be shown that his work had all been thoroughly and satisfactorily done to the Father's approval.

From the moment that he got that approval through the angel who ministered unto him, all was peace and calm. His arrest, the scattering of his disciples, the hearing before the High-priest's court, the raillery, the smiting, the pulling of the hair of his face, the spitting upon him, his being blindfolded and asked to prophesy who had struck him, all this ignominy he endured

patiently, and then, it being contrary to Jewish law to condemn a man in the night, his further trial was postponed until the members of the Sanhedrin could be called at daybreak to formally condemn him. Meantime his dear followers had all scattered like sheep, and the beloved Peter had denied him even with cursing before the cock crew. After passing through all these experiences, and probably without having been furnished with refreshments, it is remarkable that our Lord— weakened through his ministries and the giving out of his vitality in the healing of others— should have been so calm and strong as he stood before Pilate.

His enemies, the members of the Sanhedrin, and the High-priests, who had before determined that he should be put to death, with murder in their hearts had still a form of godliness, and would not enter the judgment hall because, according to their tradition, this would have constituted a defilement of their holiness. Alas, how deceitful the human heart can be! How much of murder and meanness can be covered with a garment of light, with a claim of religious purity, professing to be seeking to know and to do God's will. This which is so conspicuously illustrated in this lesson is observable in our day as well in many of the affairs of life. Hypocrisy seems to be a very general failing, and sometimes the falsity is hidden from the heart of the deceiver as it probably was in this case. We remember Peter's words subsequently respecting these very men: "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." The fact that great crimes may be committed in ignorance, and even with the thought of doing God service, should make all who are children of the light, all who are lovers of the truth and righteousness, to be very careful indeed to search their own hearts and motives earnestly lest they also should be of this class— self-deceived.

THAT THEY MIGHT EAT THE PASSOVER.

This expression has caused some confusion of thought. Jesus and his disciples ate the Passover Supper the evening before. Why, then, it is asked, should these fear to be contaminated lest they should thus be prevented from eating the Passover Supper, if it were in the past? We reply that their solicitation was in respect to the Passover Feast which would last the entire week, beginning that very day.

We must bear in mind when using this word Passover that it is applicable both to the Supper and to the Feast week which followed it, and that the Jews thought more of the Feast week, while we as Christians center our interests specially in the Passover Supper, or rather in the Memorial Supper instituted that evening to take the place of the Passover Supper for the Lord's followers throughout this Gospel age.

Our Lord frequently reproved the Jews along this very line of making clean the outside of the cup while inwardly it was filthy— of presenting a clean outward appearance as individuals and as a nation while at heart far from pure. On one occasion he reminded them that they would fast with great solemnity and outward show of restraint of appetite, whereas in their hearts they had that lack of love, that selfishness which would permit them to appropriate anything and to figuratively devour widows' houses. The Lord said nothing against outward ceremonies of cleanliness, purity and holiness, but declared that these would never take the place of the heart purity which in God's sight is all important.

When Pilate discerned that they would not enter the judgment hall he remembered their customs, and went to an outer court and had his official chair placed there. Much to their surprise he asked them to name their charges against the prisoner.

Evidently from his previous custom they had expected that Pilate would receive any culprit that they would bring to him, and be satisfied that if they had condemned one of their own nation he must be indeed a bad man and worthy of condemnation and execution at the hands of the Romans. Their surprise is indicated in their reply: "If he were not an evildoer we would not have delivered him up to thee"— Do you suppose, Pilate, that we would be willing to place in your hands as the representative of Roman authority any of our citizens of good repute?

TAKE YE HIM AND JUDGE HIM

Pilate's thrusting back the responsibility upon the Sanhedrin was very proper. The context shows us that he discerned that it was because of malice and envy that they were thus dealing with Jesus—that he was not an ordinary criminal, one whose liberty would in any wise be calculated to disturb the peace of the Roman empire.

The reply of the disappointed Jewish rulers was to the effect that they would have been willing, indeed, to attend to the whole matter, only that authority to put any man to death had been taken from them. The Jewish Talmud contains this statement: "Forty years before the destruction of the Temple the judgment of capital crimes was taken away from Israel." Supposing this to be a correct statement, it follows that in divine providence the power of the Jews to punish an offender with death had been taken away that very year in which our Lord was arraigned. This is the more remarkable when we remember that the Jews never crucified any one and that crucifixion was the legal and official method of putting to death under Roman law, and that prophecy long before had declared, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," and that our Lord himself prophesied his crucifixion, saying, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." This he said signifying what death he should die. (John 12: 32, 33.) Only by that taking of the authority away from the Jews that very year was the matter put in such a form that Jesus was not stoned to death, but was crucified.

The real charge against Jesus according to the Jewish trial was that he was a blasphemer, that he had declared himself to be the Son of God. The Jews never claimed to be sons of God; the highest station known amongst them was that occupied by Abraham, namely, a friend of God, and that occupied by Moses, namely, a servant of God, the prophets also being servants. Not until Christ came as the Head of the new house of sons were any recognized as sons. To this agree the words of the Apostle, "Moses verily was faithful as a servant over his house, but Christ as a son over his house, whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence of our faith and rejoicing firm unto the end." This charge of blasphemy under which our Lord was convicted before the Sanhedrin was punishable with stoning to death, but the power of putting to death being out of the hands of the Jews and in the hands of the Romans altered the whole matter and our Lord was crucified, was made a curse for us according to the forestatement of prophecy.

THE KING OF THE JEWS

Luke gives us other particulars respecting the trial (23: 2), informing us that the Jews brought their charges under three counts— all of them signifying treason against the Roman government. (1) Sedition. (2) Forbidding to give tribute to Caesar. (3) That he claimed himself to be an anointed king. Doubtless witnesses were produced to substantiate these charges.

No man could occupy the position which Pilate held without possessing some degree of mental acumen and thought. And though but a heathen and a sinful man Pilate quickly discerned the true status of the case before him, that it was a case of religious persecution, that the accusers were not interested in upholding the Roman government, and that the accused was not a menace to that government in any particular. After hearing the testimony Pilate entered again into the judgment hall to personally speak with the prisoner and to consider what he should do in the matter. Here all four of the evangelists agree that his first words to Jesus were, "Art thou the King of the Jews?"

This was a question which our Lord could not properly evade. He was the King of the Jews; he had left the heavenly glory to assume this very position; his coming had been heralded for centuries before and had constituted the basis of the divine promises and prophecies. He could not deny the fact now before Pilate; to have done so would have been to counteract and overthrow his own teachings and the very faith which he wished to establish according to the divine plan. At the same time it was due to Pilate, and to us all that he should plainly show by his answer that he was not seeking to wrest the government from Pilate and the Romans at this time. The answer was along this line— "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" or perhaps we might paraphrase the answer thus: "Are you asking this question from your own standpoint as a Roman, or are you asking from the standpoint of the hopes of the Jews as religionists?"

Pilate's retort was, "You are aware that I am not a Jew and do not enter sympathetically into the hopes of your nation. It is your own nation and the chief religious rulers of the same, over whom you might be esteemed to be a prince or king— it is these very men who have delivered you to

me, who have put you in my power, who want me to put you to death. What have you done to them? In what way have you so displeased them and angered them and aroused their fierce jealousy?"

Our Lord was calm and moderate, yet just to the point: "My Kingdom is not of this world," not a kingdom of the present order or arrangement. This was as much as was necessary to be told under the circumstances, as much as Pilate could have understood—more probably would have confused him. How brief and how wise was this answer! Our Lord proceeded to call Pilate's attention to the fact that his followers were not fighting for him, not seeking to establish his sway, his Kingdom authority by force; that if his Kingdom were thus to be established he would never have permitted himself to thus have been left at the mercy of his enemies; that his Kingdom was not from hence, was not yet due to come into power. In one of our Lord's parables he pointed out this very same lesson, saying, "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." He marks his Kingdom as beginning at his second advent.

Pilate evidently caught the thought, as is implied in his answer, "Art thou not a King, then?"—Do I understand you to mean that you are to be a King, but have not yet become a King, that your reign is in the distant future? Our Lord replied, Yes, you were right in your original assumption that I am a King. I was born a King, I came into the world for this very purpose of being a King, all my testimony is in line with this great truth; every one who is honest, everyone who is of the truth heareth my voice and is thus drawn to be my disciple or follower and to appreciate me as King. Others, however, are in the majority and do not recognize me now, and will not until the time shall come when I shall set up my Kingdom. Thus we paraphrase the record.

"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

Our Lord's reference to truth, sincerity, honesty, seemed to touch a tender spot in Pilate's conscience. Few worldly people respect since. Many would not try wish to lie or deceive egregiously or injuriously, but nevertheless deception is considered a part of the life and character and practice of every successful person in business and in

society. So, catching at our Lord's last statement, Pilate, as he turned on his heel to go back to the Jews, said, Yes, but who will tell us how closely that word truth or sincerity should be or could be applied in life's affairs?

It is well for the Lord's people to have clearly in mind that as the Master designated himself the Way, the Truth, the Life, so all who are truly his disciples must be of the Truth, must be sincere. It would appear that the Lord is during this Gospel age especially calling this class, the truth-hungry, the sincere, the honest-hearted, and that others are not apt to be much influenced by any of the hopes and promises now extended; but that even if such persons should now get a clue of the Truth they do not hold it long, not being at heart children of the Truth, children of the Light. How important, then, that we should be honest-hearted to begin with, sincere in all our words and thoughts and conduct; and while this honesty of word and deed should guide all of our relationships with the world, we should be doubly careful to have them measure our relationship to the Lord and to his people and to his Word! Only the sincere will ever be truly overcomers.

Poor Pilate, as he thought of his own disregard for sincerity in many of the prominent affairs of his life, and as he looked at the leaders and rulers of the Jewish nation, which claimed to be the most holy people in the world, feared that question of What is truth? What is it to be sincere? How true and how sincere should we be? These were questions beyond his depth, beyond his power to properly weigh, and apparently equally beyond the power of appreciation of the chiefest of the Jews. Jesus himself apparently was the only representative and exponent of the Truth—he was preaching a doctrine which evidently was too high above the heads of his own nation. We may see, however, that in the Lord's plan this preaching of the Truth is the means whereby the Lord would gather together a people for himself, his jewels during this Gospel age.

No wonder the Scriptures tell us that those whom the Lord is thus choosing along the lines of truth and sincerity are peculiar people, different from the majority, and no wonder either that they tell us that in all they will be but a little flock. Let us, dear readers, make every effort that by the grace

of God we may be amongst these very elect ones. Let us prize the Truth above riches or honor of men—yea, above life itself—so shall we be true disciples, followers of him who is the truth, and who prayed for us saying, “Sanctify them through thy Truth, Thy Word is Truth.

“I FIND NO FAULT IN HIM.”

In these words we have Pilate’s verdict—not guilty. According to Roman law this was the proper ending of the case. But the Jews, realizing now that after all their efforts their prey was about to escape from them, were angered and threatened Pilate, not too openly so as to taunt him, but in a very effective manner. Not long before they had accused him to the emperor, and now in covert language they threatened a further accusation, hinting that this time their charges would probably be very powerful in the estimation of the emperor. They intimated that their charge would be that Pilate was fostering sedition, that he was no friend to the emperor, Caesar, that they themselves were more loyal than he; that when they found a seditious person of their own nation raising a disturbance they freely brought him to Pilate, merely asking for his execution, and that the emperor’s representative was guilty of treason in refusing to execute one who claimed that he was the King of the Jews and was gathering to his standard many of the people all through the length and breadth of Palestine.

Pilate at once discerned that such a charge brought by such influential persons would be a serious matter in the eyes of the emperor; but, hearing of Galilee, he inquired if Jesus were by birth a Galilean, and receiving an affirmative answer he found a loophole and said, Then he belongs to Herod’s jurisdiction and I transfer the whole matter to Herod’s court; let him deal with him.— Luke 23: 5-12.

We remember how the Lord was maltreated by Herod and his soldiers, crowned with thorns, invested with a purple robe and returned to Pilate. It was in the meantime, probably, that Pilate’s wife told him of her dream respecting Jesus, and no doubt the governor was doubly perplexed when the prisoner was returned to his court in the gorgeous robe which made more prominent his real claims, and yet made even more ridiculous the pretensions of the Jewish priests and rulers that he was a

dangerous person, a menace to the government.

It occurred to Pilate that one way to appease the Jews—to let them feel that they had not been utterly defeated—would be to allow the supposition that he was justly condemned and then to let him be the prisoner usually respited at this season every year. He proposed this, but the rabble cried out for Barabbas, who was really a seditious person and a murderer, and probably the real ideal of many of those who were hounding Jesus at the instigation of the priests. It was then that Pilate asked “What, then, shall I do with Jesus?” and, instigated by the priests and Pharisees, the answer came, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

“VOX POPULI, VOX DEI.”

Alas, poor fallen human nature! How little it is to be relied upon! How untruthful is the proverb, “Vox populi, vox Dei”—The voice of the people is the voice of God. If we could suppose the world filled with perfect men and women, in the image and likeness of God and actuated by the spirit of holiness, then, indeed, we could suppose that the voice of the multitude would be the voice of God. But the very reverse is not infrequently the case; the voice of the people is often the voice of the demons who are deluding them, as the Apostle intimates, saying, “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.”

In accord with this thought, that the judgment of the world is not to be depended upon under present conditions, is our Lord’s suggestion to all of us, “Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, [blind, still servants of sin in fellowship instead of opposition to the principles of selfishness now prevailing] the world would love its own. But now ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world, that you should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruitage should be perpetual.” To us, then, the voice of Jesus is the voice of God, and only his sheep hear his voice and follow him. We are glad, however, to remember the assurances of the divine promise that ultimately all the families of the earth shall be blessed and brought to a knowledge of the Truth, released from the bondage of sin and Satan, who then will be placed under restraint. Meantime those who stand for the right must be content to be of the minority, but their faith will be strengthened by the

assurance that he that is for us is more than all that be against us. By and by, when the clouds of darkness of this present time shall have rolled away and the new Kingdom shall be in power, the Sun of Righteousness shall

shine forth, and the righteous shall be in the majority, and whosoever will not obey the laws of that empire shall be destroyed from amongst the people.— Acts 3: 23.

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Zion's Watch Tower, May 15, 1908, pages 149-154.

WHY OUR LORD WAS CRUCIFIED

—JOHN 19:17-42.—

Golden Text:—“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.”—1 Cor. 15:3.

ONE of the most remarkable facts of history is that the most intelligent people of the world, the most highly civilized, recognize as their Leader, their Prophet, Priest and King, one whom they admit was crucified as a malefactor nearly nineteen centuries ago! Still more remarkable is the fact that the doctrines promulgated in his name by his followers lay stress upon the fact that his crucifixion was a part of the divine program; more than this, that his crucifixion was necessary; that by the blood of the cross, by the death of the crucified One, atonement is effected for the sins of the Church and of the world— “He is the 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.) Indeed, by divine providence we see that the cross of Christ (not the pieces of wood, but the sacrifice made thereon and represented thereby) is the very center of the great salvation which God had prepared for our race before sin entered the world, foreknowing that it would come. The divine sentence was death, and this rested upon Adam and all his posterity. None of the condemned could redeem himself or his brother, hence the divine provision that the Logos should leave the heavenly condition and become a man, that he might redeem man.

The death of the man Christ Jesus in any form would have been a sufficiency to offset the original sentence; but God was pleased to test our dear Redeemer's loyalty to him by arranging that the death should be a peculiarly trying one, a disgraceful one, so that the loyalty of Jesus should thereby be the more particularly demonstrated, both to angels and to men; and so that the Father could be fully justified in rewarding him with the highest exaltation— far above angels, principalities, powers and every name that is named— that all men should honor the Son,

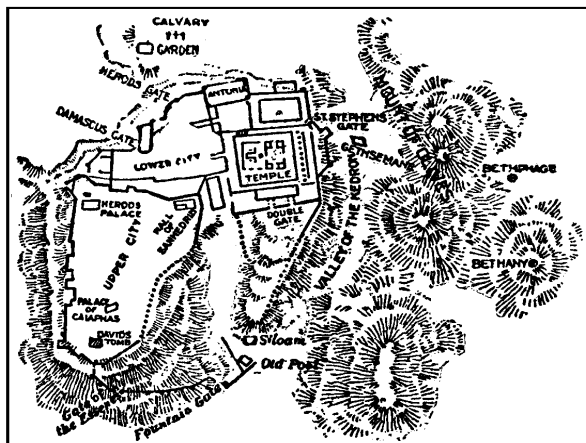
even as they honor the Father. It was for this reason, then, that the death of the cross was intimated in the Scriptures as being the most ignominious— “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” The Apostle implies this added ignominy of the cross in his account of how the Lord left the glory which he had with the Father, humbled himself, took upon himself the form of a servant and was found in fashion a man— “And being found in fashion a man he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him.” (Phil. 2:7-10.) So far, then, as our dear Redeemer himself was concerned, this disgrace of the cross, which would have been so trying to any noble son and particularly to the Perfect One, became to him a stepping stone to glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature. As for us, it certainly has already exalted our dear Redeemer in the estimation of all truly his and guided by the Word of the Lord. These glory in the Master's faith and obedience thus demonstrated to the last degree. We are aware, however, that the Higher Critics and Evolutionists have no sympathy with any such thought. Considering themselves wise they neglect the wisdom from above, which instructs us that only by this sacrifice of himself our Redeemer presented to the Father the ransom price for father Adam's life and for the lives of all his posterity, forfeited through his disobedience; and that only by this ransom could any of these attain to a resurrection and opportunity for eternal life in harmony with God.

“THEY CONDEMNED THE JUST ONE”

Our lesson does not include the trial of our Lord by the High Priest and the Sanhedrin, nor his presentation to Pilate's court, then at Herod's and his return to Pilate and the endeavors made by that Roman governor for his release. It was only when a riot was feared that Pilate consented

that Jesus should be crucified and gave the order therefor, at the same time washing his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am guiltless of the blood of this just person." It was then that the multitude cried out, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," and Jesus was led away for crucifixion.

Jerusalem has several times been destroyed and rebuilt since then, and the levels of some of the streets are quite different from what they then were; yet the Via Dolorosa, or the "sorrowful way," is still pointed out, and also a portion of the archway known as the Arch of Ecce Homo, reputed to have been the place where Pilate stood when, pleading for our Lord's release, he said to the rabid throng, "Behold the man!"—as though he would say, Do you really wish me to crucify such a noble sample of humanity and of your race? Look at him! decide now and finally on the subject! That these traditions are well founded is shown by the fact that in quite recent times excavation made for the foundation of a house on the supposed site of Pilate's palace revealed at a considerable depth an extensive portion of a mosaic pavement of fine work such as would have probably been connected with a palace and this identifies itself through the statement of John 9:13, which refers to the judgment seat as being in a place "called the Pavement." Herewith we publish a small diagram of the



JERUSALEM AND VICINITY

city, from which can be judged the route taken by our Lord and the Roman soldiers who were to crucify him while they went to the "place of a skull" called in the Hebrew language Golgotha, and in the Latin, Calvary. The supposed site is on a hill near Jerusalem, which in the distance has the general contour of a skull, with hollows corresponding to the eye-sockets. Modern

scholars are well agreed as to this site, which answers well to the general requirements of the Gospel narrative—outside the city walls, nigh to the city, in a conspicuous position, near a frequented thoroughfare, and still called by the Jews the "place of stoning." Christian tradition from the fifth century fixes this as the place of the stoning of Stephen.

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?"

It was a part of the custom of these crucifixions that the culprit must bear his own cross; and so we read that Jesus bore his until, faint from the nervous strain of the preceding twenty four hours, without sleep and probably with but little nourishment, and under great strain and exhausted from the beating, he sank under the weight of the cross. If on the one hand we think of the fact that he was perfect, we might suppose that he would have had more strength; but on the other hand we should remember that man in his perfection was not necessarily a giant in size or a Hercules in strength. Quite to the contrary; these abnormal conditions are the expressions, the results of imperfections. We may suppose that a perfect specimen of our race would combine the best qualities of mind and body represented in both the male and the female, and that delicacy, refinement and elegance with moderate strength should be nearer to our conception of perfection. Thus with fruits and vegetables; the largest fruits are frequently the coarsest; the perfect are neither over-sized and coarse-grained nor dwarfs. Our race seems to have left perfection to such a degree that the majority are either too delicate or too coarse. Furthermore, in our Lord's case we are to remember that he had been sacrificing his life for three and a half years; that vitality had been going out of him for the healing of all kinds of disease. This loss would tend to weaken him. In other words he had been dying for three and a half years and was now on his way to Calvary to finish the matter of surrendering his life in harmony with the Father's will.

Some of our Lord's disciples were onlookers (John, at least, was one), and truly they would have been glad to bear the cross for him. We must suppose that they were hindered from proffering their services by fear of being considered as interfering with the officers of the law. However, in the

emergency the soldiers found a countryman on the route whom they compelled to bear the cross after Jesus. This expression might have meant to walk after him, to relieve him of part of the load; or it might have meant for him to carry all the load while the Lord walked on before. But we do know that this enforced task upon Simon was a very precious privilege. How many of the Lord's followers since have almost envied him the opportunity enjoyed! Tradition says that Simon ultimately became a Christian, that his name was known to the Apostle John and also the part of the country whence he came. The mention of the names of his sons gives strong corroboration to the tradition.—Mark 15:22.

While sympathizing with our Lord and thinking how we should have enjoyed helping to bear his cross, we should not forget in this connection two privileges which he has provided for us. First, he tells us that if we would come after him as his disciples we may share with him in the bearing of the cross of this present time—“Whosoever will be my disciple let him take up his cross and follow me.” Then, after believing on the Lord, and being justified by faith, and having peace with God, and realizing the forgiveness of our sins, we are invited to make a full consecration of ourselves, to take up our cross—to cross our own wills and to do the will of the Lord, which is the will of the Father which sent him. Do we appreciate the privilege enough thus to take up our cross daily? Are we still bearing the cross? Is it our resolution that by the Lord's grace we will continue to bear it to the end of the journey, until like him we shall be able to say, “It is finished”—the work given us to do, the privilege of bearing witness to the Word of truth by word and by daily conduct?

The second way of crossbearing is to help others who, as members of the Body of Christ, are his representatives about us in the world. When we see any of these with crosses too heavy for them to bear, crosses under which they will likely sink or have already sunk, let us think of the Master and of how we coveted the privilege of helping him to bear his burdens, and let us hear his voice assuring us that what is done unto one of the least of his disciples in his name is done unto him. Oh, how many helpful words this would mean to many of the burdened and the weak of the Lord's Little Flock! Oh,

how many cups of kindness it would imply! How much it would bring of cheer and comfort to some of those whom the Lord recognizes as members of his Body! As one member of our body assists another member in distress, so in the Body of Christ. All the members are to bear one another up, strengthen one another, comfort one another, refresh one another, and generally to make one another ready for the glorious consummation of our hopes in the Kingdom.

A LOOK AT THE CRUCIFIED ONE

Numerous details connected with the crucifixion are enumerated. The time was the third hour, nine o'clock, according to Mark, but the sixth hour or noon according to John. The discrepancy is accounted for by the oriental lack of exactness; or Mark may have referred to the fact that the sentence was pronounced in the third hour, while John's record has to do with the time when our Lord was actually on the cross—after the slow journey, the fastening to the cross, and the making out and attaching the board indicating the charge against our Lord, “This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,” and then the subsequent raising of the cross with Jesus on it, all of which would occupy quite a considerable period of time, probably nearly or quite three hours.

The Jewish leaders were disappointed with the placard which appeared on the cross, indicating the crime for which the culprit had been executed. They protested about it, denying that Jesus was the King of the Jews. But the Governor refused to alter the matter; and doubtless he worded it especially as a rebuke to them, for he perceived that for envy, malice, they had delivered Jesus to him for death. He would now shame them. The multitudes could all read the inscription: for according to custom it was written in three languages, in Hebrew,—the language of the people; in Latin, the language of the government, and in Greek, the language of the educated of that time. Thus in spite of his enemies, the crucified Jesus was proclaimed the Messiah. Yet how strange! A crucified Messiah! How different are God's ways and means of accomplishing an object from man's ways! Truly, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways. Had Jesus not died, had he not redeemed us from sin, the most that he could have done as a ransomer would have been to assist man to more reasonable and better lives—

but not to eternal life, which had been forfeited through Adam and which could not be recovered except through a redemption. Under the divine plan, however, he who humbled himself to redeem the world is now highly exalted by the Father to his own right hand of power and dignity, and shortly, as the King of Israel and the King of all the world, he will reveal himself to the overthrow of wickedness, to the uplifting of righteousness, and to the assistance of the weak and the poor and the ignorant, for the blessing of all the families of the earth according to the promise.— Gen. 12:3.

Our Lord was made a companion of robbers. The two crucified with him, one at either side, were probably members of the band of Barabbas, and were probably considered by the people as more or less of heroes. At all events we are not informed that any jests or jibes were hurled at them by the people. Thus it must be with the Lord's followers to this day. We must remember that our Master and his cause are unpopular; that the learned and influential of the world will be opposed to us, as they were to him, and that this is according to his Word and to the principle upon which the divine plan is being worked out, namely, that if we would reign with him, we must also suffer with him. Crucifixion particulars are not given, and we may be glad of it, for the picture which suggests itself to the mind is horrible enough without any incidental details, and the fact that four writers recorded the main features of the execution, but gave none of the details of the crucifixion itself, is in full accord with the general treatment of such matters in the Bible so different from what would ordinarily be the course of a narrator. Ian MacLaren suggests:—

“There was no death so cruel as that of crucifixion, because the prisoner died not from loss of blood nor in a short space of time, but through the lingering agony of open wounds, the arrested circulation at the extremities, the tension of the nervous system, and the oppression of heart and brain. For five long hours Jesus endured this pain of torn nerves, of intense thirst and of racked body and throbbing brain!”

SEVEN WORDS FROM THE CROSS

It is not to be expected that anyone under such conditions would have much to say. It is quite probable, therefore, that the recorded words or messages of our Lord were

the only ones he uttered. These words represent faithfully some of the most important features of our Lord's character and teaching.

What is generally known as the first of these words from the cross is recorded in Luke 23:34. Then said Jesus, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” We have no doubt at all that our Lord's heart was full of a forgiving spirit, but for several reasons we doubt if he ever uttered these words: (1) They are not found in the Greek MSS., *Codex Vaticanus*, No. 1209 (fourth century), and *Codex Alexandrinus* (fifth century). (2) These words would not seem to be appropriate, for those who were guilty of our Lord's death were not repentant, and our understanding is that the Scriptures clearly indicate that repentance is necessary to forgiveness. (3) Those who were guilty of our Lord's death did not believe on him nor trust in his merit, and the clear teaching of the Scriptures is that forgiveness must be preceded by faith. (4) It is not recorded that they were of repentant and contrite hearts and that they had turned away from sin; and the clear teaching of the Scripture is that no one is forgiven unless in this attitude of repentance. (5) Our Lord had not yet finished the work of sacrifice, nor had he yet ascended to the Father and presented that sacrifice even on behalf of believers, and hence the Father would not be prepared to forgive the sin. (6) We have no evidence that the sin was forgiven, but every evidence that the prayer of the Jews themselves, “His blood be upon us and upon our children,” was answered in the time of trouble which came upon that nation, of which the Apostle says, “Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.”— 1 Thess. 2:16.

The reputed second word from the cross, “Verily I say unto you today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise,” is apparently authentic. It was the Lord's message to one of the robbers who confessed his sin and desired the Lord's favor and clemency when he would come into his Kingdom. Our Lord has not yet fully come into his Kingdom; hence the time has not yet come when the thief desired to be remembered. Notwithstanding the dark day and the apparent eclipse of our Lord's life and hopes, he assured the penitent one that he was able

* Note corrected punctuation . See DAWN-STUDIES, VOL .VI., p. 667

to answer his petition and would do so. The fulfillment of that request, as the Scriptures show, will come at our Lord's second advent, when he shall take his great power and reestablish Paradise in the earth, the Paradise which was lost on account of sin, but which was redeemed by the precious blood. Then the penitent thief will come forth; yea, the Scriptures tell us that all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth; and this call will include the other thief also. They will come forth to the favorable conditions of the Millennial Kingdom; but we may be sure that the penitent one will have an advantage over the other and a special reward, too, for ministering a word of comfort to our Redeemer in his dying hour.

"BEHOLD THY SON!" "BEHOLD THY MOTHER!"

Mary, our Lord's mother, and John, his beloved disciple, evidently were standing not far from the cross, doubtless weeping and surely sorrowing. But our Lord, so far from thinking of himself and his own anguish, was thinking of others. As during his ministry he had gone about doing good, so in his dying hour here he thought of the good, the welfare of others, and in the above words committed his mother to the care of the loving disciple. Beautiful is the lesson! How it shows us the largeness of our Lord's heart and sympathy, and how it teaches us not to be entirely engrossed with our own trials and difficulties, large and small, but rather to be burden-bearers of others, allowing our sympathies, our thoughts and our plans to be active for the blessing of all those who in any measure are under our care in matters temporal or spiritual!

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" These words are known as the fourth word or message from the cross. They mark to us the depth of our Lord's anguish. He was dying as the sinner's redemption price, as the substitute, in order that God might be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus, and that he might grant them in due time a resurrection from the dead and a return to the Father's favor and to eternal life— to all that was lost in Adam. To be our substitute he must in everything suffer all that we were doomed to suffer as sinners. This included not only his loss of life, but also his cutting off from all fellowship with the Father. A moment, as it were, would do; but there must come that moment of

darkness, of separation, and we may readily understand that this was the darkest moment in all of our Lord's experiences, still darker than Gethsemane, which was merely a foreshadowing of this experience. How glad we are that we can see the philosophy, the reason why this experience came to our Lord! And as we realize this, may it more and more fill our hearts with appreciation of the blessings which are ours through Christ; the privilege of return to the Father's fellowship and love, so that we can apply to ourselves the Master's words, "The Father himself loveth you." (John 16:27.) There is nothing in this dying word of our Lord that would suggest insincerity on his part, and surely nothing in it that would suggest the doctrine of the Trinity! It is in perfect keeping, however, with all that he said on the subject of his relationship to the Father.

The fifth word: "I thirst." This expression calls forcibly to mind several facts: (1) Exposed to the heat of the sun, with but slight covering and under nervous excitement and pain, thirst must have been one of the principal elements of torture to the crucified. (2) When we think of the fact that our Lord had been the active agent of Jehovah in the great work of creation of all things, including water, the Master's voluntary humiliation and resignation to thirst— yea, to die on behalf of the rebels of the realm— is a remarkable illustration of his love for mankind. This cry of thirst, we are told, was uttered when he knew that all things had been finished, when all of the work which had been given him to do had been accomplished— and not until then might he refer to his own condition. Even this cry was in fulfillment of the prediction of Psalm 69:21. Our Lord had refused the stupefying draught, but now accepted the refreshment given him from a sponge lifted to his lips on a reed, probably two and one-third feet long. As we think of this matter let us remember that our Lord hungered and thirsted that we, with all for whom he died, might have the water of life and the bread of life— might attain eternal life!

"IT IS FINISHED"

This sixth word was one of triumph. He had finished the work which the Father had given him to do; he had been loyal from first to last, self-sacrificing. He was glad, surely, that his earthly course was at an end, glad because it ended in victory and because this meant ultimately the blessing of the world of

mankind and their release from the power of sin and death and the Adversary. It might be said in this sense of the word that our Lord began his work when he left the heavenly courts and humbled himself to take the human nature; and that it progressed during the period of his attaining manhood's estate, thirty years: however, Scripturally considered, the work that was finished was the work of sacrifice which began at Jordan when he was baptized, when he made a full consecration of himself even unto death. Just before his crucifixion he had said, "I have a baptism to be accomplished and how am I straightened until it be finished." Three and a half years was the period of his baptism into death, and now the final moment had come—"It is finished ."

"Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." This is supposed to have been the last word, the last act of our Lord's earthly ministry, its finishing touch. How appropriate that he who had sought to do the Father's will at any cost should have absolute confidence that in his death his spirit of life would be in the Father's care and keeping, and that he should thus express himself! And this should be true of all who are his followers. Having resigned our all to the Lord we should so fully appropriate his gracious promises as to be without fear as we go down into death. Death in our Lord's case, however, must have meant far more than it could possibly mean to any of us. We not only have the Lord's assurance of a resurrection, but we have in our Lord's own case an illustration of the divine power. It was he who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead whose power will be exercised through him in bringing us forth to glory, honor and immortality. Our Lord was the forerunner; none before him had ever been raised from the dead, either to the perfection of human life or to the perfection of the divine nature.

BROKEN—HEARTED LITERALLY

St. Luke informs us that he cried with a loud voice, a testimony and witness to all that were near of his hope in God and in a resurrection. Some modern writers regard the cry as the utterance of one dying of a ruptured heart, the supposition being that this was the immediate cause of our Lord's death. It is admitted that there is such a thing as an actually broken heart. We might attribute the cause of this rupture to the ignominious circumstances surrounding our Lord's betrayal, denial, condemnation,

scourging and crucifixion: and no doubt all of these would tend to depress him in spirit. But in our judgment the primary cause of his heart rupture was the grief mentioned in the fourth cry, the withdrawal of divine fellowship, the loneliness which was his during his last hour.

The technical explanation of the reasons for supposing that our Lord died of a heart rupture is thus stated:—

"The bloody water that burst from Christ's side when pierced by the soldier's spear evidenced this. The blood exuding from the heart into the pericardium had separated into red clots and a water serum. Jesus died literally from a broken heart."

It does not surprise us that in the divine order nature is made to manifest a sympathy with our Lord by the peculiar darkness which came over the land at the time Jesus hung on the cross. One ancient MS., treating of the subject, says that "many went about with lamps, and the darkness lasted until Jesus was taken from the cross." A great earthquake is mentioned also as having taken place at this time, in connection with which the heavy curtain of the Temple, separating the Holy from the Most Holy, was torn from the top to the bottom, symbolizing thus, as the Apostle suggests, that the way into the Most Holy was now made manifest, made possible through the suffering and death of Christ. According to Mark, Joseph of Arimathea went "boldly" to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. From all accounts he must have been a noble character. Matthew says "he was a rich man"; Luke says, "a good man and a righteous . . . who was looking for the Kingdom of God"; Mark says he was a "counselor of honorable estate," that is, a member of the Sanhedrin. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of heaven," said Jesus. It is hard for them, because they have much more to overcome proportionately than if they were poor. Had this Joseph of Arimathea not been a rich man he probably would have been fully a follower of Jesus. We are pleased, however, to know that so many good things could be said about him, and that his courage and boldness increased, instead of diminishing under trial. May we not hope that ultimately he became a disciple and footstep follower in the fullest sense? Geike remarks respecting him:—

"It was no light matter Joseph had undertaken: for to take part in a burial at any time would defile him for seven days and make everything unclean which he touched (Num. 19:11); and to do so now involved a seclusion through the whole Passover week with all its holy observances and rejoicings."

How Joseph's natural, hewn tomb was honored by the Master's burial therein!

With pleasure we find Nicodemus, another wealthy and influential ruler of the Jews, associated with Joseph in caring for our Lord's body. We may be sure that these men received at the hands of the Lord special blessing because of the courage and zeal which they exhibited on this occasion. We may be sure that those who are so fearful as to hold back when opportunities are offered for service to the Lord are unlikely to be approved of the Master and unlikely, therefore, to gain the great reward which he is now offering to victors. To us the lesson in all this is to be bold for the right, for the truth, for the Lord, for the brethren— at any cost. Indeed, the more our courage and faithfulness to privilege and opportunity may cost us, the greater will be our reward, both in the present life and in that which is to come. This is the third mention we have of Nicodemus in connection with our Lord's ministry. First he visited Jesus by night, as recorded in John 3. Second, he cautiously interposed on Jesus' behalf when an attempt was made to seize the Lord, as recorded in John 7:44-52. And now, as some one suggests, he "improved a last opportunity for service with the bitter consolation of having failed where he might have done much." He was a rich man and brought an hundred Roman pounds (67 lbs. our weight) of myrrh, resin and pounded aloewood, aromatic and preservative, supposedly used by the Jews in wrapping up the dead. A lesson for us is that we should not be content with neutrality in connection with the truth and its service. We should be positive as far as possible; we should take our stand for righteousness and do with our might on behalf of the Lord's cause and the Lord's

brethren; while using wisdom and discretion, we should nevertheless be courageous. We should bring our flowers to cheer and comfort in life and not wait until death has prevented an appreciation of these.

Newman Hall suggests:—

"Golgotha ! There is a legend that it was the very center of the earth's surface, the middle point of the habitable globe. We think nothing of the legend, but very much of the truth which it suggests, for the cross of Christ is the true center of the Church where all believers meet, of all tribes and nations."

Another says:—

"How shall we dare, with the cross in our view, to lay out our lives for self-blessing and self-indulgence? How shall we make the possession of this world's honors, its wealth, or its favor or its high places, the main end and scope of our lives? taking no part in the sufferings of Christ, choosing ever the feast and never the fast?"

Phillips Brooks wrote:—

"You have your cross, my friend. There is paid in the duty which you do. But if in all your pain you know that God's love is becoming a dearer and a plainer truth to you, then you can triumph in every sacrifice. Your cross has won something of the glory and beauty of your Lord's. Rejoice and be glad, for you are crucified with Christ."

OUR GOLDEN TEXT

In closing this lesson let us remember the important truths of its Golden Text, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." He did not die because death was natural, because he was sinful like other men, nor to show us how to die; he died for our sins, because of our sins; because the penalty of our sins was a death penalty, and because we must be redeemed in order to have any future life on any plane. Hence:—

"In the cross of Christ we glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

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Zion's Watch Tower, May 15, 1908, pages 154-159.

"HE THAT LIVETH AND WAS DEAD"

—JOHN 20:1-18.—

Golden Text:—"I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive forevermore."—Rev. 1:18.

THERE is no more important lesson in connection with the Gospel than that of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. The death of Jesus indeed exhibits to us his love, and the love of the Father on our behalf. But in the divine plan, in order for the proper benefit to come to man from the death of Jesus, he must rise from the dead; he must become the Captain of our salvation, as well as our Ransomer. A dead Christ could not be our Savior; as it is declared, "Because I live ye shall live also." (John 14:19.) A proper appreciation of this subject assists materially in straightening out various theological kinks which have troubled the Lord's people for centuries.

(1) We must have the proper thought; that our Lord really died, that there was no sham about it, that he was not, as some erroneously suppose, more alive than ever while apparently dead. Our Golden Text expresses this thought in our Lord's own words, "I am he that liveth and was dead." He was dead in the same sense exactly that Adam was dead, for he died as Adam's substitute, to take his place under the divine sentence or curse of original sin, thus to make possible the release of Adam and all of his posterity from that sentence. As Jesus did not in death go to a place of eternal torment, neither did Adam go to a place of torment, nor was anything of the kind implied in the sentence upon him, all the creeds of Christendom to the contrary notwithstanding. Let God be true though it make every creed a lie!

"HE DESCENDED INTO HELL"

This expression is found in the so-called Apostles' Creed. It is in full accord with the statement of the Prophet David, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *sheol*" [the tomb, translated thirty-one times hell and thirty-one times grave and three times pit]. The Apostle Peter confirms the same, quoting the Psalmist's words in the Greek; he says, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hades*" [the grave, the tomb, the state of death]. And the same Apostle, speaking under the inspiration of Pentecost, on the subject of our Lord's resurrection tells us that the Prophet David spake not these words respecting himself, that they were not true of him, that his soul was left in *sheol*, in *hades*, and that his flesh did see corruption. St. Peter says of David, "His sepulchre is with us until this day." It would not be his sepulchre if he had risen. The Apostle says

these words were spoken of our Lord; that his soul, being, was not left in the tomb; that he was raised from the dead on the third day. There is no excuse for the confusion usually presented to the minds of inquirers on this subject by their teachers. The Scriptures are plain enough in their declaration that the Lord was dead, not alive. To prevent any misunderstanding they make very plain that not merely was our Lord's body dead, but his soul was dead; as we read, "He poured out his soul unto death," "He made his soul an offering for sin"; and again, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." (Isa. 53:10-12.) And again in the text above examined, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," in *sheol*, in *hades*, the tomb, the state of death. To suppose anything else than that our Lord was actually dead would be to suppose that Calvary was all a mockery, a farce, and that our Lord as a spirit being stepped out of the mortal body and deceived his executioners, allowing them to suppose that they killed him, while he was more alive than ever. Scriptural declarations are quite to the contrary of this, and we must stand fast by the Word of God to avoid confusion. During the "dark ages" the theory was foisted upon the Church that a man appearing to die did not do so, but became more alive than ever. Upon this false premise various delusive errors have been built—Spiritism, Theosophy, Purgatory, means for deliverance from Purgatory, praying for the dead, etc., etc.

All scholars are aware of the truth of what we here set forth, but few of them are willing to undertake to combat the error which has become so firmly lodged in the human mind, fearing the loss of influence, honor amongst men and salary. As an illustration of what we say we call attention to a pocket-card bearing the impress of the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1319 Walnut St., Philadelphia. This card has on the one side printed the ten commandments and on the other side the Apostles' Creed. It is in the latter, respecting Jesus, that we read, he "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead." Beside the word "hell" there is an asterisk referring to a footnote, which is herewith given: "*i e., continued in the state of the dead and under the power of death until the third day." This

shows conclusively that the Presbyterian Board of ministers recognize the fact that Jesus was dead and not alive during the period of his entombment. He was in neither a hell of suffering nor a heaven of bliss. He was dead, as he himself declared in our text. His resurrection was his coming to life— and again we are told that he was raised from the dead by the Father's power.— Acts 2:24, 32.

CEMETERIES—SLEEPING PLACES

Our common word cemetery signifies a sleeping place, and the thought thus conveyed is in full accord with the teachings of the Scriptures on the subject. They teach that the penalty of sin is death, and that death would have meant complete, absolute, perpetual destruction had it not been for God's mercy in providing for our redemption from that sentence and a resurrection from the dead through Jesus. And it is because of our faith in God's promise of a resurrection of the dead that we, in common with the Biblical writers, speak of death as a sleep. Thus, "Abraham slept with his fathers," all the prophets and kings "slept with their fathers," Stephen "fell on sleep" to await the awakening time in the resurrection morning, at the second coming of his Redeemer for the establishment of his Kingdom. Similarly the Apostle speaks of the dead in Christ being awakened in that glorious morning, and he even calls our attention to the fact that the whole world may be properly said to be "asleep in Jesus," because our Lord by his death redeemed the whole world of mankind and broke their death sentence and will in due time awaken them all in the resurrection morning. Hence the Apostle, in writing to the Church respecting their dead and dying friends, both in and out of Christ, says, We sorrow not as others who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died [on behalf of original sin on the whole race] and rose again [to be the deliverer of the race from the bonds of sin and death] let us believe also [the logical consequence] that those who sleep in Jesus [whose death through his merit has been changed to a sleep] will God bring from the dead by him. (1 Thess. 4:13, 14.) This is in harmony with the Father's arrangement that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust, and that this work shall be accomplished by the Lord Jesus, his honored representative.

The word cemetery, therefore, rightly understood, the sleeping place of the dead,

teaches a volume in itself to those who have the ears to hear. It is in full accord with the facts as we know them, and better still in full accord with the divine revelation that the "wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"—by a resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 6:23.) In this connection let us remember our Lord's words, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth," those who shall have passed their trial successfully unto life eternal, instantly perfected, while those who shall not have been approved will be brought forth that they may have the opportunity for rising up out of sin and death conditions by the judgments, chastenings and corrections of the Millennial Age. Our special attention for the moment is called to the word "graves" in this text. We have already seen that *sheol* in the Hebrew signifies the death state and that *hades* is its Greek equivalent, but the word here rendered "graves" is a different one, namely, *mnemeion*, which signifies "remembrance." The proper thought is that although our friends and neighbors of the world of mankind are passing to the tomb at the rate of 90,000 every day, nevertheless they are not blotted out of existence, but are still in divine "remembrance" and subjects of divine power and will eventually be released from the great prison-house of death by him who bought us all with his own precious blood.

RESURRECTION HOPES AND JOYS

It is in full accord with the Scriptural presentation that joy thrills our hearts as we come to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus and also as we think of the resurrection morning of the Millennial day and the promise that therein and thereby the Lord God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces, and there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things shall have passed away. But notwithstanding this natural, proper sentiment the resurrection does not hold its proper place in the minds of the majority of Christian people for the same reason that the second coming of Christ has lost its proper relationship to their faith. The fault lies in the fact that unconsciously another hope than that of the Bible has been instilled, a hope that men do not die but pass immediately into glory or immediately into anguish eternal. To those who thus

misread their Bibles the word resurrection can have but little real significance. To all such it is not only a needless and useless proposition but a very inconvenient one. They ask, "Why have a resurrection for those who have gone to heaven and who hope that its joys are eternal? Why have a resurrection for those who have passed into eternal torment? What is to be gained?" Very true, we answer! Under such conditions undoubtedly a resurrection would be of no value and would have no place, but those are not the conditions. The dead are dead; they have neither joy nor suffering while they sleep. They know nothing of the lapse of time; the awakening moment to each will be the next in consciousness to the one when they died. From this standpoint the resurrection is all important, without it there could be no future life or bliss. Hence the Apostle looked forward to the resurrection and pointed us forward to the same event for the culmination of our hopes— and our dear Redeemer indicated that the blessing of the world was dependent upon their hearing his voice and coming forth from the prison-house of death, the tomb, to hear the good tidings, to be judged or tested thereby as to their willingness to be obedient to their Creator. All who will obey the commands of the great King shall by his judgments then abroad in the earth be brought to perfection and life eternal, while those who will decline to be obedient at heart shall ultimately be destroyed in the Second Death.— Acts 3:23.

"BECOME THE FIRST—FRUITS"

The Apostle Paul found the spirit of the Greek philosophers intruding upon the teachings of the Gospel even in his day, so that in the Lord's providence it was proper for him to write a wonderful chapter (1 Cor. 15) fully setting forth the doctrine of the resurrection and what would be our fate without the resurrection. He says, If there be no resurrection of the dead, our hope is vain, our preaching vain, we are yet in our sins; and those who have already died are perished, and our fate will be the same. If God has provided no resurrection for the dead then our future is hopeless and we might as well eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.— Vs . 12-18.

The Apostle was writing to those who believed in the resurrection of Jesus, but who disbelieved in the necessity for their own resurrection, and so he adds, If the dead rise not then Christ did not rise, and if

Christ did not rise, the basis of all your hopes and faith drops out; and if Christ did rise from the dead you must logically believe that the resurrection of his followers will be like his. Indeed, as the Apostle again says, the resurrection of the Church is spoken of as being Christ's resurrection, having a share in Christ's resurrection; because in coming forth the Church will share the same kind of resurrection as our Lord, be like him— put to death in the flesh they will be quickened in spirit, sown in corruption they will be raised in incorruption, sown in weakness they will be raised in power, sown animal bodies they will be raised spiritual bodies. All who now are transferred from Adam to Christ and accepted of God as members of the Body of Christ, members of the Bride of Christ, have his new nature, are begotten of the Spirit and will in the resurrection be spirit beings like their Lord and Head. The remainder of mankind in the resurrection will be like their head, Adam. As is the heavenly one, such will they be who attain to his nature; as was the earthly one, such will they be who in this Gospel Age do not experience the begetting of the holy Spirit. As to the remainder of the natural seed, their resurrection will be to earthly conditions, a gradual uplifting to the full perfection of human nature, all that Adam had originally, plus experience.

If our Lord became the first-fruits of them that slept, did he not sleep? And do not the others sleep? And if he was awakened, raised from the dead by the Father's power, must not all be awakened and lifted up? A first-fruits implies after fruits. The Scriptures point out that the Church is included with the Lord as a part of the first-fruits, "a kind of first-fruits unto God of his creatures." (Jas. 1:18.) Thus the resurrection of the Christ began with the resurrection of our Lord and will be consummated with the change of the last member of the Church, which is his Body. "Christ, the firstfruits," will then be complete. But this will not consummate the divine plan, for it is God's intention to have the after-fruits, a great harvest, which will be gathered during the Millennial Age. To this the Apostle refers, saying, Afterwards they that are Christ's during his *parousia*. Our Lord's *parousia* will continue for a thousand years; he will be present in the world, present for the very purpose of ascertaining how many of the world, under favorable

conditions of knowledge and opportunity and assistance, will be glad to go up on the highway of holiness to perfection, to full recovery out of sin and death. That noble company will be the after-fruits of the divine plan. Earth as well as heaven will be filled with the glory of God when all evil doers shall have been cut off; and then every voice in heaven and earth shall be heard praising him that sitteth upon the throne and the Lamb for the grand consummation of the divine plan!

THE NARRATIVE OF OUR LESSON

Those who get the proper grasp of the importance of the resurrection of Jesus will perceive the necessity for the very explicit description thereof given us in the Gospels, because without faith in the resurrection of Jesus we must be without faith in the merit of his death, in the sufficiency of his sin-offering on our behalf and consequently uncertain in respect to our own resurrection, the salvation which shall be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1:13.) This accounts for the minuteness of detail. Moreover, not only is it to be remembered that the apostles and the five hundred brethren, converts to our Lord's teaching at the time, were natural men and needed such proofs as would appeal to the natural mind, but it should be remembered also that the message of our Lord's death and resurrection would go to natural men all the way down the Gospel Age and must be so plain and distinct as to be understood by all. After the apostles received the holy Spirit they understood matters connected with our Lord's death and resurrection which they did not understand before. It is similar with us; when we receive the holy Spirit we come to a deeper appreciation of the features of divine truth.

"PUT TO DEATH IN THE FLESH—QUICKENED IN SPIRIT"

Our Lord took our nature not with a view to keeping it to all eternity, but merely that he might be able to present the ransom-sacrifice on our behalf; that he might die as the man Christ Jesus for the man Adam and his posterity involved with him in his sin. The death of Jesus finished the work which he called to do, as his dying words show—"It is finished." There was no reason why he should be raised a human being, but every reason to the contrary. As a human being he would have been circumscribed in his power, talents, dignities, honors and thus

have been forever humiliated as the result of the great work which he accomplished in obedience to the Father's program. This would be quite the contrary of what the Apostle points out when he declares that God raised Jesus from the dead and highly exalted him far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. (Phil. 2:9; Eph. 2:21.) Most evidently, then, he does not now have a human nature, but, as the Scriptures declare, a divine nature, for the human nature, instead of being far above that of angels, is a "little lower than the angels."—Psa. 8:5.

So, then, our Lord was put to death in the flesh—not quickened or made alive or resurrected in the flesh—but as the Apostle declared, he was quickened, raised in spirit, a spirit being of the highest order, "changed" from mortal to immortal, because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."

TWO LESSONS WERE TAUGHT

We see, then, that two great lessons were to come to our Lord's followers: (1) That their Master was no longer dead but alive, risen from the dead; (2) that he was no longer the man Christ Jesus, but Jesus "changed," glorified. "Now the Lord is that spirit."—2 Cor. 3:17.

How could these two great and important lessons be taught to the disciples then and since, seeing, as our Lord says, that they were slow of hearing because they were natural men with natural minds, naturally disposed to think of things only upon the earthly, fleshly plane? The method adopted by our Lord was, first, to make very distinct to their natural sense the fact of his resurrection by the removal of his body from the tomb, by the vision of angels speaking of our Lord as risen, by the clothes and napkins lying in their places as though they had been laid aside by one awaking from sleep. To emphasize this lesson our Lord, although a spirit being, appeared to the disciples in bodies of flesh which on one or two occasions he permitted to be touched. But lest they should get the idea that he was still man, lest they should lose sight of the fact that he was a spirit being appearing as a man, as the angels had frequently done in the past, our Lord appeared in various forms, once as a gardener, once as a stranger traveling to Emmaus, once as a stranger on the shore of Galilee calling to the fishermen and directing them where to cast their nets, twice in the upper room, where he

demonstrated that he was not a man by coming into their midst while the doors were shut and, after a brief conversation, vanishing out of their sight while the door was still shut. In these various ways the Lord demonstrated the double lesson, and remained with his disciples forty days that these lessons might be well learned—first, that he was risen; secondly, that he was changed and was no longer the man Christ Jesus.

No wonder that the early Church, appreciating the value of our Lord's resurrection and the fact that they were no longer Jews under the Jewish Law, gradually changed the day specially set apart for divine worship from the seventh day to the first day of the week—but not with any law or command, simply of good will and of choice, since to the Christian every day is a Sabbath, a holy day in which he is not to do anything which would be wrong or displeasing to the Lord. The custom is a beautiful one and all who love the Lord and appreciate the value of his resurrection must esteem the first day of the week on that account. It was made sacred by our Lord's resurrection; it became, therefore, to his followers the day of hope.

Joining the various accounts of the resurrection morning we find (Mark 16:1) that Mary Magdalene, mentioned in our lesson, was one of the first at the sepulchre while it was yet dark; that with her were Mary, the mother of James and Salome, and (Luke 24:10) Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. On their way they had been wondering who would roll away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre that they might enter with their spices to complete the embalming work which was discontinued two evenings before because of the Jewish Sabbath then beginning. To their surprise the stone was already rolled away. They tarried awhile wondering, and then in the dim light they perceived that the Lord's body was not there. Perplexed by their further loss Mary hastened to the home of John, with whom Peter was lodging, and related these facts. The two apostles ran to the sepulchre. John, the younger, outrunning Peter, arrived there first. But by this time the other women had departed to communicate the news to the other disciples. Awestricken, John had stooped down and looked in, but Peter, on arrival, still more courageous, went in followed by

John. They found things as Mary had described them, the body gone, the linen cloths there. Troubled and perplexed they went their way. Although the indication is that they both believed, their belief was not that the Lord had risen, but that Mary's story was true, that his body had been removed, "for as yet they knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead."— V. 9.

Mary returned to the tomb filled with sorrow; she was weeping and saying in her heart, They might at least have left us the body of our Lord. She looked again into the sepulchre. Ah, now she saw something different. Two angels were present, who said, "Why weepest thou?" intimating that there was no cause for weeping and thus no doubt helping to prepare Mary for the next step of our Lord's revelation. A noise or perhaps a shadow called her attention backward and she saw a man who she supposed was the gardener and she appealed to him, Sir, if you have borne him hence tell me where you have laid him and I will see that you are not further troubled in the matter, for myself and his other friends will care for his remains. Then Jesus, who had hidden his identity by appearing in "another form," like a gardener, in different clothing from that which was parted amongst the soldiers, and different also from that in which he had been shrouded, revealed himself through the tone of his voice which she so well knew, uttering her name only. In a moment the truth flashed upon her mind and she cried, Rabboni, my Master, my Lord!

With us as with Mary sorrow sometimes fills our hearts and we see not the streams of joy and everlasting blessing which the Lord has for us; not until we hear his voice, his word, do we appreciate the truth. But all who know the Master truly know his voice, know his message, know his spirit, his disposition; as he himself expressed it, My sheep hear my voice and they follow me, they recognize not the voice of strangers.— John 3:5.

"I AM NOT YET ASCENDED"

In her ecstasy Mary was apparently about to grasp the Lord by the feet. Her thought evidently was, This is a vision, which will pass away and I will see my Lord no more; I will hold him tightly; where he is I must be. But Jesus taught her otherwise, and the lesson is a good one for us also. He would

have her remember that he had already said, "It is expedient for you that I go away." Why, then, should she detain him? Besides, she was not ready to go with him, she had lessons to learn, experiences were to still further develop her character, to fit and prepare her for the Kingdom blessings. He must go, she must stay. She must learn submission, confidence in him and have a realization that he is able to make all things work together for good to those who trust him. Our Lord gave Mary a message for the apostles, a service she could render him and them—and the intimation is that she should rather have been thinking of such a service instead of holding him by the feet; she should be exercising faith and accepting divine providence and hastening to spread the good tidings of his resurrection to others. The lesson for us is obvious. We, too, have heard of the death and resurrection of Jesus and additionally have learned of God's grace through him, and it is our privilege to carry the message to all of the brethren wherever they may be, to all who have the hearing ear.

Our Lord's declaration, I have not yet ascended to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God, emphasizes the fact that he went not to heaven when he died, but into the tomb, into the state of death. It emphasizes also the fact that he is our Elder Brother, our forerunner into the Father's presence and into the glories which God hath in reservation for all those that love him, that love him to the extent of willingness to follow in the footsteps of Jesus at any cost along the rugged narrow way.

"PREACHED TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON"

We refer to these words of the Apostle Peter because they are so generally misunderstood. Some suppose that our Lord went to Purgatory or to some other place of torment and delivered some discourses during the period of his death. Here we find the error respecting the meaning of life and death still further confusing; we ought to understand that when our Lord was dead he could not preach and that the dead of mankind could not hear; as the Scriptures declare, "In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave [*sheol*] who shall give thee thanks?" (Psa. 6:5.) "There is no work nor device nor knowledge in the grave [*sheol*] whither thou goest," whither all mankind go. (Eccl. 9:10.) What, then, is the signification of the words of St. Peter quoted above? We reply that he

is referring to those angels who sinned in the days of Noah—the fallen angels. They are the spirits in prison, under restraints, "chains of darkness," until the judgment of the great day. True, mankind in general are said to be in prison also; the tomb is the great prisonhouse to which our Lord referred, quoting Isaiah's prophecy and assuring us that ultimately he will open the prison-doors and bring forth the prisoners. Again he assures us that he has the key to this prison, the "key of death and of *hades*"—the tomb. But men are never referred to as spirits; angels are so referred to; they are spirit beings; man is not, he is a human or earthly being. True, we sometimes speak of the spirit of life, the power of life in man, but we do not speak of it as a thing that could be preached to; it merely refers to his vitality. Every spirit that can be preached to must be a spirit being and must be alive and not dead, in order to be able to receive the preaching.

With these points in mind it is very easy to see that the Apostle was referring to our Lord's preaching in a figurative sense in much the same way that we are in the habit of saying, "Actions speak louder than words." Our Lord's sermons to the fallen angels, the spirits in prison, restrained from liberty in the days of Noah, were along this line of action, not of words. When cast out by our Lord, some of these spirits who had obsessed humanity cried out, "We know thee who thou art!" They knew Jesus was the Logos, the Father's representative who had created them, they knew that he had left the glory of the Father and humbled himself to take the earthly nature instead; they knew that he had consecrated his human life to death as a sin-offering for mankind. In all this they beheld a wonderful lesson, yet we cannot suppose that they anymore than the apostles understood that our Lord would be raised from the dead. When, however, he was raised up by the Father's power on the third day and they beheld him again a spirit being of the highest order, it must have been a matter of astonishment and wonderment to them. It preached a lesson, namely, that obedience to God is profitable. It must have preached another lesson also, that God who punishes evil doers is sure to bless and reward all those who seek to do his will.

It was a sermon along still another line, namely: it taught the love of God, his compassion toward sinners, and it gave the

fallen angels room to reflect that if God had such compassion upon the poor, fallen human race, he might ultimately have as much compassion upon them and grant them some opportunity for escaping from the punishment which had come upon them for their sins. Theirs, indeed, was a different penalty from that upon man, but why might they not hope that the same God who was rich in mercy upon Adam and his race would have compassion also upon any of those who would have the heart desire to come back into harmony with him. It is our thought that this was a powerful sermon, and we shall not be surprised to find by and by that as a result of this sermon some of those fallen angels repented and did thereafter strive to live in harmony with the Father, hoping that some time divine mercy might be extended to them for their release and their restoration to fellowship with the holy angels. And this very hope is held out by the Apostle when he tells us that the Church shall judge not only the world of mankind but shall also judge angels. This means a judgment or trial time for the fallen angels, the holy angels needing no judging or trial.

IT IS SOWN—IT IS RAISED

Before leaving this subject we call attention to the words of the Apostle descriptive of the resurrection change of the Church. (1 Cor. 15:42, 43.) He says, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body." And since the Church's resurrection is really a share or part of Christ's resurrection, the First Resurrection, these words must also describe our Lord's

resurrection. The question we raise is, What is it that was sown and that was raised? We answer that it was our Lord's soul or being. When he was thirty years of age he was simply the perfect one, a man separate from sinners. But when he consecrated himself at baptism and was begotten of the holy Spirit he was then a New Creature in embryo. It was our Lord the New Creature who was the heir of all things, the High Priest whose privilege it was to sacrifice. He sacrificed his flesh, his earthly nature, which he covenanted to the Lord at his baptism. He finished the work of sacrificing at Calvary; for parts of three days he was dead, but when the resurrection moment came and the Father raised him up by his own power, he raised up not the sacrificed flesh but the New Creature, the "it" to which the Apostle refers, the "it" which was sown, buried in the flesh, in dishonor, with the wicked and the rich. It was raised the third day to glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature. In other words the New Creature was perfected by being given a new body. Thus seen all of the Lord's people, as was their Lord, are dual beings. They as New Creatures have a reckoned existence while their mortal bodies are reckoned dead. By and by when the mortal flesh is actually dead the New Creature will be perfected by being granted a new body, a resurrection body. Let us remember the Apostle's words and apply them to ourselves, I do count all things but loss and dross that I may win Christ . . . that I may know him and the power of his resurrection [sharing it], being made conformable to his death.— Phil. 3:8-10.

"If I in thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
 And shine a pure image of Thee,
 Then I shall be satisfied when I can break
 The fetters of flesh and be free."
 The arms of my Father encircle His child,
 O ! I shall be satisfied then."

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"MY LORD AND MY GOD"

—JOHN 20:19-31.—

Golden Text:—"Thomas answered and said unto him, my Lord and me God."— v. 28.

THE story of our Lord's resurrection never loses its interest to the Christian. With the cross and Pentecost and our Lord's second coming and the resurrection

of the Church, it is one of the most important events recorded in the Word of God. Whatever helps to impress it upon our minds assists in establishing in us the faith

once delivered unto the saints. Indeed we may say that if Christian people in general studied, understood and appreciated the resurrection of Jesus it would correct very many of the errors of theology received from the "dark ages" and it would protect them from other doctrinal errors of our day. Let the words of the apostles then sink deep into our hearts. If Christ be not risen your faith is vain and our preaching is vain, ye are yet in your sins (1 Cor. 15:17), and we who have espoused the cause of Christ are most wretchedly deceived. Whoever realizes the force of the Apostle's words and trusts to him as an inspired teacher, will assuredly not believe that the dead are alive, but that, as the Scriptures declare, their hope is that eventually they will be made alive by their resurrection from the dead. Connecting this lesson with the preceding one brings to our attention our Lord's manifestation to two of his disciples on the day of his resurrection as they were walking into the country to the home of one of them at Emmaus. The name of but none is given, Cleopas; the other has been variously suggested to have been Nathaniel or Peter, but nothing is known on the subject. The two travelers were talking as they walked, and of course the topic of their conversation was the great tragedy of three days before and the consequent disappointment of all the grand hopes they had built of sharing with Messiah in his Kingdom. What wonder that they were sad! It was at this juncture that Jesus, in another form, overtook them and in passing looked upon them saying, sympathetically, countrymen, wherefore so sad; is there any special trouble? Their reply was, Perhaps you are a stranger hereabouts and have not heard of the recent tragedy? Jesus, a just and true and noble character, was taken by our rulers and delivered over to the Roman authorities for crucifixion, because they were envious of him and of his growing influence with the people. It is a sad thing that such an occurrence should ever take place in this city of Jerusalem. Besides we and many others were witnesses of his good works and wonderful teachings and know that never man spake like this man. What wonder, then, that we are sad! Just as you came we were discussing a new feature of the matter; we have just heard that the tomb in which he was buried was robbed, but some of our friends declare that they saw at the sepulchre a vision of angels and received the

message that he had risen from the dead! Ah, Sir, we are living in strange times; we know not what to think of these things; we are perplexed!

"HE OPENED TO THEM THE SCRIPTURES"

To the surprise of these sorrowful men their fellow traveler was mighty in the Scriptures; he seemed to be sympathetic, to be a believer in Jesus and his Messiahship, but he had a remarkable way of presenting matters, explaining to them that they should not be sad, but on the contrary glad; that the very matters that were casting such a gloom over their lives were important features in the fulfillment of the divine program and in full accord with the teachings of Jesus and with the Scriptures. We may well suppose that he carried their minds backward and reminded them of the original promise made at the time of sin's first victory, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, but that it should mean the bruising of his heel. Thus the crushing of evil was pictured, and the fact that it would cost Messiah something of suffering was also implied, but that the suffering would be insignificant and the destruction of the Adversary would be ultimately complete.

We can also imagine his telling them about Abraham typifying the Father and Isaac typifying the Son, Messiah, and that Isaac's consecration to death, from which Abraham received him in a figure, was a typical fulfillment of the fact that Messiah must actually die and rise from the dead, and that this was illustrated in the various types of the Law, in the Passover lamb and also in the sin-offering of the Atonement Day. Coming down he doubtless mentioned Joseph as a type of Messiah and that his imprisonment, before he was exalted to association with Pharaoh in the government, was a type of Christ's imprisonment in death before his exaltation to be the Life Giver to the world and next to the Father in the Kingdom. Doubtless he reminded them also of the words of the Prophet Isaiah, "He shall be led as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep before his shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." We can think of many Scriptures which he doubtless quoted and thus brought to their attention, telling them that they had been slow of heart to believe all that God's Word contained on this subject, that they had believed the glorious features but had failed to give proper weight to the ignominious, sacrificial features of the

divine plan which were not less necessary, indeed were fundamental, the basis upon which the blessings should ultimately rest. He also assured them that it behooved the Son of man to suffer, that it was necessary for him to suffer as the redemption price of Adam and his race and that then he should rise from the dead to be their Deliverer.

The narrative does not tell with what amazement the two sorrowing disciples looked at their companion and wondered at his erudition and knowledge of the Scriptures, which was so much greater than their own, so much greater than that of the other apostles! No wonder that reaching their home they invited him to stay with them! He made as though he would go farther and undoubtedly would have done so had they not been anxious to have him stay; but they urged him, pleading that the day was far gone, that he could not accomplish much in the remaining hours and that they would like to have his fellowship.

KNOWN IN THE BREAKING OF BREAD

Soon they were seated at their simple evening meal, and without hesitation the wonderful stranger, who seemed to have such a grasp of the divine plan, was requested to ask a blessing upon the food. It was as he asked the blessing that they recognized his familiar tones and that it was none other than Jesus who could teach them as he had done—and simultaneously with this thought the stranger vanished. He had accomplished his purpose; why should he remain? His purpose was threefold: He would prepare their minds by pointing out to them the prophecies and the necessity for their fulfillment and their order for fulfillment; secondly, he would demonstrate to them not only his resurrection but also his change, that he was no longer the man Christ Jesus, but the same Jesus under new conditions, a spirit being, no longer limited in any respect; now he could appear and disappear at his convenience and in one form or in another form, as suited best his purposes, and in one garb or in another garb as would serve the occasion best. Thus to Mary he appeared as a gardener, to these two disciples as a traveler—but neither Mary nor these noted any print of nails in his feet or in his hands; although they were close to him, neither recognized his features nor his clothing—in fact, his raiment, as we remember, was divided amongst the Roman soldiers, and what he wore, therefore, must

have been specially provided for the occasion, just as the wine was provided at the Cana marriage by divine power, which is so incomprehensible to us.

“DID NOT OUR HEARTS BURN?”

When our Lord vanished the two disciples were thoroughly aroused. We can imagine the looks upon their faces, the earnestness of their motions and the beam of their eyes as they said to one another, “Did not our hearts burn within us by the way as he talked to us and opened to us the Scriptures?” Ah, yes! Joy had now taken the place of sorrow with them; his explanation of the prophecies which made their hearts burn at the time caused them to glow still more now that they knew the speaker, recognized him as their crucified and risen Lord. They hastened back to the city seven miles away. They were so full of enthusiasm that they could not be content to rest at home with their glorious message while they knew that other dear hearts were in perplexity. They had the true spirit of discipleship, the desire to tell the good tidings of great joy, whatever the cost, to those who had the ear to hear.

And are not our experiences similar to theirs notwithstanding the fact that centuries have since elapsed? Indeed, our condition is very similar to theirs in this respect. The false doctrines of the “dark ages” have cast a gloom and a sorrow and fear and disquiet over all Christian hearts. The story of the resurrection is still with us, but it has been made rather meaningless by the various false doctrines, as, for instance, that our Lord was the heavenly Father himself, that he did not die, could not die, else the Universe would have been without a Ruler, hence, that there is no real death, no real atonement for sin, but more or less of a deception practiced, a make-believe dying upon the cross while Christ as the Father permitted the deception to be worked. Surely thus our Lord has been taken away and we know not where they have laid him; and what is true of us is true of all of the Lord’s truly consecrated people. But now in this harvest time the Master is again present with his people. We are in his *parousia*, in the time of his presence in the end of the age, and those who have been watching and hearkening have heard the prophetic knock indicating the time of his presence, and have opened their hearts. Our hearts burn within us now as we come to understand better than in the past the great messages of God’s

Word, telling us of his love not only for the Church but also for the world, and of the redemption accomplished through the precious blood and of the salvation that shall be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in Kingdom glory; yea, and of a blessing also upon all the families of the earth which will be willing to receive the same into good and honest hearts. Do not our hearts burn within us as these prophecies of old open before us and we see their true significance? And shall not we like these disciples at Emmaus arise hastily and go to the brethren wherever they may be and tell them the blessed tidings of the Redeemer's presence, to help them to understand the riches of God's grace as outlined in his precious Word? Surely all who have the proper feeling have this missionary spirit and desire to do good to all men, especially those of the household of faith.— Gal. 6:10.

“HE BREATHED ON THEM”

Meantime Jesus, the spirit being, immediately transferred himself from Emmaus to the upper room where the disciples were assembled and the doors were fastened because they were fearing the Jews and also that the persecution which had come to the Lord might also extend to them. They were having their evening meal when our Lord, discarding the body and the clothing in which he had appeared to the two at Emmaus as a spirit being, came into their midst while the doors were shut, just as an angel could do. There he materialized, created for himself a body of flesh with clothing and in an instant stood before the disciples, who were terrified and were scarcely calmed by his familiar salutation, “Peace be unto you.” It was still the first day of the week, the day of his resurrection; we may be sure the disciples were discussing the great and momentous event and the news they had indirectly received of our Lord's resurrection. They were endeavoring to harmonize the various stories told by the women, wondering to what extent they had been deceived, etc. And now to hear the Master's own words saying, “Peace be unto you,”— what could it mean? It meant a confirmation of the story of the women that they had actually seen the Lord, that he really was no longer dead. Then the Master showed them the wounded side and lacerated feet and hands, and their fright was turned into joy. The perplexities were

not all gone; but they were getting the lesson that their Master was triumphant over death. Undoubtedly they were still perplexed at his appearing to them while the doors were shut; it would require a little time for them to learn that he was no longer the man Christ Jesus but the glorified Jesus, the spirit Jesus. They got a further lesson on this subject when a few moments later he vanished out of their sight, or, as some would say, dematerialized. The material body and clothing could not have gone through the walls while the doors were shut; a spirit being, however, is not limited by doors or locks or walls and our Lord, a spirit being, had used spirit powers and then additionally had created the body in which he then appeared, which was in still another form than that of a gardener, a stranger, a traveler to Emmaus.

Here our Lord took occasion to give his commission to the apostles, saying, “As the Father sent me, even so send I you.” I have done the work the Father gave me to do; I now appoint to you a great work, which you are to do in my name, even as I worked in my Father's name. Symbolically then, as conveying to them a lesson, Jesus breathed upon them and said, “Receive ye the holy Spirit.” He thus represented that he would put his Spirit, his disposition upon them which would enable them to carry out their commission, even as his own reception of the holy Spirit at the time of his baptism enabled him to carry out his consecration. What he did was rather a pantomime teaching; they must tarry at Jerusalem before they would really be endued with power from on high, before they would be endued with the holy Spirit. And why must they wait for Pentecost? Because the holy Spirit could come only upon those who were fully reconciled to the Father, and before they could be acceptable to the Father the great Redeemer must first ascend on high and appear in God's presence on their behalf and on behalf of all the household of faith to apply for them the merit of his sacrifice as a covering for all of their blemishes, that through him they might be acceptable to the Father and be permitted to receive the full adoption of the holy Spirit as the sons of God.

SINS REMITTED—SINS RETAINED

Addressing the apostles our Lord indicated the dignity of their complete representation of himself, saying,

“Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” This dignity, this honor, this privilege was not granted to all believers, but merely to the apostles. And it is not true that this authority descended from them to others, the clergy, nor that the power to forgive sins nor to fix the responsibility for sins is thus come to reside in those who are alleged to have been called by apostolic succession in the laying on of hands. The apostles had no such successors; there were only twelve and when one (Judas) lost his bishopric it was given to another, St. Paul. These twelve are represented in the symbols of Revelation as the twelve foundation stones of the New Jerusalem, and these alone were the apostles of the Lamb, specially privileged as such, and specially addressed in the above words.

It is right, therefore, that we should heed carefully the words of the twelve apostles as being a divine revelation in the most special sense, that we should note well what they tell us of such sins as are canceled by the merit of Christ’s sacrifice and which sins are not cancelable, but are sins unto death or sins for which a measure of stripes must be inflicted. In view of this how carefully we should study not only the words of the Master himself but also those of the apostles, to note the conditions upon which God is willing to accept all who come unto him through Christ and the conditions upon which sins may be forgiven.

But while it is not granted to any but the apostles thus to fix the limitations upon which sins are forgivable and which sins must be punished, it is the province of all those whom the Lord uses as his mouthpieces to make known these limitations to the Church and to point out to them the teachings of the apostles on these subjects. Thus it is our privilege today to explain to those who have hearing ears what are the conditions of justification by faith and reconciliation to the Father and what are the conditions leading to the Second Death—not on our own authority, not on our own account, but in the name of the Lord through his apostles, whose words we properly quote in substantiation.

“MY LORD AND MY GOD”

The Apostle Thomas was not with the others on that first Sunday evening that our Lord appeared in the upper room. It was

probably fortunate for many since that he was absent and that he was of that doubting disposition which led him to rebuke the others for having believed in the Lord’s resurrection upon too slight evidence. When they related to him the circumstances he declared, “Unless I put my finger in the prints of the nails and thrust my hand into his side I will not believe.” An entire week passed and there was no further manifestation of our Lord so far as the records show until the next first day of the week, probably again in the evening, the beginning of the eighth day from the time of our Lord’s resurrection. On this occasion all of the eleven apostles were present. The conditions were very similar to those of the week previous. Possibly they had been expecting all through the week to see our Lord and had been disappointed and when they were together a week later they hoped that this would be a favorable time for him to reveal himself. Thereafter the first day of the week was made an occasion for special meetings of the Lord’s followers in remembrance of his revelations of himself on the first and on the eighth days. Thus as the Jewish Law, providing for the seventh-day Sabbath, was recognized as ending with the Jewish dispensation, the Gospel Church, under the guidance of the holy Spirit and freed from the Law, nevertheless desired a special day in the week for rest and spiritual refreshment, and the choice for the first day became very pronounced. We must remember, however, that there is no stipulation of the first day of the week nor any other day as a Sabbath. As Christians we delight to have the Sabbath spirit, the spirit of consecration to the Lord every day, and we are glad that the first day of the week is so generally observed by the nominal Church and that thus the Lord’s Spiritual Israel can have the more favorable opportunity for fellowship with him and with each other on the day which most beautifully represents their hopes, the resurrection day, the day which marked the beginning of the new hope, new joy and a new dispensation of divine providence.

When our Lord appeared on this occasion he addressed Thomas particularly, showing that he had knowledge of what his disciples had discussed when they saw him not. Using Thomas’ own language he exhorted him to stretch hither his finger and put it into the print of the nails and to thrust his

hand into his side, and not be faithless but believing. The fact that Thomas was not too easily convinced gives us all the more assurance that the manifestations were unquestionably genuine and conclusive to those honorable men who bore witness thereto at the cost of their reputation, their influence, their lives—their all. We are not informed whether or not Thomas did put his finger into the nail prints and his hand into our Lord's side; it matters not, for at all events his mind was convinced.

Thomas' response is the Golden Text of this lesson, "My Lord and my God!" He recognized a divine power as indubitably attested by this manifestation; he knew therefore that the one in whose presence he stood was not only his Lord and Master Jesus, whose disciple he had become, but he recognized him as his God, as a mighty one, superior to all mankind, worthy to be called by the name God, which signifies "mighty

one." This would not, however, mean that Thomas supposed our Lord Jesus to be the heavenly Father. We are to remember that the word God is applied not only to the Father and to the Son but also to the holy angels and on one occasion to men, to the seventy elders of Israel, whom Moses appointed in the wilderness.

Nevertheless we delight to remember the testimony of the Word that all men should honor the Son as they honor the Father also. The word also signifies that there are two so far as personality is concerned, though they are one so far as purpose and plan are concerned, as our Lord declared. Thus our Lord testified that all of his followers are to become one, even as he and the Father are one—one in purpose, in intent, in will, in spirit. Thus we also properly recognize the Lord Jesus as our God, a mighty one, in harmony with and one with the Father.

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Zion's Watch Tower, June 1, 1908, pages 172-174.

"LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE?"

—JOHN 21:1-25.—

Golden Text:—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. 28:20.

QUITE a long interval elapsed between our Lord's appearance to the disciples on the eighth day (which was the sixth manifestation after his resurrection) and the one recorded in this lesson; it was about three weeks. During that interval we may be sure that our Lord was frequently with the apostles in spirit, watching over their interests. During that time the excitement incidental to his resurrection and six appearances within eight days wore off. Week after week they waited for further manifestations, and then concluded that something more practical should occupy their attention. Peter, because of his years and natural leadership, was the first to suggest a practical turn of affairs, saying, "I go a fishing"—I will return to the fishing business; what will you do? James and John, former partners with Peter, replied that they were of the same mind, and speedily the partnership was revived. They returned to Palestine and took possession of the ships and fishing tackle which they had abandoned three years before in obedience to the Master's call—"I will make you fishers of men." We can imagine the disappointment of those men; and yet as they looked back and thought of the blessings experienced during the three years of following

Jesus they must have felt glad as well as regretful; glad that they had been with the Master, and that they had had such a blessed season of cooperation, but regretful that the whole matter had evidently come to naught; that in the eyes of their neighbors and friends they had made fools of themselves, been deceived; they must have been grieved also because a return to the former occupation would be comparatively distasteful to them. Their first night's experience in the fishing business was calculated to disappoint them greatly; they toiled all night and caught nothing.

"JESUS STOOD ON THE SHORE"

With the morning dawn they were approaching the shore faint-hearted and discouraged, when a voice from the shore attracted their attention; some one calling for fish, they were obliged to reply that they had none. Then the stranger on the shore directed that the net be cast on the right side of the boat. They followed the suggestion of letting down the net again, when immediately it was full of large fish.

It was the loving John who first realized that the miracle implied that the stranger on the shore was the Lord, and he proclaimed his

conviction to Peter. The latter, a man of action, and doubtless still suffering at heart from his denial of the Lord, plunged into the sea and swam ashore, but evidently was timid when he reached the land and waited and helped to pull the net full of fish to the shore. When the three fishermen were landed and things made fast and safe, it was noticed that the stranger had a fire of coals and fish thereon, and he invited the weary ones to come and have breakfast with him. This they did. It is not probable that they ate in silence, yet their conversation is not recorded, except that none of the disciples felt at liberty to inquire if it were the Lord, knowing, confident that it was he. There is no indication that on this occasion our Lord appeared with marks in his hands or his feet or his side; everything implies that he appeared in still another form, and was thus giving them another lesson in the fact that he not only had risen from the dead but was wholly changed, and was now a spirit being, who could go and come like the wind and they could not tell whence he came or whither he went; he could appear in a form best suited to the occasion.

“SIMON, LOVEST THOU ME?”

Poor Peter was doubtless wishing for some favorable opportunity to make some amends for his denial of the Lord, when our Lord looked at him and addressed him not as Peter, a rock but as Simon, saying, “Lovest thou me more than these?” He may have meant, Do you love me more than these nets and boats and this fishing business? or he may have meant, Do you love me more than these other disciples? At least there was an opportunity for Peter to call to mind his own rather boastful expression of love for the Lord on the same night in which he denied him. He had said, “Lord, though all should forsake thee yet will not I.” Peter replied without making any comparison between himself and the others or the fishing implements, saying, “Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.” Our Lord used the word *agapao* for love, while Peter used a different word, *phileo*, supposed to signify a warm, personal affection. Upon this declaration our Lord replied, “Feed my lambs,” my little sheep. There was in this the suggestion of a partial restoration of Peter to the work of the ministry. Three years before, our Lord had taught the multitudes on the shore from Peter’s boat, and subsequently had performed the miracle of granting them a great draught of fishes, so great that the net broke. Following that incident, our Lord had said to Peter and James and John, “Follow me, and I will make

you fishers of men.” Now he gave them a similar miracle, and the net did not break, although 153 large fish were caught; and it was now, after this catch, that our Lord wished again to start the apostles as fishers of men under the auspices of the Gospel dispensation beginning with Pentecost, when they would be endued with power from on high. Although our Lord did not directly reprove Peter, he nevertheless impressed upon him the seriousness of his mistake and his denial, and intimated that thereby he had forfeited his place as one of the apostles. This new commission that he might feed the lambs of the flock indirectly implied that he might not be a full shepherd amongst the sheep. But our Lord again put the same question in the same form, and Peter replied in the same words. Jesus then extended the commission to him, saying, “Tend my sheep,” care for the sheep, serve the sheep. By these two parts of the commission Peter was authorized to feed the lambs, but merely to tend the sheep; he had not yet received the full liberties of shepherding. As Peter had denied the Lord three times, so our Lord questioned him the third time, this time, however, changing the word for love to *phileo*. Perhaps Peter recognized the analogy; in any event he was deeply grieved at this third questioning of his love and that our Lord used this time the word *phileo*. Peter’s reply was pathetic, “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.” With this third confession our Lord restored him fully as a bishop or shepherd, saying, “Feed my sheep.” He was authorized not only to feed the lambs and tend the sheep but finally to feed the sheep also. We are glad for Peter; and we admire our Lord’s course in adopting such a skillful method of reproof and his generosity in not reproofing more severely. Let us learn lessons from this grand exemplar! Are there any other lessons we may learn from our Lord’s words? Is it not well that we inquire each of his own heart whether or not we have a warm, deep, earnest love for the Lord, or if it is only a general love and admiration? We are to seek to cultivate that personal fellowship with the Master which will enable us to answer these questions affirmatively, and to assure him that we love him more than lands or houses, boats or nets, parents or children, husband or wife or self. As our heavenly Bridegroom he is worthy of our love, and if we do not feel this love toward him we are not of the kind fit for the Kingdom, not fit to be members of the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife. And

how shall we know, how shall we test our own hearts as to the degree of our love for the Lord? How will the Lord test us if not by permitting, trials and difficulties, oppositions, etc., to overtake us? As our Lord hid himself from the apostles for three weeks or more, yet was near them watching over them and ready to take advantage of the most favorable moment to impart the necessary lessons, so we may be sure that he watches over our interests to give us needed instruction and guidance—and if sometimes he hides his face behind a frowning providence it is with a view to our blessing or strengthening, to prepare us to appropriate some valuable lessons which will be helpful to us in our preparation for a place in the throne. Let us, then, rejoice even in tribulation, knowing what it is working out, and in such tribulation let us ask ourselves the question, How am I showing my Lord that I love him supremely?

As our Lord said to Peter upon the profession of his love that he might feed the lambs and tend and feed the sheep, so he says to all who are his followers. Not that we can have the honorable place of apostles in connection with the Lord's dear flock, but that each of us may find opportunities for tending and assisting, feeding, nourishing the flock of God, especially all whom the Lord's providences place in the Church as elders so that, as the Apostle Paul said of the elders at Ephesus, they may feed the flock of God over whom the Spirit has made them overseers, bishops, shepherds. (Acts 20:28.) It is proper, nevertheless, that each one for himself provide things decent and honest in the sight of all in a temporal way; it is also necessary and proper that each under-shepherd give attention to his own spiritual feeding and refreshment; but it is very important that the Master's commission in respect to the flock shall have a prominent place in our hearts, that we shall rightly esteem it a great privilege to feed and to tend the Lord's followers in his name and as far as possible in his spirit of self-denial, self-sacrifice, in loving service, laying down our lives for the sheep, as he did. Whoever is heedless of the sheep should not in any sense of the word be recognized as an Elder, a leader, and each dear Elder should be esteemed and chosen to the position by his brethren because of evidence of loving zeal and devotion to the cause of the great Shepherd and the flock, and not from any selfish or worldly reasons. The primary qualification of an Elder in the Church, an under-shepherd, must necessarily

be love for the Lord. All of the eloquence, all of the zeal might be hindrances and injurious to the flock's best interest, except as love for the great Shepherd would be the mainspring of action. And how may we know who has love for the Lord, and know of its measure? Our Lord tells us through the Apostle that if we love not our brethren whom we have seen we would be deceiving ourselves if we claim to love God, whom we have not seen. Hence love for our Lord must be expected to manifest itself in love for the brethren, and only those who manifest great love and sympathy, benevolence, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness for the dear flock, are to be considered faithful shepherds or worthy of eldership. The self-seeking, the ambitious are to be feared and not to be encouraged.

“WHAT SHALL THIS MAN DO?”

Following the questioning our Lord, still addressing the Apostle Peter, made a prophecy respecting him that he would live to be an old man, and that then he would be deprived of his liberties. This was not a very bright prospect to hold out before Peter; it meant a further testing of his loyalty. We are glad to know that the Apostle was not discouraged, and that he was faithful even unto death. The prophecy proved to Peter and to the other apostles present, that in the work in which they were to engage afresh they were not to expect Kingdom honors and blessings, but rather to remember the Lord's previous declaration that the servant is not above his Master, and that as men despitely used the Master the servants must expect nothing better. How nobly those chosen ones came up to the various tests and requirements placed upon them! There is a lesson for us, too, along the same lines, namely, that faithfulness to our Master will probably bring us tribulation of one kind or another. Hence we are not to seek our own wills or our own ways, but rather to look for and accept the Lord's providential guidance of our interests and to prefer this, knowing that he is able always to make all things work together for our good as New Creatures. John tells us that our Lord's words were understood to signify that Peter would die a violent death, and that in conclusion Jesus said, “Follow me,” note my example and copy it.

Peter evidently felt that the conversation was pivoted largely upon himself and sought to turn it a little, saying respecting John, whom he recognized as the Lord's favorite disciple, “Lord, what shall this man do?” What is your prediction and what will be your providence in

respect to John? Our Lord's reply was almost curt; it amounted to, Mind your own business and you will have plenty to do, though it was stated in a more polite form. Jesus said, "If I will that he tarry until I come,

WHAT IS THAT TO THEE? FOLLOW THOU ME"

This is a difficult lesson for all of the Lord's followers to learn, but a very important one. If we allow ourselves to look about us and to wonder why some fellow-disciple is not receiving apparently the same amount of chastisement or trials or difficulties or burdens that the Lord permits to come to us, and if then we permit ourselves to become judges of the Lord and his wisdom and his providences, the result will be disastrous to ourselves. It will destroy our peace and undermine our faith and hinder us from learning the lessons necessary to prepare us for the Kingdom. If such criticisms of divine providence at any time come to our minds, we should answer ourselves, promptly, in the language of our Lord to Peter, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." You are not competent to regulate these matters, nor is it proper nor necessary for the Master to explain to you all of his plans and purposes. It is far better for you that you learn faith, submission and trust. No two of us have the same natural disposition, no two of us, therefore, need the same disciplinary training at the hand of the Lord. We have confidence in his wisdom and love; let us manifest it, realizing that if our trials are greater our blessings will be proportionate, and as the Lord said to Paul, so he would say to each of us, "My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12:9.) With the Apostle let us say, If, therefore, the Lord's grace is proportionate to our trials let us receive with rejoicing all the trials he may send that we may have the more of his grace! It is for each sheep to know the Shepherd and to follow him, taking as straight paths for his feet as possible, and leaving with the Shepherd the general oversight of the flock and its interests, giving attention in proportion as the Lord through the brethren gives opportunity to assist in the shepherding work and in the name of the Lord to counsel or assist his dear flock.

"THAT HE TARRY TILL I COME"

Our Lord had clearly indicated that Peter would not tarry until his second coming, that he would die, and now, without saying that John would tarry until he should come, he merely said, If it should be my arrangement that he tarry till I come, would that interfere,

Peter, with your arrangements and my dealings with you as my follower? But the matter became a proverb amongst the Lord's followers that John would not die, and the fact is that he outlived all the other apostles. Yet he himself did not understand the Master's words to mean that he would not die, for he so calls our attention to the matter in this very lesson.

There is a sense in which John has tarried until the second coming of Christ, namely, in that he was made a representative of the whole Church in the book of Revelation. The things which happened to John are the things which have happened or will happen to the Church. The angel showed John— but in reality it was for the John class. John fell down to worship the angel, and was told not to do it, and this is in reality a lesson to the whole Church, that they are not to be worshipers of God's messengers who bear to them the divine Word of truth and grace. The John class is, therefore, still in the world representatively, and we trust that we are members of it; it has tarried until the second presence of the Lord.

Applying this lesson to ourselves further, we suggest that some of the dear friends seem disposed to query as to how long they must wait before the First Resurrection change shall come and which of them shall remain the longer, etc. Let us leave the entire matter to the Lord; we should be glad if our change should come soon, yet fully content if the Lord has further service for us and the change should be delayed. Those who experience the change the earlier will, of course, have in many respects the greater blessing for the time; but if the Lord has service for us on this side the veil let us be glad to do his will; let us be assured that he will grant sufficient grace for every experience of life.

"LO, I AM WITH THEE ALWAYS"

Our Lord's assurance that he would be with his followers until the end of the age was a consoling message. He did not tell us how long the age would last, nor all the trials and difficulties which would intervene between the time of his ascension and his return for the harvest work and the exaltation of his Church and the beginning of his Kingdom reign. It has been to our advantage that he left us in ignorance on this point; but we are assured, however, that in due time the wise shall understand; and again through the Apostle we are assured, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thess. 5:4), but "as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole

earth.” (Luke 21:35.) Our Lord indicated that at his second coming he would give such a knock as would arouse his faithful ones and lead to the trimming of their lamps, that they might know of the presence of the Bridegroom and be prepared to enter with him to the wedding festival. It is not intended that this prophetic knock should be heard by the world; it is intended only for the virgin class, wise and foolish.

Evidently our Lord did not intend that we should understand these words of the Golden Text to mean that he would be personally present in the world throughout the age. Rather we must understand him, in harmony with other statements, to the effect that the holy Spirit, the holy power of God, which came at Pentecost, was the representative of the Father and of the Son, the Spirit of both with the enlightening and instructing power, supervising all of our affairs and interests, expedient for us, beneficial to us. How glad we are that it is our great privilege to be living now in the time of the *parousia*, the presence of the Lord, and to have his special supervision in the same manner as when he was present with his disciples during those forty days before he

ascended. But we are not to expect any materialization or manifestation of our Lord's presence, such as was appropriate and indeed necessary at that time. We have seen that the necessity then was that the disciples should have convincing proof that our Lord was risen and that he was not any longer human but capable of appearing in various forms. No longer are these lessons needed, for we know he is a spirit being and is present with us in this harvest time supervising all the work of the harvest. Indeed, we have every reason to be on guard now against the manifestations of the Adversary, knowing from the Scriptures that the evil spirits, the fallen angels, will have considerable power in the way of materializing, and that it will be part of their deception to endeavor to ensnare and deceive us by impersonating the Lord and the holy ones as well as earthly friends. Let us not seek to walk by sight, but to be quite content to walk by faith, as our Lord desires us to do. The promise to us now is that we shall see him as he is— not as he was— because we shall be changed that we may be made like him. He will no longer change himself to appear as a man to us.

* * * * *

“I know that my Redeemer lives;
What joy the blest assurance gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my everlasting head!

He lives, and grants me daily strength;
Through Him I soon shall conquer death;
Then all His glories I'll declare,
That all the world His life may share.”
— (Hymns of Dawn, #111)

PRAISE YE THE LORD !