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Religious and Scientific Cleanings

"IN THE TIME OF THE END."

A little machine invented in Paris will, it is said, do away with all stenographers and typewriters. The author of a letter simply talks at a machine, the machine makes a record of the words through a thin cloth, which is mailed to the proper person, who puts it into a machine which grinds out the noises spoken into the other machine.

DEATH MEANS DEATH—NOT LIFE IN TORTURE.

Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, author of "In His Steps" and a clergyman of considerable prominence, is reported by the Christian Herald as having come at last to see the simplicity of the Bible's statement that "The Wages of Sin is death." The following is extracted from his discourse on the subject:

"I have come to believe myself in the probable annihilation of those who never respond to God's offer of forgiveness, those who never believe in Christ and take Him as their Savior. It seems probable that the Bible teaches that the word 'Death,' as applied to the soul that always refuses to repent, is a death that means total extinction. . . . I cannot interpret the use of such a text as we have to-day to mean anything less than that 'the wages of sin is death.' What do these words mean, if not plainly what they say?—the extinction of life, the utter going out of the flame that was meant to ascend higher and brighter and purer on the altar of man's worship of his Creator and Redeemer."

ERASING THE STAIN AGAINST THE HOLY NAME.

Religion is either the most important thing in life or a stupendous fraud. Anything, therefore, which throws a ray of light on the subject is worth the attention of all.

We notice that Dr. Samuel Carter of the Presbyterian church has been saying things, to-wit:

"The Westminster confession presents for the worship and allegiance of men a God who for the pleasure of His will assigned the millions of the human race to endless torment before they were born or had done good or ill.

"Readers of Lorna Doone remember how the robber Doones of Bagworthy looted a farmer's cottage and found a little babe in a cradle. One of them called to his comrade to have a game with him. He tossed the infant to the other, who caught it upon the point of his pike.

"We call these men fiends, but they were bright angels in comparison with a God who could send millions of infants to eternal torments. Every fiber of my moral being rises up against this God-dishonoring theology; with the utmost fervor of my soul I reject this God of the Confession, and as fully as I reject this God so gladly do I receive the God of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—the Father in the great parable who runs forth to meet his wretched, but repenting son, falls upon his neck and kisses him."

Dr. Carter, being a Presbyterian, should know his own ground in reference to the Confession. All will not agree with him; but one thing is certain, there is great unrest in many matters of creed nowadays, and outbursts like Dr. Carter's are becoming increasingly frequent. It seems to be true, also, that the churches are not reaching, at least not directly, the great majority of the people. The matter, as Dr. Carter puts it, has an ugly and revolting sound. Not many people will find it in their hearts to believe, we think, in this fearful claim of the older theology.—Dayton (O.) Herald.

[THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY heartily endorses the foregoing, and would add that it is publishing millions of pages monthly in its efforts to erase the stain placed upon the Holy Name by all the creeds of Christendom.]

THE REBEL SATAN DOOMED TO DEATH!

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—1 PETER 5:6.

THE Bible everywhere holds up the Lord Jesus Christ as the glorious Pattern of what is most pleasing to the Heavenly Father, a Pattern therefore to be copied by all who would abide in God's favor. There are certain steps necessary before any can come into the favor of God, and properly be called His children, or said to be under His supervision and care, or be permitted to address Him in prayer, or to consider themselves heirs of His favors and blessings. This is made very clear by the Apostles and also by Jesus Himself. The Apostles declare the necessity of an Advocate with the Father before any can approach Him, come into His presence or receive any favor from Him. Jesus expressed this same thought, saying, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."

As a matter of fact, therefore, a comparatively small proportion of humanity have any of God's favors at the present time. But we rejoice in the breadth of the Message, which assures us that in God's "due time" all shall be brought to a knowledge of Messiah, and privileged through Him to enjoy the gift of God—everlasting life. But what is coming and what is here now are two different matters. No one has authority to make the Narrow Way a Broad Way, nor to say that many will find it when the Scriptures declare, "Few there be that find it." Our consolation is that this Narrow Way leads to special glory, honor, immortality and the Divine Nature, and will develop a special, Elect class. Then subsequently, this select class will be used of the Lord in blessing the non-elect many with a great, but inferior blessing.

Our text relates not to the world in general, but merely to the consecrated few who during this Age hear the invitation, accept it, and become foot-step followers of Jesus. These have their sins forgiven as a result of faith in the precious blood of Christ and of consecration to do the will of God. These, then, have the Redeemer as their Advocate with the Father, and are accepted in the Beloved as His brethren.

These are the prospective members of the Bride of Christ, who by the Lord's grace may now suffer with their Redeemer in cross-bearing, and by and by share with Him His glorious Kingdom. These are begotten of the Father through the Holy Spirit, and thus become New Creatures in Christ. No longer are they to be classed as members of the human family, but as spiritual sons of God, of a new order, higher than the angels, but not yet perfected. Their perfecting cannot take place until their probationary trial shall have ended, and it will not end until death. In the glorious First Resurrection, therefore, these will be perfect, as sons of God on the Divine plane, associates and joint-heirs with their Lord and Redeemer.

To These Our Text Applies.

These are exhorted to come with boldness to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need. These, and only these, may know that their prayers are always heard. As Jesus said, "Their messengers do always have access to My Father's presence." (Matthew 18:10.) The exhortations of the Apostle are to these alone—not to the world.

In our context the Apostle holds up the Lord Jesus as the great Pattern of humility, the example for all of His followers, admonishing that they should walk in His steps, if they would have the Divine favor that He enjoys and attain with Him to joint-heirship in His glorious Kingdom. He was rich, yet in obedience to the Father's will He laid aside the riches of His Heavenly estate, and became poor—not merely appeared poor. He laid aside, or divested Himself of

His spirit condition and glory, and took instead human conditions.

From being above the angels, He of His own volition took a nature and place "a little lower than the angels." And He did this, knowing it was only a preliminary step. He knew that the particular steps of self-denial and suffering were to follow. He humbled Himself to become a man, because a man—Adam—had sinned, and through him a race had come under sentence of death, and could not extricate itself. Only an uncondemned man could redeem the condemned one. For this purpose Jesus left His glory, and "was found in fashion as a man."

The Logos did not become a sinful man, a blemished or imperfect man. On the contrary, He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." Otherwise, He could not have been the Redeemer. Being sinless, however, this perfect One would suffer all the more from the shame and ignominy connected with the mission He undertook.

As it was not a babe, but a man, that had sinned and was to be redeemed, therefore Jesus needed to wait until He reached manhood's estate—thirty years—before He could begin His ministry. Promptly at thirty He made His consecration, and symbolized it by water immersion at Jordan. Then He went forth, declaring the Message which He knew would be misunderstood—the Message of God's Love, the Message that there must be a sacrifice for sin, the Message that He was the Sin-Offering, the Message that as a result of that Sin-Offering, blessed fruitage afterward would come, in the Messianic Kingdom, which would bless all the families of the earth.

As He foreknew, mankind, even the best prepared—the Jewish people—were not ready for the Message. Thus, as He foresaw and as the Scriptures foretold, they crucified Him—ignorantly—for as St. Paul declares, "Had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Corinthians 2:8.) St. Paul reminds us that we should consider Christ's undeservedness of persecution, lest we should be "weary and faint in our minds." Similar experiences must to some extent come upon us. And if He who was perfect endured patiently, we who are imperfect may well exercise great patience. And so in our text the exhortation is that we perceive how Jesus humbled Himself, and that we should think it a great privilege and pleasure similarly to experience humiliations for righteousness' sake.

The Rewards of Humility and Loyalty

No doubt the Logos, "the Beginning of the Creation of God," the "First-born of every creature," the one by whom all things were made, had such loyalty to the Father that He would have been obedient, even had no reward been attached to the invitation given Him. But, on the other hand, it would not have been consistent with kindness, love or justice for the Father to demand of His Son such a sacrifice. Justice can make no such demand. And if Love makes such a suggestion, it should properly back up the suggestion with some promise of special favor or blessing. According to the Apostle, God did just this. He informed His Son that He would appreciate such a sacrifice, and set before Him a joy, a hope.

The Apostle does not explain the details of that hope, but we may infer them: (1) The joy of the Father's blessing in a superlative sense. (2) The joy of bringing many sons of God to the plane of glory as His Bride class. (3) The joy of rescuing the world of mankind from sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, death and of uplifting, or resurrecting all the willing and obedient of the race to human perfection, and all that was

lost by Adam. (4) An exaltation to a still higher station than that which He had left. He would be made partaker of the Divine nature, far above angels, principalities and powers, and above His own previous high station as the Only Begotten of the Father, the Logos—the Word.—John 1:1-3.

Here we are, with the Apostle's words and the full scope of his inspired testimony before us. He tells us that if we desire to be of the glorious Class of more than conquerors, who will be honored by the Redeemer, we must humble ourselves to the doing of the Divine will to the best of our ability, as our Redeemer humbled Himself to do the Father's will perfectly. Not that the Father will accept anything less than perfection, but that our Redeemer will make up to us by the imputation of His righteousness all that which we lack through our share in Adam's fall and its consequence. In other words, if we have the same loyalty of heart that the Master had, we will do what we can, and in so doing shall be acceptable to the Father, through the Son, who has "tasted death for every man," who gave Himself for all.

Satan's Course in Contrast.

Notice, now, the contrast between Satan's course and that of the Lord Jesus. Satan took the opposite course from that which the Redeemer took. Instead of humbling himself, willing to do everything that would be pleasing to the Father, he was proud, haughty, and sought to exalt himself. Lucifer was rich before his rebellion, before he became Satan, the adversary of God. Yet he was not so rich, had not so high a station, as the Logos, who was the very chief of all of God's creation, through whom the Divine energy operated in the creation of all things that were made.

Mark well the course of pride, that led to Satan's sin, and will ultimately lead to his degradation and destruction. Mark well also the course of Jesus, as it led Him through obedience to humiliation, and then to the highest glory. Which example shall we follow? Which fate will be ours? Shall we in humility walk in the footsteps of our Redeemer, and become His joint-heirs in His glory, honor and immortality? or shall we take the other course of pride, and thus become disciples of the Adversary, and learn of him, and reach his doom—destruction in the Second Death?

The Apostle intimates that God tests us upon certain general lines, general principles operating His Government: "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased." It would be folly to permit the seeds of pride or personal ambition to take root in our hearts. Let us be diligently on the outlook to eradicate everything of the kind, and be close students of our Master, copying His course.

There is a reason behind every Divine command and regulation. Men may make arbitrary rules and conditions without justifiable cause, but we may be sure that the great Creator has a good reason for His every act and requirement. In the present case, we can readily discern the necessity for the Divine requirement of humility. The Lord Jesus and His Church are invited by the great Jehovah to the very highest position in the Universe, next to Himself. Such an exaltation would be dangerous to any one possessed of a spirit of pride or selfish ambition. Who can tell at what time the smoldering fire might break into a blaze and cause confusion and disorder?

Consider Satan's case. What might have been the result had he been entrusted with so high a position as that now occupied by the glorified Jesus? There would have been genuine rebellion in Heaven of the kind Milton so foolishly imagined. How we can see the wisdom of the Almighty in testing those whom He would exalt to His own Divine nature! Even His well-beloved Son was required to demonstrate His faithfulness and loyalty unto death—"even the [ignominious] death of the cross." So the Apostle says that it became God, "in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect

(Continued on 2nd page, 2nd column.)

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ment for the Glory of God and
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REVIVING OF A DEAD PERSON

By Transfusion of Blood, Said to Be Possible.

The miracle of bringing the dead back to life, Dr. A. L. Soresi, of Fordham University, thinks will be a scientific achievement of the future. Dr. Soresi, who is attached to the staff of the Flower Hospital, for five years has conducted experiments of transfusion of blood, with results, he says, that are amazing.

Prof. Soresi here told of saving the life of a male patient, and the body was apparently moribund. After the explanation of his experiments with transfusion of blood in animals, Prof. Soresi said: "An experiment with a male pneumonia patient was perhaps not as spectacular, but more gratifying in results. This patient was entirely without respiration from all tests applied and therefore actually moribund to human knowledge when I made a transfusion of blood from a normal man through the jugular vein of the patient. The return to life was prompt and recovery followed in due course.

"If such transfusions could be made promptly the loss of life would be materially lowered.

"In a recent experiment at Flower Hospital I pumped all the blood from a dog until the animal lay absolutely lifeless. For sixteen minutes I allowed the animal to remain without a spark of life. The heart had stopped beating and every function of life had ceased.

"I connected the blood vessels of the dog with those of another dog and permitted the blood to flow. Inside of five minutes there was a complete return of life, and the dog soon was yelping in an entirely normal way. Other experiments with dogs have yielded amazing results.

"When the way has been found to connect directly with the left side of the heart medical science will be able to restore human beings to life after all animation has been suspended, provided there is no organic trouble. The resuscitation will be effective in cases of gas or drug poisonings, hemorrhages and such diseases as typhoid and pneumonia. Sudden death by accident, when no vital organ has been crippled, will fall within the scope of the transfusion method.

"Under the new science it will be possible to restore life after it has been extinct for half an hour. I am devoting most of my time to these experiments, and hope before long to be able to make an important announcement to the world of science."

TO MAKE CLOTHING FIREPROOF.

If we may believe the latest reports of the industrial chemists, a cheap process for making cloth absolutely fireproof has finally been discovered. Many fireproof fabrics have been brought out, but this is the first time that there has been any apparent assurance of a cloth that is cheap enough for ordinary uses. And it is also the first time there has ever been devised a process that would fireproof ordinary cotton cloth in a way that enabled the cloth to be washed or laundered. The new process is the work of an English chemist and his claims are based upon the fact that the fireproofing of any material desired, and especially of cotton cloth, will not increase the cost of production more than a fraction of a cent.

Heretofore the cotton cloths that have been fireproofed have taken on a hard and unyielding texture that made them almost impossible for the ordinary uses of such materials. It is well known that the cotton flannel material which women use throughout the world for making wrappers and night clothing is highly inflammable and that a number of tragedies have been caused by its being worn. Despite this disadvantage the cloth is used because it is soft and gives good wear. The discovery of a process for rendering such material fireproof, therefore, is deserving of more than ordinary mention.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

This subject was treated in a recent issue of THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, Vol. 5, No. 3. The interest roused and the great demand for copies of it have been remarkable. A sample copy will be mailed to anyone free upon receipt of post-card request.

THE REBEL SATAN DOOMED.

(Continued from 1st page, 4th column.)

through sufferings"—to prove Him perfect by the things which He suffered—to demonstrate that the things which He had always professed and had always done, expressed the sentiment of His heart in the fullest and most absolute sense.

Thus again we read, "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." (Hebrews 5:8.) Again we read that it was because of His faithfulness that God highly exalted Him and gave Him a name above every name. If this was necessary in the case of our Redeemer, before the Father could properly so highly exalt Him, what shall we say of His followers? Surely we must agree to the necessity for most thorough testing, proving, demonstrating the loyalty of the Church before they could be made partakers of the Divine nature and sharers of that Heavenly glory!—2 Peter 1:4.

This is the import of our text: Remember the heights, the glories of the Heavenly calling which we have received of God through Christ! Remember that we were by nature children of wrath, even as others! Remember that once we were alienated from God through wicked works! Remember that God is working in us to will and to do His good pleasure, to develop the character pleasing to Himself! Remember that unless this work of grace go on in our hearts day by day, it will not be accomplished! Remember that unless it be accomplished, we shall not be fit for a place in the Kingdom! Remember that God has predestinated that only such as demonstrate that at heart they are copies of His Son can ever be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom; and remember that in all this we see the force of the text: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."

Our trials and difficulties, our stumblings and repentances, our vows to the

Lord, and our endeavors to keep these, are parts of the great humbling process necessary to our exaltation. "If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him."

Trials and Temptations Necessary.

When we get the proper focus on this subject of the calling and election of the Church, it clarifies everything. We see now that if we could escape trials and difficulties and testings, we would escape the necessary schooling experiences, and be unfit for our graduation, unfit for a share in the First Resurrection. It takes us some time to get this proper view of matters; even as when we were school children, it required some time for us to learn the lesson that to be helped with an answer or to be excused from a lesson or to have a holiday were all disadvantages. A sufficient number of such failures to learn our lessons properly would mean unpreparedness for examination day. We have entered God's great training School. Its great Teacher is our dear Redeemer, to whom we are betrothed. Every lesson in the course is necessary for our polishing and preparation for the glories to follow.

In this School everything depends upon ourselves. The arrangements are all of God and therefore perfect. The great Teacher will not fail in His duty toward us. The results, therefore, are with ourselves. If we learn the lessons, we shall surely be graduated, and be presented before our Heavenly Father and the holy angels with honor and glory. But if we fail to learn the lessons necessary, we shall have only ourselves to blame. Indeed, from the viewpoint which we shall have beyond the veil, we surely would not want a place for which we were not prepared, and God would not give it to us. In this entire matter, therefore, we see that God is operating His elections, selections, instructions and final approvals along the lines of absolute justice, fairness.

So Run That Ye May Obtain

DIFFERENT RACES!—DIFFERENT TROPHIES!—THE GOAL BEFORE US

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run, that ye may obtain."—1 CORINTHIANS 9:24.

EVERYWHERE throughout the Scriptures the thought kept before our minds is that one may go deeper and deeper into sin and degradation and that the end of that way is death, destruction; and, on the contrary, that every one who would attain to life and the glorious likeness of the Divine character, which are conditions upon which the gift of life will be given, must strive, run and attain. In other words, a willing mind and its exercise are declared to be necessary to the attainment of Divine favor, and to the life eternal which is its reward. Too many, alas, even among Christians, seem to have the impression that negative goodness may be satisfactory to the Lord—that moral willingness to abstain from wrong-doing under favorable conditions would have the Divine approval. Of course, negative goodness is better than none, better than viciousness and wilful misdoing; yet there is no promise of eternal life to the morally, negatively good. Only the positively good—those who love righteousness and hate iniquity—can have the Divine approval.

Some may be inclined to demur to this proposition, and to claim that it is asking too much of humanity—that born through heredity with a tendency toward sin, and surrounded by sinful and degrading influences—we should be called upon to surmount all of these and to attain a fixed character for righteousness—the very reverse of the one with which we were born.

The query naturally and properly arises, "Are we not less favorably treated by our Creator than were the angels, who, created perfect, in the Divine likeness, have merely been required to maintain that character without knowing what it is to strive, to fight, to overcome the downward tendencies that oppress the fallen race of Adam? Why should not man have as favorable an opportunity as the angels? Even though man, through Original Sin, fell into a degenerated condition, mental, moral and physical, why does not the Creator make an easier path out of the sin-and-death conditions back to His fellowship and eternal life? In other words, why is there no other way to God's favor than the rugged, narrow way on the terms of taking up the Cross to follow in the footsteps of Jesus? Why are we called upon to run up so steep a hill of natural depravity to attain God's favor and life eternal?"

No Injustice with God.

These questions are pertinent and reasonable, and the Scriptures answer that God has appointed for the world just such reasonable opportunities for reconciliation with Himself as we might have expected. He has not proposed to violate the principles of His Government nor to accept to His favor any who are out of full accord therewith; but He has

provided for the world a reasonable way of return to His favor and to all that was lost through Original Sin. But His time has not yet fully come for opening up to the world His gracious provision for their recovery—their "Restitution." (Acts 3:19-21.) Through the prophets He points out that their opportunities will be grand, all that could be asked or expected—so full, so complete, that none but wilful rejectors of the Divine favor shall ultimately miss the goal of full Restitution to the Divine image and likeness as Adam enjoyed it, and an Edenic home and life eternal.

"The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." As the Apostle Peter declares, "All the holy prophets since the world began" have told of the glorious Restitution work which God will surely inaugurate in the hands of Messiah, His glorious Son, whose consort in the glory and honor of the Kingdom will be the Bride class, selected during this Gospel Age. The point which generally confuses the judgment is one that is made very clear in the Scriptures, namely, that in advance of giving these Restitution blessings to the world in general during the Messianic Age, and on reasonable and moderate terms and conditions, God in the present time is selecting an Elect class to be the Church, the Bride of Christ. And since He intends a very high exaltation to these, an exaltation to a nature not only higher than human, but also higher than angelic—the Divine nature—therefore the Lord has made the call of this Gospel Age a restricted one, and has made the way to life now narrow and difficult, so that only by great exertion can any attain it. The object of this He clearly explains to be that He seeks "a peculiar people, zealous of good works"—so zealous for truth and righteousness that they are willing to lay down their lives for these; so full of faith that they can walk by faith and not by sight; so full of love that they would delight to do the Father's will, even at the expense of their earthly interests, in that they will love all who have the Father's Spirit to the extent that with pleasure they would lay down their lives for the brethren. When it is seen that this specially Elect class of this Gospel Age is called and elected to be with Jesus in His glorious Kingdom, and to share with Him the honors of uplifting the human race out of its present fallen condition, then we see the secret, the reason, why God has made the way narrow, steep and difficult to run in.

"The Race Set Before Us."

Although nothing in the Scriptures refers to the world of mankind in the next age running a race, we may, nevertheless, understand from the various Scriptures which delineate the terms and conditions of Divine favor at that time that there will be something equivalent to a race. Some, then, may run swiftly up the Highway of holiness, and by their love and

zeal attain the joys of the Lord more speedily than others. But the running, we understand, will not be compulsory; the requirements will be that they shall walk up the Highway, and even then assistance will be granted on the way. One probable reason why no running is spoken of in connection with the highway of holiness leading to life in the next Age is that those disposed to run in the way of righteousness and hating iniquity, will be called out, selected, elected from the world, during this Gospel Age. These are the jewel class that our Lord refers to—He will make up His jewels at His Second Advent. He has indeed a glorious future for all who shall, however gradually, attain to the image and likeness of God lost in Eden. All will be in the hands of the great Mediator, who bought them with His precious blood, and who will, during the Messianic Reign, do for them everything that can be done, everything that could be asked for assistance; so that we are guaranteed that none of them shall fail by reason of any of the weaknesses of heredity, but that all who will, who desire righteousness done, may know they may attain thereto, and may at the close of the Thousand-year Day be absolutely perfect, so as to need neither covering nor assistance further. They will be like unto the angels; they shall have attained full perfection of human nature as God designed it; and all who refuse the lessons, corrections and chastisements of the great Mediator during the New Age shall be utterly cut off in the Second Death, as the Apostle Peter assures us.—Acts 3:23.

The race set before us—set before believers during this Gospel Age—is the uphill one, the difficult one. It is everywhere in the Scriptures described so to be. The Lord does not wish to make it easy; He wished to make it difficult, so that it would sift and test and prove and separate to Himself all those who have the spirit of loyalty and obedience so wonderfully manifested in our dear Redeemer. These must all attain to this likeness of God's dear Son if they would be joint-heirs with Him in the Kingdom; and present opportunities—calling, pruning, chastening, polishing, instructions in the School of Christ, etc.—are all with a view to the testing and proving and perfecting of these. These and these alone are in the race-course set before us in the Gospel; and the Apostle exhorts such and none others when He says, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."—Hebrews 12:1, 2.

Illustrated by Grecian Games.

Running races was one of the favorite athletic sports in olden times, especially among the Grecians, and the Apostle takes this fact, well known to all of His readers, to illustrate thereby what should be the course of the Christians. As these runners exercised great care in their diet and in all of life's affairs, and bent every energy to their racing, so the Christian should make business, pleasure, food and raiment all bend to the central, all-absorbing ambition of his new life, his Christian career. As the runner for an earthly crown of laurels and for the applause of spectators would cast away all of his clothing except the merest breechcloth, this should furnish an illustration of how the zealous Christian should so appreciate the greater prize, the crown of eternal life and glory and immortality and joint-heirship with Jesus in the Kingdom, that he would be willing to sacrifice time, influence, wealth, everything, that he might win Christ and be found in Him—a member of the Anointed One, a member of the Messiah.

In our text the Apostle says many run, but only one receives the crown, and similarly our Lord declares many are called, few are chosen. The thought is that it is not enough merely to take the name of Jesus and to declare ourselves His friends. That, indeed, is comparatively easy and a great honor; that requires little sacrifice at all, we might say. The running which will get the prize signifies much more than merely taking the name of Jesus—it means the taking up of the cross to follow Him through evil report as well as through good report; it means such a zeal for Him, for His Truth, for His Word, for His brethren, for the cause of righteousness which He represents, as will make us practically oblivious to all other affairs of life. This is the kind of racing that will get the prize. To these racers by and by will come the word, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."—Matthew 25:21.

As was sometimes the case in earthly races a secondary prize was given to those who endured faithfully to the end of the race, so the Lord intimates to us that He has a secondary prize for those who manifest their loyalty to Him, even though they may not put forth that degree of zeal in running which He has promised to reward with joint-heirship in the Kingdom. This class is also spoken of as overcomers, while those who attain to the highest honors are described as "more than overcomers"—more than

overcomers of the world and its spirit. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him, says the Lord; and the Apostle intimates that any drawing back would be "unto perdition"—unto the Second Death. (Hebrews 10: 38, 39.) Let us resolve that having tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the Age to come, and been made partakers of His Holy Spirit, we shall not be of those who fall away, who draw back and renounce the Lord and His righteousness, but of those who go on unto salvation—not the salvation of the Great Company, which will be before the Throne, but the salvation of the winners of the first prize, who will sit down with the Lord in His Throne and constitute His Bride and joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

"The Hope Set Before Us."

The Apostle speaks of the hope set before us as though He would suggest that there are other hopes before the world, and would invite some to one and some to another. Quite to the contrary, The Apostle assures us, "Ye are called in one hope of your calling." (Ephesians 4:4.) Hence, although there will be a "Little Flock" of the Elect who will gain the Divine nature and a Great Company who will receive eternal life on a lower spiritual plane of perfection, these were not separately called. It was the one call, and each one had the opportunity of making his calling and his election sure, and only his own carelessness in running the race prevented his being the winner of the chief prize.

With this thought before our minds how careful should all Christians be! As the Apostle says, "Walk circumspectly," "run with patience," "endure hardness," strive to enter in and attain all the glorious things which God has in reservation for His Elect—things beyond anything that eye hath seen or ear heard or the heart of man ever imagined—things of which we know only because God hath revealed them to us through His Spirit.—1 Corinthians 2:9.

But while God sets forth in the present time only one hope, only the one calling, only the one invitation, the world sets forth various hopes, various ambitions, various invitations, and urges these persistently. Indeed, the large part of the required overcoming on the part of the Elect is the resistance to the blandishments of the world—the resistance to the hopes and ambitions which the world holds out. Hence the Apostle, summing up the whole of our race, declares, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John 5:4.

Only as we have faith in God and faith in the gracious promises of His Word could we possibly renounce the world, its ambitions and pleasures, and turn our backs to these to gain the glories and honors which God has promised to those who love Him and who demonstrate their love by their faithfulness in the race. The natural eye cannot see these spiritual things, hence on y in proportion as we have exercised the eyes of faith, the eyes of our understanding, are we able to comprehend more and more and appreciate the length and breadth and height and depth of the Divine arrangement and to follow the same.

Worldly Hopes in Contrast.

It is fortunate for the world that it has hope as an element of its character, that it has ambition. Could we imagine such a thing as an utter destruction of human ambitions and hopes we should be obliged to imagine a rapid degeneracy of our race into the hopeless, ambitionless condition manifest in the most degraded races of heathendom. We are not, therefore, condemning the world for having ambitions; rather we are glad that at least a small portion of humanity have ambitions, which not only propel them through life, but which help them to stimulate others and to pull others more and more out of degradation and despondency. These men of worldly ambition are captains of industry, captains of finance, captains of politics, kings among men; and although their motive power is generally pure selfishness, nevertheless the world is better for them in some respects. Yea, although the Christian may receive severe trials from the example of such ambitious men, he nevertheless may receive a blessing also when he compares the hopes and aims of these men with his own hopes and aims as set before him in the Gospel. Let him consider further what these men will endure and do selfishly for the sake of earthly power or influence or wealth, and see in contrast what would be the Christian's reasonable service, self-denial and energy on behalf of the King of kings, and the inexpressibly greater reward which He has promised to His faithful ones.

As we see the captains of industry giving careful attention to every detail and accomplishing large results financially—as we see politicians great and small

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON.

In a recent issue of BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY this subject was fully treated from the standpoint of the Scriptures. A sample copy will be sent free upon request.

striving for offices and honors among men, and then remember that they do not hope to enjoy these for any great length of time—we are astounded at their diligence in business and fervency of spirit in serving worldly interests, selfish interests. In contrast we say to ourselves respecting those who have heard the voice from Heaven, whose eyes of understanding have to some extent opened to see the wonderful things of the Divine promise and whose ears of understanding have heard the invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ in all those glorious things—what manner of persons ought we to be?

If worldly men will give their time, their thought, and will invest all their capital in the hope of still larger returns of an earthly kind—if they will sacrifice their all to attain their earthly ideals, how should it be with us who from the standpoint of faith are risking nothing when we accept the Lord's gracious declaration that if we give ourselves and all we have unreservedly to Him, then all that He has shall be ours; that His power Divine will guarantee that all life's interests shall work for our highest welfare and that if we are willing and obedient and self-sacrificing runners in this race we shall have the great prize of glory, honor and immortality, riches of grace which will never fade away, eternal in the heavens?

Surely, then, the Lord's people have in the Gospel message the grandest incentive, the greatest ambition that could possibly be conceived, and they should indeed, as more and more their eyes open to the riches of God's favor bestowed upon them, lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and run with patience the race set before them.

Different Race-Course Views.

The race-course of the Christian may be viewed from different standpoints. From one viewpoint it is one race, or striving, from the beginning of his consecration to the Lord until death—until his resurrection. From this standpoint the course of many shows variations, sometimes good running, sometimes slow, sometimes a standstill, and, we fear, sometimes a retrogression. From this viewpoint only the Lord Himself knows positively who are in the race, and to what extent they are faithful to their talents and opportunities. From this viewpoint we may not judge one another, but rather remember that the Lord is the Judge, and that His decision will come in the end of this Age and be manifested by the granting to some a share in the First Resurrection and to others, the Great Company, a less favorable change and blessing. Then every man's work shall be manifested. We may see that some who seemed to be running very slowly were really laboring against heavy odds of disadvantage through an unfavorable heredity, while others—whom perhaps we thought to be swift runners in the race—may not have so high an honor from the Lord's standpoint, or perhaps they had much advantage every way over the majority by reason of good, natural traits and characteristics. The proper thing for each racer, then, is to do his best and to leave the entire matter of results to the Lord, knowing that he will receive exceedingly and abundantly more than he could have deserved as the reward for every self-denial, every faithful sacrifice in this race-course in seeking to please the Lord and to win the glorious prize of the high calling now set forth.

A totally different view of the race-course, and yet one in harmony with the letter and spirit of the Word, would represent the Christian's attainment of character-likeness to the Lord. The Scriptures assure us that all the Elect will be copies of God's dear Son (Romans 8:29); that the experience and development of character which begin with our consecration to the Lord and entrance to the School of Christ culminate in the attainment of our Lord's character-likeness. This experience of the Christian may be likened to a race-course, too. Only those who have accepted Christ as their Redeemer and have made a consecration of their all to the Lord are admitted to this School of Christ, or this race-course. When first they enter they are, of course, very deficient—they enter that they may progress in knowledge and in grace. The start is at the point of a desire of heart to do the Lord's will; the finish of this course of study, or this race, will be the attainment of that degree of knowledge and of love which the Lord would approve, without which we could not be fit for the Kingdom.

If death should intervene and hinder the students from learning the lesson, or in our other picture hinder the racer from reaching his goal of perfect love, then he could not receive the crown of life, he could not be considered fit for the Kingdom, which is promised only to the "overcomers." (Revelation 3:21.) Our confidence is, however, that whoever is accepted of the Lord as a runner in this race comes so completely under the Divine supervision and care that all of his earthly interests and life itself are guaranteed to be favorable to him, that he may have the opportunity for learning the lessons, the opportunity for running the race and proving himself an overcomer.

Starting at zero, we may divide this supposed race-course by four quarter-marks. The race is begun with a kind of love toward God—not the perfect love which will be reached at the end of the race, but nevertheless a love which is necessary toward even making a start. This we will call duty love; as the Apostle says, we realize that it is our "reasonable service" to seek to do the Lord's will, because we are appreciative of what He is doing for us in the redemptive work of Jesus. The duty love of this first quarter will never be lost; it will always hold a high place in the heart and mind of the runner. But as he progresses to the second quarter of the course he finds that duty love has begotten in him a still higher character of love. While still acknowledging duty love he now has even a higher love, an appreciative love, or a character-love. As we at first loved God and desired to serve and please Him because He had first loved us, so when we reach this second quarter in the Christian's experience and race-course we have reached the point where we begin to appreciate God, not merely as a benefactor, but because He is good, because of the virtues of His own character, because we are learning as we become acquainted with Him to appreciate the Justice which is the foundation of His Throne, and the Wisdom and Love and Power which govern all the Divine course of action toward humanity.

In this second quarter of our race we learn to try our hearts before the Lord and to worship Him in spirit and in truth—because He is good, because He is worthy of worship. Thus we now have not only the duty love, but also the love of appreciation of the Creator, and we press on into the third quarter of our race, where we begin to appreciate these same elements of character even in their imperfect manifestation in the Church—the Bride of Christ. This stage or degree of attainment in the race toward the mark of perfect love the Apostle refers to saying, "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (1 Peter 1:22.) And again, "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16.) As we progress toward the end of this third-quarter mark, our love for the brethren grows so deep and strong that we learn to sympathize with them as new creatures in their battlings with the weaknesses of their own flesh in a way that we could not do when first we entered this race course.

Those who have attained to this degree of love know each other no longer after the flesh, with its weaknesses; but, ignoring these, they know each other according to the spirit, according to the heart-intentions and strivings, even as the Lord knows us. Their growth in knowledge and love has thus brought them to an appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love which they knew not at the beginning of this course, and which enables them more and more to appreciate the great Divine Plan which embraces all mankind in its scope and especially cares for the truly consecrated ones. Thus we start upon the fourth-quarter mark of this race-course, the final stage. The duty love toward God increased to love of the Divine character, and this led to the loving of the brethren, because we saw in them the same Spirit of the Father, God-likeness; and this producing a deepening of our heart's love and the emptying of our hearts of selfishness and worldly views, brings us to that broader view of the whole world of mankind which enables us to look with sympathy upon all—even upon the vilest.

Not that we sympathize with villainy or impurity, but that we realize that humanity is under these defilements largely through heredity and through besetting temptations, and having learned something of the Divine grace and strength needful to overcome these downward tendencies in our own mortal flesh we have a growing sympathy for the poor world, which knows not the Lord and has not the Almighty Arm to assist out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay. This broader sympathy enables us to understand parts of the Divine Word which at first were obscure to us, for we are now learning to look at the world and the sin which is in the world from God's standpoint of sympathy, and are therefore prepared to appreciate the love

of God which has provided a way of escape from sin and death, and which ultimately shall reach to every member of the race.

In this last quarter of the race, therefore, we begin to be able to fulfill our Lord's highest description of love, namely, to have love for our enemies and those who despitely use us and persecute us. We are enabled to do this because of a fuller measure of the love of God in our own hearts and a fuller measure of knowledge and, incidentally, sympathy for the world in its degradation and blindness. Thus we reach the climax of our love—love for enemies—the mark of perfect love, the end of this race-course.

"Having Done All, Stand."

From the very earliest moment of our faith in the Redeemer, turning from sin and consecrating to God, we are covered with the merits of Christ's righteousness and have, to some extent, the mind of Christ—that is to say, we had a mind and will to do the will of God, and we entered the School of Christ that we might learn those lessons; or, under the present figure, we entered this race-course that we might run to attain this condition of heart which alone could be acceptable in God's sight—the condition of perfect love. When we reach this climax of perfect love in our hearts it does not imply that we have reached a perfection of conduct so that the mortal body will always express perfectly this high standard of love.

Indeed we may not reach this grand and desirable condition until we receive our new bodies in the resurrection; but so soon as we have attained the perfect love in our hearts it surely will have great influence and control over the words of our mouths as well as over the imaginings of our hearts. It will surely affect our conduct toward the Lord, the brethren and our enemies in some appreciable degree that we may discern and that our neighbors and friends can discern. The New Creature may occasionally find that with a heart full of love for the brethren or for an enemy he has not been wise or tactful in the exercise and demonstration of his love, but has given offense at the very time he intended to do good. Such imperfections of the flesh, however, the Scriptures assure us are not charged up to us as New Creatures, but the Lord, who knoweth the heart, regards our standing of perfect love and covers all the blemishes of the flesh with the merit of the Redeemer's sacrifice.

After we have reached the mark of perfect love, what then shall we do? We answer that then, for the first time, our experiences correspond closely to those of our Redeemer, who did not need to go through the school of experience and discipline and instruction to learn the different steps of love and to attain perfect love. He did not need to run this race and to reach this mark of perfect love, because, as the perfect One, He was always there; and when we reach that degree we are merely attaining in our hearts to the condition in which our Lord was from the very beginning of His ministry. Our future experiences from that point onward are described by the Apostle, who says, "Having done all, stand"—having attained to the condition of perfect love which casts out fear, which reverences, loves the Lord in His true character, worships Him in spirit and in truth, loves the brethren and delights to lay down life in their service, and loves its enemies and delights to do them good—having reached this point, stand there.

But what is there to move us away from such a position when once we have attained it? We reply that the Lord permits trials and difficulties of various kinds to come upon us at this time to test us, to prove our loyalty to these principles which at this time we clearly see. Thus it was with our dear Redeemer, who had this love, who saw the situation and who was controlled by this spirit of perfect love, which led Him to present His sacrifice even unto its consummation. Thus it will be with all who are copying Him. Their endeavor to stand at this mark of perfect love will mean sacrifices and self-denials of various kinds, and all of these will tend to make them strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and to prove them to be conquerors and more than conquerors through Him that loved them.

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"Laborers Together with God."

"We are laborers together with God."—1 Cor. 3:9.

DURING this Gospel Age there has been a work of God arranged for and carried on by Him. And that work is the selection of the Seed of Abraham. The first opportunity of being of this Seed was granted to the natural seed of Abraham—Israel after the flesh. The work succeeded so far as the gathering of an elect company from among them was concerned. And having accomplished this part of the work, God set the Jewish nation aside, while the further work of the selection of the Elect from among the other nations has continued for eighteen centuries.

"Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The blindness is merely until the remaining members of the Elect class have been found, and then God's favor will return to Natural Israel. "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My Covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins." Israel made a failure respecting the Election, except a few. And yet they are still beloved for the fathers' sakes.—Romans 11:7, 26-28.

The one work of the Gospel Age has been the selection of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, through whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed—shall become of the earthly seed. This Promise, that all the families of the earth shall be blessed, cannot be fulfilled until the Spiritual Seed shall first be completed. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the Promise." There has been but one work from first to last. And so we read: "One sowing, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." (John 4:37, 38.) Whether it was at the beginning, or now at the close of the Age—the time of the reaping—it is all *one work*, and there is the one purpose being served, the gathering of the Elect.

Humanitarian Work.

If asked as to the reason why we will not enter and engage in humanitarian work; building hospitals, looking after the poor, doing slum work, etc., our answer would be, We are so engaged. We have agents all over the country attending to this very work. In every county in the State there is an almshouse. The hospitals are taking care of the sick and the blind. The money with which to do this is provided by the State—and it is the money of the citizens which is used. If anybody assists in doing some additional work for the poor, he has that privilege, he has that right.

We believe it to be our duty to be humanitarian, and our State laws are humanitarian. New York is a first-class State. And if we were in Pennsylvania, we would be able to say the same. And so in respect to any State we know of in this country. As respects these humanitarian efforts, the reason we do not engage in them more particularly is that we think they are well managed by the "powers that be," according to the Government and the will of the people. And anyone who thinks differently holds different views from the majority. We stand with the majority as to the proper way of dealing with these questions. Why do we not more particularly take part in slum work? We understand that it is not for us to do. We cannot do better along this line than the majority. To interfere in these matters would imply that we have not confidence in the laws. We have no right to go about interfering with the laws.

Why do we not engage in holding revivals? For the reason that those who engage in the holding of revivals are doing something that the Scriptures never instructed us to do. Nothing in the Bible says that we are to go and pull the people in to hear someone speak. Let each do as seemeth him best. If there is anyone who thinks differently, and he can do any good, all well and good; if he does more harm than good, then that.

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- The Sabbath Question.
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also, is his responsibility. Our responsibility is to follow the course laid down by the Bible. And the Bible does not say anything about holding revival meetings. Those who wish to do this have the privilege of so doing. This is a free country. But we do not find that Jesus did this. To anyone who thinks differently, we give full liberty to do according to his will, and find no fault with him.

Why do you not take up collections for the missionary societies? is asked. We answer, You have a right to contribute to your missionary society. It is not *ours*, it is *yours*. You will be responsible to the Master for what you do, so you have full right and privilege to do whatever you think proper—and we have the same. What we are trying to do for the heathen is to show them that God is Love.

We are trying to show them that the theory of eternal torment is not the Truth, and that if they really knew the teachings of the Bible, they would see that God is a God of Love, and they would love Him; and this would be a helpful thing to them. You have a right to create a missionary fund. We would not throw a straw in your way. By and by you will hear whether the Master says, "Well done!" to *your* work or to *ours*.

As to why we do not engage in Socialism; Socialism is impracticable. We are glad that Socialism has done a great deal for the world. We are glad that we have a measure of Socialism—the street railways and cars, gas and water systems, etc. If, for instance, any family wanted to make its own gas and have its own plant for filtering water, etc., to do so would be quite an expense. And if each wanted to have its own street car lines, etc., the streets would be crowded up too much. But when Socialism goes on to tell us that it is the savior of the world, we dispute the claim. We hold that, on the contrary, Socialism is about to bring the world into anarchy. Not that Socialists wish to do so, but they are unwise.

We would be very much inclined to favor many phases of Socialism were it not that we see in the Bible that God has a very much better way of accomplishing the same results. However, the Bible assures us that there is a great time of trouble coming, before the blessings can come. But first God is gathering out a saintly company, and testing and proving them, so that He can entrust to them the Government of the future. They will constitute the Theocracy of God.

We are fully convinced that the Bible is correct, that it is the Truth, and that nothing can bring about the desired result but the Kingdom of God. We are laborers together with God. He is working with us, and we are working with Him. What is the work? God's present work is finding the saintly, the true, and guiding them, fitting them for the spiritual Kingdom to be introduced. Therefore we are working for Socialism to an extent, but working in a different manner. Socialists are working according to their light, and we according to our light.

Some Glaring Inconsistencies.

The various denominations represent Christian people with good desires, good intentions, and having certain fixed ideas respecting God and His will. No two of these agree. Many of their beliefs are thoroughly inconsistent. There are over six hundred different denominations. It is unreasonable for us to believe, as the Baptists do, that anyone will go to a place or condition of everlasting torment for not having been put into water over his head! We cannot believe anything so unreasonable. And just the same with our Presbyterian friends and their doctrine. They are certainly sincere. They have taken hold of the doctrine of John Calvin.

If John Calvin had had the proper view he never could have signed the death warrant to burn his Christian brother Servetus at the stake. This fact shows us that he was not a proper teacher of theology, however good he may have been in mind and heart. And when we come to look at his theology, that God fore-ordained that a little handful of humanity should be saved, not for any good that they had done, but of His sovereign will; and that He equally fore-ordained all the non-elect to an eternity of torture—if we believed such doctrine as this, we would believe that God was the veriest devil we could imagine—to cause hundreds of millions to come into existence, knowing that He had nothing for them but an eternity of suffering! That is a most devilish thought! We cannot believe that theory. If we did, we could not worship God!

And then as to the Methodists and their Free Grace! This does not give one much show. How could that Grace be free?—only one in ten thousand ever having a chance of getting it! We are sorry for them if that view appears to their minds as rational. We would not be a Methodist nor a Presbyterian for a million dollars a year. Not that we do

not love our Presbyterian, Methodist and Catholic friends, etc., but it would not be right for us to so believe. We find so much error in any one of their doctrines. We find that not one of them is in accord with the Bible.

We prefer to stand by Jesus and the Apostles and all who are in harmony with them. We prefer to stand for what the Bible calls the Church of the First-born, and for whatever the Bible teaches. And when we thus take our stand, we find that the Bible teaches something beautiful—that God is indeed preparing a Church, to be associated with Jesus in His Kingdom; and we find that nobody is to be roasted eternally—quite to the contrary, they are all to be blessed with an opportunity to live forever.

The Elect are the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, through whom all the non-elect are to be blessed. According to the Bible, the dead are all *asleep*; they do not know anything. "Their sons" come to honor and they know it not," because "There is no wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device in Sheol, whither thou goest." We find that Jesus went to Sheol. We find that, having thus given the Ransom-price for Adam and his family, all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth.

We find that during the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, Christ and His Church will be reigning—not to oppress the world, but to lift them up, to break the shackles of sin and death. We find that under this blessed arrangement, *all* will be brought to a knowledge of the Truth; and that at the close of that thousand-year period Christ will have finished His work; and that as a result of His reign, not only will all be destroyed who love unrighteousness, sin, and who refuse to live in harmony with God, but all who were willing to come into harmony will have bowed the knee. "Unto Him (Christ) every knee shall bow and every tongue confess." He

shall reign until all enemies have been put down.

These are the reasons why we cannot work hand-in-glove with those who have opposite theories and opposite ideas. We cannot associate with systems and be bound up to creeds that are dishonoring to God and contrary to His Word, the Bible!

The Law of Retribution.

There will be many who will have their chance in the future who do not have their chance now. But whatever knowledge they have now will not do them any harm. A certain cast of mind cannot receive the things of God now. The Scriptures say that they cannot appreciate a God of Justice and Love. Therefore "none of the wicked shall understand" is the statement of the Scriptures. If they could understand, if they could get the right thought, they would see that every transgression, in proportion to its degree of wilfulness, will be punished in the future; hence they would know that they are treasuring up to themselves wrath.

God has established, as a general law, the principle that whatsoever a man *soweth*, that shall he *reap*. Every step a man takes *down* must be retraced. If everyone knew this, it would make mankind very much more careful. If a man knows that there is to be a *just* punishment, it will make him very much more careful than if he thinks it will be an *unjust* punishment. Our thought is that if the people could get the proper focus on the subject of the penalty for sin, it would be the most potent factor in convincing them of the propriety of righteous living. Furthermore, we might cite to the denominations the fact that with all their preaching of eternal torment, they succeed in driving but a comparatively small number into *holiness of life*—into becoming footstep followers of Jesus, character-copies of God's dear Son.

The Test of Endurance.

"Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."—1 Kings 20:11.

THE TEST OF ENDURANCE is certainly one of the severest tests of faithfulness to which the elect Church, the Body of Christ, is subjected. It is the test which gauges and registers the strength of every other virtue and grace, and no soldier of the Cross will be crowned with the laurels of victory who has not stood this test. The Christian life is a warfare, and the above words of one of the kings of Israel to a boastful enemy of the Lord's people, are applicable not only to every new recruit in the Lord's army, but, similarly, to all who have not yet finished the good fight of faith.

The first gush of enthusiasm in the Lord's service, much as we may and do appreciate it, may be but the hasty production of the shallow soil of a heart which immediately receives the Truth with gladness, but, having no root in itself, endures but for a time, and afterward, when affliction and persecution arise, immediately is offended. (Mark 4:16,17.) Such characters cannot stand the fiery tests of this "evil day," whereof it is written—"The fire (of that day) shall try every man's work, of what sort it is."—1 Corinthians 3:13.

Necessity for the Whole Armor.

Therefore, says the Apostle Peter, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." (1 Peter 4:12.) All of the elect Church must be so tried; and blessed is he that shall endure unto the end. The sure Word of prophecy points to severe conflicts and great trials in the closing scenes of the Church's history. Elijah, a type of the Body of Christ, finished his earthly career and went up by a whirlwind in a chariot of fire—strong symbols of storms and great afflictions. John, another type of the Church, was cast into prison and then beheaded. And we are forewarned of the great necessity of the whole armor of God, if we would stand in this "evil day."

If therefore behooves everyone who aspires to the prize of our High Calling to brace himself for the severer conflicts and trials of faith and patience that may suddenly and without a moment's warning be sprung upon him. In the battle of this day, as in all other battles, the effort of the Enemy is to surprise and suddenly attack and overwhelm the Lord's people; and the only preparation, therefore, that can be made for such emergencies is constant vigilance and prayer and the putting on of the whole armor of God—the Truth and the spirit of the Truth.

Which Way Will You Turn?

"In your patience possess ye your souls." No other grace will be more needed than this in the fiery ordeals of this "evil day," for without great patience no man can endure to the end. All along the Christian's pathway, ever and anon, he comes to a new crisis; perhaps these are often seemingly of trivial importance, yet he realizes that they may be turning points in his Christian course. Who has not realized them? There comes a temptation to weariness in well-doing,

together with the suggestion of an easier way; or there springs up a little root of pride or ambition, with suggestions of ways and means for feeding and gratifying it. Then there comes, by and by, the decisive moment when you *must* choose this course or that; and lo, you have reached a crisis!

Which way will you turn? Most likely you will turn in the direction to which the sentiments you have cultivated have been tending, whether that be the right way or the wrong way. If it be the wrong way, most likely you will be unable to discern it clearly; for your long-cultivated sentiments will sway your judgment. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death." (Proverbs 14:12.) How necessary, therefore, is prayer, that in every crisis we may pass the test successfully! Nor can we safely delay to watch and pray until the crisis is upon us; but such should be our constant attitude.

Those Who Outride the Trials Will Be the Overcomers.

The life of a soldier, ever on the alert and on duty, is by no means an easy life; nor do the Scriptures warrant any such expectation. On the contrary, they say, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," "Fight the good fight of faith," etc. And yet many Christian people seem to have the very opposite idea. Their ideal Christian life is one without a breeze or a storm; it must be one continuous calm. Such a life was indeed more possible in former days than now, though the world, the flesh and the Devil always have opposed them, and always have had to be resisted by every loyal soldier of the Cross. But now the opposition is daily becoming more and more intense.

Consequently, we have had within this Harvest period many and severe storms of opposition, and still there are doubtless more severe trials to follow. But those who, with overcoming faith, outride them all—who patiently endure, who cultivate the Spirit of Christ with its fruits and graces—such will be the "overcomers" to whom the laurels of victory will be given when the crowning day has come.

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT

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