

FAITH'S FOUNDATIONS

John, Morton, and Minna Edgar

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

Though the Edgars are most remembered for their pyramid studies, the reprinting of their writings would not be complete without these special treatises of Bible topics. John wrote five, Morton wrote four, and their natural sister Minna wrote two. These three were careful students of the Scriptures and loving, consecrated Christian brethren. These qualities are evidenced in the following pages. Your life will be enriched by considering these messages. We recommend the reader use the six volumes of Studies in the Scriptures and Tabernacle Shadows as the primary keys to present truth, and that these Edgar writings be considered as only supplemental.

John, Morton, and Minna Edgar remained faithful to the message of truth as conveyed by that "faithful and wise servant" of Mt 24:45. John passed to his reward on June 9, 1910; Morton on February 6, 1950, and Minna in March, 1950.

We wish to thank those volunteering their labors of love to help reprint these writings. We commend these writings to the household of faith in these latter days.

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Faith's Foundations.

IT is not our purpose to give an exhortation. We desire to draw attention to some interesting details in the Bible which we believe will stimulate faith. For when we observe how the Lord in times past aided the faith of all who had honest hearts, our own faith in His Holy Word is strengthened, and we are enabled to overcome. Does not the Scriptures say: "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith"? The knowledge of these dealings of God with His people of former days lays in a firm foundation for our own faith. Knowledge is necessary for faith.

There are varying degrees of faith; and there are also what we might term specialized faiths, requiring particular knowledge. Those who manifest a disposition to exercise and cultivate faith, are honored by God. They are frequently given special missions, and play favored parts in the Lord's glorious Plan of the Ages.

The Jewish Nation not the only Nation Favored by God

Moses strengthened the faith of the Jewish nation, when about to cross the Jordan. He reminded them of God's former dealings with four other nations. As this is an important point, we shall quote De 2; 1-23 at length.

"Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, as the LORD spake unto me, saying, 3 Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward. 4 And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore: 5 Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth: because

FF2 I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession. 6 Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink. 7 For the LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the

LORD thy God hath been with thee; thou has lacked nothing. 8 And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from Elath, and from Eziongaber, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab. 9 And the LORD said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land for a possession: because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession. 10 The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; 11 Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims. 12 The Horims also dwelt in Seir beforetimes; but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the LORD gave unto them. 13 Now rise up, said I, and get you over the brook Zered. And we went over the brook Zered. 14 And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted from among the host, as the LORD sware unto them. 15 For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed. 16 So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people, 17 That the LORD spake unto me, saying, 18 Thou art to pass over through Ar, the coast of Moab, this day: 19 And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession. 20 (That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt there in old time; and the Ammonites call them Zamzummins; 21 A people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but the LORD destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead: 22 As he did to the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, when he destroyed the Horims from

FF3 before them: and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day: 23 And the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azzah, the Caphtorims, which came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.)"

According to the recital of Moses, it appears that the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, and the Caphtorims had all received national recognition by God. The children of Israel were commanded not to interfere with those people because God had given them their land; the giants in previous possession had been driven out to make way for them. The lesson that Moses desired to impress was that if God had favored and manifested his power on behalf of those older nations, then the Israelites might have faith that God could and would enable them to conquer and possess the land of promise, even though it were inhabited by giants, as had been reported by the spies some years before. These four nations are not to be confounded with the original ten heathen nations, which God commanded the Israelites to drive out of the promised land. See Ge 15:19-21.

The Four Ancient Nations First Favored, but Afterward Cursed. Why?

Two questions naturally arise here:

(1) Why did God specially deal with these four nations? Did not the Lord say of Israel, through His prophet Amos, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth"? (Am 3:1,2)

(2) Why did the Lord latterly require to curse these four nations by His Prophets? The consideration of these questions will strengthen our faith in the overruling power of our heavenly Father. It will add to our knowledge of the wideness of His Plan, and of His particular care over His special covenanted peoples.

The answer to the first question may be understood in line with the statement in De 5:10-namely, that the Lord extends His favors to those who manifest faith in Him, and to their descendants. And the answer to the second question can be found in the words of Zec 2:8, that he who touches the Lord's people touches the "apple of His eye"-for the Lord cannot bear that anyone should molest His own covenant people, as the

Edomites and the other nations afterward did. De 32:7-12

FF4

The Moabites and the Ammonites were given favor because of their father Lot, a righteous man. The Edomites were favored because of Esau their father. For although Jacob received the chief blessing, having purchased the birthright from his brother, yet Esau had a blessing too.-Heb 11:20 Why the Caphtorims should have had the favor of the Lord we cannot be quite sure. It is just possible it is because they were instrumental in building the Great Pyramid, the Lord's "Pillar of Witness" in Egypt.-Isa 19:19,20 Who were the Caphtorims?

The Caphtorims were the Philistines. (See Am 9:7.) In De

2:23 we are informed that the Caphtorim destroyed the Avims "which dwelt in Hazerim even unto Azzah." This identifies the locality possessed by the Caphtorims, for according to Jer 47:1, marginal reading, Azzah and Gaza are the same, i.e., a city in the southwest of Palestine which belonged to the Philistines.(compare also Jer 47:4.) In the Revised Version Hazerim is translated "villages."

The country (or "coastland"-not "isle") of Caphtor is identified with the delta of Egypt. This can be seen in many of the usual maps contained in Bibles. Caphtor is thought by some to be the Island of Crete; but the evidences are strongly in favor of its identification with Lower Egypt. The reason why Caphtor is thought by some to be the island of Crete, is because of the other name frequently used in the Scriptures for the Philistines- viz., Cherethites or Cherethims. (See Eze 25:16.) In the original Hebrew this name reads Crethim, and in the Greek translation of the Bible it reads Kretes, another way of spelling Crete. But instead of coming from the island of Crete, ancient historical authorities prove that colonists from among the Philistines or Cherethims (Cretans), migrated from Palestine to Crete, and gave their name to that island. The date of this migration was understood by Sir Isaac Newton to be 1055 B.C., but other chronologists of note date it about three or four hundred years earlier, which is more probable. In the Chaldean language the word Cherethites may be translated "archers." The Cretans were particularly noted as bowmen.

FF5 The Philistines, therefore, were brought up from Egypt by the Lord, and given a possession of land in Palestine, long before the nation of Israel were accorded the same favor. (Am 9:7) Indeed, the Holy Land is named after the Philistines; for Palestine and Philistine are the same in the Hebrew (Pelesheth).

Philistia is another form of the word (Ps 60:8). One of the reasons why the master builders of the Great Pyramid are identified with the at one time divinely favored Philistines, is because of a statement by the Greek historian Herodotus, to the effect that a man named Philitis "fed his flocks" near the site of the Pyramid while it was being erected; and that this Philitis was understood to be in some way connected with the building's construction. Herodotus, who lived about 500 B.C., is one of the very few early writers who give us information about the Great Pyramid.

Then we have the statement of the Egyptian priest and historian, Manetho, who wrote about 300 B.C., to the effect that the nation who set up the Pyramid afterwards left Egypt and travelled eastward to a land named Judea, and built there a city called Jerusalem. Thus the inference is that the Caphtorims or Philistines, who came forth out of Caphtor (or "coastland," i.e., the delta of Egypt), and dwelt in the villages around Azzah (Gaza), are the same as the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, who after erecting the Great Pyramid, left Egypt and settled in Judea or Palestine.-See Great Pyramid Passages, Vol. I, Pars. 4-6.

The Philistines were Shemites

Abraham, and later on Isaac also, had friendly intercourse with the Philistines, who evidently spoke a Shemitish language, so that difficulty of speech did not arise. When Jacob's sons were in Egypt, on the

contrary, an interpreter was required (Ge 42:23), for the Egyptians spoke a Hamitic language, a "strange language" to the descendants of Shem. (See Ps 81:5; 105:23; 114:1.) Thus, in spite of the seeming connection of the Caphtorims with Ham in **Ge 10:6, 13, 14**, it is not probable that they were Egyptians. Ge 10:6 says that Mizraim was the son of Ham; and Ge 10:13-14 read: "And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, and Pathrusim, and Casluhim (out of whom came Philistim) and Caphtorim." Some commentators

FF6 regard the words: "out of whom came Philistim," which are in parenthesis, as an interpolation by a later writer who desired to explain from whence came the Philistines. In any case the word "whom" may equally well be translated "where"; and the whole of the parenthesis should be inserted after Caphtorim, and not as at present after Casluhim.

When we recall to mind what the historian informs us regarding the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, the master-builders of the Great Pyramid-namely, that they invaded Egypt from the East; and subduing the Egyptians "without a battle," enlisted that people to erect the Pyramid under their supervision, after which they departed eastward to Judea-we are inclined to the thought that the Philistines were really Shemites, and not the true Caphtorims. Because they <invaded> Caphtor (Lower Egypt), compelling the people of the land, the true Hamitic Caphtorims, to do their bidding, these Shemitic Philistines could themselves be spoken of as Caphtorims. Ge 10:13,14 might be rendered: "And Mizraim [son of Ham] begat Ludim ... Casluhim, and Caphtorim (out of where came Philistim)."

The Israelites the Most Favored Nation on Earth

Without doubt, then, we see that the Philistines, as well as the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, were in the beginning recognized by God. But the Israelites were afterwards favored more than they all because of Jacob their father. "He showeth His word unto Jacob, His statutes, and His judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any [other] nation." (Ps 147:19,20) The Apostle Paul makes it clear that the Jews were God's special people, to whom pertained all the covenants and promises, and of whom the Messiah was destined to come. (Ro 3:1; 9:4,5) Jealousy and hatred quickly rose up against the Israelites in the hearts of the other nations. They spoke against, fought, and persecuted the Lord's chosen people, and even blasphemed God's holy name because of them. In 2Ch 20:1-25, we have an account of an attack against Judah by the allied armies of Ammon, Moab, and Edom (Mount Seir) during the reign of Jehoshaphat. We read that Jehoshaphat feared, and prayed to the Lord for deliverance.

FF7 2Ch 20:10-"And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and MountSeir, whom thou wouldst not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and destroyed them not (De 2:4-19): behold, I say, how they reward us to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou has given us to inherit, O our God, wilt thou not judge them?"

For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee." Because of the King's faith in his God's power, the Lord delivered Judah by causing their fierce enemies to turn against each other and thus defeat themselves.

In Eze 25, all four nations are mentioned, and judgments passed upon them. The Edomites are singled out for special denunciation in Eze 35. The Lord there says: "When the whole world rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate." The Prophet Obadiah speaks much against the Edomites, because of their manifest hatred of the Israelites.

Jeremiah, also, utters words against them. (Jer 49:7-22) This nation, descended from Esau, the twin brother of Jacob, is denoted by several names, as Mount Seir, Mount Esau, the land of Seir, Edom, Idumea; and in **Isa 1:11** by the name Dumah.

Idumea the Type of Christendom

There was always enmity between the rival nations of Israel and Edom. Before Jacob and Esau, their founders, were born, they strove against each other. (Ge 25:21-26) And even to this day there is strife, because fleshly Israel typified the spiritual Israelites of the Gospel Age; and fleshly Edom prefigures a class who have, like Esau, despised and sold their spiritual birthright for an earthly portion. The strong language directed by the prophets against Edom is more truly applicable to Christendom, the antitypical Idumea. Thus, when the Lord declares through Isa 34:5: "For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea," we understand that Christendom, ecclesiastical and social, will be destroyed by the two-edged "sword of the spirit," the Word of God. The destruction of Edom, also, is likened to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Jer 49:17,18); and our Lord said that the fiery judgment upon these

FF8 cities of the plain illustrated the overthrow of the Present Evil World at the time of his second advent. (Lk 17:28-32) See specially Isa 1:10-15, and note that this warning was uttered centuries after the literal cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. The prophet was therefore likening Israel to the ancient evil cities (a "city" is often taken as a symbol of a government); and sinful nominal fleshly Israel is a type of the nominal spiritual Israel of today-i.e., Christendom, which claims to be the people of God. Sodom and Gomorrah were situated at the south end of the Dead Sea (according to many competent authorities, whose arguments we believe to be correct); and this portion of land was afterwards included in the northern part of Idumea.

The overthrow of ancient Babylon, also, which typified "Babylon the Great," another name for Christendom, is likened to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. (Jer 50:40-46) This again shows how Edom prefigured the present social order; for Edom was associated with Babylon at the dethronement of the kingdom of Judah in 606 B.C., and was therefore doomed to partake of the retaliatory judgment on Babylon, and thus also on the judgment of the antitypical spiritual Babylon the Great. The 137th Psalm, which pictures the captive Israelites weeping in Babylon during the 70 years' desolation of Palestine, makes it clear that the Edomites were specially vindictive against Jerusalem, during the final siege and overthrow of that city. The captives were represented as praying: "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem: who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof."

The Lord said: "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?...yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau." (Mal 1:2,3) The Lord loved Jacob because he had respect to the future promises, and was willing to surrender earthly advantage to secure things not seen as yet.

But Esau despised his birthright, and sold it for a morsel of meat. His very name, and the name of his descendants, was ever after associated with this barter; for "Edom" was the name of his price-"red lentils." (Ge 25:29-34) This "earthly" tendency of Esau or Edom was further emphasized by his descendants, for the Edomites lived in holes and caves of the earth. The Horims who formerly dwelt in Mount Seir were troglodytes, that is, cave-dwellers. The Edomites' pride in the

FF9 security of their rock-dwelling is referred to in Jer 49:16 and Ob 3. Even to this day cave houses are to be seen in Mount Seir, which lies to the south of the Dead Sea.

In the Gospel Age the antitypical Edomite class were collectively the prospective bride of Christ, to whom they were originally espoused as a chaste virgin. (2Co 11:2). But because they preferred earthly things, and sold their spiritual birthright, the Lord rejected them from being his bride, and conferred this honor upon the true Israelite class. This rejecting of the spiritual Edom is picturesquely referred to in the words of the Psalmist: "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe." (Ps 108:9) According to Ru 4:5-9, it was the custom for a man to pull off his shoe when he renounced his liability to marry the wife of his dead brother, or any other liability imposed upon him by the law. It is probable that the custom mentioned in Ruth is a later modification

of the requirements of the law, as stated in De 25:7-10.

God alone is worthy

Lest we should think that it was because of great virtue in the nation of Israel, that God's special favor was with that people, while his disfavor was with the others, the Lord explains through the prophet Ezekiel: "I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went...For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land...then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel" (See the whole of chapter 36 of Ezekiel, and contrast it with chapter 35 Eze 35-36).

We are glad to know that in the times of restitution, all men, be they Moabites, Edomites, Philistines, or any other, shall surely be blessed by the seed of Abraham, and be given an opportunity to live; for Christ died for every man. The Lord used these nations as typical of great evil systems which must be destroyed forever, for they are the product of Satan's evil mind.

FF10 When Moses had strengthened the faith of the nation of Israel by his recital of how God had similarly aided four previously favored nations, the people then crossed over Jordan into the promised land.

Historical Knowledge a Basis for Faith

Another outstanding example of how the faith of the Lord's people is strengthened by a review of history, is furnished us in the case of Jeremiah. This prophet ministered during the forty years up to the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah in 606 B.C.

His prophecy that Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed, and that the land would lie desolate for 70 years while the nation was in captivity in Babylon, seemed incredible.

The Jews could not bring themselves to believe that the Lord would permit the destruction of the great Temple erected by David and Solomon, and into which His own glory had entered at the dedication over four centuries ago. The prophetic declarations of Jeremiah were therefore discredited. The calamity he spake of seemed too drastic to be relied upon. But Jeremiah fearlessly proclaimed the future doom of Jerusalem with its glorious Temple; for he reminded the people of a similar overthrow by the Lord in Shiloh.-Jer 7:11-14

According to Jos 18:1, when the land of promise was subdued after six years of conquest from the time of crossing Jordan, the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. During the whole of the period of the judges the Ark of the Covenant, representing God's presence, remained in Shiloh. But in the last days of the priest Eli a great calamity befell Israel. The ungodly conduct of the sons of Eli occasioned the loss of the Ark, which had been carried into battle against the Philistines. (1Sa 4) Thus, after about four centuries, the Lord caused a great overthrow in Shiloh because of the wickedness of the priests and people.-See Ps 78:55-64.

Jeremiah was confident that his message was from the Lord.

What had been done before could be done again, even though it might seem improbable. In Jer 7:11-14, we read: "Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord. But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the

FF11 first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel...Therefore will I do unto this house

[Solomon's Temple], which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done in Shiloh."

Just as Jeremiah's faith in his own prophecy was made strong by his review of parallel history, so the faith of the Lord's people who are proclaiming the destruction of the present nominal antitypical Spiritual Temple, is similarly strengthened.

Our historical outlook, and our knowledge of God's judgments in the past, are greater and more comprehensive than Jeremiah could have possessed. But our message has been more terrible; for have we not proclaimed the overthrow of all Christendom?

The common proverb, that "history repeats itself," is more true than many think. The Christian knows that the Lord supervises all things; and if history repeats itself it is the Lord's doing, not chance.

Knowledge is Necessary for an Effectual Prayer of Faith

James says that the prayer of faith shall save the sick. As an example he cites the prophet Elijah, who prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it did not rain for three and a half years; then he prayed again, and it rained abundantly.-See Jas 5:15-18.

It may not be clear at first why the writer connects these particular prayers of Elijah with the prayer of faith that saves the sick; but when we study the matter carefully we must agree that the illustration is appropriate and forceful.

Baal-worship had overrun the land of Israel, and completely captivated the people. Queen Jezebel was dominating her husband, King Ahab, and the prophets of Baal under her direction were causing Israel to sin, by falling away from the God of their covenant. Then Elijah bethought: The God of Israel is a living God, and His judgments are truth. Surely if the punishments pronounced by Moses, His servant, should ever be applied, the occasion has now fully come! Did not Moses say that if the people forsook the Lord and served other gods, that the Lord would make the heaven over their heads like brass, and the earth under their feet like iron?-De 28:14,15,23

Images and abominations were everywhere set up in the land,

FF12 and the Lord's commandments were forgotten. Therefore Elijah prayed earnestly that it might not rain; for as God lived, this judgment was due. And the Lord heard Elijah's prayer of faith, and honored it. James says it did not rain for three and a half years.

When the Israelites had been brought low because of the great drought, Elijah drove home the lesson to them. His method of accomplishing this was effective and highly successful. (See 1Ki 18:17-40). He proposed to the priests of Baal that an answer by fire should decide whether Baal, or Jehovah, was the God of Israel. As Baal was the great sun and fire god, the test proposed appealed to the people as reasonable. The result was a complete vindication of Jehovah's name. Elijah prayed: "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."

Then Jehovah sent down fire upon the sacrifice that had been prepared; and when the people beheld this manifestation of God's presence, they fell on their faces and cried: "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Elijah commanded that the idolatrous priests of Baal be slain; then he besought the Lord in prayer to send rain. The hearts of the Israelites were turned again to their God. Elijah therefore knew that he prayed according to the will of God when asking for rain; because just as the curse for idolatry had been sure, so the

blessing was equally certain when the worship of the true God returned. King Solomon had said, at the dedication of the Temple: "When the heaven is shut up and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them; then hear thou from heaven...and send rain upon the land."-2Ch 6:26,27

Thus we see that the effectual fervent prayers of Elijah, which were based upon his knowledge of, and absolute faith in, God's living Word, had saved the people of Israel from their sin-sickness.

We perceive, therefore, that God always honors faith in Him; but if we have knowledge of His Plan of the Ages, and place faith in this plan and pray in accordance with its innumerable details, we become co-laborers with God in a very actual sense. By our prayers of faith, uttered in harmony with the revealed will of God, we make it possible for the Lord of heaven and earth to execute

FF13 His great work of salvation. It seems a great claim to make; but this is the clear teaching of the Scriptures. (See Joh 15:14-16, especially verse 16.) Who would not desire to have a faith like this?

FF15 **Waiting on God**

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.-Lam. 3:26.

The Plan of Salvation shall run its appointed course according to times and seasons, which can neither be altered nor hastened.

The whole creation awaits God's good pleasure; but those who have an understanding of the Plan of the Ages do not wait in ignorance. The children of God wait because they believe that the Lord's times are best; the children of the world wait because they must.-Ro 8:19-23

Rewards for Faithful Waiting

We recall to mind how the Lord specially rewarded some of the Ancient Worthies who, in the midst of trials and testings, faithfully waited for the fulfilment of His promises.

Noah, after building the Ark, waited seven days for the flood. (Ge 7:10) This final period, though short, must have been a time of great trial. Noah endured, and his faithful waiting on God was vindicated when the waters bore up the ark, and he with his household were alone saved.

Abraham, after a long 25 years of waiting, had the joy of begetting a "son indeed," in whom centered all the promises.

For the fulfilment of these promises he still waits, as do also Isaac and Jacob, his heirs. But so real did the promises appear, that these three patriarchs "died in faith" having "seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them." (Heb 11:13) What grand men they were! There is nothing more wonderful in all the earth than a man who lives in quiet faith in God.

Moses waited for forty years in the wilderness for God to appoint him the savior of his brethren. He believed the Lord's promise that His people would be delivered from Egyptian bondage in the fourth generation (Ge 15:13-16); and when forty years old

FF16 he sought to be the champion of the oppressed. But at that time Moses went in his own strength, and thus failed. (Ex 2:11-15) His experiences during the succeeding forty years of waiting taught him his own nothingness; and when at last the Lord honored him, he was the meekest man in all the earth. (Nu 12:3) His long wait was not in vain-he became a mighty deliverer.

David would not kill Saul, although himself anointed king of Israel. In spite of many opportunities he would not slay the Lord's anointed, but waited God's time to ascend the throne. (1Sa 26:23) He recovered the sacred Ark lost many years before at the overthrow of Shiloh. David was a man after God's own heart.

Surely with these and many other examples we should willingly wait for the sure fulfilment of the promises the Lord has so graciously made to us. Nor do we forget the dire calamities that befell such as refused to wait upon God and His arrangements, when they knew they ought to have waited.

Punishments for not Waiting

The Jewish nation refused to wait for the return of the Lawgiver from the mount. "As for this Moses," they said, "the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." (Ex 32:1) And they made the golden calf in their impatience, and forsook the Lord. Because of this God threatened to blot them out; only two of all those above 20 years of age at the time of the exodus from Egypt, were permitted 40 years later to cross the Jordan into the promised land.-Nu 14:26-38

King Saul refused to wait for the return of Samuel, and contrary to the Lord's appointment forced himself to offer a sacrifice. In consequence of this his house was not permitted to continue the rule in the kingdom of Israel.-1Sa 13:8- 14

The Nominal Church of the Gospel Age refused to wait for Christ's return, and set up a counterfeit Christendom. The result was the formation of the "abomination that maketh desolate" during that dreadful period universally known as the Dark Ages. The Lord stigmatized the original Apostate Church as a "harlot"; and the later Protestant denominations are spoken of as her "daughters." In the symbolical language of SS 2:7, the true "virgin" Church of Christ counsels the nominal churches (daughters

FF17 of Jerusalem) not to stir up nor awaken love-that is, not to attempt to do the loving works of the Millennial reign of Christ; but to wait "till He please." And they are counselled in the name of the roes and hinds of the field-two swift animals which need not to be urged to fly like the wind when occasion is necessary. So love, backed by power, represented by the cherubim with outstretched wings on the mercyseat, will not require urging to fly to man's rescue, whenever the atoning blood is sprinkled upon the mercyseat the second time.

And in this we see the supreme examples of waiting; for God Himself waits to be gracious; He is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (Isa 30:18; 2Pe 3:9) **And our Lord Jesus has patiently waited, sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on high, until God makes His enemies His footstool. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world; and He will not alter any part of His plan, for He is a God of judgment.**

Blessed are all they who wait on Him.

Everything Awaits God's Good Pleasure

Even material things wait to give their harmonious testimony to the truth of the Lord's Word. The Great Pyramid in Egypt has waited for over 4,000 years to give its wonderful corroborative evidence. During all of this long period its purpose has been misunderstood. It has been set aside as merely an old tomb; whereas it is really God's "Pillar of Witness" referred to by the Prophet Isa 19:19,20

The Written Word has had to wait till the "living Word" should come to serve up its wonderful truths to His faithful people.

Daniel was told to "shut up the words, and seal the book" of his prophecies till the "time of the end," for none would understand their import till knowledge had increased, and many should run to and fro. (Da 12:4,9) Thus Daniel's writings had to wait for nearly 2,500 years before they could give their testimony. And even the entire Old and New Testaments, the "two Witnesses," had to wait "clothed in sackcloth," or dead languages, till the completion of the 1260 symbolical days (years), which is the beginning

FF18 of the period spoken of in Daniel as the "time of the end." (Re 11:3) They then came to "life," and were exalted to Heaven.

The Bible Societies, which came into existence immediately after 1799, multiplied the Scriptures a million-fold, and gave new life to the witnesses of God.

Archaeological remains of ancient days have waited in the dust of the earth (in Babylonia, Egypt, etc.) Until their comparatively recent discovery, to add their harmonious testimony to the truth of the Bible. Before the unearthing of these material evidences, many historical narratives in God's Word had been doubted by scholars. The child of God takes the Lord at His word, and is thus guarded against the errors arising from doubt. These archeological witnesses vindicate the faith of God's children.

Jacob's Waiting for Salvation Connected with his Son Dan

The founder of the Jewish nation, Jacob, declared that he waited for the salvation of God; and he strangely connected this hope with a prophetic utterance regarding one of his sons, Dan. We know that many of the patriarchs were prophets (Ge 49:1); and their prophecies have had to wait for further elucidation by God, before their deep meanings could be searched out. This is specially true of the prophecy concerning Dan.

In Ge 49:16-18, we read: "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."

The Tribe of Dan was Idolatrous

To understand this dark saying, we must trace the history of Dan; and we also require to take a broad survey of God's Plan of Salvation. In Judges, chapter 18, we learn that the tribe of Dan apostatized from the worship of Jehovah, and practiced open idolatry. It is for this reason, undoubtedly, that Dan is omitted when honorable mention is made of the 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel who were sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living God. (Re 7:1-8—Manasseh, Joseph's first-born, is there

FF19 substituted for Dan.) The whole manner of this tribe's apostasy evidences an unfaithful character from the first. Its people did not conquer their inheritance in the promised land, owing to lack of faith in God; for not in their own strength, but in God's strength, they could have overcome their enemies and possessed their portion of country. Their enemies proved too strong for them, and compelled them to keep to the hills; and latterly they forsook their inheritance and migrated north, to a country where the people feared no ill, and were not learned in the art of war.

These the Danites were able to overpower; they burned Laish, and established their own city instead, which they named Dan.

Thus the city of Dan became the most northern of all the cities; and as Beer-sheba lies in the south, the saying, "From Dan to Beer-sheba" became the picturesque way of denoting the entire length of Palestine.—Jud 20:1, etc.

Besides failing to conquer their own rightful inheritance in the land, and instead searching out an inheritance

for themselves and conquering a people who hardly knew their right hand from their left, the Danites on their journey northward forcibly possessed themselves of a man's private priest and images and established an idolatrous worship in their city of Dan. The Scriptures say that this state of affairs continued until the captivity. (Jud 18:29-31)

When on the death of Solomon the tribes of Israel divided into two kingdoms, we read that Jeroboam, the king of the ten tribes, in order to prevent his people from going up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord, made two golden calves, one of which he set up in Bethel (a little north of Jerusalem), and the other in Dan. Jeroboam then cried to his subjects: "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt"-after the example of his unfaithful ancestors in the wilderness at the time of the exodus from Egypt. "And this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan." (See 1Ki 12:26-30.) Jeroboam evidently found Dan to be a very suitable place to set up his idol.

Thus the city which the idolatrous tribe of Dan set up became the recognized center of heathen worship. The stolen images placed there by the Danites at the first, represented the gods of the heathen (Baalim); and the golden calf erected there by Jeroboam centuries later, stood for Osiris, the god of the Egyptians. And the

FF20 Greeks later on worshipped their god Pan in the same place.

Hence the name given to the city of Dan in later times by the Greeks-Paneas (pronounced by the Arabs Baniyas). The Romans called it Caesarea Philippi (after Philip, the tetrarch of the region). It lies at the source of the Jordan, as can be seen by consulting any Bible map.* *On some maps the name Dan is shown at a place called Tell-el-Kadi; but there is no doubt that this is a mistake. In spite of the fact that the name Kadi means the same as Dan, namely, "Judge," all the evidences prove that the successive cities of Laish or Leshem, Dan, Paneas or Baniyas, and Caesarea Philippi, all stood on the same site, two or three miles to the east of Tell-el-Kadi, and this site is at the source of the Jordan, where its waters break forth from the earth a full-born river, being supplied by subterranean streams.

When we recognized the fact that Pan and Osiris, and all the other heathen gods, had their origin in the apostate Nimrod, the founder of idolatrous worship, and that these gods claimed to be the saviors of the dying world (counterfeit Messiahs), we can appreciate the full and significant force of Jesus Christ's question to his disciples at this famous seat of the false Messiah. They were in Caesarea Philippi, the ancient city of Dan, and Paneas, when Jesus put the question: "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" And then addressing His disciples directly: "But whom say ye that I am? What joy Jesus had when he heard Peter reply: "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the Living God"! Jesus knew that none could perceive His identity except by inspiration. (Mt 16:13-17) Here, right in the very stronghold of the false Messiah, Jesus tested the faith and spiritual perception of His followers, to see if they could recognize Him as the true Savior of the death-doomed world! And the answer came spontaneously "Yes." Truly, flesh and blood could not have revealed this great truth, but the heavenly Father alone. Great was the rejoicing of Jesus. Six days later he took his more intimate disciples up the loftiest mountain in the land, Mount Hermon, and was transfigured before them to foreshow in vision his future glory in the Kingdom of Restitution.-Mt 17:1-9; 2Pe 1:16-18

Bethel, where the other idol was set up, was in Ephraim's division of the land. From one standpoint it is correct to say that the city of Dan was also in Ephraim, for this tribe was the largest of all, and frequently the entire ten tribes are collectively named

FF21 Ephraim. And as the particular division of land belonging to the tribe Ephraim is also called Samaria (1Ki 13:22), then this name Samaria as well as Ephraim, and also Israel, are used interchangeably as the name of the ten tribes. (Ho 7:1) Ephraim or Samaria are often taken to typify the apostate church of the Gospel Age.-Ho 4:17; 8:5,6 Dan-Judas- Satan So much, then, for the apostate character of the tribe of Dan.

Now, we know that the Lord overruled all things connected with His typical people of Israel, in order that they might foreshadow the antitypical realities of the Gospel and Millennial Ages. The Apostate Danites prefigured a similar unfaithful and treacherous class in the Gospel Age, who, forsaking the Lord, set up idols in their hearts. Of this class Judas Iscariot was the forerunner. Judas, however, was but a tool in the hands of Satan, who is the great adversary and betrayer of the Lord, the real Danite and "serpent by the way." (See Joh 13:26,27.) And just as the tribe of Dan forsook their first inheritance and seized an inheritance in the north, so Satan had said in his heart that he would ascend and sit in the "sides of the north," and that he would be "like the Most High."-Isa 14:13,14

In the symbols of the Scriptures, the four cardinal points of the compass are associated with certain definite conditions. Thus we read Ps 75:6,7. "For promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge; He putteth down one and setteth up another." By inference, God and the place of power are understood to reside in the north. Hence Satan's ambition to sit in the sides of the north and be like the Most High, that he might wield the sceptre of power. It is remarkable, too, that during the time of the building of the Great Pyramid (which edifice corroborates the Plan of the Ages), the north star was Alpha Draconis, the principal star in the "Dragon" constellation, a mythological representation of Satan. And this star at that time shone right down the Descending Passage of the Pyramid. When we recall that this downward passage symbolically represents the "Present Evil World," and that Satan is Scripturally called the "god of this world," we can see an appropriate significance

FF22 in this arrangement. We do not suppose that such coincidences are haphazard; we believe them expressly supervised by God to strengthen the faith of His people. Satan, that "Dragon" and "old Serpent" (Re 2:1), is the god of a dying world; and this fact is portrayed in the Lord's "Stone Witness" by the Dragon Star shining into the Entrance Passage, which descends at a steep angle down to the subterranean chamber or pit, symbolical of destruction.

Jehovah's Great "Horse" and its "Rider"

A "horse," when spoken of in a symbolical sense, represents an orderly plan or arrangement, progressing along an appointed path. Thus, the Lord's "horse," of which Jesus was the "Rider," is the Plan of Salvation-see Isa 31:3, where we read: "Now, the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit"-in other words, the plans, doctrines, and schemes of the world are not of the spirit of God; and woe to them who rely upon such "horses."

When Satan, the great Judas and Danite, waylaid and treacherously bit the heel of the Lord's "horse" so that the rider Jesus fell backward and was killed, he evidently thought he had upset the Plan of God, and had forever slain the Prince of Life.

But Jacob declared prophetically in the name of all Israelites indeed: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." (Ge 49:18) That which Satan considered to be a masterstroke, when he entered into the receptive heart of Judas and caused him to betray the Lord, was in reality his own undoing; for we read that Jesus became flesh for the suffering of death, that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death-that is, the devil." (Heb 2:9,14) Thus, the death of Jesus means the salvation of the world, and the destruction of Satan.

Further Light on the Tribe of Dan

Just as the founder of the tribes of Israel, Jacob, foretold what would befall them in the last days, so the lawgiver of the nation, Moses, uttered additional prophecies in connection with each tribe. The prophecy of Moses regarding Dan gives us further elucidation

FF23 as to the typical part played by this tribe in the Lord's Plan.

In De 33:22 we Read:"and of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp; he shall leap from Bashan." On glancing at a map of Palestine, it will be seen that Bashan is a mountainous district in the north, on the east side of Jordan; and the city of Dan was situated on the northwestern edge of this district. Bashan is thus identified with the idolatrous tribe of Dan.

Not only has the Lord caused the nation of Israel, and all the nations round about, to typify and illustrate various features of His glorious Plan of Salvation, but even every mountain and valley in and around the land of Palestine, every sea and river, the plains, deserts, cities, animals, trees, herbs, etc., are used by Him to symbolize or represent some detail in that wonderful Plan. Thus we find that the mountain of Bashan represents the kingdom of Antichrist, the stronghold of the Danite or Judas class. This thought is borne out in Ps 68:15,16. In the Authorized Version this passage reads: "The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; an high hill as the hill of Bashan. Why leap ye, ye high hills? This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever."

The Hill of Bashan versus the Hill of Zion

Every Bible student knows that the hill in which the Lord, figuratively, desires to dwell, is the hill of Zion. (See Ps 132:13,14.) The Psalmist is therefore contrasting Bashan with Zion. This thought is more evident in Leeser's translation, or, better still, in the Variorum Bible. We could render the passage thus: "The hill of God [is it] the hill of Bashan? [No.] A hill of many peaks is the hill of Bashan. Why are ye so envious, ye hill of many peaks? This [small, unpretentious hill of Zion] is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever."

During the Gospel Age the great Antichrist system would fain have called itself the Kingdom of God; and even as the imposing and many-peaked hill of Bashan looked askance at little Mount Zion, and envied its position of favor with the Lord, so the proud Antichrist with which all the high ones (many "peaks") of earth

FF24 identify themselves, has envied, while despising and persecuting, the little Zion class, the little flock, to whom it is the heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.

Our Lord Jesus, when encouraging His followers not to fear, for it pleased the Father that the Kingdom should be theirs, counselled them to be like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return." (Lk 12:32,36) The Apostate church refused to wait, and it claims to have already set up Christ's Kingdom, calling the kingdoms of this world "Christendom."

Did Dan "leap from Bashan"? Yes, in the person of Judas, he leaped upon our Lord Jesus as a hungry lion upon its prey; for even at that early time Antichrist had its small beginning. (1Joh 4:3) Our Lord called Judas the "son of perdition," which is also the name applied by the Apostle Paul to the "man of sin"-i.e., the Antichrist. (Joh 17:12; 2Th 2:3,7) During the whole of the Gospel Age the Danite or Judas class have been "leaping" from the Bashan system upon the body- members of Christ.

The Bulls of Bashan

David, prophetically in the name of Jesus, as well as in the name of Jesus' foot-step followers (in a secondary sense), speaks of this persecuting class as "Bulls of Bashan." See Ps 22:12,13 (margin): "Many bulls have compassed me; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They opened their mouths against me as a ravening and a roaring lion." (Notice the first verse of this Psalm.) The mountainous country of Bashan was famous for its breed of cattle (De 32:14); and its bulls are taken as types throughout the Old Testament of cruel and loud-mouthed oppressors (see Am 4:1). During the height of its power in the Papal Millennium, the heads of the counterfeit kingdom of Christ oppressed the "little flock" with their "bulls of excommunication."

Why did the Papacy call these notices of ostracism "bulls"? Is it not because such decrees were backed up with so much fierce and irresistible power (even kings tremble at them), that they could be truly likened to the great strength of a bull's head set with terrible horns? We believe that this may be the explanation, for Papacy makes much use of graphic language.

FF25 While Patiently Waiting, we Earnestly Long for the Kingdom

But "Bashan" is rejected; and "Zion" is still waiting for the Kingdom. Doubtless our dear heavenly Father desires to develop in us during this final period, an earnest longing to see Him and His beloved Son. Such longing may be accentuated by trials. Ps 42:1-3 bears out this thought: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?"

The full force of this similitude is rather obscured in the Authorized Version. To appreciate the Psalmist's thought, we must remember that for a continuous six or seven months of the year rain never falls in Palestine. With very few exceptions the rivers and streams dry up, and then the only water supplies are the springs and wells, and cisterns hewn in the rock.- Jer 2:13

Wherever a good and constant spring exists, a village is generally to be found. Sometimes the water must be conducted from the spring's source to the houses, and in such cases a covered-in aqueduct may be used. Holes are pierced at intervals through the cover of the aqueduct, to prevent bursting from the accumulation of air. There appears good reason to believe that it was an aqueduct like this to which the Psalmist referred, and that the text should read: "As the hart panteth over the aqueduct," etc. The hart knows that the water is there, for it can both hear and smell it through the air-holes in the cover. The animal pants after the life-giving water, but is unable to quench its thirst. We can well imagine the distress of the poor hunted creature as it stands over the closed-in waterway in the midst of that dry and thirsty land! In a similar manner, we who are in this earthly tabernacle do groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven; for we know that when we are like Christ, we shall appear before Him and see Him as He is. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of heaven. We have heard of the patience of Job; it was not for his sake so much as ours that Job declared: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come."-Job 14:14

FF26 We have need of patience, that after having done the will of God, we should receive the promise. Soon our waiting will be over; and then what joy it will be to hear the poor groaning world shout: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, and we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."-Isa 25:8,9

Revelation IV

After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven.

And behold the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter. Immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne saw I four and twenty seats, and elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and voices and thunderings: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was as a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts

[living creatures] full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and third beast had a face like as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they have no rest day and night, saying Holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who lived for ever and ever, amen, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever amen, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they were created. (Re 4 Sinaitic Manuscript.)

FF27 Summary of Chapter IV of Revelation*

*References to "The Finished Mystery" have been omitted at the discretion of the Publishers.

This chapter is a pen-picture, in symbolical language, of the great Jehovah in his identification with his glorious Plan of the Ages. It reveals him as being the Author of that wonderful Plan.

These symbols, also, have the virtue of hiding the truth from the natural man, because the natural man has not that Spiritual discernment which enables the Spiritual man to perceive the true meaning behind the symbol. Jesus therefore spake in parables and dark sayings, in symbols, for the double purpose of hiding his meaning from the natural, worldly mind, and of making the truth exceptionally clear and reasonable to the humble, honest, and teachable mind. Unto this latter class it is given to comprehend the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Another virtue of the symbol is, that it conveys to the instructed mind in one word truths which would take many words in the ordinary way to explain. A symbol may also teach the spiritually minded deep and vital truths which ordinary words could never fully reveal. After instruction the spiritual mind does not think of the symbol, but reaches out to the true meaning behind it. In this connection see Joh 6:53-63.

Symbolical language is the language of the Spirit; for the symbols used convey to the mind the deep spiritual truths which God desires to impress there.

John the Revelator was given his visions of the things pertaining to the Plan of the Ages in order that they might instruct the spirit begotten Church of the Gospel Dispensation, especially during the very end, or "harvest" of the Age. The members of the Church may be called the "John" class, because they "see" the visions that John saw, not in symbols, but in their realities.

The "John" class are permitted to see these heavenly things from God's standpoint; for God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, yea, even the deep things of God.

The Plan of the Ages is the work of God himself. He sits in his throne in heaven wielding authority and directing all things

FF28 according to his own good will and pleasure, and none can say him, Nay. In character he is like the jasper and the sardine stones; for these two stones have special features which well represent the characteristics of Jehovah. Like the jasper, or diamond, he is perfect and glorious; and even as the crystal of the diamond has eight triangular faces (like two solid pyramids set base to base), and thus 24 angle-points (8 by 3 equal 24), so God is perfect in himself (a Pyramid being the symbol of perfection), and has 24 viewpoints, all expressed by himself through the mouths of his holy prophets, 24 in number. Like the sardine stone he retains a clear impression of all his creation.

The sardius is the engravers' stone, taking on a high polish and permanent engraving, perpetuating the work

of the world's best artists. So the Lord never forgets the work of his hands. His tender mercies are over all his works. He has engraved us upon the palms of his hands. (Isa 49:15,16) Earth's millions who have entered the tomb are remembered by him, and will be raised from the dead, each with individual identity. The dead are not preserved anywhere except in the remembrance of God.

Thus He is like a jasper and a sardine stone.

The authority of Jehovah is established in absolute justice, and therefore absolute peace is assured for ever. Without justice there can be no peace. This fact is recognized by men, and they accordingly appoint special representatives of the crown (of the king on his throne) whom they name "Justice of the Peace." By dispensing justice, they preserve peace. The green rainbow round the throne of Jehovah is the symbolical picture of this fact; the rainbow being the express symbol of perfect peace, and the green (emerald) color representing everlastingness.

Jehovah requires 24 different styles of utterances to fully declare his character and Plan. The utterances of the 24 prophets of ancient days are represented by the 24 "Elders" who sit on thrones around His own throne. Beginning with Enoch and ending with John the Baptist, God's inspired prophets declare the glorious character of Him that sits on the throne, and by their utterances foretell the loving design of His mighty plan of salvation. The white raiment and gold crowns show the spotless and wholly clean annunciation of God's mouthpieces (even though the men themselves were not perfect); and the crowns represent their glory and honor, conferred upon them because of their willing

FF29 and loving obedience to their God. Their glory was really His glory; and those who speak of God's loving character and glorious plan of Restitution, are holy in His sight. None others are holy.

During the long and gloomy night of earth's history, lightning-flashes of truth and righteousness have been sent by God, that His people might see their path through the darkness. Errors have also been shown up clearly to those who were expectant.

The result has been much wordy conflict. Many ideas as to the right road to pursue have resulted from the momentary dispellings of the enveloping darkness. But those who saw clearly the errors were alone able to avoid them and walk the right way. They also could pronounce judgment upon those who upheld the errors. The lightnings, voices, and thunderings which proceeded from the throne represent all this. God through it all has perfect command of the situation. His knowledge is all comprehensive, as shown by the symbol of the seven "lamps of fire" which are the seven "spirits of God," and the "seven eyes."

The troubled condition of mankind, which is like the raging of the sea, is thus clear and calm in God's sight, and also in the sight of God's consecrated people, who view matters from His standpoint. The ever-changing conditions and opinions and doings of men, like the tossing sea, is confusing and terrifying when viewed from the earthly standpoint; but from the heavenly standpoint, represented by God's throne, this raging "sea" is but a reflection of God's own orderly plan, clear as crystal to all who are rightly informed. They recognize that God rules in the kingdom of men, and that He moves always in strict harmony with the four attributes of His character, perfect justice, power, love, and wisdom, doing violence to none of them. The four "living creatures," which represent these four attributes, are said to be in and around the throne, being woven into its very fabric, showing that God's sovereign rule is perfect in every moral respect, even though during the out-working of his plan he might be misjudged by those not understanding his purpose.

Indeed, none could fully understand his purpose until the end of the six thousand years of earth's history. Each of the symbolical creatures had six wings, operating in pairs. The wings represent the six thousand years, through which the four attributes of God "flew," gradually revealing themselves and thus making manifest God's graciously benevolent character. The order of the

FF30 four "living creatures," as stated, represent the successive order in which God revealed his four perfect attributes. Justice (the "lion") was revealed first in the condemnation of the human race because of disobedience. Power (the "calf") was revealed second in the destruction of the "Old World of the Ungodly" in the overpowering flood. Love (the man-faced creature) was revealed third in God sending His beloved and only begotten Son to die as a ransom-sacrifice, in order to redeem the death-doomed world. Wisdom (the "flying eagle") was revealed fourth at the full end of the six thousand years, when the beauty and wisdom of God's Plan is now clearly seen by the Lord's people, the six thousand years, represented by the six wings of the living creatures, having carried the Plan toward completion.

Those who are privileged to look on these things at this time perceive that each one of Jehovah's attributes takes full cognizance of the others, doing no violence either before or after to the work which each has to perform. Indeed, none of these attributes can operate without the cooperation of the other three, for all work together, even though the effects of the work of one may at times be more manifest than of the others. The complete cooperation of all four attributes in every phase of God's Plan is well symbolized by the four living creatures as presented in the prophecy of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel, chapter one, each of these four creatures had the four faces which represent justice, power, love, and wisdom. Each of the symbolical creatures see in the future what will require to be done in the outworking of the Plan of the Ages, and they each look at the past to the work which has been accomplished, and keep in strict harmony therewith. We, therefore, can well understand why the four "living creatures" are said to have been "full of eyes before and behind," and also "full of eyes within"; for nothing has transpired, or ever will transpire, without God's knowledge. In the past six thousand years, whether hidden or partially revealed, God's justice, power, love and wisdom, have been evident in all the affairs of His plan of salvation. They have never "rested," but have always "worked" together toward the grand consummation. Blessed are those who can call themselves co-workers with God. They will rest from their labors, but their works will follow with them in the glorious Ages to follow the completion of the six thousand years.

FF31 In the seventh thousand-year period the work of Restitution will be gradually carried out; and in the eighth thousand-year period full circumcision of the hearts of mankind will have been attained. In this mighty work the overcomers of the past six thousand years, both spiritual and earthly, will be joyfully engaged. While the revealment of the four attributes of God was complete at the end of the six thousand years, the six "wings" having carried them, as it were, till God's secret was due to be finished, yet the work of these four attributes will continue in the hands of the Christ, head and body, for two thousand years more, until God's loving and perfect character is fully revealed to all in heaven and on earth. The holiness of the Heavenly Father's character, the absolute harmony of his four attributes, has been clearly revealed to his special covenant peoples. In the Age of Restitution, and in the Age of "holy convocation" to follow (i.e., the seventh and eighth thousand-year periods*), the Lord's *According to the Bible chronology, the eighth thousand-year period of the history of man on earth is also the fiftieth from the time when God began to form the earth. (See the chronological chart, diagram No. VIII, which demonstrates this interesting fact.) In this sense, therefore, the great thousand-year period which follows the Millennial reign of Christ may be called a grand Jubilee, when everything will have reached full restoration and perfection, all evil and evil-doers having been cut off by that time. The eighth thousand-year period really represents eternity.

Beauty of holiness will be apparent to every being, whether in earth or in heaven. Thus the four "living creatures" are represented as crying "Holy" eight times; for every 1,000-year "day" has been holy to the Lord God Almighty, as all will fully realize when the "days" are finished. All will realize that the great Jehovah, who has been from everlasting, and will be to everlasting, has carried toward its glorious completion all his foreordained Plan of the Ages. His four attributes, which will then be evident to all, will forever continue to glorify Him. By these he will have gained honor and power, for their fulfillment in every particular will demonstrate that He is the God of truth, and therefore worthy of everlasting honor and obedience. The recognition of his loving provision for the lasting joy and peace of all his creatures as foretold by his servants the prophets, 24 in number, will call forth the unfeigned love and adoration of every being in heaven and

earth. Worthy indeed is He to receive

FF32 glory and honor and power from that creation which he formed for his own pleasure. With infinite patience he has waited for it, and when it is fully established there will be pleasures forevermore and peace everlasting. Amen.

NOTE-Regarding the symbolical significance of the four "living creatures," we are glad that Vol. VII "Studies" presents the correct understanding of this matter. All Bible students who know the Lord's Plan of the Ages are agreed that they represent the four perfect attributes of God. The opinion has been expressed that, instead of the lion representing justice, it better represents power; for, said the Philistines in answering Samson's riddle, what is stronger than the lion? Also, instead of the calf representing power it better represents justice, because bulls and calves were sacrificed to satisfy justice. This claim- namely, that the lion symbolizes power, and the calf justice- seems reasonable at the first glance. Yet the Scriptures rather prove the other view, the calf being undoubtedly a figure of power, and the lion of justice. Apart from the order in which the four living creatures are stated in the 4th chapter of Revelation, which agrees well with the manifestations of God's four attributes throughout the six thousand years of earth's history, we find certain declarations elsewhere in the Bible which decide the matter for us in favor of the interpretation given in Vol. VII "Studies." The word "calf" and the word "bull" or "bullock" are used synonymously. But there is another word used in the Scriptures for the same species of animal, and which is sometimes mentioned along with the bull and bullock. We refer to the "unicorn." (See [Isa 34:7](#), where the three words occur together: "And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls." Also in [De 33:17](#), we read "His [Joseph's] glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth.") This word "unicorn" is really a misnomer; for, as the word itself signifies, a unicorn is an animal with only one horn, whereas the particular animal referred to in the Scriptures had two horns, like an ox or bull.

This fact is demonstrated in the marginal reading of [De 33:17](#), where it speaks of the "horns of an unicorn." The Hebrew word is "Reem," a well-known animal of the olden days, which became extinct about the middle ages. The

FF33 discovered remains of the ancient Reem (in the Lebanon mountains of Palestine) show that it was an animal of the ox variety (not a rhinoceros, as suggested in the marginal reading of [Isa 34:7](#); or the buffalo). Wherever the word "unicorn" occurs it should be translated "wild ox," as in the Revised Version. The Reem was noted for its untameableness. ([Job 39:9,10](#)) It was very fleet and active. ([Ps 29:6](#)) It was noted for its horn, of which it had more than one, as we have mentioned. ([Ps 92:10](#)) In [De 33:17](#), and in [Ps 22:21](#), the Authorized Version has the phrase: "horns of the unicorns."

Now the translators of the Authorized Version knew that a unicorn has but one horn; and as the word "horn" occurs in the plural in the original Hebrew Scriptures, and is thus rightly rendered "horns," they thought that more than one unicorn must be meant, and put the word "unicorn" also in the plural to agree with "horns." This is a mistake, for the Hebrew while in the plural for "horn," is in the singular for "unicorn." The passage should have been translated: "Horns of a unicorn (as given in the marginal reading of [De 33:17](#)); or, rather, "horns of a Reem," or wild ox. This wild ox, a specially strong, nimble, and fierce species of the bull, is used by the Lord to symbolize His might power. In this connection see [Nu 23:22](#); [24:8](#)- "God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of the wild ox"-the Reem, mistranslated "unicorn." Thus we perceive that Jehovah's strength is compared to the ox, and the strongest species of this animal. Then we know, of course, that the horns of the ox were used specially to symbolize power; the passages cited above prove this.

Justice is represented by the lion. The voice of authority is always represented by its loud voice; and true authority-that is, the authority that will be respected and obeyed, is strictly just.

The roar of the lion would thus in itself very well represent the loud authoritative voice of Justice. "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion,"-His judgments against the evil nations shall be loudly proclaimed from Zion, the Spiritual Kingdom. (Joe 3:16) If we compare this passage in Joe 3:16 with the similar passage in Isa 2:3, we perceive that the "roar" of the Lord (like the roar of a great lion), is identified with the "law" (justice) of the Lord. In Joel 3:16 we read: "The Lord also shall 'roar' out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem;" and in Isa 2:3 we read; "out of Zion shall go

FF34 forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." In both passages the context shows that judgments and justice are to be meted out among the nations during the time of the spiritual and earthly phases of the Kingdom of Righteousness, which phases are represented by Zion and Jerusalem. In Nu 24:9, after comparing the Lord's mighty strength to the wild ox (in Nu 24:8), the writer compares His justice to a lion. Jehovah is represented as a great lion "crouching," meaning that, so far, God's justice is largely held in abeyance during the period of the permission of evil. While the "wrath" of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, His justice is not yet fully vindicated (except to the eye of faith-the children of God are the only ones who realize His absolute justice, and this only as they exercise their faith in the great Plan of the Ages-God, of course, is never at any time unjust). Justice has not yet been meted out to wrong-doers, for we read that God knows how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished; nor have the Lord's faithful people received their just rewards for well-doing. But when, in the Millennial Age, the "great lion" is at last "roused up," then "blessed" will be he who blesses God, and "cursed" will be he who curses God! Justice will then be laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. In this connection see also Ge 49:9,10, where Judah is compared to an old lion ("who shall rouse him up?"), out of whom the "lawgiver" is to come-i.e., the one who dispenses justice.

Satan, the god of this world, is said to go about as a "roaring lion," seeking whom of the Lord's little ones he may devour. (1Pe 5:8) All persecutions of God's people have their origin in Satan, who accuses them before God day and night. Now, persecutions are generally instigated in the name of justice, but they are really perversions of justice. Satan is not the true lion; it is the "lion of the tribe of Judah," the Lord Jesus, who satisfied justice, and prevailed to open the secrets of God. (See Re 5) One of these profound secrets (represented by the "seals") is the reason for the permission of gross injustice by Him whose throne is founded on justice.-See Re 6.

It is to be noted that in Solomon's throne, which was typical of the Throne of God, lions constituted a very prominent part of the ornamentation.-1Ki 10:18-20 Love is represented by the man-faced creature, for man, in his perfection like Adam before his fall, and the man Jesus Christ, is

FF35 the most loving of all God's earthly creatures. None of the creatures of earth could represent love more perfectly than the perfect man, in whose heart the law of his God is written, the sum of which is love for God and neighbor.

Wisdom is symbolized by the flying eagle. The wonderfully keen vision of this bird represents well the clear-sightedness of wisdom. The care of the eagle over its young, when instructing them in the use of their wings, shows great wisdom. It wisely puts its little ones into such a position that, while guarding them from injury, their flying powers are developed.-See De 32:11.

FF37 Mythology and the Bible

It may be asked: What possible connection can there be between Mythology and the Bible? Is not a myth an untruth; whereas the Bible is the "Word of Truth"?

It is important to notice, however, that many of the ancient mythical tales have a substratum of historical fact; and much in them that appears fabulous and nonsensical on the surface, proves on careful investigation to

have a hidden meaning.

That the ancient nations of Babylon, Egypt, Greece, etc., were highly civilized is demonstrated by the remains of their wonderful architecture, the style of which cannot be improved upon even by the advanced nations of our day. Such cultured people must have had some reason, satisfactory to themselves, to induce them to worship their mythical gods. The Bible throws light upon this question; and a little knowledge of Mythology aids us to understand a number of very obscure texts of the Scriptures.

Scriptural Recognition of Heathen Gods

In giving the law to the Israelites, the Lord commanded them to on no account worship the gods of the other nations; but we read of many instances where they deliberately disregarded this injunction, and were in consequence punished until they returned to Him, the only true God. Jeremiah records a case in point in chapter 44, verses 15-19,25-"As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had

FF38 we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven," etc. See also Jer 7:17,19-"Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and they pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger."

Who was this "Queen of heaven" in whom the erring Jews had such implicit confidence?

In Jud 2:11-13 is recorded another falling away of the Israelites: "And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord unto anger. And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth."

Who was Baal? Who was Ashtaroth?

As all are aware, the Bible contains many references to Baal; yet it does not disclose the identity of this god, nor explain why the faithless Jews and other peoples so consistently rendered him obeisance. It is here that we are aided by Mythology, the study of which reveals the fact that the god Baal, and the goddess the Queen of heaven, were universally worshipped under various names and titles. While this is recognized by students of Mythology, it is not so generally realized that these same deities are even now worshipped in our very midst by the adherents of that great idolatrous system which the Scriptures name "Babylon the Great"!

The Two Babylons

History proves that Papacy's adoration of images, dead saints and relics, its holy candles, holy water, etc., and all its vain ritual, are borrowed from heathen sources. Papacy's excuse, as voiced by Cardinal Newman, is that although it is admitted that such things are "the very instruments and appendages of demon-worship,"

FF39 they were, however, sanctified by adoption into the church." (Newman's Development, pp. 359,360) But it is now clearly apparent that the Romish Church has not been justified in adopting heathen customs and practices. For this very reason, Papacy is denominated "Babylon the Great"; the Babylon of old was full of these abominations, and therefore well typified the fallen church of the Gospel Age.

Babylon was the first nation or kingdom after the deluge, and by it idolatrous worship was inaugurated.

Comparing Jer 51:6-8, with Re 17:4,5; 14:8, we notice that almost the same expressions are used. In Jeremiah, ancient Babylon is said to have been a golden cup in the Lord's hands, by which all nations were made drunken-drunken with the wine of false religion. In Revelation "Babylon the Great" is called the "Mother of Harlots," the parent system, which made all nations drink of her golden cup full of abominations, the wine of false doctrine. As typical Babylon fell, so shall antitypical "Babylon the Great" fall never to rise.

That Babylon was the first nation after the flood is shown by Ge 10:8-12. This reference, also, furnishes a clue to the origin of the worship of false gods; and by comparing with certain statements in mythological histories we get a further clue to the identity of these deities. We read: "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, 'Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord.' And the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land he went forth into Assyria and builded Nineveh," etc. (See margin.)

Nimrod the Mighty Hunter, and his Influence in the World

Why should the Bible make special mention of Nimrod?

Because he was the first to become mighty; and even to this day the countries of Babylonia and Assyria are filled with the name of Nimrod. When Moses wrote Genesis, although Nimrod had long since passed away, his name had become a proverb, so that it was a popular saying: "Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord." His might lay in the fact of his being a hunter;

FF40 for we must reflect on the conditions which would obtain in the earth in his day. Only four human pairs were preserved from the waters of the deluge; but many kinds of animals came forth from the ark; and as these animals multiplied one can see how the terror of the more ferocious among them would lay hold upon all men. He, therefore, who brought destruction to the tiger, the leopard, the lion, the python, was regarded as the great benefactor, the man above all others to be honored by his fellows and commemorated by posterity.

The universal popularity of an individual must be a force for good or for evil to the community. Although the Scriptures do not directly allude to the nature of the influence exerted by Nimrod, we may safely infer from the character of his parentage, and from other circumstances, that it was evil. That his grandfather, Ham, had a depraved disposition is proved in Ge 9:18-25; while in the same connection Shem was given a special blessing because of his purity. (Ge 9:26) Thus we gather that very shortly after the deluge the human race was divided into two camps, one for the Lord and righteousness among whom Shem took the leading part, the other for unrighteousness with Ham as the principal apostate. Of the latter branch of the race Nimrod was descended.

It is improbable, therefore, that the declaration that Nimrod was a "mighty hunter before the Lord" signifies that he in any way sought thus to honor the Lord. In such a connection the phrase "before the Lord" rather implies a belittling of the Lord's power to protect His own. Perceiving the menaced condition of the race, Nimrod, trusting to his own prowess, came forward as the bold savior of the world, and becoming a mighty one in the earth attracted men's attention away from the Lord. The natural result of the admiration of a man of Nimrod's character must necessarily have been to destroy reverence for God, and thus lead to the adoration and worship of the creature instead of the Creator. That the world did fall into infidelity shortly after the flood is proved from the first part of the eleventh chapter of Genesis. The great Jewish historian Josephus says in confirmation: "The multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God."-Ant. 1:4:2

FF41 We cannot suppose, however, that the saintly few would permit this evil without exerting some effort to stay the downward course, for the Lord's people in all ages from the time of righteous Abel have protested against sin. If the tradition of the Jews be true that Shem was Melchizedec (and the claim seems reasonable and quite in accord with Scripture analogy), then, as "Priest of the most high God" he must have been a very Hercules in the Lord's cause, and a constant check to the evilly disposed.

Thus far we may reasonably infer from the brief references to Nimrod given in the Scriptures. To gain further information about this mighty hunter we require to study the pages of Mythology.

Ninus and Semiramis

In Ge 10:11, already quoted, we read that Nimrod built the city of Nineveh. This little item of Bible history enables us to identify Nimrod with the king Ninus of classical writings. The name Nineveh literally means "The habitation of Ninus." The historian Apollodorus expressly states that "Ninus is Nimrod." (Apollodori, Fragm. 68 in Muller, Vol. i. P. 440) In the ancient records of Justin and Diodorus Siculus, Ninus is credited with similar kingly powers as are attributed to Nimrod by the Scriptures. (Justin, Hist. Rom. Script., Vol. ii, p. 615; Diodorus, Bibliotheca, lib. ii. p. 63) Ninus was the son, as well as the husband, of Semiramis. According to Eusebius these two reigned as king and queen in the time of Abraham; but the great chronologist Clinton, and the celebrated Excavator and Linguist Layard, both assign an earlier date to the reign of Ninus and Semiramis.

In one of the famous sculptures of ancient Babylon, Ninus and Semiramis are represented as actively engaged in the pursuits of the chase, the "quiver-bearing Semiramis" being a fit companion for the "mighty Hunter before the Lord."-Diodorus, lib. ii, p. 69 Semiramis was a beautiful but very depraved woman, and it is to her that much of the extravagant and licentious character of the heathen religions has been ascribed. In his work Inferno, in the 5th Canto, Dante pictures Semiramis as one of the

FF42 damned in hell (not purgatory); and he also mentions Ninus in the same connection. Although Dante's "visions" were a figment of his imagination, yet his consigning Semiramis to eternal punishing shows the bad esteem in which she was held.

The "Mysteries" of the Heathen Religions

The Chaldean "Mysteries" can be traced back to the days of Semiramis. It appears that her husband's apostacy was quite open, and consisted mainly in leading men into sensuality, teaching them that they might enjoy the "pleasures of sin" without fear of retribution from a holy God. In his hunting expeditions he was accompanied by troops of women; and by music, games and revelries, and everything that pleases the natural heart, he insinuated himself into the favor of the world.

It was after the death of Ninus or Nimrod that the secret "Mysteries" were set up by Semiramis and her followers.

Nimrod's death is not noticed in the Scriptures, but there was an ancient tradition that his end was violent. Strange though it may seem, numerous lines of evidence (which we shall investigate as we proceed) prove that it was this very death of Nimrod that constituted the foundational theme of the Mysteries.* *Reference to Hislop's 2 Babylons.

Salverte informs us that all who sought initiation into these systems were compelled to drink peculiar intoxicating beverages. This is undoubtedly the origin of Jeremiah's allusion to the golden cup which made all nations drunken; for every nation received its idolatrous religion from Babylon.

In all essentials the "Mysteries" of the different nations were the same, each being fashioned after the pattern

of the "Mother" nation Babylon. Regarding this Layard says: "Of the great antiquity of this primitive worship there is abundant evidence, and that it originated among the inhabitants of the Assyrian plains, we have the united testimony of sacred and profane history. It obtained the epithet of perfect, and was believed to be the most ancient religious system, having preceded that of the Egyptians. The identity of many of the Assyrian doctrines with those of Egypt is alluded to by Porphyry and Clemens." Birch, also, says: "The Zodiacal signs...show unequivocally that the Greeks derived their notions and arrangements of the Zodiac

FF43 [and consequently their Mythology, which was intertwined with it] from the Chaldeans. The identity of Nimrod with the constellation Orion is not to be rejected."-Layard, Nineveh and its Remains, Vol. ii, pp. 439,440.

We see, therefore, that ancient Babylon was a fitting type of that wonderful "Mystery of Iniquity" of the Gospel Age, called "Babylon the Great." Just as that great system had its small beginning in the days of the Apostles, being alluded to by Paul in 2Th 2:7-"The mystery of iniquity doth already work," and afterwards attained so great dimensions that it has deceived the whole world, so the typical Mystery in literal Babylon also began in a small way, then grew and extended, and latterly became so universal that all nations were made "mad," i.e., void of judgment. Only those who worship the true God had the spirit of a sound mind.-2Ti 1:7

"Mother and Son" Worship

While in "Babylon the Great," the principal subjects of devotion are the Madonna and her child (said to be the virgin Mary and Jesus), so in typical Babylon the popular worship was extended to a goddess mother and her son, who had their origin in Semiramis and her son Ninus (the Hebrew word for "son" is nin). Remembering the religious influence which proceeded from Babylon, we have here the explanation of the universal adoration of the "Mother and Son." In Greece they were worshipped as Ceres the great mother, with the babe at her breast; or as Irene the goddess of Peace, with the boy Plutus in her arms. In Pagan Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter-puer, or Jupiter the boy. In Asia as Cybele and Deoius. In India as Isi and Iswara; and even in Thibet, China, and Japan, missionaries were astonished to find the exact counterpart of the Madonna and her child as devoutly revered as in Papal Rome itself!

The Egyptian God Osiris was Nimrod

In Egypt the Mother was worshipped as Isis, and the Son as Osiris, though more often as Horus. Regarding Osiris, Bunsen shows that he was represented as at once the Son and Husband

FF44 of his mother, and actually bore as one of his titles of honor the name "Husband of the Mother." (Bunsen, Vol. i, pp. 438,439) This serves to identify Osiris with Ninus who married his own mother. There are many strong proofs that Osiris was Nimrod or Ninus. In some of his forms Osiris was represented clothed in a leopard's skin; and as it is a principle in every religion that the high priest wears the insignia of the god whom he serves, the Egyptian high priest wore a leopard's skin when officiating on all important occasions. This article of apparel was intended to commemorate some outstanding event in connection with the god Osiris; for all the strange clothing and head gear of the heathen gods and priests were signs or symbols intended to convey some meaning to those who were educated to understand them-that is, to the "initiated." We who are initiated into the mysteries of God's glorious plan of the Ages (Mk 4:11), have an understanding of the symbolisms of the garments of the Jewish high priests.

The name Nimrod means literally "The subduer of the leopard," being derived from nimr "a leopard," and rad "to subdue." In these ancient days much significance was attached to names, as students of the Bible are aware. Nimrod's name, therefore, implied that his fame as a hunter rested mainly on the fact that he had discovered the art of training the leopard to aid him in hunting the other wild beasts. A particular kind of

leopard, named the cheetah, is used for hunting in India even at this day.

When we find that Osiris and his priests are represented arrayed in leopard's skins, we may be sure that deep meaning was attached to this costume; we believe that it was intended to convey to the initiates the understanding that their god Osiris was in reality Nimrod, the renowned "Leopard-tamer." It is well known that Nimrod or Ninus, on becoming mighty, extended his dominion, conquering Egypt, in addition to other countries.

Plutarch says there was a tradition among the Egyptians that "Osiris was black." (De Isid, et Os., Vol. ii, p. 359) As the Egyptians were dark people themselves, the blackness of Osiris must have been more than ordinary to have called for special comment. In his book of Plates, Belzoni shows a colored drawing of the recognized figure of Osiris, which he copied from the life-size paintings on the walls in one of the tombs of the kings at

FF45 Thebes. (Plate V) The face and hands of this figure are jet black. Wilkinson, also, in his 6th volume, shows a figure of Osiris which has the features of the negro; and it is significant that this negro figure of Osiris is clothed in a leopard's skin.

Professor C. Piazzzi Smyth draws attention to the unmistakable negro features of the great Sphinx near the Pyramids of Gizeh, which idol is pronounced to be a representation of Horus, the son of Osiris and Isis. Horus, however, is only another form of Osiris. This, then, is further identification of Osiris with Nimrod, for Nimrod was black, being the son of Cush, whose name signifies "black." Ham, also, was black; he is the father of all the black races.

The Ethiopians were very black, and this people were descendants of Cush. Eusebius says: "Chus was he from whom came the Ethiopians." (Chronicon, Vol. ii, p. 109) Josephus says the same. In the original of Jer 13:23, the word "Ethiopian" reads "Cushite,"-"Can the Cushite change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" See also Ge 2:13, margin.

Nimrod's Death the Foundational Theme of Heathen Religions

There are many more proofs of the identification of the Egyptian god Osiris with the Babylonian Nimrod, but those we have mentioned will suffice for our present purpose, namely, to gain information as to the manner of Nimrod's death; for the account of the death of Osiris is well known. Osiris met with a violent death, and that violent death of Osiris was the central theme of the whole idolatry of Egypt. If Osiris was Nimrod, as we have seen reason to believe, that violent death of Osiris which the Egyptians so pathetically deplored in their annual festivals, was just the death of Nimrod.

The account of the death of Osiris as given in the Egyptian Book of the Dead (a copy of which is frequently found entombed with mummies), is as follows: While Osiris was absent on a certain occasion, his enemy, who was named Sem, entered into a conspiracy with 72 of the leading men of Egypt to put Osiris to death. The plot succeeded. Osiris was slain, and his body was torn into 14 pieces which were scattered throughout the country. Isis greatly lamented her husband's death, and searched about

FF46 for the pieces of his body. Wherever she discovered a piece, she buried it and erected a shrine over it.

The Patriarch Shem, and his Godly Influence in the World

Wilkinson shows (Vol. v, p. 17) that Sem was one of the names of the primitive Egyptian Hercules, who was said to have, by the power of God, fought and overcome the giants who had rebelled against heaven. In plain language, this mythical tale simply means that the Hercules Sem or Shem (see Lk 3:36), the great opponent of idolatry, was enabled by the power or spirit of God to so convince the tribunal of 72 supreme Judges of

Egypt of the enormity of the offence of Osiris or Nimrod, as to persuade them to condemn and put that "mighty one" or giant to death and to send parts of his dismembered body to the various cities as a solemn declaration in their name, that "whosoever follows the example of Nimrod (Osiris) shall meet with a like penalty." In following this course Shem was acting according to a recognized judicial custom, instances of which are found in the Scriptures.-See Jud 19:29; and 1Sa 11:7.

Afterwards, the upholders of the idolatrous religious system of Egypt stigmatized the leader of the "conspiracy" as Typho, or the "Evil One." One of the most noted names by which Typho was called, was Seth. (Epiphanius, Adv. Hoeres, lib. iii) The names Seth and Shem are synonymous, both alike signifying "The appointed one."

This persuasive power of Shem, by which he caused the great Nimrod to be condemned to death, was symbolized by the tusks of a wild boar. We read in Mythology that the god Adonis perished by the tusks of a wild boar. Now Adonis is identical with the god Tammuz, and Tammuz with Osiris. (Kitto's Illustrated Commentary, Vol. iv, p. 141; Wilkinson's Egyptians, Vol. v, p. 3) In Egypt, the pig was the symbol of evil; and as the horn is the ancient symbol of power, being so recognized in Scriptures, the tusks in the mouth of the male pig signifies that it was by the "power of his mouth" that the evil one, Seth, caused Adonis (Osiris) to be put to death. In memory of this deed, the peoples of many countries have caused countless boars to lose their

FF47 heads in sacrifice to the outraged god. This explains why the boar's or pig's head is even at this day a recognized dish at the Christmas dinner in Britain, though the reason for the custom has long been forgotten. In India, a demon with a "boar's face" is said to have gained such power through his devotions, that he oppressed the "devotees" of worshippers of the gods, who had to hide themselves. (Moor's Pantheon, p. 19) Even in Japan there seems to be a similar myth.

Thus the righteous Shem, blessed by Jehovah, has been stigmatized and misrepresented in all the heathen religions of the world; while the idolatrous Nimrod who led men away from the true God, and who was justly condemned to death because of his evil deeds, has been exalted to the status of a god himself.

This turning of things upside down, however, shall not stand, for Jehovah shall now soon vindicate himself on behalf of his righteous servants.

We are reminded here of what the Egyptian historian Manetho wrote regarding the builders of the Great Pyramid: "There came up from the East, in a strange manner, men of an ignoble race, who had the confidence to invade our country, and easily subdued it by their power without a battle. All this invading nation was styled Hyksos-that is, Shepherd Kings." He adds that this people afterwards departed for Judea and built there a city named Jerusalem. The head of these Shepherd Kings has been recognized as the patriarch Shem, and Shem as Melchizedec, king of Salem. (Heb 7:1,2) It is certainly quite in keeping with the exalted methods of this "king of peace" that he subdued the Egyptians without a battle, persuading them only by the spirit or power of God to close their idolatrous temples and do his bidding. (See Great Pyramid Passages, Vol. i, pars. 4-6.) It shows how wonderful was the godly influence which this venerable king and "priest of the most high God" exercised in the early stages of the "present evil world." He was indeed a fit type of Christ in the Millennial Age, whom God sware would be a "Priest forever after the order of Melchizedec." (Ps 110:4) In face of such great power for righteousness, one can see how the iniquity instigated by Satan, the god of this world," would inquire to be very warily conducted. Hence the term "mystery" or "secret," of iniquity.

FF48 **The False "Seed of the Woman"**

When the mighty Nimrod was violently put to death in the midst of his career, great indeed must have been the lamentation among his followers. Semiramis would, naturally, experience the greatest grief and loss. She

had shared with him his kingdom and glory, but now all this honor had suddenly come to an end. Semiramis, however, was a woman of unbounded ambition, and she by no means intended to quietly step aside without a bid for fame on her own account. That she succeeded in making a name for herself is fully attested by the pages of ancient history. A most daring suggestion was advanced which she seized upon and resolutely carried out—namely, that she should claim that her dead son was none other than the promised "seed of the woman" who had been destined to bruise the serpent's head, and who, in doing so, was to have his own heel bruised! Formerly her son had been honored as the mighty hunter and benefactor of the world; but though he was now dead she would declare that he had risen and had been deified, and thus have him worshipped as a god! We say that this bold scheme was suggested to Semiramis, for who could have instigated such an imposition except the "father of lies"? That "old serpent," Satan, caused the fall of mankind through his lying suggestion to Eve (Ge 3:1-6), and he now attempted to frustrate Jehovah's glorious plan of redemption by introducing his false Messiah, a lying counterfeit of the true. In consequence of this the whole world has been led astray, and few indeed have had the privilege of knowing God and Jesus Christ whom He sent. Only those who have been initiated into the mystery of God by means of the enlightening action of the Holy Spirit, have been able to discern the true Messiah. (Mt 16:15-17) We are rejoiced to know that the time is not now far distant when the poor deceived world will have its eyes opened and recognize its true Redeemer, and when the people will shout: "Lo, THIS is our God; we have waited for him, and HE will save us." (Isa 25:9) Satan has taken advantage of the religious element in man, and by his blinding lies has directed the world's worship to himself, becoming in very deed the "god of this world." (2Co 4:4) He had said in his heart "I shall be like

FF49 the Most High," and he sought to follow out this desire in every possible way. But he shall be "cut down to the ground" in the Lord's due time (Isa 14:12-17); and Jesus Christ, who did not seek to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and was obedient unto death, shall be highly exalted and given a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow in adoration and worship. (Php 3:6-11, Diaglott) "Exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high," is the principle on which God works.

The patriarchs, and the ancient world in general, were acquainted with the story of the temptation in Eden, and they knew that the seed of the woman was ultimately to destroy the tempter. Because of this, and because of the innate wickedness of the hearts of men (Jer 17:9), Satan was able to foist his counterfeit "Seed of the woman" upon the world. We know that this is so, for there is hardly a people on earth whose mythological religion does not contain reference to the "Seed" bruising the head of the serpent. Referring to this phrase of the religions of the heathen countries, Wilkinson (Vol. His p. 395) says: "The evil genius of the adversaries of the Egyptian god Horus [Osiris in another form] is frequently figured under the form of a snake, whose head he is seen piercing with a spear.

The same fable occurs in the religion of India, where the malignant serpent Calyia is slain by Vishnu, in the avatar [incarnation] of Crishna. The Scandinavian deity Thor was said to have bruised the head of the great serpent with his mace. The origin of this may be readily traced to the Bible." The Greeks, also, represented their god Apollo as slaying the serpent Pytho; and Humboldt shows that the Mexicans had the same belief concerning their god Teotl: "The serpent crushed by the great spirit Teotl, when he takes the form of one of the subaltern deities, is the genius of evil—a real Kakodaemon." (Mexican Researches, Vol. i, p. 228) When examination is made of these various myths, it is found that in almost every case the serpent-destroying god dies as the result of injuries received in the combat, thus showing that the Pagans knew that it was by dying that the promised Seed was to destroy the adversary.

In the above quotation from Wilkinson, it will be noticed that he attributes to the Bible the knowledge which the Pagans

FF50 had of destroying the serpent as the incarnation of evil; but he no doubt means that this knowledge may be traced to the account of the temptation in Eden, which afterwards appeared in the Bible. The Bible as we

have it, of course, did not begin to be written till after the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, 1615 B.C. Long before this date (the Exodus was 857 years after the flood) the false religions of Babylonia, Egypt, and the other countries were fully set up, originating, as we have said, with Semiramis and her followers. In the midst of all this idolatry, however, the Lord always had his faithful few- Noah, Shem, Abraham, and others being specially mentioned. It was because the worship of the false Messiah was in full operation in Egypt and in the other countries, that Jehovah repeatedly warned his people, the Jewish nation, against following them.

Bowing down to "sticks and stones" was in reality the worship of the dead. These images enslaved the minds of those who served them, giving a seeming actuality to beings who did not exist; for the "gods" whom they represented were in their graves, and are still waiting for the resurrection in the Millennial reign of Christ.

The "Image of Jealousy"

We have already mentioned the fact that the popular subjects of worship in every nation have been the "Mother and Son," images of whom were everywhere set up. Even the Jewish nation was for a time guilty of worshipping the Babylonian goddess with the false Seed in her arms, for one of her images is evidently referred to by Eze 8:3 when he says: "And the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy." This image of the "Mother and Son," erected as the result of the jealousy of Satan against the coming true Seed of the woman, provoked God to jealousy because it misdirected the devotion of His people, to whom He had said: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image....Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." (Ex 20:3-5) In Egypt the "Mother and

FF51 Son" were worshipped as Isis and Osiris, whose very names signify "the woman" and "the seed"; for Isis is the Greek form of H'isha-the woman; and Osiris is read on the Egyptian monuments He-siri, -the seed.

The "Deification" of Nimrod

The mythical story in Egypt of the deification of Nimrod by Semiramis is to the effect that Isis, who was a great enchantress and had much knowledge of "magical ceremonies," instructed Horus and a number of his "followers" to perform a series of operations in connection with the burial of his father, which had the effect of raising Osiris from the dead, and of establishing him as king in Amenti, i.e., the "Hidden Place," or the other world (Fourth Sallier Papyrus in the British Museum.- Although Horus was the son of Osiris, he was merely another form of Osiris himself, being a new incarnation of that god).

Thus, by following Satan's lie, that the dead are not dead, Semiramis and her deluded followers caused others to believe that Nimrod was not now dead, but that he had been resurrected, and had become a god and should be revered as such. But it is evident that if this advanced form of idolatry was to become established, it was indispensable that it should be inaugurated in secret, and be operated with extreme caution; for the terror of execution, lately inflicted on one so mighty as Nimrod, was too real to be ignored. This, then, was the beginning of that iniquitous system of "Mystery" which has been so far-reaching in its desolating effects, and which the Lord used as a type of that still greater "desolating abomination," the mystic "Babylon the Great" of the Gospel Age.

The very nature of the "Mysteries" gave great facilities for imposing on the senses of those who were being "initiated." It is well known that magical arts were invented by the Chaldeans.

Epiphanius, after considering the evidences open in his day, pronounced it as his opinion that it was "Nimrod that established the sciences of magic and astronomy." (Adv.Hoeres, lib. i, tom. i, Vol. i, p. 7 c) All the fertile resources of magic, therefore, were employed by Semiramis and her intimate followers, to give color to the

lying deceptions of those Mysteries of which she was

FF52 the originator. But notwithstanding all the care and precautions of the conductors of these ceremonies, enough has leaked out to enable us to gain a clear insight into their character.

Candidates for initiation were made to pass through the ordeal of the confessional, and were required to swear by binding oaths to maintain the secrecy of the system they were desirous of entering. After thus surrendering themselves implicitly to the priests, they were anointed with "magical ointments" which introduced into their bodily systems such drugs as tended to excite their imaginations and add to the power of the indispensable intoxicating drinks, that they might be prepared for the visions and revelations that were about to be made to them. Wilkinson, describing the experiences of those undergoing the process of initiation, says: "Strange and amazing objects presented themselves. Sometimes the place they were in seemed to shake around them; sometimes it appeared bright and resplendent with light and radiant fire, and then again covered with black darkness, sometimes thunder and lightning, sometimes fearful noises and bellowings, sometimes terrible apparitions astonished the trembling Spectators." (egyptians, Vol. v, p. 326) Then, at last, the great hidden god was revealed to them in such a manner as to allay their fears and call forth their admiration and blind affections. It was easy for those who controlled the Mysteries, having discovered scientific secrets which they jealously preserved in their own exclusive keeping, to give the ignorant initiates what might seem ocular demonstration that Nimrod who had been slain, and for whom such lamentations had been made, was again alive, and now encompassed with heavenly glory. Thus the whole system of the secret "Mysteries" of Babylon introduced by the help of magic (sham miracles), was intended to glorify a dead man; and when once the worship of one dead man was established, the worship of many more was sure to follow.

In this way Nimrod became the "father of the gods," being said to be the first of "deified mortals." As such he was worshipped under the titles of Kronos and Saturn. Saturn was the god of the Mysteries, the name itself signifying "the Hidden one." He was revealed to the initiated, but hidden to all others.

FF53 "The Identity of the Greek God Bacchus"

Another of the names under which the deified Nimrod received honor was Bacchus. In Greece, Bacchus was symbolically represented by a spotted fawn, which animal was intended in the figurative language of the Mysteries to covertly identify Bacchus with Nimrod. The name of the fawn in Greece was "Nebros," which signifies "the spotted one," while the name of Nimrod, as known to the Greeks, was "Nebrod," and is so translated in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures-i.e., the Septuagint. It will be remembered that Nimrod gained much of his success as a hunter by training the leopard to assist him in the chase. The skin of the fawn was intended to suggest the spotted leopard. The custom of wearing the skin of fawn appears to have been imported from Assyria direct, for some sculptures excavated in Nineveh show a god bearing a spotted fawn in his arm, in such a way as to indicate that the animal is to be regarded as a symbol. (Vaux's Nineveh and Persepolis, chap. viii, p. 233) Leopards were employed to draw the car of Bacchus; and he himself was represented clothed with a leopard's skin as were also his priests, although sometimes the skin of the fawn was substituted.

The Greek Bacchus and his priesthood, therefore, were in this respect similar to the Egyptian Osiris and priesthood.

Herodotus, the father of history, always speaks of Osiris as being Bacchus (lib. ii, cap. 42), and so also does Diodorus, who says: "Orpheus introduced from Egypt the greatest part of the mystical ceremonies, the orgies that celebrate the wanderings of Ceres, and the whole fable of the shades below. The rites of Osiris and Bacchus are the same; those of Isis and Ceres exactly resemble each other, except in name." (Bibliotheca, lib. i, b. 9) This is an additional proof that Bacchus and Nimrod are the same, for we have already seen that Osiris was Nimrod.

The ivy, so conspicuous in all Bacchanalian celebrations, was an express symbol of Nimrod. The Greek word for ivy is "Kissos"; and Kissos was one of the titles of Bacchus. (Pausanias, Attica, cap. 31, p. 78) Now, the name of the descendants of Cush was pronounced in Greece "Kissioi." (Strabo, lib. xv, p. 691) The ivy branch carried by the votaries of Bacchus, therefore, signified

FF54 to the initiated that Bacchus was the "branch of Cush" -i.e., Nimrod, the son of Cush. This also accounts for one of the titles of the Greek god Apollo-"Kisseus Apollon." It serves to identify Apollo with Nimrod (among other proofs), meaning literally "The Cushite Apollo."

From Anacreon (p. 296) we learn that another of the titles of Bacchus was "Aithiopais," which means "the son of Aethiops."

We have already pointed out that the Ethiopians were descendants of Cush, and therefore Aethiops must have been Cush himself.-See Hab 3:7, margin.

The literal meaning of the name Bacchus is "the lamented one, being derived from Bakhah "to weep" or "lament." Hesychius (p. 179) says that among the Phoenicians "Bacchos means weeping." The Hebrew word used in the Bible for weeping and lamenting is Baca, or Bakah. (See Ps 84:6, where the word Baca appears untranslated-"valley of Baca," should read "valley of weeping.") On certain mystical Bacchanalian festivals a spotted fawn was torn in pieces, and great lamentations were made. Photius tells us the significance of this ceremony: "The tearing in pieces of the nebroi [or spotted fawns] was an imitation of the suffering in the case of Dionysus" or Bacchus. (Photius, Lexicon, pars. i, p. 291) Thus the great lamentations which followed the violent death of Nimrod (Nebrod), when his body was torn into 14 pieces by the judges of Egypt, was annually commemorated by the various nations. The backsliding women of Israel wept for the death of the false Messiah under the name of Tammuz, in memory of the wailing of Semiramis for the death of Nimrod: Eze 8:13,14, reads: "Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz." It is significant that these women sat at the north gate, the same place as the seat of the "image of jealousy" mentioned in Eze 8:3. Tammuz is identified with Osiris, and is therefore the same as Bacchus.- Wilkinson's Egyptians, Vol. v, b. 3; c. xiii, p. 10 When Jesus, the true Messiah and Savior of the world, was being led to death, we read that the women "bewailed and lamented him." But Jesus rebuked them and said: "Daughters of

FF55 Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."-Lk 23:27,28 The reason why Bacchus is commonly understood to be the god of wine, drunkenness and revelry, is because of the effect which the mysterious beverages and ointments had upon his devotees.

The uninitiated merely saw the after effects, but did not understand the true import of these Bacchanalian orgies, which were claimed to be for "the purification of souls." (Servius, in Georg., lib. i, Vol. ii, p. 197) The "elevating" effect which the process of anointing, etc., had upon the initiates of the false religions, is manifestly a miserable counterfeit of the godly joy experienced by those who, on being anointed with the Holy Spirit, gain an understanding of the glorious truth as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. (1Co 2:9-16) The Apostle says: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Holy Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph 5:18,19) To the worldly, the exhilarating and joyful effect which the Holy Spirit has upon those who newly come into the light of God's Truth seems to be the result of intemperate drinking, or due to insanity. Many of us have had the experience of being thus misjudged. So also were the members of the early Church at Pentecost misrepresented, some of the bystanders mockingly saying: "These men are full of new wine." (Ac 2:1-18) But we care nothing for this, because we know that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."-1Co 2:14 Not only was the anointing of the Holy Spirit counterfeited by the false religions, but

nearly every virtue and exalted office was ascribed to the false savior of the world that belongs to Jesus Christ. Without doubt this is the reason why Satan, the "god of this world," by counterfeiting the truth as nearly as possible, has had so great hold upon the hearts of mankind. The Apostle says: "The whole world lieth in the wicked one." We know that the great Papal system, well named Satan's Masterpiece, has been a wonderful counterfeit of the glorious Millennial reign of Christ; and now we see why it was denominated by our Lord "Babylon the Great," because it was the antitype of that iniquitous system

FF56 which originated in Babylon of old. Just as Satan tried to frustrate Jehovah's plan of redemption, by forestalling the Millennial reign of Christ with his false Papal Millennium, during which the Popes have successively reigned as king of kings, and lord of lords; so he also sought to becloud the purpose of God by forestalling the advent of Jesus Christ, by bringing in his false Messiah. It was claimed that the death of Osiris (that is, of Nimrod) was sacrificial, submitted to for the benefit of the world.

Osiris the False Savior

The monuments of Egypt show that the worship of Osiris dates from the earliest times, and that he was regarded as the "god- man who suffered, died, rose again, and reigned eternally in heaven." He was the "King of eternity, lord of the everlastingness, the prince of gods and men, the god of gods, king of kings, lord of lords, prince of princes, the governor of the world, whose existence is everlasting." (Papyrus of Ani, Plate I, in the British Museum) Osiris was the god who made men and women to rise from the dead, and bestowed upon them everlasting life. He was the resurrection itself.-Guide to the Egyptian Collection in the British Museum, p. 139 We have already seen that, after the death and mutilation of the body of Osiris, the man-god of Egypt, by Seth (Shem), Horus the son of Osiris, assisted by a number of beings who were called the "followers of Horus," performed a series of magical rites whereby the rejoining of the limbs of the god was effected, and he revived. The Egyptians argued: "Certain ceremonies were performed by Horus on the body of Osiris, and he was mummified, and as a result he rose to everlasting life; we therefore will have the same ceremonies performed over our dead bodies, that we also may live again." This seemed to have been the reasoning which originated the practice of mummification. The Egyptians firmly believed that if the body was not preserved after death future life was impossible. They therefore endeavored above all things to insure that their mummies would have perfect protection, spending large sums of money on intricate tombs, etc., so that it may truthfully be said that this people expended more upon the dead than upon the living. It demonstrates

FF57 how "void of judgment" they were, and how deceived by Satan; for how could the preservation of their poor bodies secure for them a future life! We are reminded of the Apostle Paul's ridicule of some who were evidently arguing like the Egyptians: "Thou fool, thou sowest not that body that shall be!" It is important to notice that in their elaborate religious system, the idea of repentance never entered the minds of the Egyptians. With them the commission of sin was regarded merely as a breach of the ritual law of the community, and could be atoned for by certain payments, after which the law breaker considered himself free from all obligation, real or moral. In the Coptic, which is the nearest to the ancient language of Egypt, there is no word for "repentance"; the translators were obliged to transfer the Greek word itself into the Coptic version of the New Testament. As all heathen religions are essentially the same, this manifests a vital difference between them and the true religion; for repentance from sins is the first step in the work of salvation, as declared by the Apostle Peter when he addressed the assembled Israelites in the temple: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." (Ac 3:19) The Papal Church follows the lead of its ancient type in disannulling the need for repentance from sins, and atonement by the blood, by instituting "indulgences" and the "sacrifices of the mass."

Origin of the Yule Log and the Christmas Tree

One of the titles of the false Messiah was Baal-berith, which means "Lord of the Covenant," and as such he is referred to in Jud 8:33-"And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned

again...and made Baal-berith their god." It is now recognized that the 25th day of December, although called "Christmas-day," is not the true day of the birth of our Lord Jesus. The beginning of October is more nearly correct for his birth as a man, and April for his birth as a new creature. But the 25th day of December was originally observed by heathen countries far and wide, in honor of the supposed birth of their false Messiah (Wilkinson's Egyptians, Vol. iv, p.405); and it was in order to conciliate them, and to swell

FF58 the number of the nominal adherents of Christianity (so called), that the same festive day was adopted by the Apostate Church, giving it only the name of Christ. The Christmas tree so common at this day, was equally common in Pagan Rome and Pagan Egypt. This is the reason why "Babylon the Great" adopted it, for there is no command in the Scriptures requiring the followers of Christ to observe the day of his birth by Christmas tree celebrations. Briefly-the putting of the "Yule log" into the fire on Christmas eve, and the appearance next morning of the Christmas tree laden with gifts, represented the consuming of the great god who, like the log, had been cut in pieces, and his after birth in newness of life as the "Branch of God," or the Tree that brings gifts to men. The Egyptians used the palm for their Christmas tree, but the people of Pagan Rome used the fir, because the fir tree covertly symbolized the risen god as the Baal-berith of old Babylon; for Baal-berith- "Lord of the Covenant," differs only one letter from Baal-bereth- "Lord of the Fir tree."

The God Saturn, and Bull Worship

The mystical symbol of Osiris was the young Apis bull or calf, Apis being another name for Saturn, the hidden one. The Apis bull was also known as Hap, which in the Egyptian language means "to conceal." In the Chaldean language Hap means "to cover." (Guide to the Egyptian Collection in the British Museum, p. 131) We now see why the Jewish nation made and worshipped the image of a calf soon after leaving Egypt under Moses, claiming that this was the god who had delivered them out of bondage, meaning, of course, that Osiris whom the calf represented was the god. A figure of the Apis bull in a covering resembling the spotted skin of the leopard, is illustrated by Col. Hamilton Smith. (Biblical Cyclopaedia, Vol. i, p. 368) Attention has already been drawn to the significance of the leopard's skin, which identifies Osiris with Nimrod, the "subduer of the leopard." Isis was represented by a cow, called the cow of Athor, which is well known to be a spotted cow.- Wilkinson, Vol iv, p. 387, and Vol. vi, Plate 36 The bull was the express symbol of Nimrod, being the hieroglyphic which showed him as the "mighty one" and "lord of

FF59 the chase." In Assyria the word for "bull" signifies also a "ruler" or "prince"; and it was for this reason that the mighty kings of Babylonia and Assyria, who succeeded and imitated Nimrod the first king, were represented by great human-headed bulls. These bulls, also, have wide expanding wings, to show that not only was the king himself a might one, but that he had "mighty ones" under his command. Nimrod and his followers are the mighty ones or "giants" who are spoken of in Mythology as having "rebelled against heaven." The Hebrew word for "mighty one" in Ge 10:8 is "Gheber" (this same word is translated "giant" in Job 16:14). A synonym for Gheber is "Abir"; but "Aber," pronounced nearly the same as Abir, is the word for "wing." Thus, "Baal-abirin" means "Lord of the mighty ones," while "Baal-abin" means "lord of the wings," or "winged one." (The word abir occurs in Jud 5:22-"the pransings of their mighty ones"; while aber is found in Isa 40:31-"They shall mount up with wings as eagles.") There is allusion to the "wings" of an Assyrian king in Isa 8:6-8.

As the horn is the ancient symbol of power, these Assyrian bulls, though human-headed, nevertheless show horns curving round their headgear. The reason why the horn is used as a symbol of kingly authority and power appears, from certain sculptures discovered by Layard when excavating Babylon, to be directly owing to Nimrod's prowess as a great hunter. In a woodcut in his Nineveh and Babylon, page 605, Layard shows the Assyrian Hercules (that is, "Nimrod the Giant" as he is called in the Septuagint version of Genesis) without weapons attacking a bull. Having conquered the bull, he sets its horn on his head as a trophy of victory, an evidence of his great power in being able to overcome so strong an animal. Thus crowned he is now represented as encountering a lion, the king of beasts.

This accounts for the ancient custom among Eastern nations of kings and chiefs wearing horns on their heads as evidence of their power and authority. (Smith's Bible Dictionary, Art. "Horn")

The Satyrs and the God Pan

In the Armenian version of the Chronicle of Eusebius, Ninus stands first in the list of Assyrian kings. This agrees with the

FF60 Scriptural notice of Nimrod, who is said to have been the first to become mighty, and to have had the first kingdom. According to Pherecydes, Kronos or Saturn was "the first before all others that ever wore a crown." (Tertullian, De Corona Militis, cap. 7, Vol. ii, p. 85) Here is therefore an additional proof that Kronos or Saturn was Nimrod. It explains why the Greek Bacchus was represented as wearing horns, and why he was frequently addressed by the epithet of "Bull-horned." (Orphic Hymns: Hymn li, To Trietericus, Greek, p. 117) Apollo, whom we have seen is likewise identified with Nimrod, is addressed in the Orphic Hymns, as the "Two-horned god." (Hymn to Apollo) The companions of Bacchus were called Satyrs, and are said to have "danced along with him." (Aelian Hist., p. 22) The Satyrs were horned gods; and knowing the identity of Bacchus, it is easy to see that his companions the Satyrs were really the "mighty ones" over whom Nimrod was lord. It is generally agreed that the god Pan was the head of the Satyrs. Now, Satyr is just another form of the word Satur or Saturn-"the Hidden one." Pan was therefore the first of the Satyrs or hidden ones.

When Nimrod or Osiris was put to a violent death as the result of the judicial condemnation of the 72 leading men, it produced great terror among his followers who immediately hid themselves, hence the derivation of the word pan-ic-extreme or sudden fright. Referring to the effect which the slaying of Osiris by Typho (Seth or Shem) had upon his followers, Plutarch says: "The first who knew the accident that had befallen their king, were the Pans or Satyrs who lived about Chemmis; and they, immediately acquainting the people of the news, gave the first occasion to the name of Panic Terrors."-de Isid. s. 13

Devil Worship

It is from the name Kronos that the English Word "crown" is derived; and the familiar spiked crown which adorns the heads of European monarchs still conveys the idea of the horns of the ancient Eastern kings. Plutarch says that "the Romans looked upon Kronos as a subterranean and infernal god." (Vol. ii, p.266) In Ausonius, also, we read that "Saturn is not among the celestial, but the infernal gods." (Ecolog. i, p. 156) Pluto, also, is

FF61 called the "god of hell"; and this name has the same significance as Saturn, meaning "the Hidden one"; for Pluto is derived from Lut "to hide," which with the Egyptian definite article prefixed becomes "P'Lut." Both Wilkinson (Vol. iv, p.63), and Bunsen (Vol. i, pp. 431,432) show that Osiris in Egypt was the "king of hades," or Pluto. Hades, as we all know, is the "hidden state." Actually, however, Pluto or Saturn was none other than the incarnation of the Devil, who hid himself under the disguise of the serpent when he caused the fall of man in the garden of Eden, and who has hidden himself from the world ever since under his refuge of lies. It is curious that the popular representation of the Devil, with the horns, hoofs and tail, is exactly the appearance of the black Nimrod when he is depicted in the sculpture encountering the lion; for in that hieroglyph he wears not only the two horns of the bull over which he had previously gained victory, but its hind legs and tail as well! "Auld Hornie" is the popular name by which the Devil was known in Scotland in the older days. The Satyrs, also, were half animals, having the hind legs and tail of the goat in addition to the horns. The connection of the goat-like Satyrs with the Devil is borne out by the Hebrew word sa'yr. This Hebrew word is translated as he-goat in 2Ch 29:23- "They brought forth the he-goat [sa'yr] for the sin-offering"; as devils in Le 17:7- "And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils" [sa'yr]; and as satyrs in Isa 13:21-"Babylon...shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah...and satyrs [sa'yr] shall dance there."

The system of the "Mysteries" demanded that all its ritual, etc., should be kept carefully secret. Everything in connection with them was symbolical and had a hidden meaning, and the initiates were not allowed on pain of death to divulge their real nature. Herodotus, who was initiated in the Mysteries of Egypt, makes this apparent when he refers to the goat-like appearance of the god Pan. He says: "It is not that they [the initiates] believe he [Pan] really had that form; they think him like the other gods; the reason [of his goat-like appearance] being connected with religion, I am not at liberty to explain it." (Birch's Wilkinson, Vol. iii, p. 186) The "hidden things of darkness," however, are now being made manifest in this enlightening day (the beginning of the Millennium), and we know that the mystic

FF62 reason for the goat part of the Satyrs is connected with their panic and their sudden flight to hide themselves on hearing of the violent death of their chief; for "Berkha," the word for "fugitive," signifies also "he goat." One of the epithets of the god Pan, the head of the Satyrs, was Capricornus, which means "goat-horned."

Origin of Sun and Fire Worship

The Chaldean name for Nimrod, the son of Semiramis, was Zero-ashta, from zero "the seed," and ashta "the woman." But the word Ashta also means "the fire," so that Zero-ashta, "the seed of the woman," became Zeroastes or Zoroaster, the well known name of the head of the fire worshippers. In general history the Zoroaster of Bactria is most frequently referred to; but the voice of antiquity is clear and distinct to the effect that the first and great Zoroaster was an Assyrian or Chaldean, and that he was the founder of the idolatrous system of Babylon, and therefore Nimrod. (Suidas, Tom. i, p. 1133) After his death the deified Nimrod was fabled to have been "born from the fire"-Zero-ashta, the "seed of the fire"-and as such he was revered as the great sun-god Baal. Theophilus of Antioch informs us that Kronos, which as we have seen was one of the titles of the deified Nimrod, was in the East worshipped under the names of Bel and Bal.-Clericus, De Philosophia Orientali, lib. i, sect. ii, cap. 37 Nimrod was the first Babylonian king, and therefore the title Molech is primarily applied to him, for "Molech" means "king." We thus perceive why the Scriptures indicate Molech (or Moloch) to be the terrible god of fire, the earthly representative of Baal the sun god. In Jer 32:35, we read: "And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin." It was claimed that the act of passing through the fire was for the purpose of purifying, and this probably reconciled the parents who sacrificed their children to Molech. They were under the delusion that the fire that consumed the little

FF63 ones also perfected them, and made them meet for the future life. The god Tammuz, who is identified with Nimrod, and for whom the women of Israel lamented annually (Eze 8:14), is really connected with fire worship and with the thought of purification therefrom, for the name Tammuz is derived from tam, "to perfect," and muz, "to burn"-to make perfect by burning. This, no doubt, is the origin of the imaginary place called Purgatory, the fire of which is supposed by Papacy to be necessary to perfect men's souls, and to purge away the sins they carry with them into the unseen world! The error, of course, naturally arose through credulous belief in Satan's lie at the beginning, namely, that there is no real death, but that the soul is independent and immortal, and continues to live in the spirit world after the death of the body. Those who believe the truth of God are shielded from so great an error, and know that the dead shall remain in their graves till the glorious resurrection morning. How deceived the poor world has been! In Jer 19:5,6, we read: "They have built also the high place of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called 'Tophet,' nor 'The valley of the son of Hinnom,' but 'The valley of slaughter.'" The name "Tophet" given to the valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna as it is called in the New Testament, is derived from toph, which in Isa 30:32 is translated "tabrets," i.e., drums. By the noise of tabrets or drums the priests of Baal sought to drown the cries of the children who were being offered in sacrifice to the terrible Molech. Because of this abomination the Lord cursed the valley of Hinnom, and in recognition of

that curse Jesus spoke of the valley as figuratively representing the symbolical "lake of fire and brimstone," the second death, into which Satan and all who follow him shall be cast at the end of the Millennial reign of Christ.

This retribution upon Satan, the author of the cruel worship of Molech, seems to be foretold in Isa 30:27-33 under cover of the Assyrian king Nimrod, whom we have seen was the direct representative of the Devil. The passage reads: "Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and

FF64 his tongue as a devouring fire...For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod...for Tophet [the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna] is ordained of old; yea for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."

Just as the valley of Gehenna, which runs along the south side of Jerusalem, is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of the second death from which there will not be a resurrection, so the valley of Jehoshaphat or Kedron, which runs along the east side of the city, is used as a symbol of the first or Adamic death, from which a resurrection is assured because of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The Jews, and also the Mohammedans, greatly desire to be buried in this valley, for they believe that the resurrection and final judgment will take place here. (See Joe 3:1,12-14.) The valley of Jehoshaphat is probably the "valley of dry bones" referred to by Eze 37 The story of the trial of the prophets of Baal by Elijah (1Ki 18:17-40) indicates how firmly established the worship of Baal was at that time in Israel. Elijah came boldly forward cried: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If Jehovah is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The test proposed by Elijah as to who was the true God, Jehovah, or Baal, was to be an answer by fire; and the people agreed that this would be a proper test because Baal was the sun or fire god, and what could be more reasonable than to expect an answer by fire from him? The test vindicated the name of Jehovah, and the 450 priests of Baal were slain. Elijah's fearless action in thus ridding the land of Baal worshippers was one of incalculable blessing to the people. The worship of Baal was an even more horrible religion than is implied by presenting children as burnt offerings to him; for just as it was required in the Mosaic law that the priests should eat of part of the animals offered in sacrifice by the people (see Nu 18:9,10), so the priests of Baal ate part of the human sacrifices offered to their fire god Molech! This shows the true derivation of the name given in the English tongue to devourers of human flesh, for the Chaldean word for "the priests" is cahna, so that Chana-Bal, that is, "Priest of Baal," became cannibal. It is common knowledge that the priests of the

FF65 sun worshippers of ancient Mexico were cannibals.

How rejoiced the poor groaning creation will be when Christ, the true "Sun of Righteousness," shall arise with healing in his wings. (Mal 4:2) What a contrast to that cruel "sun" of all unrighteousness, which arose with death in his wings! Malachi's allusion to the "wings" of the sun is evidently derived from the well known symbol of the sun god in Egypt and Assyria. Above the doors of the ancient temples and tombs in these countries, there is usually to be seen a representation of the sun god, in the form of a round disc with wide spread wings.

Along with the sun as the great fire god, the serpent was connected. Owen says: "In the Mythology of the primitive world, the serpent is universally the symbol of the sun." (Owen, apud Davies's Druids, in note, p. 437) In Egypt the commonest sign for the sun, or sun god, is a disc with a serpent around it. (Bunsen, Hieroglyphics, Vol. i, p. 497) The original reason for the connection of the serpent with the sun appears to have been that, as the physical world receives its light from the sun, so the serpent was held to have been the great enlightener of the spiritual world, by giving mankind the knowledge of good and evil. This, of course, like all idolatry, is an absolute perversion of the truth; but it serves to identify the sun god with Satan. In Re 12:3, Satan is called a "great red dragon," or "fiery serpent." (See Diaglott, and compare with Re 12:9)

Semiramis Worshipped Under Various Names

Just as Nimrod was regarded as the sun, and was given the title Baal, or "lord of heaven" (for the word Baal means lord), so Semiramis, when she was likewise "deified," received worship as the Moon, the "Queen of heaven." Now, according to Athenagoras and Lucian, Semiramis was worshipped as Astarte, the Syrian goddess. (Legatto, Vol. ii, p. 179; De Dea Syria, Vol. iii, p. 382) This Syrian goddess was also known as Ishtar (Layard's Nineveh and Babylon, p. 629); and it is from Ishtar that the word Easter is derived. (See 1912 Watch Tower, 144.) Smith's Bible Dictionary, under the Article "ashtoreth," says: "From the connection

FF66 of this goddess with Baal or Bel we should naturally conclude that she would be found in the Assyrian Pantheon, and in fact the name Ishtar appears to be clearly identified in the list of the great gods of Assyria. There is no reason to doubt that this Assyrian goddess is the Ashtoreth [or Ashtaroth] of the Old Testament and the Astarte of the Greeks and Romans...It is certain that the worship of Astarte became identified with that of Venus (or Aphrodite)."

Layard states that in the Syrian temple of Hierapolis, Astarte "was represented standing on a lion, crowned with Towers."(Nineveh and its Remains, Vol. ii, p. 456) The name Astarte itself means "the woman that made towers," being composed of two words: "Asht-tart." Asht is the word for woman; and it is generally agreed that the last syllable "tart" comes from the Hebrew verb "Tr," which means both "to go round," and "to be round." From this is derived the Greek word "turit," and its English equivalent "turret," a round tower. Ash-turit, therefore, which is the same as "Ashtoreth" of the Hebrew, is literally "the woman that made the tower" or encompassing wall. Ovid mentions that Semiramis was currently believed to have "surrounded Babylon with a wall of brick." (Ovid, Opera, Vol.iii; Fasti, iv, 219-221) But there is no need to give all the credit of building the battlements of Babylon to Semiramis; the reason why she gained the honor of fortifying the city was because she in the long run became foremost in the esteem of the ancient idolators, and thus had attributed to her every virtue and characteristic that properly belonged, or was imagined to have belonged, to her son Ninus. She was also worshipped as Rhea or Cybele, the "Mother of the gods" (Paschal, Chronicle, Vol. i, p. 65), and as such is always represented as wearing a mural or turreted crown on her head. In this respect the Ephesian Diana exactly resembled Rhea, for Diana was likewise a tower-bearing goddess. Now, the Ephesian Diana is expressly identified with Semiramis; for Semiramis is the same as the goddess Artemis, and it is well known that Artemis was Diana. (Layard, Nineveh and its Remains, Vol. ii, p. 480, note) The Roman Diana was a huntress bearing a quiver of arrows. In this character she was the complement of Nimrod the "mighty hunter."

The universal adoration of the "deified" Semiramis under

FF67 various names and titles by the Eastern nations, is prominently drawn to our attention in Ac 19:23-41. "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" the multitude shouted, "whom all Asia and the world worshippeth." It is a remarkable fact that this great goddess is even now worshipped in our very midst in the person of the Papal "Queen of heaven," the so called Virgin Mary, whose image is set up everywhere! A favorite image of the Romish Virgin Mary shows her standing on a large sphere, which is colored blue, and spangled with stars. On her head rests a heavy gold crown. The globe is intended to symbolize the blue vault of heaven, while the crowned woman herself, apparently, represents the moon as the Queen of heaven, that is Astarte or Ashtoreth. By her side she holds the child who is also crowned, and who stands on a smaller star spangled blue globe.

In this connection he evidently represents the sun, the king or lord of heaven, that is, Baal (remember that the word Baal means Lord). Another familiar figure of the Papal "Mother of god" shows her standing on clouds (sometimes a sphere), one foot treading on a serpent's head, and with the crescent of the moon at her feet.

The crescent of the moon is the well known sign of Astarte or Ashtoreth, the horns of the moon's crescent covertly suggesting her power as Queen of heaven. Papacy maintains that it was not the seed of the woman, but the woman herself, who was to bruise the head of the serpent. Regardless of the laws of grammar the Apostate church renders God's condemnation of the serpent: "She shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise her heel." In this the goddess of "Babylon the Great" is only fashioned after her type in ancient Babylon, for though it was originally claimed that Nimrod had crushed the head of the serpent, his mother was latterly given the glory of having done this great deed. (Diodorus, Bibliotheca, lib. ii, p.70; Smith's Classical Dictionary, p. 320) Although in the first instance Semiramis derived her exalted position from the Divine character attributed to the child in her arms, she ultimately practically eclipsed her son. So also in "Babylon the Great" it is the Madonna who receives all the adoration, and to whom petitions are generally addressed. What a satire, to think that the poor world has been so blinded by Satan, that it has been deceived into worshipping a woman who is nonexistent! Well did the Lord forbid his people to make

FF68 and bow down to images, "which see not, nor hear, nor know." (Da 5:23; Ps 115:4-8) It would be difficult to understand how so great a delusion could have become universal, were it not that we are aware that Satan is the "god of this world," and that along with him are legions of demons, who have sought to impersonate the dead in various ways, bolstering up Satan's lie that there is no death. (Ge 3:4) In Ps 106:37 we are told that the Jews, in serving Baal or Molech, had really "sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils"-demons; and in Ps 96:5 we read: "For all the gods of the nations are demons." (Septuagint version) The Apostle Paul, in 1Co 10:20, says: "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils"-demons.

Origin of Star Worship

The worship of the stars by the idolatrous nations was as prevalent as the worship of the Sun and Moon. Mythology identifies Nimrod and Semiramis with certain constellations.

From Persian records we are expressly assured that Nimrod, after his death, was "deified" by the name of Orion, the mighty hunter, and "placed among the stars." (Paschal Chronicle, tom. i, p. 64) The constellation Virgo is admitted by the most learned astronomers to have been dedicated to Ceres, who as we have seen was identical with the Egyptian Isis, and was therefore the same as Semiramis the Babylonian goddess. (Dr. John Hill, in his Urania; and Mr. A. Jamieson, in his Celestial Atlas. See Landseer's Sabean Researches, p. 201.) All the signs of the Zodiac, and the other constellations and stars were associated with various gods, and incidents in connection with them, by the Chaldean astrologers. The Lord specially commanded the Israelites to on no account worship images, the sun or moon, or the stars, because of the degrading influence it would have upon them, even as it had upon the heathen nations.

In De 4:15-19, we read: "Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves...lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath

FF69 the earth; and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, and serve them."

Yet the Jewish people frequently disregarded the Lord's command. In 2 Kings, chapters 22 and 23, we read how King Josiah, after having heard the words of the newly discovered book of the law of Moses, cleared the land of this idolatry: "He put down the idolatrous priests...them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the twelve signs or constellations [i.e., the Zodiac, the invention of the Chaldeans], and to all the host of heaven." (2Ki 23:5, margin) This identification of their gods and goddesses with the stars by the Babylonians is a counterfeit of the true "deified mortals," Jesus Christ and the glorified Church;

for we read in 1Co 15:41,42-"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead."

Origin of the Fish God Dagon

The Lord's warning to his people not to make an image of anything in the likeness of a fish, would imply that such was possible. Professor Layard in his excavations at Nineveh discovered sculptured figures of a fish god, which he identified with Dagon, the fish god of the Philistines, who borrowed it from the Babylonians. (Nineveh and Babylon, pp. 343, 350) In 1Sa 5:1-5, we read that the Philistines placed the captured ark of God in the house of their god Dagon. The next morning they found Dagon fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. They set Dagon up in his place again; but: "when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the fishy part of Dagon was left to him. Therefore neither the priest of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day." (See margin.) In passing we draw attention to Zep 1:9-"In the same day also will I punish all those that leap over the threshold." (R.V.)

FF70 The Philistines leaped over the threshold on which their god Dagon had lost his head and hands; and it appears from Zephaniah that some among the Jews who had forsaken the Lord were worshipping Dagon, and were leaping over the threshold in deference to him! Berosus, describing this fish god, says that "its body was that of a fish, but under the head of the fish was that of a man, and to its tail were joined a woman's feet. (Cory's frag., p. 30) From Layard's sculptures we notice that the figure had also hands. Now, what could have suggested such a peculiar combination of man and fish? And what could have induced the Babylonians to set up so strange an object in a temple to worship as a god? When we remember that an image is a hieroglyphic, that every feature of it is intended to convey to the beholder some message, or suggest some attribute concerning the god whom the image represents, we can perceive that this fish god described a man who had been in some respects like a fish. It appears that not only were Nimrod and Semiramis raised to the status of god and goddess in the Mysteries, but that as Father (Kronos) and Mother (Rhea) of the gods, they were the forerunners of numerous other "deified mortals."

The fish god Dagon could not have represented anyone more perfectly than Ham (or possibly Noah), for did not this man live through the waters of the flood which destroyed all "in whose nostrils was the breath of life"? In this respect, then, he was like a fish, because we do not read that fish were destroyed in the deluge. (Ge 7:21,22) Without doubt this is the origin of that mythical creature called the mermaid and the merman.

The great apostate church of the Gospel Age, true to its Babylonish origin, has actually adopted this fish god in its ritual; for the pope on certain occasions manifests by his head gear that he is the direct representative of Dagon. As it was an indispensable rule in all idolatrous religions that the high priest should wear the insignia of the god he worshipped, so the sculptures discovered by Layard show that the priests of Dagon were arrayed in clothing resembling fish. This is probably the "strange apparel" referred to in Zep 1:8. Berosus tells us that in the image of Dagon the head of the man appeared under the head of the fish, while Layard points out that in the case of the priests "the head of the fish formed a mitre above that of the man, while its scaly,

FF71 fan-like tail fell as a cloak behind, leaving the human limbs and feet exposed." (Babylon and Nineveh, p. 343) We have evidence that at a later period the Pagan priests dispensed with the body of the fish, and used the head alone like a cap. (Bryant, Vol. v, p. 384) The gaping jaws of the fish's head, surmounting the head of the man is the exact appearance of the two horned mitre of the pope, or of a Papal bishop at this day! Mr. A. Trimen, a distinguished London architect and author, found that on a certain occasion every year the Chinese Emperor, as Pontifex Maximus of his nation, wears a mitre which is the very counterpart of the Papal mitre. (Hager, on Chinese Hieroglyphics, B. 35, in the British Museum) Thus we see the far reaching influence of that idolatrous system set up in ancient Babylon. That "Mystery of Iniquity" has indeed deceived

all the world so that, as the Scriptures truly say, the nations have been made drunken or mad. But the followers of God and Christ are not deceived; they are not ignorant of Satan's devices, for "he that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of no man." The Mystery of Godliness" cannot be penetrated except by those who are initiated through the anointing of the Holy Spirit. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of [the natural] man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Let us be thankful if we dwell in the "secret place of the Most High." It is given to very few to be allowed to know God and Jesus Christ whom He sent. We recall the words of Jesus, related in Mt 11:25,26-"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Can we be certain that we are of those who are initiated in the mysteries of God?

Yes; for the Apostle John says: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God."

And now, if any desire further information regarding the "Mystery" of God's glorious Plan of the Ages, and its great

FF72 counterfeit the "Mystery of Iniquity," we refer you to The Divine Plan of the Ages; and also to the Rev. Alex. Hislop's work entitled: The Two Babylons.

FF73 Abraham's Life History

An Allegory of the Divine Plan of the Ages

It has been written that Abraham had two sons, one from the bondwoman, and one from the freewoman. Now, the one from the bondwoman was born according to the flesh; but he of the freewoman was through the promise. Which things are an allegory; for these represent two covenants.-Ga 4:22-31

Had it not been for this authoritative statement of the Apostle, would it have occurred to us that Abraham's two wives are allegorical of two covenants?

Our attention having been drawn to this fact, we find, when we study Abraham's career, that his whole life history is an allegory. All the events of his life were overruled and recorded in such a manner, that they form in their sequence a living picture, epitomizing the complete Plan of the Ages. As Bible students know, the Scriptures abound with such illustrations.

They are all designed by our loving heavenly Father to strengthen our faith; to make the glorious Plan of the Ages appear so real, that we can believe in it as firmly as that tomorrow will dawn.

"Allegory" is not an English, but a Greek, word. Translated into English it reads: "adapted to another meaning." While Abraham enacted his life in a natural way, and apparently without restriction, yet, in God's providences, every incident and event, and every person that came into his life, was adapted to mean some feature in the Plan of God.

Thus Abraham himself enacted the part of God. (Ro 4:17; also Isa 51:2) His two wives, as we have seen, represented God's two covenants-Sarah the original oath-bound covenant, or covenant of Grace, and Hagar the law covenant. His children by these wives represented God's children, fleshly and spiritual, which He begat through His two covenants. Isaac typified the Spiritual Seed, Christ head and body, sons of God begotten

FF74 through the original oath-bound covenant; and Ishmael typified the nation of Israel, the progeny of the law covenant. These two covenants may therefore be likened to two wives, God being their husband.

Each journey of Abraham from place to place represented God changing to a new phase of His foreordained Plan. Every action of Abraham pictured some definite dealing of God with mankind. And the persons with whom Abraham came into contact typified particular features of the LORD's scheme of salvation.

Nearly fourteen chapters of the book of Genesis are devoted to the life history of Abraham-namely, chapters 12 to 25. We notice that the first three chapters present, allegorically, a general outline of the three great Dispensations into which the Divine Plan of the Ages is divided. The succeeding chapters enter into the details of the various Ages, and especially describe God's dealings with His covenanted people during these periods. (See the Chart of the Ages.) Remember that, in the allegory, Abraham always represents God, who is the real Father of the faithful. (Ro 4:17) The First Dispensation, or "world of the ungodly," as it is named by the Apostle Peter, began with the creation of Adam, and ended with the flood.

Chapter 12 of Genesis is an allegorical sketch of this first dispensation.

Ge 12:1-3. Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: 2) And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3) And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

The first three verses show how Abraham was called to leave his own country and enter into another land, where he would become a great nation, and get a great name. He would also become a blessing, and bless all the families of the earth.

God cannot lie, and these promises will be fulfilled. But while on the surface the Scriptures seem to center the hope of the world

FF75 in Abraham and in the seed whom he beget through his wife Sarah, we perceive that this is only a little earthly picture of the true hope of the world. For although addressed to Abraham, God was in reality applying the promises to Himself. He, personally, would (1) beget a great nation, (2) and would glorify Himself and make His own name great, (3) and through Him all the world would receive a blessing.

Ge 12:4-9. So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5) And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. 6) And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. 7) And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. 8) And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD. 9) And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

Abraham descended from Haran to Canaan. Both countries are mountainous, but Haran is much higher than Canaan. Sarah and Lot accompanied Abraham. In the symbolisms of the Scriptures, a mountain represents a kingdom; and we find that, in the allegory, Lot is a type of mankind. In this we see God coming down with His original (Sarah) covenant from the high heavenly kingdom, to establish a lesser kingdom on earth at the creation of Adam.

The definite promise made to Abraham: "Unto thy seed will I give this land"-Canaan (Ge 12:7), indicates not

only that Abraham's seed would get the land, but much more important, that God's Seed would possess the earth when mankind attained to the glorious liberty of the children of God at the end of the Millennium.

Abraham built an altar and called upon the name of the Lord who appeared to him. This represents Adam, originally the earthly image of God, having perfect communion with God during the period of innocence in the garden of Eden.

FF76 Ge 12:10. And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

Now, a famine implies lack of bread and consequent starvation, followed by death. Was there a famine in God's earthly kingdom? Yes. When Adam transgressed there began immediately a famine, not of bread nor of thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. For man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Am 8:11; Mt 4:4) Adam did not obey the life-sustaining words of his Creator, and therefore he and the whole human race in him famished and died. (Ro 5:12) The scene was changed. Paradise, the kingdom of God on earth, fell and became the kingdom of Satan, with sin, sorrow, and death. The "world of the ungodly" was inaugurated. This terrible change was typified by Abraham journeying (with Sarah and Lot) from the mountainous country of Canaan, down south to the almost sea-level land of Egypt. The Scriptures use Egypt as a figure of the sinful world.

Is it consistent with the facts to say that Abraham represents God at this stage? For how can God be said to have gone down with the world into its sinful condition? The episode narrated in the remaining verse of this 12th chapter of Genesis shows how the allegory sustains this thought. First, let us quote the verses: Ge 12:11-20. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: 12) Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. 13) Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee. 14) And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. 15) The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16) And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and men servants and maidservants, and she asses, and camels. 17) And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. 18) And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me?

Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? 19) Why saidst thou, She is my sister? So I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy

FF77 wife, take her, and go thy way. 20) And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

Were it not that we perceive an allegorical purpose in this peculiar episode in Abraham's life, we might be at a loss to understand why it should be mentioned. The holy writers of God's Word were great economists of space, and always had a definite reason for every utterance. Besides which we remember that God Himself supervised all the holy records, and nothing was allowed to be inserted in His Word unless it would serve a useful purpose. Apart from the allegorical picture there is no apparent reason why this episode should be included in the Bible. We just draw attention to this, because it is a good example of how an incident, unimportant in itself, has a deep meaning when recognized as an allegorical sketch.

Briefly stated, this part of the allegory simply teaches that God kept secret the means by which He intended to bring into existence the "Seed" which was destined to bless all the families of the earth. God reveals His secrets only when, in His wisdom, He knows that the appropriate time has come. He knew that His wisest

plan was to hide the true relationship of His oath-bound covenant to Himself (even as Abraham hid the fact that Sarah was his wife), and to permit Satan and his angels, typified by Pharaoh and his princes, to make the attempt of blessing the world and thus try to glorify themselves. Satan did not desire to be the god of a dying world. To the woman he had said: "ye shall not surely die." But when he saw death reigning, he attempted to instill new life into the death-doomed race by causing the angels, the sons of God, to marry the "daughters of men." (Ge 6:1-4) This was Satan's attempt to bless the world, and bring glory to himself. But he failed.

God had two reasons for hiding His covenant: (1) that it might never thereafter be claimed by any of His angelic creatures that Christ's sacrifice was unnecessary, and that His work of salvation could have been done by them if only they had had the opportunity; (2) that the loyalty of the angels might be tested.

Such of the angels as fell from their "first estate" by mingling with the human family, have ever since been kept in restraint unto the judgment of the great day.-Jude 6; 2Pe 2:4

FF78 The plagues which came upon Pharaoh and his house typified the calamities brought upon angels and men through their vainglorious attempt to appropriate God's covenant to themselves. The result of their folly was increased degradation and sorrow, terminating with the Deluge.

The Second Dispensation,

or "Present Evil World," which began with Noah and his family after the drying up of the flood, and ends with Christ's Second Advent, is allegorically sketched in Ge 13-14:12.

Ge 13:1-4. And Abram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. 2) And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. 3) And he went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai; 4) Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

The return of Abraham to Canaan pictures the regeneration after the flood. Abraham represents God, and Lot represents restored mankind. Later on, as we shall see, Lot represents that portion of the human race with which God had special dealings-namely, the nation of Israel.

Ge 13:5-13. And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. 6) And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together. 7) And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. 8) And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. 9) Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. 10) And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. 11) Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east; and they separated themselves the one from the other. 12) Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and

FF79 pitched his tent toward Sodom. 13) But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

The Apostle tells us that mankind, when they knew God, glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. Therefore, as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a mind void of judgment. (Ro 1:21-32) At no period in earth's history did men know God more fully than during the years following the flood. One would have expected that the lesson of the great flood, which taught God's righteous

judgment against sin, would have been a lasting one. With such a demonstration of God's power, it would be only reasonable to suppose that mankind would no longer strive against Him, and against His servants the prophets and saints. But not so. Like Lot, they preferred their own way to the way of God. They chose the course of pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness. And thus, seeing that they could not dwell together in peace, God allowed mankind to separate themselves from Him, even as Abraham permitted Lot to go his own way toward Sodom. God does nothing without a reason-His desire is to prove to men through bitter experience the folly of their conduct.

Ge 13:14-18. And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15) For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. 16) And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. 17) Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee. 18) Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

While God promised Abraham the whole land of Canaan (figurative of the world-see Ro 4:13), and a posterity as numerous as the dust of the earth, we perceive that this promise has a deeper significance. Though mankind, like Lot, chose the wayward course, God's original covenant will be fulfilled nevertheless. The world will yet be His, and will be thickly populated with His own children, all in complete harmony with Himself. "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself

FF80 that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." (Isa 45:18) Thus when men fell away from God soon after the flood (as typified by Lot separating from Abraham and pitching his tent toward the sinful city Sodom), God reminded Himself of His own oath-bound covenant to bless the world in due time by reclaiming it from its sinful condition through His Seed.

Ge 14:1-12. And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; 2) That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. 3) All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea. 4) Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5) And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shavehth Kiriathaim, 6) And the Horites in their Mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness. 7) And they returned, and came to En-mishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar. 8) And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar:) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim: 9) With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphael king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five. 10) And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. 11) And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. 12) And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

The details of these verses have significance in connection with various features of God's Plan, the narrative as a whole is an allegorical outline of the last portion of the Second Dispensation-namely, the period of the Seven Times of the Gentiles. Lot here represents not mankind as a whole, but the one representative nation of Israel, with which God had particular dealings. The four kings with Chedorlaomer as leader who overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and captured foolish Lot with all his goods, represent the four Gentile universal empires, headed

FF81 by Nebuchadnezzar, who in 606 B.C. overthrew the apostate kingdom of Israel, and carried captive the children of Israel with all their goods. Since then the Israelites have been subject to the Gentile nations, and have been waiting for God to deliver them.

The Third Dispensation

is introduced in Ge 14:13-16. We shall first quote these verses: Ge 14:13-16. And there came one that escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Amer: and these were confederate with Abram. 14) And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. 15) And divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. 16) And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

These verses picture how God and His anointed company, the spirit begotten Church, every member of which had been born in God's own house and has been instructed by Him, will smite "Babylon the Great" in the dark night of trouble which ends the Second Dispensation, and ushers in the Third Dispensation.

And as Abraham and his trained servants, all born in his house, rescued Lot and his goods, so will God and His specially trained and anointed company restore Israel with all their possessions, and also the world of mankind in general.

It is remarkable that of all Abraham's servants the name of one only is recorded-Eliezer. But more remarkable still, if we add together the numerical value of each Hebrew letter in the name Eliezer, we find the total is exactly 318.* *Regarding the number of Abraham's servants, Hastings' Bible Dictionary states under the caption "Number"- "The number 318 is the equivalent of Eliezer, if the numerical values of the different letters of this name are added together: 1+30+10+70+7+200= 318.

It would be a strange coincidence if the number of Abraham's 'trained servants' stood in such a relation to 'Eliezer,' the only name known to us of a trained servant of Abraham. Hence Rashi said long ago, 'Our fathers said, Eliezer it was, alone, and this (318) is the Gematrical number of his name.'" The ancient

FF82 Hebrews, like the Greeks, used the letters in their alphabet to denote numbers, so that, reckoned in this way, every word had a numerical value. Apparently, therefore, only one name among all Abraham's 318 servants required to be recorded, because this name represented the complete number. The reason is evident, for as an allegorical personage Eliezer represented the Holy Spirit; and the 318 trained servants accompanying Abraham typified the Christ, head and body, all those who have been anointed with the Holy Spirit, in company with God overthrowing the Gentile nations on the completion of their lease of power, the end of their "Seven Times."

Ge 14:17-20. And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale. 18) And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19) and he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20) And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

When the evil systems of the Second Dispensation are finally overthrown in the great trouble which follows the expiry of the Gentile Times, and Israel, represented by Lot, is restored to favor, even the world, as represented in the king of Sodom, although formerly evil at heart, will recognize God as the mighty avenger and conqueror who has liberated them from bondage, especially the bondage of the grave. It will be in the

"King's Dale" that restored mankind will meet God and do Him honor, even as the king of Sodom met Abraham in this valley.

For the King's Dale is the valley of Jehoshaphat, or the valley of the Kedron, which runs along the east side of Jerusalem (known in Abraham's day as Salem) and this valley is recognized as a type of the Adamic death, from which a resurrection is assured because of the sacrificial work of the great high priest, Christ. (The valley of Jehoshaphat is a great cemetery; and every Jew, as well as the Mohammedans, desires to be buried in this valley, as they firmly believe that it is here that the resurrection of the dead is to take place, and where they will meet God. This valley is the valley of the "dry bones" referred to by Ezekiel in the 37th chapter, where the dead are pictured in graphic language as

FF83 coming to life once more. Absalom's "Pillar" can be seen in this valley at the present day.-See 2Sa 18:18) Christ, head and body, the great High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, will also be there, and will "meet God" and offer to Him the flesh and blood of his atoning sacrifice, represented by the bread and wine which Melchizedek offered to Abraham in the king's dale. According to God's own arrangement, the successful sacrificial work of Christ gives him the right to kingly and priestly authority; and even as Abraham recognized Melchizedek when he received the bread and wine from him, and gave him tithes, so God will recognize Christ as a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, and will hand over the reins of government into his exclusive keeping until the work of the Millennial reign is accomplished, and all the dead have been raised to perfect life, and the Adamic curse finally rolled away.

In all this Christ will bless God, because he will bring honor to His great Name. And after the Millennial work is complete, the Son will hand over the Kingdom to the Father, that the Father may be all in all, even the Son becoming subject to Him. (Thus when we keep strictly to the allegorical picture, we are not doing violence to the statement in Heb 7:7.) Ge 14:21-24. And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. 22) And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, 23) That I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: 24) Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre: let them take their portion.

Those who have allied themselves with God will get their portion of the spoil (Isa 53:12), but God Himself will take nothing; for is He not the possessor of heaven and earth? God gives, but takes nothing; nor will He be debtor to any man. Who can make Him rich? And the children of God must also give and not take, nor be debtor to any except to love others.

After presenting this general outline of the Plan of the Ages, we find that the allegory of Abraham's life history, as continued from the 15th chapter of Genesis, enters into the details of the

FF84 Plan. Everything recorded is not to be regarded in an allegorical sense; merely the principal or outstanding features are to be so recognized. This is the method pursued by the Apostle when telling us that Abraham's two wives were allegorical of two covenants-he does not regard every minute incident in connection with Abraham's wives as necessarily having connections with the picture, but treats the narratives broadly.

We remember that many separate purposes are served by every feature of the Divine record-"wheels within wheels."

As the Bible does not give much information about the "Old World of the Ungodly," so also in the further unfoldings of the allegorical sketch, it passes on to the account of the first Age of the Second Dispensation without more than a passing reference to the First Dispensation. We find that

is dealt with in the 15th chapter of Genesis, which we here quote: Ge 15:1-21. After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. 2) And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3) And Abram said, Behold to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4) And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5) And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6) And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. 7) And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. 8) And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? 9) And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. 10) And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not. 11) And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. 12) And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great

FF85 darkness fell upon him. 13) And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14) And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. 15) And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. 16) But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. 17) And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. 18) In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. 19) The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, 20) And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, 21) And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

Till Abraham's day, 427 years after the flood, and 2,081 years after the fall of Adam, God's Holy Spirit, typified by Eliezer, had been striving with men to convince them of their evil ways, and raise them out of their degradation. But as it was without beneficent effect, God said to Noah: "My spirit shall not always strive with men." (Ge 6:3) God's law, though largely effaced by the fall, was still written in man's nature, and it was to this that God appealed by His spirit; for the law is spiritual, as the Apostle declares. (Ro 2:14,15) This spirit could not always strive with men, but must ultimately become so effaced as to no longer prevent them from going headlong into destruction.

Clearly, then, the Holy Spirit of God, as represented by Eliezer, could not be the heir of the promise, the one who would inherit all things and bless all the families of the earth. And thus, just as God informed Abraham that Eliezer could not be his heir, but that he would have a seed of his own who would inherit the promises, so God, by this allegorical picture informs us that it is not by the Holy Spirit, but by His beloved Son Jesus Christ whom He Himself would beget, that all the blessings of restitution shall be accomplished. And this Son was not to be an earthly Seed, but a heavenly spiritual Seed, like the stars of heaven for multitude—a multitudinous Seed, composed of Jesus Christ the head, and the members of the Church His body.

The sign which Abraham received in confirmation of God's

FF86 promise that his seed would possess the land, is a hidden prophecy of the time when the Christ, typified by Isaac, would know He would possess the world. For if we regard the years of the covenant-witnessing animals as prophetic, we find that the aggregate ages of these five animals point to the date when the present great world-war began, which is the commencement of the active overthrow of the Present Evil World by the

invisible spiritual Kingdom, that the world may thus become the possession of the Christ. Reckoning the ages of the two birds as one year each, the aggregate ages of the five animals is eleven years. If we regard these eleven years as prophetic, they represent a period of 11 times 360= 3,960 years. This period, dated from the year 2045 B.C. when the covenant was first made with Abraham, terminates in the year 1914-1915 A.D., the date of the end of the Times of the Gentiles.

The remarkable catalogue of ten nations, which ends this 15th chapter of Genesis (verses 19-21) is a hidden reference to the ten "toes" of the great image which, Daniel informs us, are to be destroyed by the "stone" Kingdom. (Da 2:31-46) For before God's spiritual Seed can fully possess the world, He must first dispossess its present Gentile occupants, the ten divisions of the "Holy Roman Empire." Observe that Abraham's question was not: "When shall I inherit it?" but: "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" This word "whereby" has, in the Hebrew, the meaning of "by what." The thought is "By what (event) shall I know?" - "What is the sign?" Keeping to the allegorical picture, God, as represented by Abraham, knew that He and His Seed would inherit the Kingdom when the foretold great time of trouble broke out in 1914, the date indicated prophetically by the ages of the animals used in sealing the promise. His Seed now also know that they will enter into full possession of the world, over which they will reign as spiritual Kings and Priests; because they see the present complete governmental powers now being dashed in pieces as a potter's vessel. This is a sure sign to the faithful that the promise is being fulfilled. The number "ten," when connected with government, represents complete governmental power; and as the ten nations enumerated in verses 19 to 21 of this 15th chapter of Genesis were in complete possession of the promised inheritance in the days of Abraham,

FF87 so the antitypical inheritance has up till 1914 been possessed by the complete governmental powers of the Gentiles (as represented by the ten "horns" of the fourth "beast" seen in Daniel's vision, and the ten "toes" of the great Gentile image seen in vision by Nebuchadnezzar). The Israelites were constantly reminded of God's determination to drive out the nations, that He might fulfill His promise to Abraham (Jos 23:9,10); therefore, when in the days of Joshua the ruling powers began to be driven out, the fleshly seed of Abraham knew they would inherit the land. So, also, when the spiritual Seed now see the complete governmental powers of the Present Evil World, typified by the original ten nations in Canaan, being driven out of their rulership, it is a sign to them. They know that, in the words of Re 11:15: "The kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ."

There is also an indication that the special covenant regarding the land in verse 18 of this 15th chapter of Genesis, will begin to be fulfilled with the fleshly Israelites in 1925, ten years after the beginning of the fulfilment of the spiritual phase of the promise (according to the point of time given at the end of the 16th chapter).

The Law Dispensation

is allegorically dealt with in Genesis, chapters 16 to 19 inclusive.

Ge 16:1-16. Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. 2) And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. 3) And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. 4) And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes. 5) And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid unto thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee. 6) But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. 7) And the angel of the LORD found

FF88 her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. 8) And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou? And whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. 9) And the angel of the LORD said unto her, return to thy mistress and submit thyself unto her hands. 10) And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. 11) And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. 12) And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. 13) And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? 14) Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold it is between Kadesh and Bered. 15) And Hagar bore Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. 16) And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

God at the first did not indicate to Abraham that the son whom he would beget would be by Sarah, and as it seemed as if the heir was not intended to come through her, Abraham took Hagar, Sarah's bondmaid, and begat Ishmael. The antitype of the interval between God's covenant with Abraham, and the birth of Ishmael (between 10 and 11 years), is the long period of 2,553 years which elapsed between the creation of Adam, and the "birth" of the nation of Israel when it entered the promised land under Joshua. During all of that long period it must have seemed as if God's original oath-bound Covenant, typified by Sarah, was barren indeed. (Ga 4:21-31) But the Law Covenant, to which God bound Himself, at once conceived and brought forth in due time the nation of Israel, the fleshly seed typified by Ishmael, "a wild man whose hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him"; for the nation of Israel has indeed been thus peculiarly marked amongst the nations of earth. During all the Jewish Age from the entering of the nation into the inheritance of the land of Canaan, till the first advent of Jesus Christ, the "Sarah Covenant" still remained barren. But when Jesus was raised from the dead, the "Head" of the great spiritual Seed of promise was born through the Sarah Covenant; and during the Gospel Age the "Church of the firstborn" have

FF89 been selected member by member to complete the antitypical Isaac, the Seed of God Himself, in whom all the promises center.

We understand through the times and seasons of the Scriptures, that in 1878 A.D. those who slept in Christ arose in the First Resurrection.* *We find that there is a time-parallel between the births of the natural seeds of Abraham, and the two nations, fleshly and spiritual, which those two seeds typify. According to the notes of time given in the narrative, Ishmael was born between 10 and 11 years after Abraham received the covenant from God on first entering the land of Canaan, or say 10-5/8 years. It was 25 years interval between the covenant and the birth of Isaac the true seed. (Ge 12:2-4; 21:5) As we have noticed already, the entering of Abraham into Canaan with Sarah when he received the covenant, was allegorical of God coming down to earth with His oath-bound Covenant, and creating Adam as head of His earthly kingdom (Adam being typified by Lot).

Until Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, The "sarah Covenant" was barren, and until 1878 A.D. the members of the Church, the "Body" of Christ, were not born from the dead (and even now the "feet" members still await their birth). But in 1575 B.C. the Hagar Covenant brought forth her fleshly seed, when they crossed Jordan and entered as a nation into their own country. The intervals between the covenant with Abraham and the births of Ishmael and Isaac, are in the same proportionate ratio as the long periods between the creation of Adam 4128 B.C. and the entrance of the fleshly seed into their land as a nation in 1575 B.C.; and the entrance of the spiritual Seed or Holy Nation into their heavenly inheritance in 1878 A.D. (Or, to state the ratio: As 25 years is to 10- 5/8 years, so is 6006 years to 2553 years-the ratio is the same.) The 17th chapter of Genesis continues the allegory of the Law Dispensation: Ge 17:1-27. And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2) And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3) And

Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4) As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5) Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6) And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7) And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8) And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9) And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou,

FF90 and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10) This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11) And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12) And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13) He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14) And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant. 15) And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 16) And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. 17) Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? 18) And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! 19) And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. 20) And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. 21) But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. 22) And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham. 23) And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the self same day, as God had said unto him. 24) And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25) And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 26) In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. 27) And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

After the nation of Israel, born of the Law Covenant, had entered into their inheritance, God gave them judges, and later, kings, as His representatives in the earthly kingdom. But it soon

FF91 became apparent to the honest-hearted among the people, that the Law would make nothing perfect, and that it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats could take away sins. Hagar did not represent the covenant, nor Ishmael the Seed, which could bring blessing. When this became evident, God then proclaimed, for the first time, His intention to bring forth the Seed of promise by the Sarah Covenant. He sent prophets during the Jewish Age who foretold (as God foretold Abraham in the allegory) that not only would He (God) be a "great father" (which is the meaning of the name Abram)-that is, not only would He be the father of the Jewish nation alone, but that He would be the Father of many nations (the meaning of the name Abraham). Through these prophets He also foretold (as in the allegory) that His original oath-bound Covenant (represented by Sarai) would no longer be a source of contention (the meaning of the name Sarai), but would become a source of happiness, a princess or queen (which is the significance of the name Sarah). That His Covenant, like Sarah, would soon bring forth a "son indeed," a great Deliverer, who would bring blessings to all.

The circumcision on the 8th day pointed to the great 8th Millennial Day when all the children of God

(Abraham) will be circumcised in heart and blessed with everlasting life and communion with God.

Ge 18:1-3. And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day: 2) And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, 3) And said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: 4) Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: 5) And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. 6) And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7) And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. 8) And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before

FF92 them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. 9) And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 10) And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. 11) Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12) Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? 13) And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? 14) Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. 15) Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh. 16) And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. 17) And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18) Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19) For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. 20) And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; 21) I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. 22) And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: But Abraham stood yet before the Lord. (Note: the remaining verses give an account of how Abraham interceded for Sodom, and how the Lord promised that he would not destroy it if even so few as ten righteous persons were found there.) In this 18th chapter of Genesis, two important things are foretold by the three angels: (1) That Sarah would have the promised son at the appointed time; and (2) that Sodom would be destroyed. The three angels represent three means by which God had communicated to the Jewish nation during their Age, that (1) The great Messiah would come at the due time, and (2) that the apostate kingdom of Israel would be destroyed because of its wickedness. (See Eze 16:47-50.) These three means by which God foretold these two great events, were (1) the typical reign of Solomon, (2) the Law, and (3) the prophets. The

FF93 heat of the day is the time when the sun is high in the heavens, and symbolizes well the reign of Solomon when the typical people of God, the children of the Law Covenant, reached the zenith of their favor with Jehovah. Solomon himself is the well-known type of the Royal Seed, Christ, in His glory, and thus foreshadowed the coming Messiah. But toward the latter part of his typical reign, Solomon fell away into idolatry, and on his death the kingdom was largely wrested from his heir. His kingdom was divided, and thus practically fell. The reign of the antitypical Solomon will never fall; the fall of Solomon's kingdom rather foreshadowed the overthrow of the whole Jewish nation and kingdom in 606 B.C., and again in 70 A.D.

The law of Moses also, by means of its types and shadows, foretold the coming of the great Prophet and Priest the great Deliverer; and also the destruction of the kingdom and nation because of their evil which was even greater than the evil of the Sodomites.

The prophets likewise foretold of these two events.

It is generally understood that one of the three angels who appeared before Abraham was the Lord Jesus in his prehuman existence. In this appearance of the Lord and the two angels before Abraham, we are reminded of the vision on the Mount when Jesus was transfigured, and Moses and Elias, representing the law and the prophets, communed with him before God, and spoke of his coming glory.-Mt 17:1-9; 2Pe 1:16-18

Ge 19 is rather long to quote. Briefly summarized, this chapter details how two angels came to Sodom at even; and Lot, who was sitting at the gate, invited them to stay with him during the night. They ate unleavened bread. The Sodomites hearing of the two strangers in Lot's home, demanded that they should be delivered up. Lot refused, and the angels struck the rabble with blindness, so that they could not see the door. The angels then foretold of the destruction of Sodom because of its great wickedness, and urged and then compelled Lot and his wife, and his two daughters to flee from the place. "And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." And Lot besought them to let him escape into the little city of Zoar, and

FF94 his request was granted. "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." Later, Lot, fearing to dwell in Zoar, went up to the mountain and dwelt there with his two daughters.

The Moabites and the Ammonites were born of these two daughters.

While in the allegory we are still dealing with the Law Dispensation, we know that what took place in that Age was typical of the realities of the Gospel Age. In the typical Law Age, the destruction of Sodom allegorically represented the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel in 606 B.C.; and in a secondary sense it might also be regarded as representing the complete overthrow of Israel as a nation in 70 A.D. But since these two important events, through the overruling providence of God, occurred as figures of the much greater downfall of Christendom now begun, so the destruction of Sodom by fire and brimstone from heaven foreshadowed in the fullest degree the everlasting destruction of Christendom at the end of the Gospel Age. That this application is correct there is no doubt, for Jesus himself connected the destruction of Sodom with the overthrow of the Present Evil World. (See Lu 17:28-32.) In the 11th chapter of Revelation, also, Christendom is spiritually called Sodom. In this 11th chapter of Revelation "two witnesses" are prominently mentioned. In the symbolisms of this book these two witnesses represent the Old and New Testaments, which warn the Spiritual Israelites to flee from the destruction of Christendom, just as Lot was warned by the two angels to escape out of Sodom before the fire and brimstone came down. In this connection, therefore (and in strict accordance with the words of Jesus), Lot, while in the allegory primarily representing fleshly Israel, also more fully represents the true Church, the spiritual Israel; and Lot's wife represents the Great Company.*

FF95 When considering the general outline of the Divine Plan of the Ages as allegorically presented in Ge 12-14, we saw that the overthrow of Sodom by Chedorlaomer also pictured the overthrow of Israel in 606 B.C. Here again certain incidents connected with that earlier overthrow of Sodom, have an illustrative bearing upon the destruction of the Spiritual Sodom. In the 10th verse of Genesis 14, we read that the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fell in the vale of Siddim, which was full of petroleum pits (not slimepits). The Hebrew for slimepit could also have been rendered "bitumen," which is petroleum hardened by evaporation and oxidation. The material, also known as asphalt and pitch, which is very inflammable, burning like bright coal, is cast up to the surface of the Dead Sea in great masses by earthquakes. (This was especially noted in the earthquakes of 1834 and 1837.) In the opinion of many competent authorities, Sodom was situated at the

southern end of the Dead Sea, at a place now covered by the water. The "slimepits" being now covered by the water of the Dead Sea, would account for the floating masses of bitumen after earthquakes had loosened them from the pits. One writer says that these floating lumps of bitumen sometimes spontaneously burst into flames. This phenomenon may have been the origin of the prophet Isaiah's graphic description of the destruction of Idumea, when he says that its streams would be turned into pitch. The land of Idumea, inhabited by the descendants of Esau or Edom, stretches southward and westward from the southern end of the Dead Sea. Idumea is one of the well known types of Christendom, as all Bible students are aware. In **Isa 34:1-10** the prophet in highly figurative language forcefully depicts the utter destruction of Christendom, the spiritual Idumea. Its "streams," the channels of commerce by which the life of a country is sustained, would be turned into inflammable pitch, its dust into brimstone, and its land into burning pitch, and the smoke thereof would ascend for ever. When Sodom was destroyed in the days of Abraham, he saw the smoke of the country going up as the smoke of a furnace. (**Ge 19:28**) Thus the fiery overthrow in the vale of Siddim, that highly inflammable region which afterwards was included in the land of Idumea, well illustrated the fiery overthrow of the spiritual Sodom, or spiritual Idumea; for the coming social

FF96 revolution, likened to a great earthquake, will loosen elements in the figurative "streams" of Christendom which will burst into the destructive fire of anarchy, and will utterly consume the present order of things. (See **2Pe 3:10-12**.) The "smoke" (remembrance) of this great destruction will never fade-it will be an everlasting lesson.

It says that the "sun was risen upon the earth" when Lot escaped into the little city Zoar. (**Ge 19:23**) Later, when the vengeance of God was poured upon Sodom, Lot fled from Zoar to the mountain. As a city symbolizes "a religious government backed by power and influence" (see "Studies in the Scriptures," Vol. IV, page 25), Zoar must represent the small organization which is backed by the power of God, and is composed of those in present Truth, the spirit begotten sons of God organized for the active spread of the message of the kingdom during the "harvest" period of the Age. In the dawn of the Millennial morning this kingdom class have obeyed the summons to come out of the antitypical spiritual Sodom, preparatory to ascending beyond the veil to the heavenly Kingdom (mountain).

And Jesus said: "Remember Lot's wife!" She looked back, and was therefore turned into a pillar of salt. As salt is a preservative, and as a pillar is frequently used as a memorial, so we would understand that the pillar of salt into which the disobedient wife of Lot was turned serves as an everlasting memorial of warning to all who have freed themselves from Churchianity, or Babylon the Great.

Since Lot here represents the Israel of God, his two daughters represent fleshly Judah and Israel, who, like spiritual Israel, have been captive in Christendom during the whole of the Gospel Age. Just as Lot, after escaping to the mountain, begat through his daughters the Moabites and the Ammonites, so the Christ, head and body, when glorified in the heavenly Kingdom, will give life to the Gentiles through Judah and Israel, who will then be the ministers of the Word of life.

The Seven Times of the Gentiles

is referred to in the allegory in the 20th chapter of Genesis, which we here quote:

FF97 **Ge 20:1-18**. And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. 2) And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. 3) But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. 4) But Abimelech had not come hear her: and he said, Lord, will thou slay also a righteous nation? 5) Said he not unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. 6) And God said unto him in the dream, Yea, I know that thou didst

this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. 7) Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine. 8) Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid. 9) Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? And what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin?

Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. 10) And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? 11) And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. 12) And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13) And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is the kindness which thou shalt show unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother. 14) And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. 15) And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. 16) And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver; behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other: thus she was reproved. 17) So Abraham prayed unto God, and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children. 18) For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

As in the allegory the overthrow of Sodom in the days of Abraham primarily represented the overthrow of the apostate

FF98 kingdom of Israel in 606 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, so the allegory continues in the 20th chapter of Genesis to deal with the period immediately following that overthrow—namely, the Seven Times of the Gentiles. King Abimelech taking Sarah into his house, believing her to be Abraham's sister, reminds us of the similar incident recorded in the 12th chapter in connection with Pharaoh and his princes. In the former case Pharaoh and his princes represented Satan and his evil angels; but in this case, Abimelech and his house represent Nebuchadnezzar and the Gentiles generally, who in 606 B.C., after the overthrow of God's typical earthly kingdom, sought to govern the world, and thus bring blessing upon all the families of the earth. In other words, they sought to do all that God's original oath-bound covenant, as typified by Sarah, is destined to do. But as Abraham did not divulge to Abimelech that his sister Sarah was also his wife, so God in His wisdom hid the full truth that He alone is bound to His original Covenant, and that He alone has the right and power to bring into existence the great Seed who will bless the world with good government, peace, and contentment. Abraham did not tell a lie when he said that Sarah was his sister; he withheld the truth that she was also his wife. So God, who cannot lie, does not disclose His secrets until the due time. After he has allowed angels, and then men, to learn by bitter experience that they are unable to bless the world, He will then disclose the fact that He is the husband of the Sarah Covenant of blessing. Neither angels nor men will hereafter ever be in a position to claim that the sacrifice of Christ was unnecessary (for through death and resurrection the Christ, the spiritual Seed of Abraham, is born of the oath-bound covenant); for all will then have had the opportunity to try to bring forth this Seed, but have only brought disaster upon themselves, as did Pharaoh and his princes, and later Abimelech and his house, in their misappropriation of Abraham's wife, Sarah. In hiding the truth for a season, God demonstrates His wisdom, and proves that His thoughts and ways are as high above those of angels and men, as the heavens are above the earth.

In the allegory we read (in verse 3 of this 20th chapter of Genesis) how the Lord appeared to Abimelech in a dream, and declared to him Sarah's true relationship to Abraham. This reminds

FF99 us of how the Lord similarly appeared in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, and told him that "the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." (Da 4:32) But it was not until the typical

"seven times" of madness had passed over the head of Nebuchadnezzar, that he realized the full significance of God's warning. And neither will the world fully comprehend their inability to rule and bless until, the great "Seven Times of the Gentiles" having passed, the rude awakening, the time of "shaking" now in progress, makes them rub their eyes and see clearly their former madness. They will then extol the most high, and praise Him for their returned reason (lost for them by Adam through his disobedience). And God will not hold the Gentiles responsible for their misrule, but will forgive them, knowing that in the integrity of their hearts they believed they could rule and bless the world. They have not known that the covenant of blessing belongs to God alone.

In the 14th and 15th verses (Da 4:14-15) it says that Abimelech restored Sarah to Abraham, and gave him great riches, and told him to dwell where he pleased. As Abimelech in himself represents, in the allegory, the Babylonian empire headed by Nebuchadnezzar, the restoration of Sarah and the riches and freedom he gave to Abraham, represent: (1) God resuming His right to His own Covenant in 536 B.C., when the typical 70 years' dominion of Babylon ended; and (2) at that date God's chosen people, the Israelites, were restored to their native land, (3) laden with gifts from the Gentiles, preparatory to the birth of Jesus Christ, the promised Seed of the Covenant. In the fuller sense this illustrates how, after the lease of dominion permitted to "Babylon the Great" (Christendom) comes to the full end, God resumes His right to the Covenant, and brings forth into the spiritual realm the great Christ, head and body complete. Then the blessing of all the families of the earth will at once commence with the restoration to their native land of the captive Israelites, laden with gifts from the Gentiles.

The Harvest Period of the Jewish Age

is dealt with in the 21st chapter of Genesis. We shall quote this chapter in sections, and show the allegorical meaning as we

FF100 proceed: Ge 21:1-9. And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

2) For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3) And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. 4) And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5) And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. 6) And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. 7) And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? For I have born him a son in his old age. 8) And the child grew and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned. 9) And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

After having fully demonstrated that the angels could not bless the world with everlasting life (as typified by Pharaoh and his princes' misappropriation of Sarah); and that the Holy Spirit was not the means of blessing (as typified by the rejection of Eliezer as Abraham's heir); and that fleshly Israel was not Abraham's true Seed (as typified by God's refusal to recognize Ishmael as the child of promise); and that the Gentile nations were not capable of bringing peace and contentment to mankind (as typified by Abimelech's mistake in appropriating Sarah); God at last brings forth His true spiritual Seed, Jesus Christ, through His own oath-bound Covenant (as typified by Sarah now having born to Abraham the long promised son Isaac). And as Ishmael persecuted Isaac, so the fleshly Israelites persecuted Jesus Christ during the time of his ministry.

Ge 21:10-21. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. 11) And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. 12) And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight

because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. 13) And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed. 14) And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed,

FF101 and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. 15) And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. 16) And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept. 17) And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar?

Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18) Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. 19) And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. 20) And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. 21) And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

Prompted by the counsel of His Covenant, God cast out the Law Covenant and its children, even as Abraham at the dictates of Sarah cast out Hagar and Ishmael; for the Israelites under bondage to the Law could not be fellowheirs with the children of the Grace Covenant. (Ga 4:30) But God heard the cry of Ishmael in his cast-off condition; and as He had already promised Abraham that Ishmael would become a great nation with twelve princes, He directed Hagar to bring water to Ishmael from the well of Beer-sheba. So, God has not altogether cast off His people whom He foreknew, for they are still beloved for the Father's sake; they are Abraham's seed according to the flesh. (See Ga 4:13.) The Old Law Covenant has been able to supply the cast-off Nation of Israel with sufficient water of truth, to sustain them in their wilderness condition during the Gospel Age, during their "double" of disfavor, and they will yet become a great nation.

Ge 21:22-34. And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest: 23) Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. 24) And Abraham said, I will swear. 25) And Abraham reproveth Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. 26) And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell

FF102 me, neither yet heard I of it, but to day. And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. 28) And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. 29) And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? 30) And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well. 31) Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they swore both of them. 32) Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned unto the land of the Philistines. And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. 34) And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.

Just as Abimelech did not know that his servants had violently taken away the well of water which belonged to Abraham, this illustrates in the allegory that the princes of this world did not know that their servants had crucified the Lord of glory, thus taking away the "Well" of the water of truth. Nevertheless, God will reprove them for this cruel work: for the Gentiles are partly held responsible with the Jews for violently taking away the Son of God.

The seven ewe lambs represent the complete Church, the Lord's sheep, who witness the fact to the world that it is God who has "dugged this well," Beer-sheba, the "Well of the oath."

The everlasting God, having established his oath-bound covenant with the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name, prolonged His visit among them for "many days"- namely, the whole length of the Gospel Age. The selection and setting apart of the Church (the ewe lambs) is a witness to the integrity of God that He will not deal falsely with the Gentiles during his sojourn among them.

The next three chapters of Genesis-namely, chapters 22 to 24, deal with the

Gospel Age.

As the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is the central point of the whole plan of salvation, still another chapter is devoted to it. The account here given in the 22nd chapter shows God's part in

FF103 the sacrifice. Though the Jews and the Gentiles were more or less responsible, in that they acted of their own free will, nevertheless they could not have committed the cruel deed had God not permitted it, and had Jesus not been a voluntary victim.

Hence, God was the great First Cause. This is shown not only by the allegory contained in this chapter, but also by the word of the Lord Himself: "The cup which my Father hath given me [not the cup which Judas, or the Jews or the Romans had given him] shall I not drink it?"-Joh 18:11 Ge 22:1-6. And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. 2) And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. 3) And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went into the place of which God had told him. 4) Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. 5) And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. 6) And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

The sacrifice of his Son Jesus Christ, His only Son whom He loved more than all else, demonstrated as nothing else could do the infinite wisdom and love of God, and also established His immutable justice as the sure foundation of all His purposes.

The three days' journey represents the three thousand-year days of this Gospel Age, required for the complete sacrifice of the Christ, head and body. It was early in the fifth day after the fall of Adam, that Jesus Christ came, and it will be early in the seventh day that he will complete the sacrifice of his body, the Church.

Ge 22:7-19. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father; and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8) And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. 9) And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order,

FF104 and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10) And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11) And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. 12) And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. 13) And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering

in the stead of his son. 14) And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. 15) And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16) And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17) That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18) And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. 19) So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

(Note: It is not necessary for the allegory to quote the remaining five verses of this chapter.) It appears that, just as Abraham had not previously informed Isaac his son that it was he who was to be offered in sacrifice, so God had not told His Son Jesus Christ of the necessity of his sacrifice, until the time had come. In withholding this information from him until the due time, God exhibited His tender love for His Son, in not paining him with suspense for a longer time than was necessary; and also demonstrates the confidence which the Father had in His Son's faithfulness; for God's whole plan was dependent on His knowledge that Jesus Christ would gladly walk in obedience to His will.

Abraham's reception of Isaac from the Altar as from the dead, was a figure of the resurrection of the antitypical Isaac. (Heb 11:19) The infinite power of God was manifested in the raising of Jesus Christ from the dead.

As a reward for his willingness to sacrifice his beloved son, which was the culminating and supreme test of Abraham's faith, God not only repeated once more His promise to bless him and to multiply his seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which

FF105 is upon the seashore, but on this occasion He confirmed it by an oath; and for the same reason, though also, perhaps, partly because of Isaac's obedience to his father's will, He added for the first time: "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." So certain now was Abraham's confidence in God that, though the Apostle states that he died without having received the promise (Heb 11:39), nevertheless the same Apostle in the same letter to the Hebrews (Heb 6:15) declares in reference to this stage in Abraham's history: "After he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."

Whether Abraham understood the matter or not, we now see that he obtained the promise only in a tentative sense. In the antitype, the heavenly Father, when He has patiently endured the continuance of evil for six thousand years, and has received the antitypical Isaac, Christ, head and body, from the dead, will actually obtain the promise, for then His beloved Son will have proved himself the rightful heir of the Covenant, and will at once possess himself of his enemies' gate (the vital part in all ancient walled cities), and commence the glorious work of blessing all the nations of the earth, the Jews first and afterwards the Gentiles.

The 23rd chapter of Genesis gives the account of the death of Sarah; and of the purchase by Abraham of the cave of Machpelah in which to bury her. Jesus Christ in himself is the Seed of the Sarah Covenant; when he was raised from the dead he became heir of all things, and the Church, his joint-heirs, were representatively in him from the time of his resurrection.

God's oath-bound Covenant is called an everlasting covenant, but when it brought forth this Seed (Christ and his "body" members in him), it died or ceased to exist as a Mother. This view of the oneness of Christ and the Church which is his body is in accordance with the allegorical picture we have considered up till now. Hereafter we have another and distinct illustration of the union of Christ and the Church-namely, that of husband and wife, as represented by Isaac and Rebecca.

The 24th chapter of Genesis records with many details the selection of Isaac's bride Rebecca. According to

the chronology, Sarah died three years before the marriage of Isaac and Rebecca

FF106 It was after the death of his mother Sarah that Isaac's future bride was sought for. The three years between the death of Sarah and the marriage of Isaac and Rebecca represents the period of the Gospel Age, at the end of which the great antitypical marriage will take place. During this long period the Holy Spirit, like Eliezer, has been searching for the bride, and having now found her the marriage is soon to be consummated.

The Church, the "Lamb's wife," will now soon be fully united to Jesus Christ, and will see him as he is, receive his name, which is above every name, and enter into his mother Sarah's tent-that is, into the privileges and opportunities for blessing the world promised in the Abrahamic Covenant represented by Sarah.-Ga 4:24

The Millennial Age

is allegorically represented in the 25th chapter of Genesis, verses 1 to 10. Ge 25:1-10. Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. 2) And she bare him Zimran [etc.]. 5) And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. 6) But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country. 7) And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. 8) Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. 9) And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre; 10) The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

After the death of Sarah and the marriage of Isaac, Abraham took to himself a third wife, whose name Keturah signifies incense, and by whom he had many sons (the names of whom are given in verses 2 to 4 of the 25th chapter [Ge 25:2-4]). This illustrates the fact that in the Millennial Age, after the Sarah Covenant has done its work of bringing forth the heir of the promise, and the marriage of Jesus Christ and the Church his bride has taken place, the heavenly Father will, by a new covenant represented by Keturah, give life to many nations, and so justify the name

FF107 Abraham (Father of many nations) by which He had called Himself.

And just as Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac, so God gives all things to Christ.. Abraham's other sons had no part or lot with Isaac. He gave them gifts and sent them away eastward. So fleshly Israel and the other restored nations will have no part or lot with the "Holy Nation," the Israel of God. The others will receive earthly gifts with eternal life. It is interesting to note that the great Jewish historian, Josephus, states (in Ant. 1:15-1) that the descendants of Keturah took possession of Troglodytis-that is the, the country of cavedwellers. They appear, therefore, to have inhabited caves and holes of the earth, thus contrasting themselves with the descendants of Isaac, who were tentdwellers.

Abraham's death exactly one hundred years after being bound by the original Covenant, indicates that God's great work of salvation will be complete at the exact date appointed by Himself from the beginning.

In the succeeding chapters of Genesis we have an account of the life history of Isaac and Rebecca; and we find in this history another allegory of many of the outstanding features of the Divine Plan of the Ages. Isaac now takes the place of his father Abraham, and represents God; while Rebecca takes the place of Sarah and represents the original oath-bound Covenant of blessing. The firstborn of Isaac and Rebecca, Esau, takes the place of Ishmael in representing the fleshly house of Israel, while Jacob in his turn takes the place that Isaac held, and represents, in this allegorical picture, the spiritual Israel. Esau had the birthright and should have inherited the promises, but being a "profane" or worldly person, he sold this right to Jacob his brother. So, the

Jewish nation had the first opportunity of becoming heir to God (here represented by Isaac), but being earthly they could not appreciate spiritual things, and thus sold their birthright to the Jacob class who became the spiritual Sons of God.

From another standpoint: just as there were two literal nations composed of the descendants of Esau and Jacob, namely, the Edomites and the Israelites, both of which dwelt in territory adjoining (Mount Seir, the country of the children of Esau, running from the south of Judea southward), so during the Gospel Age there have been two antitypical "nations" in the spiritual

FF108 sense-an Edomite class who had the spiritual birthright as heirs of God, but who have sold it for earthly things; and the true Israelites indeed, who have supplanted the other class and have thus by their faith in God's promises become heirs of all things.

For this reason, God has said: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."-Ro 9:13.

When Isaac was bestowing his blessings upon Jacob and Esau, he represented God in His attribute of justice demanding a sacrifice. We read that Isaac was blind; and justice is personified by a human figure blindfolded, and having a sword in one hand, and balances in the other. Justice is impartial, and so long as things are rectified and made equal (balanced), does not respect the person of the one who makes things equal. Thus, the justice of God was violated when Adam sinned, and therefore the penalty of disobedience had to be paid, Jesus Christ offered to sacrifice his human life as an offset to Adam, and so meet the demands of justice. The "Esau" class had the opportunity of participating in this sacrifice (as represented by Isaac desiring his son Esau to bring him "savory meat" such as his soul loved, that he might eat and be satisfied). But the account shows how Jacob, who had previously bought the birthright from Esau, presented to his father savory meat prepared by his mother Rebecca, and how Isaac, not seeing who presented the meat, ate and was satisfied. The Jacob class, who have respect to the birthright and desire to receive God's blessing, have recognized that God demands a sacrifice (savory meat) before He can bestow His blessing. They have, therefore, in harmony with the arrangement of God in Christ Jesus, presented their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God; and God has "eaten" this offer of a sweet savour and has been satisfied-His justice has been recognized and met. The Esau class have not been willing to sacrifice themselves, having preferred the things of this earth and despising the promises of God.

There is a similarity in a number of the incidents of the life of Isaac and of his father Abraham; and in studying these incidents we find that they represent much the same things in the Divine Plan. For instance, in chapter 26 of Genesis, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, mistakes Rebecca as the sister of Isaac, instead of regarding her as the wife of Isaac.

This recalls the similar

FF109 mistake made by Abimelech in the case of Abraham and Sarah, and illustrates the same thing-namely, the mistake made by the Gentiles in thinking that they could produce the seed which was destined to bless the world. But we have indicated enough to show that Isaac's life history can also be viewed as an allegory of the Divine Plan; and we believe it will repay careful study by every student of God's Holy Word. There is a rich mine in the life history of these ancient worthies, and those who dig bring to light many beautiful gems of truth, which beautify the Christian character by stimulating to faithfulness and joyful service. How good the Lord is in giving us so many faith inspiring confirmations of His glorious Plan of the Ages. Do we doubt His ability and power to bring every feature of His plan into effect? Not if we read His "Living Word" rightly.

FF111 **Where Are the Dead?**

This is a question which has exercised the minds of thinking people in all ages. In our day the answers are

many and conflicting. Amid the din of all the clashing creeds few indeed know what to believe. Lord Tennyson voiced the universal longing when he said Ah! Christ! That it were possible For one short hour to see The souls we loved, that they might tell us What and where they be!" (Maud.) But, dear friends, we do not need to inquire of the souls who have departed from us; we have the Word of God, and that is sufficient. I hope to prove to you that the Bible gives a complete and satisfactory answer to our question.

Before considering the Scriptural answer, however, let us see what human reasoning unaided by Holy Writ can tell us. We shall find that the answer from this source is incomplete.

Whatever information we do derive from Science and Philosophy, however, will be found to agree with the Word of God; and this is what we should expect for God is the author of the laws of nature and reason, as well as of the Bible. Those who claim that science and the Bible contradict each other simply do not understand the one or the other.

What Can Science Tell Us?

What has Science to say with regard to the body, soul, and spirit? Science tells us that the human body is composed of many elements. None of these elements is peculiar to the body; they are found everywhere in the earth around us. This is in exact agreement with the Bible, which states that God "formed

FF112 man of the dust of the ground"-Ge 2:7. The dust of the ground is merely another way of saying "the elements of the earth."

But what about the soul, the real person, the "Ego," the thinking part of man? What can science tell us about it? The popular conception is that the soul is a being or person residing within and independent of our organism, and that at death it is set free from the body and continues to exist for ever. Science knows nothing of such a being; it has never been discovered in the dissecting room nor in the laboratory. Science can prove that it is not true that the thinking part of man is independent of his organism. The lower animals can reason to some extent, and the more complex and finer the structure of their brain the better their reasoning power. Man, whose brain is the most complex and has the finest structure-is possessed of the highest degree of reasoning power. As the child grows into maturity and its brain develops, the reasoning power increases; and by and by, when old age creeps in and the brain begins to decay, the reasoning power steadily diminishes. It is clear then, that the soul, the thinking part of man, is not independent of his organism.

I have frequently seen persons brought into hospital unconscious through an injury to the head, who recovered after an operation. Now, on questioning the patient regarding the details of his accident, we always find that the last thing he remembers is what occurred immediately before the accident.

Although the intervening time till he regained consciousness has been days and sometimes even weeks, yet to him it has been a perfect blank. Why is this? Where was the man's soul during the interval? Why could it not recollect events after the accident if it is independent of the body? Surely it is quite evident that the soul is dependent on organism.

But what about the spirit? Is it a being inside of us? Science has not found any such being. The only spirit that Science recognizes is the spirit or power of life. Formerly it was thought that life resided in some particular part of the body, but now, thanks to Professor Virchow, we know that the body is composed of innumerable cells, and that the spirit or power of life animates every one of them. We know, also, that this power of life is dependent on certain continual processes of waste and repair.

FF113 My finger, for example, is composed of many cells in each of which is the spirit or power of life and this life is dependent on processes of waste and repair. If these processes become deranged there is disease, if they cease there is death. My finger is dead, and in course of time shrivels up and drops off. When my finger

dies, what becomes of the spirit of life?

We understand that the death of my finger and also of my whole body simply means the cessation of the life-processes of waste and repair. It is the same in the case of the lower animals and of plants. They also are composed of innumerable cells in each of which is the spirit or power of life, and this power of life is dependent on similar processes of waste and repair. We do not understand that their spirit of life is a being which continues to have an independent existence after death.

After life has gone, man is unable to give it back. God alone possesses this power. And so we read in Ec 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit (or power of life) shall return unto God who gave it." God alone can restore the spirit or power of life.

That, briefly, is what Science can tell us regarding our question.

Science knows nothing of a future state.

The Answer of Philosophy

This is where Philosophy steps in. We human beings have considerable reasoning power, and also a conscience or moral sense, that is to say, the faculty of discerning between right and wrong. Philosophy tells us that if we follow the right course we are good or virtuous and should expect a corresponding reward, and that if we follow the wrong course we are bad or vicious and should expect a corresponding punishment. Yet we find in reality that these reasonable consequences frequently do not follow. In fact, the very reverse is generally the rule. Mal 3:15 truly says: "Now we call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." On the other hand as the Apostle Paul declares: "Yea, all that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution"-2Ti 3:12. Is it true that all the great ones of the earth, the

FF114 kings, nobles, and capitalists are the most righteous, and that the lower the scale of position and honor the more vicious we find men to be? You all know that this is by no means the case.

Is it not chiefly from among the poor of this world, rich in faith, that God is choosing the heirs of the Kingdom which he has promised to them that love him?-Jas 2:8 Philosophy, therefore, reasons that there must be a future state where the virtuous will be rewarded, and the vicious punished.

But Philosophy cannot tell us what or where this future state will be, nor whether it is attained at the moment of death or after an interval. It is mere assumption to declare, as many do, that there cannot possibly be an interval between death and the beginning of the future condition.

Revelation by Spirits Unworthy of Credence

There are thus many questions left unanswered by unaided human reasoning. If we cannot get the complete answer from Science or from Philosophy, where should we expect to obtain it? As we cannot get it from ourselves, evidently we must expect a revelation from without.

Some profess to receive this revelation through Spiritism. I have not time to discuss this subject at present, but I am convinced that Spiritism, where it is not fraud or trickery, as much of it is, is a manifestation of evil spirits, the fallen angels. The Lord warns us very strongly against consulting those who have familiar spirits, and declares that all who do these things are an abomination to him.-De 18:9-12; Le 19:31; Isa 8:19,20

The Answer from the Word of God

Where then, must we look for this revelation? We must look to God himself, and expect to get our answer not through visions or peculiar manifestations, but through the Bible, the Word of God, "the faith once for all delivered to the saints."-Jude 3, R.V.

FF115 What is the Soul?

To get a proper understanding of our subject we must begin with the question: "What is the soul?" For the answer we naturally turn to the description of the creation of the first human soul, Adam, which we find in the 7th verse of the 2nd chapter of Genesis: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

Let us study this a little. We should not read the Bible without thinking over what God has to tell us. "God formed man of the dust of the ground." Adam's body was formed of the elements of the earth. He had eyes, ears, and a mouth, but so far no ability to see, hear or speak. Then God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Notice, the Bible does not say that God breathed into his nostrils a soul. What the Word says is that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," the spirit or power of life. And what was the result? Do we find the intimation that Adam had now a soul in him? No, we find that the result of the breath of life having been breathed into Adam was that he "became a living soul." In other words, the soul is not the body, nor is it the spirit of life, but in order to be a living soul it must possess both a body and the spirit of life. This is in agreement with what we have seen Science to teach, namely, that the "Ego," the real person, the thinking part of man, is not independent of his organism.

Adam was now able to see and hear and speak, to think and walk and work. He was now a sentient being, a being endowed with sense-perception; and thus the best definition of a living soul that one could give is that it is a sentient being. It may be objected that such a definition would include the lower animals, and that the Scriptures do not teach that the lower animals are souls. But the Word of God does speak of the lower animals in this way, although it is somewhat obscured in our English version. When the Hebrew words nephesh caiyah (living soul) are used with reference to the lower animals, they are never (with one exception, namely, Nu 31:28) translated "soul" but always "life" or "living creature" or some such expression; whereas the same words when they occur in relation to human

FF116 beings, are invariably translated "soul" or "living soul." Two illustrations of this may be seen in the first chapter of Genesis, verses 20 and 30 (Ge 1:20, 30). In Ge 1:20 verse we read: "God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life." Those of you who have reference Bibles will see in the margin against the word "creature" the words: "Hebrew, soul."

Then in Ge 1:30 verse of the same chapter we read: "To every beast of the earth and to every fowl of the air and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth wherein there is life." Notice here also that in the margin against the word "life" appear the words: "Hebrew, a living soul." Clearly, then, the Bible agrees with Science in declaring that the lower animals are living souls.

It is thus evident that man will not be granted a future state because he is or possesses a soul, but because he alone of earthly creatures was made in the image of God; that is, with the mental powers of reason, memory, judgment and will, and with the moral qualities of justice, benevolence, love, etc., similar to those possessed by God, though inferior in degree.

Is the Soul Immortal?

The next part of our subject is a very important one. It is the answer to the question: Is the soul immortal? A great deal depends upon this. Since the Bible tells us that some will be saved, it follows if the soul is immortal that there are only two alternatives possible. Either all will ultimately attain eternal bliss with God,

or some are doomed to an eternity of woe, whatever may be the form of that woe. On the other hand, if our loving heavenly Father can destroy the soul, he will not be restricted to either of these alternatives. He will not require to ignore the freedom of man's will as the doctrine of "Universalism" would demand, nor will he be compelled to condemn the wilfully wicked to eternal woe.

It was in the summer of 1899 that this question was first brought prominently before my notice. At that time I was visited by two or three of my friends who inquired: "Is the soul immortal?" I replied: "Of course it is!" They asked, "Why do you say, 'Of course it is'?" "Oh!" I answered, "because nearly everybody believes it." "But surely," my friends argued, "you would

FF117 not give that as a reason; what the majority of people believe cannot be a proof that what they believe is true. Why, if that is the case we ought all to be heathen, because the majority of people are heathen." I agreed. "But," I said, "such an important doctrine must be taught in the Scriptures!" "Show us a verse, then," they said. I was at a loss, dear friends, when they asked me to do that. I could not recall one, but exclaimed: "Surely, though I cannot remember any, there must be many verses in the Scriptures which speak of our immortal souls?" Judge of my astonishment when these friends told me, and not only told me but proved to me that there is not such a verse in the whole Bible.

Yet it is easily proved. All you require to do is to get a complete Concordance, look up first the word "soul," and every word that means "soul," and then the word "immortal," and every word that means "immortal," and you will find that there is not a single verse from Genesis to Revelation which states that the soul is immortal.

The late Dr. Thomas Clark, the author of a book called *A Life's Thought on Christ*, offered one thousand pounds to anyone who could find the expression "immortal," "never-dying," or "ever-living soul," in the Hebrew, Greek, or English Scriptures. Dr. Thomas Clark was quite safe in making that offer. No one ever earned the money. The late W. E. Gladstone wrote with regard to this question: "The natural immortality of the soul is a doctrine wholly unknown to the Holy Scriptures, and standing on no higher plane than that of an ingeniously sustained, but gravely and formidably contested philosophical opinion....It crept into the church by a back door as it were" (*Studies subsidiary to the works of Bishop Butler*, pp. 197-198). That is it, dear friends. The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul is not taught in the Scriptures at all; it crept into the church through the back door of Greek philosophy.

It may be asked: If the Scriptures do not affirm that man has inherent in him an "immortal," "never-dying" or "ever-living" soul, does the Word of God state that the soul is mortal, that the soul can die? Those who believe that it is immortal generally think that God has so constituted the soul that He Himself cannot possibly destroy it. Is that true? In Mt 10:28, we read

FF118 that God is able to destroy not only the body but also the soul in Gehenna. (We shall see later what is meant by "Gehenna.") Now turn to Eze 18:4. There we read: "Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of the father so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth it shall die."

It is the soul, the sentient being, which is responsible for sin, and it is the soul, therefore, which is to bear the penalty of sin, and that penalty is distinctly stated to be death. The soul which sins will die; "for the wages of sin is death," -not eternal torment.-Ro 6:23 When once we understand this, the whole Bible becomes luminous. Many passages formerly obscure now become clear.

In 1Ti 6:15,16, we read: "The King of kings and Lord of lords...only hath immortality." Do not let any of us after this say that we have immortality when the Bible so distinctly states that the King of kings only has it.

In Ro 2:7, the Apostle refers to those who seek for glory, honor and immortality. Let me illustrate: I hold a watch in my hand. Now if I should say: "I am seeking for my watch," you would think there was something

wrong with my mind. Why?

Because I would be seeking for something I have already. But many Christians say they are immortal, and yet they seek for immortality! In 1Co 15:53,54, the Apostle says: "This mortal must put on immortality." But we cannot put on anything if we have it on already! No, dear friends, the Word of God is consistent. It does not teach that immortality is the natural possession of man. What it does say is: "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." We do not have eternal life inherent in us, but it is offered to us as a gift through Jesus Christ, who gave himself a propitiation for our sins. If we have the necessary faith toward God we shall be rewarded with the gift of eternal life in His due time. That is what the Psalmist tells us: "The Lord preserveth all them that love him; but all the wicked will he destroy"-Ps 145:20. He will not preserve the wicked in any condition whatsoever.

Some imagine that if the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul be disproved, the foundation is removed from the Christian faith. But this is by no means the case. Everywhere in

FF119 the Scriptures we are assured that our hope of a future life depends, not on any supposed inherent immortality, but on the resurrection from the dead.-Ac 24:14,15; 1Co 15

It must seem strange to many that this idea of the immortality of the soul has become so prevalent when it is so opposed to the teaching of the Scriptures. It was during the time when people thought it their duty to torture others who differed from them in religious belief that the Church adopted this teaching of the Greek philosophers; and they did so because it helped to support the doctrine of eternal torment.

The usual argument put forward to support the theory that the soul is immortal is that it is a little part of God breathed into Adam. If those who theorize in this way would only reason out their argument to its legitimate conclusion, they would see that it could not possibly be true. They ought to remember that it is not the body but the soul which is responsible for sin. If the soul is a little part of God, then this little part of God in man is responsible for sin, and may come under the sentence of eternal condemnation.

Some, having noticed that the statement in Ge 2:7, that God breathed the breath (spirit) of life into man's nostrils, differs from the description of the creation of the lower animals, think that it is not the soul but the spirit which is a little part of God, and that it is not the soul but the spirit which is, on this account, immortal. These fail to notice that in the seventh chapter of Genesis, verse 22 (Ge 7:22), the lower animals are also said to have the spirit of life in their nostrils. Those, therefore, who thus seek to prove that man is immortal, would prove also that the lower animals are immortal. The same argument applies to those who seek to prove man's natural immortality from the indestructibility of matter, and the conservation of energy. If these were proofs of the immortality of man, they would also be proofs of the immortality of every animal and every plant.

Surely no reasonable man believes that the lower animals and plants are immortal! We have learned that the best definition of the soul is that it is the whole sentient being. The dominant part of the being is the mind, the will, but this cannot exist without organism.

Accordingly, while in a restricted sense the soul may be described

FF120 as the mind, the will, the conscious Ego, nevertheless, in order to exist, the Ego must have a body of some kind. We have learned also that there is no verse in the Bible which states that the soul is immortal, but that, on the contrary, the Word of God teaches distinctly that the soul which sins shall die.

When is the Just Recompense of Reward?

The popular idea, derived from that little book which contains so many precious truths, the "Shorter Catechism," is that "The souls of believers are at death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into

glory."

Is it true that all the dead who have had faith in God are now in heaven? Let us take an example. What about David, who, with all his faults, was a man beloved of the Lord, a man after God's heart? Is David in heaven? I suppose many in this audience would answer: "Yes." Let us read what the Word of God says.

See Ac 2:34: "David is not ascended into the heavens."

Nothing could be plainer than that. The question is: Are you going to believe it? Some of you may say: "That is strange. I did think that David would be in heaven, but evidently I am mistaken. He was not so good as I thought he was." But wait a little! See what Jesus said. In Joh 3:13, we find it recorded: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man." (The words "which is in heaven," should be omitted-see marginal note in Revised Version.) "No man"! There is no exception, save Jesus Himself, who came from heaven to be made flesh and dwell among men.

Let us beware lest the traditions of men lead us to deny the words of Christ.

In Ac 26:23, we are told that Jesus was the first to rise from the dead. He was "the firstfruits of them that slept," "the first born from the dead." (1Co 15:20; Col 1:18) Some of you may say: "Does not this contradict the other Scriptural statements regarding the raising of Lazarus and others?" The explanation is that Jesus was the first to rise to perfection of life. The others were simply awakened from the death-state to their former dying condition, and after a few years at most returned to the tomb once more. Their awakening from the dead

FF121 was not a resurrection in the true meaning of that word, namely, a raising to perfection of life.

What about the time since Christ died and rose again? Had each one during this Gospel Age entered into his just recompense of reward at the moment of death? The Scriptural answer to this question is not the one usually accepted. **2Pe 2:9** informs us regarding the wicked. Do we find the Apostle there saying that God knows how to punish the wicked at the moment of their death? No, dear friends, Peter tells us clearly that God "knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." Notice! The time when the wicked are to be punished is at the day of judgment when Christ returns. Our Lord, in Mt 16:27, distinctly states: "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." How does that square with the statement of the Shorter Catechism that the souls of believers are at death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory? Let us believe the Word of God. It will not be until the time when Jesus will return in the glory of His Father with His angels, that he will reward every man according to his works.

Current theology teaches that every believer goes immediately at death to be with Jesus, but the Lord did not give this thought to His disciples, those whom He loved so well. He did not say to them: "I will receive you unto myself the moment you die."

What He did say was: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." (Joh 14:2,3) Again, Paul, speaking to the Colossians, said: "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."-**Col 3:3,4**.

The Thief on the Cross

The objection which is most frequently put forward is the reply of Jesus to the thief on the cross-Lu 23:43. According to the usual thought, the repentant thief went, the moment he died,

FF122 to join the Lord in heaven. But we have seen that the testimony of the Scriptures is that all the Apostles, martyrs, and other saints who have died are waiting till the return of Christ to get their reward. It follows, if the usual idea with regard to our Lord's reply is correct, that this thief must have had the precedence of the Apostles and all the holy martyrs. But our Lord Himself said to Mary on the third day after his promise to the thief: "I am not yet ascended to my Father." Again, Peter, in Ac 2:27, draws attention to the words of David in the 16th Psalm (Ps 16): "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," but shows that David was not here speaking of himself but, as the prophetic mouthpiece of our Lord Jesus, he was foretelling that Jesus' soul went to hell, not to Paradise, but would not remain there. I shall refer to this later.

When we inquire into the matter, we find the explanation very simple. Rotherham's translation of the passage does away with all difficulties. It is this: "Verily I say unto thee today, with me shalt thou be in Paradise." He put the comma after "today," instead of before it. Has Rotherham any justification for making this alteration? Yes, because when the Bible was written there were no commas. Punctuation was not invented till some four centuries ago, shortly after the invention of the art of printing. It is merely a modern convenience to indicate that the writer wishes the reader to pause shortly at these places, and so help the understanding of what is written. If you would like to prove that there is no punctuation in the ancient manuscripts of the Bible, I advise you to visit the British Museum, and there you will find, laid open for inspection in a glass case, the most ancient manuscripts.

Whether you understand Greek or not you will see that all the words and sentences run together; there is no separation between them, and there is not a comma in the whole manuscript. This means, then, that the comma and other marks of punctuation which appear in our English versions are not inspired, but were merely inserted by the translators to bring out what they thought was the meaning of the Scriptures.

Those who translated the New Testament into English believed that the "souls of believers do immediately pass into glory," and accordingly put a comma after "thee." We have

FF123 found, however, that Jesus and His Apostles said that it would be at the time of His return in the glory of His Father with His holy angels, that believers would be rewarded and the wicked punished. Accordingly, the comma should have been placed after "today." What Jesus actually said was: "Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise." (The Greek word *esee* can be equally well translated: "thou shalt be," or "shalt thou be.") Thus we see that Jesus was not contradicting what He had said on every other occasion, nor making any exception in the case of the repentant thief. When Jesus uttered the words of our text, it must on that day have seemed the most unlikely thing possible that He would ever become a King. Hanging on a cross, dying the death of a criminal, and with the title: "King of the Jews," inscribed in mockery above His head, it must have seemed beyond all the bonds of probability that He would ever receive a kingdom; but when the thief asked to be remembered by Jesus when he came into His Kingdom, Jesus honored his faith and said: "Verily I say unto thee today-this dark day when I am dying a felon's death, and it seems as though I was an impostor-thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Another important reason why our Lord used the word "today" is that it was on that day that the great sacrifice for the sin of the world was to be finished, which would render it possible for His Kingdom to be established.

The Intermediate State

We have seen that the Scriptures teach an intermediate state, a time of waiting between death and the reward. A great many students of the Bible have come to this conclusion, but unfortunately most of them still cling to the erroneous idea of the natural immortality of the soul. Therefore they believe that the soul during this intermediate state is conscious, that it can think and feel, and that it knows even more after death than it knew before. Let us inquire into this also.

Do the Scriptures declare that, after death the soul knows more than it did before its death? Look at Ec 9:5:

"The dead know not anything"; also the tenth verse: "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Then you remember the prayer of Hezekiah:

FF124 "The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down in the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day"-Isa 38:18,19.

Again the Psalmist tells us in Ps 146:4, that when a man dies, "he returneth to his earth, and in that very day his thoughts perish." Does that look as if he knew more than he did before? In Ps 6:4, we read: "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercies' sake." Then the 5th verse: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Is it not clear then, dear friends, that the soul during this intermediate state is in a condition of unconsciousness, waiting for the resurrection awakening?

It is only when we understand what death is that we can realize the beauty of that figure which is so often used throughout the Old and New Testaments, the sleep of death. You remember how the Lord said: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," and when His disciples did not understand Him, "then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." (Joh 11:11-14) Death is likened to sleep because it is a state of unconsciousness to be followed by an awakening.

I suppose you know, dear friends, that I am a medical man. Like most medical men I am sometimes called out during the night.

Occasionally I require to work all night, and as a consequence I am very tired and sleepy next day. Being a busy man, I seldom have time to rest during the day, but on one occasion I remember lying on a couch, and shutting my eyes then opening them again, said to myself: "I was very nearly asleep that time."

On looking at the clock, however, I was surprised to see that I had been asleep for an hour! I thought I had simply closed my eyes for a moment, and could hardly believe that any interval had elapsed. Why was that? Because the interval was a state of unconsciousness. I was asleep, and my sleep was a sound sleep because I was so tired. It was as sound as death.

That is the condition of the dead. When a person dies he closes his eyes, passes into a state of unconsciousness, and an interval elapses; it may be weeks, years or centuries, but no matter how long, to that person the period is a complete blank. It is just like that hour when I was asleep. In other words, to each one

FF125 who is awakened on the resurrection morn, it will be as if he had simply closed his eyes and the next moment opened them. That is the condition of the dead. They are completely unconscious.

They "know not anything."

But the "hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." (Joh 5:28,29) Notice that Jesus did not say: "all that are in eternal bliss and in eternal torment," but, "all that are in the graves," the death-state.

"Ah, yes," some say, "that means the bodies of the dead, it does not refer to their souls; it means that when Jesus calls, the souls of the saved and of the lost will fly back and re-inhabit their bodies. It is the bodies which are to rise, for it is only the bodies which pass into the death-state." But that was not what Jesus said. We have the united testimony of both Science and the Scriptures that the bodies will not be resurrected. Science shows that the bodies are at death disintegrated, and go, many of them, to fertilize plants. Some, again, are eaten by wild beasts or cannibals, and go to form the tissues of these beasts or cannibals. It is then manifestly impossible for the same body to rise.

But we do not need to rely on the testimony of Science alone.

The Apostle Paul in answering this question: "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come" did not say: "That is a peculiar question! Why do you ask: 'How are the dead to be raised, and with what body do they come'? Do you not know that the soul never dies, and it is only the body which dies and requires to be resurrected?" No! What Paul did say was: "Thou fool, ... thou sowest not that body that shall be...but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." (1Co 15:35-38) What could be plainer than that? It is not the body but the soul which dies, as we read in Isa 53:12, of Christ: "he hath poured out his soul unto death." It is not the body, therefore, but the soul which is to be resurrected; and God shall give to each soul a body as it pleases Him, according to the character sown in this lifetime.

Where are the Dead?

From what I have said it will be plain to you that the Scriptural answer to our question is simply this: The dead are all,

FF126 good and bad alike, in one place, the grave-not the literal grave, but the death-state. "All go into one place. All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." (Ec 3:20) "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary (including the weary in well-doing) be at rest. There the prisoners (of death) rest together. They hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there."-Job 3:17-19 The teaching of the Scriptures is, therefore, that the dead are dead. It seems strange that it should be necessary to come before an intelligent audience in order to prove what is so clearly set forth in the Word of God. The reason is that the minds of the majority of Christians have been so confused by the theological teaching of the past, that they cannot discern the plain testimony of the Bible on this subject.

In the Hebrew Old Testament the word which is used to name the grave or death-state, in which all the dead are at rest, is "Sheol." This word occurs 65 times altogether in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is not, however, translated uniformly "grave."

Three times it is translated "pit," 31 times "grave," and 31 times "hell." The word "hell" occurs in the English version of the Old Testament exactly 31 times; i.e., the only Hebrew word in the Old Testament which is translated "hell" is this word "Sheol." The Hebrew "Sheol" corresponds to the Greek "Hades," a word which appears in the New Testament to designate the same condition, the death-state. This is proved by the fact that the Apostles Peter and Paul, in two quotations from the Old Testament in which the word "Sheol" occurs, have translated it by the Greek word "Hades." Compare Ps 16:10 with Ac 2:27; and Ho 13:14 with 1Co 15:55, and in the last named text note that in reference Bibles the word "grave" has opposite to it in the margin the word "hell."

It is very important that we should realize that there is no thought of eternal torment in the Bible use of the words "Sheol" and "Hades." Let us see what Job said: "O that thou wouldest hide me in Sheol"-that would be a strange desire if Sheol was a place or condition of eternal torment!-"that thou wouldest keep me secret"-Ah, yes! That is the true thought; sheol is the hidden state-"until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live

FF127 again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."-Job 14:13-15 In Ho 13:14, we are assured that Sheol (hell, the death-state) is to be destroyed. It cannot, therefore, be an eternal place or condition of any kind whatever. The verse shows that it is by the resurrection that the death-state is to be destroyed. The words of the Prophet are: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave (Sheol); I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave (Sheol) I will be thy destruction."

The Apostle Paul, quoting this, exclaimed at the end of that wonderful chapter on the resurrection of the dead, 1Co 15:55:"O death where is thy sting? O grave (Hades; marginal reading: 'hell') where is thy

victory?"

The very best of men, Jesus Himself, went to hell-not his body merely, but His soul. We learn this from the verse which has already been mentioned, Ac 2:27, quoted from Ps 16:10: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Seeing that Jesus' soul went to hell, it is manifest that hell does not signify a place or condition of eternal torment, but the death-state. This agrees with the statement of the Prophet (Isa 53:12): "He (Jesus) has poured out his soul unto death."

The popular theory that the dead are not dead is supposed to receive support from three passages of the Scriptures. These are

- (1) the parable of the rich man and Lazarus,
- (2) the appearance of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration, and
- (3) Jesus' statement regarding Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

It is evident from the whole setting of this passage that it is a parable. Otherwise the logical lesson to be drawn from it is that unless we are poor beggars, full of sores, we shall never enter eternal bliss; and that future torment will be our portion if we happen to wear fine linen and purple and fare sumptuously every day. Christ in this parable was teaching a great dispensational truth, namely, the overthrow of Israel and the acceptance of the Gentiles into God's favor. If you read carefully the 32nd chapter

FF128 of Deuteronomy (De 32), you will see that Jesus was merely repeating in vivid language what Moses had already said. See particularly verses 20 to 29; and also Paul's quotation of De 32:21 in Ro 10:19, where he shows that Moses' prophecy referred to the overthrow of Israel consequent upon the Lord Jesus' rejection of the nation.

The rich man represented the nation of Israel, which at the time when Christ was speaking was faring sumptuously every day on God's favors and promises. The "purple" represented the fact that the Jews were the Children of the Kingdom, the nation to which the Messiah belonged. The "fine linen" symbolized the righteousness imputed to them through the typical sacrifices of the Law.

Lazarus represented those of the Gentiles who feared God, but were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph 2:12) The only favors they could receive were the crumbs which fell from Israel's table of bounties. When the woman of Canaan asked our Lord to heal her daughter, Jesus replied: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' tables."

As a reward for her faith Jesus gave her the desired crumbs of favor.-Mt 15:21-18 Owing to Israel's rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, a change came to both these classes. The "Lazarus" class "died," i.e., ceased to exist as outcasts and were received into God's favor.

Cornelius was the first of these. Accepting Christ they were henceforth received into Abraham's bosom as the true children of faithful Abraham; and heirs of the promise which God had made to Abraham.-Ga 3:7,26-29; **Ro 11:7-9**; 12-25 Subsequently in the year 70 A.D., the "rich man" "died," i.e., ceased to exist as a Nation and as the national representatives of God's favors. From then the Jews have been in torment, and the great gulf of their Law prejudices has hindered them from accepting Christ and returning to the favor of God.

Other Scriptures, however, assure us that this will not always be so, but that "blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the

FF129 Gentiles be come in," and that then "all Israel shall be saved."- Ro 11:25,26

Moses and Elias on the Mount

It is thought by many that Moses and Elias have appeared in person to the disciples and Jesus. Such have omitted to notice that Jesus told his disciples expressly that what they had seen was a vision-Mt 17:9. Peter in his second Epistle explains that the vision foreshadowed the glorious kingdom of Christ.

The word rendered "vision" is in the Greek horama. This word occurs altogether twelve times in the New Testament, and in each instance it is properly rendered "vision." To take two examples: in Ac 9:11,12, we read: "The Lord said unto him (Ananias), Arise and go into the street which is called Straight and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth and hath seen in a vision (horama) a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight." The man seen by the blind Saul of Tarsus was evidently not a reality, but a vision. In Ac 12:7,9, we read: "Behold an angel of the Lord came upon him and a light shined in the prison, and he smote Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly...And he went out and followed him and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision"-horama. Peter thought that what he had seen was a vision, and did not know that it was a reality. These examples make it evident that the word horama used by Christ indicated that Moses and Elias were not really present on the Mount, but only appeared to be there. The whole scene was a vision.

To say that Moses and Elias actually stood with Christ on the Mount would be to contradict the teaching of the Scriptures that Jesus was the first to rise from the dead.-Ac 26:23; 1Co 15:20

God is not the God of the Dead but of the Living -Mt 22:32

This text is frequently quoted as a proof that the dead are not dead. A study of the context will show that Christ has here

FF130 the resurrection in view, and that the passage teaches exactly the opposite of the commonly received meaning. His words in the preceding verse are; "As touching the resurrection of the dead." He did not say: "the resurrection of the living," for that would have been nonsense. It was in view of the resurrection that Jesus could truly say that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not the God of the dead but of the living. This agrees with what the Apostle says in **Ro 4; 17**: "God quickeneth the dead and calleth those things which be not as though they were."

Two other texts frequently brought forward to support the theory that believers at death "do immediately pass into glory," are 2Co 5:8, where the Apostle Paul says he is "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord," and Php 1:23, where he expresses a "desire to depart and to be with Christ." It is evident, however, from other Scriptures (see 2Ti 4:8), that the Apostle did not expect to be immediately ushered into the presence of the Lord the moment he laid aside his "earthly tabernacle." He knew he must remain asleep in death until the return of Christ at the last trump, when he would be awakened in the first resurrection, and so be ever with the Lord.

The word "depart" in the latter text is not a correct translation of the Greek word analusai. In Lu 12:36, the same Greek word is rendered "return." But neither does "return" accurately express the meaning of analusai; the literal translation is "to be loosed again." Paul was in a "strait betwixt two" things- whether to live or to die. Both had advantages, and he did not know which he would rather choose; but "to be loosed again" from the prison-house of death by the Lord at His second coming, was indeed far better than either of these other

two things, and this is what the Apostle earnestly desired above all else.

Two Main Classes in the Death-State

There are two classes in the death-state: the dead in Adam and the dead in Christ. When Adam sinned, the sentence of death was passed not only upon him but also upon the whole

FF131 human race yet unborn. Many deny this, and say that God would not condemn the whole race because of one man's sin; but we see this law in operation every day. They overlook the fact that through the law of heredity children suffer because of the sins of their fathers. As the Prophet expresses it: "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." (Jer 31:29) It was a dying life that the dying Adam gave to the race. The stream was contaminated at its source. Accordingly, "there is none righteous, no, not one." All are guilty before God, and all therefore, have been justly condemned to death.

This is known as the doctrine of original sin. It is exactly what Paul tells us in Ro 5:12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"; also in the 18th verse: "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Again in 1Co 15:22: "In Adam all die." There is nothing more plainly taught in the Scriptures than this doctrine of original sin.

Those who are dead in Adam have been condemned to death because of innate sin. God, the righteous Judge, is holy. He hates sin, and could not allow any imperfect sinful being to have eternal life. In this is seen the justice of God; but now, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Ro 5:8) He "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."- Joh 3:16 By belief in Christ is not meant merely that mental form of belief which says: "I believe that there was such a man as Christ Jesus, and that He was crucified by the Romans," not that kind of belief, but the kind which is a living faith, which trusts in God and says: I believe that God so loved the world that He gave His Son to be the Savior of mankind, and I believe God's promise that I am justified by my faith.

We who exercise this living faith in Jesus pass from death unto life. (See Joh 5:24) Not that we have actual life; but God reckons it to us because His justice has been satisfied by the death of Christ, and we have accepted the provision which He has made for us in Christ.

FF132 Does this mean that those of us who believe are now never to die? No, dear friends, if that were the case none of the Apostles would have died. There is something more. When we have escaped the condemnation which rests upon the world and are now seeking to do God's will, we find in His Holy Word that we have obtained our reprieve from condemnation for a special purpose, and if we do not use it for this purpose we have received the grace of God in vain.-2Co 6:1 What is this special purpose for which we receive the grace of justification? Let us see in the 9th chapter of Luke what Jesus says with regard to it. In the 22nd verse He explains to His disciples that He is about to suffer: "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."

And then in the next two verses He adds: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake the same shall save it." In other words, we are justified, that is, we are reprieved from the sentence of condemnation, which still rests on the world and are passed from death unto life, only for the special purpose of doing what Jesus did, laying down our lives as He did.

That is what the Apostle Paul tells us in Ro 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren"-you who are of the household of faith-"by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto

God, which is your reasonable service." Could that have been said to the world?

No. One who has not been justified, and is not, therefore, at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, cannot present his body a living sacrifice, for the simple reason that he has no life of his own to give; it has been forfeited at the hands of justice. He is dead in Adam.

When we follow Christ's example, we are reckoned in as members of His body. Remember how Paul presents the matter in the 12th chapter of First Corinthians (1Co 12): Jesus is the "head," and we, the Church, the followers of Christ, are His "body" and members in particular. All who are members of Christ's body, are also sharers of the sufferings and death of Christ. In the 6th chapter of Romans, the 3rd verse (Ro 6:3), Paul says: "Know ye not, that

FF133 so many of (the household of faith) as were baptized (immersed) into Jesus Christ (becoming members of his body), were baptized (immersed) into his death?"

Thus the world in general are dead in Adam, but those who have exercised saving faith and have presented their bodies a living sacrifice, are dead in Christ. The dead in Adam die at the hands of justice; but the dead in Christ die a sacrificial death.

Justice, though it accepted Christ's death, could not demand it, for He was sinless and His death was voluntary; neither can justice demand the death of Christ's followers, for there is "now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Ro 8:1) It was love which constrained Jesus to lay down His life for the satisfaction of justice, and it is love which constrains the members of His body to follow in His footsteps of self-sacrifice unto death.

The First Resurrection

Here we have, then, the two main classes in the grave or death-state: the dead in Adam, and the dead in Christ. Now, in 1Th 4:16, we read: "The dead in Christ shall rise first." And in Re 20:6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." In Ro 8:17, we are told that we must suffer with Christ before we can be glorified with him, but the Apostle adds: "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him (Christ), we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."-2Ti 2:11,12 I hope that everyone in this audience will be of this class. The offer is free to all who have ears to hear the Glad Tidings, and who will take up their cross daily and follow in the footsteps of the Master. If you are faithful unto death, you will get the crown of life, and then, when you are reigning with Christ, you will be like Him, for you will be raised in the likeness of His glorious spiritual body.-Re 2:10; 1Jo 3:2; Php 3:21

FF134 The Resurrection of the Unjust

But what about the rest of mankind? The term "First Resurrection" implies that there will be another, and that is exactly what we are told in the Scriptures. There is to be a resurrection of the unjust as well as of the just. (See Ac 24:15.) Why are they to be raised? Orthodoxy says they are to be raised simply to be condemned again. That is why the translators of the Authorized Version of the Scriptures translated the Greek word *krisis* in Joh 5:29, by the word "damnation," whereas the proper rendering is "judgment" as in the Revised Version. What Jesus said was: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth: they that have done good (the Old Testament Saints, as well as the followers of Christ) unto the resurrection of life (their trial is past; they have proved themselves worthy of life); and they that have done evil (the unjust), unto the resurrection of judgment." *Krisis* means a trial or testing followed by a sentence, which sentence will depend on the person's innocence or guilt. The English

word "crisis" is derived from the Greek Krisis. It is used in reference to any condition of affairs in which the issue is as yet undecided; and those who are interested are in anxious suspense, watching whether the result will be success or failure, life or death.

After a judicial sentence has passed, the person is no longer on his trial; his judgment is over. The world in general, the unjust, have never been on trial as individuals. The trial of their federal head took place at the beginning in the Garden of Eden, and the sentence of condemnation was passed then. The whole race has been born under the sentence of condemnation, "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and the vast majority have died without having escaped from that condemnation, and, therefore, without any individual trial. Unlike those who have died in Christ, of whom Paul wrote: "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Ro 8:1), these died without real faith, or without any faith at all "in that only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

That is why they are called the unjust; they have not been justified.

FF135 Comparatively few of the earth's inhabitants have heard of Christ. Think of the millions upon millions who died before the Son of God came to give himself "a ransom for all," and concerning whom Paul wrote that they had "no hope," and were "without God in the world"! (Eph 2:12) Think of the millions upon millions of people living in heathen lands today, who without having heard the name of Jesus, are dying at the rate of about 70,000 every day! Then again, think of the vast multitude who, though they have heard, have never understood the Glad Tidings of great joy which the angel said would be to all people! None of these have had an individual trial, because the condemnation to death was passed upon them on account of Adam's disobedience.

They are coming forth from the death-state in order to be judged, to be tried for life or death. We are assured of this, because we are told that Jesus "by the grace of God tasted death for every man" (Heb 2:9), that "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours (the Church's) only, but also for the sins of the whole world."-1Jo 2:2 The teaching of the Scriptures is clear that Adam sold the whole race under sin to death (Ro 7:14), and that Christ bought the whole race with His precious blood, and that "to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." (Ro 14:9) It is clear, also, that the only way by which any can get eternal life, is through faith in the death and resurrection of Christ. We are told by Jesus himself: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (Joh 14:6); and again, Paul tells us that neither Jews nor Gentiles could justify themselves by works, and it was for this reason that God sent forth His Son Christ Jesus "to be a propitiation through faith in his blood (death)."-Romans 2:14,15; 3:9,10,25 It is because of this that God our Savior has arranged that all shall come to a knowledge of the truth. (1Ti 2:4) That which enables Him to do this, to be "just and (still) the justifier," is the fact that the man Christ Jesus, the mediator between God and men, "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified (to all) in due time."-1Ti 2:5,6 Remember that we are not the judges as to who have had,

FF136 and who have not had a full opportunity for salvation in the present lifetime. It is a good thing, for men are prone to be severe in their judgment of others. You would think that if any have had an opportunity for salvation, the Jews who crucified Christ surely had. They did not merely go to a church and hear a minister preach about Christ; instead they actually saw Christ himself, they heard the gracious message from His own mouth, and they saw the wonderful works which He did, and yet they crucified Him! Why, you will say, if anyone had responsibility those Jews had, and if any suffer eternal condemnation those Jews must. Yet what did the Apostle Peter say: "I wot that through ignorance ye did it." And Paul said: "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." No, dear friends, the "god of this world," Satan, as we read in 2Co 4:4, "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." The Lord is the judge.

If God sees that anyone has full knowledge of his responsibilities now but will not obey the gospel, He will

not give such a man a further opportunity. What would be the use?

We must remember, however, that God is full of loving-kindness, "for his mercy endureth forever." In Heb 6:4-6, He has given an indication as to what He regards as a full opportunity.

If the Lord sees that an individual has never heard or never sufficiently understood the glad message of salvation, that individual will get an opportunity.

This does not mean, however, a license for sin or indifference in this lifetime, for we are told that there will be a measure of future punishment according to the measure of present responsibility. As a man sows, so shall he also reap. (Ga 6:7) In the last day it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the people of Palestine, for the Sodomites sinned in much greater ignorance than the Jews. (Mt 11:23,24) We can leave the matter quite safely with the Lord.

We have, however, this assurance, that as all men were condemned in the one man, Adam, and not one of them was asked whether he wanted to be condemned in Adam or not, so all men, either in this lifetime or in the resurrection, will get the free

FF137 gift of justification to life because of the one Savior, Jesus Christ. "As by the offence of one judgment came upon ALL men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon ALL men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."-Ro 5:18,19 The Lord's Plan God's ways and God's thoughts are not our ways and our thoughts. They are as much higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. (Isa 55:8,9) He is longsuffering. His plan is to allow mankind to pass through a dreadful night of sorrow and death as a consequence of sin, and He is waiting till that lesson has been fully learned. In the meantime He is selecting those who are blameless and harmless, the Sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom they shine as lights in the world (Php 2:15)-a little flock in all. It is the Father's good pleasure to give these the kingdom (Lu 12:32), that they may share in blessing the world.

We have seen, then, that the world in general was condemned in Adam, and that the people will come forth from the death-state to their first individual trial. That is the purpose for which Christ is coming to reign, "Because he (God) hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Ac 17:31) There is great comfort in that word "assurance"; and notice that the assurance is not to some but "unto all men."

What an assurance it is to know that the world is to be judged by the meek and gentle Jesus! The followers of Christ are to be associated with Him in this glorious work, as we read: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"-1Co 6:2. That is the reason why the followers of Christ must develop the graces of the spirit.

Those who claim that faith without works is sufficient, are shutting their eyes to the plain statements of the Scriptures, that

FF138 faith without works is dead. In 1Co 13:1-3, it is solemnly declared that we may have all knowledge and such great faith that we could move mountains, and yet, if we have not love, it profits us nothing. No one will be a joint-heir with Christ unless by the help of God he builds on the foundation of faith and knowledge the superstructure of love. Before we can be entrusted with the work of judging the world with Christ, we must prove that "love" is the great motive power of all our words and actions. Not that God expects of us perfection in the flesh, but we must grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, "and become conformed to his image" to the best of our ability.

If we do this, trusting in the blood of Christ, we shall be accepted, not because of our own merit, but because of the merit of Christ. As Paul says: "we are accepted in the Beloved." (Eph 1:6) Those who are faithful unto death will hear the Lord say to them: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."- Mt 25:21 We all know that very few take up their cross daily, and learn to be meek and lowly and loving as Jesus was, and so we are not astonished when we read in the Word of God that "many are called but few are chosen," and "strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

These few are the saints who will be privileged to sit with Christ on His throne. (Re 3:21) Hear the Good Shepherd's tender words to us who love Him and do our best to obey Him: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."-Lu 12:32

The World's Day of Judgment

This is usually thought to be a day of twenty-four hours: but Peter speaking of the day of judgment, says: "Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."-2Pe 3:8 In the "Day" of the world's judgment, the thousand-year reign of Christ, conditions will be in most respects the very reverse

FF139 of what they are now. The present time is a dark night of sorrow, suffering, and death. That will be the perfect day when "sorrow and sighing shall flee away." A false theology has taught the people to dread the day of judgment, whereas the Scriptures speak of it as a gladsome time-"O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him all the earth. Say among the heathen (nations) that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth."-Psalm 46:9-13 In that day the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and it will no longer be necessary for anyone to mount a pulpit or platform to tell the people about the Lord, for everyone will know the Lord from the least of them unto the greatest of them. (Isa 11:9; Jer 31:34) That will indeed be a glorious time. It will be a marked contrast to the present time when "darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." (Isa 60:2) Very few indeed know God at this time. Many believe that the Bible teaches eternal torment. Not long ago, two men were sentenced for throwing a dog into a furnace and watching its agony till it died. The judge rightfully characterized their conduct as brutal. Yet many who would shudder at the bare narrative of such brutality, profess to believe that God is torturing not dogs but human beings, not for a few moments till death ends the scene but for all eternity! What an awful conception of God! My heart rejoices to have the glad assurance of God's Word that in the glorious Millennial reign of Christ, the day of the world's judgment, all men's eyes will be opened to see that "GOD IS LOVE." See in the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah what the Prophet tells us of that glorious Millennial Day! "He will destroy in this mountain (kingdom) the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail (of unbelief) that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory (by the resurrection of the dead): and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all

FF140 faces...And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, and we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." (Isaiah 25:7-9) Notice, dear friends, that it is after the people come forth from their graves that God will save them! There are still more privileges for the world of mankind. In the present Age the way to life is narrow, and "few there be that find it." Satan still "walks about as a roaring lion," seeking whom he may devour. But in the Millennial Age a "highway of holiness" will be set up-not a narrow difficult way, but a highway, an easy way, in which even fools will not err. And there will be no "lion" there, for Satan is to be bound during the thousand years. (Isa 35:8-10; Re 20:2) Satan's evil influence will be restrained, and then the present aims of

our temperance and other social reformers will be attained. Neither social evils nor any other kind of evil will be any longer permitted.

One important reason why men persist in doing evil in the present time, is because they are not always punished at once for every sinful act and word. As the wise man said: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." (Ec 8:11) Is not that true? Why are our jails full of prisoners? Simply because that men recognize that the chances of escaping punishment are great, and they are willing to run the risk of being convicted. When Christ is the reigning king, this evil condition will be abolished. In Isa 26:9, we are told that when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. In that day the Lord will no longer permit evil. There will be a just measure of punishment for every sinful act and word, and this punishment will bring about reformation of character.

On the other hand, according to the Psalmist: "In his (Christ's) day the righteous shall flourish." (Ps 72:7) In this respect also the conditions will be the reverse of those which now obtain. It will then be easier to do good than to do evil, whereas in the present time it is easier to do evil than to do good. When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, when every sinful act and word is punished and every righteous act and word rewarded, men will soon come to recognize the love,

FF141 justice, wisdom and power of God. Need we wonder, then, that at that time "the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness"! I believe that the Millennial reign of Christ is very near at hand, even at the door; but we are not to understand that perfect peace and righteousness will prevail from its very start. Many have false ideas with regard to the Millennium. They think that the moment the Millennium begins, everybody and everything will immediately be perfect. But this will not be the case. Speaking of the new heavens and the new earth which will be established when Christ takes to Himself His great power and begins to reign, the Prophet says: "There shall no more come thence an infant of few days, nor an old man that shall not have the full length of his days; for as a lad shall one die a hundred years old; and as a sinner shall be accursed he who dieth at a hundred years old." (Isa 65:20, Leeser's translation) This shows that some will be sinners in that Millennial day, and that the incorrigible will get at least a hundred years' trial. The Apostle states plainly (1Co 15:25), that Christ "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." In other words, the Millennium will not be a time of perfect peace and righteousness; it is the "day" appointed by God for the purpose of establishing perfect peace and righteousness.-Ac 17:31 By the end of the Millennium, all mankind will have had restored to them the perfection which was lost by Adam, the perfect human nature; and the whole earth will be restored to the former paradise condition. (Ac 3:21; Isaiah 35) Then, the thousand years being finished, Satan is to be loosed for a little season. (Re 20:3) "Why!" some will say, "that will mar everything! Why should Satan be loosed after paradise is restored?"

When Adam and Eve in the beginning were placed in the Garden of Eden, they were perfect, but God permitted Satan to tempt them. Why? In order to test their loyalty to Him and to righteousness. They fell. Sin entered into the world and death through sin; hence all the present sighing, crying and pain, which have continued now for six thousand years, and by means of which men have been learning the bitter lesson of the sinfulness of sin. (Ro 7:13) Christ will soon begin his glorious reign. He will call, and all the dead will come forth from the

FF142 death-state. Those who in the past shared Christ's sufferings and death will now share His glory, and will with Christ reign over and judge all those who have died in Adam. These will be gradually lifted up to the perfection lost by Adam, and then, when they have learned the blessings of righteousness and the value of submission to the Lord, Satan will be permitted to tempt them. Why? For the same reason that he was permitted to tempt Adam and Eve-to test their loyalty to God and to righteousness. We do not know how many will fall, but surely after the long experiences of both sin and righteousness, comparatively few will follow Satan, for all will have had practical experience of the love as well as of the justice of God.

Those who do fall will be destroyed in the second death.

\The Second Death

The first death is the death in Adam, but the second death will in no sense be due to Adam. "In those days they shall say no more, 'The fathers have eaten a sour grape (of sin) and the children's teeth are set on edge,' but everyone (who dies) shall die for his own iniquity." (Jer 31:29,30) In the Millennial Age each will receive an individual trial, and all who die will die as the result of their own sin, no longer because of Adam's sin.

This will be their second death, their first being the death they suffered in the past on account of Adam's disobedience.- Ro 5:12,18 The second death is pictured as a "Lake of fire and brimstone" (Re 21:8), a forceful figure of utter destruction-a death from which there will not be a resurrection: for "Christ dieth no more," there will not be a second ransom for sinners. (Ro 6:9) This second death is frequently referred to in the Greek version of the Bible as "Gehenna," one of the three words translated "hell" in the English New Testament. "Gehenna" is the Greek form of the name "Valley of Hinnom," the valley situated immediately outside Jerusalem below Mount Zion. It was the refuse destructor of the city. Fires were kept constantly burning in it and brimstone was added for the purpose of aiding the work of destruction. All the garbage of the city was cast into it; also the bodies of criminals, so as to signify that these were not

FF143 worthy of a resurrection.

Thus we see that there is no idea of torment associated with Gehenna, the second death. It means a condition of everlasting destruction. This is just what the Psalmist said: "The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy," not preserve in any condition whatsoever.-Psalm 145:20

The Reward of the Faithful

Those, on the other hand, who resist Satan and who are loyal to God and to righteousness, who love the Lord their God with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves, will pass on into the Ages to follow, when there will be "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither will there be any more pain, for the former things will have passed away." Only those who worship God in spirit and in truth will attain to this condition of eternal bliss as perfect human beings on a perfect earth. Then, when the first dominion is restored, God's great plan of Salvation will be complete, and the prayer which our Lord taught his disciples to offer will be answered; "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven!" The angel's message will be fulfilled: "Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.-Lu 2:10 In conclusion, I hope that all here will recognize the fact that though this earthly restitution is a glorious reward for faithfulness, we in this Age can have a higher state to look forward to. I hope you see that it is your reasonable service to take up your cross now and follow Christ. If you do, and if you are faithful unto death, you will reign with him as a glorious spirit being of the divine nature. (2Pe 1:4) Your chief cause for rejoicing will be your ability to cooperate with the gentle loving Jesus in dispensing all those wonderful blessings to this poor sin-cursed earth; for is it not more blessed to give than to receive?

I trust that what I have said will enable you all to understand and appreciate the Word of God more than you ever did before, and that your love for God and for righteousness will thus be increased. Amen.

F145 Prayer and the Bible

ALL Christians believe in prayer. But belief in prayer is not confined to Christians; the heathen believe in prayer. In times of dire distress even ungodly sceptics will fall on their knees and pray fervently. Like the Samaritans of old, however, the heathen worship they know not what (Joh 4:22), while the skeptic, moved by fear, yielding to the natural human instinct, appeals to a higher power for help. (Isa 26:16) The Christian on

the contrary knows whom he worships, and understands that he prays to God in the name of Christ. Yet how many can satisfactorily explain the philosophy of prayer?

Nothing should deter us from an investigation into this important feature of the Bible, as even a little knowledge of the underlying reason governing the necessity of prayer opens up its possibilities. Such knowledge is useful to the man of God; it enables him to more intelligently cooperate with the Lord in the outworking of the Plan of Salvation. For we must clearly recognize that when the Apostle says that consecrated believers are "laborers together with God," he is giving expression to a significant truth.-1Co 3:9; 2Co 6:1

What is Effective Prayer?

Effective prayer is that which invokes God's aid in bringing into effect the many details of his glorious Plan of Salvation; because this is the work in which Jehovah is engaged since the fall of Adam, and in which we are privileged to be colaborers with him.* *We do not overlook the Scriptures which declare that God rested from all his works after the creation of Adam. (Heb 4:4) Still, Jesus said: "My Father worketh hitherto and [therefore] I work." (Joh 5:7) The work to which Jesus referred was the work of love and mercy, healing the sick and forgiving the sins of the repentant. (Lu 5:18-25) The Scriptures show that the Almighty's Day of Rest, like each of the preceding six days of creation, is a period of seven thousand years, beginning from the fall of Adam into sin and death, and terminating at the close of the reign of Christ, when the Father will again resume control of the earthly Kingdom. (1Co 15:22-26) Nevertheless, though resting from works of creation Jehovah has been working more mightily since the fall, in lifting up mankind from the miry pit of sin and death; for the labor dictated by love is not of the same order as that forbidden to be done on the Sabbath days according to the law of Moses.-Lu 13:11-17 No other work is of importance. If the world did not get life, of what avail would their works be? (Joh 10:10)

FF146 As we know that God will not incline his ear to any except they pray according to his will, we therefore conclude that every prayer, to be effective, must be offered with His glorious Plan of Salvation in view, the details of which are contained in the Bible. This is the reason why we speak of these two connectedly: "Prayer and the Bible." Thus the prayers of the heathen, long and often repeated, cannot be in line with God's will, as they have nothing in common with the Bible. The prayers throughout Christendom, while offered in Christ's name, are often contrary to the mind of Jehovah through ignorance of the Bible's teachings, and are therefore not heeded by God. We may venture further and say that some prayers of God's consecrated children are ineffective, because not offered in strict accordance with the Father's will. James indicates this when he declares: "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss."

The Reason why Prayer is Necessary

When Adam was created he was perfect mentally, morally, and physically. He had perfect communion with his Maker whom he loved naturally, as the Divine law, the sum of which is love for God and neighbor, was written in his heart. There was no need for the great Jehovah to say to Adam: "My Son, give me thine heart," for He had already all the love and devotion of Adam's heart.

But when the tempter succeeded in his endeavor to deceive Eve, and through this means caused Adam to wilfully take away his heart's loyalty to his heavenly Creator, everything was changed.

The sweet communion was broken. By disobeying the Lord and obeying Satan in eating the forbidden fruit, Adam wilfully cast the loving God out of his rightful place, and allowed

FF147 the usurping prince of this world to step in. From that time onward the whole world has lain in the wicked one.

The Almighty never changes. He is the Unchangeable One.

Though Adam had withdrawn from God he was still loved; but his sin of disobedience had raised a barrier; and it is written that the Lord shall by no means clear the guilty. Nevertheless, God's perfect love triumphed. His mercy endureth forever. He had already formulated a plan by which he would reestablish communion with the alienated earth-by means of another man on whose heart loyalty he could depend.

After a lapse of over four thousand years during which it was demonstrated that there was none righteous, no, not one, for "all came short of the glory of God" (Ro 3:10), the Man Christ Jesus was sent into the world to plead on behalf of the fallen race. During that long dark period Jehovah dealt with specially chosen men to whom he intimated that a Savior would one day come and reclaim mankind. Those who exercised faith in this promise pleased God, and were accounted righteous. (Ro 4:3) These favored few were not actually free from sin, therefore none could pay to God a "ransom for his brother" and so lay the foundation for lasting heart-union between God and men. Not one of them had the unblemished law of love written in his heart, and thus the Almighty was unable to transmit through them that power which alone can save the world from sin and death. It was necessary that the one who would have the honor of establishing this great work should be lovable, holy, in every respect; and such was Jesus. We read that Jesus was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb 7:26) He was able to accomplish for the fallen world what the world could not do for itself.

We notice how the Scriptures distinguish between Jesus and other men. Our Lord said that of all born of women none had been greater than John the Baptist; and he also speaks of John as a "burning and shining light." (Mt 11:11; Joh 5:35) It is apparent from these declarations of Jesus that none of the holy prophets excelled John the Baptist. And yet John himself acknowledged that he was not able to abolish sin and reunite the hearts of men with God. He constantly directed attention to Jesus as the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the

FF148 world. (Joh 1:29) The Apostle tells us that the Baptist, great though he was, was not that light. As a forerunner he was sent to bear witness and testify that Jesus was the true light which will yet lighten every man that comes into the world. (Joh 1:6-9) It is quite evident from the Scriptures that vital communion between God and the earth, broken by Adam, was reestablished by Jesus Christ. Prayers offered previous to Christ's advent accomplished a preparatory work only.

Jesus Christ the "Light" of the World

But perfect relations between the Creator and his earthly domain was not reestablished without a challenge. Satan, the "prince of this world," chief among the "rulers of darkness," tried his utmost to sever the connection again. (Lu 4:1-13) The Adversary, however, could not succeed this time, for with the aid of the mighty power of God Jesus was more than a match for him. The Scriptures are clear that Jesus could do nothing of himself. (Joh 5:19; 8:28) Therefore he was in constant communion with his Father by prayer. He prayed to Jehovah for strength to resist Satan. He asked for wisdom to direct the affairs of his ministry among men that the message of the coming Kingdom might find root in the hearts of some, and extend through them to all on earth. Jesus prayed for power to work miracles, so to manifest the authority conferred on him and foreshow the great power of his future Kingdom. He also prayed for discernment to understand the deep things of his Father's Word, that he might work in harmony therewith and fulfill the heavenly will.

Jesus passed on the light to his disciples, and God found response in them also. (Joh 15:16; 17:18) These were sent forth into the world among whom they shone as lights, in order that they might enlighten us who believe in the Savior through their word. (Joh 12:35,36; Mt 5:14,16; Ac 26:18; Eph 5:8; Php 2:15) As soon as we, like all who had the "hearing ear" during the Gospel Age, believed in the life giving words, God's will then began to be done in us; and letting our light shine we are empowered to enkindle still others. (Joh 17:20;

2Co 4:6) Thus that single Light which God sent into the world over eighteen

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centuries ago has caused many lights to shine throughout all these years. (Lu 2:27-32; Ac 13:44-48) And just as the darkness did not comprehend the first great light, neither has it understood the succeeding lights. (Joh 3:19-21; 15:18-20; 17:13,14; 1Jo 3:1) But when God merges all these "lights" into the one great Sun of Righteousness in the Age of Restitution spoken of by the prophets, when the human race will return from its captivity in death (Mt 13:43; Mal 4:2; Ac 3:19-24), every man that has come into the world from the beginning will be lightened up, and every trace of darkness will be chased away. (Eph 5:14) This earth will then become a dazzling planet, the will of the Lord being done on it once more as in heaven; and God, who dwells in light, and in whom is no darkness at all, will tabernacle with men. (1Ti 6:16; Re 21:3) There will be perfect communion between the Creator and all his human creatures; Satan, the prince of darkness, will be destroyed.-Eph 6:12; Joh 12:31

Salvation is Impossible Without Prayer

The Scriptures clearly teach that God requires prayer and that through prayer his plan for the salvation of the world is to be realized. (We state the matter plainly that the philosophy of prayer may appear more evident.) It is true that with God all things are possible. But God has made some things impossible.

When Jesus prayed: "Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me"; but a little later: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done"; he understood that it was not possible. To redeem man from death Jesus must drink the cup of suffering and die the just for the unjust. (Mr 14:36; Mt 26:42) God had made it impossible for the world to be saved out of death by another method.

Had it been possible for the world to be saved from death without prayer, Jesus would not then have required to pray.

Neither would he have impressed upon his disciples the necessity of prayer; nor would the Apostles have been so insistent in their exhortation to all believers in Christ to pray constantly.

For to state the philosophy of prayer simply-if men desire to

FF150 gain the glorious liberty of the children of God, they must overcome the forces of evil. But none have the strength within themselves to fight evil. God alone can supply this power; and he is willing to give it in the way appointed. He cannot send down his saving power to earth until he has there a kindred heart in communication with himself, through whom he can operate. God works by love and persuasion; not by fear and force. His plan is to win man from under the banner of Satan, the usurping prince, and convert them into willing worshippers.

He does not want men to be slaves. At present they are slaves to sin, and slaves to Satan; but God desires their liberation and willing allegiance; and he has provided a way by which all may come to him for the necessary power to fight for their freedom.

Prayer is the line of communication between the fighter and the base of power. The struggling earth cries to God for help, because it finds no help in itself to overcome the powers of evil; and God requires this heart-felt prayer, for it is a spirit force against which spiritual forces of evil cannot stand.-Eph 6:12-18 In the meantime only the few can direct the power of prayer aright; and while misunderstood and even hated by the world, these are really fighting the battle on behalf of the world. (1Jo 3:1; Joh 15:18,19; 17:14) They understand the dire distress of humanity because of the sin and fall of Adam in the beginning, and fervently pray for the

liberation of themselves and all mankind, not so much from individual present ills, as from the great general condemnation to death, and the cruel dominion of Satan. These Scripturally-enlightened few know the true need of the human race, and, like their Lord and Master Jesus Christ, they long for its everlasting salvation. (Joh 10:10) These prayers, like the prayers of Jesus, are meritorious, because carefully thought out in line with Jehovah's Plan of Salvation as revealed in the Living Word.

We must recognize that the act of praying is not in itself necessarily meritorious, for it is after all a natural tendency.

Ultimately, when the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isa 11:9; Zep 3:9), the inherent praying faculty will be cultivated and developed and properly directed, so that all men may than pray acceptably. (Isa 58:9; Ps 65:2; Job 22:22-26) But it is an enviable favor to know how to pray acceptably

FF151 in the present dark night of sin and death. It is given to very few to have this special knowledge. (Isa. 53:11; Ho 4:6; Ro 10:2; Mr 4:11,12) Yet the privilege is not withheld from any who earnestly desire to use it.- Mt 5:6

Prayer is a Necessary Office

The most wonderful kingdom the world shall ever know is to be established as the result of prayer. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray to the Father for the Kingdom to come, and for His will to be done on earth as in heaven, he was committing to them a necessary office. (Joh 15:16) We must not suppose that the Kingdom would have come in any case, whether prayed for or not. We do well to grasp the proper thought, as it makes much difference in our attitude toward prayer. Prayer is in itself one of the factors in Jehovah's foreordained Plan of Salvation. Tennyson expressed a great truth when he sang: "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

The Kingdom and all matters pertaining to it must be prayed for; and if men did not pray angels would. We read that angels desired to look into these things; but God has not committed the future Kingdom into the hands of the angelic hosts, but to specially chosen men, the Son of Man himself being chief. The prophets of old foretold of the sufferings of this chosen class, and of the glory of the Kingdom to follow.-1Pe 10:12; Heb 2:5

Jesus, addressing his disciples, said: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery [secret] of the Kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand." (Mr 4:11,12) It is not every one who can be the disciple of Jesus; only those who deny themselves and take up their cross daily, and follow him into his sacrificial death, can claim discipleship.-Lu 9:23; 14:27; Ro 6:3-5; Ps 50:5 Effective prayer implies sacrifice, and consequent suffering.

Here is a great secret underlying power-producing prayer; and we would that we could make it clear-the Kingdom cannot

FF152 come unless it is prayed for, and those only who know God's will concerning the Kingdom can pray acceptably. It is not every one who repeats: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven," who is praying acceptably, for few indeed know what God's will is, and what kind of Kingdom is to come.

According to the plain declaration of the Scriptures (1Jo 5:14,15), only such as know God's will can be heard by him, and receive an answer. Therefore, the Kingdom shall come, and God's will shall be done on earth, not because millions in Christendom have for centuries prayed for it, but on account of the few who have known the secrets of the Kingdom, and have been heard and answered. Just why it is that the prayers of the specially instructed few can accomplish the great work of establishing the Kingdom of God, will, we believe,

become clear as we proceed.

What Prayer is

There are a number of senses in which the word prayer is used, as: petition, intercession, entreaty, supplication, confession, invocation, blessing, praise, thanksgiving, adoration, devotion.

These all imply communion with God as the center of power, and the giver of every perfect gift. The fundamental thought is that of a petitioner pleading with a contrite heart for favors for himself, or on behalf of others. As befitting the hallowed majesty of the great Being with whom he communes, the petitioner approaches in a reverential attitude of heart, in a thankful mood because of favors already enjoyed, and in loving adoration and praise at the realization of the wonderful perfection of God's character as demonstrated in his gracious and bountiful provision in reserve for the children of men. In no sense, therefore, is praying to be thought of as commanding; although the attitude of a commander may often be necessary for the Lord's colaborer, in order to bring into effect that for which he has previously prayed. In other words, after having prayed to God according to his will, we are sometimes invested with authority to command the performance of God's will. Our meaning will appear clearer by a contemplation of Mr 11:13,14,20-24.

While the subject of prayer is wide, and its phases many and impossible to comprehend in a sentence, one thing is specially

FF153 prominent, namely, that the only prayers that are heard and answered by Jehovah are those uttered according to his will. (1Jo 5:14,15; Ps 34:15; 66:18-20; Joh 9:31) And if God's will is reflected in acceptable prayer, then prayer can be said to be the expression of God's will. It is this definition of prayer we desire particularly to consider. Whatever other definitions can be profitably brought forward and studied, this one, that prayer is the expression of God's will, is thoroughly Scriptural; and to understand it is most helpful to the child of God.

None can know God's will and pray in accordance therewith, unless they have given themselves in sacrifice to him in the way he has appointed. This is the teaching of Ro 12:1,2, where we read: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Complete knowledge of God's perfect will cannot be acquired without careful Christian study and experience; yet from the very first the spirit begotten son of the heavenly Father can pray acceptably. The Father of Spirits has so ordered it that we who obey the call to be sacrificing disciples of Christ shall be heard by him, though not at all times able to frame our petitions in suitable words nor even fully realize what are our proper desires as New Creatures in Jesus Christ. In this connection we specially notice the Apostle's words in Ro 8:26,27, Diaglott rendering: "The spirit assists our weakness; for we do not know what we should pray for as we ought; but the spirit itself intercedes with unspoken groans. And he who searches the hearts, know what is the mind of the spirit, because according to God it intercedes on behalf of saints." This vague pleading of the child to the Father will continue with us in measure to the end of our Christian course; for the spirit begotten sons of God cannot be satisfied until they awake in the spirit realm in the likeness of Christ. (1Jo 3:2) As the Apostle says: even we ourselves, which have the first fruits of the spirit, "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."-Ro 8:23

FF154 But while our inarticulate yearnings in the spirit are acknowledged and answered by Him who reads and understands the heart, it is still possible, and necessary, that we should study the Holy Scriptures to show

ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed. (2Ti 2:15) Otherwise, if we did not study to rightly divide the Word of Truth, how could we know God's perfect will and pray in accordance therewith? Prayer is a necessary office, to which those who show themselves approved spiritual workers are appointed. (Joh 15:15,16) And as the will of our heavenly Father is made manifest to us through our study of his Word, it is our glad privilege to pray according to the things thus revealed and so obtain the blessings promised. This, however, requires a close adherence to our covenant of sacrifice. Our own will must go as God's will is done, until at the end of our course the will of our Father is supreme, and our own will is entirely laid aside. It was so with Jesus to the end (Mr 14:35,36), and it must be so with all who desire to be where he is.- 1Co 14:15

The Exclusiveness of Prayer in the Gospel Age

One truth which stands clearly revealed is, that during this Gospel Age any prayer to be effective, that will do definite lasting work, must ascend to God in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Other prayer God does not hear (Joh 5:23; 14:6), for ignoring the world's Savior they cannot, in the very nature of things, be in line and harmony with the Great Plan of Salvation-Ac 4:12 The Scriptural teaching that in the Gospel Age vital, cooperative, prayer is the exclusive privilege of the sacrificing followers of Christ, is illustrated in the beautiful, orderly arranged services of the Levitical priesthood in the tabernacle of Moses. We note three general conditions of men in the world today: (1) the comparatively few who have covenanted with God to lay down their lives with Christ in his sacrificial death, (2) those who have belief in the Son of God but do not sacrifice with him, (3) the unheeding Gentile unbeliever. The first class are represented by the sacrificing priests in the "Holy" apartment in the tabernacle, where they enjoy the light of the golden candlestick, eat the

FF155 shewbread, and offer incense on the golden altar, which things are typical of spiritual blessings and privileges. The second class are pictured by the Levites, who are not sacrificing priests, in the "Court" outside the tabernacle. These Levites were not permitted to enter or look into the "Holy," thus prefiguring the inability of the nonsacrificing believers in Christ, who are therefore not spirit begotten sons of God, to perceive the deep spiritual things of God. (1Co 2:9-16) The unbelieving world in general is represented by The "camp" outside the Court.

"The golden altar, in the 'Holy' would seem to represent the 'little flock,' the consecrated Church in the present sacrificing condition. From this altar ascends the sweet incense, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ-the willing services of the priests; their praises, their willing obedience-all things whatsoever they do to the glory of God. Those who thus offer incense acceptable to God (1Pe 2:5) come very close to their Father, close up to the vail which separates from the 'Most Holy'; and if they have requests to make they may be presented with the incense-'much incense with the prayers of saints.' (Re 8:3) The prayers of such priests of God are effectual. Our Lord Jesus kept the incense continually burning, and could say: 'I know that thou hearest me always.' (Joh 11:42) So the underpriests, 'members of his body,' will be heard always if they continually offer the incense of faith, love and obedience to God. None should expect to have requests recognized who do not thus keep their covenant. 'If ye abide in me, and my words [teachings] abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.' (Joh 15:7) The necessity of a clear apprehension of Christ's teachings as a guide to our requests and expectations, that we may not 'ask amiss,' and out of harmony with God's Plan, is clearly shown by this Scripture, but seldom noticed."- Charles T. Russell

The Prayers of a Gentile

There is Scriptural record of one apparent exception to the rule governing effective prayer during the Gospel Age, where the prayers of the Gentile Cornelius, as we read in Acts 10, had ascended to God as a memorial, and ultimately received the Divine recognition. This proves that the great Jehovah is not unmindful

FF156 of those whose hearts are in the right, receptive, attitude. We are told that Cornelius was a devout, God

fearing man, and that he "prayed to God alway." Before God sent the Apostle Peter to tell him "what he ought to do," the heart-felt prayers of Cornelius could not accomplish any part in the pre-arranged work of salvation, for he did not then know of "The Way, the Truth, and the Life," the Lord Jesus Christ, apart from whom we can do nothing. (Joh 14:6) Nevertheless his prayers were sincere and uttered in all good faith, and they and his good deeds ascended as a "memorial" before God, and were had in "remembrance" when, in the due time, the offer of joint-heirship with Christ was extended to the Gentiles.-Ac 10:4,31 After his conversion and illumination by the Holy Spirit, the words of Cornelius could then minister grace and life to his hearers, the necessary power being granted by God through the medium of his prayers in Christ's name. (Ac 10:44-47; Eph 4:29; 1Ti 4:16; 1Th 1:5) It is probable that the earnest, though not yet properly instructed, prayers of many kind-hearted men and women, devout in their daily lives as was Cornelius, will similarly serve as memorials, and bring them in remembrance before the Everlasting Father in the Age of Restitution immediately in the future. It is probably that there is an important place for such to fill when the scope of Salvation is widened toward all on earth, even as the centurion Cornelius had the honor of holding first place among Gentile believers when the grace of God was due to be extended beyond the nation of Israel. For this reason we would not think to deter any from praying to the Lord of heaven and earth (Ac 17:22-31), but while commending would seek to make manifest Christ as "the way, the truth, and the life," as Peter was instructed to do for Cornelius, and leave the issue with the heavenly Father who knows the end from the beginning.-Ac 10:28,34,35; Isa 46:9,10

God Regards the Children of Believers

We also note the statement of the Apostle in 1Co 7:14-"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the [believing] wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the [believing] husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they

FF157 holy." Many of the Lord's people who were born in this cleansed or justified, "holy," condition can, on reviewing their early life, perceive that the Lord had kindly regard for them, shaping many of the affairs of their life to their ultimate spiritual advantage. Trials and difficulties were tempered that they might not destroy, but discipline. In these days, also, they realized that many of their prayers to God, uttered in simple faith though not with much knowledge, were heard and honored.

We see now that this Divine supervision in our infancy was directly owing to our parentage. One or both of our parents were spirit begotten new creatures in Christ Jesus; otherwise we had been "unclean" like the children of unbelievers. Such providential covering continues until the years of discretion are attained; and this period varies with the individual. A few seem to have discerning minds at an early age; others develop slowly and reach personal accountability later in life; while some, by no means small in number, are so devoid of judgment that they never attain to responsibility.

It is obvious that should any die while in the "minority" state of mind, they are not of that class who are "dead in Christ." For the irresponsible are incapable of taking the intelligent step of full consecration to God, without which none can receive the Holy Spirit of begettal, and so become members in particular in the body of Christ. Nevertheless the child of the believer has much advantage over the child of the unbeliever; for the prayers of his parents, and the character training and heavenly knowledge he acquires, enables him to choose the right way when sanctification in the service of the Lord is made clear to him; whereas the child of the unbeliever has much of error in doctrinal teaching and practice to unlearn. Thus it is manifest that, during the time until their discretionary powers are sufficiently developed, the prayers of the children of the consecrated are honored by God; yet these prayers cannot have the vital force of such as are uttered by the mature Christian who has made a covenant with God by sacrifice.

Idea. Expression. Realization.

The necessary part fulfilled by prayer in the outworking of

FF158 God's glorious Plan of Salvation, is apparent when we consider the three successive stages which must be essential parts of every completed work. To illustrate: A man conceives an idea to build a house. At first no one is aware of this, and hence his plans are secret. In his thoughts only has his idea taken formation.

Then, having detailed all the features of the house in his mind, he voices this idea that his workers may know of it.

And having heard their employers, these collaborators build the house and materialize the idea. The idea was conceived, expressed, and realized.

So with God's creation of earth. In his thoughts he pictured what form the earth should have, and all the details connected with it.-Isa 40:13,14 Then God gave expression to his idea. As the Scriptures declare: "He spake." Or as it is written in Genesis: "God said- "With the result that "it was so." "He spake, and it was done." (Ps 33:9) God's idea was realized. All his mighty power was at the disposal of those agents which put into effect his idea as soon as it was expressed.

Here, then, we have what is really the basis of prayer. It may at first appear strange, but it is true. For what is prayer but the expression of God's will? And if our prayers express the will of God, we know that God's will must be done. But if any pray contrary to the Divine arrangement he is voicing his own or some other's will; and thoughts not sanctioned by God cannot be realized as the Scriptures declare: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." (Ps 127:1) For there is but one grand scheme which can achieve the promised blessing to all nations, the one which had its conception in the mind of the great Jehovah. (Isa 14:24; 55:6-11) It is contained in his Word, but is secret. It is revealed to those only who make a covenant with Him by sacrifice. (Ps 50:5; 35:14; Pr 3:32) Authority to give plain utterance to the secret thoughts of God was first invested in Jesus Christ, and by him extended to the members of his Body; and therefore every detail of the loving heavenly Father's gracious and beautiful Plan shall be realized.

For the assurance we have of the truth of this we thank and praise Him.-Mt 13:34,35; Joh 7:16,17; Ro 16:25,26

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The Will of God

God warned Adam that if he ate of the forbidden fruit he would die. Adam disobeyed, the sentence was pronounced, and Adam died. (Ge 2:17; 3:17-19; 5:5) Was this contained in the Creator's original idea? Yes; otherwise he could not have devised his wonderful plan of salvation beforehand if he had not foreknown that man would require to be saved. The Almighty was not taken by surprise, for he knew that Satan would succeed in causing the entrance of sin. He had left Adam freedom of will to choose either obedience with life, or disobedience with death; and as Adam was created perfect mentally, morally and physically, he had ability to obey-he was not deceived into disobedience like Eve. (1Ti 2:14) God therefore did not foreordain the sin of our first parents; but He foreknew of it.

The Scriptures show that God had prearranged to so overrule the foreknown degradation of mankind, that it became an essential part of his Plan for the exaltation of his Son Jesus Christ.-Php 2:7-11; Heb 2:9,10; 5:7-10; 1Pe 1:18-20 It was the heavenly Father's foreordained intention to select the "Bride" for his Son from the fallen human race; and in so doing he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.-1Pe 1:2; Eph 1:4-12 And, additionally, his original idea provided that the "children" of Christ and his Bride were to be a regenerated human family-a family which had been condemned to death, and which would therefore require to be purchased from the grave and owe its restored life to its great Redeemer, its "everlasting Father."

Christ with his glorified Church, spoken of in the Scriptures as "the Spirit and the Bride," will be the lifegiver who will bestow everlasting life to men in the regeneration, or times of restitution. (Psa. 45:16; Isa 9:6; Mt 19:28; Joh 6:40,48-51; 10:10; 11:25,26; Ac 3:19-21) The making of the "new heavens and the new earth" is a work of salvation from first to last, and is to be completed within Jehovah's "Rest Day" of seven thousand years. (Joh 4:42; 1Ti 4:10; Heb 2:10; 5:7-9) "Known unto God are all his works; from the beginning of the world."-Ac 15:18; Heb 3:11; 4:1-3

FF160 How God Communicated His Will

During the course of the centuries God declared the numerous details of his purpose or idea; for we read that "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the holy spirit"; and "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (2Pe 1:21; Ac 3:21) Not only did he express himself by human mouthpieces under inspiration, but also by means of types and shadows; or, as the Scriptures put it: "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past."-Heb 1:1

How God's Will is Realized

But most of these expressions were sealed. (1Pe 1:10-12; Mt 13:16,17; Da 12:9) Nearly all were dark sayings and parables and therefore unintelligible, and by men much misunderstood and misapplied. None but the "wise" or spiritually minded can understand the "deep things" of God, and then only when these are due to be revealed. (Da 12:10; Ac 1:7,8; 1Co 2:9-16) But as soon as the sealed communications of God are comprehended, they are re-expressed plainly, and at once the requisite power is granted to carry them into effect. Jesus was the first to have this Honor.(col 1:17,18) When he was baptized with the Holy spirit at Jordan the "heavens were opened unto him," and he then gained an understanding of many of the dark sayings of the past. (Mt 3:16) The types became clear to him through his spirit of discernment; for the Holy Spirit has an enlightening action on the mind. Christ was thus enabled to re-express the previously sealed declarations of God, that the will of God might be accomplished or realized.-Heb 1:1,2; 2:3,4 The unfolding of the Old Testament Scriptures revealed to Jesus what was the will of the heavenly Father regarding the part he had himself to perform in the great work of salvation; and thus knowing the perfect Divine will he prayed for its fulfillment. As the result of his prayers our Lord was able to address his followers with life giving words, and carry on his miracles and works of healing. We read in Mr 1:35-39 that Jesus, rising up a great while before day, "departed into a solitary place, and

FF161 there prayed." Immediately after this he is reported as preaching the Gospel and healing the sick. Also in Lu 5:16, after mentioning that the fame of Christ had gone abroad so that great multitudes came together to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities, the narrative relates that "He withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed." It then declares that the "power of the Lord was present to heal them." These and other examples demonstrate the intimate connection between the prayers of Jesus to his heavenly Father, and the manifestations of power by which he was able to preach with effect, and perform miraculous healings. They are consistent with his own confession, which he constantly impressed upon his disciples, that: "I can of mine own self do nothing...because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me." (Joh 5:30) Because he delighted to do the will of the Father his prayers were always honored, as he himself intimated: "The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." (Ps 40:8; Joh 8:28,29) And not only in the matter of preaching and healing did he require to pray, but for wisdom also that he might correctly interpret the will of God in other features of the Divine Plan.

Just as Jesus Christ received the spirit of discernment to enable him to comprehend and give intelligible expression to the dark sayings of the ancient prophets, so his followers have been granted a like power. As Jesus said: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God" (Mr 4:11); but to the world in general these things are still sealed. Jesus even thanked the Father that the Plan of Salvation was hidden from the wise and prudent of the earth, and was revealed only to those who like children had a humble and

teachable disposition.-Mt 11:25,26; 18:1-4 In furtherance of Jehovah's wise arrangement to conduct the operation of the Plan in secret, and thus make accurate knowledge of it the exclusive privilege of his covenanted, spirit begotten people, Jesus himself never addressed the multitudes except in parables. (Mt 13:10-13,34,35) His answers to the direct questionings of the skeptical, fault finding rulers were evasive, for he did not intend they should understand. Even the explanations of his parables granted to his inquiring and truth hungry

FF162 disciples are not comprehended by any who are not faithful children of God. (Mr 4:33,34; Lu 10:22-24) The hard heart of unbelief is impervious to the simple message of God's love. (Pr 28:14; Mark 8:14-21) The world therefore are altogether unable to give expression to the will of God, for they do not know it. And as they cannot give expression, God's will or idea concerning the Kingdom is not realized through their agency. No, it is the Church of the Living God who understand his will and are honored, as was Jesus, to give voice to his purposes and thus call into operation all the resources of Jehovah's mighty power to accomplish his work. (1Co 2:14-16) This is the teaching of Eph 3:9-12-see Diaglott rendering.

The World's Greatest Battle

The earthly life of Jesus furnishes us with many illustrations of how the power of God is exercised when his will is expressed in prayer. The greatest conflict ever waged was during these forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness after being anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. Satan, the powerful adversary of God, there tried his utmost to entice away Jesus' heart loyalty to his heavenly Father. "Fall down and worship me," he said, "and I will give you all the kingdoms of the world." But Jesus expressed Jehovah's will by replying: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Mt 4:8-11) The utterances of God's spirit begotten children, when expressed harmoniously with the Divine will and in implicit faith, is of the nature of prayer.

Jesus could not be induced, even under the trying conditions of hunger and thirst, to forsake his God and give his heart to another. He would not allow his sweet communion with his heavenly Father in heaven to be severed. Satan, by his deceptive lie, had succeeded in the garden of Eden in enticing away the heart of man to himself; and because communication with God was broken he had retained his power over the world. But the Man Christ Jesus resisted him, and through the wonderful power of his Father's words defeated the enemy of God and man forever! Jehovah had re-established everlasting communication with the hitherto alienated earth through the heart of another, loyal, man (Mt 3:17; 12:17,18); and he there began to reclaim His

FF163 earthly Kingdom, because His perfect will was now done on earth once more. All previous communicative work was tentative, and based upon the foreknown work of Christ.-Joh 8:56; 1Pe 1:10-12 From this time onward Jesus called into requisition the power of the Lord of heaven and earth by means of prayer. Through his loyal heart God could operate and finish his great work, his seventh-day-rest work, of reclaiming the fallen world to himself.

The Church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, are the first to escape the condemnation; for the power of God exerted through his loyal Son accomplishes a sanctifying work in those who heed the message. (Joh 17:15-20; Ro 1:16) These hear the word of reconciliation, and in response to the invitation: "My son, give me thine heart," they take away their (unwitting) allegiance to the god of this world, Satan, and give their heart loyalty to the heavenly Father. (Pr 23:26; Col.1:8-13) God is then able to use them to accomplish further features of his purposes, and to send his operative power through the medium of their prayers.-Col 4:3; 1Th 3:10; 1Pe 3:12; Php 1:19 Although Satan is vanquished he is allowed his freedom temporarily in order that the power of God may be manifested in winning over a few here and there by the message of love.

Such as respond to this message are said to be delivered from the power of darkness, and are translated into

the Kingdom of God's dear Son. (Col 1:13) And after a sufficient number have joined forces with the Conqueror, giving their heart's loyalty to him and agreeing to do his will, the devil will be bound for a thousand years (Re 20:1,2) during which all the remainder of his deluded subjects will be won over under more favorable conditions, and will learn to love their new Ruler with all their heart. (Isa 25:8,9) And when the evil one is let loose at the end of the thousand years, and tries again to entice men to give their services to him, he will not succeed. (Re 20:7,8) The love of their victorious King will be so much appreciated that they will then be immovably loyal to him. (Re 21:4,5) The incorrigible who lack love will be destroyed with the devil. (Mt 25:41-46; Re 21:6-8) God's will shall then be done on earth (in all men's hearts) as it is now done in heaven.

FF164 God's Power Works Through Prayer

By the expenditure of vast wealth in the terrible World War millions of men lost life; but not all the treasure of all the ages can purchase back life to a single dead soldier. The worship of the Golden Calf destroys life; it cannot invoke power to restore it. Where there is life there is hope; but when life is gone hope is lost, for man cannot revive the dead.

And yet the raising of the dead seemed an easy matter with Jesus. He commanded: "Lazarus, come forth"; and he that was dead came forth! (Joh 11:43,44) Lazarus had died four days previously and was decomposing; but when Jesus spake he was restored to life immediately. The power of our Lord's words was mightier than death! The source of this might is revealed in the simple thanks which Jesus offered before calling forth the dead-"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." From the time he received news about Lazarus, Jesus had been supplicating for that power which could return his friend to life.

He had no doubt that his request would be granted; for he knew he correctly interpreted the Father's will in thus proving his right to the title: "The Resurrection and the Life." (Joh 11:4,15,25) Had our Lord not rendered thanks audibly we might have mistakenly supposed that the marvellous resurrection forces originated with him instead of with his Father. Thus Jesus explained himself: "Because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."-Joh 11:42 Lazarus was not raised to everlasting life. He and certain others were restored to their former activities, as practical demonstrations of that power by which Christ will be able to call forth from the sleep of death all of earth's millions, and start them on the upward way to perfect and lasting life. (Isa 35:10) "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." (Joh 5:28,29; Ac 24:15) Careful, reverential, thinkers will not receive with incredulity this information. A miracle is not wrought by the violation of any law, but by the counteracting influence of another law. The disobedience of Adam brought into operation the "law of sin and death"; and scientific investigation has failed to discover a natural force strong enough to reverse it.

FF165 But prayerful investigation of the Written Word of Jehovah, which is the greatest science, has been rewarded by the revealment of a law which is vastly more powerful than the law of sin and death. It is called the "law of the spirit of life," and was brought into force by the obedience of Christ Jesus. (Ro 5:19; 8:2) This new law has the power to free us from the law of sin and death in the present Age if we have faith; for it is written: "sin shall not have dominion over you." (Ro 6:14) Ultimately all the human race, both those who have died in the past, and those still going into death, will experience the benefit of the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." In the Coming Age of universal blessing man will pray, and restoration of life will come.

We note another example of the granting of power through prayer. It is essential that the rulers of any country should be chosen with wisdom, for on them the welfare of the nation depends. But in spite of the many safeguards dictated by the experience of generations, mistakes are made and hence no government is fully satisfying. If through wire pulling and graft the elected governing body is corrupt, the country suffers.

Surely he would be endowed with wisdom indeed, who could devise a method by which the electors would know for a certainty who were the very best candidates possible to vote into office.

But Jesus seemed to have no difficulty in selecting the men who were destined to be the chiefs in the mightiest Kingdom. We read: "He called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." (Lu 6:13-16) This momentous selection is related so simply, that it appears as if our Lord put forth little effort. But it was not easy to select the twelve foundations of the Church, the rulers who were to sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel in the regeneration. (Mt 19:28; Eph 2:20; Re 21:14) Jesus was unerring in his judgment. Of those whom he chose from among his numerous disciples only one was lost. Here is the explanation: "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." And when it was day he called his disciples and separated the twelve without faltering.

Jesus knew it was God's will that he should have twelve special

FF166 representatives who would constitute the twelve foundations of Spiritual Israel, just as Jacob's twelve sons were the founders of fleshly Israel, and he therefore prayed Jehovah to grant the insight and wisdom necessary to enable him to make the correct appointments. For it was not his own wishes, but the choice of his Father that he desired to be guided by. (Mt 20:20-23) This is shown by our Lord's reference to these twelve in Joh 17:6 as previously belonging to the Father. And even the inclusion of Judas, the son of perdition, was not an error, for it was God's will that a betrayer should be numbered with the twelve; and he had foretold of this in the Scriptures, and the Scriptures must be fulfilled. (Joh 6:64,65; 13:11; 17:12) It made the trial of Jesus the more searching, and proved his loyalty to his covenant of sacrifice.

The heavenly wisdom was given to Jesus in response to earnest prayer; and it is accorded to his followers also if they ask for it with unwavering faith. (Jas 1:5-8; 3:13-17) For the wisdom which is from above is the right application of the knowledge granted by the great Jehovah, who is the fountain of knowledge.

The Foundation of the Prayers of Jesus

Jesus emphasized upon his hearers that he was sent into the world to establish among men the words, work, and will, of his Father. He repeatedly declared that he did not speak his own words, nor do his own work, nor impose his own will. To realize this profound truth is to increase our comprehension of what constitutes effective prayer.

Notice these statements of our Lord: "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." (Joh 12:49) "The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." (Joh 5:36) "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not." (Joh 10:37) "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." (Joh 7:36) "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."-Joh 6:38 We are impressed with the fact that, while in the days of his flesh, Jesus Christ by implicit obedience in all things enabled

FF167 God to have his perfect and holy will done on earth, even though it had now become the very stronghold of Satan because of universal sin and darkness. Adam rejected God's will, and by his disobedience allowed the will of Satan to gain control; but the Man Christ Jesus rejected Satan's will, and by his obedience opened the way for God's will to be re-established in the world.

Satan's will brought death. God's will brought life.-Joh 8:44; 6:40; 10:10; Ro 5:19 When Jesus had finished the work his Father had given him to do (Joh 17:4); when he had spoken all the words he was commanded to speak (Joh 17:8; 15:15); and when he had accomplished all the revealed will of God (Heb 10:5-9; Psa.10:6-

8), he departed out of the world and ascended to the heavenly Father.-John 16:28 Part of the purpose of God was that Jesus should inform specially selected men of his Father's great Plan, that they also might know of the various orderly steps toward the salvation of mankind. For they were to continue the work of their Leader, that God's will might extend through them and finally be done in the hearts of all men. This important mission Jesus committed to his followers before he departed out of the world: "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained [appointed] you...that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." (Joh 15:15,16) Just as Jesus required to ask of the Father in prayer for the things necessary to re-establish His perfect will on earth, so the members of the Church, the body of Christ, must also pray that God's holy will may continue to be accomplished. It is a necessary office, fulfilled by the very elect. Thus our Lord declared: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you."-Joh 15:7; 16:23,24

As the Lord Jesus did not act in his own name but in the name of his Father, so neither do we who follow act in our own name, but in the name of Jesus Christ the Victor. This truth is set forth by our Lord himself in these words: "Herein is my Father

FF168 glorified, that ye bear much fruit: so shall ye be my disciples.

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." "Without me ye can do nothing."-Joh 15:8-10,5 If the words of Jesus are to abide in us, we must understand the Scriptures which declare them. We must also have faith in the power of God that the words spoken shall be effective. Our Lord had no doubt on this point, for he exclaimed: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass Away."(mt 24:35) His words were not his own, but the Father's; and he knew that the Most High had declared: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa 55:11) God has the power to carry into effect every detail of his mighty Plan of Salvation. He speaks, and it is done. He is the great Commander. All forces in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, are subject to Him. Therefore his every thought is realized. The Sadducees doubted the resurrection of the dead.

Jesus rebuked them and said: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures [the expression of God's will], nor the power of God" to bring his will into realization.-Mt 22:29

God's Will May be Known

We cannot suppose that God who seeks for such as will worship him in spirit and in truth (Joh 4:23,24), would withhold from us the knowledge of his will; for this would make it impossible for us to pray according to his will. Jehovah does not give his favors with the right hand, and take them away with the left. If we are without definite knowledge of God's will, the fault is not with Him but with ourselves. For Jesus distinctly declared that if any man would do the Father's will, he would know of the doctrine or teaching. (Joh 7:16,17) He also said: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Mt 5:6) Obedience is the condition to be observed if we would be filled with the spirit of the Lord, and gain

FF169 his guidance and counsel in our endeavor to ascertain and do his holy will. The first step of obedience is to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is but our reasonable service. (Ro 12:1,2; 2Co 5:14,15) Until we obey in this matter we cannot expect a further revealment of the perfect will, for we would not be in the attitude to rightly use the knowledge.

We have a beautiful illustration of the sure result of obeying the loving invitation of our God, in the account

of the construction and erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness. This is given in the last two chapters of Exodus; and the intimation that all parts of the work were completed as the Lord had commanded Moses is there repeated no less than eighteen times, as if to emphasize the importance attached to the implicit obedience of God's servant. Had he failed in any particular (had he made the branches in the candlestick five, instead of seven; or covered the altar of incense with copper instead of gold, for instance) the presence of the Lord would have been withheld, because every detail had to be made according to the pattern shown in the mount.-Heb 8:5 We read that when Moses "finished the work, then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. (Ex 40:33,34) Thenceforward the cloud served to guide the nation in their journeys through the wilderness (Nu 9:15-23; 14:14); it continued to give them light during the night (Ex 40:38); and God spake from it, that Moses might instruct the people unerringly upon every matter. (Exod. 33:7-11; Le 1:1; Nu 7:89; 11:16,17,25) These favors were secured, and assured, because of the obedience of Moses at the beginning.

Jesus said: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him...If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (Joh 14:21-23) Also: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, that it may be with you to the age. The Spirit of Truth, which the world cannot receive, because it

FF170 beholds it not, nor knows it, because it abides with you, and will be in you...the Helper, the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things, and remind you of all things which I said to you.-Joh 14:15-26, Diaglott-See also John 16:12,13 In these words we perceive the antitypical application in the Gospel Age of the wilderness experiences of Fleshly Israel. We Spiritual Israelites show our love for Jesus Christ by obeying his commands, and following in his footsteps of sacrifice even unto death. It is not possible for us to be his coworkers otherwise. In acknowledgment of our obedience we receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the manifestation of the presence of the Father and the Son; and this Holy Spirit, which is said to be the Spirit of Truth, guides and teaches us throughout all our pilgrimage journey to the heavenly home. This applies collectively to the whole Church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven, as well as individually to each child of God. It is not for us to question the means by which God can guide us in our walk of faith, and teach us his perfect will through the indwelling Holy Spirit. (John 6:45) We must leave this matter to Him who cannot err. Our part is to take God at his word and make a covenant with him by sacrifice; for if we perform our part, the heavenly Father will certainly perform his.-Heb 6:13-20 Just as Moses communed with the Lord in the glory cloud in the tabernacle, so we who are spirit begotten are filled with the Holy Spirit as we yield ourselves unreservedly to Him (Ac 2:4; 4:8,31; Ro 6:13; Eph 5:18); and by means of prayer we speak to our Father, and ask for that wisdom and guidance which is readily granted in time of need. (Heb 4:15,16; Jas 1:5-8; 1Jo 2:27) The Holy Spirit of love, truth and power, fills us to overflowing and completely transforms us when we take the step of obedience in compliance with the Divine conditions. (Ac 10:38; 1:8; 2Ti 1:7) The one follows the other without fail, for Jehovah is the God of Truth. (Lu 24:49; Ac 1:4; 2:33; Eph 1:13; Ti 3:4-7) A literal translation of Romans, fifth chapter, fifth verse, reveals much depth of meaning in the Apostle's words: "And this hope is not put to shame, because the love of God has been flooded in our hearts by that Holy Spirit which has been given to us." This love, which is "flooded"

FF171 or "poured" abroad in our heart by the Lord's Spirit, sweeps out of it those things of an earthly, selfish, nature, and leaves in their stead rich ground for the implanting of the graces of the Christian character. (Mt 13:18-23) By keeping our heart with all diligence, cultivating the fruits and graces of the Spirit and excluding obnoxious growths, we become copies of God's dear Son, and meet for the Master's use. (Ro 8:29; 2 Tim.2:21) We know that he who possesses this degree of love is a spirit begotten child of God, because God is love. (1Jo 4:6-8; 5:3) He it is who has the right to pray, for he can truthfully call the mighty Creator his Father.- Ro 8:14-17

The Diversity of God's Will

God's will concerns many things, and his power is exerted in numberless ways. It may be miracles, casting out demons, stilling the storms, or delivering the persecuted-as Daniel from the lions, the three Hebrews from the fire, Peter from prison.

These are physical demonstrations of power. The spiritual and unseen operations of the Divine might are more wonderful, but little known. For instance: the will of God concerning us is our sanctification. (1Th 4:3) We express this will in prayer, in secret, and the resulting power of the Holy Spirit comes upon us and accomplishes a sanctifying influence. We read that our heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him for it, than an earthly father is to give his son earthly gifts.-Lu 11:13 We know that the only work of any avail is God's work of salvation, and that prayer to be effective must be in line with this great design. How does this apply to each individual child of God? Does it not mean that many of our personal requests will not be granted? Regarding this phase of our spiritual life, the Scriptures hold out the assurance that the effectiveness of our petitions depends on the motive which inspires them, and the purpose to be served. All things are permissible if the motive is right, and if the favors we ask for are in line either directly or indirectly with our Father's gracious plan. For our Lord's invitation and promise: "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," need not be limited.-Mt 21:22 As it is God's will that a Bride for His Son shall be selected

FF172 from this sinful world, it is in order for us to pray to this end.

That is, it is correct for us to pray for everything that will complete the sanctification of God's selected people. Is any sick (sin sick) among you? Well, remember that the prayer of faith will heal the sick. Is any in overwhelming difficulties, so that the spiritual life is endangered? Pray that God may remove these difficulties, and he will do it. How do we know? Because it is his will, as the Scriptures say: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation [trial] also to make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1Co 10:13) Jesus said: "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." (Mt 18:14) Claim every promise of God in Christ's name, nothing wavering, and God will honor our faith and answer our prayers.-Ro 4:20,21 The realization that the heavenly Father is ready to honor our prayers gives us a peaceful mind and heart which nothing can disturb. "In everything, by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Php 4:6,7) The child of God who has at heart his Father's grand work, who desires above all else to see His will done on earth everywhere, would not think of requesting by prayer anything for selfish interests. "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."-1Jo 5:14,15

The Sacrificial Life is Misunderstood

Our whole Christian life is to be one of sacrifice, that our brethren in the Lord, and afterwards the world of mankind, may benefit. It is more blessed to give than to receive. We shall therefore give God our heart and homage. We shall give Jesus our trust and fellowship, and our love, for we are to be his Bride. We shall give our brethren our strength, and lay down our lives for them. And being planted together in the likeness of our Lord's death, we shall be baptized on behalf of the dead world. (1Co 15:29; Ro 6:3) The great driving power which will enable us to do all this is

FF173 love out of a pure heart. Of course our love will be misunderstood, as was the love of Jesus. This is one of the principle reasons why it is necessary for us to pray. We are so prone to be discouraged when our loving acts, looks and words are misinterpreted, wrong motives even being applied to them, that we must

pray to God earnestly that we shall have the necessary strength, the power of the Holy Spirit, to maintain this Christ-like attitude.

Experienced Christians know that it takes the mighty power of God within to enable them to be steadfast in pure and fervent love. But none need despair, because if we keep up our communication with God in Christ Jesus' name, the power will surely come. And remarkable though it is we shall find that we can actually continue our loving acts, looks and words even toward those who misunderstand them most! We shall be astonished ourselves to find how comparatively easy it is. It is prayer that brings this stupendous power. God cannot transmit it to us unless we keep up the connecting wires of prayer.

Everyone knows that when the wire is broken, electric energy cannot be transmitted. Every Christian should know that unless he is in direct connection with the Lord who is the source of spiritual power, he cannot get the necessary forces into his life to make him a channel of blessing to others-the real purpose of a Christian life. For in its truest sense prayer is not so much on our own behalf, but on behalf of others. We need not imagine that we can generate this power within ourselves. It comes from above. Jesus expressly said: "Apart from me, ye can do nothing." We simply cannot get power to flow out of us to bless, unless we keep unbroken our "prayer-wire" with God so that power may flow into us. It must flow in first, and fill us up, and then it shall flow out to others and give them all the blessings we can possibly desire.

We likened prayer to a wire, through which stupendous power comes from God to ourselves. But is it necessary to have stupendous power? It is indeed! The Bible does not say in vain: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Pr 16:32) The general who successfully leads his armies and captures strongly fortified positions is rightly applauded and honored, for it requires no mean mental power to perform such leadership. The Scripture quietly says, however, that the man who can rule his own spirit is

FF174 mightier than a great general. This is not a vain saying; it is true! "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." (Heb 12:3) Christ Jesus was the only one who could rule his own spirit all the time in harmony with his Father's will. We are enabled to rule our spirit as we yield ourselves to the control of the Holy Spirit of love. It is a gradual growth in our case, and requires patience to cultivate. By means of prayer we gain the necessary power. Now, all this is in strict line with God's glorious Plan of the Ages, and is therefore according to his will. For we are God's prospective priests and kings, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and foreknown by God from before the foundation of the world. We must be prepared unto good works, and we can thus pray that everything necessary, whether it be things spiritual or natural, shall be granted to enable us to prepare for the work of blessing all the families of the earth as Abraham's Seed. (Ge 22:18; Gal 3:29) The saying of Jesus: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," takes on a deeper meaning. We perceive that we cannot successfully ask for anything except as we are in Christ the anointed, and unless Christ's words, which are God's words, that is, God's expression of his great Plan of Salvation, dwell in us. (Col 3:16) "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."-Col 3:17

Hindrances to Prayer

When we awake to the fact that prayer according to the will of God, and in the name of Jesus, is a mighty force placed at the disposal of the people of God, it is natural that we should desire to put it into operation. There is nothing wrong in this desire, for we are everywhere in the Sacred Word urged to pray. Such texts as these are authority for our anxiety to wield this wonderful power: "Men ought always to pray." (Lu 18:1) "Watch ye therefore, and pray always." (Lu 21:36) "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." (Col 4:2) "Pray without ceasing." (1Th 5:17) "I will therefore that men pray everywhere." (1Ti 2:8) "Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." (1Pe 4:7) It is evident from these and many similar texts that

FF175 God desires us to pray. And yet we cannot deny that we are often disappointed at the apparent failure of many of our prayers to work any result. Something seems to hinder them.

This is true, for even if they be according to God's will and in the name of Christ Jesus, there are three hindrances to prayer, namely Sin, Selfishness, and Satan. These three barriers to the effectiveness of our prayers will bear careful consideration.

If we are conscious of sin in our hearts we cannot pray acceptably; for God cannot work through a heart that is charged with sin, as the Scriptures declare: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." (Ps 66:18) We note that Jesus Christ always prayed acceptably, because in him was no sin. (2Co 5:21; Heb 4:15) But his followers cannot claim to have no sin, as the Apostle says; "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1Jo 1:8) One who is begotten of God will not habitually practice sin, for the "seed" of God remains in him. (1Jo 3:9) Those who continue in sins are not begotten of the Holy Spirit and therefore not children of God, but, rather, children, of the devil. (1Jo 3:10,11) The prayers of such, that is, of those who claim to be followers of the Lord and yet hate their brethren (1Jo 3:13-15) are abhorrent to God.-Ps 109:1-7 The Hindrance of Sin can be Overcome If the child of God has consciousness of sin in his heart, he can have it cleansed away by confession in the name of the Advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous. (1 Joh 1:9; 2:1,2) We must purge out the evil-malice, evil-surmisings, etc. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2Ti 2:21) We must stop evil-speaking, if we have been indulging in this selfish form of luxury. (Jas 4:11) When we feel strongly inclined to judge another adversely as we sometimes do, let us stop and think: even Jesus judged no man; and if any had good reason to judge, Jesus had; yet he always refrained and committed the matter to God. (Joh 8:15; 12:47) We are told to judge nothing before the time, and not to judge one another. (Ro 14:13; 1Co 4:5) God has now committed all judgment unto the

FF176 Son, who is able to judge righteously; but the Son has not committed judgment to us. We cannot read motives, therefore we cannot judge righteously.

The Apostle says: "If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." (1Co 11:31,32) By means of prayer we shall turn our judging minds in upon our own hearts and see if there be any evil way there; then confess and get our sins forgiven, remembering that God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness whenever we sincerely confess and call to our aid our Advocate. When we approach our heavenly Father in this attitude, we shall know that our prayers are honored; for the cleansed heart is sensitive to the response of God. In the words of the Psalmist we shall be able to exclaim: "Verily God hath heard; He hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me."-Ps 66:19,20 Should we ever be so unfortunate as to think we have reached a point where we no longer need bring our judging mind to bear upon our own heart, and that we may now turn our attention outward and do a little judging of our brethren, let us note carefully what the Scriptures say about this; for the words are very pointed-they have a cutting edge as sharp as a razor: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer 17:9) But if it should happen, owing to the heart being so deceitful, that we cannot perceive any special cause for judging ourselves, then the Lord will give us some aid in the matter. As surely as we are begotten of the Holy Spirit, just so surely shall we have this personal inward judging to do; and if we do not ask the Lord's aid voluntarily, then our Master will give it unasked, for he loves us. (Re 3:19) Far better for us to do the matter voluntarily, as the Apostle advises: "Let a man examine himself."-1Co 11:28; 2Co 13:5 Ask the Lord to turn his searchlight into our hearts. In the words of Ps 139:23,24, say: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me." Don't flinch, but with the searchlight shining its piercing rays upon our heart, let us look thereon steadily, and we shall literally tremble to behold what iniquity lies there! Aye,

FF177 and the more honest we are the more we will tremble. But let us not faint, but confess, and God will

send his power to enable us to amend. (Php 2:12,13) After confession, we may then pray in the words of the Psalmist: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me...Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee...A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. (Psa. 51) We shall be fit to judge righteously along with Christ our Lord, in the "Day" which has been appointed by God.-Ac 17:31; 1Co 6:2; Re 20:4-6; Da 7:20-27 The Hindrance of Selfishness Must be Eliminated God's power is applied, when prayed for through Jesus the Victor, to transform our lives, that we may be used successfully in bringing blessings upon others by turning them to God's ways. With the driving power of love in our hearts we shall never pray for ourselves with any other motive than that of being prepared more perfectly for the Master's use. For when we pray otherwise we are selfish, and our prayers will not then be heard. Jesus is our example in this respect; and we know that his prayers were not for himself directly, but on behalf of his followers, and ultimately on behalf of the world. (Joh 17:9-23) It is manifest that selfishness is one of the hindrances to effective prayer; it is possible that the accusation of James will sometimes apply to us: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your own desires." (Jas 4:3) And yet how often do men pray with no other motive than this! Selfishness is, of course, the very opposite to sacrifice which is the secret of acceptable prayer, for sacrifice is self-denial.- Mt 16:24 Our Lord desires that we shall rise to our wonderful opportunities in the matter of prayer. The privilege is too precious to waste in asking for temporal things for our own use, such as food, drink, clothing. Our Master did not send us into the world to

FF178 spend our time asking for things which the heathen implore of their idol gods (Lu 12:29,30); but as he himself was sent into the world to perform a definite work for his Father, and did not question that he would be provided with every human necessity while thus engaged, so he sends us into the world to continue that work in his name till it be accomplished; and we have not to request the Father for things which he has already pledged himself to provide. A careful reading of the sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel will show that our Master desires us to direct our exclusive powers of prayer to those things pertaining to the Kingdom and its righteousness. We have his word for it that all other things shall be added without special pleading.

The Hindrance Interposed by Satan Cannot Endure

We may pray from a pure heart with unselfish motive, and according to God's will, and yet at times it seems that our heavenly Father does not hear. Why is this? Because prayer is a spirit force; and Satan is a spirit being, able, apparently, to retard the powers which prayer sets in motion.

But the adversary cannot obstruct the spiritual force of prayer indefinitely, for if the heart of the one who prays is in the right condition, and if he pray in the name of Christ according to the will of God, Satan must give way ultimately. Thus Jesus gave a parable to illustrate the necessity for persistency in prayer until the petition be granted. In Lu 18:1-8 he spake a parable to this end, or to impress this lesson, that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." The parable reveals a contest between the people of God and the adversary. The Lord's children have no power in themselves to overcome Satan; they therefore call upon their God to aid them.

Jesus used three persons in his parable, namely, a judge, a widow, and an adversary. These three represent: God, the children of God, and Satan. For the purpose of driving home the lesson, Jesus likened God to an unjust judge who would not move to avenge the helpless widow, until compelled for very weariness at her importuning. But God is not unjust and indifferent. On the contrary he will avenge his own elect, who cry unto him day and night, speedily. Why, then, should it be required that we persist in

FF179 prayer when we know that our heavenly Father does not need to be compelled to avenge us against our adversary? Because he suffers Satan's oppressions for a wise purpose; and he must have the continual

prayers of his elect that Satan may be defeated.

There is much truth in the words of the hymn: "Restraining prayer, we cease to fight; prayer keeps the Christian's armour bright; and Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees." For although the child of God may be weak physically, he is strong spiritually when he prays in faith out of a pure and honest heart, according to God's will, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (2Co 12:9,10) He is then putting into operation spiritual forces which in due time will hurl the cruel deceiver from his spiritual control of mankind. (1Co 15:42,43) Satan and his evil demon-followers know this, and tremble. (Mt 8:29; Ac 16:18; Jas 2:19) We remind ourselves that prayer is in itself one of the factors in the Lord's orderly Plan of Salvation. Spiritual forces are far stronger than physical forces; and the prayer of a spirit begotten saint is the strongest of all spiritual forces, because backed by every power of the Almighty. The will of the Lord of heaven and earth must be realized (for what power is there to thwart Him?); and acceptable prayer is the expression of His will.

The words of the parable, "bear long with them," do not apply to the elect whom God will avenge speedily, but to the adversary with whom he is longsuffering. The inference is clear that if the people of God fainted, the great adversary would gain the day and retain his position of power. Had the widow (who could do nothing for herself, being helpless) fainted in her pleadings her adversary would have retained his oppressive power, because the judge was unjust and would not see justice done until compelled for the sake of personal peace. With God the motive is entirely different. His throne is founded on justice.

(Ps 89:14, margin) He requires our continual prayers to enable him to establish justice upon the earth; and he is bearing long with the adversary until every feature of his gracious Plan of Salvation is accomplished.-**Ro 9:22,23**

Prayer a Powerful Spiritual Force

"Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever

FF180 shall say unto this mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea'; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."-Mr 11:22-24 None of God's people would think of praying for the removal of a mountain except he knew, from the study of the word, that the heavenly Father had made this imperative in the outworking of His Plan. Then he would pray without doubt in his heart that the mountain be cast into the sea; for he knows that no power in existence can prevent the fulfillment of God's will as revealed in His Word of Truth.-Lu 1:37 According to the words of Jesus, prayer is superior to the physical laws of nature. When Elijah prayed that it might not rain in the land of Israel God heard his prayer, and in response so ordered climatic conditions that rain could not fall. For Elijah's prayer was the expression of the Divine will as previously recorded by Moses, namely, that if the people of Israel forsook Jehovah and served other gods, he would make the heavens like brass and the earth like iron; he would restrain the rain and dew. (De 28:23) In these days the nation had disobeyed the Lord's command and worshipped Baal; therefore Elijah declared boldly in implicit faith in the power of his God to perform that which was written: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." (1Ki 17:1) James tells us that Elijah "prayed earnestly that it might not rain." (Jas 5:17) He was a man subject to like passions as we are; and his prayer was honored because uttered, not only in harmony with the Divine will, but also with the ultimate blessing of the people in view. When, on the exposure of the false prophets, the disillusioned Israelites acknowledged their fault and publicly renounced Baal and proclaimed Jehovah as the true God, Elijah besought the great Creator of all to again fulfill His Word in blessing the land with rain; for the nation had been cured of its sin sickness.-De 28:12-14; 2Ch 6:26-31; 1Ki 17:21-45; Jas 5:15-18 God has never been without his witnesses and while those faithful servants (the most prominent of whom are

enumerated in

FF181 the eleventh chapter of Hebrews-see also Heb 12:1) could not comprehend the full significance of their words and works, they evidently expressed correctly the details of the will of God due in their times, that all might receive realization. These details of the Plan were necessary to be accomplished in the days of the early witnesses; they were types of greater enactments in a later period, or served as examples for the instruction of the heavenly Father's spiritual children.

Through the faithful office of his discerning servant Elijah, God was enabled to foreshow a greater fulfillment of that word which He at the first uttered by the mouth of Moses in the law, and again through the saying of Solomon at the consecration of the temple. (Compare 1Ki 16:31; 18:13, with Re 2:20; 11:6.) We refer to the 1260 symbolical "days" in the Gospel Age (i.e., 3-1/2 symbolical years. Each day in the type represents a literal year in the antitype), when the refreshing showers of God's truth were shut off. (De 32:2; Isa 55:10,11) This was while the apostate church-state system, named the Antichrist, held the sovereignty of the world, a dreadful period well prefigured by the evil reign of Jezebel and her pliant husband King Ahab. Like Elijah, who had providential sustenance through the drought in Israel, so the Lord's faithful people during the corresponding antitypical interval of the spiritual famine, when they were in the "wilderness" condition, received the miraculous nourishment from the Word of Life. (Re 12:6) It was the simple, unwavering trust and obedience of Elijah, which made possible this important type and lesson. What far-reaching influences are attached to the prayers of the faithful! What great honor it is to be so used by God! The heathen god Baal was the representation of Satan himself, the one time brilliant spirit being who, lifted up in pride because of his beauty, became the adversary of the Almighty. (Eze 28:11-19) As the "god of this world" (2Co 4:4) he seduced for a season the covenanted people of the Lord, assuming for the purpose this title of "Baal" (lord). But the prayers of Elijah overcame the oppressing power which the evil one had exercised upon God's heritage. The prayer of faith, expressing the revealed will of the great Law Giver as written in His Word, had set in motion even the physical forces of nature to vanquish the devil, that the Divine purpose might run the appointed course; for the nation of

FF182 Israel was typical and could not be diverted by any contrary spiritual influence continuously.-Isa 14:24-27 In assuring us that nothing at all can resist the power of the prayer of faith, Jesus seems to exaggerate in his instance of the mountain. But this is not so, for there are laws in existence more firmly founded than mountains, which can be removed by prayer. We have referred to the universal "law of sin and death" as it now holds sway since the fall of man. This law would be immovable were it not for the ransom sacrifice of Christ. A natural upheaval, or unremitting manual labor, can remove a mountain. Nothing but prayer, however, according to God's arrangement in Christ, can enlist the aid of that law which will reverse the present law of sin and death. (Ro 8:2) Therefore, although natural forces when set in motion by God in response to prayer are impressive, the Christian knows that spiritual forces excel them.-Joh 14:12,13 We do well to note that Jehovah does not permit us to comprehend and use spiritual powers unless we are in close contact with Him, mostly in secret prayer. (Mt 6:6) Knowledge of the Scriptural plan of salvation is not of itself sufficient to establish the quality of faith that is necessary. We must know the heavenly Father Himself and have fellowship with him and his Son, if we would gain the acceptable faith; and in this connection it is profitable to consider the following texts: Mt 11:25-27; Joh 17:20-26; Eph 1:15-18; 3:14-19; Col.1:9-11; 2Pe 1:2,3; 1Jo 1:3-7.

The Adversary of God and His Anointed

Writing to the Corinthians Paul advises them to forgive and comfort an erring brother, that overmuch sorrow should not swallow him up, adding: "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." (2Co 2:6-11) The wiles of the Devil are not unknown to us who give heed to the Lord's Word, for since the beginning our adversary has not changed his methods of attack. These devices are outlined in the account of the temptation and fall of Adam and Eve (Ge 3); and a summary of them will be of advantage to

all who desire to gain the victory with Christ.

1. Satan hides himself, the better to deceive the unwary.

FF183 (2Co 11:14) He did not appear openly when tempting Eve, but hid behind the serpent. (Ge 3:1) Very many are not aware of Satan's existence; but thinking people know that there can be no power apart from personality. The person may be invisible, but his existence is manifested by the influence he exerts. Evil energy is everywhere prevalent; therefore sane philosophical reasoning agrees that there is somewhere an unholy, baleful being of keen mental powers, with whom this iniquity originates. (1Jo 3:8) Unfortunately, because of the inherent weaknesses due to the fall, and the lack of enlightenment, the generality of men are unconscious of the predominance of sin in the world; and they are prone to turn things upside down, and call evil good, and good evil, often not knowing the difference. (Isa 5:20) In the present Age it is only the people of God who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.-Heb 5:14 The Word of God speaks plainly of an evil one. Many texts directly name him; and we find passages which indicate him under cover of other names. Eze 28:1-19 tells us of the characteristics of the ruler of Tyrus; Eze 28:1-10 speak of him as a prince, and Eze 28:11-19 as a king. We perceive in this change of title a hidden reference to Satan as the real ruler, or spiritual king of Tyrus. (See also Isa 14:12-15.) If we take the Bible as our guide we will not doubt that the arch enemy of God and His people is an individual, a powerful spirit of great malevolence.

Those who yield to their temptations are not fighting as good soldiers of Christ; and any who play with their temptations leave the way open for a fall. Satan does not flee from such; he takes them captive at his will. (2Ti 2:26; Jas 4:7) Some there are who fight their temptations, and overcome them effectually with the wonderful power supplied by God in response to earnest prayer. (Ro 6:14; 8:11; 1Co 9:27; Col 3:5-10) These know by experience that the Bible speaks truth when it declares that our "adversary the devil as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."-1Pe 5:8,9 Though Satan will "roar" at us when, according to the will of God, we keep our body under and develop acceptable faith and love, the Scriptures assure us that "he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." (1Jo 5:18) We are now in the "city of refuge," and our life is hid with Christ in

FF184 God. (Col 3:1-3; Heb 6:18) Satan's purpose is, if possible, to take out of our heart and mind the peace of God which we have inherited as the reward of our obedient love and faith; and the Lord permits these testings to prove that this peace is real and lasting. (1Pe 4:12-19) The Prophet Isaiah said: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." (Isa 26:3) It is a peace which passes all understanding; which the world can neither give, nor uproot.-Joh 14:27; Php 4:6,7 The inspired Apostle declares: "the God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly." (Ro 16:20) If we did know of the existence of Satan as the "god of this world," how could we overcome him in the name of Jesus? (Re 12:7-11) Therefore the worldly-minded, and the disobedient doubters, have no part or lot in this holy war which is being waged against the evil spiritual rulers in high places by the Holy Nation in Christ's Name.-1Pe 2:9

2. Satan tries to corrupt our pure minds by suggesting causes for doubt as to the Lord's love and care for us. This device was successful in Eden, and terrible are the results. The subtle enemy begat doubt in Eve's mind regarding the love of her Creator in withholding permission to eat of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." If God loved her, why did he forbid what was so desirable?

Now, doubt of the love of another leads to doubt of the person himself. And when we doubt we become suspicious. Suspicion naturally gives rise to misunderstanding of motives, although these may be of the best. Because we misapprehend the motives we turn to criticize; and hatred follows criticism without fail unless checked. The sure outcome of unbridled hatred is violence, murder-if not literal then mental. (1Jo 3:15) The tried Christian is apprized of this device of the devil, the antithesis of faith and trust. Experience has taught

him the bitterness of doubt; but the remembrance of how the heavenly Father restored his confidence immediately in answer to earnest prayer is a sweet and precious spiritual possession, which he will not relinquish.-Isa 40:28-31

3. The Devil is the "father" of lies. (Joh 3:44) His greatest lie is that it was unnecessary for Jesus Christ to die as the world's

FF185 Savior. Why? Because he denied the Word of God when he said to Eve: "Ye shall not surely die!" (Contrast Ge 2:17 with Ge 3:4.) All who fail to comprehend the meaning of the Apostle when he says: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro 6:23), are easily deceived by this lying device. To maintain that the dead are not dead, but only passed into some continued state or condition of life, is to render meaningless the Scriptural declaration that Christ came in the flesh, and as a perfect man died for all men, that all might have a resurrection from the dead. (Joh 1:14; Heb 2:9,14; 2Joh 7) To say that the dead live is a contradiction. This is the "strong delusion" which God permits to come upon those who receive not the truth in the love of it.-2Th 2:7-14

4. Wrong ambition and pride is another device of the adversary, evidenced at the beginning when he dazzled Eve's senses with the reward of disobedience: "Ye shall be as gods!" (Ge 3:5) Self-exaltation was the cause of Satan's own overthrow; and it is instructive to note those Scriptures which trace the fall of this great being from the high position of honor he once enjoyed, to his future destruction. In Eze 28:13-17 we read that Satan, the "anointed cherub that covereth," was perfect in his ways from the day he was created, till iniquity was found in him. His heart was lifted up when he contemplated his personal beauty; and in his pride he even sought to be like the most High. (Isa.14:13,14) Therefore God said he would be cast down; and Jesus exclaimed: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven."(lu 10:18) It appears that this fall was, first, from the freedom of the heavens beyond into the atmosphere of our earth, there to become the "prince of the power of the Air."(eph 2:2) In Re 12:7-9 he is said to have been "cast into the earth," evidently symbolical of a still lower stage in his downward career. He is then bound and "cast into the bottomless pit," where he is to lie sealed up during the thousand years of Christ's glorious reign of righteousness (Re 20:1-3); after which, at the termination of a "little season" of liberty, he will be finally "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," which is the "second death," and thus be forever destroyed. (Re 20:7-10; 21:8) "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1Pe 5:5,6) In this our supreme example is Jesus.-Php 2:3-11

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5. Disobedience to God's commands is a common device of our enemy. At his instigation Adam and Eve ate that which Jehovah had forbidden. (Ge 3:6) Jesus has given us a commandment that we should love one another. (Joh 15:12) This is not a recommendation; nor does our Master entreat us; it is a command. Satan suggests very good reasons why, in special cases at all events, we should not render heart obedience.

6. The Apostle says that he knew and was persuaded that there is nothing unclean of itself; and that: "To the pure all things are pure." (Ro 14:14; Ti 1:15) The insinuation of impurity is undoubtedly one of the devil's devices. He made our first parents wrongly imagine that their unclothed state was shameful. (Ge 3:7) God said: "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" There was no occasion for shame if they remained as God had created them. It was Satan's impure suggestion, successful because the real clothing, that of the pure innocent mind, had been stripped away through the sin of disobeying the Lord's command. The sin of disobedience had weakened the will, and resistance being now broken Satan's suggestion gained footing.

The Apostle condemns some of the household of faith for forbidding Church members to marry. (1Ti 3:1-3) Marriage is honorable; but as a matter of judgment he advises the unmarried to remain so if possible, and the married to be as if unmarried. (1Co 7:26-29, 38) The Lord allows individual judgment; and those who take it

upon themselves to forbid marriage do not have his approval, for they evidently imply that, in their opinion, such union between Christians is impure.

Suggestions of impurity come from those who have not successfully overcome this device of the evil one; but we who hope to be united with the heavenly Bridegroom have power to purify ourselves as He is pure.-1Jo 3:2,3 7. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2Ti 1:7) One of the adversary's devices, and most successful of weapons against the spirit begotten child of God, is fear. The realization of their disobedience made Adam and Eve fear to meet their loving Creator; and they hid themselves.-Ge 3:10 Fear may attack us in many ways. Fear of want prevents our hands from doing the Lord's service. We overcome this by reposing

FF187 implicit trust in the Lord's promise that all necessities will be provided when we seek first the Kingdom. (Lu 12:27-32) The fear of man brings a snare; but we observe that the fearlessness of Jesus defeated this snare of the evil one. (Pr 29:25; Mt 22:16) "The righteous are bold as a lion."- Pr 28:1; Joh 7:25,26; Ac 4:13 There are many Scriptures urging all to have godly fear; but we must distinguish between the fear (reverence) which has the approval of God, and the unreasoning fear (terror) which Satan seeks to instill into our hearts. We read that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and wisdom is knowledge applied with judgment. (Jas 3:13) The fear instigated by Satan causes panic, which but for the Lord's grace would overthrow our judgment altogether. Satan will sometimes seize the opportunity, when we are overtaken in a fault, to strike terror into our hearts. His object is to make us imagine we need no longer go to our heavenly Father in prayer, by suggesting that we have committed an unpardonable sin. But while we sorrow greatly over our fault we should not allow it to prey upon our minds, but remember the words of the Apostle: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." (2Co 7:9-11) Acknowledging our shortcoming we shall repent and gain the Lord's forgiveness. We read: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."-Pr 28:13; 1Jo 1:9 The inspired prophet Isaiah says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa 55:7; 2Co 8:9,10) To forsake our thoughts, which are naturally evil, we must substitute for them the thoughts of the Lord; and to make sure we gain the Lord's thoughts, we must "do works meet for repentance." (Ac 26:20) We know that faith without works is dead. When God perceives our evident sincerity of heart to think and do the right things, he gives us a responsible position in his favor, with grace to hold it. On no account should we give up praying to our heavenly Father in his Son's name, for the more we pray the stronger we become. If we break off communication we cannot get the power; and we require the power supplied by God to enable us to make headway, because the Christian's battle is real. (2Co 4:7) Ours is

FF188 a strange warfare; we fight not with guns but with a name- Jesus, our Leader-and by prayer to God. (Eph 6:18; Re 12:11) We need not dread our enemies, for the Scriptures promise that: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength"; and: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Isa 30:15; Ps 34:7) "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread."-Isa 8:13 Should we see a fellow-servant labor under fear of the consequences of some shortcoming which, however, we know to be pardonable, we may on request pray to our heavenly Father to relieve our erring and apprehensive brother. (1Jo 5:14-16) This privilege of praying for others, which is the right of the Lord's special representatives, should not be disregarded. (See Ge 20:7,17; Nu 21:7; 1Sa 12:20-25; **Job 42:7-10**; Jer. 42; Lu 22:32; 2Th 3:1) To be overtaken in a fault is quite different from the kind of sin which merits the second death, and for which, the Scriptures tell us, it is useless to pray. (Heb 6:4-8; 10:26-31; 2Joh 9-11) For such unforgivable wickedness could not be of sudden growth, but must be the outcome of wilfull persistence in an evil course which at the first would be intelligently recognized as wrong; and none in close communion with the Lord could fail to discern it.-2Pe 2:10-22; Jude 11-16

The Lord through the inspired Apostle, however, states that he is persuaded better things of us, and things that accompany salvation. (Pr 24:15,16) We are not of those who draw back into perdition, but of those that

believe to the saving of the soul. (Heb 6:9; 10:39) Faults are for the most part due to the weaknesses of the flesh, or lack of experience, and are not counted wilfull by the heavenly Father. (Ps 103:8-14; Jas 5:11) Failings are often seized upon by the adversary who, it may be through the mouths of slanderers (Isa 66:5), exaggerates their offensiveness, and thus leads the child of God into affliction. Satan's object is to discourage us into giving up the warfare by which we overcome him, and serve the Lord; while the Lord permits these trials to come upon his children, not to destroy them, but to burn away the fleshly impediments to their healthy growth as New Creatures. They are blessings in disguise.-Heb 12:5-14 To gain the victory we must first put ourselves right with God

FF189 by prayerful confession and repentance from the heart, after which we may call upon Him to stand by us while, in His Name, we boldly maintain our ground in the presence of our adversaries, knowing that He will put them to confusion who desire our hurt. The substance of our heavenward pleadings is expressed by David: "Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my [spiritual] life from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity: who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: that they may shoot in secret at the perfect...They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search," to see if they can find in their victim's life some justification for their evil and unreasonable surmisings. They are mistaken, for while the Lord's consecrated people were formerly "children of wrath even as others," their sins are blotted out through faith in the atoning blood of Christ; and in accusing them these zealous enemies are really condemning God who justifies the saints. (Isa 43:25; 1Co 6:9-11) Therefore David continues: "God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly they shall be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away."-64th Psalm We submit all such outward contentions to Him who judges righteously (Ro 12:19; 1Pe 2:19-23); for as New Creatures in Christ Jesus who hope to bless the poor straitened world in the future, we must prove ourselves worthy of this honor, and hence our present fightings are chiefly inward. (1 Cor. 4; 12-14; 9:26,27; 1Ti 6:11,12; 2Ti 4:7,8) We are instructed to pray for those who persecute us, that we may be called children of the Father in heaven. (Mt 5:43-48) Jesus rebuked James and John because they wished for fire to descend and consume the ungracious Samaritans. They then failed to realize that the Son of man came to earth to save men's lives, and not to destroy. (Lu 9:54-56) But we now understand what is expected of us, and shall earnestly endeavor, with the aid of the Lord, to maintain a loving, kindly disposition of heart even in face of the merciless imaginings of our detractors.-1Pe 3:8-18 It is to be noted that the wilfull transgressor is not subject to that reverential fear which, like the warning pain in the physical body, acts as a signal to the spiritually-minded when in danger of a grave fault. (Ps 34:6-19; 36:1-4) The habitually unrighteous

FF190 are latterly given over to dread of a different sort. (Heb 10:26-36) It has been well remarked that "Fear is a good watch dog, but a bad master." Any form of fear taught by deluded men (such as the eternal torment doctrine, one of the "doctrines of the devils"-1Ti 4:1; Jer 7:31), and which is in violation of Jehovah's perfect attributes of justice, power, love and wisdom, must be repudiated by all who begin to see the beautiful character of the Almighty. (Isa 29:13) For the God to whom we pray is not fiendish like the gods of the heathen; and those who preach the "eternal torment" heresy cast dishonor on that Holy Name.

We read that there is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear. (1Jo 4:18) "He that feareth is not made perfect in love"; for effective love is aggressive. In spite of every prejudice against him owing to Satan's misrepresentations, Jesus when in the flesh steadily pursued his way until he had planted the seeds of truth into this sin-cursed world, and then finally permitted himself to be planted into death in order to lay the foundation (the only possible one) for the great work of winning the world back from Satan's domination. Nothing can withstand pure love; it is more powerful, more aggressive than any other moral force, because it is fearless.

The Revelation of Contests in the Spirit Realm

There is an influence connected with, or emanating from, prayer, which overcomes the resistance exerted by

evil spirit beings. The disciples rejoiced when they perceived that the demons were subject to them through Jesus' name. (Lu 9:1; 10:17,20) There is record of one prominent instance, however, where an evil spirit defied their authority; and it is important to consider what Jesus replied when asked to explain the cause of this failure.

We remind ourselves of the origin and history of the demons.

These invisible beings are the angels, the "sons of God," who sinned in the days that were before the deluge. They kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation; and materializing co-mingled with mankind. Therefore God, when bringing in the flood upon the old world of the ungodly, cast them into "Tartarus," that is, the earth's superincumbent atmosphere, there delivering them into "chains of darkness" to be reserved unto judgment. (See 1Pe 3:18-20; 2Pe 2:4; Jude 6; Ge 6:2)

FF191 These fallen angels or demons (misnamed "devils" in the Authorized Version) are frequently referred to in the Scriptures.

They "possess" men; and through spiritualistic mediums they impersonate the dead, thus bolstering up Satan's lie that the dead live, and denying the truth of God's Holy Word. (Ps 6:5; 115:17; 146:4; Ec 9:5,10; Job 14:21) Under the law of Moses the act of communing with such as had "familiar spirits" (mediums) was punishable with death.-Le 19:31; 20:6,27; De 18:9-14; 1Ch 10:13,14; Isa 8:19 As our Lord Jesus had authority to exorcise the demons, and as he delegated the like power to his disciples, it is clear that they have, and do still, hinder the establishment of God's will among men. The host of unclean spirits must be driven forth from their illicit control, before the world can have freedom to experience the blessings of Christ's reign. For this reason we take cognizance of Jesus' reply to the anxious question of his disciples regarding their inability to cast out a certain demon- "He said unto them, 'This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer.'" (Mr 9:17-29) It was of a particularly malignant and tenacious order, defiant of those who, weak in faith, lacked the requisite authority from God. Hence the necessity for prayer, that the unseen power of the Almighty should enforce the word of command, and compel the evil spirit to obey.

Jesus had just descended from the mount of transfiguration, where he had been in communion with God by prayer, when he performed this miracle. The Scriptures inform us that it was "as he prayed" that his wonderful transfiguration came. (Lu 9:29) "The fashion of his countenance was altered," we read; and when afterwards he drew near to the multitude at the foot of the mountain the people were greatly amazed, and running up could not forbear saluting him. (Mr 9:15) The dumb and deaf spirit was powerless to resist the behest of Jesus, on whom the might and majesty of God had come in response to his fervent prayer of faith in the mount. (2Pe 1:16-18) The fallen angels knew Jesus, as also they know his followers; and the spiritual potency of the sacrificing spirit begotten sons of God causes them distress.-Mt 8:29; Lu 8:31; Ac 16:16-18; 19:13-17 The individual energies of the "firstborn," whose names are

FF192 written in heaven, are not now to be directed so much against those demons in close intimacy with humanity (the "foul spirits," and "familiar spirits," are in all probability of the lower order of the adversary's invisible minions), but against the keener, directing intelligences in Satan's kingdom of darkness.

These higher spiritual "governments, authorities, and powers" of the evil one are intent upon disarranging the orderly working of Jehovah's Plan of Salvation, and with seeking by "crafty ways" to divert from the main purpose the unique spiritual power of God's people. (Eph 6:10-12) The Apostle therefore urges us to put on the whole "armor" of God, and then to pray with all prayer. (Eph 6:18) It is evident from Paul's words that we who are new creatures in Christ Jesus, embryo spirit beings, must have that special spiritual protection likened to armor, that we may be impervious to the attacks of the enemy.

Thus equipped we stand in security while, by prayer, we establish every feature of our heavenly Father's will,

and thus undermine and in due time cause the complete ruin of the stronghold of the god of this world.

The organized efforts of Satan to thwart God's great Plan by openly destroying the Bible, counteracting its holy influence through misrepresentations, or boldly raising obstacles to its study among those who desire its direct instruction and guidance, have proved futile in face of the vigilant prayers of the faithful children of God. The Scriptures have therefore been preserved throughout the centuries; and the details of the Plan when revealed and noted have been fulfilled in answer to prayer according to the Divine arrangement. (Joh 4:34,35; Mt 9:36-38) When his subtle machinations fail, the adversary often seeks by violence to prevent the effectual prayer of faith from ascending to God. He will even intercept the Divinely appointed spirit messengers in an endeavor to disorder the Plan of the Almighty.-Jude 9

The tenth chapter of Daniel (Da 10) furnishes us with an indication of how our continuous petitioning to the heavenly throne may ensure the victory. If we ponder the things recorded in this portion of the Word of God, we shall perceive here the slight raising of the veil, momentarily showing the nature of those contentions for and against Jehovah which obtain in the spirit realm.

We read that Daniel, in order to acquire understanding of his important vision, prayed to God, and persisted therein three full

FF193 weeks until the desired revelation was granted. The angel (Gabriel) who was sent from the heavenly courts in response to Daniel's pleadings, explained to him that; "From the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I left him there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for yet the vision is for many days." Then, after giving Daniel the elucidation of the vision, the angel continued: "Knowest thou wherefore I am come unto thee? And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince."* *NOTE: The word "remained" in verse 13 of the tenth chapter of Daniel (Da 10:13), as given in the Authorized Version, is not the correct reading of the Hebrew original-see Rotherham's translation which has the rendering: "left him"; that is, Gabriel left Michael to fight the prince of Persia, while he continued on his journey to the praying Daniel to whom he delivered his message. This message is detailed in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of Daniel. The division of the narrative into chapters in the Authorized Version tends to obscure its continuity. The entire record from chapter 10 to the end of the book is more clearly followed in the modern English translations by ROTHERHAM, and by FENTON. For a satisfactory exposition of Daniel's prophetic visions, as well as of the general Biblical Plan of God, we especially direct attention to Studies in the Scriptures by the late CHARLES T. RUSSELL.

Michael, we know is our Lord Jesus Christ in his prehuman existence, the Archangel or chief of all God's spirit agencies, the prince whom Jehovah appointed when dealing with His covenanted people Israel. The prince of the heathen nation of Persia, who so boldly hindered the angel Gabriel for twenty-one days until Michael intervened and engaged him in battle, can have been none other than Satan. For the evil one was aware that the explanatory message entrusted by God to Gabriel, and which was to be unfolded to the beloved Daniel in answer to his earnest prayer, was in reality a prophetic history of the outstanding features of the future Gentile dominion, wherein was revealed the uprising of the Antichrist, Satan's masterpiece.

The Devil undoubtedly "sensed" danger in this far-reaching revelation, even if he was

FF194 unable to comprehend its exact meaning, and hence his efforts to hold it back in the hope that Daniel might through faintness cease his petitioning, and thus break the necessary prayerful attitude.

Because of the steadfastness of this servant of God, we of the Gospel Age are enabled to discern in the angel's explanation the successive steps by which Satan brought into active operation his lying counterfeit of Christ's glorious Millennial reign of righteousness. By the carefully arranged details of this revelation, also, we can follow the appointed times and seasons, and perceive that the fall of Satan's empire is sure, and was foreknown by the great Jehovah. For it was not so much for his own immediate benefit that Daniel was granted the answer to his prayer (he was told he must wait till the end of the days), but rather for the Lord's spiritual children who live at the close of the long period of the Gentile lease of power, that these might intelligently cooperate with Him in the establishment of the promised fifth universal empire, or Kingdom of Christ.

We perceive the truth of the Apostle's declaration that our fight is not truly against "flesh and blood"; for men are at present under the control of the evil spirit powers, and are not the primary enemies. (2Co 4:4) Our mission is to undeceive the world, and through the Divine instruction confer upon it the blessings of everlasting life and freedom. This the saints of God shall do in the power of the coming spiritual Kingdom, for the establishment of which they are now in conflict with the Satanic rulers in the heavenlies. This Holy War still proceeds, but the triumph of the little flock of spirit begotten "children of the Kingdom" is promised. (Lu 12:32) By God's wonderful provision our prayers of faith can be enlisted to gain the cause of the Lord in this invisible contest.

Let not the reproach of our loving Master fall upon us: "O ye of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" On the contrary, even when everything is dark, and the accomplishment of our heavenly Father's gracious and beneficent purposes seems improbable to the doubting world, let us continually remember these trustful words in the beautiful prayers of the Levites, and of David and Solomon: "Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth,

FF195 and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee." "There is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart." "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."

We all desire our prayers to be vitally effective; and if we pay heed to the instructions of God's Holy Word we know they shall be. There is one closing instruction added by our Lord, which is of deep significance: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." Amen.

FF196 **God's Safe Holding**

(Ps 119:117) Hold Thou me up, in Christ in heavenly places, To view my life from that triumphant height, So shall my soul grow strong with patient courage To run the race and wage the daily fight.

How light and brief the present conflict seemeth, And short the way to that eternal rest, When eyes of faith gaze smiling from the shelter Of Love's safe holding to my Savior's breast.

Hold Thou me up, in Christ with full dominion O'er my weak flesh and subtle self-desire, Spurning each snare, sweet-baited by the Tempter, Guarding my robe from spot of earthly mire.

Held by Thy power, no darkness can confound me, Nor haunting fears my trusting heart alarm, Thy grace and strength are perfected in weakness, And none can pluck me from Thy 'circling arm.

Hold Thou me up in Christ, my righteous cov'ring, Till crowned immortal I in glory shine; For now I live through His life pulsing in me, As lives the branch by dwelling in the vine.

Father, I yield in grateful heart-submission To Thy keen blade of purging pain and woe; Prune as Thou wilt, and perfect love's fruition: From luscious grapes sweet wine of joy will flow.

Hold Thou me up, in Christ a living member, Swift to obey the promptings of His will, My words and deeds His mind alone expressing As I with joy my task of love fulfill.

If I would reign with Him, a king in glory, Here I must share His sacrifice and shame, So, Father, help me bear the cross with Jesus Till life will end in praise to Thy dear name.

FF197 **Memoirs of Aunt Sarah**

Her Conversion

AUNT Sarah was one of those Christians who could tell the very date of the happy day that fixed her choice on Jesus. It was her delight to recount over and over again the way the Lord had led her to see Him as her personal Savior. She had been taught that "eternal torment" was the wages of sin, and realized that she was a sinner needing forgiveness. She longed to be "saved," and earnestly sought the help of Christian friends, but failed to find the comfort of full assurance. She determined to seek till she found; and for several weeks, night and day, with deep anxiety she labored to enter into the rest of faith. There was one whom she feared might prove a rival to the Lord, and might divert her thoughts from spiritual to earthly hopes. In her earnestness, she prayed that this friend, for whom she had a strong affection, might be kept away till the Lord had taken the first place in her heart. In one way and another the counter-attraction was withheld, and Aunt Sarah was permitted to struggle on undisturbed in her endeavors to gain the light.

Many a sleepless hour she passed in great distress. At last, one night, worn and weary, she cried out to the Lord to give her sleep or she would lose her reason. In the morning she arose refreshed. God, in His love and pity, had answered her cry. She marvelled, and gladly accepted this as a token from the Lord.

Later, while preparing the breakfast, and slowly stirring the meal into the porridge pot, she kept repeating these words; "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

"Do I not believe on Him?" she asked herself. "Surely I do. I believe He died that I might be forgiven!" She continued stirring the porridge, thinking hard, then suddenly

FF198 said aloud: "'Thou shalt be saved!' ... Why, then, I must be saved!...And is that all I have to do to be saved? Only to believe that Jesus died for me? Oh! That's just grand!" The Word of God, in its simplicity, spoke peace to her troubled soul. The first step of faith was taken tremblingly and fearfully, and she dared to believe that her sins were laid on Him who loved her and gave Himself for her.

The joy of this assurance had no sooner begun to fill her heart, than doubts were whispered into her mind. She felt the chill of unbelief. The Adversary suggested that it was too good to be true that such as she could be accepted by the Lord. She felt as if the Evil One stood behind her, and "spurtle" in hand she turned round, and, striking at her unseen foe, cried: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth me from all sin." And that settled the matter. Doubts on this question never troubled her again.

Knowing Jesus called Satan "a liar from the beginning," she, therefore, then and there accused her enemy of

falsehood.

Having, by the Word, vanquished him for the time being, she attended to her work, while wave after wave of holy joy and gratitude filled her being. When telling of this experience, she often remarked: "So I began to make the porridge a sinner, and I dished them a saint." Not only did she believe in the Lord, she gave herself fully to Him.

That evening, for the first time after a long interval, she heard the familiar knock at the hall door. As she joyfully ran to open it, she said triumphantly to the Lord and to herself: "Yes, he can come now, for he can never get the first place in my heart, Jesus is there!" She opened the door widely, her face radiant with a light it never had before. Soon her friend realized that her affection for him had been displaced, and that Sarah, as her name implies, was now a "princess"-one of the daughters of the King. The dear Lord kept her heart for Himself, and never shared it with another. Doubtless it cost her ardent nature much suffering, but she willingly, with her own hands, put from her a union which she knew would not be "in the Lord." It was not in vain, however, that she made this voluntary sacrifice. The pain it caused deepened and widened the channels of her sympathy as nothing else could have done.

Dear Aunt Sarah would not have become so tender and comforting a "mother in Israel" had she never loved and surrendered.

FF199 **Her Early Work for the Lord**

It was soon evident that Sarah Ferrie would not be content to render half-hearted service. Before many days all her friends knew of the change. At once she began to "speak for Jesus," and the Lord used her as a means of bringing many to Himself.

She was most diligent in finding opportunities for service, and soon became well known as an earnest and successful Christian worker. She had many natural nephews and nieces-some of whom became Christian fellow-workers with her-but, as her kind and cheerful disposition rendered her a general favorite, before long others also affectionately called her "Aunt Sarah," and this became her accepted designation, even by those who did not know her intimately. She regularly visited the infirmaries and sang to the patients, speaking also to many at their bedsides. The "little woman with the black eyes and the black bag"-a description of herself that gave her some merriment-was eagerly looked for and welcomed by many a poor invalid. In the bag she carried little tracts and booklets and some sweets, besides her Bible and hymn book. One rarely saw Aunt Sarah without her satchel.

The temperance movement also claimed her sympathy and support, but she felt this work less congenial. The Saturday night entertainments, intended to afford a counter attraction to the public house, jarred upon her spirit. After her conversion, she was so wishful to demonstrate to her worldly friends that a Christian need not be melancholy, that she let her humor and lively wit have full play. Sometimes she felt she had gone to extremes in provoking laughter and fun at a social gathering.

After an evening of such "innocent mirth-making" she was occasionally troubled in mind, and once wistfully remarked to a Christian niece: "I'm afraid, Minnie, I can't call all that nonsense sanctified humor!" Step by step her Lord led her to devote her winsome joyousness wholly to His service.

It flashed most brightly in the testimony meeting. If Aunt Sarah were present she was usually among the first to recount some evidences of her Father's love and goodness. Those who

FF200 knew her best are well aware that she had to struggle against a natural shrinking from taking a prominent place. We are glad she overcame so often, for we remember many a helpful lesson she thus passed on to us. She was almost invariably humorous, but the Lord used the laugh to break down any restraining

stiffness. It was always easier for others to speak after Aunt Sarah had testified. Besides the laugh helped to fix the lesson in our minds.

A testimony given about ten years before her death still lives in the memory of some. It is so typical of her bright homely style that it will bear recording here.

She sat in the front seat, and as she stood up, turned round with face aglow to tell us one of her encounters with our old enemy.

"I want to tell you of this attack of his," she said, "that we may be the better fortified against his devices. I was having a real happy time the other day, when all at once didn't the devil pull out something from behind me-a something that I had done a long time ago, and that I felt ashamed of-and held it up before my face and said: 'There, now! How do you like that?'" As she spoke, Aunt Sarah acted the part, and our eyes as well as our ears took in the lesson. "'Like it!' I cried, 'Why! I don't like it at all!!' and down went my heart to my boots-ay, and right through them too!" And she heaved a sigh that could be heard by us all, but the look of triumph in her eye was undimmed.

"Well, I kept looking, and the devil held it up for me to see every bit of its ugliness. The more I looked, you may be sure, the worse I felt.

"But the Lord came to the rescue-suddenly the texts flashed into my mind: 'Forgetting the things that are behind...I press on,' and 'Thou has cast all my sins behind Thy back' (Php 3:13,14; Isa 38:17), and it just seemed as if the Father said to me: 'Sarah, why are you trying to get behind me to look at what I've cast there?' So I cried: 'Lord, I'll refuse to look any more.

I'm determined by Thy grace, I will forget the things that are behind.' Oh, how my heart jumped for joy to think that God has covered up ALL my sins. I feel I want to praise Him more than ever, and to press on in the race for the prize set before me."

Believing in eternal torment and the inherent immortality of the soul, she felt it incumbent upon her to solemnly warn sinners of the dreadful fate of the unconverted, but, as she afterward affirmed, "I never enjoyed telling of that-I liked best to present the

FF201 love of God." Yes, the eternal torment of the unregenerate is a belief which throws a deep shadow on the character of Him in whom is no darkness at all. "I never liked to feel that I had to apologize for God in designing such a fate for so many of His creatures. But if the Bible said it then I have to believe, whether I liked it or not. Oh! How grand to know that the Bible teaches no such thing!" If we would comprehend the full extent of Aunt Sarah's devotion we must bear in mind that she was in no way a woman of leisure. She earned her living as a bedding merchant in the city, but while attending to her business she contrived to spend as much time as possible in more direct service to the Lord. "I was always real hungry for a blessing, and wherever I heard something good was to be got there I tried to go." Whenever she received it she busied herself to share it with others.

When, from time to time, special services were held for the deepening of the spiritual life, Aunt Sarah was sure to be present. She testified to blessings received at these meetings, and believed that through the help there obtained she entered more deeply into the joys of full surrender. Most of her jewelry was parted with for Foreign Missions, and some favorite trinkets were given to help in the conversion of the Jews. In all this the Lord was preparing her to receive fuller knowledge of Himself. She began her Christian life in the State Church of Scotland, but soon found it too cold and formal. When she came into the light of present truth she was a member of a very earnest branch of the close sect of the Plymouth Brethren. This she designated "one of the best little bits of Babylon that could be found." "The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth

more and more unto the perfect day," is a text she often quoted, and wherever she saw the light shining, there, by the grace of God, Aunt Sarah followed on.

By and by she began to have doubts about the eternal torment theory. Her eldest sister (Mrs. Hodge, of Gourock) and she often discussed the subject with a measure of timidity and fearfulness, lest they should stray from the teaching of Scripture. The fate of the heathen also gave them some concern; but, like many others, they could find no comfort save in the words of Abraham: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" They were assured God could never judge unrighteously, and that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways and thoughts higher than

FF202 ours. The more they developed into the likeness of the Perfect Pattern, the less could their hearts be satisfied with the assurance of merely their own salvation and that of the few, who, in this life, find the strait gate and walk in the narrow way.

On one occasion, during a series of meetings for special prayer, after listening night after night to loud, repeated, and long-drawn-out supplications, Aunt Sarah felt her soul revolt at the improper conception of God these petitions betrayed. She told one of the leaders she thought they did not honor the Lord enough. Surely, instead of imploring further, it was now time to begin thanking the Father for all the glorious things He had covenanted to do. She believed the rich promises regarding the prayer of faith offered in Christ's name, and fully assured that she would behold great and wonderful things (Jer 33:3; Mt 21:22), determined to sing His praises for the blessings that were on the way.

This incident occurred about a month before the Lord caused His light and truth regarding the "Plan of the Ages" to shine into her mind. Truly her Father heard her prayers, and granted her a rich token of His acceptance.

Her eldest sister came first into touch with the writings of Pastor Russell, and quickly saw that they unfolded many precious truths hitherto hidden from her view. She at once gave Aunt Sarah a copy of the first three volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures" and urged her to read them. So multifarious and incessant were her labors for the unconverted, however, that she had no time for a new study. She must read her daily portion of Scripture, as well as her religious papers and Spurgeon's weekly sermon, and she would not be denied time for prayer.

Her sister tried in vain to thoroughly arouse her to the importance of this fresh light that, surely, God Himself had directed to come within her reach. "I mean to read them, but I am really not able to find the time," she would answer. At last Mrs. Hodge got over the difficulty by sending an urgent invitation to Aunt Sarah to spend a few days with her during the visit of her son and his friend, Brother Hemery, from Manchester.

Greater Light

While at Gourock she heard "great and wonderful things."

FF203 Many puzzling questions now became clear to her. Misty, vague wonderings gave place to well founded hopes, built upon the infallible Word of God. A "thus saith the Lord" settled for her many disputed points. Brother Hemery traced, step by step, God's plan as revealed in the Bible, and demonstrated the distinctive work and purpose of each Age. He opened up to her wondering eyes the glorious hope for the few (the Church) and the blessings for the many (the world in the Age to come). He clearly proved that death-not an endless existence in misery (as the creeds declare), but extinction of being-was the penalty God pronounced upon sin. He opened to her the Scriptures, showing how the man Christ Jesus bore the guilt of all. "He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man." (Heb 2:9) He "gave Himself a ransom for all." (1Ti 2:6) Therefore, every man must, in due time, partake of the benefit accruing to the race by the sacrifice of

Christ.

"But would that not mean a second chance?" asked Aunt Sarah.

Brother Hemery proceeded to make clear how the first chance or opportunity for eternal life has never yet been offered to every man; that in this Age only the few have heard with their natural ears, and that even of these fewer still have heard with their understanding. Jesus said: "He that hath an ear, let him hear," and "Unto you (His disciples, the few with the hearing ears) it is given to know the mystery of God, but unto them that are without all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing, they may hear and not understand, lest at any time they should be converted and their sins be forgiven them." Aunt Sarah felt as if this familiar passage was being brought for the first time to her attention.

"Did Jesus not wish all to understand His words?" she queried.

"No," came the answer; "He did not desire that all should know then, nor that all, even now, should know; but the day is coming when all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears unstopped (Isa 35:5), because Satan, the 'god of this world,' who now blinds the minds of them which believe not, will be bound, and no longer permitted to deceive mankind in the next Age-when Christ's Kingdom is set up on the earth. Then the

FF204 knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

"Yes," she agreed, "that will come to pass in the Millennium. I have always believed that, but what about the unbelievers who die in ignorance now? And what about the heathen?"

After a careful study of Mt 11:20-27, in connection with Eze 16:44-63, Aunt Sarah saw that the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, which God, in His wisdom, had seen fit to destroy, were not so evil in His sight as were the Jews who sinned against greater light and knowledge; and yet it was God's purpose to restore both Jews and Sodomites to life and grant them a "tolerable" time in the great day of Judgment, when Christ will reign to bless all. The Sodomites, not having been so hardened in heart as were the Jews through their resistance to the ministry of Jesus among them, will not require the severe discipline that the Israelites will receive in that day.

This is proved by the statement of Jesus that had these cities seen the works of His first advent they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. If He knew that Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom would have accepted His message had He been sent to them, surely God would know that also, and if God knew that and also had foreseen-as the prophecies clearly show He did-that the Jews would reject Jesus' witness, why did the all-wise, all-loving, almighty and just God not send Jesus to the Sodomites, who would have accepted Him, instead of to the Jews, who rejected Him? And if the Jews, who refused to accept their Messiah, were to be lost for ever, and consigned to eternal misery, why did the gentle Jesus, who came to die for all, thank the Father because He had hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes? And yet the wise and prudent, in their own sight, are the very class that, according to the creeds of men, are doomed to eternal woe.

Jesus rejoiced because He knew that those at present blinded will arise from the sleep of death at His call in the next Age, and will then be granted a full opportunity for eternal life. Those who, at that day, will come into harmony with God's law of righteousness and love, rendering obedience to Christ, the King and Judge, will obtain all the blessings that Adam by his disobedience lost for the race, and that Jesus, through His death, won to restore to all.

FF205 It brought great joy to Aunt Sarah's loving heart to be convinced that the future work God had designed for her, and for all His saints, was not to spend eternity singing hymns and playing a golden harp in heaven, but to be His great instrument, as a joint-heir with Christ, of blessing all the families of the earth. In

after days she often referred to the satisfaction of heart and mind brought to her by the realization that she was part of the great seed of Abraham, whom God had sworn not only to bless, but to make the blessing of all. (Ga 3:8,16,29) With her wide knowledge of Scripture she quickly recognized that many seemingly contradictory passages were thus made harmonious, and such verses as Ac 3:19-21, 15:14-18, acquired a new and fuller meaning. Before long she saw for herself several instances where the "false limits" of man's teachings had obscured the Word of God, and quoted numerous texts in proof of the truths now being presented to her.

The subject of our Lord's Second Coming had, for many years, claimed much of her thought and study, but only now did she learn the true and worthy object of His return. It made her long all the more for His advent. For years the signs of the times had indicated to her that this great event was almost, if not quite, due to take place. Night after night she had retired to rest hoping to be awakened by the literal sounding of the great trumpet and the voice of the Archangel, to see the Lord descend from the heavens in human form, while she would be "caught up" bodily "to meet Him in the air." She often quaintly remarked, in her desire to press home her teaching on the "rapture of the saints," that "the undertakers will never make any money out of me."

The last evening of her visit in Gourock (7th June, 1897) was the most momentous. It was only a few hours before leaving for Glasgow that she learned how erroneous were her views on the manner of Christ's Second Coming. She had been expecting to see Him as a man in the flesh, in the body of His humiliation, with her natural eyes, instead of recognizing through the eyes of her faith and spiritual understanding, the fact of His presence in the world as a glorious spirit being, the express image of the Father's person. Brother Hemery pointed out to her the change of the word "coming" to that of "presence" in the R.V. margin and emphasized the great difference in the meaning of these two words.

FF206 Thus, instead of looking for signs that the Master was about to arrive (of the day and hour of His coming none on earth was to know beforehand), we are exhorted rather to look for signs whereby we would know when He was present-that His arrival had already taken place. As gently as possible, her brother in the Lord unfolded to her his belief that the time prophecies of the Bible, as well as the signs of the times all pointed out that the Lord had returned and was already present doing a work preparatory to establishing His Kingdom on earth. Mt 24:27 was read with new and startling meaning. The word "lightning" was shown to be a poor translation of the Greek word "astrape," which signifies "bright shining" (as given in Lu 11:36), and really refers here, as the context indicates, to the sunlight which shines always from the east even to the west, while on the other hand, lightning flashes in a variety of directions, wherever the electrical forces producing it may be discharged. When the word "presence" is substituted for "coming," the statement is seen to declare that the presence of Christ will be like the sunlight, gradually illuminating the world.

Those who are awake and watching, the children of the light, are the first to discern and rejoice in His presence. The children of the night and of the darkness will awake when the Sun of Righteousness will arise in His full glory, and all the sin-sick will rejoice in the healing to be gained through the influence of His rays. "As it was in the days of Noah (the days when Noah was present on the earth) so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man (when He will be present on the earth.). They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark...even thus shall it be in the days when the Son of Man is revealed."-Lu 17:26-30 Aunt Sarah cried out in amazement: "He's here! The Lord has come!" She could hardly restrain her excitement. Question after question came tumbling forth, and like snow before the early sunshine, her difficulties dissolved in the new found light. At last she had the right understanding of the Lord's return. She concluded that, after all, the symbolic seventh trumpet and the voice of the Archangel had suddenly awakened her to see the glorious sunlight of her Lord's presence, stealing unawares, like a thief, upon the world. Brother Hemery had never, in all his experience, met with one so "ripe and ready" to discern the truth now due to the

FF207 household of faith. Her nephew and he felt it wise to give her a word of warning that she must not

expect to find all ears as open to the truth as her own had been, and remarked that the truth was like a sword, dividing friend from friend. "Ah!" she quickly replied, "my friends are not of the worldly so-called Christian class-mine are the real jewels of the Lord." She was impatient to get home with the good news, and determined to quickly arrange to have a meeting gathered together of the best of her religious associates. There and then Brother Hemery was engaged to give them a discourse on the "Plan of the Ages."

When the time for leaving came, she could hardly tear herself away, and she had to run to catch the last train. Brothers Hemery and Hodge accompanied her to the station, and just as they parted they exhorted her to be careful as to how she told of the fresh light she had gained.

The train had scarcely started when Aunt Sarah, with joy beaming in her face, began to tell a lady-the only other occupant of the compartment-of the good things she had been hearing, and ended by asking her in an earnest tone if she knew the Lord had come! At the first station the lady changed in haste into another carriage, and Aunt Sarah was alone for the rest of the way! One night, a few days after her Gourock visit, doubts and questionings arose in Aunt Sarah's mind about the Lord's Presence. She found it difficult to get entirely free from long cherished ideas. What about the descent of Jesus on Mount Olivet? How should that be understood? And then He was to come suddenly to His temple! (Mal 3:1) "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in, behold He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts," kept repeating itself in her mind. As she brushed out her long hair before the mirror, she wondered where this temple could be, and asked aloud: "Where is Your temple, Lord?" doubting if He could be present on the earth when, as yet, there was no temple ready to receive Him. As she gazed abstractedly into the glass, brush in hand, suddenly, like a flash, the words; "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1Co 3:16) illuminated her mind. "Oh!" she cried; "Your temple is here! And, Lord, You have come to it!" At once she saw that the Lord could find no earthly building a fit habitation for Himself, but could dwell by His Spirit only in the consecrated

FF208 hearts of His espoused; and only to these He revealed, by His Word, the signs of His return to earth-"We walk by faith, not by sight." Her gratitude and welcome to her King expressed itself in tears as she renewed her vow of consecration.

Early Labors in the Harvest Field

To be convinced of the truth was to Aunt Sarah a commission from the Lord to proclaim it. Despite warnings not to be too expectant that her friends would see eye to eye with her, she was so confident of the sincerity of their desire to know and do the will of the heavenly Father that she joyfully made arrangements for the meeting Brother Hemery had agreed to address. About thirty of her most intimate religious associates were invited, among whom were some well-known evangelists and diligent Christian workers. As she glanced over the audience she was glad and thankful that the Lord had blessed her efforts to gather together such a godly company. Speaking of it later, she said the cream of her fellow-laborers were there- indeed, a creme de la creme of God's people in Glasgow.

In his lecture, Brother Hemery sought to make clear how the death of one man, Christ Jesus, could be a "corresponding price," a ransom for all. He emphasized that Jesus was the "Son of God," and not, as the creeds erroneously state, "God the Son." He proved that to redeem man it was necessary for Him to lay aside the spirit nature that He possessed while with the Father in glory, and become flesh and yet separate and distinct from the rest of mankind, who are sinners and condemned to death. Jesus being born of the virgin Mary, was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," and, though on the human plane, still the Son of God. Adam, also, when pure and sinless, fresh from the hands of His Creator, was designated a Son of God. (Lu 3:38) He was in the image of God, and the federal head of his race. The man Jesus, mature at the age of thirty, in full possession of all His rights to perfect human life and its earthly blessings, could offer Himself as Adam's equivalent-a ransom or corresponding price. Adam lost perfection of being and life by his

fall, not only for himself but also for the whole human race. Jesus, surrendering His unforfeited life, became the Redeemer of Adam and his race.

FF209 The possible race in the man Jesus offset the race in Adam. The balance was perfect.

Brother Hemery showed how the Father, accepting of Jesus' sacrifice, raised Him from the dead "a new creation," and highly exalted Him to a more glorious condition and nature—raised Him to have "life in Himself," immortality, and that now Jesus is on the throne of His Father, the express image of His Father's person. Jesus can now give human life and its accompanying blessings to whomsoever He will, and in due time, as the Second Adam, will give life to the entire race. But first, before the blessing of the world can take place, the Church, the Bride of Christ, must be perfected, proved and made worthy like her Lord, through suffering and death. To her is given the privilege of surrendering by faith the perfect human life she sees awaiting all the obedient in the next Age. Now cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus, she offers herself a "holy sacrifice," and shares in Christ's death, that she may share also in His resurrection, and become partaker with Him in the Divine nature and glory.

The speaker was allowed to proceed undisturbed for about an hour, but he saw from his hearers' faces that prejudice and preconceived ideas were barring the entrance of the truth. At last one rather pompous minister arose, and, bristling with suppressed feelings, announced that he desired "to ask our young friend a question on a certain point, that will require only a 'yes' or 'no' for answer."

Many murmured their approval of his suggestion, and Brother Hemery consented to the question being stated.

"Will our young friend tell us if he believes Jesus was Divine while on earth. Yes or no?"

Realizing that the questioner might easily have misconstrued some of his remarks, Brother Hemery began to explain what he understood by the term "Divine," but he was not allowed to continue. The voice of the minister grew hard and stern as he repeated his question, and demanded yes or no for an answer.

Brother Hemery quietly replied: "No, Jesus was not Divine during His sojourn on earth."

With a triumphant "Ah! I thought this was the teaching," and with a gesture of offended piety, the questioner made a movement towards the door. One by one the entire audience arose and

FF210 followed him. Many were the lamentations over Aunt Sarah's deflection from the constricted path of orthodoxy. She defended the truth with some vigor, and replied to some questions put before her with such clearness and assurance, that one missionary, looking around on the astonished group, and lifting up his hands in consternation and surprise, declared: "Why, Aunt Sarah has swallowed this American doctrine holus bolus!" On another occasion, when with a company of her old friends, and seeking to help them see the beauty of "restitution," and "death the wages of sin," one remarked that he feared she had gone off her head, and another that she had a devil. But one minister, who sat quietly listening to those cutting remarks anent Miss Ferrie's fall from truth and grace, looking kindly into her distressed and disappointed face, exclaimed with sympathetic penetration: "Ah! She hasna' lost her Jesus. I see Him in her eyes!" The following incident, which occurred many years after her "change of views," reveals the bitterness that was engendered in the hearts of these religious associates by her faithfulness to the Word of God.

One afternoon, as she was on her way to pay a visit, Aunt Sarah noticed an old friend, an evangelist, coming down the road towards her. Several years had passed since they had met, and her heart warmed up at sight of him. She knew that he, poor man, still taught the errors she had been so mercifully freed from, and was still an opposer to the truths that she rejoiced in, but, remembering the fellowship they had long enjoyed together, and believing that in spite of his erroneous beliefs, he still loved the Lord, she stopped as he, unaware of her

approach, drew near. Holding out her hand she kindly greeted him. He stopped abruptly, recognized her, and, staggering a few steps away, held up his arms in front of him, as if to ward off a blow. Averting his face, he uttered a peculiar quavering cry, and kept retreating from her, while with wide-spread hands, palms outwards, he motioned her away.

Poor Aunt Sarah gasped in amazement, while her heart seemed for the moment to stand still. In her bewilderment she also stepped backwards a few paces, then, recovering herself, quietly walked away.

Shortly afterwards she glanced backwards and saw her former friend still waving his arms before him, and heard him emitting

FF211

his strange moaning cry.

When telling of the occurrence, Aunt Sarah assured us that it was a real satisfaction to have it so forcibly demonstrated to her that she had become to some at least of her old associates part of "the offscourings of all things," but she confessed the suffering, though short, had been keen.

Some of her religious friends felt that Aunt Sarah's sudden change of beliefs and enthusiastic efforts to make these known must be due to mental unbalance. They persuaded her relatives to consult a doctor as to the state of her mind. Doctor John Edgar was called in, but, to their surprise, he pronounced her mentally sound.

A few years later, after Doctor Edgar had become to her a brother in the Lord, they often humorously recalled the incident.

At that time the only interest he had in her was that of a doctor towards his patient. He could not remember the subject of their conversation, but was glad he was used to certify that she had the spirit of a sound mind.

The news of Miss Ferrie's "new religion" spread quickly among her associates, but few troubled to investigate her so-called strange beliefs. She published a leaflet in which she presented Scriptural proof that her present faith was entirely founded on the harmonious teaching of the Word of God. Besides distributing this among her former co-laborers, she gave each of her more intimate religious friends the first three volumes of the "Studies in the Scriptures."

Though for a long time no response came to encourage her, she kept toiling on, content to endure for the Lord's sake the misunderstanding, the ostracism, and measure of persecution to which she was subjected.

To her who so loved fellowship this isolation must have been very trying. Save for occasional talks with her sister in Gourock, and her niece, Mrs. Greenlees, for months she had no fellowship. She eagerly seized, however, whatever opportunities came her way to tell the Glad Tidings, and used her daily avocation as a means for serving the Lord. She placed some copies of the "Studies in the Scriptures" and various booklets in her shop window, and inside had neat little pigeon-hole shelves arranged to contain the various tracts and pamphlets in order, to be ready for handing

FF212 out to her customers as she changed the subject of conversation from bedding to doctrine.

An elderly relative, who frequently stepped in to see her, used to ask with a touch of sarcasm in his manner: "Well, Aunt Sarah, have you got anyone into your new religion yet?" And Sarah would reply: "Not yet! But if the Lord keeps me waiting it will be all for a purpose."

One old friend asked her: "To what sect do you now belong?"

Tell me, Aunt Sarah, what are you?"

The answer came slowly as she thoughtfully replied: "What am I? I am just a voice crying in the wilderness, 'There standeth one among you whom you know not.'" But the wilderness was not a barren place to Sarah. There, as she often declared, the Lord spread for her a table, and she realized a closer union with Him than she had ever previously enjoyed. She grew strong as she waited on God. The more she studied, the more convinced she became that the teaching of Pastor Russell is indeed harmonious with the whole Bible.

By and by she heard that a little company who had similar hopes and beliefs met regularly in a tiny dingy hall in a poor locality, and as, for the first time, she passed through the narrow close and up the dark stair, she determined that if she could meet the Lord and His freed men there, she would find delight in frequenting it. She soon discovered, however, that the leader of the meeting was not at all clear on some of the main features of the truth, and some in the class were apparently further advanced than he. Sometimes, also, those who were invited to address the Sunday evening gatherings were ignorant of the fundamental doctrines. Realizing that the meeting was unprofitable to her, and she learned more by spending the Sundays in private study and prayer, she wrote, placing the matter before Brother Hemery, asking his advice. His answer was a reminder that the will of God was her sanctification, and whatever course she took should be with a view to the promotion of that end. She, accordingly, ceased to attend this meeting, which, before long, was disbanded.

Encouragement

Sister Greenlees was as zealous in seeking opportunities to

FF213 spread the Glad Tidings as Aunt Sarah, but by her circumstances was more hampered in her efforts. Although, like Aunt Sarah, she had given most of her jewelry to help in mission work, a five diamond ring, which had been a present from her mother, was still a valued possession. Knowing her aunt had used up all the money she could possibly spare in the purchase of literature she had given away, she obtained her mother's permission to sell her ring, and gave Aunt Sarah part of the proceeds to purchase more volumes. They asked the Lord to guide them in giving away the books. Among others, Aunt Sarah was led to think of some business friends with whom she had had long and friendly intercourse, and with some trepidation she presented several of them with copies of "The Divine Plan of the Ages." She waited results with a measure of hopefulness, though willing to see no fruit from her labors, if that should still be her Father's will for her.

Not many weeks elapsed before she received her first great encouragement in her work. One day, while in a warehouse on business, one of the heads of the firm came forward with some eagerness and said: "That's a fine book you left for me the other week, Miss Ferrie!" Her heart beat quickly as she assented.

Circumstances allowed of little more being said at that time.

Those who knew Aunt Sarah need hardly be told that she discovered business required her to call again very soon. On this occasion the same gentleman left his desk and came forward to speak with her. With greater emphasis he again remarked: "That is a fine book you have given us, Miss Ferrie.

We are reading it and enjoying it, and would like to have some copies to give away to our friends."

"Oh! Mr. Edgar," she said, "I would like to have a long talk with you about that book."

In a busy office it was not convenient for them to discuss the questions that she knew from experience would probably arise in his mind. He had known her from girlhood and had always taken a kindly interest in her business affairs, but as he then smiled down on her, and spoke of the pleasure he had in seeing the wider view of God's love and mercy, she felt there was now a new and stronger bond between them. Before she left he handed her a one-pound note, saying: "Buy books with it!" Grasping the money, and holding it fast, she went

down the stair into the street as if on wings. "The very feel of that pound was good to me!" she remarked

FF214 afterwards. It sent a thrill of joy through her, for it evidenced much genuine interest in and appreciation of the Truth. Her delight and gratitude brimmed over in praise and thankfulness.

What good fruits from the sale of the ring! How her niece would rejoice! As one after another of Mr. Edgar's family came into the Truth, Aunt Sarah would remark: "Another jewel of the Lord gathered in place of Minnie's diamonds!" When at last she could count five of them as one with her in the Lord, she felt her cup was running over. Whenever she saw any of the five manifesting evidences of growth in grace and knowledge, or saw them specially used of the Lord, she compared it to the sparkling and the flashing of the diamonds.

About the same time Aunt Sarah received further encouragement through an old friend and her husband, telling of their thankfulness "for these three books you gave us."

Although not associated with her in religious work, their friendship was in the Lord and dated from a year after Aunt Sarah's conversion. At the close of one of Mr. Moody's meetings on a beautiful summer Sunday morning, in the year 1874, Aunt Sarah, with her usual readiness to help, asked an earnest listener who sat beside her if she were a Christian.

"No, but I'd like to be," came the answer.

In the course of a short conversation, Aunt Sarah told how she had found rest in the Lord.

Although what she then said did not seem to help her companion in her endeavor to find the path of life, yet it was the beginning of a life-long Christian friendship. Next Sunday morning, at the sparsely attended prayer meeting arranged for young converts by an elder of the Established Church which Aunt Sarah attended, she was astonished to see her new acquaintance come in. It was only then they learned that, although quite unknown to each other, they had for years frequented the same place of worship. At the close of the little service, Aunt Sarah introduced her new friend, Miss Sharp (who afterwards became Mrs. Tait) to the leader, with a word as to her spiritual condition. An earnest talk followed. He enabled her to see that already she was justified by her faith in Christ, and that the sanctification she yearned for is not, like justification, the work of a moment, but is a gradual growth continuing throughout the life the true believer.

FF215 Brother and Sister Tait were the only two of her old friends in the Lord who came into the full knowledge of present truth, but along with them came three of the latter's sisters, all of whom had been scholars in Aunt Sarah's Sunday School class.

The Back Shop Aunt Sarah's bedding shop had fairly large premises at the back. Here it was furnished with sofa, table, and chairs, and a cheery fire burned in the grate. Wednesday afternoon was a half-holiday for the shop assistants, and she saw in this an opportunity to use her warehouse in the Lord's service. Then the sewing machine and articles used for business purposes were placed on one side, and with the help of screens and curtains the back shop became a cosy parlor. Here, for a long time, she had regularly enjoyed a season of fellowship with her friends.

After she came into the Truth and her former associates had separated themselves from her, the back shop seemed desolate.

But it had been devoted to the Lord, and although, through her faithfulness to His Word, it remained unused, it was only that the Lord might, in due time, the more abundantly magnify Himself through it.

About a year and a half later the parlor began to fill again. The first week-night meetings of the friends was

held here on Wednesday evenings. Brothers Crawford and Cormack, whom Aunt Sarah had met in the dingy hall in the city, regularly attended, and proved a help in the Bible study. Now and then the class was cheered and stimulated by the welcome presence of the late Brother MacKerrell of Greenock. On Wednesday afternoons a few sisters gathered for fellowship and to recount experiences, as well as for mutual assistance in answering puzzling questions. Sometimes a Bible reading or "Chart Talk" was given. All these gatherings are precious memories to those who were privileged to meet there. The numbers steadily grew, for every one who sought to herald the Glad Tidings found some hearing ears and hearts prepared for the word of the Kingdom. Every few months fresh impulse was received through the pilgrim visits of Brother Hemery from Manchester.

His able and untiring efforts to instruct and exhort the friends were greatly blessed of the Lord for the building

FF216 up of the church.

Many a happy tea party was held in the back shop. The table was enlarged by means of a board on trestles, and many willing hands assisted in getting all things ready for "the business brothers and sisters" when they would arrive after their day's toil was over. Among those who gave freely of her time and strength was Sister Emma Ferrie, Aunt Sarah's sister-in-law.

Her assistance was much appreciated by the friends as well as by Aunt Sarah herself, who continually affirmed that she could never do so much in the Lord's service, both in and out of the shop, were it not for "all dear Emma does for me." The loving harmony manifested by all the friends was very sweet—a foretaste of the heavenly joys. The thought of the eternal nature of our relationship as brothers and sisters in Christ helped us to consider our friendship very precious and sacred.

Aunt Sarah was a born organizer. She kept us all busy. No idlers could hope to remain long in her company. They either felt compelled to do something or became so uncomfortable that they withdrew.

The beginning of the volunteer work planned by Brother Russell, found Aunt Sarah keen to make full use of such a grand chance to give Glasgow a witness. All the tracts we received from America were stamped with her business address and an invitation to the reader to call or write for more literature.

Many who came in response looked for a bookseller's shop, and gazed inquiringly when they found the given number was a bedding warehouse. Before long, a glass case that hung at the door, or a book or two reposing among the mattresses in the window, caught their eyes, and a minute later they were inside conversing with Aunt Sarah. The inquirer for books was always made far more welcome than the purchaser of bedding.

On special occasions, when large religious meetings were announced in the city, Aunt Sarah was usually the first to propose "serving the audience with tracts!" We gathered in the back shop for our instructions and our bundles, as well as to encourage each other for the fray. Some of us went out with grim determination not to give in to the flesh, but Aunt Sarah was an example of loving grateful service. One babe remarked: "It's easy for you, Aunt Sarah, to give out the literature. I believe you actually love doing

FF217 it." "My word, that I do! And I believe you like it too. Now, don't you think it just fine to have such good things to give away! I'm sure you do!" In the Train A journey by rail meant, to Aunt Sarah, an opportunity for witnessing which she was keen to take advantage of. Most people, in looking for a seat, seek a carriage where there is plenty of room, but it was not so with her. She always selected a well-filled compartment, and tried to make a choice of her company. To see a person dressed in mourning would be a call to her to take a seat close by. Seldom did Aunt Sarah travel without requesting that if any one in that train was hungry for the truth, the Lord would arrange for the opportunity to present the glad tidings. On many

occasions she was glad to note that He answered her prayer.

Few are so apt as Aunt Sarah was in bringing the Bible into the conversation. Her bright, loving face and cheery manner enabled her to say and do many things which, from others, would have been resented. Then her sweetie-bag was a grand introduction—a neat, tiny article of brightly colored silk, which she always carried with her, filled with "imperials"—a hard sweet that would not soil the most delicate gloves. If by good fortune someone coughed, Aunt Sarah would at once dive into the recesses of her black velvet satchel, and taking out the bag, would pass it open to the afflicted one with a kindly smile and a warm invitation to have a sweet. Then she would turn to the others in the compartment and say: "I think we'll just pass round the bag—a sweet's not a bad thing. There, I'm sure this little girl agrees with me!" As Aunt Sarah would remark, in telling us how to do it, "Then all the folk now being in a good humor, they could hardly refuse to accept something real good—a tract!" These she kept in her satchel neatly folded, and assorted so that she could easily find the one she desired. A soldier would as soon go to battle without his ammunition as would Aunt Sarah set off without her tracts.

On one occasion, two mothers, with some children, were among her fellow-travellers. After she had given the little ones a sweetie each, one of the women volunteered the information that they were all returning from a holiday. "Ah!" cried Aunt Sarah,

FF218 sympathetically, "it's real good to have a holiday. And it is good to know the poor world is going to have a grand holiday that will last a thousand years!" Of course, the ears of all in the compartment were opened by this statement, and soon she had an interested audience listening eagerly while she unfolded the plan.

Often, in lieu of a better opening, Aunt Sarah would remark how everybody seemed to travel nowadays, and yet so few knew that all this travelling was foretold in the Bible as a sign of the "time of the end." Then Da 12:1 formed the basis for a talk on the signs of the times. She never forced her remarks on anyone, but gently felt her way, eager to step in where the Lord opened the door.

Her zeal in making use of railway travelling was much encouraged by a testimony Brother Phillips gave at a convention a few weeks before his death. He was a "commercial," and regularly visited in rotation several towns within a certain radius of Glasgow. He usually travelled by the same train on each route, and as it is the habit of commercials to fraternize in groups in the various compartments, he first gave out tracts to all his acquaintances, and then going each morning into a different compartment he served its occupants with the literature. Did he then feel that he had finished his witness on that route? Not at all. From that time he endeavored to catch an earlier train, and served all its regular patrons in a similar way.

Though the opportunities for service are necessarily far more restricted on tramway-cars than when travelling by rail, even here Aunt Sarah found openings for her zeal. Once, while seated beside a lady who had forgotten her purse, and was unable to pay her fare, with thoughtful gentleness and courtesy she proffered the necessary coppers. So much was the lady impressed by the sweet smile and graciousness of the donor that she felt she could not refuse the kindness. She readily responded to her overtures to conversation and quickly found herself deep in a religious talk. Aunt Sarah told of the good time coming, when people will never need introduction, because the spirit of love will dominate every heart.

"Why, the folk will all be eager to do a bit of kindness to one another," she explained. "Everybody will be looking for somebody to help, they will all be that anxious for a chance to show

FF219 they have learned it is more blessed to give than to receive."

When they parted, Aunt Sarah had the lady's address and an order for "The Divine Plan of the Ages" in her

bag.

I wish all could see her shining face, as she told "how good it was of the Lord to give me such a fine chance."

Her Colporteur Experience

Even with all her privileges and opportunities for usefulness, Aunt Sarah often wondered whether she could take any course which would enable her to render greater service. She knew that "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord," and earnestly sought His guidance. Finding by experience that the Lord blessed her efforts to sell Scriptures Studies, she gave up her shop and launched forth as a colporteur. She was then in the fifty-fourth year of her age.

Being anxious that Glasgow would not be without a depot for the publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, she praised the Lord that, when her door was closed by His providence another was opened. After the death of her old friend, Mr. Edgar, three of his family came to live in the city, and their new home was ready to take the place of her shop as an agency for the literature.

The first scene of her labors as a "professional" colporteur was Swansea, South Wales. She enjoyed the work but found it very exhausting. She sorely missed the fellowship of her friends in Glasgow! Letters were poor substitutes for the loved voices and faces! She sought to benefit, however, by all her new experiences, and tried, while "living in a box"-as she termed the life of moving from place to place with all her belongings in a trunk-to develop patience and contentment. It was when packing for these journeys that she discovered in the traveller's receptacle called a hold-all, an illustration of an oft-quoted and much-loved text-Ro 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

At a testimony meeting she told what pleasures it gave her to find this helpful illustration. "Packing up was always a great trouble to me, so I knew the Lord had special lessons for me

FF220 through it, and therefore special blessings, too! I found if there was an article of an awkward shape that I could not get nicely fixed in my trunk, I said: 'Well, I'll get it into my hold-all.' And the heavy things-boots, etc.-that would make my trunk such a weight for the poor porter, I laid to one side, and the bulky things for which I could find no room-Oh! Then the hold-all could take these. And, then, when my box was all ready, locked and strapped, I nearly always saw something I had forgotten to put in, and for a minute I would feel bothered, till I remembered, with a sigh of relief, that it could go into the hold-all. Dear me!' I thought to myself, 'whatever should I do without that hold-all?

' And then, as I thought of how good it was of the Lord to give me such a fine big hold-all, it struck me He had given me a spiritual hold-all for my pilgrimage in the narrow way-and that it could be as large as my faith. Ro 8:28 holds all things that happen to me, for I am one of those that love God, one of His called ones.

"Now, I'll give you an example of what the spiritual hold-all will take in. A sister and I were going on a journey. We had had a great hurry to catch the train, and arrived just in time to see it going off. You know how you feel when you see the last carriage sliding away from you! The sister was worried a bit, but I just said: "Well, my dear, you and I will put this into the hold-all. Losing this train is just one of the 'all things' that will work out for our good. My! We don't know but the Lord has somebody in the next train that is just ready to get the truth from us. We'll wait and see!' And when we did get the next train, my! I tell you, I gave out the tracts quick, and had such a nice talk with a lady."

Aunt Sarah, with glowing face, often assured us that it was only when we put our sorrows and difficulties, our trials and troubles into the hold-all, that they are carried for us. "According to your faith be it unto you."

In a few years, owing to increased infirmity, the colporteur work had to be given up as a regular occupation. But the Lord used her greatly in a more private way.

Some considered Aunt Sarah rather eccentric, and certainly many of her doings and sayings were peculiar to herself. But he who thoughtfully sought to analyze the elements of her unique personality easily recognized that it was her simple strong faith, buoyant hope and overflowing love that lent distinctiveness to her

FF221 individuality. Her unbounded confidence in the power of God to fulfill the prophecies and promises of His Word, combined with a vivid imagination, enabled her constantly to picture in her mind the coming Golden Age. Indeed, it might be said that by her faith she was always there. It became, therefore, natural for her to speak of it familiarly and with great assurance. She saw in the common things of life illustrations of the greatest verities, and sometimes startled others by her naive symbolisms of spiritual realities.

In no way was her inimitable style more marked than in her method of instructing inquirers. Although homely to a degree it was pointed and direct, and fairly bristled with illustrations. To her the "immortality of the soul" was the fundamental error, and none was keener than she in detecting any haziness of mind on that subject. "Have you seen life and death yet?" she would earnestly inquire. She aimed at helping her listener to see that "as black is the opposite of white," so death is the antithesis of life. "Now, no one has any difficulty in understanding what death means when you are speaking of a dead dog; but, my! speak of death when referring to a human being, and see how confused they are as to what that means! They will tell you the real man, the soul, never dies, but the man's body dies, and then the man himself gets more alive than ever he was, and in a minute or two knows far more about you and everything else than he did when he was living! Ay! And feels more too- specially if he was not a Christian! But the Bible says: 'The soul that sinneth it shall die!' Yes, it was the soul Adam, the living being, that sinned, and therefore, it must be the soul Adam that bears the penalty of sin. Many think that when God said to the sinner Adam: 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' He meant that only the body was to die, and that the soul would live on somewhere and endure misery. But it is not possible for a soul to live apart from a body. Tell me, where was Adam before God created his body? Why! He did not exist at all! There was no Adam till the body was formed and got life.

When God breathed life into the body He had created from the dust, that very instant Adam came into being. And therefore he went out of existence the very instant the body ceased to live. I am sure that is as clear as noonday to any reasonable mind. Just to take the Bible's statements drives the mists of error away."

FF222 Aunt Sarah and the Children

It was a real treat to hear Aunt Sarah tell children the "old, old story." A great favorite with the young, she had a happy knack of interesting herself in their concerns. Her warmly expressed appreciation of any little kindness made them seek an opportunity to do more. She pictured the grand time children will have in the Millennial Age, when all the prophecies concerning the earthly phase of the Kingdom will be fulfilled.

For a boy to own the finest menagerie in existence would indeed be grand. But what will be his delight when man's lost dominion over the animal creation is restored! The power of the most wonderful lion tamer and serpent-charmer pales, like a candle light in the sunshine, when compared with the tremendous sway then to be exercised by even a child. Isa 11:6-8 pictures not a man cowing one or two low-spirited lions cooped up in a cage, but a little child fearlessly leading out in the open a wolf and a lamb, a leopard and a kid, a lion and a calf, all of them together as a happy harmonious family of docile pets. Not a hint of anxiety depicted lest the wolf, the leopard, and the lion should get "out of hand" and prey upon the lamb, the kid, and the calf, or fight with each other. The control is complete! So also in the second picture presented-a tiny baby plays hide and seek with an asp, while a toddling mite searches in the adders' den for an additional playmate.

But it was when she dwelt on the resurrection of the dead that Aunt Sarah was happiest. Many have a lively recollection of her description of the resurrection parties, which will take the place of the solemn, sad gatherings now so familiar at funerals. What gladness there will be when white and gold cards are sent out inviting friends to a feast of love and joy to welcome back a dear one who has just awakened from the sleep of death! That happy supper-banquet given by Martha and Mary to honor Jesus and to celebrate His greatest miracle-the raising of their brother Lazarus from corruption and the tomb- was a faint foreshadowing of these coming reunion feasts. She made the children laugh as she pictured the astonishment of some who will find themselves on the earth, instead of being angels in heaven, as they had expected. "And, mind you," she would remark, "they'll be far happier to be men again than to be angels! Only those who have suffered for

FF223 Jesus' sake and have sacrificed earthly hopes and aims, could be happy as spirit beings like Him, and feel at home in heaven."

Then she would rub her hands with glee as she expressed the intense relief of others who found that, instead of being in flames of torment, they were restored to old mother earth again.

There was special satisfaction as she chimed for the little ones what she fancied the church bells pealed forth in a seaside town where she had been working as a colporteur for a few weeks: "Where are the dead?

In their cold bed! What a surprise When they arise!" The children listened and believed. Why should it be thought a thing incredible to the adult mind that God should raise the dead? Because, as Jesus said of the Sadducees, "They know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God." (Mt 22:29) But the simple faith of the child finds no difficulty in accepting the promise that all that are in their graves will come forth in due time, "each man in his own order."-1Co 15:23 The following incident is one of many that could be given as an example of a child's ready acceptance of this truth. A group of little ones was gathered round an entry in one of the poorer localities of Glasgow, as the remains of a schoolmate were being carried out. Just as the door of the hearse closed, one of the older girls said very dolefully: "That's the last we'll ever see of poor Mary Ann."

"Ugh!" cried a little boy in tones of shocked remonstrance, "it's no the last o' her we'll see at a'! D'ye no ken that Mary Ann'll rise again in the resurrection, an' we'll a' see her then? But," with a tone of pitying scorn, he continued, "your mither disna ken the truth! My mither dis!"

A Joy-Producer.

Yes, Aunt Sarah was truly a joy-producer. It has been said that "faith is the root and joy the flower," and certainly where faith is strong the heart cannot be long depressed and sad. But joy blooms as fruit also in other hearts as well as in our own when love is the root.

FF224 Not only was Aunt Sarah full of sunshine herself, but she invariably made her environment bright and cheerful. The Church's hope of being heirs of the Abrahamic promise-to bless all the families of the earth-appealed to her most strongly.

She delighted in making others happy, and found joy in the practice of blessing the lonely and the sad, the suffering and the hopeless, and even the unattractive and unlovely whom others naturally avoided. Like Job (29:13), many a widow's heart she caused to sing for joy by her loving attention and sympathetic help.

The secret of her cheering and beneficent influence was expressed in the answer she gave to the inquiry whether she liked pet dogs and cats: "Oh! I'm just real fond o' folks." Act, word, look, and tone all corroborated this assertion.

She truly preferred and continually tried to "think the very best o' folks." Indeed, so consistently did she speak only of the finer qualities of others, that an acquaintance once remarked: "When you have heard Miss

Ferrie speak of her friends you expect to find them angels. But when you meet them, why, they are as ordinary as most people!" In her presence the harsh or unkind word was restrained and the stinging criticism withheld. The slightest evil speaking made her look uncomfortable, and she tried to quickly change the subject.

It was easy to confess faults to her. Soon she would emphasize that she was "of like passion" as the confessor. There are few who would not gladly be judged by Aunt Sarah, for "the love of God was shed abroad in her heart by the Holy spirit given unto her." She could as easily weep with those who weep as rejoice with those who rejoice.

Some are unable, save through long intercourse with the Master, to rejoice readily in the labors of others. But when Aunt Sarah came into Present Truth she had long ago reached that stage of growth. She never failed to be interested, indeed enthusiastic, over the success of another's service. Those who felt disheartened found a talk with her invariably result in a renewal of zeal and hope.

None felt the encouragement of her loving motherly ways more than the speakers in the Church. They all enjoyed seeing her sitting in one of the front seats when they were on the platform.

FF225 Her beaming face proved quite an inspiration. She visibly indicated her appreciation of every point as it was presented.

The critical faculty that some are so burdened with lay dormant in her. She was liberal with her praise, but most stinted in fault-finding.

She entered deeply into the joy of the Father in giving good gifts to His children, and in being kind unto the unthankful and the evil. Love made her a giver, and she truly delighted in bestowing. Some remarked that "money burned a hole in Aunt Sarah's pocket"; but it did not slip through to be spent on herself. If she could give nothing else, she gave a sweetie-bag, and at the same time told of the good use it should be put to.

In her large circle of friends Aunt Sarah had the faculty of making each realize that he or she had a special place in her heart. We never felt she loved us "in a bunch," but that her affection was of the nature of an individual, personal attachment. Indeed, her love for God her Father, and Jesus Christ her Lord, was deeply personal, and it was her cherished belief that their love for her was the same. God calls His stars, and Jesus calls His sheep, by name; therefore, by the hearing of faith she listened to the sweet cadence of almighty, everlasting love calling her by name, and her heart joyfully responded. In seasons of sorrow, trouble, or perplexity, comfort and peace came to her soul as she laid hold on the precious promises by faith, and claimed them as her own. "Fear not, Sarah, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, Sarah, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." If oppressed by a sense of loneliness, she could hear Him sweetly whisper: "Sarah, am I not enough for you?" Then the cloud would lift from her spirit as she joyfully responded: "Yes, Lord, Thou alone canst satisfy."

Her Desires, Prayers, and Tokens

Aunt Sarah was a woman of prayer. She prayed about everything that concerned her, and regarded nothing as too small to bring to her Father and Lord. Had not Jesus said even the hairs of our heads are numbered? Did not the Word bid us cast all our cares upon Him? Was it left to her to distinguish what cares the Father would be pleased to bear for her, and what He would have

FF226 her carry herself? Realizing how fervently and continually she desired that His will should be done in all the great and little affairs of her life, and that her very casting of her cares on Him was in order that His blessed will regarding her might be fulfilled, she felt free to converse with the Lord regarding all that was in her heart. Mt 18:19 is a promise Aunt Sarah often claimed and had fulfilled. For another sister of like tried

faith to "agree" and voice with her a petition on a certain matter, brought her great satisfaction and strength. Frequently I was her companion in prayer. After acquainting me with the circumstances and need, we discussed the subject, and seeking to closely follow the guidance of the Word, it was not long before we were agreed as touching what we would together ask of the Father. Side by side we knelt, often hand clasped in hand, and poured out our hearts to God. Many sacred and precious memories gather round these seasons of united prayer and praise. When we arose, often with wet eyes, we avowed our confidence that the Lord heard and would answer. Seldom had we long to wait before receiving evidences that our requests had been "done" for us. As soon as opportunity afforded we would kneel again together to praise and thank the Giver.

Her favorite text was Ps 37:4: "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He will give thee the desires of thine heart." She rejoiced in testifying how abundantly this promise had been fulfilled in her life. Many of us fail to notice what our desires are, and thus lose the gratification of knowing that these are constantly being satisfied. She seemed to keep good note of all hers, and continually laid them before the Lord, expectantly waiting to see how He granted them. What pleasure she gained as, one by one, sometimes in most unlooked-for ways, God gave her the desires of her heart, and how she praised and thanked Him and loved Him for thus showing His "marvelous loving-kindness"! (Ps 17:7) Not only was her own faith thereby stimulated, but that also of the brethren whom she invited to watch with her, and thus share her joy.

When in the old days she bought little leaflets in dozens to give to the unconverted, and finding that she could give away far more than she had the means to buy, she sometimes wished that she had hundreds, and not just dozens, to dispense. Some time after

FF227 she came into the light of Present Truth, Brother Russell offered, through the "Watch Tower," to supply for distribution as many copies of the pamphlet, "The Bible versus the Evolution Theory," as the brethren might wish. Considering the small number of us then in Glasgow, our desire was large. With bated breath we asked for no less than 30,000, and gave directions for them to be sent to Aunt Sarah's shop. What a red-letter day that was when they were delivered. The packages had burst in transit, and the carriers had been obliged to put the pamphlets into large sacks. Bag after bag was carried into the back shop till there was barely room for Aunt Sarah to turn herself. Her gratitude to the Lord was unbounded, and overflowed in exuberant ejaculations of delight. To think that at last her earnest desire for tracts was actually fulfilled, and that far more abundantly than she had ever dreamt of! Not in hundreds, but in thousands! Not in flimsy leaflets, but in well-bound booklets! And, above all, to think that these 30,000 substantial brochures, supplied without the payment of one penny, contained the good news which would comfort many weary hearts! Oh! what a difference between these and the former "milk and water" tracts, often mixed, alas! with much error! Besides all this, how good of the heavenly Father to arrange that she should have the assistance of beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord to give out the grand message of peace! Her cup was full indeed.

Then, as told elsewhere, in the days when, to us, a "large meeting" consisted of two or three dozens, Aunt Sarah would make us smile incredulously as she enthusiastically exclaimed: "We'll have St. Andrew's Hall filled yet, because that is one of my desires! Just you wait and you'll see!" And sure enough we did, when on more than one occasion, the large auditorium was crowded, overflow meetings were held, and hundreds were turned away. To see Aunt Sarah's face on such great occasions, as she sat beaming on these large audiences, was a sight not to be forgotten.

Not only was Aunt Sarah ready to see that God was fulfilling her desires, she was on the watch also for "tokens" from Him- little signs or indications that the Lord's favor was with her. If she were setting out on a journey and feeling timid as to the outcome, and found on the way a good opening to speak of the truth, this would be accepted by her as a "token" of the Lord's approval. Or,

FF228 were she beginning some work that proved more difficult and trying than she had anticipated, and an incident occurred that gave her the help of another, that was welcomed as a "token," and great would be her

joy. In brief, it might be said that every bit of cheer and encouragement, every pleasant surprise—all that gave her joy, from the delightful experience of being used to make the blind see and the deaf hear, to the sun breaking through the clouds and the rain clearing off as she set out on an errand for the Lord—were to her "tokens" of her Father's love and care. How sweet it made her life to be thus always living under the light of His countenance! Sometimes one would caution her to beware lest in her desire for "tokens" she would be seeking guidance by signs. But she had none of that superstitious regard for outside omens which is so reprehensible. Her desire for tokens was more like the faith of a happy child that loved to trace in tiny things as well as in great the evidences of her Father's constant, solicitous, and never-sleeping watchfulness. Then there was the returning of love's evidences to the Lord—a giving, a doing, a suffering, a relinquishing of some "extra" thing that might be considered as not required of her, but that would surely be accepted by Him as a token of her grateful love.

Her Prayer for Resting Place

For many years Aunt Sarah had no fixed place of abode. While engaged in business she boarded with an old lady to whom she had become much attached. But though she resided in this house for eighteen years, it never was a real home to her.

Even that had to be resigned when she launched forth as a colporteur, and began to move about from one locality to another. To be without a settled dwelling place was a trial to her, but this she cheerfully endured, for she remembered that her Master had nowhere to lay His head.

After the regular colporteur work was given up, she had many removals. Unlike Moab (Jer 58:11) she was never "settled," but underwent many changes. (Ps 55:19) One of the ways the Lord has of purifying His people is to empty them "from vessel to vessel." Aunt Sarah once quaintly remarked to me, "When the Father

FF229 calls me I want to go up like a bottle out of dry sand!" Questioningly I repeated, "Like a bottle out of dry sand?"

"Yes," she said, smiling at my dullness to grasp the aptness of her illustration, "how much of the earth would be stickin' to it?"

Doubtless by these pilgrim experiences she was the more separated from the world and the sooner made meet for her heavenly home. For varying periods she stayed here and there, but Glasgow was dearest to her heart.

Towards the close of 1915 she felt that the time had come when it would be wise for her to seek a more permanent residence.

She longed for greater quietness and retirement, more leisure for prayer and study, greater liberty in apportioning her time, and in spending to the best advantage her failing energies. Invitations to stay at the homes of the brethren were often embarrassing.

While a visitor, no matter how welcome, there were of necessity certain claims and restrictions from which in a place of her own she would be freed.

She confided all this to me shortly before Christmas. The little tale was not told without some emotion, and my heart was filled with loving compassion. One could well understand that Aunt Sarah, in her 66th year, troubled with a weak heart, and occasional attacks of bronchitis and asthma, must often have longed for the comfort and rest of a home. But she seldom breathed a word of these natural longings. It would have seemed to her too much like complaining or regretting her sacrifice. If ever a tear came she sought to quickly wipe it away. The dews of sorrow were ever lusted by her Lord's love.

Bright and vivacious dispositions usually have their periods of depression. Those who live mostly on the mountain tops sometimes find themselves in very deep valleys. Rarely, but yet sometimes, Aunt Sarah's sunny skies of blue were overclouded.

Her depression never lasted long, however. As she herself once remarked: "Ay, down goes the head below the water, but in a wee while, up like a cork it bobs again! No sea of trouble can ever drown those who are the Lord's. They're bound to rise above the waves!" Her physical condition probably accounted for some of those occasional darkenings of her spirit; but a deep sense of her own unworthiness and imperfection was the principal cause. Only a privileged few ever saw Aunt Sarah in the valley; but, oh! it was

FF230 a sweet task to cheer her up! It was indeed an honor to be permitted to help comfort her who was the comforter of so many. Then she was so easily persuaded to accept the comfort the Lord had for her! Her large dark eyes were very pathetic when brimming over with tears; and tears of thankfulness and joy often followed fast on the traces of those caused by depression of spirit or grief and sorrow. On this occasion, as Aunt Sarah and I talked of how the Lord sometimes leads His loved ones into the wilderness, there to speak to their hearts, she expressed her willingness to go wherever the Lord led her. "But, dear, you and I will kneel down here together (how often our prayers have been answered!) and ask the Lord to open up some door for me." Her eyes filled and her voice trembled as she spoke of her desire, if it were the Father's will, for her to remain in Glasgow. After coming to one mind on the matter, we knelt before the Lord, and told Him all about it. We asked Him to go before and search her out a resting place, and lead her to it. All the feeling of loneliness seemed to vanish as we rose from our knees. A hush of expectancy fell upon us. Aunt Sarah warmly kissed me and said: "We'll praise and thank Him together when the answer comes."

On Christmas day she left our home to pay a visit to Sister Greenlees, and while there she arranged to board at the home of Miss Cumming, a Glasgow sister in the Lord. On the 15th January she moved into her new resting place. That morning, as Aunt Sarah read the texts for the day on the calendar hanging on the wall, she was so impressed by their suggestiveness that she turned to her niece and said: "Listen, Minnie, listen to the message I've got from the Lord: 'Arise ye and depart, for this is not your rest' (Mic 2:10), 'Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come' (Heb 13:14), 'There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.'-Heb 4:9" Not only did these Scriptures remind her that no earthly dwelling place could be more than a stop by the way; they also quickened in her the hope that the home she was about to enter would prove the last pitching of her tent in the wilderness. That calendar leaf is treasured by a loving niece.

The first Sunday morning Sister Cumming and Aunt Sarah attended the district Bible study class together. The opening hymn proving unfamiliar, No. 87, "He Leadeth Me," was hurriedly

FF231 substituted. It was one of Aunt Sarah's chief favorites-she had often sung it in open air meetings and in the infirmaries. She sang it now as a psalm of praise from a glowing grateful heart.

"Ah, yes," she afterwards remarked, "that hymn just had to be sung. The dear Lord arranged it that way for me."

Several weeks of happy service followed. The Lord filled her cup with good things. He knew her delight in telling of His loving plan, and granted her many opportunities to proclaim to others the glad message of the Kingdom. Probably she used up her strength more quickly than was apparent at the time.

One Saturday evening she had a gathering of several friends- her first tea party in her new quarters. Circumstances had prevented me from visiting her till then. Whenever we found ourselves alone for a few moments in the bedroom she flung her arms round me and said: "Oh! I am so glad to have you here, Minna! I have been wearying for you to come and see the room the Lord got for me. I wanted us just to kneel down here and thank Him together."

"Well, dear Aunt Sarah," I replied, "I am rejoicing with you, and though we have not the opportunity now of kneeling down together, yet we are this very minute both lifting up our hearts in thankfulness."

"Yes, dear, but we will do it on our knees some time when we are by ourselves." Then we looked round the room and spoke of this and that convenience, especially noting the handiness of having her Bible, Manna, hymn book, and Scripture Studies all within reach of her bed.

"Oh!" she said, "I have had such lovely times with the Lord in this room!" Her new resting place, in many ways, suited her admirably, and she realized it was indeed of the Lord's searching for her.

Little did either of us think that a few weeks later the Lord would lead her from that resting place to her eternal rest in the heavenly home that He had Himself prepared for her. Again were Aunt Sarah's desires to be fulfilled far beyond her asking.

"A room of my own!" "Ah, yes, Sarah!" the Father had whispered, "and it will be but an ante-chamber to the larger room, where your Bridegroom awaits you!" But the Father had not whispered that loud enough for His daughters to hear it just then. Soon they

FF232 understood, and adored.

Sister Cumming was astonished one morning, on going in with Aunt Sarah's breakfast tray, to find her sitting up in bed, alert and eager, her eyes aglow, and her face radiant with happy smiles. "This is the tenth of March," she cried joyfully, as if in explanation of why she should be so wide awake that morning.

All Aunt Sarah's friends knew that she treasured in her memory a long list of "Ebenezer" dates, and every now and then announced the anniversary of one of them. Therefore Sister Cumming asked expectantly: "And what about this date?"

"This is the anniversary of my conversion," she replied; and then, with a ring of triumphant praise, added: "Kept by the power of God for 43 years!" What a grand testimony meeting she held with the Lord that morning!

Her Last Illness

March, 1916, came in like a lion, and raged week after week in storms of wind, rain, sleet, and snow, till everybody gave up hope of a lamb-like departure. Aunt Sarah's engagements were numerous, and she kept going out to fulfill them. She was enjoying, as she said, "Just a grand time," always finding, through one way and another, some hearing ears. She considered it her duty and privilege to attend a series of meetings being held at the farthest quarter of the city, feeling sure she would meet some there hungering for the truth, and whom she might help. One cold Sunday evening, stormy with driving sleet, found Aunt Sarah present as usual. Few strangers were there, but she reasoned that the worse the weather the more likely were the hearers to be earnest in their quest for light, and therefore the more worthy of a supreme effort to help them. She talked with several, and was specially attentive to one lady dressed in mourning. I shook my head at her as I passed, and remonstrated: "Aunt Sarah! Out a night like this!" As might be expected, she caught cold; but no one felt uneasy, as she was often indisposed and soon recovered. She was confined indoors for nearly a week, and very few heard of her being "not quite so well." On Saturday, the 18th March, she felt much better, and in the afternoon went out to talk with a shopkeeper who had manifested some interest. In her zeal she stayed for about an

FF233 hour. The same evening she entertained some friends to tea. The rough weather continued, and those who missed her from the following Sunday meetings thought she was wisely remaining at home. However, her absence was due to a relapse.

On Monday, 20th March, Aunt Sarah felt, as she subsequently remarked, "that this was somehow different from other colds."

And yet she sent no message to her relatives. However, on the Tuesday evening her niece, Sister Greenlees, hearing from others that she was confined to bed, called to see her. The following day she sent for a doctor, despite Aunt Sarah's protest, and he advised that someone should sit up with her, as she had a severe attack of bronchitis. Sister Greenlees herself stayed that night, and realized, as she saw how breathless her aunt was, that she was indeed seriously ill. Most of next day this faithful, loving niece still ministered to her needs. In the afternoon, as she sat by the bedside, Aunt Sarah opened her eyes, and looking lovingly at her said, in a gentle, confident tone: "I think, Minnie, the Father has my place all ready for me." As her patient, however, was apparently obtaining relief by the remedies applied, Sister Greenlees trusted that the worst was over, and expressed this hope to me when I came in the early evening to fill her place. But as night drew on the breathing became more distressing, and the heart labored to do its work. Aunt Sarah and I felt that the Lord was present, and even in her suffering she referred to our prayer. "Little did we think, Minna, that you and I would spend the first night in my room together like this," she said, as she opened her eyes from a few moments' sleep and met mine gazing rather anxiously upon her. I told her that, although grieved to see her suffering, yet I was thanking the Lord that I was privileged to help nurse her.

Aunt Sarah passed a very restless night. Sleep came seldom, and only in snatches. Sometimes there were periods of great exhaustion, and of a nervousness that called for a soothing touch and comforting word. On the whole, she was very composed, considering that for the greater part of her life she had a peculiar dread of suffering-indeed in some respects she was almost childlike in her sensitiveness to pain, and in her shrinking from any threatening bodily distress. There had been times when the thought of dying and death sent a chill through her whole being, and often she could, had she yielded to the morbid anxiety the

FF234 Adversary sought to stir up in her mind, have endured in her imagination many lingering deaths and much acute suffering.

"What will I die of? I wonder will I get cancer-and, oh! it is such a terrible pain-and so many have it-and-" Then her faith came to her rescue, and obediently she listened as the Master said: "Sarah, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." She would then reply: "I know You will arrange it all for me. I know I'll not be tried too sorely. But, Lord, You know the kind of illness I would prefer! But, there, I'll leave it all with You!" She had sometimes spoken to me of these fears, and of how she got rid of them, and assured me very confidently that she would see "just how nicely the Lord would arrange it all." "I don't let myself have any worry about it. My! just fancy how ridiculous it would be for me to worry about dying of cancer or some such awful disease, and here the Lord is maybe going to take me off in an accident or in some nice quiet way! Oh! my certy! The Lord knew best when He said: 'Sufficient unto the day'!" "Well," I responded, with a look of tender love, "I'll tell you, Aunt Sarah, one of my desires, that is to be with you, if the Lord will, when the end does come." And then!-why, of course, she took me in her arms, saying: "And it's one of my desires, too, dear, that you should be. Well, we'll see!" Now, in these nights and days of suffering, Aunt Sarah was very patient. She bore all the distress without murmuring, and tried to give as little trouble as possible. Once she asked, rather pathetically, "Am I patient?" and was pleased at the hearty assurance that she was. "I do want to be patient," she said.

Although all around her knew she was very ill, none then thought there was any immediate danger. She was able to take a fair amount of nourishment, and so we felt hopeful of her recovery. During Friday night, however, instead of improving she again gradually grew worse. On Saturday the doctor pronounced that pneumonia had set in. He looked grave, and feared it would go hardly with her. As the hours dragged on, her loved ones, watching as they nursed her, realized that her Lord was calling her to "rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away!" Sister Greenlees was most devoted in her attentions, and had to be persuaded to take rest at intervals. Many loving hearts would gladly have shared the burden, and the few sisters who took their

turn at

FF235 nursing felt it was indeed a great privilege to minister to Aunt Sarah in her last sufferings.

Early on Saturday evening, as I saw her so distressed, exhausted, and panting for breath, having in mind her former shrinking from physical pain, I thought it probable she might also be battling with fearful forebodings of prolonged and still greater sufferings. Feeling assured that owing to the weak condition of her heart she could not recover, and was not at all likely to live even forty-eight hours, it seemed to me love demanded that she be told that already the worst of her physical sufferings were past, and that her long-cherished hopes were about to be fulfilled. To learn that she was on the very threshold of the exceeding and eternal glory would lift her above her present afflictions, incidental to the completion of her sacrifice, and would stimulate her mind to dwell on the coming joys.

So, speaking quietly and distinctly, I told her the nature of her trouble, and of how I viewed her condition. As I mentioned "pneumonia" her dark eyes opened wide in surprise, and soon a look of satisfaction and relief passed over her face. It was evident that a cloud was lifted from her spirit. She gazed earnestly and steadily up into my face, as I concluded: "Dear Aunt Sarah, you have such an indulgent Father! You wished that the last would be just such a brief illness as this, and so once again your Father has granted your desires. Soon, dear, you will fall asleep, and your heart will give out, and you will then quietly and gently pass beyond. So we can all thank Him again!" Sister Greenlees stood beside me. With a wondering smile, Aunt Sarah looked at us both, her head turning a little from side to side as she murmured brokenly: "Oh, He has been so good to me...all the time...led me all the way." Then gradually and contentedly she closed her eyes.

But the joy welling up within expressed itself from time to time as strength permitted. Once she was heard to say: "Counted worthy to escape." Many a time she had prayed, as Jesus bade His own do, to be delivered from the fierceness of the trouble through which the next Age will be ushered in. Now she expressed her gratification that the Lord should deem her fit to be spared the great tribulation coming upon the world.

Later on, after a period of special distress, she panted in broken

FF236 words, frequently halting for breath: "I'm glad...the Lord let me have some suffering...just a little...but enough to let me realize better all that Jesus suffered for us."

She was very grateful for all that was done to relieve her, and lovingly spoke of the sisters who attended her as her "Royal nurses." In response we reminded her that her name, Sarah, meant "Princess," and "surely a Princess about to be made a Queen should have Royal nurses!" Once, after she had spoken a little of the joy it would give her to see Jesus face to face, one brightly, half-playfully remarked: "Why! I do believe, Aunt Sarah, that when you get to the other side you will forget all about us down here; you'll be so much taken up with the Lord, you'll have no thought for anyone else."

Her reply was a joyous laugh that rang in our ears and like music thrilled our hearts. It expressed so sweetly the happy anticipation of her bridal joy.

She gave many loving messages for absent friends. Every now and then she would mention another, and say a few words, but exhaustion and difficulty in breathing increased. At last she looked up appealingly at me and said, with a pause between each word: "I canna' name them a', for mind and-" then she stopped. So I finished the quotation for her-"memory fail! Is that it, Aunt Sarah?" She nodded assent, and I added quickly: "I understand, dear, you want us to tell all your brothers and sisters in the Lord, each one, to accept your parting love just as if you had spoken of them individually by name." With a satisfied shake of her head she whispered: "Yes, oh yes!" The assurance that this message would be given comforted her loving heart, and she rested more contentedly.

On Sunday, several relatives and friends visited her, and she conversed briefly with them all, sometimes seeing a few together. One sister in the Lord referred to her diligent service and to her long faithfulness to the Truth. "I would gladly have done more if only I'd had a better body," she replied. She was wonderfully bright at intervals; indeed, so vigorous was her mentality that the doctor, when he called early in the afternoon, assured her relatives that he had by no means given up hope.

When we conveyed this news of the doctor's hope to Aunt Sarah she looked very disappointed, and wistfully said: "If it is

FF237 the Father's will I'd rather go now! I would need to come through a' this again, likely, some time." Then, fearful lest any self-will or self-desire might have been expressed in her remarks, she added soon after, with a look and gesture of submission: "But as He wills! Yes, just as He wills."

Now only one at a time remained in the room with her, and, each being enjoined to speak as seldom as possible, little more was said by her or in her presence. Medicine and nourishment were given at stated times, and she often slept in the intervals.

Save for her labored breathing and flushed face there was little outward indication of her serious condition. As night approached, the action of the heart became still more intermittent. None of us now felt hopeful for her recovery, and, although tears sometimes filled our eyes at the thought of parting with one we so dearly loved, yet the joy of knowing her pilgrimage was nearly ended, and the toils of the long road about over, kept us from thinking of our own personal loss. As the hours passed, her sleep gradually deepened into unconsciousness. A change was observed a little over two hours before her death. When we were summoned to her bedside she was beyond hearing or speaking. While seven of us silently stood around her bed, quietly and gently life flickered out. Dear Aunt Sarah had "escaped."

As I looked around the little room, then at the still form on the bed, my heart was filled with intense feelings of thankfulness on Aunt Sarah's behalf. How exceedingly tender had been the heavenly Father's love and care from the first moments of her Christian experience till she reached the end of the way, and entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God! But for those who die in the Lord during those closing years of the Gospel Age that rest is not one of inactivity. The time prophecies given in the Bible and confirmed by the signs of the times prove that the Great Day of Trouble is already upon the world, and that, therefore, the First Resurrection is now in progress. The Scriptures teach that the time of trouble and the rewarding of the saints synchronize. (Da 12:1,2; Re 11:18) In consequence all the members of the Body of Christ who, like Stephen, "fell asleep" in death (Ac 7:60) before this "Harvest period" (Mt 13:39, R.V.) have even now been called forth from the grave by the voice of the archangel and the "trump of God," and have received the crown of righteousness (2Ti 4:8)

FF238 and of glory (1Pe 5:4) laid up for them till the Lord's second advent; while those members of the Church who remain in the flesh till the Son of Man's parousia (presence) have the special blessedness of experiencing at the moment of death their glorious change from human to spiritual conditions and nature.

In the twinkling of an eye they pass from corruption to incorruption, from dishonor to honor, from weakness to power, and are made like their Lord and Head, and see Him as He is.

The special favor of not sleeping in death, granted to this remnant, was foretold by the Apostles.-1Co 15:51,52; 1Th 4:16,17; Re 14:13,14 For seventeen years Aunt Sarah had expected the "great tribulation" (Mt 24:21), the "time of trouble" (Da 12:1), to break out in the autumn of 1914, and her faith in the chronological features of God's plan of the Ages was confirmed when this terrible "world-war" burst forth with such intensity in August of that year.

Aunt Sarah was buried in Eastwood cemetery. Considerably over a hundred friends were present at the funeral. The ground was covered with a mantle of snow, but over her grave lay many wreaths and sprays of lovely flowers. The sun shone brightly and intensified the beauty of the scene. Hymn No. 105, "If I in Thy Likeness," was sung, while sorrow and joy were expressed in voice and face. But in the friends of like precious faith the joy triumphed.

When the service was over most of the company returned to the city to be present at the usual Tuesday half-holiday meeting-the outgrowth of the little afternoon gathering that was held in the old days in Aunt Sarah's back shop. Praise and testimony took the place of the appointed Bible study. It was led by Brother Tait, her old friend and brother in the Lord. The first to speak was Sister Tait, who had enjoyed Aunt Sarah's friendship for forty-two years. Many others spoke, and every testimony circled lovingly round her memory. Each told of blessing received through her labors, and through her example of faith, zeal and love.

Before we parted, the Lord gave us a sweet token of His loving favor. A dear brother who had long differed with Aunt Sarah, much to her grief, on a certain subject, felt this a fitting occasion to tell that the Lord had led him to see that her view was the more

FF239 correct one, and that he now rejoiced to be so "at one" with his brothers and sisters in Christ. What a delight it was to hear at her memorial service this good news!

FF240

SAINTS TRIUMPHANT

A Hymn of the First Resurrection

The long bleak winter of the Church is past Truth brightly shines, and flowers of hope appear; Lo! Israel's fig tree spreads her budding leaves, Clear token that prophetic spring is here.

The seventh trump proclaims its message due, "Blest henceforth are the dead in Christ who die," For them death pangs are throes of heav'nly birth- Immortal life attends their parting sigh.

No longer now wait saints in silent tomb The dawn of their glad resurrection day; The Bridegroom calls in accents sweet and clear, "Arise, my love, my fair one, come away!" With songs of joy triumphant they ascend, Responsive to his life-enthrilling call; They leave behind the ash of sacrifice, The emptied cup of suff'ring, shame, and gall.

Attired in royal priesthood's robe and crown, They drink enraptured their Beloved's wine, And praise anew the merit of His blood, And all their Father's tender grace divine.

They cease from toil, but not from works of love: What rest sublime when will and deed are one! Heart yearnings stilled awhile by patient faith, Awake to sing-restraints of earth are gone.

Angels acclaim these saints triumphant, fair, The richest fruit of Love's redeeming grace, "Hail, worthy Lamb! Who bled to win Thy Bride! "Hail, worthy Bride! Who died to see His face! "Hail, promised Seed! Thy life in weakness sown, Now reap in pow'r its boundless harvest store, With blessings hail each human soul Thy spoil Won back from death to hail Thee, and adore!"

MINNA EDGAR

FF241 **Memoirs of Dr. John Edgar**

Preface

"PRECIOUS in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

This beautiful text was greatly impressed upon my mind when my beloved brother, John, entered into his rest. His had been a busy and useful life, wholly devoted in late years to the service of God. For the Lord's sake he had counted not his life dear unto him; and now he had triumphantly finished his course.

I felt assured that the heavenly Father would use His faithful servant's dying testimony; and the thought was suggested that a brief Memoir might prove, in the Lord's hands, a means to this end. I besought the Lord in earnest prayer that I might know his will in this matter; and "watching unto prayer" He in various ways graciously indicated His approval.

At that time I contemplated issuing duplicated typewritten notes; but it soon became evident from the numerous interested inquiries I constantly received, that only by the printed page could I hope to supply the demand for these Memoirs.

Many dear friends had written expressing deep sympathy in our loss, and, in a general letter of acknowledgment, I hastened to convey to them our brother's parting exhortation. Pastor Russell kindly published this letter in the "Watch Tower" of 15th July, 1910, and the Lord thus enabled many thousands of like precious faith to receive the benefit of John's last testimony. Communications from far and near soon came, telling of great blessings received through the message.

A little later Dr. Jones, of Chicago, requested my brother Morton to send "something more concerning the doctor, on the lines of the 'family letter,'" that it might be inserted in the forthcoming U.S.A. Convention Report. He responded by forwarding some brief notes which I had compiled, and these duly appeared in the Report.

I have since heard of many who, through reading my brother's dying testimony, have been quickened to greater earnestness in service, and to more fervent love and zeal. It gives me special joy and cause for thanksgiving to learn that the faith of some fellow-pilgrims, while on their death-beds, was fanned to a "pure and

FF242 steady ray" through the knowledge of John's experience, and that the dark valley of death was illuminated with the joyful assurance that the blessed Saviour, who "helped dear Brother Edgar" to rejoice even amidst his sufferings, would also strengthen them to witness a good confession to the mighty power of God to keep His own.

In sending forth these Memoirs I am, therefore, encouraged to hope that they will be used and blessed of the Lord. They have been written in much weakness and with many tears; yet the labor of love, undertaken and completed in entire dependence upon God, has been very sweet.

MINNA EDGAR

FF243

Notice of the Death of Dr. John Edgar

From "Glasgow Herald," Friday, 10th June, 1910.

We regret to announce the death of Dr. John Edgar, of Clairmont Gardens, Glasgow, which took place yesterday evening in a nursing home. Dr. Edgar became suddenly ill toward the end of last week, and on

Monday it was found necessary to perform an operation which unfortunately proved unavailing. Dr. Edgar, who was a son of the late Mr. John Edgar of Mansewood, Pollokshaws, was well known in professional circles as an outstanding specialist in the departments of obstetrics and gynaecology. He was born in Glasgow 48 years ago, and was educated in the University of Glasgow in arts, science, and medicine, taking degrees in all three faculties. After qualifying in medicine, he took special post-graduate courses abroad, and on his return to Glasgow at once commenced special studies in the hospitals in the departments in which he has since distinguished himself. In 1896 he was appointed one of the surgeons to the Royal Samaritan Hospital for Women, a position which, till the time of his death, he occupied with much acceptance. He was also, on the retirement of Dr. W. L. Reid from Anderson's College Medical School, appointed to succeed him as a teacher of midwifery and gynaecology, where his teaching was highly appreciated by the students. Dr. Edgar took much interest in the work of the Glasgow medical societies, at which he was a frequent attender, and in two of which he reached the position of vice-president. He was author of many important contributions to the proceedings of these societies and to the medical periodicals. For many years he has had a large consulting practice in Glasgow and neighborhood. He was a great favorite with his professional brethren, who regarded him as a man of considerable talent, and his untimely death, at an early age, is a matter for very deep regret.

FF244 In recent years, Dr. Edgar had gained considerable popularity as a speaker on religious subjects, having travelled in connection with this work over nearly all the populous centers in Great Britain and many parts of the Continent. His lecture, "Where are the Dead?" has reached a circulation of 40,000. Last year, accompanied by his brother Morton, he visited Palestine, delivering lectures in Jerusalem. They also visited the Great Pyramid in Egypt, spending some time in exploring and measuring its internal passages. A volume is at present in the press detailing their scientific symbolism, and pointing out many significant parallels in Scripture chronology and time prophecy.

CHERISHED PROMISES

(Isa 58:11; 51:3; 27:3. Ho 14:5) Though sterile as a desert My heritage hath lain, A silent desolation Of marshland, hill, and plain; Now mine, through faith surrendered, Submitted to my care, Transformed, shall bloom an Eden, With flowers and fruitage rare.

Lest any hurt my vineyard, I'll keep it night and day, Lest summer heat and sunshine Should wither and decay.

I'll water it and tend it Each moment of each hour, By evening mist and dew-cloud, And rain's refreshing showe These promises, dear Father, Lie cherished in my heart, I, panting, crave the wat'ring Thou only canst impart.

Come, make my soul Thy garden, Spread flowers of grace around, Let lily of the valley.

FF245 And Sharon's rose abound.

Convert my barren waste-land To pleasant fruitful field, And cause my rocky upland Its verdant praise to yield.

Change dreary swamp to fountains All rippling with delight, Proclaiming loud Thy mercy, Exulting in Thy might.

Rank weeds of self uprooted Abhorred and flung aside, Each sprout of pride detected, Though secretly it hide.

Vain Nature's thorns and briers To ashes burn away, Let naught retard the increase.

Of love's productive sway.

All Thine the Garden's flowers, All Thine the Vineyard's fruit, Beloved, Thou hast planted And watered seed and root.

Possess and keep me, Father, Extend Thy quick'ning power- Till all my being praise Thee Each moment of each hour.

MINNA EDGAR

FF247 **Memoirs of Dr. John Edgar** Part Two

I. **How he came into the Light**

My dear brother John came gradually into the light now due to the household of faith, for there were many obstacles in the way. It was difficult for him to find the necessary leisure sufficient to duly consider spiritual things; his professional work and studies fully occupied his time, and were very dear to his heart. Past successes quickened his hopes for still greater achievements, and there was every prospect that his ambitions would be attained. He was highly esteemed, both for his personal qualities and his skill as a surgeon. Enjoying vigorous health, a happy home, and many loving friends, this life held much to satisfy his bright, affectionate disposition.

Although such earthly acquisitions tended to hinder his spiritual advancement, my brother had nevertheless certain Christian advantages. Our parents had trained him to reverence God and the Bible, and also to regard Christ as his personal Saviour.

Possessed of a humble spirit, his mind was open to accept of truth, even though unpopular. His standard of authority was the Word of God. Any teaching that appeared reasonable and in harmony therewith, he carefully searched till satisfied of its soundness or otherwise; and whenever a truth became a matter of conviction, his life and conduct were brought into conformity with it regardless of all consequences, immediate or remote, even should these prove to be the loss of every cherished friend and the frustration of his dearest earthly hopes. Thus humbly walking in the light, he continued to be taught of the Lord; for "the meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way."-Ps 25:9 Brought as he was in the course of his professional work into close touch with much pain and sorrow, and being of a very sympathetic nature, John keenly felt the need for the world's deliverance. He had himself experienced deep grief in our losing by

FF248 death, after protracted suffering, four members of our family, in the short space of two and a half years. The ploughshare of sorrow had thus done its part in helping to prepare his heart to receive gladly the seed of the Word-the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."-Lu 2:10 Our father, whom we all dearly loved, and our sister Eva, in addition to myself, were the first to read and appreciate "The Divine Plan of the Ages," by Charles T. Russell.

This book was drawn to our attention at the right time by a friend, Miss Ferrie. We were greatly depressed by the sufferings and death of our dear ones, though assured that they had died trusting in Jesus. Despite the teaching of the Church, as expressed in the Shorter Catechism, that "the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory," much mystery beclouded our minds and augmented our sorrow.

These bereavements were used by God to impress upon us how terrible an enemy is death, and led us to see that the question "Where are the Dead?" is not satisfactorily answered by the creeds of Christendom. Brought

up in the Presbyterian faith, we held as truth the commonly accepted doctrines of eternal torment, the immortality of the soul, free grace, and the Calvinistic view of election, etc. Greatly did these doctrines trouble me, especially during the last nine months of our brother James' most distressing illness.

James never professed being a Christian, and generally avoided conversation on religious subjects. He would not permit me to pray with him, and would wearily turn away as he noted my sadness at his refusal. He had been what the world calls "a good fellow," an honest, moral-living man; but God alone knows what bitter tears I shed as I agonized in prayer that he might be saved from the horrible fate which my creed taught awaits all who do not confess Christ. How fervently I urged my simple faith to "claim" my brother's salvation on the strength of the promise in Joh 16:23-"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you!" I clung to that word "whatsoever," and implored the Almighty to grant me my brother's salvation.

On the day James died, when I realized that he was so soon to pass away, my prayers grew more passionate in my fast-ebbing

FF249 hope. Had my faith proved too weak to win my brother's soul?

Was he to be forever lost because a child of God in her weakness proved unavailing in prayer? I was bewildered and distressed, but still sought to lay hold of the promise of God's own Word, and resolved that once again I would speak to my brother. I did so, asking him most tenderly if he would like me "to say a wee prayer with him"; but, with closed eyes, he murmured, "Oh, no." Overwhelmed with grief, I sought the quiet of my room to pour out in prayer my deep anguish before the Lord.

Later, when in the library, dear father questioned me as to the cause of my bitter weeping. I told him, between my sobs, of the dreadful fears which filled my mind. I think father must surely have been finding consolation in thoughts of the mercy of the Lord, which, as the Scriptures say, "endureth for ever," for he did not appear to be much perturbed on James' account, though he showed concern at my grief. He went to the sick room, and before long returned, saying in his kindly tones, "Well, my dear lassie, you need never distress yourself any more about James. I asked him just now if he was trusting in Jesus, and he answered, 'Oh yes, father.'" Words cannot express my unbounded gratitude to God who had thus so graciously comforted me.

Indeed, was it not just like His loving tenderness so to soothe the grief of His ignorant child! I thought this dying expression of trust was all that was required to deliver my brother from an eternity of woe.

Before long, however, perplexing questions presented themselves to my mind. Had I the right to hope that James was now in Heaven with all those faithful followers of the Lord, who had devoted their lives to His service and suffered, maybe, even martyrdom for His sake? Was my brother's spirit undergoing a purifying process which would ultimately make him a copy of Christ? What of those who have no one to pray for them-would they perish on that account? For these and similar difficulties, Presbyterianism has no solution. Our prayers for more light, however, were answered by the Lord in due time, and in His own way.

As we read "The Divine Plan of the Ages," proving its every statement in the Scriptures, we found our questions and difficulties thoroughly cleared up. Our heavenly Father's love shone out most brilliantly from His own Holy Word. We became convinced that this book was indeed a help to the understanding of

FF250 the Bible, and we often spoke to the doctor of the marvelous unfolding which we had received through its aid, and we constantly sought to arouse his interest in it. For fully a year, however, there was little response. He and the other members of the family feared that their father and two sisters were becoming fanatical, and they disliked the publicity caused by the "propagandist work" and separation from the United Presbyterian Church. Nevertheless, our brother acknowledged later that our enthusiasm and zeal had influenced him favorably.

Our home was opened freely in the service of the Truth, and it was our joy and privilege to entertain many of the Lord's children and messengers. John, who was a frequent visitor, was brought into contact with many of these friends, including Brother Hemery and Sister Sarah Ferrie, whom we then, with loving familiarity, began to know as "Aunt Sarah." These two earnest followers of the Lord were used of Him to help break down any prejudice and indifference which the doctor may have had.

It was in the autumn of 1899 that John began a thorough investigation of the "new beliefs." Shortly after a little convention at which he and his wife were present, they desired us to spend an evening with them, before Brothers Hemery and Houston left the city for their homes; and as they gave us liberty to invite as many as we pleased of the brethren and inquiring friends, their large drawing room was well filled. We had a most delightful time discussing the various points of the Truth and explaining certain difficult questions. I saw that the Lord's blessing was certainly with us, and towards the close I whispered to my brother that, even as in the days of old the house which held the Ark of the Covenant received earthly blessings, so now those who entertained the Lord's messengers would surely receive spiritual blessings, and that he and Grace should therefore be expectant.

Shortly after this helpful gathering, John was called to a consultation in the far North of Scotland. As the journey was to be long, he thought it an excellent opportunity to read the book which we had so often earnestly urged him to study—"The Divine Plan of the Ages." That day of travel was the most momentous in his life. His mind had now become receptive to the Truth, and he read on, hour after hour, as one enrapt. The train stopped at the various stations on the route, and the passengers came and went

FF251 as usual; but so engrossed was he in his reading, he was oblivious of all else. He afterwards said that at one station several rough-speaking youths entered the compartment, and for a time he heard their voices; but very soon his book again absorbed his attention, and by and by he found himself alone, with no recollection as to when or where his fellow-travellers had left. He was amused at his own concentration of thought.

The plan of God opened up to him in all its grandeur and brought conviction of its truth to his mind. It was too glorious in its manifestations of love and wisdom to be of man. It bore unmistakably the impress of the Divine. He realized, as never before, that the best evidence of the truth and inspiration of the Bible comes from within itself. He saw that the golden thread of God's plan of salvation for mankind runs through it from Genesis to Revelation. From that day forward the doctor made rapid progress in grace and knowledge. He manifested keen appreciation of the high calling, and considered it but a small sacrifice to surrender "mere earthly things" for the hope of gaining joint-heirship with Christ. His was a thorough and whole-hearted consecration to the Lord.

One evening, some months after his journey to the North, John, in company with a few others, symbolized his sacrifice and baptism into the death of Christ by water immersion. We had engaged one of the Glasgow public baths, and our little baptismal ceremony, though conducted with great simplicity, was most impressive. We felt as if we were indeed shut in with the Lord so that we might have impressed upon our minds the solemnity of the obligation we had entered upon. The lights from the suspended lamps were reflected in the still water, and shone upon the upturned faces, aglow with the holy resolve to be true to their covenant of sacrifice. The brief exhortation, the prayers, the singing, all came from hearts filled with the realization of the presence of God.

The water burial spoke of humiliation, suffering, sacrifice, death, but to our dear brother these were "light afflictions" compared to the "eternal weight of glory" revealed to the eyes of his faith. Tears blurred our vision, but they were the outcome of joy, not of sadness. We knew John deeply appreciated the great privilege of being accepted as a probationary member of Christ's

FF252 Body, and that, though conscious of his own weakness, he rested in the glad assurance that all his imperfections were covered by the merit of Christ, whose precious blood cleansed him from all sin. His confidence of final victory lay not in himself but in God. Relying by faith on the mighty power of the heavenly Father, he joyfully laid hold of the glorious hope of the high calling of God in Christ.

John became most diligent in the study of the Bible, taking as his text-books the various volumes of "Scripture Studies," which he marked and annotated profusely. As an example of "redeeming the time," he was an inspiration to us all, for every moment he spent in travelling in tram-cars, etc., was occupied in either reading or writing. "This one thing I do" was the motto which he often expressed, and which seemed to dominate his mind. Frequently one heard the remark: "I saw the doctor in the car this morning, busy studying as usual." "The hand of the diligent maketh rich" was exemplified in his case, for the wealth of his knowledge was gained by much perseverance.

Not only did he believe in his heart the truth which he had received, but he gladly confessed it with his mouth. Very soon all who knew him became aware that Dr. Edgar's desires, hopes, and ambitions were no longer centered round his professional career, but were set in Heaven. All with whom he came into contact found him more eager to speak to them of God's glorious plan than of any other subject; and he always carried in a pocket, specially made for the purpose, a Bible and a copy of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" in readiness to give or lend to any who should evince an interest in the Word of God.

He preferred to give the volume rather than tracts, because he held that the book led the inquirer into the light of the Truth step by step, and was therefore less likely to awaken prejudice.

Not long after his consecration he offered his largest room for our meetings; and we met there every Sunday until, at the end of a year, our increasing numbers made it necessary to seek larger premises. A "born teacher," John could make the Truth so simple and clear that even the slowest could understand. He was one of the first elders to be elected by the Church, and he held that office till his death. He was indeed an "elder brother" to every member; his advice and help were often asked and readily obtained by

FF253 many in their times of difficulty, spiritual or otherwise. His influence and talents, money and home, were freely used in the interests of the brethren everywhere; and in this stewardship he had the loving cooperation of his wife, who early followed his example in consecration. Truly, he did not seek to save his life, but spent it in the service of the Master.

In June, 1903, our beloved father died. John and he had been much alike in mind and disposition, and the bond between them was very close and tender. Each admired as well as loved the other, and constantly sought the other's opinion and counsel.

John felt that the earthly father's love enabled him the better to comprehend the great love of God, the heavenly Father. He endeavored, therefore, to be to his own sons what his father had been to him. As an illustration of this parental care, I remember, when I was standing alone by father's coffin, the door of the room opened softly, and John entered leading his two little boys by the hand. They gazed solemnly up into his face as he spoke to them of their dear grandfather's death, and tried to impress some helpful lessons upon their young minds in the time of sorrow. He told them that Jesus died for all, that there might be a glorious resurrection of the dead. He reminded them of how kind and loving their grandfather had always been to them, and to all around him, and said he wanted them to grow up to be like him. He then spoke of the love of God, and of how much greater that love was than the love any human being could have for them. We all knelt beside the coffin as he engaged in prayer, worded in simple language so that the little lads could easily follow. Surely that is one of the prayers recorded in Heaven.

Later, during the funeral service, his personal grief came over him like a great wave. He hurriedly withdrew

from his position among the mourners, who were being addressed by Brother Hemery, and, entering a room and closing the door, he rushed to the farthest corner, leaned his head upon his arms and sobbed bitterly as if his heart would break. He was unaware of his sister Eva's presence; she let him weep undisturbed, fearing to intrude upon such sacred sorrow.

Laying aside all thoughts of self, John filled our father's place as head of the family, and willingly bore the burden of all our affairs. He became guardian to the children of our two deceased sisters, so that, combined with his professional duties, which were

FF254 heavy, he had now many family concerns to attend to, besides his numerous engagements in the work of the Lord's Harvest.

We often wondered, and still wonder, how he was able to do so much.

Though we had to endure many difficulties and trials after our father's decease, the Lord, ever gracious and loving, had in reserve for us a great joy. Seven months later our youngest brother, Morton, came into the light of present Truth. Various disappointments had helped to dissipate his worldly hopes, and after a certain earnest talk he yielded himself to God. He then began to read prayerfully "The Divine Plan of the Ages." The first meeting he attended was held in the home of one of the brethren, where John gave a discourse, illustrated by a chart, on the plan of God. Words cannot express the doctor's joy in noticing how eagerly his brother followed every word, drinking in the Truth. Once started, Morton made rapid progress. He showed particular aptitude in the study of Chronology and Time-prophecy, and before long the brothers were working together with mutual benefit.

II. His Public Testimony The first public discourse the doctor delivered was in his own city. The subject was "The Resurrection of the Dead." Many expressed satisfaction with his exposition, and thankfulness that the Lord, the Chief Reaper, had sent forth this laborer into the harvest field.

His popularity as a public lecturer rapidly increased, and his services were in constant demand both at home and abroad.

This work cost him much nervous strain, and he suffered from headaches and sleeplessness both before and after addressing a large meeting. God greatly honored him, and many hundreds can testify to blessings received through his ministry. He visited Germany on more than one occasion, and, being proficient in the language, delivered several lectures to the dear friends in that country. He also made an extensive tour in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, where, however, he required the services of an interpreter—a grand lesson in patience, he once remarked when recounting his experiences; for he required to halt at the end of every few sentences, and listen to what always seemed a very lengthy translation of the little he had said.

FF255 All of these lecturing tours John greatly enjoyed; everywhere he noticed the same spirit manifested by the brethren, which demonstrated that all were following the one Lord and Master.

He realized that they were indeed all "one in Christ Jesus."

In the summer of 1906, our brother, his wife, and I visited many of the principal cities in the United States of America and Canada. This tour was like a royal procession, the dear friends everywhere were so loving and attentive. On our arrival at railway depots we were generally met by several of the brethren, who hospitably entertained us. We received great blessing from the sweet fellowship which we were privileged to enjoy with hundreds of those of like precious faith, and the two large conventions at Asbury Park and St. Paul's were most inspiring.

We were the guests of Brother Russell for a week in the headquarters of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract

Society (then in Allegheny, Pa.). As we journeyed from place to place, the doctor delivered many lectures, principally on the Time-prophecies and the symbolisms of the Great Pyramid, using numerous large diagrams previously prepared for the purpose by Morton. This ministry was much appreciated, and, but for his characteristic humility, the love and honor he everywhere received might have been to his spiritual disadvantage.

In 1907 his lecture, "Where are the Dead?" was delivered several times throughout Glasgow and neighborhood to crowded audiences. On one of these occasions, this question was brought into marked prominence by special circumstances.

In a large seaside holiday resort, while the posters were on the hoardings announcing the lecture, a most distressing boating accident occurred off the coast, by which several lives were lost.

The importance of the question, "Where are the Dead?" was thus brought forcibly before the minds of the people, and the coming lecture was talked about. The result was a most impressive meeting, the large pavilion being filled to overflowing with a deeply sympathetic and attentive audience.

Surely many hearts were comforted by the message of peace /and love.

Toward the close of the year it was arranged that a public meeting should be addressed by the doctor in the Public Hall, Pollokshields. The choice of the subject was left to his own decision. He mentioned to me that he was wondering what lecture to give,

FF256 and on my suggesting "Where are the Dead?" exclaimed laughingly, "Oh dear no! I have given that so often. Why, people will begin to think I have nothing else to give! A one-lecture man, eh?" I answered, "It is just because you have already given it so often that I recommend you to repeat it."

"Explain yourself," he demanded. "God has blessed that lecture again and again, and the very fact that so many come to hear indicates that the public are not tired of it. Besides, you know it is a question all thinking people ask themselves. John, give it again," I urged. I was glad when he decided to do so, and knew that in making this decision he was overcoming his natural inclination.

The hall was crowded half-an-hour before the advertised time! Hundreds failed to get even standing room inside the hall, ante-room, or passages. The chairman, who had a fine stentorian voice, stood at the entrance and announced to the crowd gathered round the hall door that the same lecture would be delivered a fortnight hence in the Langside Public Hall. A loud voice from the rear of the crowd replied: "The Langside Hall will never hold the people; engage St. Andrew's Hall." The suggestion then made was recognized to be wise, for though the Langside Hall is much larger than the Burgh Hall, it also was densely packed, and hundreds were again turned away unable to gain entrance.

Accordingly, John was asked to give his lecture in the largest auditorium in the city, St. Andrew's Grand Hall, and after a little hesitancy he consented. The Hall, which has a seating capacity of 4,500 was hired for the 29th of March, 1908. By this means we trusted that a more public witness for the Truth would be given in Glasgow than had previously been attempted.

Even this large hall, however, proved too small for the crowds who desired to gain admittance, and not a little consternation was caused among the officials in attendance by the determined manner in which the people pressed into the corridors and passageways. The overflow meeting, which was immediately arranged for, and addressed by Brother William W. Johnston (now in charge of the African Branch of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society), was also soon overcrowded, and still the people continued to come in great numbers. We had the satisfaction, however, of supplying the lecture in pamphlet form to those who were unable to hear, many of whom had come long distances.

FF257 So great a multitude of people coming to hear God's glorious Plan of the Ages naturally filled us with praise and thanksgiving. We recalled to mind, as we beheld that crowded building, a long-cherished and often-expressed desire of our dear sister in the Lord, Aunt Sarah, that this large hall should one day be filled with people eager to hear the glad message of God's love as we understood it. In the old days our little class of about a dozen met in her "wee back shop" in the Cowcaddens; and when we had an "extra large" meeting of two or three dozen, Aunt Sarah would make us smile as she would enthusiastically exclaim: "We'll have St. Andrew's Hall filled yet!" Noting our incredulous smiles, she would continue-"Does not the Lord say, 'Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart'? Well, the Lord will yet let me see St. Andrew's Hall filled with folk listening to the good tidings of great joy, for I am delighting myself in Him, and that is one of the desires of my heart. Just you wait and you'll see!" And we did see! But none of us had ever thought the prophecy would be so amply fulfilled. Truly, Eph 3:20 was exemplified here, for the Lord had certainly granted Aunt Sarah's desire "exceeding abundantly above all" that she had asked or thought! As might be expected, great blessing flowed from this meeting; through it the Truth was brought into much prominence. The lecture was freely discussed in many of the large workshops and warehouses in the city. The booklet was taken up by many booksellers, who frequently asked for further copies. The first edition of twenty thousand was sold out within ten weeks; but the orders accumulated to such an extent that when the second edition was ready we had to request the postal authorities to send a van to collect them from our house. When the last of the mail-bags had been carried out and the bustle was over, we were impressed with the thought that in this again the Lord had answered our prayer far beyond what we had asked or thought.

We recalled the mingled feelings of hope and trepidation with which we awaited the night of the momentous meeting, and the nervousness and fearfulness of our dear brother John, as the time drew near. His wife tells that, when he and she knelt together in prayer before leaving their home for the hall, the doctor was almost overcome with the feeling of his own weakness and insufficiency, and asked her to

FF258 voice their petition to the Lord that grace and strength might be granted to enable him to deliver His message. Their request was honored, for the doctor never spoke better than he did then.

Besides delivering "Where are the Dead?" to crowded audiences in many of the cities throughout Scandinavia, the doctor had the great privilege of delivering his famous lecture (so much was his name identified with it) in the Holy City itself! I well remember the thrill of pleasure with which I read the announcement of this meeting in the handbill and in the letters the doctor sent home. It was surely an honor to be permitted to proclaim the present Truth in Jerusalem, where Jesus, who spake as never man spake, had given forth His Father's Words of Life! Others of John's lectures have appeared from time to time in the printed reports of the General Conventions held in this country and in America. Of these, possibly the most helpful are-"Socialism and the Bible," "The Preservation of Identity in the Resurrection," "A Tree Planted by the Rivers of Water," and "Rest and Restitution."* *The first three of these helpful addresses can now be procured in booklet form, uniform in size with this brochure.

Throughout all his public ministry, the doctor's principal aim was to induce others to study for themselves the writings of Pastor Russell; but to those who had already gained a knowledge of the Plan of God, and were walking the narrow way of consecration, he was a constant stimulus by example and precept. His very presence was helpful. The sight of his bright, loving face as he entered the room had a beneficial influence. As one of his patients remarked, "The doctor comes like a ray of sunshine to us sick folks." But many felt they did not require to be sick to feel the warmth and glow. The zeal and enthusiasm engendered by his love for the Truth were "catching," and his firm assurance that we are living in the closing years of the Gospel Dispensation, together with his ability in presenting the proofs which formed the foundation of his faith, tended greatly to disarm criticism and opposition.

He was thoroughly convinced of the importance of the time-features of God's plan. Bitter experience of

others, as well as his own, taught him the opprobrium that rested on all attempts to interpret the time-prophecies of the Bible, and he often referred to the lack of logic evidenced in the objections offered to the study of

FF259 Biblical dates. Because, he would say, some have failed to interpret properly the obscure prophecies of the Scriptures in the past, it does not follow that these prophecies will never be understood. Men do not use such an argument in connection with any of the sciences, and why therefore should they use it in connection with the time-features or other prophecies of the Scriptures? The real fact is that men refrain from believing the Bible, for belief in the Word of God brings responsibility. Our brother believed that, even as Martin Luther had been chosen as a fitting instrument by God to unfold truths then due to be known by the household of faith, so now further unfoldings are due; and it was his conviction that to Charles T. Russell, a wise and faithful servant of the Lord, had been entrusted the honor of shedding light upon hitherto obscure passages of the Scriptures.

The doctor was not afraid to acknowledge his firm belief that we are living "in the days of the Son of Man," when a great dispensational change is due to take place, and that the Lord's faithful are now experiencing the "blessedness" which Daniel the prophet foretold for those living at the end of the "thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days" of waiting. To him it was the greatest privilege to serve as one of the messengers sent forth in this harvest-time, the consummation of the Age (Mt 13:39, R.V.), to separate the wheat from the tares. He saw from the Scriptures that many wonderful events are due to take place during this period, the most important being the gathering together of the Lord's saints who had "made a covenant with Him by sacrifice." (Psalm 1:5) He believed that the "First Resurrection" is in progress; that all the members of the Body of Christ who had "fallen asleep" in death waiting for the "last trump," the "trump of God," are now with the Lord, glorious spirit beings, and consequently those who are "alive and remain" do not "sleep" in death as did those who died previous to this harvest-time (and as all do who are not members of the Body of Christ). Now, when the saints die they are "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," to their glorious spirit condition.*-1Th 4:16; 1Co 15:52.

*It will be noticed in this connection that there is no contradiction between this belief and the teaching set forth in "Where are the Dead?" as some correspondents to the newspapers have claimed.

The discourse on "Where are the Dead?" does not deal with "times and seasons" nor with the special features of the few closing years of this Gospel Dispensation, but is an elucidation of a great general truth, viz., that the dead are asleep, waiting till the resurrection morning.

Those who desire a clear exposition of the times and seasons are referred to the second and third volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures," by the late C. T. Russell.

FF260 For several years the doctor was specially interested in the symbolisms of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh, in Egypt. When he read for the first time (in 1900) Pastor Russell's article on the Great Pyramid in the third volume of "Studies in the Scriptures," he did not fully appreciate it. The theory that the system of passages and chambers in that building is intended by God to symbolize His plan of salvation appeared too fanciful.

Subsequent study of the Divine Plan itself, however, had so prepared his mind that when, six years later, in spring of 1906, he and his brother Morton began a systematic study of the subject, he became thoroughly convinced that this was indeed God's "Stone Witness." Continuing their search for the treasures of truth which they believed still lay hidden in this wonderful edifice, they were rewarded by the discovery of many additional corroborations. The brothers derived much blessing from this work, and often expressed gratitude to their heavenly Father for these further confirmations to their faith. To quote the doctor's own words: "In our study of the Pyramid our love for God grows deeper, because we see in it His loving favor for us and for the world in general; and at the same time our awe of Him increases as we perceive His power and wisdom."

In the summer of 1906 the doctor delivered a series of lectures on the Pyramid in America and Great Britain, setting forth the additional corroborations which had been found; and the same year a brochure containing a synopsis of the discoveries was published. The entire edition of this publication was soon exhausted; but, ever mindful of the interests of the Truth, the brothers began the preparation of a fuller and more detailed work.

As they progressed, still further beauties were revealed, and before bringing out their joint-publication they decided to make a personal visit to the Great Pyramid, that they might speak more confidently of its wonderful symbolisms. Accordingly, in the summer of 1909, accompanied by Mrs. Edgar and her two sons, the brothers visited Egypt and Palestine. For many weeks they encamped in tents close to the Great Pyramid. Morton preceded the

FF261 others in order to make necessary preliminary arrangements, and to complete preparations for taking exact measurements of the internal passages, etc. A very full account of their operations at the Pyramid is given in the first volume of "Great Pyramid Passages." The second volume of this work enters fully into all the Pyramid-inch time-measurements, of which there are about fifty; and also explains the wonderful time-parallels of the Scriptures.

During their stay in the East, we were kept well advised of their impressions and movements. The brethren in Glasgow took an intense interest in their operations, and eagerly perused long letters sent home from time to time. We were not without anxiety on their account, for many dangers attended their enterprise. These will be readily understood when it is stated that, in addition to measuring accurately the exceedingly steep and slippery passages, they closely examined the Well-shaft, which is almost perpendicular, and about 200 feet in depth! This work was rendered more easily possible by being performed during the "off" season, when the ordinary tourists and curiosity-hunters had left the country; but, on the other hand, they were exposed to the excessive heat which prevails at that time, and is a frequent cause of serious illness to those accustomed to a northern climate. Indeed, while in Jerusalem, the doctor and his younger boy, Stanley, were very ill with dysentery; and when we received news of their sickness we were filled with apprehensions. We doubly rejoiced, therefore, and rendered to God our heart-felt thanks when in due time they returned safe and well.

III. The Last Days

Our dear brother was privileged to labor in the public service of the Master right up to the last week of his life on earth. On 15th May he addressed a large gathering at the London Convention, held in Whitefield's Old Tabernacle, on "Our Oneness in Christ" (since published in the 1910 American Convention Report). It is interesting to know that, on this occasion, he occupied the identical old-fashioned high pulpit from which Whitefield preached. (The old pulpit, in a state of good preservation, was transferred to the present building, which was erected on the exact site of the original Whitefield Tabernacle.)

FF262 Later, on the same evening, he was chairman at the second of the three large "May Meetings" addressed by Pastor Russell in the London Royal Albert Hall; and two days after, on the 17th May, he again officiated as the pastor's chairman at the public meeting held in the Glasgow City Hall. Many remarked then on the doctor's bright, happy expression as he sat facing the large audience. It was always a joy to him to be with Brother Russell, and especially on such an occasion as this, when his beloved pastor was so ably delivering the Lord's glorious message to a great congregation of attentive listeners.

In Edinburgh, on Thursday, 19th May, three weeks before his death, John gave a most helpful discourse on "The Sin- Offering."

During this interval he accompanied Pastor Russell to Dundee. On the 21st he lectured in Ayr, and on the 28th returned to Dundee, addressing a large meeting on "Why God Permitted Evil." On 1st June he spoke at a

farewell gathering held by the Church at Glasgow on the eve of the departure of Brothers Johnston and Crawford for other fields of service. His warm, loving words of God-speed and encouragement, together with the bright and humorous, yet tender, account which he gave of the growth of the class at Glasgow, will long live in the memory of those who heard him. Though he appeared tired, he was cheerful and happy, and exerted himself to assist all to look at the bright side of this parting scene. None imagined that it was his farewell also, in a very special sense, to the brethren whom he so dearly loved.

The next day was a general holiday in Glasgow, and our brother and his wife, in company with other friends, visited Lochranza, where a dear brother and sister in the Lord were temporarily residing. We afterwards learned that during the day, as opportunity offered, he wrote on pictorial cards a large number of messages of loving remembrance to invalided, aged, or isolated brethren. His thoughtfulness in these little attentions has often proved a helpful lesson to others. On the same evening he joined a large company of friends at the Central Station to say "Goodbye" to Brother Johnston, who was now leaving for London, en route for Africa.

The following night the doctor felt indisposed, but on Saturday morning, though still very unwell, he attended to some of his most urgent medical cases, besides performing an important surgical

FF263 operation, and in the afternoon retired to bed.

On Sunday, during the usual morning Bible study, we were informed that he was still very unwell, and at the close of the meeting I hastened to visit him. I found that he was suffering from headache; but he had his Bible in his hand, and was going over the passage which we had been considering at our morning class. After a little talk about his illness, he began to speak of our lesson-Heb 2:11-14. He wondered why Isa 8:18 should have been quoted here by the writer, and offered various explanations; but I insisted that he must not talk. Before I left he requested me to convey several messages, and gave directions by which a certain brother, who required spiritual assistance, might be brought into touch with one able to help him.

That afternoon Stanley brought me a little note from his father, in which he had tabulated in his usual methodical way the different items he wished me to attend to. I smiled as I saw the list, thinking, "How like John this is," but nevertheless regretting that I had not assured him more definitely that I would remember. Then I noticed some writing in small characters along the edge to the effect that the physician had again examined him, and thought he might have sub-acute appendicitis. The news naturally caused me anxiety, and I decided that the Church must know of this development. In the evening, therefore (on the 5th June-the seventh anniversary of our father's death), the Church received the message that the doctor's illness was more than mere indisposition. We remembered him in prayer, and though we felt a little alarmed at the thought of the possible dangerous malady, we hoped that all would yet be well.

I saw him once more that evening, and again found him reading his Bible. I gently took the book from him, saying that I knew too much about sickness to allow him to read any more. I lingered with him a little, and then, as he hoped he might settle to sleep, I left for home, feeling very anxious, though somewhat assured by a message which the physician had telephoned to Mrs. Edgar.

During the night he suffered from severe pain and sickness, but, wishing not to disturb his physician's rest, he waited till morning before sending a message to him to come and bring with him a surgeon. The examination took place at 8:45 a.m., and the symptoms which indicated to the surgeon the seriousness of our

FF264 brother's condition revealed it to the patient himself. The surgeon told me later that, while he was engaged percussing he noticed my brother listening intently, and on their both hearing certain ominous sounds their eyes met. Both knew it to be very doubtful if life could be saved. Our brother himself seemed quite assured that he was face to face with death. There was, however, a slender hope that an immediate operation might lead to recovery.

We were all quickly summoned to his bedside before the ambulance should convey him to a private nursing-home near by, where he had himself attended many patients. We found our dear one in great agony, and much exhausted by his long night of suffering. A groan would seldom escape him. His dear wife and I did all we could to relieve his pain. At times he felt icy cold, and then would burn with fever.

Our sister Annie said to him as she sat beside him, "Surely, John, it is not you who is to be the first to go! I am the eldest, and have expected to be taken before you."

"Yes, I am going to the Father," he replied, "to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

"Oh, John," she exclaimed, "we cannot do without you. You are the head, you know, of the family; we cannot spare you yet."

But he answered, "God will care for you all. Cast all your care upon Him, and He will look after you far better than I could do!" He stretched out his arms for us, and drawing us one by one to himself, kissed us most tenderly. Mentioning each of us by name, he said, "Good-bye; God bless you." Now and then one of us would burst into tears, and these he would reprove gently by saying, "If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I go to the Father." We assured him that we did rejoice for his sake, but mourned for our own.

We know that God heard the many prayers that ascended on our behalf, for surely special grace was given us to bear our sudden trial calmly.

Occasionally dear John would murmur, "Oh, I am so tired;" and Annie would pat him soothingly and say, "Poor son!" ("Son" is a term of comforting endearment often used in Scotland by an elder to a younger relative.) Our dear sister Grace was wonderfully upheld, though her heart was anguished at the sight of her beloved husband's sufferings. Time and again he held her face to

FF265 his own, fervently kissing her, and seeking to comfort her by reminding her of God's almighty power and love.

At last the ambulance arrived, and after some more farewells he was conveyed to the nursing home. We were not altogether devoid of hope, for we knew he was in the hands of a clever surgeon; and we trusted that the Master might still have work for him on this side of the veil.

After the operation, the surgeon came to the side-room where I was waiting, and very gravely said, "I am sorry that I cannot give you hope for your brother. If he should linger for 24 hours, then we might begin to have a glimmer of hope." I felt that surely it must be somebody else's brother he was speaking of! Yet, though numb and dazed, I knew that God was about to let the greatest sorrow fall upon us, and my heart cried out to Him for grace and strength to enable us all to bear it. It was hard to go home to the anxious ones with such news. Though all were stunned by this sudden blow, we never at any time felt a trace of rebellion in our hearts. We desired most fervently that God's will should be done.

Sister Grace and I visited John that afternoon, and found him very exhausted but quite collected. He sought to comfort his wife by assuring her that God would be her helper and strength, and very tenderly he commended us both to His keeping. In the evening, when we again visited him, he was bathed in perspiration, so that even the pillow under his head was wet.

The surgeon remarked that such sweating was quite phenomenal, and our hope sprang up afresh. We thought, "Maybe God is working the miracle that alone can save him! Our God can do wonderful things, and it might be that His glory will be best served by sparing this useful life yet a little longer!" All Monday night he suffered acutely and was most restless; but twenty-four hours slipped past and still he lingered.

Nevertheless the surgeon denied us all hope.

The news of the doctor's very serious condition was quickly circulated among the anxious brethren, and, as all loved him very dearly, much sorrow and grief were awakened.

Tuesday was a long day of waiting and pain. Sister Grace and I now and then saw him, but as he exhausted himself in seeking to manifest his love for us, and especially for his dear wife, by giving us parting exhortations to trust in God, and comfort our hearts in the knowledge that we must soon meet again, we felt it necessary

FF266 to leave him in quietness. To witness his distress of body was exceedingly painful. The upturned appealing glance, the sudden helpless movement of his hands, betokened that his sufferings were great, and told that in the midst of them his soul made supplication to its God. We prayed without ceasing.

In the evening we were greatly relieved on learning that morphia was to be injected; we hoped he would now get sleep.

That night his sons, Jack and Stanley, knelt in prayer with their mother and myself. Our hearts rejoiced to hear the lads pray aloud. The elder (17 years of age) told the Lord that he knew his father did not desire "earthly blessings," and he would not ask for his life to be spared, but besought God to alleviate the pain as far as possible, that "father might get some sleep." He ended with the pathetic appeal that his mother might be strengthened to bear up, "because you know, Father, if mother were also to be taken away it might be more than Stanley and I could bear."

On Wednesday morning I suggested to sister Grace to go alone to see her dear one. She did so, and, while I waited for her in another room, she told him of the boys' prayers the night before, knowing that it would be a comfort to him and would gladden him to hear that the Lord was working in their hearts. It was now approaching forty-eight hours since the operation, and though no authoritative hope was given us our spirits rose a little. On leaving the nursing home to join those who usually congregated a short distance away, anxiously awaiting the latest report, we found Brother Hemery coming over to meet us. He had travelled from London during the night, for he desired greatly to see his dear brother John once more in the flesh, should the Lord grant him that privilege.

In the early afternoon a message came from the nursing home that John desired to see his wife and boys. Jack and Stanley were much affected by the interview. The former told his father that on the previous night he had knelt down when alone in his bedroom, and earnestly prayed to God for the light. Both the lads told their father that they intended to consecrate themselves to the Lord. They wept as he commended them to the heavenly Father. He advised and encouraged them, assuring them of God's love and care for them. Assured that Brother Russell would continue faithful to the end, he urged them to keep close to him. He was frequently

FF267 interrupted in his remarks by spasms of sickness; but his fatherly care constrained him to sacrifice himself that he might exhort and help them. He spoke to them of the joy he was so soon to experience in being raised with Christ, and reminded them of the shortness of the time. When told of Brother Hemery's arrival, he expressed appreciation of the love and kindness shown, and said he would send for him if he felt at all able for an interview. Before the lads left, they knelt with their mother at their father's bedside, and presented themselves to God.

About 4 p.m. a message came from John that he would like Brother Hemery and one of his sisters to come to him. It was arranged that I should go. To witness the greeting of these two brothers in the Lord was most touching. John asked Brother Hemery to give him "a long kiss," and the tears sprang to Brother Hemery's

eyes as he caught hold of the doctor's hand, and exclaimed, "My dearest brother! You know you are my dearest brother!" John smiled and replied, "You know I love you, though I may not always have manifested it as much as I should have done-Scotch fashion, you know, which I am trying to overcome." Referring to the joy the Lord had granted him in the knowledge that his two sons had now consecrated themselves, he desired Brother Hemery to take special interest in their welfare, and to aid them spiritually.

Haltingly he spoke, sickness frequently disturbing him, but with determination he continued till he had said all he wanted to say.

He described his symptoms, and showed very clearly the slender thread on which his life hung. He apparently wanted us to know exactly how things stood with him. We saw he had little hope of his recovery, but bravely submitted to all that was being done for him. We were filled with wonderment at the orderly, methodical way in which he diagnosed his own case-for the time being he was the professor instructing his students. He dismissed the subject, saying with that deliberation which betrayed the effort it was for him to speak, "I am cooperating with the nurses, with the doctor, and with GOD!" Then he sought to lift us up to the height of his own joyful anticipation of so soon seeing Him who is our Lord and Head, and quoted the text, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy: at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." He urged us to lay firm

FF268 hold of our glorious hope. He also referred to Brother Russell as being the servant of the Lord, and of how he desired us always to cooperate with him. He spoke of the book on the Great Pyramid, and of his wish that the second volume should be gone on with, and requested us to encourage Brother Morton in his work upon it. He remarked that when he had spoken to Brother Russell on the corroborations of the time features which he and Morton had found in the Great Pyramid, his eyes had lighted up with pleasure.

Late in the evening Sister Grace visited John alone. She met the surgeon, who told her that he expected her husband would hardly live out the night, and certainly not through the next day.

The slender thread had broken! She came to us in tears to say that all hope of his life being spared was now utterly gone, and to convey to us our brother's message that we were to go to him in turns to have a last interview. Now that John had the surgeon's assurance that death was imminent, he determined to use all his remaining strength to witness for the Truth, so that maybe some might be persuaded to start in the race for the high calling, while others might be helped in their endeavors to make their calling and election sure.

So sudden was his fatal illness, it seemed as if my beloved brother were being cut off while yet in the full strength of a vigorous manhood. Nevertheless, by God's grace, his mind was free from all fear and dread. He could calmly think of the near approach of death, and testify that it had no terrors for him. No dismay, alarm not dark forebodings, but restful assurance and glad anticipations filled his mind; for, while dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty, he had learned to confront "the last enemy" with the glorious song of triumphant faith ringing in his heart, and making melody in the ears of the Lord upon whom he had so faithfully "set his love." "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and fortress: my God; ... He covers me with His feathers, and under His wings do I trust: His truth is my shield and buckler...He will deliver me and set me on high, because I have known His name...He will honor me. With long life [immortality] will He satisfy me, and show me His salvation."

Those who have watched by many death beds will be surprised

FF269 to learn that, in addition to the last farewell, when eight of us were gathered together around his bed just prior to the end, he had separate interviews with no less than twenty-three relatives and friends. A solemn hush lay upon all as they emerged from the sick room, and each realized that the interview would be a treasured and ever-stimulating memory. They felt that they had been brought into the presence of the Unseen, and had been privileged to stand on holy ground! His expression was so joyful, loving, and tender! There was

not a trace of doubt in his mind, nor, indeed, in the minds of any of us, that he was now waiting on the very threshold, ready to be ushered into the glory beyond. Indeed, the reflection of the glory already shone in his face and beamed from his eyes.

The doctor's first interview was with his boys. During the long hours that had elapsed since they last saw their father, they had developed spiritually. We had looked on in glad wonderment at their growth. They were growing like "calves of the stall." (Mal 3:2) The joy of the Lord had come into their hearts like a flood.

But for a time after their presentation of themselves to God, at their father's bedside, they had been much depressed. Not only did their beloved father's suffering and serious condition fill their minds with sadness, but the sense of their own weakness and insufficiency to faithfully keep the vow they had made weighed heavily upon them. The dear Lord who gathers the lambs with His arm, and carries them in His bosom, provided for them the spiritual help they required. While Stanley was being cheered and counselled by his mother and a loving sister in the Lord, Jack confided in me how discouraged and perplexed he felt. He had entered the "straight gate" of consecration, by surrendering himself to God, but now he was puzzled as to how to progress along the "narrow way." He had been instructed in the Truth from a child, but he instinctively felt that more than knowledge was necessary to make him a winner in the race. The fear of failure brought tears to his eyes. I used the simple illustration of "a new boy at school" to help him realize that now, having enrolled himself as a pupil in the school of Christ, he must place implicit confidence in his Great Teacher's willingness and ability to give him all needed instruction and discipline.

"You know, Jack," I said, "it is not left to a new scholar to find

FF270 out for himself what lessons are best suited for him. How hopeless his case would be were it so! It is the teacher who arranges what must first be learned. So Christ appoints us the right lessons, and assists us as we seek to learn them. Just as the diligent pupil is led step by step from the lowest to the highest class, so little by little the heavenly scholars are taught. The tasks are never too difficult nor too many."

I specially emphasized the comforting thought that Christ is an almighty Teacher and able to impart of His own Spirit of wisdom and power to His pupils, enabling them to understand the deep things of God, and to obey His every command. A dull scholar could never receive of an earthly teacher's intelligence to render him capable of comprehension, but we are "quickened" by the Holy Spirit and so gain new energy of feeling, thought, and action. This, I showed, is something more than mere knowledge; it is the mighty power of God working in us to will and do of His good pleasure. I reminded him of many precious promises, no doubt long familiar to his ear, but now pregnant with fresh meaning as he listened. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I urged him to rest in faith that the Almighty God who had given His dear Son to die for him would surely give him all things needful for his perfecting, and that, as the Father had begun the good work in him, he must expect it to be continued till by and by it would be completed. "How you are to overcome, dear Jack, is stated by the Apostle: 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' You will find, as many have done, that one of the most comforting passages in the Bible is that spoken by our dear Lord Himself: 'Without Me ye can do nothing.'" Jack looked puzzled, but soon saw that it was indeed a comfort to have the Lord's own assurance that He knows our weakness, while yet accepting us as branches in the vine to bear fruit through the power of His Spirit in us, to the glory of God the Father.

In the late afternoon their Aunt Annie found Jack and Stanley alone in the dining room, both weeping. Her motherly compassion was aroused. She naturally concluded they had heard bad news of their father's condition, and anxiously inquired; but Jack replied, between his sobs, "It is not about father we are crying, Aunt Annie. We have given ourselves to God, and are crying for joy!"

FF271 In the evening both lads told their companions of their decision to follow Christ, and we learned that they followed up the announcement by exhorting them also to surrender themselves to God. They continually

reminded their mother and myself of the shortness of the time, and whenever one of us began to break down, they would remonstrate with us, saying, "You know it won't be long till we see him again." We remarked, smiling with joy in the midst of our tears, "Why, you boys won't let us weep at all!" When they entered their father's presence, his quick eyes of love soon perceived the change in the lads. It was hardly necessary for Jack to tell him, as he did, of their joy and peace in the knowledge that they had consecrated themselves to God.

Their father, clasping their hands in his own, exclaimed, "Now, see! A rejoicing father, and two rejoicing sons!" Jack brokenly expressed his regret that he had not long ago given himself to the Lord; and that it should have needed all this great suffering of his father to turn his heart to God. "Why, Jack," came the answer, with a radiant look of love, "I would gladly at any time have died for you. It would be joy for me to give my life for you both."

Before my sister Annie went in to say "good bye" to our brother, we urged three of his near relatives to have a farewell interview with him, as we felt assured that John would not only desire, but would expect them to do so. Each shrank from what they feared might prove a trying "scene," and requested that another might convey their parting message. When Annie entered his room, John asked why her husband was not with her. She explained that he would have liked to come, but felt it would be too trying to witness his sufferings. "Ah," John replied, rather wistfully, "that is the weakness of the flesh! But tell him," he added, in a hearty tone, "I shall take the will for the deed." He then mentioned the others by name, and, on learning that they also shrank from an interview, remarked with his characteristic generosity of heart, "Oh, well, I shall take the will for the deed in their case too!" Dear Annie had a strong desire that the three should see John, for she felt convinced that if only they could behold him so calm, bright, and "like himself," all their shrinking would vanish. In her unselfish eagerness to give them this opportunity of saying

FF272 farewell to John before it was too late, she made her own interview very short.

On bidding him good bye, she remarked almost regretfully, "I never thought, John, that you would be taken before me. I always believed that I, being the eldest of the family would be sure to go first." He smiled, and looking at her archly, said with a little shake of his head, "Ay! Don't you just wish it was you!" When Annie regained the group of relatives and friends her earnest assurances of "how nice he looked, how calm and composed," and "how brightly he talked," and "how desirous he was of seeing them all," etc., overcame the timidity of those who had refrained, and so each in turn made his way to the sick room.

I met them as they were returning homewards. Each expressed his satisfaction that he had taken advantage of the privilege granted him, and remarked that it was simply wonderful to see him "like that." The radiant joy manifest in John's face had evidently made a deep impression on their minds. So precious to me were my dear brother's last words, that I, perhaps unwisely, eagerly questioned one of them, "What did John say to you?" The answer came, slowly and haltingly, "He said he was very happy-never was so happy before in his life-and asked me to kiss him." I felt I must inquire no further.

Brother Alex. Tait (one of the three elders to be first elected by the Church at Glasgow) has kindly written out a brief summary of our brother's last words with him: "When I entered the room he extended his arms as if to embrace me, and asked me to give him a kiss. 'What fine times we have had together,' he said. 'My trial is past, but you have to fight for a while longer. I shall soon be with Him. Oh, it is grand! In His presence is fulness of joy.' When I suggested how glorious it would be to see the Lord, and meet the friends who had gone before, his face beamed with light. He seemed as if he were already in the Divine Presence. He invariably wore a smile; but now his countenance manifested an inner rapture which I never before witnessed. One could not help being uplifted and sharing it with him.

Referring to a remark Brother Johnston had made before sailing for Africa, about his being as near to the

Kingdom in Nyassaland as in Glasgow, the doctor said, 'I have stolen a march

FF273 on Brother Johnston. I will be in the Kingdom before him. Oh, it is grand!' "He spoke of how Brothers Johnston, Crawford, himself, and I had been so long elders together, and that now I was to be left alone. Brothers Johnston and Crawford had left the city, and he was going beyond the veil. He seemed to have loving compassion for me, but assured me that he would be better able to help me from the other side, and the Lord would be with me.

At this point he said some things I could not well make out, but I understood him to be expressing his loving consideration for the interest of the work in Glasgow.

"When I told him how his example had been a great help and stimulus to me, because he had had so much more to sacrifice than I had, he replied that he never knew he was sacrificing anything.

"He frequently repeated the words, 'In His presence is fulness of joy. Oh, it is grand!' He sent messages of love to all the elders, and commented briefly on the qualities of mind most prominent in each. He expressed sorrow that my wife had not come with me, and asked me to convey a message of love and farewell to her, her sisters at Eston, and her brother's family in London.

"When I was leaving, he again said, 'Give me a kiss-a long one; none of your Scotch ones,' and we had a loving farewell embrace. At his request I engaged with him in prayer: he responded with a solemn 'Amen' at the close.

"That is all I can remember of the words spoken; but there were impressions left upon my mind which cannot be put into language. These I will never forget. He seemed to take me with him into the Holy, and filled my mind and heart with the rapture he himself had entered into."

Before Brother Tait had gone, Brother Captain Warden, who was one of those brought into the light of Truth through hearing our brother's lecture, "Where are the Dead?" at the crowded meeting in St. Andrew's Grand Hall, came softly into the room and approached the bed. I was standing close by and said, "Brother Warden," to call John's attention to him. The doctor turned, and, when his eyes fell on Brother Warden's face, he exclaimed, "A brother I have loved ever since I knew him, over two years ago!" He beckoned him to come near, and motioned him to

FF274 a chair by his bed. Brother Warden was overcome, but John reprovably said, "Do not weep, brother!" Then sickness came on. He seemed to be struggling to overcome the spasm, and I said, "Now, dear, don't distress yourself. Brother Warden is in no hurry; he can wait." But even amid his suffering, as at all times, mindful of the comfort of others, he replied, "But his car! Will he not be too late to get a car home?" I answered, "Do not trouble about that, John. Brother Warden will not mind though he has to walk home every inch of the way."

Then, as Brother Warden was trying to overcome his emotion, the doctor said, "Weep not for me"-For a moment he tried in vain to express himself; but, knowing that he wanted to repeat the text, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I go to the Father," I voiced it for him. He showed great satisfaction that I had understood his mind, and said, "Yes, that's the text!" Then, gaining a little strength, he said with great tenderness, "Brother, kiss me." As Brother Warden on reseating himself still kept looking downwards, seeking to control his feelings, my brother in most loving tones of command said brightly, "Brother, look at me," and when Brother Warden looked up he saw before him such a radiant, smiling face, with fervent love beaming from his eyes, that the sight banished all his tears. The doctor went on to speak of the glory and exultation awaiting the overcomers, and of his expectancy of soon being with the Lord, and of his hope that Brother Warden would join him before long. Brother Warden spoke of the blessing and help he had received

through the doctor, and of the stimulus he had gained in noting with what fixity of purpose the doctor had carried out his vow of consecration. "And, besides, dear brother," he continued, "you have had so much more to sacrifice in the way of honors, position, and influence than most of us." But John shook his head, and replied, "I have had so little to sacrifice; it seems to me I have had such trifling honors to give up compared to all the Lord has given me in return."

He exhorted the captain to preserve his meek, teachable disposition, and spoke of how the humble were exalted, and the meek were loved and taught of the Lord. On receiving the loving message sent by Sister Warden-"Only 'Good night,' beloved, not 'Farewell,' we love thee well, but Jesus loves thee best"-he expressed his appreciation of it, and rejoiced with Brother Warden

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in her spiritual progress. He asked the Lord to abundantly bless them both.

Then, changing the subject, he said, "Brother, you have a most fatherly disposition, and I want you to look after my boys." I had mentioned to him Brother Warden's willingness to become a trustee, and he thanked him warmly for it. He spoke of the joy he had in his sons giving themselves to the Lord, and said, "They are but little seedlings that require to be watered with the Truth." He described in a word or two the growth of the tiny plant, using his hands to illustrate how the little stem forced its way upwards, and the root its way downwards, as the seedling developed. We were forcibly reminded of his lecture on "A tree planted by the rivers of water."

His niece, Mrs. Browning, when she learned of her uncle's critical condition, expressed great regret that she had never told him "just how much she loved and admired him." She was greatly affected. He had been not only a kind, loving uncle to her, but also her sympathetic and skilful medical adviser. She and her husband were granted an interview. I was present, and shall never forget the touching scene. She sought to pour forth expressions of her love. The emotion in her face told more than her broken words. Her uncle cheerily let her know he quite understood her affection, and sought to soothe her grief. Then he gently drew her attention to herself. First, he advised her as her physician, taking great pains to impress upon her all he wanted her to guard against; then, with great tenderness and longing in his face and voice, he urged her to seek the highest things, and asked her to read "The Divine Plan of the Ages."

She promised that she would do so, and assured him that she intended to give herself to God. He exhorted her and her husband not to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Though the time was short, yet she would get a full opportunity to complete the race.

After these and other interviews were over, his wife and I thought to sit up all night with him, but this he would not allow.

About 1:30 a.m. he urged us to use the spirit of a sound mind, and seek some sleep. "Grace, you know, did not get sleeping last night, and I hear, Minna, you are still coughing. You must take care." He felt assured he would not die for many hours yet; his pulse was still strong. "In fact," he said, "my pulse is so good, I would not be

FF276 surprised if I live on for a day or two; besides, if I do not, you will both have so much to do, you will require all your strength."

As we still lingered, loath to leave him, he gave us many instructions regarding his earthly affairs, and asked me to send messages of love to all the churches, and his special love to "Dear Brother Russell, who has always been so loving and mindful of me." He mentioned by name the various representatives of the Continental branches of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, and also of many brothers and sisters in

the Lord, and finally bade us convey his love to everyone he knew, "without one exception."

Referring to the American tour which he had intended sharing with Brother Hemery, and for which all arrangements, even to the engaging of his berth on board the steamer, had been made, he remarked, with a smile, "I shall be in America after all, this year. Travelling will be no weariness to a spirit being!" He also told me to write announcing his decease to the various medical associations with which he was connected, and to several of his professional friends, to thank them all for their kind and generous aid to him in his work. He spoke of the various positions he held as "the trifling honors of the world, which so many covet and work so hard to obtain. I leave them all behind.

They are nothing compared to the glory in store for me. How foolish are men to grasp after these and neglect the important things of eternity."

He even gave instructions regarding his funeral, and calmly spoke of how soon his coffin would require to be sealed.

Remembering that on Saturday the majority of the brethren cease early from work, he requested that he should, if possible, be buried on that day. "Perhaps you had better say 'No flowers,'" he said. His wife suggested that very probably some would find a measure of satisfaction and comfort in manifesting their love in such offerings. His desire had been to spare others the expense of floral tributes, but his wife's words shed another light on the subject. A tender look came over his face, as he remarked softly, "I had not thought of it in that way. Quite true, some may want to send them. Yes, yes, certainly, let them express their love as they please."

While I was assisting his nurse, under his direction, to fasten some of his bandages, he remarked, "I am leaving my body all scarred, like the Master's, Minna." He expressed grateful thanks

for every little attention received, and praised his nurses: "Excellent nurses! But I am afraid, nurses, I gave you a lot of trouble when I was so restless the first two days." But he reminded them that the heavenly Father would reward them for all their kindnesses to him. His bearing all through his illness made a great impression on both nurses and doctors. One surgeon remarked that our brother had faced the operation "like one of the grand old Christians we read about."

Sister Grace and I were with him early on Thursday morning.

He seemed as if he might fall asleep. Morphia had been administered, and we sat, one on each side of the bed, waiting for it to take effect. All at once the silence was broken by his asking, "Who is the cupbearer?" I thought he was talking in his sleep, and did not reply. After a moment he spoke again, almost reprovingly, as if surprised at our silence, much as a teacher might who had expected his pupil to answer immediately and correctly, "Why, Christ! Christ is the cupbearer." "Then who has filled up the cup?" he further inquired. "The Father," he answered himself and then lapsed back into silence. My sister-in-law and I exchanged glances. We felt our dear one's heart was saying, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" -Joh 18:11.

The time wore slowly on. Several who had been unable to see him on the previous night had short interviews with him in the forenoon.

At times he would revive a little and speak of the loved ones who had passed away, some from our own family, and others from the wider circle of our brethren in Christ. What a joy it will be to meet with those who proved faithful even unto death! On one occasion I remarked, "I wonder, John, if you will find our father among the overcomers. I often wish I could be quite sure of that." He answered, "Ay, poor father had much to contend with in his long illness." Then he added, with great earnestness, and in a deep tone of satisfaction,

"Ah, but my father had a grand spirit, a grand spirit!" It was so sweet to be thus reminded that God judges us not by the number and greatness of our works and service, but according as we in our hearts have become conformed to the image of Christ.

We talked of the glorious prospect of sharing as part of the

FF278 great seed of Abraham, in the work of blessing not only our own, but all the families of the earth. I recalled to memory how our brother James had remarked, after weary months of lonely suffering had taught him to realize the emptiness of the world's friendship: "If I had my life to live over again, I would do differently." At that time I thought he had learned the lesson too late to profit by it; but now John and I could rejoice in the gracious provision our loving God had made, whereby the sad and painful experiences of this life would result in blessing for all who, in the coming Age, obey the rule of righteousness and love, administered by Christ and His Bride, the Church. How comforting to think James would indeed live again and under more favorable auspices! What happiness is in store for the poor groaning creation in that day when Christ, the Great Deliverer, will break the bonds of sin, and set death's captives free! What rapture to share with Him in that glorious work of restitution, which has been foretold by the mouth of all the prophets since the world began! But what of the work that awaits the faithful who at death now pass beyond the veil to be with their Lord, to be "like Him," and "see Him as He is"? (1Jo 3:2) The marriage of the Lamb must necessarily be delayed till all of the Bride class has been selected. When speaking of this I reminded John of how dear Brother Ford had written to me shortly before his death, that when he entered into glory he would endeavor, should the Lord grant him that privilege, to help me and mine, who were so dear to him, to fight the good fight of faith, and win the prize of the high calling in Christ. "I have often felt it a comfort, John," I said, "to think of his love being still active on our behalf; and now you are going away too, and you will also..." I could not continue for the choking in my throat; but he understood all I would have said, and assured me so brightly that when he was risen with the dear Lord he would be more able to help us than if he were left on earth beside us. He greatly rejoiced to know that we are now in the time when Re 14:13 applies: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors for their works follow with them"-R.V. He did not, therefore, expect to fall asleep and so cease for a time his efforts to serve the Lord and His brethren. Even as the Head of the Church uses His members on earth to help and comfort one another, so

FF279 surely He will permit those who are now freed from the limitations of the flesh to continue their ministry of love where service can bring no weariness. The love of the Lord became more intimately sweet as we felt how close is the union between Himself and those whom He accepts as members of His Body.

I cannot hope to describe the cheerful satisfaction he showed when we did anything for his comfort. He would make short humorous remarks, and sought to brighten our spirits by showing his appreciation of our efforts to relieve him. He preserved his professional instincts up to the last. It was he who directed us how to alter his position in bed, with the least possible exertion to himself and us. After every attack of sickness, even though exhausted, he was most particular to undergo a rather fatiguing process of mouth washing, etc. We are confident that this was for the sake of others, so that nothing about him might offend the most delicate sense.

A few hours before his death, he asked the nurse to inject morphia, and held his arm ready for her. She obeyed, while his head was turned the other way. A little later he remarked, "Come, nurse, I am ready." She replied, "I have already injected the morphia, doctor." "Oh, I never felt it! Why, nurse, you will be getting quite proud of yourself!" he said, complimenting her on her skilful injection of the drug. She answered, with a thrill of pleasure in her voice, "Well, doctor, it was you yourself who taught me!" A little over an hour before the end came, he realized the close approach of death, and asked me to turn him round on his back, and prop him up with pillows. Except for the nurse, Grace, Annie, and I were alone with him. "Tell them all to come," he said, "I want them all here." Sister went out quickly to call the others. She had a walk of about

five minutes to the house. The moments dragged while we waited. We feared they might be too late. He looked around with deep longing in his eyes. "I want them all with me," he murmured; "but it is all right," he added, as if quite submissive, should the Father so will it, to have his desire ungratified. He then requested the nurse to inject a solution of strychnine and morphia. The nurse remarked to us that the morphia appeared to have no effect on him—his brain was so active. She was filled with wonderment, and stated afterwards that she had never before witnessed such a deathbed.

FF280 In a few moments my brother looked up and said, "Minna, read the 91st Psalm." (Ps 91) I found the place and tremblingly commenced.

With my beloved brother dying, it was no easy task to control my voice to read aloud. God heard the earnest cry of my heart for grace, though now and then a sob choked my utterance. As I continued, the beautiful Psalm appealed to me as never before.

Ps 91:14,15,16 were read almost triumphantly, for I realized how fitly they applied as a message from the Lord to our dear one in his last hour. "With long life will I satisfy him," I faltered, but my brother added as if in response, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness." "And show him My salvation," I finished. In the midst of our grief we yet exulted in the assurance that our dear one was so soon to experience the grandeur of the "Great Salvation." Then he asked me to read the last few verses of the second and third chapters of Revelation.

While I was reading, the others came softly one by one into the room. A look of relief and thankfulness came over his face. He reached out his left hand to his wife, as she stood beside him, and beckoned with the other to his boys to come near. He grasped a hand of each in his right. Then he said, "Now, Minna, read Ps 91 over again, and explain it." He spoke with great distinctness. In my helplessness I again prayed for strength. I knew he asked the explanation for the sake of his sons and niece. I fear the comments were very brief—a broken sentence here and there. Sometimes my feelings overcame me, but his quiet, "Yes, continue," or "Well, read on," caused me to resume. I grudged every minute my eyes were averted from his face, and so, when I had finished reading, I put down the Bible and quoted from memory many of the texts I felt he might desire.

Joh 17 was one of his favorite chapters, and as I recited Joh 17:4—"I have glorified Thee on earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do," we all realized with deep joy that these words of our blessed Head may appropriately be spoken by all the members of His Body, when they complete their course.

Many precious promises were quoted, such as Isa 43:2,3- "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the

FF281 flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." And Joh 14:1-3—"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you," etc. But there was no trace of trouble on his face; it seemed out of place to bid his heart not be troubled; rather did the exhortation apply to ourselves.

His eyes shone with brilliancy, like stars of blue, as, gathering together all his failing energies he began to address us. We soon recognized that he spoke to us as representatives of the entire Church, for he commenced by saying: "My dear brothers and sisters in the Lord: Daily renew your covenant of sacrifice to the Lord, and daily seek to carry it out. Rely on God to strengthen you, and He will help you to fulfill your vow!" Faintness came on; his eyes closed a while, and he breathed heavily. In a little he whispered, "Surely God will strengthen me to say a word"; and the dear Lord did.

With an effort he began again, enunciating his words with remarkable clearness and precision. He sought to show us the steps by which we enter into closest relationship with God, and spoke of the privilege the Father bestowed upon us in granting us the right to a crown of life, that we in faith may lay it down and be planted in the likeness of Christ's death; and of the promise that, if faithful, a more glorious crown of life shall be given us in the first resurrection. Sickness recurred constantly, but after each attack passed he began again. He always commenced with the same exhortation, "My dear brothers and sisters in the Lord: Daily renew your covenant of sacrifice, and daily seek to carry it out." Once he surprised us with the vigor of his action in clenching his fist, and making a sudden, quick, determined movement as he urged us to "Do, as well as vow."

He impressed upon us the comforting thought that the mighty power of God would ever be exerted on our behalf, and searched his memory for a passage of Scripture to enforce his remarks. I suggested Eph 1:17-19, and he nodded. "Yes, that's it," and then added, "for the Church."

Realizing that he was not to be long with us, that his strength was ebbing fast, he bade farewell to us individually, and one by one he held us by the hand and kissed us warmly, addressing each

FF282 By name as he did so. But the end was not yet.

Once more he rallied, and once more his voice sounded out solemnly, "My dear brothers and sisters in the Lord: Daily renew your vow of sacrifice to the Lord, and daily seek to fulfill it. No matter if you are tired, weary, go on! Every talent—all your influence, money, time, strength—all you have, use for the Lord, devote it to Him." In our love for him we could hardly bear to see him expend as he was doing his little remnant of strength. We felt that the mighty effort he was making to leave with us that which would help us to complete our sacrifice, as he had consummated his, was costing him too much suffering. I gently said, "John, dear, you have given us your message, rest now." But he replied, "It is a very little life I have to lay down now; a very little life. Let me expend it."

He repeated slowly with emphasis 1Co 15:42,43—"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." Again and again he quoted the text—"In Thy presence is fulness of joy! At Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore!" Now and then he sought to cheer us by reminding us that, when raised in power, he would be much better able to help us win in the race than if he had continued to be with us in the weakness of the flesh. Our John would still be the "same John," even though hidden from our mortal eyes, and changed to a glorious spirit being like his Master. He remarked that surely he would ever have a special interest in the Church at Glasgow, though, of course, he would rejoice to aid any of the Lord's own, no matter where.

He assured his sons and niece that, though they were only commencing the race, when it was so near the time for the completion of the Bride, they would, nevertheless, be enabled to finish their course, if they continued to faithfully follow the Lord; and he encouraged us, who had already been walking so many years in the narrow way, by speaking of how soon the sacrifice of the entire Church must be consummated. "Before many months are over some of you may hear the Master say to you, as He is about to say to me, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!'" with a radiant look on his face he

FF283 exclaimed, "Oh, what a glorious day is this for me, so soon to see my dear Lord face to face, and our dear God! So soon to enter into my reward!" Then looking at us earnestly, he bade us "press on." I recited, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Never did these words speak more to our hearts than then. Jesus uttered them just before His final conflict and conquest, and they revealed His trust in "the Father, who was with Him," to keep Him faithful to His covenant till it was fulfilled on the cross. We saw this same confidence manifested in our dear one, and

realized that the same mighty power of God upheld him in his dying hour. We beheld Christ suffering and triumphing in one of His members, and the sight filled us with holy awe. We felt we were learning how to die. It seemed as if the Master said, "Be of good cheer, fear no tribulation or anguish; for see how My grace is sufficient for him in his hour of extremity. It will be sufficient for you, and for all who will follow Me faithfully even unto death. You have the 'same Jesus,' the same Lord, and his Father is your Father, and his God is your God."

On one occasion after an attack of nausea, when he was patiently enduring some physical distress, Brother Morton said to him, "Dear John, you have now developed the new mind, and the Lord is about to give you a glorious spirit-body in keeping with your new mind. This old body will soon be left behind."

He replied falteringly, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." Then, rallying, he looked earnestly from one to the other of us, and said in an awe-struck tone, "Is it not wonderful to think that today I shall see my Lord, and enter into His glory!" The true spirit of the "Elder Brother" energized and dominated his mind to the last. Though he was about to leave the world, his dear ones were still to be left to continue the fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and in the yearning of his heart over us he sought to exhort us to the end. He seemed to have something to say that he could not express—the thought apparently eluded him as he tried to put it into words. "I had a message," he murmured, "but I cannot give it." However, the Father knew that the best message to impart through His dear servant was the one main thought of the daily lifting up of the cross, and in the strength of the Lord, daily following in the Master's footsteps

FF284 even unto death.

As younger students value the oft-repeated advice of an honored graduate, so we treasure the method which, by constant reiteration, he impressed upon us, and which we are assured he had proved in his own experience to be the best to pursue while endeavoring to qualify for the royal degree in the School of Christ.

As the shadows of the dark valley deepened upon him, our loved one again and again addressed us: "My dear brothers and sisters in the Lord: Daily renew your covenant of sacrifice to the Lord: and daily seek to fulfill it. God will help you. God will be with you." His voice began to falter as the muscles failed to fully respond. The words were easily recognized; but we realized with a pang of sorrow that we had heard the familiar and well-loved tones for the last time on earth. It seemed as if another voice than his was now speaking to us. "My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ: Daily renew your covenant of sacrifice, and daily seek to perform it." The words issued more and more slowly, and the voice became more guttural as, with his dying breath, he still kept urging us to daily renew our vow of sacrifice to the Lord, and daily seek to fulfill it. It was awe-inspiring to hear him, haltingly, brokenly, yet so earnestly, tell us from the very jaws of death how to overcome. Never can we, who heard that most solemn exhortation, forget it. God forbid that we should! He paused as the last struggle was about to begin; his breath came and went very slowly; his powers of speech were almost gone; the hues of death were gathering over his face. But once again the undaunted spirit controlled the mortal flesh. As if to remind us of the glory awaiting him beyond the veil, now ready to descend and hide him from our human sight, he uttered his last farewell in the inspiring words—"Sown in weakness, raised in power!" A few minutes later as he lay with closed eyes, he whispered, "Sing"; and we, who stood or knelt around his bed, softly sang two verses of "God be with you till we meet again." We felt that this was the expression of his desire for us.

Then, as he himself had warned us on the night before that the end might prove distressing, we sent away his two boys with Morton and his niece, while his dear wife and Annie, Eva and myself remained with him till all was over. Before leaving, Morton

FF285 stooped down and twice fervently kissed John's hand, now growing cold in death; and each as they left the room did the same. For the last fifteen minutes our dear one was speechless and in much bodily

distress. Dear Grace and Eva began to weep bitterly. A violent fit of sickness came on. We longed for God to release him. After the spasm had passed, his eyes became almost unearthly in their brightness, and, although still preserving their look of intelligence, became fixed in their gaze.

Sister Annie called him by many endearing names, with sobs bursting from her now and then. He looked straight at her, and love enabled her to meet that brilliant gaze till at last it drooped in death.

We turned to go, knowing we were parting only from the body of weakness which the glorious New Creature had left behind. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," his change had come: for the Seventh, the Last, and Great Trump of God is sounding! "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them."-Re 14:13 That evening, as his open coffin lay on trestles in the drawing-room at Clairmont Gardens, many who loved him came to look for the last time on his face. One by one they slowly filed past, lingering awhile as if loath to turn away from his dear form.

Affixed on the coffin lid was a large brass plate bearing this inscription- JOHN EDGAR AGED 48 YEARS.

"Sown in weakness, Raised in power."

June 9, 1910.

The words helped to lift the thoughts from the seen to the unseen, so that tears of grief ceased to flow as the eyes of faith saw him risen more than conqueror, through Him that loved him and gave Himself for him.

By Saturday morning the beautiful flowers sent as tributes of love and esteem by many almost hid the casket from view, and were piled up over the trestles below, and covered several yards of the carpet beneath. They spoke more eloquently than words, not

only of the wealth of love he had won from friends, patients, professional co-workers, and brethren in the Lord, but also of the glory which he now enjoyed in the midst of the paradise of God. One large cross of scarlet, entwined by a golden crown, which a sister in the Lord had skillfully constructed from hundreds of small red and yellow "everlasting" flowers, reminded us that if we "always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord," then "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Brother Hemery conducted the funeral service, both in the house and at the graveside. He sought to use the occasion to speak of the grandeur of the hope that had influenced our brother's life for nearly eleven years. We trust that some were helped who had previously not given much consideration to spiritual matters.

Many hundreds were gathered at the cemetery; and God's sunshine streamed down upon all. Some had travelled far to be present. One dear brother in the Lord, in response to a few words of appreciation of the love that had prompted him to journey from South Wales, remarked in earnest tones, "Sister, I came, for I realized a Prince in Israel had fallen!" Many wept as the coffin was lowered into the grave, but most loved him so well that in the midst of their grief they could nevertheless rejoice for his sake, because he had gone to be with the Father. A stranger who was present remarked that this was his ideal of what a Christian funeral should be. Though he had attended many funerals, he had never before seen such real rejoicing in the Lord as he had witnessed in the doctor's house.

There the bereaved sorrowed not as those who had no hope. As one saw the sweet smile on the widow's face, one felt assured she realized the everlasting arms of love around her: her whole bearing was an evidence of God's power to lift the heart that trusted in Him, far above all earthly sorrow.

Praise the Lord for His wonderful work of love.

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HIS LAST LESSON

How glorious is this day for me; Heaven's joys begin, earth's sorrows end! Weep not, beloved, but rejoice,
For to my Father I ascend.

My God, yea our God calleth me To my eternal home above; With tender kiss and fond farewell I leave you
sheltered by His love.

While yet my failing pulses beat, A lesson I would fain impart, That oft, by love recalled, will speak As
God's own whisper to your heart.

Seek not to spare my feeble strength, But let me, though with falt'ring breath, The counsel of my soul express
E'er silent close my lips in death.

Beloved friends, each day renew Your covenant of sacrifice; And all day long your vows fulfill In strength
that grace alone supplies.

Deem present time a precious boon, The race to run, the prize secure; Who daily does the will of God Will
find at length his crown made sure.

Unnumbered blessings hidden lie Within the precincts of a day, And possibilities untold Attend the
consecrated way; Obedient hearts with rapture find Their path traced clear in Love's design, And prove God
daily loadeth them With varied benefits benign.

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Then closer bind your sacrifice Upon the altar Christ provides, Whose merit sanctifies the gift, And sin's
defiling blemish hides.

In faith and prayer yield every day Your offering pure to God anew, Shrink not from toil, reproach, and pain;
For oh, your days on earth are few.

The altar fire burns clean and strong When constant faith upon it blows; And flames of zeal your life consume
While hope with heavenly fervor glows.

But 'tis when love's red embers shine With ruddy glow of furnace heat That then your sacrifice ascends To
God, a savor rich and sweet.

MINNA EDGAR

FF289 **The Preservation of Identity in the Resurrection**

"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that
which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body
which shall be, but [a] bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as
it hath please him, and to every seed his own body."-1Co 15:35-38

WHEN we read these words with unprejudiced minds, we see that the Bible agrees with Science in asserting

that the body, which becomes disintegrated at death, will not be resurrected.

The Scriptures nowhere teach the resurrection of the body; this passage distinctly denies it: "Thou fool...thou sowest not that body which shall be."

The question is often asked: If the body will not be resurrected, how will the identity be preserved in the resurrection? Must not some part of the old individual be preserved during the interval?

What is this seed or bare grain, which, the Apostle says, is sown at death, and will be given a body as it pleases God? Is it not an immaterial something, whatever we may call it, whether soul or spirit, which God preserves and to which he gives a new body in the resurrection? We reply: The soul is the whole sentient being.

When the soul or being dies, it goes out of existence. God preserves the memory and character of the individual, not as an immaterial something, but merely as a remembrance. In the resurrection he will impart this memory and character to a new body, and thus the identity will be preserved.

Many profess that they cannot understand how a man's mental and moral characteristics can be preserved unless during the interval between death and the resurrection they have been embodied in some material or spiritual substance. Now this is really

FF290 the old difficulty which led to the conception of the natural immortality of the soul, and the theory of the disembodied spirits of the dead. We admit that the subject is difficult for our finite minds to grasp. We cannot understand it completely. By and by, when that which is perfect is come, and when we know even as we are known, doubtless we shall be able to comprehend it clearly. We can, however, understand it to some extent.

The Phonograph Illustration

The illustration which I have found most satisfactory to myself, and also to others to whom I have suggested it, is that of the phonograph. It is hinted at by the late Charles T. Russell in his fifth volume of "Studies in the Scriptures" (last two paragraphs of chapter 13): "But does doubt cry out: 'How could God in resurrection reproduce the millions of earth completely so that each will know himself and profit by the memory of present life experience?' We answer that in the phonograph cylinder even man is able to preserve his own words and reproduce them; much more is our Creator able to reproduce for the entire race such brain organism as will perfectly reproduce every sentiment, thought, and experience. David seems to refer to the power of God in a manner that might be applicable either prophetically to the resurrection, or reflectively to the first birth. He says: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

My substance [organism] was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance being yet imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written which in continuance [gradually] were fashioned when as yet there was none of them.'-Ps 139:14-16" To follow out the illustration of the phonograph in detail, we see that the cylinder or blank record represents our whole physical organism, particularly the brain.

The motive power of the phonograph is the spring mechanism, which, therefore, represents our spirit or power of life. It is only when there is life in the machine that the record is made, just as it is only during life that we can write our character on our organism.

The voice spoken into the instrument represents our thoughts,

FF291 words and actions, and the vibrations of the needle represent the various chemical and other changes,

which are necessary for the production of the impressions on our organism.

After the record is finished, it is found to consist of a more or less continuous series of minute wave-like impressions on the surface of the cylinder. These correspond to impressions on our organism, particularly on our brain, caused by our thoughts, words, and deeds. While the record proper is the series of wave-like impressions, yet the whole cylinder is also called a record.

So is it with us. Our whole being is the soul, yet the soul proper, the essential part of us, is our character.

When we replace the record in the phonograph and make the necessary changes, and give life to the instrument by winding up the spring mechanism and setting it in motion, the speech or song is reproduced with exactness, the same words, the same tone, the same inflections, etc., everything identical with what had been spoken or sung into it.

Suppose the record is now destroyed, no man has power to produce one similar in all respects; but though man has not this power, the Almighty has it. It is possible for God to note and remember the marks on the original cylinder so accurately, that years or even centuries after it has been destroyed he could inscribe them on a new cylinder. He could reproduce the length, breadth, depth, and shape of the lines, and their relationship one to another so exactly, that when set going in the phonograph all who heard it would say, "Why, that is the original record!" That is what God is going to do with every individual both of the Church and of the world. Each person is writing his own character on his organism, particularly on his brain. Every time he thinks, and especially every time he speaks or acts, he is making an impression on his organism. A thought makes a faint impression, a word makes a deeper impression, and an action makes a still deeper impression, because "actions speak louder than words." These all go to the making of character. When a thought is often repeated it is more likely to show itself by word or action, and the more often thoughts, words or actions are repeated, the deeper become the resultant lines of character on our organism, particularly on our brain. By and by these impressions become so deep that we call them habits.

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Habits make Character

A man's character may be defined as the sum total of his habits. When habits are formed the impressions are made not only on the brain, but frequently also on the whole organism.

They are shown more or less on his face, in his gait, in the tone of his voice, and in the shake of his hand. When we are introduced to anyone, we form more or less consciously a rough estimate of his character. If he has a frank honest expression in his eyes and in his whole face and manner, if he has a cheerful ring in his voice, if he gives a warm shake of the hand, we feel sure that we have met someone whom we can trust. On the other hand, if his eyes are mean and shifty, his smile cynical, his gait sneaking, and his handshake unresponsive, we have the feeling that we should have as little as possible to do with that man. It is not necessary to enter further into details. Sufficient has been said to remind us that a man's character is frequently revealed to some extent at least, by his general appearance.

But these outward marks, while they are mainly the evidences of corresponding changes in the brain, are, to some extent at least, results of heredity and environment, and are not always a safe index of what is going on within. Hence we cannot always judge a man's character by his appearance; but God looks not so much at the outward appearance as at the mind and heart, the mental and moral characteristics, evidenced by changes in the brain. He takes note of these changes, and as the Prophet Malachi poetically puts it, he writes them all down on his "book of remembrance"; that is to say, he stores them up in his memory. Then when the time comes for the awakening of the dead, no matter how long the interval may have been, even though it may

have extended to many centuries, he will reproduce or stamp these characteristics on a new body, just as he might have reproduced the wave-like impressions of a broken record on a new cylinder. Possibly God could have done this at the first without our requiring to form our own character, but he prefers to deal with us as free and intelligent moral agents.

Thus the identity of every individual in the world will be preserved in the resurrection. Each will remember his past life, just as he now remembers it, and his habits, good and bad, will be the

FF293 same. Every sentiment, thought, and experience will be perfectly reproduced. Thus he will recognize himself. His friends also will recognize him, not so much by his outward appearance as by his habits. You remember how our Lord's followers failed to recognize him after his resurrection till he revealed himself by one or other of his habits. Mary mistook him for a gardener till he said tenderly in the manner so familiar to her, "Mary!" Then, at once recognizing him, she turned herself and said, "Master!" The two disciples who walked with him to Emmaus that same day, though their hearts burned within them while he talked with them by the way, failed to recognize him by his appearance and voice, but when, later, "he took bread and blessed it, and brake and gave to them," they immediately recognized him, and then he "vanished out of their sight."

It has been objected that it is degrading God to state that he will store up in his memory any evil deeds. Surely there is some misconception here! Does the objector think that God would become contaminated in any way? The remembrance of the evil does not contaminate God. We know that it does not, because God is holy and cannot be tempted of evil. God is Judge, and it would be impossible for him to judge unless he knew good and evil, and could remember the character of both the righteous and the unrighteous. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."-Ec 12:14

Derivation of the Word "Character"

The word "character, viewed derivatively, is very appropriate. It is a Greek word meaning, according to Liddell and Scott

- (1) An instrument for marking or graving; also of a person, the engraver.
- (2) Commonly, a mark engraved or impressed on coins, seals, etc; also, the mark or token impressed (as it were) on a person or thing, by which it is known from others; a distinctive mark, character.

Marks on the Brain

The brain is composed of two great hemispheres of white matter connected with each other at the base and covered over with a

FF294 thin layer of grey matter. As the surface of the brain is thrown into lobes and convolutions by deep and shallow sulci (fissures), the resulting area of grey matter on the surface of the brain is very extensive. When extremely thin sections of this grey matter are examined under a powerful microscope, innumerable minute bodies, called neurons or nerve cells, are found crowded together. They are connected by delicate nerve filaments with one another and with all the various regions of the body, and it is these nerve filaments which compose the white matter of the brain. The neurons are supposed by physiologists to govern our thoughts, words, and actions, and to be the storehouse of our memory. Possibly, therefore, the neurons, or, rather, the changes that take place in them, correspond to the wave-like impressions on the surface of the phonograph cylinder.

If that be so, what the Lord will do in the resurrection will be to reproduce a similar set of neurons in the brain of the new body, and the result will be that the old habits of thought, word, and action will be restored.

"To Every Seed His Own Body"

Our God is infinitely loving and wise. "His tender mercies are over all his works." He will grant to every one the right and proper desire of his heart. I hope you are of the wheat class, that your affections are set on things above and not on the things of the earth; for if so, you will receive a heavenly or spiritual body in the resurrection, like that of the last Adam, your great forerunner and heavenly Lord. But there are grains "of some other" kind. These also will get their proper desire. There are many who talk about heaven, say they hope to go to heaven, but their heart is not there. Their affections are not spiritual, but earthly. Such persons will be more than satisfied with Paradise restored. It will far exceed the fondest desires of their heart or their wildest dreams of fancy. A dear sister in the Truth, while shopping one day, overheard part of a conversation between a clergyman and a lady who were standing beside her at the same counter. It appeared that the lady had been very ill, and the clergyman was sympathizing with her. In the course of the conversation the lady said: "Yes, indeed, I was dangerously ill; it is only the mercy of God that I'm not in heaven

FF295 today." Evidently she did not desire to go to heaven. Her affections were centered on earthly things.

Those who have earthly, fleshly desires will, if obedient to the great Mediator, be resurrected to the likeness of the first Adam, perfect human beings with full dominion over a perfect earth.

When they are awakened from the grave or death state, their bodies will be stamped with exactly the same character as they possessed at the time of their death; for the eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the good and the evil, and he is taking note of the character of everyone, both of the Church and of the world. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Ga 6:7) Thus the identity of each will be preserved in the resurrection, and everyone will be held responsible for the deeds done in the body. "And so it has been written, The First Adam became a living soul; the Last Adam a life-giving Spirit. The Spiritual, however, was not the first, but the animal [or natural]; afterwards the Spiritual. The first man was from the ground, earthy [of earthly origin]; the second man is from heaven [of heavenly or spiritual origin]. Of what kind the earthy one, such also the earthy ones; and of what kind the heavenly one, such also the heavenly ones; and even as WE bore the likeness of the earthy one, WE shall also bear the likeness of the heavenly one.

And I say this, brethren, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; nor shall corruption inherit incorruption." (1Co 15:45-50, Diaglott) We who are no longer in the flesh but in the spirit, because the spirit of God dwells in us, will receive spiritual or heavenly bodies in the resurrection. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God." (1Co 2:14) His mind is not spiritual but earthly; therefore in the resurrection he will receive an earthy body like that of the first Adam. "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit."-Joh 3:6 In the case of the Church, it is the heart's intentions, and the efforts put forth as the outcome of these intentions, which represent the character of the new creature. The imperfections of thought, word and deed, which are not wilfull, but are the result of our organism rendered imperfect through the Fall, are covered by the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. In the resurrection, therefore, the changes in the neurons due to the imperfections of the flesh, will not be reproduced, but those which are the results of

FF296 the heart's intentions will be stamped on the perfect spiritual body which the Lord will create. In this way the identity of the New Creature will be preserved, but not the identity of the old human nature. It is as if a trained vocalist were to sing into a phonograph which has been fitted with a faulty cylinder. The resulting record would be discordant. But God could destroy the faulty cylinder, make a new one of different material and finer quality, and reproduce upon it the wave-like impressions caused by the singer's voice, and ignore the others due to the imperfections of the cylinder. The result would be a perfect record which would give forth the beautiful melody exactly as it had been sung into the phonograph.

In the case of the world, however, the various changes in the neurons will be reproduced in the human or

natural body, which will be created exactly as they were in the old organism. The result will be an exact reproduction of the character of the individual as it was at the time of his death. Little children who have died before they have had time to form character will have no bad habits to unlearn in the resurrection. This will be to some extent to their advantage, but on the other hand this advantage will be counter-balanced by their lack of the lessons gained by a previous experience of evil. They will require to gain their experience during the Millennium.

The Importance of Character

We see, then, the great importance of forming the right kind of character now. That is the only thing we now have which will be restored to us in the resurrection. When we get this thought, we can realize the worthlessness and transitoriness of all else. Our attention will not be so much on what we shall eat and drink, what clothes we shall wear, how much money we can make, what remedies we should use for our various bodily ailments, etc. While these things are necessary in order that we may preserve our health and strength and do more efficient service for the Lord, the truth, and the brethren, the essential thing is the formation of the Christ-like character. Our times, energies, etc., therefore, should be first and foremost in this direction, for it was for this purpose that God predestinated the bride of Christ, that the various members

FF297 should be in the image of Christ.

That is why Jesus said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." That is why the Apostle wrote: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." All the things which the world considers so wonderful and desirable are loss and dross to us that we may win Christ, be made partakers of his sufferings and conformable to his death, and so share in his resurrection. Are our domestic or business affairs filling our mind? Are we worrying over our balance-sheet? If so, let us realize that these and all other earthly things are but secondary. Let us do our duty with regard to these, but let them not fill our mind and heart. Rather let us say with the Apostle, "This one thing I do...I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Difference Between a Phonograph and a Man

Thus the phonograph serves as a good illustration of the method by which God will preserve the identity of each individual in the resurrection. Yet there is a considerable and important difference between a phonograph and a man. The one is merely a mechanical device; the other is a living soul, a sentient being.

(1) The phonograph is altogether the creature of its environment. It has no conscience or moral sense, that is to say, no faculty of discerning right and wrong; and it has no volition.

If a person sings into it, it cannot say to itself: "I do not like that song. I do not approve of that sentiment." It cannot rise up and go out in search of more congenial society. In a word, it cannot voluntarily change its environment, and it must record everything that is spoken or sung into it, so long as its cylinder is moving.

Though, like the phonograph, a man is influenced by his environment, he can change it, more or less, as he desires. As a rule, he can choose better or worse companions, better or worse books, better or worse modes of life, etc. There is a great deal of truth in the old saying: "Birds of a feather flock together." If you are godly-minded, the worldly-minded will not desire your company, nor you theirs. If you persist in associating with worldly people when you can dissociate yourself from them, you will be more or less contaminated; some of their worldly sentiments will be received

FF298 by you; for, as the Apostle says: "Evil communications corrupt good manners." (1Co 15:35) Suppose you are a member of one of the denominations of Christendom, and you have come to realize that you are associating with worldly people, you should dissociate yourself from them. The Lord exhorts us: "Come out

from among them. Be ye clean that bear the vessels [teachings] of the Lord." (2Co 6:17; Isa 52:11) The Apostle also urges us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Is this a contradiction? No. The Apostle is addressing those who are endeavoring to be like Christ, and exhorting them to meet often one with another, in order to provoke one another to love and to good works, and that the more they see the day approach, the day of the Lord-the day of vengeance upon Christendom, and the day of the Church's deliverance. If we follow the Apostle's advice, we shall find that the resulting influence upon our minds and hearts will be good.

We cannot, however, altogether avoid contact with the evil that is in the world, and it is not meant by God that we should. Our forefathers, many of them godly men, perceiving the teaching of the Scriptures that the Church is not of the world but separate from it, shut themselves up in monasteries, but it was in vain.

They could not avoid the evil that was in the world, and it was not God's purpose that his children should withdraw from the world in this fashion. The evil which we cannot avoid we must resist, in the sense that we must not be influenced by it to do or think evil. On the contrary, we must overcome evil with good for it is to the overcomers that Jesus has promised a share with him on his throne, even as he also overcame evil with good and sat down with his Father on his throne. This means that the evil influences from without should be used as opportunities for enabling us by the grace of God to form good habits of thought, word and deed, habits of faith, patience, meekness, and love.

Suppose you had nothing to test your patience, how could you develop this strong quality. We learn obedience through the things which we suffer, just as did our great Forerunner.

Thus, while the phonograph, so long as its cylinder is moving, must record all the sounds which come to it from without, we, on the contrary, record on our organisms our own thoughts, words and deeds, and not those of others unless we choose to make them

FF299 our own. God is leaving each of us to the freedom of our will, while at the same time he is seeing to it that all things are working together for good to those who love him, who are the called according to his purpose.

Thus one great difference between a phonograph and a human being is that the latter is possessed of a conscience, the ability to discern what is right and what is wrong, and he has freedom of will to choose between the two, to accept or reject as he desires.

(2) The other great difference between a phonograph and a human being, is that the machine cannot voluntarily obliterate or deepen the marks on its records once they are made. Men, on the contrary, can do this to a greater or less extent. In order to understand this, let us consider what is a living soul.

A Living Soul

The word of God says: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." (Ge 2:7) When man was formed of the dust of the ground, the elements of the earth, he had all the potentialities of hearing, speech, thought, and action, but, without the power of life, none of these could be put into force. Then God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life-the spirit or power of life. Then, and not till then, man became a living soul. Thus we see that the soul is not the body, nor is it the spirit of life, but it is the whole sentient being, the being which is endowed with sense perception.

The dominant part of the soul is the will, the thinking part of a man. This is the ego, the real person, for in a sense the body is merely the instrument of the will. Yet there can be no will without a body. A man whose brain has been injured cannot tell after his recovery what occurred during the interval of his unconsciousness.

This is surely a positive proof that his mind is not independent of his organism.

I have already mentioned that the grey matter of the brain is the organ of volition and intelligence. It may be mapped out into three areas:

- (1) An area in the frontal region concerned in cognition and volition,
- FF300 (2) a motor or ideo-motor area in the middle above the ears, and
- (3) a sensory area behind.

This distinction, however, is not absolute.

The neurons or nerve cells in these areas are arranged in groups.

For instance, the nerve cells which control the right side of the body are situated on the left side of the brain; the leg area being in the grey matter at the summit of the brain; the arm area lower down on the same (left) side of the brain; and the neck and face area, including also speech, still lower down. What applies to mankind, applies also, though in a lesser degree, to all mammals. They also have a brain composed of grey and white matter, with neurons and nerve filaments. They also respond to stimuli, are conscious, and can reason to some extent. The arguments usually put forward in support of the unscriptural doctrine commonly held regarding the nature of the soul and its supposed inherent immortality, would apply also the lower animals.

Professor Ferrier demonstrated the various areas by exposing the brain of a monkey and experimenting with the poles of a battery. (The brain is insensitive to pain.) After some practice he was able, by touching the various points of the motor area in turn, to cause the monkey to perform various actions, such as extending its arm, seizing an apple, conveying it to its mouth, and biting it. From these experiments valuable knowledge has been gained, enabling surgeons to localize the area of the brain affected in many cases of tumor, etc., in human beings.

The filaments which connect the nerve cells, with each other and with the various portions of the body, form, when gathered into fine or thick cords, the various nerves. These are classified as sensory nerves, motor nerves, etc. The sensory nerves convey impressions from the eye, ear, mouth, skin, and other parts to the respective cells in the sensory area, and thence the impressions are conveyed by connecting filaments first to the higher intellectual centers, and thence, as a rule, to the nerve cells in the motor area. These in turn originate impulses which are transmitted along the motor nerves to the corresponding muscles of the jaw, larynx, arm, leg, or other parts.

For instance, someone in front of you raised a stick. The impression strikes your eyes and immediately an impulse is transmitted

FF301 to the visual centers at the back of your brain, and you see what is happening. The message is then conveyed to your intellectual centers, and you appreciate the fact that the man is attempting to strike you. Immediately the intellectual centers are thrown into a great commotion. They flash a message along to both your arm centers, and these in turn transmit impulses to the muscles of your arms, with the result that your left arm is raised to protect yourself, and your right attempts to seize your opponent's arm or the stick. At the same time, a message is flashed along to your speech center and it in turn transmits impulses to the muscles of your throat and mouth, with the result that you call out "Stop." A complicated process, and yet it is all done in a second! Truly we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

How Habits are Formed

At first the interval between the perception of some particular sensation and the action which results, is of an appreciable duration, but the more frequently the same thoughts, words and actions follow upon the perception of a certain sensation or set of sensations, the shorter becomes the interval, until finally it is quite inappreciable. No conscious effort of the will is now required. The action has become more or less automatic. A habit has been acquired.

How can we explain this? It may be that, just as the electric current flows much more readily through a thick wire than through a thin one, so the filaments which connect certain sensory cells with certain intellectual and motor cells may, from frequent use, become thicker and more active, and the cells themselves also may become more efficient, with the result that a conscious effort is no longer required.

Physical Habits

Let me illustrate this by showing how a physical habit is formed. When a person begins to learn how to ride a bicycle, he is told that whenever the machine becomes inclined to one side, he should at once turn the front wheel to the same side in order to save himself from falling. Yet no sooner is he mounted on the bicycle

FF302 and left to his own resources than he finds himself sprawling on the ground. Why is this? His sensory cells warned him correctly when the bicycle became inclined to the side, but at this stage of his training, he requires to make a distinct conscious effort in order to pass the message on to the motor cells which govern the arm muscles. Before he has even thought of turning the front wheel to the side, he is on the ground.

After he has had a few falls, however, the painful experience teaches him to think more quickly and more definitely, and the next time he mounts the bicycle, when he feels it becoming inclined to one side, he at once turns the front wheel to the same side. But he has not yet learned how far to turn it, and as a result he overdoes it, and down he comes again. Should he persevere, he will find that with further practice, extending over several days perhaps, he will be able to ride the bicycle, though he will take the breadth of the road while doing so. But before he has gone far, his nerve cells will become fatigued, and again he will fall. With some more patience and perseverance he will find by and by to his joy that he can ride for miles with only an occasional wobble.

When he becomes an expert rider, how different is the action! How gracefully he glides along! With what perfect equilibrium! How accurately he chooses his path among the stones and between the ruts! And yet he scarcely requires to think of what he is doing! He engages in an animated conversation with his neighbor, or he admires the surrounding scenery, without so much as a wobble. Why is this? It is because those sensory and motor centers which have to do with the keeping of his equilibrium on a bicycle are so efficient and so well connected with each other by active intercommunicating filaments that the effort of the will is no longer or scarcely at all necessary. The action has become automatic. A habit has been acquired. That is how habits are formed.

The illustration which I have given demonstrates the method of acquirement of physical habits; but the process necessary to the formation of mental and moral habits, which are so much more important because they constitute the character and therefore the most important part of the identity of the individual, are essentially similar in kind. Surely, then, if a man, in his efforts to master the art of cycling, is willing to face the smiles and gibes of friends and strangers, and to submit to the pain and ignominy occasioned

FF303 by frequent falls, if he can persevere in spite of these and all other forms of discouragement, until he has crowned his efforts with success, how much greater reason have WE for laying aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, so that we may run with patience (patient endurance) the race that is set before us. In this endeavor we shall be greatly helped by reflecting on the faith of the ancient worthies and by looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the

cross, despising the shame, and, as a result, is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.- Heb 12:1,2

Mental and Moral Habits

The more often certain thoughts, words, and actions follow upon certain sensations or sets of sensations, the more easily are they evoked. At first a conscious effort is necessary, but with long practice they become more or less automatic. A mental or moral habit, good or bad, has been acquired. For instance, having consulted the word of counsel which our Heavenly Father has granted us, and having found there the proverb that a soft answer turneth away wrath, and the injunction that we should bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us, suppose we resolve that by the grace of God we shall endeavor to follow the good advice thus given us. It will not be long before our resolution will be put to the test. Possibly on the same day some one will curse us, not as a rule in the sense of uttering an oath against us, but he will attempt, wittingly or unwittingly, to injure our good name. At once we feel annoyed and excited, and before we have had time to think, we give a sharp answer in return. Then what a feeling of shame comes over us. We recognize that we have returned evil for evil, and confessing our sin to our Heavenly Father, we pray for his forgiveness through the merit of our dear Lord's death on our behalf, and we beseech him for continued favor in our further endeavors after righteousness. Realizing that our fall was due to the fact that our brain has been all along more accustomed to obey evil thoughts than good thoughts, and that we were thinking more of self than of God, we make an endeavor to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" and think only of such

FF304 things as are true, honorable, just pure, loving, and of good report (2Co 10:5; Php 4:8), and to turn to the Lord for grace and strength in every time of need.

Should we persevere in spite of several failures, we shall find by and by that we shall be able to suffer insults patiently, and to return good for evil. At first we shall do it awkwardly, so that sometimes we shall wonder whether it would not have been better simply to have taken no notice of the one who is using us despitefully; but if we continue to practice, we shall find that it will become easier and easier to be meek, gentle, and kind to others, until at length we shall acquire the habit of loving kindness, and then without much, if any, conscious effort, we shall bless them that curse us and do good to them that hate us.

One thing which will help us greatly in our efforts to love our enemies is the knowledge that God is the great First Cause, and that our enemies, the secondary causes, could not say or do anything against us without his permission. Everything that God does is for a wise and loving purpose. Therefore, when God permits anyone to insult us or injure our good name, it must be for our good. What good, you ask, could such an action do to us? The good it does is that it enables us to mortify the deeds of the flesh, to sacrifice self, and to develop faith, meekness, self-control, patience, peace, and love.

The old will will demand justice, but the new mind will keep the body under, and love will eventually triumph. Instead of harming us, those who speak or do evil against us are conferring a benefit upon us. The promise of joint-heirship with Christ is to those who not only believe on Christ, but also suffer for his sake, and who overcome evil with good. How can we be overcomers if our Heavenly Father does not permit us to be tempted? Let us, therefore, dear brethren, "glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."-Ro 5:3-5 This does not mean that we should put others to the test in order that they may be benefited spiritually. Did not our Lord say: "It must needs be that offences [causes of stumbling] come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh"? Let us, therefore,

FF305 beware lest we should put a stumbling block before one of Christ's little ones. It were better that a millstone were hanged about our neck, and that we were drowned in the depth of the sea.-Mt 18:6,7 It is

always easier to acquire bad habits than good habits. Bad habits are more pleasing to the flesh; they have their basis in selfishness. Good habits, on the other hand, have their basis in love for God and righteousness, and require self-renunciation.

Another reason why it is easier to form bad habits is that our organisms are all imperfect through the Fall. It is impossible to make a perfect record on an imperfect cylinder, and similarly, it is impossible to form a perfect character on an imperfect organism. "There is none righteous, no, not one."

The only human beings who have possessed perfect organisms were Adam and Jesus. Adam disobeyed God. When he perceived that the one whom he loved so much had taken the forbidden fruit, he resolved to die with her and partook of it also. He should have had more faith in and love for God. Thus he evidenced not only want of faith, but also self-will or self-love.

His record became faulty. The character tones which proceeded from it were harsh and discordant, and as all God's works are perfect, God was obliged by his love, no less than by his justice, to destroy Adam, and to condemn the whole race, imperfect through heredity, to the same fate.

Jesus, on the other hand, obeyed God in every respect. He evidenced faith, meekness, kindness, long suffering, patience, and love. The resulting record gave a beautiful harmony, and demonstrated that he was entitled to eternal life. His continual delight was to do his Father's will. In obedience to this will he humbled himself to death, even the death of the cross, wherefore he hath been highly exalted and given a name above every name. "Oh how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!" He is "the chiefest among ten thousand," "the altogether lovely one."

How different it is with us. When as little children we began to think, speak, and act, we demonstrated the truth of the saying, "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Many of the notes which we produced from the beginning were grating, harsh, and discordant, such as the notes of pride, impatience, anger, spite, envy. You have all seen little children,

FF306 when their toys are taken from them, cry with anger and perhaps endeavor to strike you. These various traits became accentuated as we grew older, with the result that when we reached years of discretion we found that the lines of our character were already deeply impressed on our organism. We had acquired many evil habits. Now we find it extremely difficult, in some cases impossible, to eradicate these lines. There is a hint here to parents. Fathers and mothers can do much by judicious training, keeping in check the natural bad qualities possessed by their children, and fostering the good qualities. On the other hand, each child has its own natural disposition and its own will, so that however judicious the training, parents are frequently disappointed with the result.

There are two antagonistic spirits underlying every thought, word, and action, the one evil, and the other holy. If our thoughts, words, and actions are the result of an evil spirit or mind, an evil disposition, the resulting notes are harsh and discordant; but if they spring from a holy spirit or mind, the spirit of truth and love, the resulting notes are sweet and harmonious. These two spirits are like the positive and negative poles of a magnet. They are antagonistic the one to the other.

The evil spirit is the spirit of Satan, the spirit of pride, unbelief, selfishness, anger, envy, strife, backbiting, and slander. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of God and of Christ, the spirit of humility, faith, love, self-control, patience, generosity, peace, kindness, and self-sacrifice. The only ones who can receive the Holy Spirit are the followers of Christ. By it they gradually obliterate the lines of pride, and slowly, painfully substitute the lines of humility. For the lines of unbelief they substitute the lines of faith; for the lines of impatience, the lines of patience; for the lines of covetousness, the lines of generosity, etc.

We must remember, however, that though God expects progress, he does not expect perfection in the flesh. It is in Christ the Beloved that we are accepted. If it had been possible for anyone to be perfect in the flesh Jesus would not have died for us.

When we have formed the right lines of character, so far as is possible, on our organism, God will give us in the resurrection, as has been already explained, a new body of the divine nature with the lines of character of the New Creature impressed upon it, but without any of the imperfections which are due to the Fall. Thus

FF307 our identity as New Creatures will be preserved. We shall know ourselves, and we shall know one another. May we all be faithful to our vow of consecration, so that we may receive the honor of bearing the image of our heavenly Lord, and sitting with him on his throne to the glory of God the Father! Amen.

FF309 **Socialism and the Bible**

"And I shall shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come."-Hag 2:7

A FEW years ago, Socialism was advocated only by theorists. It was merely an academic question, and practical men smiled at it. Today it is a living and actively growing international force.

What is the reason of this? Are there grounds of complaint against the past and present modes of government and social order? The answer is undoubtedly in the affirmative. There are many grounds of discontent, but they can be gathered together into three main lines of argument.

The first main line of argument is the argument from justice; the second, the argument from economy; and the third, the argument from necessity. First, as regards the Argument from Justice: Socialists point out that those who possess honor and riches are not by any means always the most worthy. Very often they have less ability and honesty than many less fortunate in the struggle for existence. This ought not to be.

Every man should start life alike in opportunity; society should not show favoritism at the beginning nor in any period of life. If a man is to be rewarded in any way, it ought to be on account of his merits, and not from mere accident of birth, or because he has more backstairs influence than his neighbors. On the other hand, if a man is to be poor and of low station in life, it ought to be as a penalty for wrong doing, and not because he cannot get a living wage, or on account of failure to find employment though anxious for it. That is the argument from justice. Then the second argument, the Argument from Economy: What wastage there is in the present competitive system! Besides the enormous expenditure in advertising and touting for orders, there is the deterioration of goods owing to over production, and the manufacture of shoddy

FF310 materials to cut prices. Again, consider the waste of money, time, and labor involved in the present overlapping both in the manufacture of goods, and in their delivery. Compare, for instance, the delivery of letters with that of stores. If, in place of the present competition, there was only a joint and orderly system of production and distribution, what an immense saving would be effected! That is the argument from economy. Thirdly, there is the Argument from Necessity: We see, as we look around us, that the social conditions are not right. Hundreds of thousands are badly clad, badly fed, badly housed. When we turn to the labor conditions, we see thousands out of employment, and tens of thousands overworked and underpaid. Then again, when we consider the physical and mental conditions of the people, we see much distress and suffering. The asylums and hospitals are growing in size and number year by year, yet they are always filled to overflowing; and outside of these institutions there are great multitudes of both rich and poor, who are completely or partially disabled, mentally and physically. No doubt much of this disability is beyond the power of the physician and social reformer to remove; but some of it, at least, could be overcome by proper laws and regulations, more especially if the wealth of the country was in the hands of the nation. Again, when we look into the moral conditions of the people, we find that the present system is accountable for much. In

all large cities thousands of families are compelled to live in houses of one apartment, and the poor are crowded into districts badly ventilated, badly lit, and badly drained. The result is that countless children grow up amidst the moral and material filth of the slums, and, sad to relate, these evil influences are not confined to the slums, though most noticeable there. Such demoralizing conditions ought not to be, and if proper regulations were enforced, many of these evils could be eradicated.

These are the arguments, dear friends, and the last is the most important. The more we study the whole question, the more we see the need for drastic reform. Deliverance from the present order of things is a necessity recognized by all humane and right thinking people.

Having thus briefly stated the three main lines of argument

FF311 in favor of Socialism, let us now ask the question: is Socialism practicable? Socialists say that if their principles were adopted, everyone would experience peace and contentment, and that thus the desire of all nations would come.

There are two questions involved here:

(1) Are there any difficulties in the way of Socialism being established?

(2) Should it become established, will the desired ends be gained?

(1) Are there any difficulties in the way of Socialism being established? Yes, there are two chief difficulties.

(a) The first is the indifference of the people, mostly due to the natural mental lethargy which opposes all change. But this is being rapidly overcome. The people were first awakened to a sense of their rights by the Reformation, and later by the French Revolution. Both of these great events were largely due to the invention of the art of printing, and consequent diffusion of knowledge. Within late years education has become general in all civilized countries, and the cheap literature now flooding the world is enlightening the people as never before, and rousing them thoroughly to a sense of their rights as men.

Because of this, and also because of the ready means of inter-communication, the people of different countries, even though widely separated, are getting acquainted with each other in a way that was not possible in former times; and they are gradually realizing a great deal in common between them. The prejudices which divide people from people are being broken down, and the cry is now becoming widespread: "The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man!" The indifference to Socialism is consequently being rapidly overcome. Very soon it will be completely dissolved, and then, as Daniel foretold when writing prophetically of this period as "the time of the end"-the time when "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," that is to say, the time when there will be free intercommunication between the various peoples and a general increase of knowledge-there will be "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."- Da 12:1-4

(b) The other difficulty is an even greater obstacle to Socialism becoming established. It is the opposition of vested interests.

By vested interests I mean everything which certain people believe to be their rights, whether it be rank, or property, or land,

FF312 or money. The man who happens to be a king or peer, considers the rank his by right. The man who has inherited or bought property or land, claims that it belongs to him by right; and the same is true with regard to money. More and more opposition will be offered by those who possess vested interests, for very few will give up what they believe to be their rights simply that the community may benefit. All men do not

yet love their neighbors as themselves. Before such change can be effected, there must be a moral revolution. Men's hearts will first require to be changed.

It is the poor who experience most the hardships of the present system, and it is they, as they get enlightened, who are daily swelling the ranks of the Socialists, because they think they see in Socialism their only hope of relief. The poor say to the rich: "It is all very well for you to speak about your rights; but look at us, see how we are suffering! You have no moral right to the land, or to so much money. It is not fair that any man or woman should possess so much when we are denied even the necessities of life."

While the Socialists are increasing in number, and the outcry against the rich is swelling in volume, the men with vested interests—the aristocrats, land owners, property owners, and capitalists, and also the church—resent the proposal to change the existing social and political arrangements. They would like, indeed, to see the people more contented. To this end they are willing to grant certain measures of reform; but only so long as they can retain their wealth and honors and keep the people servile in some degree. The day is past, however, for the people to be content with things as they are. As well attempt to stem the ocean's flowing tide, as try to check the advance of knowledge and truth! Within recent years a new political party, the Socialist or Social Democrat, has sprung into existence in every civilized country; and we should expect that very soon all politicians will be either Socialists or Anti-Socialists, although they may form themselves into subdivisions. Every thinking man sees this at hand. The Anti-Socialists—the aristocrats, the capitalists and the church—have the support of those whose interests are bound up with theirs, and also of such peace lovers as fear to entrust themselves to the will of the people. But the Socialists are demanding and securing reforms, and every success makes them eager for

greater victories. We cannot suppose that those now in authority will long continue to meekly submit; and after abortive attempts to obtain their greater desires by peaceful means, the people will get impatient at the opposition and slowness of reform.

Becoming imperative in their demands, they will ultimately have recourse to force, and general revolution will break out.

The people are now bound together to that degree, that the war between the masses and the classes will be worldwide. The governments will confederate together against their common enemy the people; and the people, having tasted the sweets of liberty, will break away from the restraint of their chosen leaders. Anarchy will ensue, and in the end all the present kingdoms and institutions will be overthrown in a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. The present World War, which broke out in August 1914, is making possible privileges for the Social democrats, which were scarcely hoped for in Great Britain.

The people have been likened to a great giant who, while slumbering in ignorance and superstition, allowed himself to be put into bondage. For some time he has been slowly waking, and has already broken several of his fetters. Soon he will be fully roused. When he realizes his mighty strength, he will burst the remaining bonds in anger, and, rising to his feet, will crush the powers that bound him.

Having considered the two chief difficulties in the way of the establishment of Socialism, and having seen what will occur if the desires of the people are not granted, let us now consider what will result should Socialism be established.

(2) If Socialism is established, whether by peaceful means or by force, will it work? With human nature as it is will the desire of all nations be realized through Socialism? In order to consider this matter fully and clearly, let us see what Socialism is in its main features. In 1906, Mr. Robert Blatchford, the well known editor of "The Clarion," a Socialist paper, printed and circulated a leaflet setting forth first what Socialism is, and then what Socialism is not. The contents are as follows:

What Socialism Is

Great Britain is ruled by the wealthy in the interests of the wealthy. We propose that it should be ruled by the people in

FF314 the interests of the people; for class rule brings conflict of interests, which brings hatred, while community of interests breeds fellowship, and fellowship is life.

All the means of existence in Great Britain are owned by individuals. We submit that things which are needful to make a nation and maintain a nation should be owned by the nation.

The nation owns the navy, the government factories, the public buildings, the arsenals, the forts, and the barracks. We suggest that the nation should own ALL the ships, ALL the railways, ALL the factories, ALL the buildings, ALL the land, ALL the requisites of national life and defense.

The nation manages the Post Office, the Telegraphs, and through the local Councils, it manages many of its gasworks, waterworks, and tramways. We contend that the nation should manage ALL its business and ALL its work.

The nation directs the people's morals through a State Church, which once a week teaches the wickedness of grinding the faces of widows and orphans. We claim that the nation should establish social conditions which will make oppression and injustice impossible all the week round.

That is what Socialism is. Then the leaflet goes on to say what it is not:

What Socialism is Not

Those who do not wish you to be Socialists have given you very false notions about Socialism, in the hope of setting you against it.

The men who have tried to smash your unions, who have written against you, and spoken against you, and acted against you in all the great strikes and lockouts, are the same men who speak and write against Socialism.

They say that Socialists want to get up a revolution, to turn the country upside down by force, to seize all property, and to divide it equally amongst the whole people.

But today, there are very few Socialists who believe in brute force or who think a revolution possible or desirable.

I have always been dead against the idea of revolution, for many reasons. I do not think a revolution is possible in Britain. Firstly, because the people have too much sense; secondly, because the people are by nature patient and kindly; thirdly, because the people are too free to make force needful.

Revolution by force of arms is not desirable or feasible; but there is another kind of revolution from which we hope great things. This is a revolution of thought. Let us once get the people, or the big majority of the people, to understand Socialism, to believe

FF315 in Socialism, and to work for Socialism, and the real revolution is accomplished.

As to seizing the wealth of the country and sharing it out amongst the people. First, we do not propose to seize anything. We do propose to get some things-the land, for instance-and to make them the property of the

whole nation; but we mean that to be done by Act of Parliament, and by purchase. Second, we have no idea of "sharing out" the land, nor the railways, nor the money, nor any other kind of wealth or property, equally amongst the people. To share these things out- if they could be shared, which they could not be-would be to make them private property, whereas we want them to be public property, the property of the British nation.

"Make all men equal in possessions," cry the Non-Socialists, "and in a very short time there would be rich and poor, as before."

It is quite true that, did we divide all wealth equally tomorrow, there would in a short time be many penniless, and a few in a way of getting rich; but it is only true if we suppose that after sharing we allowed private ownership of land and the old system of trade and competition to go on as before. Change those things: do away with the land system which leads to poverty and to wealth, and we should have no more rich and poor.

Now, dear friends, suppose that Socialism is established, will the three main lines of argument in its favor be satisfactorily met? You remember the three arguments in favor of Socialism: Justice, Economy, Necessity. (1) What about

The Argument From Justice?

Socialists say: "It is not right that some should be born with a claim to the good things of life, and others to poverty or worse with little hope of betterment. Let all men start alike in opportunity."

But is it possible to arrange social conditions that all men may start alike in opportunity? The answer is undoubtedly in the negative; for people are born with natural differences which it is not in the power of man to adjust. In health, in physical capabilities, and in mental ability the differences are such, that those naturally favored would soon gain advantage over their fellows. There are also differences in morals, and this is the chief difficulty with which Socialism would have to contend.

Some

FF316 men are good, honest, and trusting. There are others who endeavor to take advantage of these and of one another, and to get the best of everything, by honest means if they can, but if not, then by dishonest means.

But supposing that all were started alike in the matter of wealth and position in life and in every other possible respect, would it be possible to get lasting peace and contentment? No. To ensure peace and contentment, which is the desire of all nations, would necessitate that those in authority must be endowed with such keen perceptions and accuracy of judgment, that they could weigh and judge everything exactly, and be able to discern whether any advantage some might gain was duly earned, and any loss that others might suffer was truly deserved. More than that, these officials would require to be possessed of unlimited powers, that they might exercise their authority to the best advantage for the community; and, finally, they would require to be so wise, loving and just in all their words and actions, that the people would eventually be perfectly satisfied and bow to their decisions.

That would be a consummation to be desired, would it not? If such conditions were established, then indeed the desire of all nations would to a great extent be realized. But with human nature as it is, how hopeless for us to expect so glorious a consummation! Men have not that keenness of perception and accuracy of judgment, which would enable them to fulfill the duties of such unerring authorities; and even if some with more than ordinary acumen were elected to office, the people, having tasted the sweets of liberty and individual judgment, would not allow them to exercise unlimited power. Indeed, it would be necessary for the officials to be in an unassailable position, that they might successfully defy the will of the people should occasion demand. This, however, would not be a Socialist government.

With human nature as it is, acts of injustice would be inevitable on the part of the authorities, some of them intentional due to moral obliquity, some of them unintentional due to lack of judgment, thoughtlessness, or carelessness. The result would be much grumbling and discontent. No board of officials, however well-intentioned, could satisfy all, or even the majority. The people would eventually break away from restraint, and anarchy

FF317 would certainly follow.

(2) Let us now consider

The Argument From Economy.

Under this head there are four main difficulties in the way of Socialism proving successful.

(a) There is difficulty of organization. Efficiency would require one central government, with district councils for local affairs. To insure harmonious working between these councils and the central government would be extremely difficult; and as great authority would necessarily require to be placed in the hands of a few, clever schemers would seek the prominent positions for the sake of the power they could wield. Once they obtained the power, the people would suffer.

(b) There is the difficulty of supply. In order to deal out the various necessities of life, officials require to be appointed; and these, eager to get through with their work, would chafe at the need of attending to individual peculiarities, and incline to shirk their duty. Hence the people would suffer from this cause also.

How different it would be, however, if the officials in charge had perfect minds and perfect hearts.

(c) Then there is the difficulty of employment. Each individual would require to have employment suited to his capabilities.

But sooner or later many would desire a change. They would say: "I am rather tired of this kind of work; I would like something different"; or: "I am tired of being in this place; I would like to go somewhere else." It would be impossible, however, to allow every individual to change his employment or locality as he pleased; for this would certainly mean an over supply of laborers in favorable positions and districts, and inconvenient scarcity in the unfavorable. Hence, the people would require to be forced, more or less against their wills, to remain where they were placed: and discontent and trouble must be the outcome.

(d) Lastly, there is the question of wages. Some suggest that money should not be used to pay wages. But the people must get food and clothing, etc., which would be a form of wage.

Either all would receive alike, or else, if graded, the wages would be more or less at the discretion of the officials in charge.

Suppose

FF318 everyone received alike, what would be the result? Those with ability would lack the incentive of greater remuneration to put forth their best efforts; and the majority, who are without special ability, would attend their work only because obliged to.

(This is what obtains in some measure at the present time, where Trades Unions insist on a minimum standard rate of wages.) I am speaking of the natural inclinations of men in general. There would certainly be noble exceptions; some who loved their work for its own sake, or who were conscientious and unselfish and worked for the sake of others. But we have no reason to suppose that there would be many of this class; and

if it is claimed that the new Socialistic conditions would multiply such noble examples, peace and contentment could not reign so long as even a minority of the other class existed.

If, on the other hand, the wages were graded, would not that delegate a great deal of power to the officials? What an amount of wire-pulling there would be to obtain the best situations! It would be impossible to prevent many of the evils of the present competitive system. Those in authority would require to be perfect both in mind and heart; but even if they were, do you think the people would be satisfied? Generally, those who are discontented and cause trouble, are the indolent and incompetent.

(3) As regards the third argument, The Argument From Necessity, much might be done to alleviate present conditions; but to remove all the social, physical, mental, and moral imperfections which abound, is beyond the power of man.

And so we see, dear friends, that whether Socialism will, or will not ultimately be established, there is certain to be trouble in the near future. The people are rapidly waking out of their mental lethargy, and their superstitious reverence for kings, aristocracy, and church. They see that while they have not their fair share of this world's goods, others are rolling in luxury. Their natural appetites and desires prevent them from agreeing that a bare existence is all that is necessary. They know that happiness is needful to make existence desirable. In the meantime, some form of Socialism is the only remedy which seems to offer relief.

FF319 All men recognize the signs of unrest everywhere manifest.

Many console themselves with the thought that the nations are passing through a period of transition, but that though experiencing some changes perhaps, peace will ultimately be attained, and the world will continue essentially as before. This is a delusive hope, for whether Socialism is established or not, anarchy is bound to ensue. If the people are thwarted, they will not rest content till all the present kingdoms and institutions are shattered. The giant is now too wide awake to permit himself again to be put into bondage. If, on the other hand, Socialism is established, there will require to be armies of public employees, and the individual will sooner or later become the slave of officials even more than at present he is the slave of the wealthy. Politics will be still more of a trade than it is now.

Rings and general corruption will be the order of the day. With human nature as it is, force will be necessary to carry out the various measures intended for the public good; and the people, having once tasted the sweets of liberty, and finding their aspirations and desires for freedom and happiness frustrated, will break away from all restraints, and anarchy must follow.

But what avails the kindly ways of yore,
The sacred customs and the old-world cries,
If we are linked in heartfelt love no more
By old-world ties?

The envious nations and their rulers keep
Armed watch upon each other all the while;
They prate of friendship, lulling fear to sleep
With treacherous smile.

Oh! finer souls of penetrating ken,
Poets and preachers, in our hearts instill
Humility afresh, and bring to men
Peace and goodwill.

-Alfred Austin (Poet-Laureate)

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES

You will agree, dear friends, from what we have seen thus far, that under present conditions of sin and selfishness we cannot

FF320 reasonably expect peace and contentment to result from Socialism; nor can the world hope to escape a great time of trouble in the near future.* [*NOTE: The trouble here referred to by the late Professor Edgar (who died in June, 1910), is not the present (1915) great European war but the more terrible civil strifes which will follow. Because of the apparent evidences of the Scriptures, Professor Edgar consistently proclaimed his belief that great trouble among the nations was due to break out in Autumn, 1914, the date indicated by the prophetic period named the "Seven Times of the Gentiles"-See Vol. II, of Great Pyramid Passages.] Is there any hope, then, of deliverance from the distressing chaos into which the world is about to be plunged? Is there any truth in the old adage that man's extremity is God's opportunity? If there is a God above, He will foreknow all things. He must surely have revealed in His Word sufficient to help and sustain those who believe on Him, in order that they may intelligently cooperate in the means which He will have directed for the good of man.

World Wide Trouble Followed by World Wide Blessing

There are many Scriptures which teach that, in God's order, the world must first pass through the great fire of trouble before they can hope to have their desire of good government, peace and contentment realized.

This thought is expressed in our text, Hag 2:6,7-"For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come." And in Zep 3:8,9-"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms"-that is what is taking place now; we find that all the kingdoms are associating together against their common enemy the people.

The Lord goes on to say why He has determined to gather the nations and assemble the kingdoms. It is-"to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured by the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent."

FF321 Turn next to the 12th chapter of Daniel (Da 12). There we see in Da 12:4 regarding "the time of the end"-the time of the end of the present kingdoms, the time of the end of the present reign of evil-that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." We know from history that this prophecy never was fulfilled in the past; but when we look around us and consider our modern locomotives, steamships and motor cars, our schools, technical colleges and free libraries, etc., we cannot doubt that we are even now witnessing the fulfillment of the prophecy. It is evident that we are now living in "the time of the end."

In the first and second verses of the chapter (Da 12:1-2), we read: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." Our Lord in quoting these words in the 24th chapter of Matthew, 21st verse, (Mt 24:21) says: "For then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be [again]." The coming trouble is to be greater than was even the French Revolution, though that was very terrible. It will be the greatest time of trouble that has ever taken place, or ever will take place, in the history of the world.

Why will the Lord require to bring the world through such severe trouble? In the book of Pr 18:4 we are told: "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?" So long as a man can keep up his spirit, it does not matter how weak he may be, he is more or less self-reliant; but once his spirit is broken, all the stamina is taken out of him, and he is helpless. In the present, as in the past, men think that by their own efforts they will bring about the desire of all nations. The Socialists say: "Just let Socialism get into full swing, and we shall soon renovate the whole earth." The Anti-Socialists say: "Let us alone. We shall bring about reforms gradually. Only be patient and by-and-by there will be peace and contentment throughout the world." The spirits of both parties will require to be broken in order to teach them the folly of self-

reliance; and to this end the Lord will bring them through the great trouble, as He has foretold by His holy prophets. When it

FF322 is over, men will acknowledge their own helplessness and their need of a Savior. They will turn to God and implore His aid; and, His name be praised, the Lord will help the helpless. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."-Ps 34:13

Thus we see that the Scriptures corroborate what we have observed from the signs of the times, namely, that there is to be world-wide anarchy at an early date. Let us now inquire of the Word of God:

Who Will Bring About the Desire of All Nations?

It is important to notice that in the Scriptures alone is there an indication of hope for the world escaping out of the dreadful conditions which will shortly prevail; and the Scriptures were written by Jews for the Jewish nation. When, therefore, Christ comes again to take His great power, He will reign as "King of the Jews," and the Jewish nation will be the foremost at that time. As Jesus said, "Salvation is of the Jews." The other nations will gradually be merged into the Jewish nation, so that all will ultimately have the one great King, who will rule over and bless them, and so bring about everlasting peace and contentment-"the desire of all nations."

There are many passages of Scripture which prophesy that after the kingdoms of this Dispensation are overthrown, Christ will reign with an autocratic rule upon the earth. I shall briefly refer to a few of these prophecies.

Da 12:1 says that "at that time [the time of the end] Michael shall stand up." The word Michael means "One like unto God"; and can only refer to Jesus Christ, the one who is the express image of the Father. He is the great Prince which stands for Daniel's people, the Israelites; and Daniel was told that when He manifests His power on their behalf, "at that time thy people shall be delivered." The Jews have been persecuted all through this Gospel Age, but they will soon cease to be "trodden down of the Gentiles," and God will return His favor to them, and they shall be His chosen people. We see this beginning even now. Palestine is being opened up, and the Jews are fast returning to their native land; they are also now opening their ears to the comforting words of Isa 40:1-2; but it is not

FF323 the due time for their complete return of favor.

The prophecy continues: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." When Christ's Kingdom is set up on the ruins of the present kingdoms after the time of trouble, and the Jews return to their own land and to God's favor, the general resurrection of the dead will take place. This is also shown in Re 11:18, which reads: "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come"-there is to be world wide trouble among the nations, due to the wrath of God-"and the time of the dead, that they should be judged"-the awakening of the dead is to take place at the same time-"and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."

During that long period known as the "times of the Gentiles," the Jewish nation has been trodden under by the Gentile kingdoms. This was foretold by Ezekiel, who, as the prophetic mouthpiece of the Lord, said to Zedekiah the last king of Judah: "And thou, profane wicked Prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low [the Gentiles], and abase him that is high [Israel]. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it [the kingdom of Israel]; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." (Eze 21:25-27) The kingdom of Israel was the kingdom of God; its kings were always spoken of as

sitting upon the throne of the Lord. Consequently when the crown was removed from the king of Judah, God's kingdom upon earth ceased.

In this prophecy the Lord declared that His kingdom would be no more until one came whose right it is. In the interim of waiting, the Gentiles, who were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph 2:12), were exalted to hold the dominion of the world; but when the "times of the Gentiles" have expired (Lu 21:24), He whose right it is will take to Himself His great power and reign. Who is this?

Undoubtedly it is our Lord Jesus Christ, the greater Son of David.

FF324 How did He acquire the right to God's kingdom upon earth? He gained it by His voluntary death on the cross. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living."-1Co 6:19,20; Ro 14:9 The same great truth is taught in Da 2:31-45, where it shows how the successive Gentile nations, which have held universal sway since the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel, were symbolized by a great image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in a dream. The head of this image was of gold and represented Babylonia; its breasts and arms of silver, Medo-Persia; its belly and thighs of brass, Greece; its legs of iron, Pagan Rome; its feet of iron and clay, Papal Rome; and its toes, the present divisions of the Roman Empire.

In the dream, this image was smitten on the feet by a little stone cut out without hands, and was demolished into dust and scattered till no place was found for it. The stone then grew into a great mountain which filled the whole earth. Daniel explains that this great mountain which will fill the whole earth is the Kingdom of our Lord. The seventh chapter of Daniel refers to the same four universal Empires under the figure of four beasts, and describes how one like the Son of man, together with the saints of the most High, comes with the clouds of heaven to take possession of the kingdom.

In Mic 4:8, the Lord Jesus is spoken of as the "Tower of the flock"-"And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion." The first dominion, which was granted to Adam, and subsequently to Israel, is His by right; and soon He will shatter the present kingdoms, and take the dominion to Himself.

At the same time, as we have seen, He will cause the Jews to return to their own land and to the favor of God, and will bring about the resurrection of the dead.

Before considering the method by which Christ's rule will bring about the desire of all nations, which man's rule has failed to accomplish, let us see what are

The Fundamental Reasons of Man's Failure to Govern.

(1) The first and chief reason is that men are sinners, not

FF325 saints, and this not through any individual fault of their own, but through heredity and environment. "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that doeth good." Selfishness prevails instead of love. The world, the flesh, and the devil are too strong for men, however well intentioned they may be, unless God is on their side. Even the Communism of the saints in the time of the Apostles, failed from this very cause (Ac 4:34-37; 6:1); and if such men and women failed, how certainly will the world at large fail! Sin and selfishness must be eradicated before men are capable of successfully ruling themselves or others. This reason may be named the imperfect moral nature of man, due mainly to heredity and environment. His heart is not right.

(2) A second important reason is, that no one, ruler or subject, is perfectly sound in mind. We confine a

certain section of mankind in asylums and label them "insane." As a matter of fact, however, there is no one perfectly sane or sound of mind.

What is insanity? Insanity simply means lack of judgment; and I do not think anyone will claim that he is perfectly sound (sane) in judgment. However wisely a man or a body of men may rule, occasional errors in judgment are sure to occur. The principal reason for this is the inability to read motives. Men can judge only by the hearing of the ear, and the seeing of the eye; they cannot read the heart. Thus "to err is human" has become a proverb. This reason of man's failure to govern successfully may be called the imperfect mental nature of man, due mainly to heredity. His head is not right.

(3) A third reason, no less important than the others, is that everyone is more or less physically imperfect. Some are a little stronger than their fellows, but all are more or less weak and prone to disease and accidents, and sooner or later everyone goes down into death. So long as death reigns, there can never be everlasting peace and contentment. Though every other cause of sorrow were removed, the loss by death of our nearest and dearest, and the knowledge that sooner or later we also will require to die, must necessarily mar happiness. This reason may be called the imperfect physical nature of man. Like the other two, it is mainly due to heredity. His body is not right.

Thus, moral imperfection, mental imperfection, and physical

imperfection ending in death, will require to be removed before the desire of all nations can come. Men have been constantly endeavoring to remove these imperfections and to improve their environment, but without success. Christ alone is able to accomplish this great work; and we are assured in the Scriptures that He will do so; it is for this purpose that He comes again.

The Cause of the Present Imperfection

What is the cause of the fact that all men are more or less imperfect mentally, physically, and morally? Clearly for the most part, their frailty is due to heredity. Some say: It is all very well to blame heredity, but a man's imperfections are due to his own fault. While this is true, it is so only to a small extent. No children are born physically perfect; some are disfigured with gross deformities. The same is true of the mental condition; and as regards the moral nature, you have not exercised your powers of observation if you have not noticed the evidences of moral imperfection in children even before they are able to reason.

The man who denies the influence of heredity is mentally blind.

The Scriptures are in entire accord with all this. The Psalmist says that we are born in sin, and shapen in Iniquity.(psalm 51:5; see also Job 14:4.) "The fathers have eaten a sour grape [of sin], and the children's teeth are set on edge."- Jer 31:29 As it is evident that we are all imperfect, and therefore all sinners, mainly through the law of heredity, it is necessary to inquire: How did sin enter the world? If we trace the law of heredity backwards, we come to the first man. Is it that the first man, as the Evolution theory claims, was only a little removed above the ape, and, therefore, with most of the mental and moral infirmities of the brute? If so, then God is the author of sin. Reason and the Word of God both declare the falsity of such a view.

But the Bible account is not that man was made in the image of the ape nor a little above the ape, but that he was made in the image of God (Ge 1:27), a little lower than the Angels.(heb 2:6,7) All God's works are perfect. (De 32:4) According to the Scriptures, then, man was perfect in the beginning and through sin fell from this perfection. I have heard some argue: "If Adam was perfect, how could he sin?" The reply

is that, he was not created with a fully developed character; his perfection implied perfect mental and moral faculties in a perfect body. His character was a blank; but God implanted in him a conscience or moral sense, that is, the faculty or power of discerning between right and wrong, to enable him to form character.

Adam was also allowed the liberty of his will, in order that he might be free to choose good or evil, and so develop a good or wicked character.

Some think that God should have created Adam so that he could not sin, and thus have avoided all this misery and sickness and death which we see around us, and which every one of us experience. Was it not wrong for God, they ask, to permit Adam to sin? God cannot do wrong. To have created man without freedom of will, would have made him a mere machine.

God purposed to bring an earthly being into existence who would love Him spontaneously; and who would worship Him in spirit and truth. (Joh 4:23) Man had nothing whatever to do with the formation of his body and brain; that was his Creator's work. It is character which decides destiny, and it is the formation of character that God has left in our hands, as we read: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."-Pr 4:23 According to the Scriptures, Adam chose the wrong course. (1Ti 2:14) Was God taken by surprise? Not at all. He had His plan of redemption arranged from the beginning, for "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Ac 15:18) He had foreordained from before the foundation of the world that the "Lamb" should be slain. (1Pe 1:18-20) God sentenced Adam to death; and by the law of heredity which He brought into operation, all the descendants of the first man have been born in sin, and share the sentence to death with him, as it is written: "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."-Ro 5:12

The Satisfaction of Justice

The foregoing shows the stern justice of God; but the Scriptures declare that "God is love." Let us now, therefore, consider

FF328 evidences of His love, that true love which is both wise and just.

God, having condemned all in Adam, in due time sent His only begotten Son into the world in order that He might become Adam's substitute, and take upon Himself the death penalty.

First, however, the Lord allowed an interval to elapse, because He foresaw it would be necessary to prove to men their need of a Savior. If God had sent Jesus Christ sooner, it would always have been open to question whether men could not have saved themselves; but by the method which He adopted, it was proven conclusively that "none of them by any means can redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Psalm 49:7), that "there is none righteous, no, not one." (Ro 3:10) To satisfy perfect justice which demands an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life, the ransom price to be paid must be an exact equivalent, namely, the life of a perfect man. This man would require to be absolutely without sin, because justice demands a sinner's death. No descendant of Adam has been born free from sin; nor has any since merited life in his own right in order that he might lay it down in sacrifice as a ransom or corresponding price for Adam, neither the Jew who had the written law to guide him, nor the Gentile who had the light of his conscience and reason as a guide. Even the angels, whom the Scriptures indicate were permitted by God to attempt the uplift of man during the first Dispensation before the flood, were unable to reverse the sentence of death passed upon the human race. On the contrary, instead of raising men from sin and degradation, many of the angels fell from their first estate, as we read in Jude 6.

Thus God demonstrated that His way of salvation is the only possible way. His only begotten Son, Jesus Himself, left the glory He had with His Father in heaven, and partook of flesh and blood that He might die as a man; that through death He might destroy him that has the power of death, that is, the devil. (Heb 2:9,14) It was love that dictated the sacrifice, and He obeyed the dictates of love. As Jesus has paid the price, the first man will in due time be set free, that he may have a second opportunity for life or death. But not only will Adam be set free from the prisonhouse of death, but the whole race also, which was condemned in him. That

is what Paul declares in Ro 5:18,19-

FF329 "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift shall come upon all men to justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The Reign of Christ

When Christ begins His glorious reign, he will destroy the works of the devil. (1Jo 3:8) These works are Sin and Death, with all that these imply. 1Co 15:25,26-"For he [Christ] must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

And the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." What are the enemies of mankind that obstruct the establishment of good government, peace and contentment? They are moral imperfection, mental imperfection, and physical imperfection.

These result from sin and end in death, and must be put under Christ's feet before the desire of all nations can be realized.

In the book of Re 20:1,2, we are assured that the first enemy that Christ will subdue will be Satan. As the "prince of the power of the air" Satan now rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and as the "god of this world" he "hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (Eph 2:3; 2Co 4:4) Satan is "the prince of this world" (Joh 14:30), and must be deposed; then Christ will become the Prince of Peace. Satan will be bound for a thousand years, to prevent him deceiving the nations during their process of uplifting under the beneficent rule of Christ. But when the thousand years are expired he must be loosed for a little season, in order to finally test the loyalty of the people to God and to righteousness. When all the enemies of God and righteousness have been destroyed, then, indeed, the desire of all nations will have come. That glorious condition, however, will not exist till the end of Christ's Millennial reign.

During the thousand years of Christ's rule, the moral, mental and physical imperfections which have rendered man helpless in his attempt to govern the world, will be removed. Of the three, the condition of the heart is the most important. Will men's

FF330 hearts be put right? Yes. In Eze 36:26,27, we read: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Through the prophet Jer 31:28,29, we are informed that the law of heredity will cease after the Israelites are restored to their land and to God's everlasting favor: "And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict: so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord. In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." This means that in those days, i.e., during Christ's Millennial reign, no man will suffer mentally, morally, or physically through heredity.

How will this change be accomplished? Simply by bringing in a new order of things, a new Dispensation. Those in the grave will come forth, and those who survive the great time of trouble which will bring the present Dispensation to a close, will live on. There will be no births as we have now, because so long as procreation continues, the law of heredity will operate. Jesus Himself said: "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage." (Mt 22:30) The prophet goes on to declare (Jer 31:30)-"But everyone [who dies] shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape [of sin], his teeth shall be set on edge." Each one will suffer, or die, for his own individual misdeeds. This is in accordance with the Apostle's

statement, recorded in Ac 3:23-"Every soul which will not hear that prophet [in the sense of obeying him] shall be destroyed from among the people." The Psalmist also declares (Ps 72:9)-"His enemies shall lick the dust."

But the extreme penalty of death will be only for wilful persistent disobedience. There will not be any at that time who will be ignorant of God's glorious character, and His wonderful plan of salvation. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:...After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and

FF331 will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer 31:31-34) Again, in the 35th chapter of Isaiah, we read regarding the reign of Christ, the time when the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."

The Resurrection of the Unjust

Thus the testimony of God's Word, dear friends, is that all moral, mental, and physical imperfections will be removed by Christ, not suddenly, but gradually. With the exception of the saints, who have died in faith, everyone will be raised from the grave with the same imperfect character such as he has now. If a man is vicious in this lifetime he will be raised with the same vicious character. Moderately good men will rise moderately good. It will not profit anyone to say: "I am to get another chance. I will do as I like now." Solomon, speaking to such, said: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."- Ec 11:9 In the resurrection, just as it is now, the development of character will be gradual. In the present Dispensation, evil is permitted by God and is prospering. "Now we call the proud happy: yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." (Mal 3:15) The consequence is that the people are pursuing the downward course of sin; for it is apparent to every right thinking man that the world, left to itself, is not learning righteousness. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." (Ec 8:2)

FF332 Business men declare that there is dishonesty in all commercial concerns; that no business can succeed on lines of strict integrity. In these times it is much more difficult to do good than to do evil. Frequently when you do a kindly action for anyone, you do not even get thanks; and if you are gentle and loving, people think you soft and try to take advantage of you.

If you endeavor to lead an honest, straightforward life, you are certain to meet with opposition. "All that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution." (1Ti 3:12) The development of good character in the present time meets with opposition at every turn. Need we wonder at this when Satan is the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air?

It will be very different when Christ takes His power to reign.

He will judge the people with righteousness, and evil will no longer be permitted. Of that time we read: "When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa 26:9) When Christ is reigning, every time a man sins the penalty will follow swiftly and surely, and, on the other hand, every time a man does a righteous act he will be rewarded immediately. Thus the righteous will

be encouraged, and the sinner will be discouraged; the people will soon find that it will pay to do good; that the better they are the more they succeed, and the worse they are the greater they suffer-the very reverse of what obtains at present. The inhabitants of the world will then learn righteousness, and will flourish (Psalm 72:7); as their moral imperfection disappears, their mental and physical imperfections will also disappear, until finally they will attain to that perfection lost by Adam.

Christ's Reign Autocratic

At first, the people will require to be forced to obey, but the necessary punishment will be of a reformative nature, and will be accompanied by evidences of love and impartial justice.

Everyone will recognize that any punishment he may receive is deserved and intended for his good. He will have the best guarantee that this is so, for the judge in that day will be the meek and gentle Jesus, and associated with Him will be the saints. (Ac 17:31; 1Co 6:2) Gradually the world will yield that

FF333 obedience which comes from love and appreciation of righteousness, and will no longer require to be forced.

In Christ's day errors in judgment will not occur, nor mistakes of any kind on the part of the Great Judge. "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots ; and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears."-Isa 11:1-8 This chapter is one of the best known of these which describe the Millennial reign of Christ. It describes how such ferocious animals as the wolf, the leopard and the lion will lie down with the lamb and the kid, and how a little child shall lead them. It tells, too, how "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." In that day Christ will see into the hearts of men; and will discern the motives which underlie their every thought and action.

Not only will Christ be unerring in judgment, and His dealings ultimately recognized by all to be just and loving, perfect, but His righteous decisions will be backed by the almighty power of God. He has full authority from God to execute His wise, just and loving purposes when the time comes. When He rose from the dead, He said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Mt 28:18) He will not require to consider whether His laws and judgments are popular or otherwise for He will have no fear of an election or revolution by which He might be unseated from power. His Kingdom will be an everlasting Kingdom; and His authority will be absolute, for "he has been highly exalted and given a name above every name."

His decisions will be so just and loving and wise, and will be executed so effectually and with such good results, that ultimately every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father- Php 2:10,11. Thus we see that Christ's reign will be autocratic.

FF334 The Desire of all Nations Shall Come

At the end of the thousand years, those who love iniquity will be destroyed in the second death (Re 21:18); all others will continue to live during the Ages to follow. Sin and selfishness, and all forms of mental and physical imperfections will be completely eradicated, and there will be "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither will there be any more pain, for the former things will have passed away." The earth will yield its increase (Psalm 67:6), and nothing will be allowed to exist which could hurt or destroy. The dominion over the perfect earth will be given to the human race under God's sovereignty, because man will then be

perfect not only in body, but also in heart, in character. They will have perfect communion with God and with each other, for all will love the Lord their God with all their heart, and mind, and soul and strength, and their neighbor as themselves. As the guiding principle will no longer be selfishness as at present, but love, the form of government which will be successfully adopted may be on the lines now advocated by Socialism. There will be nothing to mar the world's everlasting peace and contentment when Christ "shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father." (1Co 15:24-26) Thus do the Scriptures reveal how at last the "desire of all nations shall come."

The Purpose of the Present Dispensation

I have dwelt principally on the hope which will be offered to the world, and have not enlarged on the hope held out to the Church, the followers of Christ. In closing, therefore, I would urge upon you the desirability of believing in Christ now, and of accepting the gracious privilege of becoming members of His Body. (1Co 12:12) If we follow in His footsteps now when evil is permitted, we shall share in His resurrection, and shall be associated with Him in His glorious reign. As we read: "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." (2Ti 2:11,12) This will mean a life of self-denial and sacrifice, doing good to all men as we have opportunity, but especially to

FF335 the household of faith. It will bring much persecution and contradiction of sinners. But though we shall have tribulation, the peace of God will rule in our hearts, and we shall have the joy of the Lord.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain." I trust that all of us who take up our cross and follow Jesus, will overcome evil with good and endure to the end; that for the joy set before us we shall endure the cross, and despise the shame, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. If we do, we shall be counted as overcomers. Let us pray for one another that we may be faithful unto death, so that we may obtain the crown of life, and be privileged to share with the Lord Jesus in His glorious work of realizing the desire of all nations, peace on earth, and good will toward men, to the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

FF335 A Tree Planted by the Rivers of Water

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he [this man of God of whom the Psalmist speaks] shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."-Psalm 1:1-3

The more we inquire into the laws which govern the natural and spiritual worlds, the more we find them in harmony with each other. Hence we conclude that they owe their existence to the same author. The natural man is apt to place the laws of nature first, but the man of God knows that the spiritual laws are the more important. In fact, it would seem as if God actually arranged every thing in nature so as to make clear to our understanding the great spiritual truths which otherwise might be beyond our comprehension.

We find many examples of this in the Scriptures. For instance, the nation of Israel is repeatedly symbolized as a vine tree, a tree which is quite useless except for one purpose, fruitbearing.

Turn to the 15th chapter of Ezekiel (Ez 15), and see what the Prophet says: "And the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work?" Who would think of taking the wood of a vine tree to do any work!-"or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereto? Behold it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for any work?-

Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for any

FF338 work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned?

Therefore thus saith the Lord God: as the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem." The Lord could have made the vine a great tree like the fir or the cedar, but he did not choose to do so, doubtless because he wished to illustrate his purpose with regard to the nation of Israel, namely, that the sole primary object for which he has chosen them was that they might bear the fruits of holiness: "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?"-De 10:12,13 Ezekiel's prophecy was fulfilled in the year 70 A.D. when the nation of Israel was cast into the fire of trouble and destroyed.

Our Lord Jesus explains the reason in the 21st chapter of Matthew, 43rd verse (Mt 21:43): "Therefore I say unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"-the fruits of holiness.

Christendom has made the same mistake in this respect as did natural Israel. Like the nation of Israel, the Christian nations have depended on their own strength and their own wisdom instead of on the Lord's, and they have become great in the eyes of the world. They have failed to see that the sole primary object for which the Lord has chosen them is that they should bear the fruits of holiness, as the Apostle explains: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1Th 4; 3) For this reason, the Lord is casting them off and is giving the Kingdom to a nation bearing the fruits thereof, the holy nation, redeemed out of every kindred and tongue and people, despised and rejected by men, but chosen of God. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his

FF339 presence."-1Co 1:26-29 To be God's people, we must not only believe in the Lord, but we must also suffer for his sake (Php 1:29); we must deny ourselves and take up our cross daily and follow him. Those who do this are the true Israel, the true vine. They are the nation who will inherit the Kingdom of heaven. Why? Because they have recognized that they must not depend upon worldly wisdom, worldly strength, worldly position, or upon anything else that this world can offer, but that their dependence is to be entirely upon the Lord; and they are striving with his help to cultivate the fruits of holiness. It was because Jesus with his disciples followed this course that he could say: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman," "I am the vine, ye are the branches."-Joh 15:1,5 A Tree Planted by Rivers of Water The tree described in the first Psalm, unlike the vine mentioned by Jesus and Ezekiel, does not refer, however, to the nation of Israel but to the individual man of God. It may at first seem strange that God should compare a man to a tree; but it is evident from the Psalmist's use of the illustration that there must be some truth underlying it, and if we can only find out what this truth is, doubtless we shall be enriched by it spiritually.

A tree planted by rivers of water has, as a rule, plenty of life, because it has access to and absorbs plenty of water. The same tree if transplanted to a desert, would soon die from lack of water. So it is with the man of God. It is only when he has access to the rivers of the water of truth, the Books of the Bible, that he can grow spiritually, and the more of the truth he absorbs and uses, the more vitality he gets.

Before there can be a tree there must first be a seed and that seed must be sown in prepared ground. If the ground is hard, it will require to be broken up, but it does not always require such energetic treatment. In the parable of the sower, our Lord spoke of the different kinds of ground, and said that the good ground was the

pure and honest heart. The preparation of the ground means the process by which we come to a realization that we cannot of ourselves be pleasing to the Lord, and that, therefore,

FF340 we need a Savior. If, while in this attitude of mind and heart, we turn to have faith toward God through Jesus Christ, and being justified by faith, have peace with God, we are then ready to receive the seed, the word of the Kingdom, into our heart, and become New Creatures in Jesus Christ. Thus the ground in which the seed is sown is the justified mind and heart.

The seed as Jesus explained (Mt 13:19), is the word of the kingdom, the glad message that Christ's Kingdom is to be set up on earth, and that, if only we deny ourselves and take up our cross daily and follow Christ, we shall be joint-heirs with him in that Kingdom for the grand purpose of blessing all the families of the earth to the glory of God the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ. If the seed is properly received into the pure and honest heart, it at once begins to take root and sprout. The root represents the faith of the New Creature.

There are two acts of faith, the faith of justification and the faith of consecration. Our Lord Jesus did not require to take the first step because he was never anything but just or righteous, but he consecrated himself by faith. He had such faith in his Father in heaven that he delighted to do his will, even though he knew that this meant the surrender of all his life rights as a human being, that he would be blotted out of existence, and that the mighty power of God would be required to raise him from the dead to a new nature, the Divine Nature. (Eph 1:19,20) This does not require so much faith on our part because Christ was the first to rise from the dead. (Ac 26:23) He led the way, and we know that what our Heavenly Father has done for him, he is abundantly able and willing to do for us.

The two acts of faith are shown in the 5th chapter of Romans(ro 5). In the first verse (Ro 5:1), we are told that it is by faith that we are justified and so have peace with God; and then in the next verse we are told further that it is by faith also that we have access into this grace wherein we stand, the grace or favor of sanctification, and so have hope of the glory of God. The first act of faith, by which we are justified, is the preparation of the ground, the heart. If the seed, the word or glad tidings of the Kingdom, is properly received into such a heart and takes root there, the New Creature is begotten. The root is the faith of the New Creature, the second act of faith, the faith of consecration.

It is the

FF341 small beginning which eventually, if permitted to grow, will develop into the mature fruit tree, the man of God, the New Creature in Jesus Christ.

When the seed of the fruit tree is sown it sends out little root tendrils to absorb water and the various minerals or earthly elements which have been dissolved by the water. Soon a little stem sprouts and shows itself above ground. This little stem then sends out little branches, which, with the root and the stem grow thicker and longer and stronger year by year. When the branches put forth leaves and eventually buds, flowers and fruit, we have the mature fruit tree.

The New Creature Compared to a Tree

Let us now consider the various parts of the tree in detail, and compare these with the various stages in the development of the New Creature as outlined in 2Pe 1:5-7, and we shall be struck with the wonderful aptness of the illustration, which under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Psalmist uses in our text.

The Apostle's words are: "Besides this giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."

The Root of Faith

The first of the graces is the root of faith. As with the root of a tree, its tendrils are at first small and delicate, but they grow and spread in all directions with the continued growth of the New Creature.

The root of a tree has two functions: (1) It is the part of the tree which takes hold of the ground. At first the hold is very feeble, so that even a child could pluck it up; but by and by, when the tree is large, it would defy the united strength of many strong men to uproot it. It is the same with our faith as New Creatures. Faith is the part which takes hold of the ground, the justified heart or will. At first, when our faith is small, we should be easily uprooted, were it not that the

FF342 Lord is caring for us at this as at every stage. Gradually with our spiritual development, the various branches of our faith grow and spread out so as to take a firmer hold of our hearts.

Some of them take hold of that part of our heart or will which regulates our thoughts, so that we come more and more to think as Jesus thought; others take hold of those parts of our heart or will which regulate our speech and general conduct, so that we gradually come to talk as Jesus talked, and walk as he walked.

The more our faith grows and the firmer the hold it takes of our heart, the better we are able to withstand the assault of the enemy. Faith is the great foundation grace, the one without which it would be impossible for us to grow. "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

(2) The other function of a root of a tree is the absorption of water from the ground, and of the various earthly or mineral elements in the ground, which can be dissolved by the water and are useful for the growth of the tree. Water forms three-fourths of the weight of most plants. Accordingly it is indispensable. If the tree were deprived of it for even a day, it would begin to wither. Coming from the "rivers of water," beside which the tree is planted, it percolates through the ground, searches out the various earthly elements which are there, dissolves them little by little, and is then absorbed by the root. All the water that enters into the structure of the tree comes by the root; none of it enters by any other part, not even through the leaves.

The rivers of water by which the New Creature is planted are the different Books of the Bible, and the water of truth from them percolates into our hearts, through the channels of our eyes and our ears. When it enters our hearts, it searches out the different natural elements which it finds there, and gradually dissolves them. One of these elements is ambition, which leads the natural man to strive to be great in this world, to make a name for himself, to accumulate riches, etc. However desirable this may be from the worldly point of view, it is a wrong principle so far as the man of God is concerned; but when the truth gets into the heart, the natural element of ambition is gradually dissolved, and as it becomes absorbed along with the water of truth, it is transformed from an earthly ambition into a spiritual ambition, a heavenly ambition. This spiritual ambition leads the

FF343 New Creature to strive to please God, whatever men may think of him; it leads him to lay up in store for himself treasure in heaven, and makes him "covet earnestly the best gifts," in order that he may be counted worthy of becoming a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, and so be enabled to satisfy the desires of his heart in glorifying God and helping to bless all the families of the earth.

Another natural element is that of combativeness which many of us possess to a greater or less extent. The natural man who has the quality of combativeness is apt to be very objectionable, but when such a man becomes a New Creature in Christ, the truth searches out the natural combativeness in his heart and gradually dissolves it, and as it becomes absorbed by the faith of the New Creature, it is transformed into a spiritual combativeness. This quality is one of the finest which can be possessed by the man of God, because properly directed, it enables him to carry on a warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and so to fight the

good fight of faith. The natural man uses his combativeness to fight others for the sake of himself; the man of God uses his combativeness to fight himself for the sake of others. We must all have this quality, to some extent at least. If we do not possess it naturally, we shall require to pray to our Heavenly Father to assist us. You know how the skilful gardener adds to the ground whatever elements may be lacking, if they are necessary to the growth of the tree. I am sure the Lord will give us whatever elements are needful to our spiritual growth.

The root, then, represents our faith, and just as the root is the only part of the tree which absorbs water, so the man of God receives the truth only by the one means, namely, his faith. If a man lacks faith, he will not be able to receive the truth. That explains the reason why so many tell us that the Divine Plan of the Ages is the most difficult book they ever read. They have not the root of faith in their hearts. But the New Creature by his faith can, and must drink in the water of truth. If he is deprived of it for even a day, he begins to wither.

What is in the root which enables it to absorb water with the dissolved earthly elements? It is the sap, and the process of absorption is called endosmose. By endosmose is meant the natural law by which, when a thin fluid is separated by a porous wall

FF344 from a more concentrated fluid, the latter absorbs the former.

The sap is thicker than the water in the ground and therefore absorbs it with its dissolved earthly elements through the medium of the root. Similarly, the Holy Spirit (which I understand is represented by the sap), by a spiritual process corresponding to endosmose, absorbs the water of truth together with the natural elements which have been dissolved by the truth; and the medium through which this absorption is effected is our faith, the root of the New Creature. In this way the measure of the Holy Spirit is gradually increased in the New Creature, and just as the sap not only nourishes the root but ascends to the other parts of the tree, the trunk, branches, leaves, etc., and nourishes them also, so the Holy Spirit thus increased in measure and strength, develops not only the faith of the New Creature, but also the other graces which we have still to consider.

Add to your Faith, Virtue

If a seed is sown and takes root, no one is at first aware of the fact. It is not until the little root adds to itself a stem and the stem appears above the ground that we can say: "Ah! A seed has been planted there, and it has taken root." The stem is the first visible manifestation. This brings us to our second point.

The Apostle Peter says: "Add to your faith virtue." The word translated "virtue" properly means "fortitude." (See Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott.) When we present our bodies a living sacrifice to the Lord, the root of faith, the first step in the development of the New Creature, is in our hearts, but at first no one knows it except ourselves. It is not until we add to our faith fortitude that others come to know that the Word of Truth has taken root. Fortitude is the first visible manifestation of the New Creature. If we do not develop fortitude, our faith will die; just as in the case of the natural if a stem fails to appear, the root will die.

What does this quality of fortitude mean? It means the courage of our faith. When we add to our faith fortitude, we not only believe in our heart, but we also confess with our mouth that Jesus is our Lord, and it is when we begin to tell this to people and to show it in our daily life and conduct that others learn that

FF345 we are Christians. We must not be ashamed of Christ. If we are, he will be ashamed of us when he comes to reckon with us. I remember one day when sitting in a train, I had some tracts in my pocket. My faith told me to hand them to my fellow passengers but the flesh rebelled. I was very nearly yielding when the thought came to me, "Be not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." I pulled the tracts out of my pocket and looked at them. There on the cover of the uppermost one I saw the very words which had come to my mind:

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Then faith had the victory. Having now the courage of my convictions, I handed round the tracts, and found it not so dreadful after all.

Why should we be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ? It is such good news! Poor groaning humanity is waiting for it. Even though men may sneer or jeer at you, or persecute you for believing it and proclaiming it, by and by in the day of visitation, they will remember your good works which they behold, and will glorify God on your behalf.-1Pe 2:12 Virtue or fortitude is that grace which enables us to give the truth to others and to model our own lives by it and to persevere in both in spite of opposition, and also in spite of repeated failures. At first when we are only young plants, we bend at every blast of adversity, but by and by when we grow more mature, we are able to withstand any storm which may assail our faith in God and his truth.

Add to your Virtue, Knowledge

When you begin to speak of the truth to others, you find very soon that you cannot explain it so clearly as you would wish, and questions are put to you, which you find you cannot answer.

For instance, you will be asked: "Is that not a second chance?"

and "Would that not lead to sin?" The effect is to send you again and again to the rivers of truth to refresh your memory, and add to your fortitude knowledge: and while refreshing your memory, you will find your heart refreshed also. The more you impart the truth to others, the more you add to your own knowledge, the clearer and more precious the truth becomes to you. Again when you begin to mold your life in accordance with the will of God,

FF346 the various experiences through which you pass, the opposition you receive, the failures you make, and all the many trials and difficulties which you are bound to encounter on the narrow way, send you again and again to the Word of God for instruction as well as for comfort and exhortation.

Just as there are many branches in a good tree, so many branches of knowledge require to be cultivated by the true Christian who desires to be conformed to the image of Christ.

Seeking to know God, his glorious character and his wonderful plan, and Christ, the express image of the Father, the true Christian develops branches of knowledge in the heavenly direction. Alongside these he finds it necessary and pleasant to develop branches of knowledge concerning the Prophets and the Apostles and the other Old Testament and New Testament Saints, and still other branches concerning the graces of the spirit and the exceeding great and precious promises of God.

Besides these there are many more! Including lower down, branches of knowledge concerning the wiles of the devil, and also the various temptations (troubles and allurements) which come to us from the world and from our flesh. We must see to it that we can say with the Apostle Paul: "We are not ignorant of Satan's devices." If you think it is unnecessary to know about the wiles of the devil you will fail to be forewarned, and not being forewarned you will not be forearmed, with the probably result that sooner or later you will be overthrown by the adversary.

Still lower down, and tending to grow earthwards are many branches of secular knowledge which are not so important as the others. Yet they are necessary in some degree to the proper understanding of the Bible. For instance, we ought to know something about grammar and the meaning of words. It is helpful also to know a little of the Greek, and possibly also of the Hebrew language, at least a few words for the better understanding of the truth, a knowledge of geography, history, botany, etc., is often helpful in grasping the meaning of many of the illustrations and historical and geographical allusions so frequently met with in the Scriptures.

But while adding to our fortitude knowledge, it is essential that we should attend also to the next of the Apostle's injunctions:

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Add to your Knowledge, Temperance (Self-Control)

If there were no branches on a tree, there would be no fruit, and small branches would bear little fruit. So it is with the New Creature in Christ Jesus. Without knowledge of God and his glorious plan of redemption he will bear no fruit, and if this knowledge be small, his fruitage will also be small. It is evident then, that we must cultivate many branches of knowledge. But a fruit tree does not grow simply for the purpose of having branches. However fine these branches may be, it must develop fruit in order to justify its existence. This will necessitate judicious pruning. A tree that is not pruned simply runs to wood. Similarly, the purpose for which the man of God must develop the various branches of knowledge is that he may in due time bear an abundant fruitage of love, and for this purpose careful pruning and training will be necessary.

In the case of the New Creature, however-and here the analogy between the tree and the New Creature fails-much is left to the freedom of his will. He is treated as a reasoning being, and is expected to do much of his own pruning. Paul says: "For if we judge ourselves we shall not be judged, but if we are judged we are chastened of the Lord that we may not be condemned with the world." (1Co 11:31,32) In other words, we ought daily to examine ourselves and exercise self-control. If we do not, we are not using the spirit of a sound mind and the Lord will require to prune or chasten us, just as the skilful gardener requires to prune the tree which has no reasoning power to guide it.

The sole object of our studies should be to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed. The development of the different branches of knowledge should be so controlled that we may grow on them the fruit of love. That is what the branches are for; and the reason why there are so many branches, is that there may be the more fruit.

We require to exercise control, especially in regard to the branches of secular knowledge. In the natural fruit tree the lowest branches tend to grow towards the earth. After the same fashion the branches of secular knowledge are prone to grow

FF348 earthwards. We should remember not to cultivate these branches simply for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, nor for earthly purposes other than our daily vocation (and then to as restricted an extent as possible), but only in order to understand God's Word, and so help our spiritual growth. It is best to be content for the most part with what secular knowledge we possessed before we became New Creatures in Christ Jesus. The more time and energy we devote to the cultivation of secular branches, the more our spiritual growth is apt to become stunted, and our fruitage of love of poor quality.

The brethren can be of assistance to one another in this matter.

For instance, from my former study of the secular branch of botany, I am endeavoring to explain to you the Psalmist's meaning and through this the Apostle Peter's exhortation, so that your and my own spiritual growth may be aided.

We have seen, then, that a tree which is not pruned runs to wood. It may become large and imposing, but its fruit is scanty and of poor quality. So is it with the New Creature if he does not exercise self-control. "Knowledge puffeth up but love buildeth up."

Self-control must be exercised also in order to keep the body under, so that we may not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our mind to prove what is the good and acceptable will of God.

Self-control is needed so that we may not be unduly cast down by our failures, nor exalted by our successes. It is needed to prevent us from being turned aside from the narrow way by rebuffs or persecutions, or from becoming filled with pride because of flatteries.

Add to your Self-Control, Patience

We cannot develop patience until we are able to exercise self control. This quality of patience is represented by the leaves of the tree. You may say: "That is very strange. What is there about the leaves of a tree which enables them to represent patience? Leaves will grow on a tree though it has not been pruned." That is true and here again the analogy between the tree and the New Creature fails, but there are several points of close resemblance between the leaves of a tree and the patience of the man of God.

FF349 If you see a tree without leaves at a time when you expect them, you say at once: "I am afraid that that tree is dying," and if you have any interest in it, you water it, in order, if possible, to give it life. But if you see that it has a profusion of green leaves you say: "Ah! There is plenty of life in that tree," and if it is a fruit tree you expect to get good fruit by and by. So it is with the New Creature. If you see a man of God who has not developed this quality of patience at a time when you should have expected it, you say: "I am afraid he is dying spiritually." Then you give him the water of truth and pray for him, and help him as much as you can, in order, if possible, to give him life. (Jas.5:20; **1Jo 5:16**) On the other hand, once you see patience developed, you say he has spiritual life in him and the more patience he has the more spiritual life you think he has, and the more you expect that in due time the ripe fruit of love will make its appearance.

There are two special qualities possessed by the leaves of a tree which cause it to resemble patience. One is their mobility, and the other is the fact that they absorb Carbonic Acid gas, and split it up into Carbon and Oxygen. The Carbon is then used for the growth of the tree, and the Oxygen, that element of the atmosphere which sustains the life of man and the lower animals, is given off into the air.

(1) You know how mobile are the leaves of a tree. When a puff of wind comes the leaves all bend under it, and then, when it has passed, they recover themselves immediately as if nothing had happened. In this respect the leaves differ markedly from the trunk of a well developed tree. The trunk represents our fortitude, our firmness to principles; the leaves on the other hand, represent our patience, our yielding to troubles and trials where no principle is at stake.

Just as in the case of the well developed natural tree the strong trunk, together with the firm hold which the root has in the ground, prevents the tree from being uprooted by any strong wind or other cause, so the mature man of God, because of his deep faith and strong courage in the Lord (not in himself), is able to stand firm against the wind of any false doctrine or anything else intended by the Adversary to cause him to swerve from his duty to the Lord. We are told that the servant of the

FF350 Lord must not strive, but we are told also that he must contend earnestly for "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." (Jud 3, R.V.) Very different from this is the quality of patience. There are plenty of trials which come to us from without which do not affect matters of principle. In such cases we must yield, we must exercise patience.

Remember the example of our Lord Jesus. When the truth was at stake, when he was tempted to turn aside from the will of God, nothing could make him swerve. Knowing that the Lord would help him, he set his face like a flint; and he knew that he would not be confounded. (Isa 50:7) He had strong fortitude, but at the same time he had infinite patience. His persecutions and adversities he bore meekly, patiently. When he was reviled, he reviled not again, and he allowed himself to be scourged, spat upon and sneered at, without retaliating.

(2) The other quality possessed by the leaves is the power of absorbing Carbonic Acid gas, splitting it up into Carbon and Oxygen, assimilating the former and returning the latter to the atmosphere. All the Carbon (Charcoal) in the tree is extracted from the atmosphere and it is the leaves alone which do this wonderful and laborious work. Yet Carbon forms one half the dry weight of a tree. It is represented chiefly in the woody fibre which gives strength to its various parts. This reminds us that it is only when we have the quality of patience that we can add moral fibre to our spiritual being, and so develop strength of character. That is why the Apostle James urges us to let patience have her perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing.

On the under surface of leaves there are a great many little pores called stomata (mouths), through which the Carbonic Acid gas is absorbed into the leaves and the Oxygen is liberated into the atmosphere. Little particles, called Chlorophyll granules, which give the green color to the leaves, seize hold of the Carbonic Acid gas the moment it enters, and split it up into its component parts, one part of Carbon and two of Oxygen.

The Carbon is assimilated to give strength to the various parts of the tree. The two parts of Oxygen, on the other hand, escape into the air. Thus plants absorb Carbonic Acid gas, and give off Oxygen.

In the case of human beings and the lower animals, the process

FF351 is exactly reversed. Through their lungs they absorb Oxygen and exhale Carbonic Acid gas. Oxygen is life giving to man and animals, and Carbonic Acid gas is poisonous to them, and if there were no plants the atmosphere would soon become exhausted of Oxygen and surcharged with Carbonic Acid gas, and all flesh would die. How wonderful is the wisdom of God in this interchange and balance of nature.

There is the same relationship between natural and spiritual men as there is between animals and plants. The atmosphere in which trees and animals live, represents our environment, the circumstances amidst which our lives are spent. The Oxygen would fitly represent those circumstances which conduce to material prosperity, and the Carbonic Acid gas those which lead to material adversity. The natural man thrives on material prosperity, just as he thrives on Oxygen. It is life giving to him.

Just see the effect produced on a man by giving him an increase of salary and a better position. Doesn't he thrive! Doesn't he enjoy himself! The more prosperous he is in a natural sense, the more he comes to think that the evil in this world has been overrated. But suppose earthly adversity comes, he is at once cast down. Should his adversity increase, so does his depression, and with its continuance he becomes more and more dejected and despondent, till in extreme cases he falls into such a state of despair that he may finally commit suicide. Thus, material adversity, like Carbonic Acid gas is poisonous to the natural man. "The sorrow of the world worketh death."

With the spiritual man, the New Creature in Christ Jesus, the reverse condition obtains. If the New Creature received no physical, financial, or social adversity, he would wither away spiritually. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." He requires adversity for his spiritual growth. By means of his patience, he splits it up, takes the good out of it in order to add moral fibre to his being, and gives off the double portion of prosperity to others.

There is thus the same interchange and balance between the man of God and the man of the world as there is between plants and animals. Just as men and animals absorb Oxygen and exhale Carbonic Acid gas, and trees on the contrary, absorb Carbonic Acid gas and emit Oxygen, just so worldly men, while

FF352 themselves thriving on material prosperity, inflict adversity on those who are endeavoring to live godly in Christ Jesus, and the latter, instead of being injured by the experience, make use of every earthly

adversity which comes to them to do good to the world as they have opportunity, while at the same time they add to their own spiritual strength and sustain their own spiritual life. Jesus, speaking to his disciples, said: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you. The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." (Joh 15:18-25) But by returning good for evil, blessing those that curse them, doing good to those that hate them, and praying for those who despitefully use them, the footstep followers of the gentle Jesus reprove the world of sin, and exercise a preservative influence over the world, preventing it from going rapidly into deeper moral degradation and death.

Jesus declared this truth when, after telling his followers that God's true prophets had always been persecuted for righteousness' sake, and bidding them rejoice and be exceeding glad when they were reviled and persecuted for his sake, he added: "Ye are the salt of the earth." (Mt 5:10-13) Just as salt exercises a preservative influence on flesh, and as plants exercise a preservative influence on animals, so the saints of God have all along exercised a preservative influence on the world, for the few righteous men in the world have preserved it from destruction. That is what Paul meant when he quoted Isaiah: "Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah." (Ro 9:29) It was because there were not even ten righteous men in Sodom that the Lord destroyed it.-Ge 18:16-32 Before leaving this part of our subject, I should like to draw your attention to two other points of importance. The first is that the proportion of Carbonic Acid gas in the atmosphere is very small, only one five-hundredth that of Oxygen. So is it also in the spiritual atmosphere of the New Creature. The proportion of adversity is, as a rule, much less than that of prosperity.

Consequently we must be careful not to waste any of it.

The other point is that the Carbonic Acid gas is absorbed

FF353 and split up only under the influence of the light and warmth which comes from the sun. During the night time this action entirely ceases. In the same way, it is only when the New Creature is under the influence of God's light and warmth, his wisdom and love emanating from the Gospel, that he can get the good out of every adversity by means of his patience. "Ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God."-Jud 20,21

Add to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, Love of the Brethren; and to Love of the Brethren, Love

The tree is now well grown, root, trunk, and branches, it has been pruned and trained, and it has produced a profusion of fresh, green leaves. We can picture before our minds just such a strong beautiful character, full of spiritual life and energy, giving grateful shelter to man and beast. Full of faith, and with a strong courage in the Lord, he is not afraid to speak about Christ, and model his life according to his conception of Christ.

Not only does he know the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, but he can expound it to others and make plain to them the mysteries of God. Indeed, so numerous and extensive may be the branches of knowledge which he has cultivated that he may have been called to be the pastor of a large and wealthy congregation, or the occupant of a chair in some theological college. Such a character as this would surely be the admiration of all who know him, but even this may not be the sum of all his virtues. His self-control may be such that he is able to keep calm in all circumstances, to keep his body under, and to so arrange his reading and observation that he studies only such subjects and these in such a way that his spiritual growth may be increased. Lastly, his patience may be so perfect that he is able to endure adversity, reviling, and persecution, be strengthened in character by the trials to which he is exposed, and return good for evil. Surely, you would say, such a beautiful character as that would be fit for the Kingdom of heaven.

No, dear brethren, something more is necessary before he can be accepted as a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. If with all these excellent qualities he has not in his due season grown love, God

FF354 will cut him down as of no further use. Strange, is it? No, we never grow fruit trees for their foliage; we grow fruit trees for their fruit. If the good that a man does to others is at the best merely the outcome of his faith, knowledge, and patience, and in order to build up his usual spiritual character, if he does not reach the stage when the good he does to others is the outcome of love for them and for God, he has not fulfilled the purpose for which God had chosen him. Love must be the motive underlying all our words and actions before God will recognize us as having cultivated the fruit of holiness. It is only to such as develop this God-like quality of love that the Lord will say in his own time: "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."

Paul gives this thought in the beautiful words of 1Co 13:1-3: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

Just as a fruit tree in addition to its leaves must develop buds, blossoms, and lastly fruit, in order to justify its existence, so the man of God must add to his patience godliness, to his godliness love of the brethren, and to his love of the brethren, love. The godliness is represented by the buds, the love of the brethren is represented by the blossoms, and the love by the fruit. The bud, the blossom and the fruit represent three stages, the ultimate one being the fruit, that for which the tree is grown; in the same way godliness, love of the brethren and love represent three stages, the ultimate one being love in the all-comprehensive sense, the fruit for which the New Creature is trained and developed.

Add to your Patience, Godliness

Some claim that godliness means God-likeness. It is true that the root meaning is God-likeness, but this is an example of the

FF355 error into which one may fall by insisting too strongly on the root meaning of words. Godliness is one of many words which have changed their meaning in the course of time. If it meant God-likeness, it would not be necessary to add to it love of the brethren and love, because God is love, and if we are like God we should have reached the mark of love in its all-comprehensive sense, the mark of perfect love. The Greek word translated "godliness" in the verse which we are considering is "eusebeia," which means piety, reverence for God. Our English word "godliness" in its usual meaning is, therefore, a good translation of the Greek term.

That is the bud, the first stage in the formation of the fruit of love. The man who has reached only this stage is not so attractive as one who has added to his godliness love of the brethren. The bud is a little hard, green thing. The germ of the blossom and fruit is there, but it is hidden from sight, covered over with a hard capsule, and if you were to put the bud into your mouth, you would find it rather bitter, unpleasant to the taste.

Those who have reached the stage of godliness may be expected in due time to develop the fruit of love, but so far they have only the beginning of it.

The Scottish race of two or three generations ago formed an illustration of the effect of this grace of godliness. These men had great reverence for God, and love for righteousness. They had what we might call

the duty love, a desire to obey God's commandments. They were honest in their business and in all their affairs of life, and were very strict with their children.

They were respected by everyone, but like the germ in the bud, their love, although it was there, was hidden. It was considered a sign of weakness to show their love, or to be demonstrative in any way. The features of these men, as may be noticed in their portraits, or in the faces of the few who are still alive, were hard and stern. These characteristics may to some extent be natural to the Scottish race, but I believe they were chiefly the result of their Calvinistic training. A man who is sincere, always tries to be like the god whom he worships, and the Calvinistic god is stern, unlovable.

Add to your Godliness, Love of the Brethren

Godliness is a good quality, but it is only the budstage, the

FF356 first or duty stage of love. Those who come to know God better will add to their godliness love of the brethren. This is represented by the blossom.

Just as there comes a time when the petals which are forming inside the bud become so large that one fine morning, through the kindly influence of the sun's light and warmth, they burst the hard capsule and the bud becomes a blossom, so there comes a time in the development of the New Creature, who is being conformed to the image of Christ, when, through the influence of the wisdom and love of God which shines from the pages of the Gospel the love which is growing in his heart bursts the reserve which has hitherto restrained it, and he finds that he has added to his godliness or duty love, love of the brethren.

That which helps the Christian most is the Lord's new commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you," and John's explanation of this in his first epistle, 1Joh 3:16: "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."-R.V.

A tree in blossom is peculiarly attractive. Its beauty and its fragrant odor appeal to us. Is it not exactly the same with many dear brothers and sisters of our acquaintance? Their beauty of character and the sweet smelling savor of their many self sacrificing acts of kindness appeal to us. We are attracted to them. Is it not the same with any company of the Lord's brethren who present the beauty and fragrant odor of brotherly love? Many have told me that the first thing which attracted them to the truth was the love manifest among the brethren.

But remember that "the [natural] heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Our hearts will sometimes tell us that we have developed this grace of brotherly love when we have not done so. So long as the germ is shut up inside a hard capsule of reserve, we have reached only the bud stage. It is not until the petals have burst open the hard covering that we can truly say we have reached the blossom stage. To have reached the blossom stage of love of the brethren our love must be seen.

It must not be shut up within our hearts but must be manifested by kind, loving words and many little, and possibly some great self-sacrificing acts of love. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have love one to another." But how are

FF357 all men to know it, unless they see us manifest this love? If they do see it, and especially if they see it in trying circumstances when they would least expect it, then they will know that we are Jesus' disciples.

Remember to say often to yourselves: "Have I this love shut up in my heart?-If so, I have only developed the bud of godliness."

Or: "Am I showing the brethren my love by my words and actions?-If so, I am glad, for that means that I

have developed into the blossom stage, and soon I should expect to develop the fruit of all comprehensive love." Remember that to love a brother means that you will tell him so; but it means also something more, as the Apostle says: "Love not in word [only], but in deed and in truth." (1Jo 3:18) Dear Brethren, let us all pray to God that he will enable us not only to have thoughts and desires in the direction of loving our brethren in Christ with a pure heart fervently, but that we shall love them as Christ loved us, namely, by laying down our lives for them in the way he did, no matter whether they are kind and loving to us in return, or are speaking evil of us and are unkind toward us. Let us remember that we are all still in the flesh and liable to err.

This brings us to a special point of likeness between the blossoms of trees and this love of the brethren. The blossoms lay down their lives for one another. It so happens that God has formed them in such a way that no blossom can fertilize itself, for the pollen, the life giving part of the flower, ripens first. It is not until the pollen has been cast off that the germ inside ripens, ready to receive and be fertilized by the pollen from other blossoms. When it has been fertilized, the petals fall off and the fruit begins to grow. How does the pollen get to the other blossoms? It is by means of insects which flit about from flower to flower, carrying the pollen with them on their legs and bodies. They do this, not for the purpose of fertilizing the blossoms, but in order to suck the sweetness out of them.

That is exactly what happens to us. When we have blossomed forth into love of the brethren, we are a mark for Satan. He is not the adversary of the world, for the whole world, we are told, already lies in the wicked one (1Jo 5:19, R.V.), but he is the adversary of those who show the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love; and the more we manifest love of the brethren, the more

FF358 we are a prey for Satan. It is he who sends along the insects of trouble to suck the sweetness out of our lives and to carry away our vitality.

Insects, many of them, are beautiful to look at; frequently they appear quite insignificant; but let one of these creatures alight upon our hand or neck or other exposed part of our body, and begin to crawl over us, how disgusted we feel! Instinctively we brush them off or try to kill them. Dear brethren, these insects represent the trials which come to the New Creature. When they visit some of the other brethren, they do not look so very bad, they appear to us sometimes almost insignificant, but let them alight upon us, and at once we find how very disagreeable they are, much more so than we had expected. Instinctively we try to get rid of them, but just as with insects, the more we fight against them the worse, as a rule, they become, and the majority of them are poisonous.

In sending us trials for the purpose of sucking the sweetness out of our lives, and poisoning us, Satan succeeds so far as the body is concerned. Our pollen, our human vitality, goes with the trials. But it is just here that Satan defeats his own ends, because by these same trials, the New Creature is strengthened in character, and learns how to sympathize with others who are passing through similar experiences. We are being prepared in the same way that Jesus was prepared, for "it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb 2:10) The trials with which God permitted Satan to tempt our Lord Jesus were the same as those which we endure. He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."-Heb 4:15 The more trials we have, if we are rightly exercised by them, the better we are enabled to sympathize with our brethren in their sufferings, not only with those of them who are rejoicing in the light of present truth, but also with such as are still in bondage in the nominal system, or are out in the wilderness condition disgusted with all professions of religion. The more we sympathize with them, the more of our time, money, talents, influence, and energies do we surrender for their temporal and especially for their spiritual interests. We do not consider ourselves first

FF359 and our brethren afterwards, but the reverse of this. We lay down our lives, our human vitality, for them, just as the blossoms lay down their lives for one another.

One very important fact to remember is that the blossoms have nothing whatever to do with sending the insects to other blossoms. Though we know that the trials which come to us as New Creatures work together for our spiritual good, and are therefore essential for us, we have nothing to do with putting trials upon others. As Jesus said: "It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto him through whom the offence cometh!" The Lord will permit Satan and all who are willing to be his agents to place trials upon the brethren, knowing that these will act as tests for them, and, if rightly used, will enable them to become more developed spiritually, but the Lord's vengeance will surely come sooner or later upon all "through whom the offence cometh." God forbid that any of us should act as agents of Satan in this or any other way! If we should happen to be led into placing trials upon the brethren, let us confess our sins at the throne of grace and endeavor to make amends for the wrong we have committed.

Add to your Love of the Brethren, Love

Just as the blossom, which has given up its sweetness and vitality, is ready to be fertilized and become developed into fruit through further visits of the insects bearing the pollen from other blossoms, so the New Creature who has through trials lost much of the sweetness and vitality of his human life, and is laying down his life for the brethren is ready to develop from love of the brethren into love in its all-comprehensive sense through the visitation of still further trials, and through the sympathetic assistance of his brethren who are laying down their lives for him. In this way he learns to sympathize not only with his brethren in Christ Jesus, but also with the world of mankind, and finally with his enemies.

(1) While endeavoring to love righteousness and obey God (duty love), he discovers how very frail he is, and how much he desires others to make allowance for his failings.

(2) This teaches him to make allowance for the frailties of the brethren, and enables

FF360 him to learn how to love them (brotherly love). He finds how much good he can do himself and them by bearing patiently with them and treating them kindly, lovingly, even though to do so he requires to sacrifice what he might justly call his rights.

(3) In this way, through these further trials and through the help which he himself receives from the brethren who are laying down their lives for him, he becomes, so to speak, fertilized, and develops the fruit of love (all comprehensive love). He finds that he is now able to sympathize with both friends and enemies, to make large allowances for their many failings, and to do them good as he has opportunity, for "love covers the multitude of sins." In this way he is getting himself ready to reign with Christ and bless the world.

The best way to overcome your enemies is to be kind to them.

Very few enemies can withstand persistent kindness, if your love for them is unfeigned. The fruit of love implies love for God, love for righteousness, love for the brethren, love for mankind in general, love for enemies, love for everything except evil. It is love in the all-comprehensive sense of the term. When we have reached that stage, we have reached the mark of perfect love.

This does not mean, however, that there is now no more room for development. At first the fruit is small, hard, green, wrinkled, and of unpleasant odor and bitter taste. When eaten, it is apt to be rejected. That represents the quality of our love at the first. In due time, if all goes well, the unripe fruit gives place to the ripe fruit, large, soft, and velvety to the touch. It is pleasant to the eyes, the odor is fragrant, and when eaten it is delicious and good for food. That is how our love is when it is ripe.

If the fruit is left on the tree, insects attack it just as they attacked the blossoms, and by and by it falls to the ground and withers away. But there is something left; there are seeds inside, which, when sown, produce other trees. So it is with the man of God. Trials come upon him to the end; and, then, when he falls in death

he will in due time be associated with Christ in bringing forth other trees of righteousness. That is how it was with Jesus, as he said: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (Joh 12:24) It has been estimated that the proportion of the dead to

FF361 be raised will be 144,000 to each of the members of Christ's body.

Before closing, there are two further points to which I desire to draw your attention. (1) When a seed is sown, the root does not grow and spread out in every direction and become very large before the stem begins to grow, and the stem does not continue growing until it has reached its full development before the branches begin to appear, and so with the other parts of the tree.

So, also, we do not find faith reaching its full development before fortitude becomes manifest, nor fortitude before knowledge, etc. What we do find is, as in the case of the tree, that all the graces enumerated by the Apostle Peter appear in the order mentioned by him, within a comparatively short period, varying with the individual, and that then, year by year, they continue to grow more or less quickly.

(2) The other point to be remembered is, that if you sow a seed in the ground, and nobody takes care of it, the result may be that a fruit tree will grow there, but the fruit which grows on that wild tree will be of very poor quality, and the tree itself will be stunted, badly developed. On the other hand, if the tree be attended to by a skilful gardener, it will grow fully and symmetrically, and its fruit will be large, soft, and luscious.

Compare, for instance, the crab apple tree with the properly cultivated apple tree. It is the same with the New Creature.

However anxious we may be that we shall produce fruit in our season and that our leaf shall not wither, no anxiety or exertion on our part will give the desired result apart from the loving care of the Lord, the husbandman. Unlike a tree, we have intelligence and are left largely to the freedom of our will. If we withdraw ourselves from the Lord's care, our spiritual growth will be stunted, and our fruitage of love will be small and of poor quality. The more we surrender ourselves to him, and the less we rely upon ourselves, the better will be our spiritual growth, and the better fruit we shall be able to grow. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." (1Pe 5:6,7) Amen.