

A brother who was at one time pastor of the "Christian Church" in Boston, and whose attention had been directed to the doctrine of eternal torment, thus writes of the sympathetic view of that doctrine. We give you extracts:

"In pursuing the subject [eternal torment] I found no relief from the arguments or considerations advanced by the advocates of eternal woe respecting the sympathies of the righteous. Take for example the sentiments uttered by Jonathan Edwards:

"The woes of sinners in hell will not be a cause of grief to the saints in heaven—but of rejoicing. This rejoicing will be the fruit of an amiable disposition, and a perfect holiness, and a conformity to Christ. At the judgment you may be ready to fly to some godly friend, but you will see them unconcerned for you, with joy ascending to meet the Lord, and not less joyful for the horror in which they see you. When THEY HEAR you GROAN and SIGH and GNASH YOUR TEETH, these things will not MOVE them to pity you. After your godly parents shall have seen you lie in hell millions of years, or ages, in torment day and night, they will not begin to pity you then. They will praise God that his justice appears in the eternity of your misery. The torments in hell will be immeasurably greater

than being in a GLOWING OVEN, BRICK KILN, OR FURNACE."

"My soul sickened at such sentiments. It seemed to me that none but a monomaniac upon the subject could so write or believe. Scholastic theology may calmly reason of eternal woe; but when we examine the subject in the light of the fact that we, our families, friends, and fellow-men, as beings of sensitive natures, keenly alive to mental and physical suffering, are exposed to such a peril as the dogma of eternal misery asserts, one may indeed attempt to receive, or imagine it as true; but as Bp. Newton has well said, 'Seriously believe it you cannot!' It would be a perversion of human nature to do so, to say nothing of the spirit of Christianity.

"Our heavenly Father has taught us by both precept and example to be 'kind to the unthankful and unholy' in this life, and our hearts are easily roused by the sufferings of our common humanity. But, we are told, in the world to come we shall behold countless myriads of the lost in the torments of hell, as 'in an unfathomable sea of liquid fire, where the wicked must drink in everlasting torture,' and not feel one sympathetic emotion, or our happiness be for a moment marred by the terrible scene!"

VIEW FROM THE TOWER

We see darkness lifting in certain directions and with certain classes. The dawning light of truth which soon shall flood the world and permeate the present recesses of error and sin, is even now growing a little more grey as the darker shadows flee.

The interest in truth in general, upon all subjects, is spreading daily, and upon the most weighty and important subject of religion it is making rapid strides. Of course this does not apply so fully to the more advanced religious truths. But even of these advanced truths we may say, that they are making rapid strides among the truly consecrated, i. e., among those consecrated to God only, and not to a sect.

The TOWER goes into over 10,000 families monthly, and though some in those families bitterly oppose it, it is steadily commending the truth to the consecrated, and hundreds of hearts and hands are daily contriving ways for spreading its message of the justice, wisdom, power, and love, of our God.

The TOWER goes monthly to about 800 ministers of various denominations, and though some take it in secret and send us the names of fellow ministers to whom to send sample copies, who would not be known as the sender; and some preach long and loud against the "glad tidings," yet the truth is spreading and is affecting, directly and indirectly to some extent, the utterances of probably one-third the pulpits of this land and many in England. There is no resisting it; for it is of God. The King is present and is leading his truth, long trampled in the dust, to certain victory.

We mentioned in a recent issue that there are nearly two millions of Swedes in this country, among whom are many earnest Christians some of whom are becoming interested in "this way." We mentioned also the desire to furnish such, a tract similar in substance to our issue, No. 4, Vol. 4, of TOWER, and the establishment of a FUND for this special purpose. Some are now inquiring about it, and though we have to report but a small sum, yet it was mostly subscribed during August; and a few more months similar would enable us to publish at once. The fund now contains \$153.08. We lay before you as usual extracts from a few

INTERESTING LETTERS

Marion, Iowa.

DEAR EDITOR:—A gentleman called at my study a few days ago, and I received of him a little pamphlet entitled, "Food for Thinking Christians." I did not think the pamphlet of much importance at the time, but from curiosity more than anything else. I began to read it, and I soon found that the title was not a misnomer, but that it was indeed food for thinking Christians. I have not finished reading it yet. Some facts, I think, will bear re-reading. I find in it many new and valuable ideas, and, as I am bound by no man-made creed, I am at perfect liberty to receive them.

Many of the positions are new to me, and as beautiful as they are new. Part VIII., on "The Narrow Way to Life," advances some new thoughts in regard to Christ that thoroughly revolutionize my former notions.

Well, I simply thought I would drop you a line to say I am being greatly profited by this little pamphlet, and I wish you God-speed in the good work of teaching the living oracles.

In the one Hope,

\_\_\_\_\_, M.D.

Pineville, Mo.

MY DEAR BRO. RUSSELL:—By a fortuitous circumstance, which, however, I regard as providential, ZION'S WATCH TOWER was brought to my attention, and I was much astonished to think I had lived so long on the outskirts of civilization without knowing what was going on. I have been waiting and trusting, a little like the old prophet Elijah, almost thinking I was left alone, when to my astonishment I learn from the TOWER that a work is going on, and thousands are yet in existence who do not bow the knee to the image of Baal or Babylon.

I have passed my three-score years and ten, and three over. I was indoctrinated into the faith of Christ and consecrated to the service of God in my twenty-third year. Having drank deeply at an early period of the sentiments that seem to pervade the TOWER, I turned away from the doctrines of men, and regarded myself measurably as standing alone. I have written much upon the heavenly theme, as well as spoken much, but, to all appearances, to no avail. I appeared to address an unappreciative people. But now, as two drops of water, if placed in close proximity, will flow together by the law of affinity, so is my joy enlarged, and my heart goes out to you, my brother.

Having waded through many vicissitudes through a long life, and now standing on the verge of the grave, as it were, I cannot expect to reach the period which will usher in the reign of the Christ of God. But, be this as it may, I have a well-grounded hope that, whether living or dead, I shall stand in my lot at the end of the days; when all tears shall be wiped away, and when his suffering and waiting saints—the body, the bride of Christ—shall be received and installed into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Will you please send me the TOWER? Being decrepit with age, I am unable to work much, and can scarcely meet the demands of nature, food and raiment, and if you will so regard it, I am one of the Lord's poor. From what I can learn, the circulation of the TOWER is great, and what astonishes me is to think that a work of such magnitude and of such a character has grown up without my knowledge. I wish to learn more of it. You speak of the flock as being small; this however, is not strange to me, but how small or how large are matters of my present solicitude. . . .

Your brother in Christ,

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Moe's River.

BRO. RUSSELL—Dear Sir: While visiting friends, not long since, I saw the WATCH TOWER for the first time. My friend gave me some numbers of the TOWER, also "Food for Thinking Christians." I am highly delighted with them.

I am, and have been for twenty-five years, a minister of the Gospel, but have not dug after truth as much as I might. I want to know more of these things. O, what good, blessed gospel truths I find in "Food for Thinking Christians." Will you be so kind as to write me as soon as possible, and send me as many papers as you can, not only for myself, but for others, who are just now hungering and thirsting after righteousness?

I am yours, &c.,

## SHACKLES BREAKING

The following is the brief report of a sermon of a Presbyterian minister of this city, delivered to his congregation not long since and clipped by us from a Pittsburgh daily paper. It serves to show the drift of intelligent thought on certain subjects. Though this Brother shows in this sermon no evidence that he understands God's plan or has any special insight to the teachings of Scripture on the subjects, yet it does show that he has a *reasonable mind* and is honest enough to express his convictions in a manner which, to say the least, must endanger his title, honors and salary in Babylon.

We pray that the Lord may guide him into the truth more and more. As he gives evidence of some reason and candor, two indispensable qualities for growth in grace and knowledge, if he also be *wholly* consecrated to the Lord and not to a sect, or creed, so that he shall rejoice to sacrifice *all* for the truth, counting not his life dear unto him, then doubtless he will be owned and esteemed of God proportionately as he becomes disowned and dishonored by a worldly system, called the Church, but which is now given up and "spued out." The extract is as follows:

"Yesterday morning the Rev. E. R. Donehoo delivered a sermon which is at variance with the old and accepted idea of the future life. The following extracts give an idea of the Reverend gentleman's views:

"For the work of a man shall he render unto him and cause every man to find according to his ways. Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment."—Job 34:11-12.

"The old doctrine of the literal hell of fire and brimstone is not very strenuously urged even by the most rigidly orthodox in these days. Nor has the surrender of this idea been followed by a declining confidence in the authority of Scripture. It cannot be denied that in proportion as the harsh and cruel dogmas of Christian doctrine which once were the constitutional elements of every pulpit discourse, are abandoned, the beauty and harmony of Divine truth begins to appear. There was a time not very far distant when the chief argument employed in persuading men to give up sin, was in so picturing the condition of the lost in hell as to inspire the impenitent with terror and thus drive them through sheer fright into the fold of believers. The idea of present reward, from the pursuit of that which is in itself good and true and virtuous was scarcely ever brought into view. Through the influence of such instruction, it became the settled conviction amongst a large class that one or the other fate awaits every one immediately at death: Hell with its unmitigated miseries or Heaven with its unmingled joys. To have failed of the heavenly standard, even in the slightest degree, is to plunge into the deepest and most hopeless abyss of hell eternally. To have spent a lifetime in open and defiant rebellion against God, and yet in the final hour to have repented and sued for mercy is to escape every torment of the damned and to attain to all the bliss in store for the righteous.

"Such are the teachings with which sinners have too often been terrorized and saints regaled. All this may be good theology, which I doubt, but of this I feel perfectly assured that it is out of all proportion to the ordinary views of justice and equity, and utterly out of accord with the dictates of enlightened reason. If human courts should undertake to administer the law on any such principle, the judges would be held up to public scorn and society would rise up with the one common impulse to protest against such a partial, unjust and inhuman method of procedure. The punishment must have some relation to the enormity of the offense.

"The great error with too many religious teachers has been that they have constructed their theology, so far at least as heaven and hell are concerned, not from the word of God, the only reliable authority at hand, but from the distorted and ghastly visions of Dante, or the equally grotesque and wholly unreliable imaginings of Milton, or the monstrous conceits so characteristic of the revivalists of the last century.

"The rule laid down by Christ is the safe one and in harmony with every portion of revealed truth: "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." The application of this rule should set at rest forever the delusion so often entertained that God will dispense indiscriminate rewards to His friends and indiscriminate punishments to all who have broken his law. The doctrine taught by Christ is that the more light the greater will be the punishableness of sin. To the Pharisee of his time he said: "If ye were blind ye should have no sin, but now ye say 'we see,' therefore your sin remaineth." And James bears like testimony: "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Knowledge carries corresponding responsibility. "If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." From this we learn that a knowledge of the gospel brings with it a responsibility to accept it.

"While increased knowledge brings with it increased responsibility it must not be therefore inferred that mere ignorance will of itself constitute an excuse. The ignorance may be self-incurred, it may be guilt, neglect of available opportunities to inform oneself, in which case no mitigation in the punishment may be expected.

"What is true of punishment is as true of rewards. The reward will be in proportion to the service done and work rendered and character sustained and duty discharged. Each man here and now is determining for himself what degree of misery or happiness shall be meted out to him in the eternal world. And however strictly the great Judge will punish every transgression, I have no fear that Satan's dominions will bear any proportion to those of an omnipotent King. After sin has been thoroughly punished and every rebel consigned to his doom the redeemed shall be made up of all ages and climes, innumerable as the sands of the sea shore, not one excluded from heaven's joys in the end, but those who deliberately invoked their awful doom."

## FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

"If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:8.

Good works and knowledge are so closely related that it is useless to think of separating them; they are produced by the same Spirit. Believing this, the Tower seeks to present the deep things of God not to a worldly class, but to the consecrated, in whom the fruits of the Spirit are being produced, realizing that the natural man [the unconsecrated] 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. (1 Cor. 2:14.)

Wherever, therefore, and in proportion as we find the fruits of the Spirit, we expect to find the *Spirit* which produced those fruits. And all possessing this Spirit and using it, will be able not only to grow in grace but in knowledge also, and shall be neither barren nor *unfruitful in the KNOWLEDGE* of our Lord.

This statement of the inspired Apostle, that a man cannot be *fruitful* in the graces and barren in the knowledge of the Lord, may and should astound some who boast of their graces and freely admit their ignorance of the Lord and his plans.

Many who seem to be religious have only a *form* of godliness, a form of faith, a form of patience, a form of charity, a form of brotherly kindness. May we not, on Peter's authority, safely set it down that those graces are like clusters of grapes tied on to thorn bushes and not the *real fruit* of the vine, if we find not *with* them that essential favor of God—

a "*knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ?" May we not conclude that such, if ever purged from sin by faith in the sin sacrifice, have been blinded by the God of this world, and "cannot see afar off"—cannot grasp or appreciate the things future in the unfolding of our Father's plan. (Verse 9 and Jno. 16:13.)

The Apostle continues, verse 10: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." As though he said on this account you must criticise yourselves very closely to see that you are developing the real fruits of the Spirit, remembering the test I have given you, that the real fruits will have among them, prominently, an increasing *knowledge* of our Lord—a close, intimate acquaintance and communion with him—in which he will reveal *himself* to us by showing us "things to come."

Nor can the *knowledge* fruit be obtained independent of the other fruits—[though a parrot-like *form* of knowledge might exist without the others, it should be thus recognized as only the *form*—because these various fruits are results of the same spirit or sap. And if one of these fruits withers and dies, it indicates that the supply of sap is being cut off, that the spirit is being lost by that branch, and surely indicates that all the fruits are withering and dying. Let all these fruits be in you and *abound*; quench not the Spirit. "For if you do [bear all] these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (Verses 10, 11.)

But, does some one suggest, that thus making *knowledge* one of the necessary fruits of the Spirit would exclude from the spiritual class many ministers and others? We reply, that while *knowledge* is essential, it does not follow that the knowledge must be *perfect*. It has pleased our Father to permit a veil of error to be drawn across his plan—

“Which veils and darkens His designs.”

And only as it becomes *due time* does he remove that veil gradually, finally completely finishing “*the Mystery of God.*” Hence, *knowledge* as a fruit of the Spirit, could never here-

before reach the same size which it *now* may and *should* attain. God expects the size of this fruit to be proportionate with its opportunities and possibilities. As an illustration—we refer you to the words of Albert Barnes, quoted in another column. These prove that what he knew of God's character, as revealed through nature and in our Lord Jesus, had won his heart, so that, in comparison, the errors of that man-made theology were irreconcilable. As the due time for these mists to be cleared away has come we should expect all such to advance in the shining path.

## ACCEPTABLE WITH GOD

“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.”—Psa. 19:7,14.

In the midst of the trying scenes of this day of the Lord how necessary that all the little company of consecrated ones should continually breathe this prayer. Doubtless all feel the almost overwhelming force with which the tide of innumerable temptations are brought to bear against them. To some the world presents unusual attractions, to some business brings increasing cares, to some error presents its most plausible and deluding forms, and to others weariness in the conflict with temptations within and without calls for rest and inactivity; and because iniquity abounds the love of many waxes cold.

The inspired Psalmist not only puts this prayer in our mouth, but he suggests the means by which we may be acceptable to God, recommending the Word of the Lord as able to bring about this desired result, saying: “The law (margin—doctrine) of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul”—bringing us back to a condition of harmony with God. Without a close study of the teaching of our Father's Word it is impossible to do or think those things that are pleasing in his sight. “The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” Those who come to the Word of the Lord in simplicity of heart, with no other desire than to know his will, shall surely obtain the heavenly wisdom.

“The statutes (precepts—teachings) of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart—imparting the necessary stimulus to enable us to stem the tide of opposition. “The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes”—giving us the right ideas of justice, love, etc. “The fear of the Lord is

clean, enduring forever.” Filial fear of the Lord, which dreads to do anything to break the existing harmony, is a right and proper fear, not a slavish fear; and this loving fear will endure forever between those whose hearts are thus in harmony with God.

“The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.” His judgments as to right and wrong in any matter are always correct. If we cannot trust our own warped and erring judgment, we may always find a clear and unmistakable expression of our Father's unerring judgments in his precious Word.

“More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” We should thus appreciate and search for our Father's judgments, our Father's expressions of justice and right and truth. “Moreover, by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward.” We are warned against the danger and errors into which our own warped and erring judgment would lead us; for “Who can understand his (own) errors?” Let our prayer ever be, “Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins.” If we presume to set up our judgment against the Lord's judgment in any matter, as expressed in his Word, we fall at once into the snare of the adversary.

In view of these things, let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, meditating much upon the precepts and teachings of his Word, that through them we may be imbued with their spirit. And thus the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart shall be acceptable in the sight of the Lord, our strength and our Redeemer.

MRS. C. T. R.

## PRAISE OUR GOD

“All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Jehovah, and shall glorify thy name.”—Ps. 86:9; Rev. 15:4.

Arise all down-cast souls, arise,  
No longer sit in mournful gloom;  
Go forth to meet your risen King,  
Who comes victorious to the throne.  
Rejoice, rejoice, glad songs of praise  
To God's eternal glory raise.

Lo! Satan vanquished from Him flies,  
The “powers of darkness” dread the light;  
The grave is opened by His power,  
The bruised Serpent yields the fight.  
Rejoice, rejoice, glad songs of praise  
To God's eternal glory raise.

Alone he fought the glorious fight,  
Alone he conquers every foe;  
Then unto him let anthems rise,  
And songs of love forever flow.  
Rejoice, rejoice, glad songs of praise  
To Christ's eternal glory raise.

Earth then as Eden—man restored—  
All bright and happy here below;  
Saints glorified and with their Lord,  
Who shall not praise thee then, O God!  
Rejoice, rejoice, glad songs of praise  
To God's eternal glory raise.

From “Zion's Watch Tower” now we see  
So near, that grand and glorious day;  
The thousand years of jubilee,  
When love once more mankind shall sway.  
Rejoice, rejoice, glad songs of praise  
To God's eternal glory raise.

## NOAH'S ARK

The following item is clipped from the *Chicago Tribune* of August 13th:

“London, August 9th. A paper at Constantinople announces the discovery of Noah's ark. It appears that some Turkish Commissioners appointed to investigate the question of avalanches on Mount Ararat suddenly came upon a gigantic structure of very dark wood protruding from a glacier. They made inquiries of the inhabitants. These had seen it for six years, but had been afraid to approach it because a spirit of fierce aspect had been seen looking out of the upper window. The Turkish Commissioners, however, are bold men, not deterred by such trifles, and they determined to reach it. Situated as it was among the fastnesses of one of the glens of Mount Ararat, it was a work of enormous difficulty, and it

was only after incredible hardships that they succeeded. The ark was in a good state of preservation, although the angles—observe, not the bow or stern—had been a good deal broken in its descent. They recognized it at once. There was an Englishman among them who had presumably read his Bible, and he saw it was made of the ancient gopher wood of Scripture, which, as every one knows, grows only on the plains of the Euphrates. Effecting an entrance into the structure, which was painted brown, they found that the admiralty requirements for the conveyance of horses had been carried out, and the interior was divided into partitions fifteen feet high. Into three of these only could they get, the others being full of ice, and how far the ark extended into the glacier they could not tell. If, however, on being uncovered it turns out

to be 300 cubits long it will go hard with disbelievers."

The gopher wood of which the Ark was built, is generally supposed to be the *cypress*, famous among the ancients, and frequently mentioned in Scripture. It is remarkable for durability. Instances are related of doors and posts made of this wood which had lasted 1,100 years.

Remembering, also, that Mt. Ararat is covered with perpetual snow and ice for more than 3,000 feet below its summit, and that an earthquake which shook it in the beginning of the present year (1883) broke loose tremendous quantities of this ice, burying under the avalanches whole villages, we

## OUR GOSPEL HID TO SOME

"Therefore having this ministry, even as we received mercy we faint not; but have repudiated the secret things of shame; not walking in craftiness, nor falsifying the Word of God; but by the *exhibition of THE TRUTH* approving ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

"But if, indeed, our Glad Tidings be veiled, they have been veiled to those who *are perishing* [lost], to those unbelievers whose minds the God of this age *blinded*, in order that they might not [or, so that they cannot] see clearly the effulgence of the Glad Tidings of the Glory of the Anointed One who is the likeness of God." (2 Cor. 4:1-4).

The above rendering in the *Diaglott* brings to the surface of this passage a beauty and meaning more difficult to grasp from the common translation. How true and forcible this expression, and how applicable to the *Glad Tidings* as now seen shining out in fullness and beauty, declaring our Father perfect, not only in Wisdom and Power, but also in Justice and Love.

Very much of what is preached *today* as Gospel is far from being glad tidings. Instead of revealing the glory of God's character, a vast amount of what is taught, like rubbish, almost conceals the truth held, and dims and tarnishes God's justice and his love by misrepresentation; and though instilled into men from childhood, it does not *commend itself to the conscience* of even its advocates. In proof of this, we quote the following from the pen of that good man, *Albert Barnes*, who, alas, was much blinded by the deceptions which the Prince of this Age had engrafted on *theology* before his day. Were he living now and brought in contact with the glad tidings now shining, probably he would rejoice in the light from the Word of God.

Mr. Barnes says:

"I see not one ray to disclose to me the reason why sin came into the world, why the earth is strewn with the dying and dead, and why man must suffer to all eternity. I have never seen a particle of light thrown upon these subjects that has given a moment's ease to my tortured mind, nor have I an explanation to offer or a thought to suggest that would be a relief to you.

"I trust other men, as they profess to do, understand this better than I do, and that they have not the anguish of spirit that I have; but I confess, when I look on a world of sinners and sufferers, upon death-beds and grave-yards, upon the world of woe, filled with hearts to suffer forever; when I see my friends, my parents, my family, my people, my fellow citizens;—when I look upon a whole race, all involved in this sin and danger; when I see the great mass of them wholly unconcerned; and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet he does not do it, I am struck dumb. *It is all dark, dark to my soul, and I cannot disguise it.*"—*Albert Barnes' Practical Sermons*, p. 124.

Of the Glad Tidings which we proclaim—some publicly, some privately—it is true that we repudiate the darkness and traditions of men brought from the "dark ages"—"not walking in craftiness [substituting traditions for God's Word], nor falsifying the Word of God—[wresting, twisting and ignoring Scripture] but by the *EXHIBITION of the TRUTH* approving ourselves to every man's *conscience*. Not that all will acknowledge the force, grandeur and harmony of our teachings, but we may be sure that "*in the sight of God*" all who hear and carefully weigh these *Glad Tidings* will in their hearts approve it as reasonable and beautiful; *unless*, as the Apostle here remarks, the God of this age [Satan—John 14:30] has blinded their eyes. If our glad tidings be hid—veiled, obscured—it is not the fault of the glad tidings, for to all who can see, it is glorious, harmonious and bright. Where it comes and cannot be seen, the fault is not in the light but in the eye.

As originally created, man was in his Creator's mental likeness: Justice, Mercy, Love, etc., in man were the same in kind as in God: so much so that they could and did, even since the fall, *reason together* on these subjects (Isa. 1:18).

cannot but think that the foregoing article is not so unreason-able as might at first appear. The same wise God who placed the Great Pyramid "in the midst and in the border of Egypt," for a *sign*, now but commencing to speak to men of science, may have hidden away Noah's Ark, burying and *preserving* it in ice, ready to be another witness to the most illiterate. We can only say, it would be "just like God," and in perfect harmony with our teachings, that the *outward* evidences of the truth of the Bible, for the instruction of the natural man, should begin to increase; and we expect that these will multiply during the coming thirty years.

But from the very outstart Satan's policy seems to have been to *blind* men. He blinds and obscures and obliterates, as far as possible, these God-like qualities in them; and in addition seeks to misrepresent God's character, and thus hinder their recognition of these qualities in Jehovah.

Looking about us today we see people thus blinded everywhere, and from various causes. Some worship the work of their hands. In them the moral qualities—justice, love, etc., are almost extinguished. These retain scarcely any of the image of God, in which man was created. They are almost totally blind: yet in their blindness they are "*feeling after* God, if happily they might find him," as Paul expresses it (Acts 17:27). Another class he blinds in an *opposite way*—with pride and liberty of earthly wisdom, science falsely so called. Vainly puffed up by their own wisdom, this class often become fools, who say in their hearts "There is no God" (Psa. 14:1).

Another class who escaped his arts as applied to the two classes just mentioned, Satan seeks to *blind* in yet another way: this class has caught some glimpses of God's character; they see a little of his power, but to his justice, wisdom and love, they are blinded by Satan who, by mixture of dishonoring falsehoods with their little truth, conceals the grandest elements of the divine nature. Those thus blinded cannot appreciate the *glad tidings*. This is no less true of many called Christians today, than of religionists in past centuries.

When Jesus wanted to point out the blind in his day he did not mention the heathen, but the favored people of Israel, and especially the Pharisaic Doctors of the Law. It was to these he said that they were "*blind leaders of the blind*" (Matt. 15:14). Satan's method by which he blinded the Pharisees, was the same which he now uses with such effect on a similar class. Jesus mentions their cause of blindness—"Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect through your traditions" (Matt. 15:6). Satan could not get Israel to forsake the law and become idolaters, therefore he took the opposite course, and by multiplying the *forms* and ceremonies of religion, he satisfied their consciences, while he blinded them to the spirit, or true meaning of the Law. So now, with the spread of general intelligence, Satan keeps changing his tactics to hinder the light of the glad tidings from being appreciated.

For a time, through Papacy in the dark ages, Satan had succeeded not only in blinding men by religious forms, but in almost extinguishing the glorious light; for he had almost destroyed the Lamp itself—"Thy Word is a lamp." Bibles were destroyed until it was supposed that none remained. But God, though permitting the prince of this world to reign, did not leave men in total darkness, and soon the fires of the Reformation began to light up the world and scattered much of the darkness.

But our wily foe, unable to restrain the light (the truth) transformed himself into a seeming angel of light (messenger of truth). He led the Reformation into success, pride, and worldly honor, and introduced a worldly spirit so as to *blind them* in an opposite direction. As Israel had the Law, these have the Bible; but they glory more in printing Bibles, owning Bibles, and reading Bibles, than in *studying* and *understanding* them. Bibles are bought and worshiped and occasionally read; but the creeds of past ages and traditions of the Fathers are *studied* and *practiced*. Satan now, unable to hinder the publishing of Bibles, endeavors to have them read through creed-tinted spectacles. These will blind them so that the light of the glorious glad tidings can scarcely be discerned.

Many who have been led to see some light, are blinded by fear; they fear to let their light shine: they fear to let any one know that though once blind, now they begin to see. These wear their goggles when others are in sight, and take them off a few moments when alone. They have the spirit of bondage and fear which bringeth a snare and blindness upon them again. Such are not worthy to be of the Bride.

the Lamb's wife, as Jesus said: "Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my words . . . of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).

Let the dear saints who by the truth have been translated out of darkness into this glorious light wherein we stand and rejoice, give special heed to another blinding influence. We have known some who had clean escaped from all those snares and blindings, and who had seen much of the glory of the glad tidings, who were still pursued by the adversary, and again brought into bondage and darkness, being led into spiritual pride and ambition; and such the adversary harnesses into the service and blinds to the truth, by engaging them in manufacturing and spreading fancied *new light* which has foundation and support neither in hoary tradition nor in Scripture, and whose only passport is that it is *new*.

Of such are some of the modern theorizings on the Atonement, which strike at the very foundation of the Christian's hope, and are blinding and overturning the faith of some.

Some others are blinded by prosperity: Satan throws them handfuls of gold, and their eyes become so fastened on it, that soon the *glories* of the glad tidings begin to fade from view, and they, too, are in outer darkness. Others are blinded by the *cares* of this life. They are made to appear necessities, so that all the energies of life may be absorbed in the things which perish; and that the heavenly things, being neglected, may fade from view. Let us beware of every blinding influence and keep the *one* thing constantly before us, saying as did Paul: "This one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).

#### THE PERISHING BLINDED ONES

Thus seen, the blinded ones not only embraced nearly all of Jesus' day, but nearly all of every age since; and the Apostle says they are the *perishing*—the *lost*. What does he mean? Some tell us he means that all these billions of blinded ones are going to a place and condition of eternal torture because *blinded* by Satan. We answer, No; they and we were *ALL* lost—*perishing in death* because of Adam's sin—and the difference between those who *SEE by faith* the glorious promises of God, as though already fulfilled, and those who are blinded by Satan so that they cannot see, is, that those not blinded have joy and peace through believing, and are *reckoned SAVED* both by God and themselves, while the blind are still in the *lost condition*—still under *condemnation*, even though Christ died for them. The benefit of Christ's death becomes applicable to each, as he by faith grasps Christ's sacrifice as the "propitiation for our sins." The blinded ones are unable to realize the ransom, hence are still among the lost or condemned.

But we inquire, Shall it be thus forever? Will Jehovah forever permit the god of this world to blind men, so that, though the sacrifice for sin has been given, the blinded cannot see and take the benefit of it, by accepting their share in it?

Oh, no: there comes an end to the reign of "the god of this world." He who *redeemed* men is commissioned to "put down all rule and all authority and power" other than that

of Jehovah (1 Cor. 15:24, 25). The great clock of the Ages has just tolled the close of Satan's 6,000 years' reign: the appointed "heir of all things," Christ—Jehovah's *vice-gerent*—is present, and the binding of the great blinder—the prince of this world, the prince of darkness—is commenced. When he is bound and shut up for a thousand years that he may not deceive and blind the nations during the reign of Christ, think you will the mass of the world be blinded still? If it required his continued arts to prevent the true light of the gospel from being seen, what will be the result of his binding? Surely it will be sight to the blind.

To this agree the words of the prophet: "Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart be strong, fear not: Behold your God shall come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." "THEN the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped."

The RANSOM for sin will then be clearly *seen*, "and the ransomed of the Lord shall return (from the lost and perishing condition) to Zion (God's *fortress*) with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; THEY shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. 35.)

Does some one inquire why the god of this world was so long permitted to blind mankind to the glories of God's character and plans? We reply that it was not *long* in God's estimation. A thousand years are to him but as one day—as a watch in the night. Then, too, he had an object in permitting Satan's reign. It furnished bitterness and distress to men in their experience under sin, which prepares them to appreciate the true light and reign of righteousness when due. And the blinding of the many served to develop and select the choice first-fruits unto God and the Lamb, the "little flock," who are to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, who shall share with Christ the glories to follow. They are to share in the bruising of Satan (Rom. 16:20) and in blessing and restoring of sight to the blind.

It was referring to this future healing of the deaf and opening of blinded eyes of the understanding, that Jesus said to the disciples: "Greater works than these shall ye do." Thus far Jesus' disciples have never done greater works than his for the blind and lame and sick but in the dawning Millennium Day, they with him shall do the greater works—they shall not only heal the bodies but the minds of men.

In fact Jesus' miracles were also types of spiritual blessings yet future, as we read: "These things did Jesus, and manifested forth (showed *beforehand*) his glory" (John 2:11). The glory of Jesus is still future and will be shown "when he shall come to be GLORIFIED IN HIS SAINTS, and to be *admired in all them that BELIEVE IN THAT DAY.*" (2 Thes. 1:10). That coming glory was foreshadowed by his miracles. When it is remembered that very many of his miracles, in fact most of the notable ones, were done on the seventh or Sabbath day, it will be seen that this also was typical, and foreshadowed the fact that the great healing time would be the seventh thousand years—the Millennium—the great Sabbath of rest in Christ, in which the world will be *reinvigorated* and perfected for the eternal ages of sinlessness to follow.

## "JUDGMENT TO COME"

It is a common thing to hear people talk of "the judgment day," as though there were but one judgment day, and that was in "the world to come;" or, if we were to state it according to the popular theology, we should say the world to which we go, meaning by the word *we*, all mankind. We understand this misconception to come from not "rightly dividing the Word of truth."

There is no doubt that there is another world, or state or being, to which Jesus our blessed Redeemer and Lord has gone "to prepare a place" for us, and, when so prepared, "will come again" and receive us unto himself. (John 14:23.) But the word *us* does not apply to the *world* in the sense of embracing the whole human race, as is clear from a following chapter (16:20): "Verily I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament (at his absence), but the *world* shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." Again, in the 15th chap., 18 and 19 vers., Jesus says: "If the *world* hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the *world*, the world would love his own, but because ye are *not of the world*, but I have chosen you *out of the world*, therefore the world hateth you."

We think no one can fail to see a clear distinction made here between "the *world*" and a class for whom Jesus was about to go and "prepare a place." He was to prepare the

place, and they were to be prepared *for* the place through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him."

They (the disciples) were to become acquainted with the *Spirit* of truth, not the letter only, but the very *nature* of truth, the truth *itself*, should be their guide (John 14:17, 26 and 15:26), enabling them to *judge themselves* according to the "law of sin and death," and according to "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." They see that, according to the law of sin and death, they are *condemned* to death because the account of *sin* stands against them in "the books," and it is a *just* account, and they acquiesce in it; but the Spirit of truth reveals to them the glorious fact that, by the *law* of the Spirit of life in (through or by) Christ Jesus, they are redeemed (liberated) from the *law of sin and death*; that the *race* is to live again in a coming age on account of this *ransom*; but that *now* (during the gospel age) those who hear and *believe* this may stand clear of the account, "made free from the *law of sin and death*," (because if they believe it, they will love the Redeemer, and condemn sin) and be *reckoned* NOW, what the world shall realize in *fact*, alive in (by on *account* of) Christ. (1st Cor. 15:22.—*Diaglott*.)

But here a seeming difficulty arises; it is asked, how it is

that they are made free from the law of sin and death and yet have to die? But, it must be remembered, that they are *already dead* under the law of sin (*i. e.*, legally), but they are to be saved *from* (out of) death, not from *dying*. This is to be a *fact* with the world in the coming age, and, to him who believes it *now*, it is now *reckoned*, *i. e.*, he is reckoned as having suffered the penalty of the law of sin, and as having been restored to life by "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." His faith causes him to *walk according to* "the Spirit of life." "There is, *therefore*, *NOW* no condemnation" to such an one.

Such have ears to hear the gospel *invitation* to the *higher life*, the "high calling," which involves the consecration of that redeemed and restored nature, to death, with Christ. This call to the higher life, to be made a "partaker of the divine nature," is not a command, but is a "holy invitation," a glorious privilege, to suffer and die with Christ that we may be also glorified together.

This, then, is a *part* of the present judgment (trial) of this world, the judgment which is now in progress among "the elect," and this judgment will exempt them from any further judgment ("condemnation"). (John 5:24.)

But there is another order of judgment going on now (to which we referred in the last number) in which the rulership of this world is *being judged*, and is about to be cast out, and *then* will follow the judgment to come. (Acts 24:25.)

But does some one ask if the human race are judged *twice*? We answer, Most certainly they are. A little thought will convince any one who is familiar with the Scriptures that this is the case, for all men *have been* judged *once* already; for "it is *appointed* unto men once to die;" that is, *one* judgment; for man would not have been condemned to death unless judged to be transgressors of some law, and "after *this* (still another) judgment." Not for the *same* transgression surely. What was the first judgment and sentence of the race for? For the sins of the *fathers*. The "fathers ate the sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." (Jer. 31:29; Deut. 5:9.) For the whole human race suffer *now* for the father's sins, or *because they sinned*? Yes, in a certain sense, (*i. e.*, in Adam) yet not altogether for their individual sins, but the *nature* of the fathers, being polluted by sin, is *transmitted* to the children who come under the sentence of death for having the nature (disposition) to do just as the fathers did; as rebels in *heart*, they are under sentence of death. Then it is not for *actual* transgression that men die? Not for that *only*, but it is for the *disposition* to transgress. (Matt. 5:28.) The inherited taint renders them unfit to live, because with *such* a nature they *cannot* keep God's law. (Rom. 8:7.) Then, will the judgment to come consign them to eternal death, or eternal suffering, because they did not keep God's law in *this* age or life? Surely not; for it was their *inability* to keep it that caused their death, and called forth the mercy and love of the Father and of the Son, who *found a ransom* for them, and brought them from death again, and restored to them what they lost in Adam. But will *all* that was lost in Adam be restored? Certainly; there will be a restitution of *all things which God hath spoken* by the mouth of all his holy prophets." (Acts 3:21; Ezek. 16:44-63; Jer. 31:16, &c.) But if all that was lost in Adam is to be restored to *all men*, does some one ask what is the incentive to a holy life now? The incentive is exceedingly *great*; it is even an opportunity and the only one—we see no "second chance"—to attain unto the *divine nature*—IMMORTALITY. During the gospel age is the accepted time for *that* (Luke 4:19; 2nd Cor. 6:2); and if any one receiving an invitation to that "high calling" fails to make his "election sure," it will be an eternal loss, one which can *never*, *NEVER* be retrieved, though it should be "sought carefully with tears."

All men will be restored to what was lost in Adam, *unconditionally*, "For since through a man, there is death, through a man also there is a resurrection of the dead; for as by Adam all die, so by the anointed also, will all be restored to life" (1st Cor. 15:21, 22.—*Diaglott.*) But to this "high calling" there are "hard" conditions; it is a reaping where he "had not sown." The conditions are so hard that but few will accept them, for the conditions are even sufferings and death; not of the old nature, *already* under sentence of death, but of the perfect human, like what Jesus had, and with which the *believer is credited*. But those who accept these hard conditions do so "for the glory set before" them, and are passed *from death* (legally, *out of*) into life (Mark 8:35), and shall not come into condemnation" (process of judgment) again. (John 5:24.) But all the rest of mankind will come "after this" into judgment.

That *they* will have a *future* trial, *i. e.*, probation and judgment, is clear from several scriptures to which we have re-

ferred, and from the fact that man *suffers* the penalty of sin (death) *before* the "judgment to come;" hence the judgment to come must be after probation to come; for how can judgment (krima, an accusation charge) be brought concerning a transgression *for which* penalty has been suffered, and *from which* the subject has been redeemed? They were cast into prison (death, the penalty) till they should pay the "uttermost farthing." A Redeemer *paid it*, and they are free. Who shall now condemn again for *that*? But now, with a knowledge gained from bitter experience, may come another probation which shall be a success. The first probation was in a representative Adam, by whom all die; another, Christ, represented them, and by him all live again, (in a resurrection) and from that *onward* the probation is every man for himself. Herein we discern the thought of Paul when he said (1st Tim. 5:24): "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment, and some they follow *after*."

The works of the little flock composing the mystical body of Christ are manifest, and are judged beforehand (the first and second man, the man Adam and the perfect man in Christ Jesus, are both judged beforehand, *i. e.*, before the "restitution" race are). "There is, therefore, *now* no condemnation of (judgment *against*) them which are in Christ Jesus," (the little flock) nor will there *ever* be, for the rule by which men will be judged in the *coming* judgment will be the same as that by which they are judged now, *viz.*: the law of God as embodied in the holy Scriptures, which will *then* be "opened" to the understanding of all and no longer sealed (Rev. 20:12); so that he who is unjust or unholy according to that law, will forever stand so judged by it, until he becomes changed or restored in his *nature*. And let no one vainly think that in the judgment to come there will be any *other* standard, for he who is unjust now, by the same standard, will "be unjust still." (Rev. 22:11.)

But there is one notable element that will necessarily be left out of the "judgment to come;" that is, the element of redemptive or propitiatory sacrifice, or representative suffering. Christ having offered one sacrifice (of this kind) for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth *expecting* till his ENEMIES be made his *footstool*," (Heb. 10:12, 13), *i. e.*, as we understand, instruments of service, *not* members of his *body*. So, we understand, there will be no more offerings of this kind, hence no more *forgiveness* of sins: every one who shall be subject to that judgment (trial) shall expiate his own sins. Stern justice will preside then. Christ having died to save that which was lost, namely, the *ability* to keep the law. *That* being restored, man will be required to keep it or be beaten with many or few stripes according to the extent of his transgressions. These stripes will not be vindictive but *reformatory*. Verily "it is a  *fearful* thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" yea, "Fear him, which, after he hath killed, (and brought again from death) hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." (Luke 12:5.) This is the "fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries" ("eat up" opposition). (Heb. 10:4.) "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?"

The Christ of God "will not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment (right) in the earth (Isa. 42:4); and yet he will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax, but *will* bring forth judgment unto truth (right according to truth). None will suffer for the sins of their fathers then as *is now* the case. (See Ex. 34:7; Deut. 5:9, and human experience all around.) It will then no more be said, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge," but "the soul that sinneth *it* shall die." "The son shall *not* bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." (Ezek. 18:20.) No one will die *again* on account of another; no one live *again* on account of another.

But the inquiring mind naturally asks, Why was not this course pursued with man in the *first* place? We answer that God is just and it would not have been according to his law of justice to imperil and hold man to such a strict account, without a possibility of redemption, UNTIL *he had had experience with sin*, and become acquainted with its awful results: but now, after having learned the exceeding sinfulness of sin, (which is the great lesson now being taught to the world,) and having (when brought again from the dead) *ability* given to keep the law, it is but justice to require it.

In the beginning the judgment was, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and then and there a Saviour. Redeemer was provided, a city of refuge for him who had unwittingly forfeited his life. But we are not told of any such Saviour, city of refuge, in the age to come. True, "Saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau" (Obad 21), but these saviours we understand to be

typified by those who judged Israel, and will be leaders and guides, kings and priests, but not *Redeemers*.

So, a similar judgment is to be given in the coming age, that was given in the beginning, for violation of God's *law*, viz.: *death*. This is the "second death," from which we are told of no resurrection; at least, if so, we are not aware of it. But he who in this present age having died with, or in Adam, is *awakened* of the Spirit and consecrates himself to

death with Christ (this would be his *second* legal death), is not hurt of it, for he shall "find it" again in the first resurrection. (Mark 8:35; Rev. 2:11; 20:16.)

O, blessed thought, that "Righteousness and judgment are the habitation (base) of his throne."

"O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

J. C. SUNDERLIN.

## "AFTER DEATH THE JUDGMENT"

We believe that to the great majority of mankind (to all except the Church), their judgment or trial will be after death—after the Adamic death—has been legally cancelled, and is being swallowed up of life, as is well expressed in the foregoing article by our brother; but the text at the head of this article so frequently used as it is by our brother, in the foregoing article, as the proof of that coming judgment, we object to, because it is used by the Apostle to teach a totally different thing, as may be seen from a careful examination of the entire argument in which these words were used. (Heb. 9:6-28.)

Paul's argument is to those who were familiar with the typical service of the typical sanctuary. In their typical service, there was a remembrance made of sins each year; and each year on the Day of Atonement a typical sacrifice was offered which never actually put away sin, but which was merely typical of the real work to be done afterward by Christ. For the blood of bulls and goats could never put away sin, and they were merely figures or illustrations for the time of the real sacrifice, "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"—who "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

It was arranged of God, that the entire process of atonement for man's sin should be presented in types or patterns for our instruction, that the man of God should be thoroughly furnished. Accordingly, they had the Most Holy to represent the presence of Jehovah—heaven itself; and the death of Christ was illustrated by the priests every year—they using animals to represent themselves in death. When the bullock, which was "for," or represented the Priest, was killed, it represented the death of the priest, and thereafter the priest represented Christ as a "new creature," and took the blood—the evidence of his sacrifice of his former self—with him into the Most Holy, to present it as the *ransom price* for the people's sins, and thereby to procure for the people God's forgiveness of their sins and future *favor*.

But, as these men in this work were to typify Christ and his *perfect* work, that must be shown; hence the law, that if the priest failed to offer exactly the proper sacrifice, and in a proper manner, he would *die* at the second veil and not be permitted to enter the Most Holy, and hence would fail to make atonement for the people's sins, and to come out to bless them. But, if every thing was perfectly done, the priest and his sacrifice were accepted of Jehovah, and the blotting out of sins and blessings of the people followed. It will be seen, then, that with these *men* who for years had typified Christ in the consecration or *killing* of the animals which represented them—after this representative *death*—came their judgment or trial. Was it perfectly done in all respects? If so, their judgment would be favorable, and they would come forth to typically absolve the sins of the people and bless them.

As thus in type it is appointed for these men (priests) to die representatively, etc., so ALSO Christ was once offered—died *really*—to bear the sins of many; and it was needful, as shown in the type, that he must go to have the sacrifice accepted in the Most Holy. We have evidence that he *lives* in that Most Holy, or perfect spiritual condition, which is proof to us that his was an acceptable sacrifice, and that in due time he will come forth with a blessing for all, for whose sins he paid the *ransom price*—his own life.

The Apostle's reason for making this argument is obvious. The Jews derided the idea of a *Saviour* dying without saving them, expecting that Messiah would reign in great earthly power and splendor. Paul shows them that Christ must needs first suffer to purchase—*redeem*—before he could save and bless, and that this had all been shown in the types of the Law. As it is appointed unto men (your priesthood) first to *die* and then to go into the Most Holy, etc., BEFORE the blessing could come, so ALSO it is with Christ, of whom your men were but types or shadows. (See also "TABERNACLE" pamphlet, p. 61, and TOWER of October, 1880.)

## THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT

MATT. 18:23 35.

This parable has been urged by some as in opposition to the necessity of Jesus' death as our ransom, or substitute, in the settlement of the Adamic penalty. They argue that this parable teaches the contrary that God *FREELY FORGIVES* all Adamic sin, and hence neither requires men to pay it, nor yet that Jesus should pay it for us, the just for the unjust. But this is a false presentation of the teaching of this parable, and results from having a theory which they seek to prop with some seeming scriptural evidence.

The parable does not relate to dealings between God and the world of sinners; but between God and his covenanted children, called here, as elsewhere, "*bond-servants*." They are those who have already been justified from Adamic guilt by Christ's ransom, and who have consecrated themselves to God to be his servants forever. These are acquainted with the will of their king and know how, through weakness of the flesh and temptation, *they* have failed to render to God

*all* which their covenant calls for, and when they have gone to the Father and asked [as members of the body of Christ—in the name of their head] for mercy, they have always found him very merciful and he forgave them and said, Go in peace: as Jesus said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He will do it."

In return, it is expected that *such* shall be ready to exercise the same leniency toward their fellows. If they do not, they need not expect any leniency from their Father in the matter of their *covenant keeping*, but must be kept to the strict letter of it, and will be delivered over to trouble and distress in the present life sufficient to make them sympathize with the weak and erring.

The same lesson is taught in the Lord's prayer. Forgive *our* trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against *us*. It is the *church* which prays "Our Father"—the church already made free from Adamic guilt.

## REVELATION—CHAPTER IV

"After these things I saw, and behold a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard, as of a trumpet, speaking with me, saying: Come up hither and I will show thee the things which must come to pass hereafter. Straightway I was in the Spirit." [Revised Ver.]

When we listen to the description of a scene, as told by two or more observers, it is of much importance that we know both the time and the standpoint of the different witnesses. The chapter we are about to examine comes under this rule.

In the Book of Revelation we believe that John, personally, always symbolizes the beloved disciples—the faithful in the Church—who are alive at the time required by the events

described. We think the Master referred to this in John 21:22: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then this saying, therefore, went forth among the brethren that that disciple should not die; yet Jesus said not unto him that he should not die, but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is it to thee?" If we observe the standpoint from which John sees each vision we will know that of the class he represents.

Verse first tells us that the vision is of things "after" the events of the preceding chapter. The last period was while the Lord stood at the door knocking [being *present*, of course,] and when he is about to spue out of his mouth the present proud and worldly Church.

That process has begun, so that it is now due that the class symbolized by John should, *in a symbolic sense*, be caught up and enabled to see things from a purely spiritual standpoint.

In John's first vision, while he is given a glimpse of hidden things, he remains on the Isle of Patmos. Patmos means *mortal*. This symbolizes that the Church of John's day could only see coming events from a mortal standpoint. Now he—rather we, whom he represents—are “caught up” in the spirit of our minds, and see spiritual things from an exalted position never attained to before.

John's vision, then, as described in this chapter, shows events as seen by us, or rather so many of us as have attained to this standpoint or spiritual position. This is in a sense the beginning of John's visions. At the first revelation made to him he saw only our Lord and the lamp-stands; the messages were delivered to him in words. From this time forward he is allowed to see events and conditions in a series of vivid pictures—the clearest way of representation.

He sees an open door in *heaven*. What heaven? When Paul was shown visions of things to come he was “caught up [better, *snatched away*] to the third heaven.” (2 Cor. 12:2.) John also saw at last the third heavens and earth fully established. As most of our readers know, the progression of these so-called heavens is not upward, but onward. The first heavens and earth were before the flood; the second, this present evil world and its ruling powers (first and second are under Satan); the third, the new heavens and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. The third will be under the rule of Christ and his saints. It is during this latter that all the glorious promises of peace and prosperity will be fulfilled. “His rest shall be glorious.” This dispensation of the kingdom of God is symbolically termed a new heavens (government) and new earth (subjects) in contradistinction from the heavens and earth which now are, “The present evil world,” or order of things. It was to this Millennial kingdom that Paul was caught away in vision (2 Cor. 12:2).

As the *powers* of the third heaven take possession, the powers of the second are “shaken” until they are destroyed. (Matt. 24:29; Heb. 12:26.) The Lord tells us in Matt. 24:31, that after he has come he “will send forth his angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds.” (See also 1st Thess. 4:16, 17.)

It is evident, then, that the open door which John saw was the entrance to the third heaven—the first step toward the place of power for those whom John represents. What brings them there? John says that the first voice which he heard was as of a trumpet, which said: “Come up hither.”

During the sounding of the seventh trumpet, under which we now are, the announcement was made: “The kingdoms of this world are become those of our Lord and of his Christ.” (Rev. 11:15.) The prophetic word has shown us that the Christ has come, that he has entered upon his reign. Believing this, and knowing what the results would be in the earth, business has been sacrificed and pleasure relinquished that we might know and spread the truth. Every new truth received and cherished has been a stepping-stone upward. The Lord has been our Guide, and we have been led into “green pastures.”

The first object to meet the gaze of John is that of a glorious King seated on his throne. This is the Father, the “Ancient of Days.” He is “to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone.” The jasper is supposed to mean the diamond. It is described as “most precious” and “clear as crystal.” Being the most brilliant of all gems, it fittingly symbolizes the glory of God; the light (luminary, or source of light) of the New Jerusalem. (Rev. 21:11-23.) The sardine is a stone of a red color. We think it here symbolizes love, which is the underlying element in all God's actions—tinging the glory through which it shines.

The throne is encircled by a rainbow “like unto an emerald.” A rainbow is the “token” of a covenant. (Gen. 9:12-17.) The green or emerald color probably symbolizes freshness and vigor; that God's plans are, like nature in the spring-time, filled with life, and continually developing and unfolding—blossoming into luscious fruit for the sustenance and pleasure of His creatures.

We are now introduced to

#### THE TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS

Around the throne of God are seen twenty-four thrones, on which are seated twenty-four elders. Many opinions have been given in regard to who these symbolize. With present light we present the following: It is clear that, being symbolic, they cannot be individual saints. It cannot well be the Church of the first-born, as they appear under another symbol. It is unlikely that they represent angels.

There have been, as we count, twenty-four prophets that have prophesied of “things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Their *testimonies* here seem to be personified, exalted and enthroned. The two witnesses of Rev. 11:3-12 are evidently the Old and New Testaments thus personified, as we think we can clearly show when we come to them. They, too, were exalted to (symbolic) heaven—the place of honor and authority in the Church.

These twenty-four witnesses for God, while now more or less despised and disbelieved, will yet be proved true and faithful, and will thus be similarly exalted in the sight of all men. (Comp. Luke 10:15.) As yet, *we only* are enabled thus to see them. They are clothed in white, denoting purity. The crowns of gold symbolize their divine authority.

At the present time the Church, in a great measure, ignores their witness—failing to understand it. In the future reign both the Church and the world must bow to their authority, as they will then have *lost the privileges* that were promised in the New Testament.

“Out of the throne [of God] proceed lightnings and thunders and voices” These refer to the mutterings of the tempest which is already gathering over the Church and the world. Others beside ourselves see the approaching storm, but they fail to recognize from whence it comes.

Before the throne are seen seven lamps of fire burning, which are the seven spirits of God—the seven (perfect or *complete* number) channels through which God is about to manifest his power. If we compare carefully Rev. 1:4, 12:20; 2:1; 3:1; 5:6, we find that they are the church of the first-born. These were called from the beginning “the light of the world,” but from henceforth they are to “shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Matt. 13:43.) These, too, are to be the honored instruments by which he will smite the nations, pour out his plagues, and shed light and truth upon mankind. “This honor hath all his saints.” (Ps. 149.)

In full view of the throne is also seen “a sea of glass.” This sea is soon to be mingled with fire (Rev. 15:2). From our standpoint it is transparent. The sea represents the unfettered, irreligious masses of the people. We are enabled to see clearly the internal forces that control them, what they are about to do, and why they do it. We can see that the fire is “already kindled.” We see it smouldering in their breasts, ready to break out, a wild, *unquenchable* whirlwind of flame, when the due time comes. The whole matter is clear as crystal from the standpoint of those who are walking in the light.

Around and in the midst of the throne are seen the four cherubim or living ones, here translated “beasts.” Before we can understand what they represent here, we must take a glance at what is revealed in regard to them in earlier times.

#### THE CHERUBIM

These strange creatures are first brought to view in Gen. 3:24 where they appear with flaming swords as the guardians of the way leading to the tree of life. They are next seen at each end of the mercy-seat on the ark in the wilderness (Ex. 25:18). In the most holy of the temple two new representatives of immense size were placed, between which the ark was set. (1 Kings 6:23.) They were seen in vision by Isaiah (6:2-6) and by Ezekiel. (1:5-16; 10:1-21.) They are always connected with the immediate presence or with the throne of God. Evidently at the entrance to Eden they represented or accompanied the presence of God. (compare Gen. 4:3, 16.) Isaiah and Ezekiel saw them as *supporting* or carrying the throne or chariot of Jehovah.

Looking at the mercy-seat as representing this chariot or throne, the same idea is expressed in the relation of the cherubim to the ark—both in the tabernacle and temple. (See also 1 Chron. 28:18. 2 Chron. 3.) Jehovah is *frequently* spoken of as dwelling between or above the cherubim. (Ex. 25:22; Num. 7:89; 1 Sam. 4:4; Ps. 18:10; Isa. 37:16.)

Some who have failed to recognize them as *symbols*, have supposed that they were a high class of angels, a kind of body-guard of the Most High. He has no need of such. He dwells amid admiring and adoring worshipers.

What, then, do the cherubim symbolize? We think they personify the attributes of God. Scholars have suggested a number of attributes. We think that there are just four which are fundamental, namely: Power, Wisdom, Justice and Love. These four include all others. For instance: independence, omniscience, holiness and benevolence are dependent on or similar to the above mentioned in their absolute perfection as God has them. On these his throne is represented as being supported.

When the way back to Eden was closed by “the cheru-

him," it was not only the act of his power and justice; it was also done by wisdom and love. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake" was the utterance of love and wisdom. Idleness destroys; activity develops. The latter made the Greeks, even in a rugged country, a finely developed people; while idleness ruined Rome, with the treasures of the world at her feet.

In the tabernacle two small cherubim appear. They are a part of the mercy-seat and seem to grow out of it. Before we can appreciate this picture we must remember that the tabernacle represented things as they exist during the Gospel age: the temple, as they will be during the Millennial age. Again, the picture is not as seen from God's standpoint, but from that of the church. The mercy-seat in a sense represents Christ. Many who cannot see the love and justice of God apart from Christ, believe that they are somehow bound up in him. These two attributes of God are very indistinct to them; they cannot see them; except that in some manner, too deep for their understanding, they are blended in Christ. Again, previous to the advent of Jesus, even the love is hidden; only the "stern" justice appears. The love was in Christ, but was not yet made manifest. Previous to the atoning sacrifice the picture appears like this. The mercy-seat is the place of justice—but man has been proved guilty. Until satisfaction has been made there is no hope. Power and wisdom—the two cherubim—stand at either end, their wings uplifted as if ready to fly to the rescue, but their feet are held by justice. They cannot move. They look expectant toward the mercy-seat, waiting, watching for the blood of atonement which shall set them free to do their willing work. But these cherubim are said to over-shadow the mercy-seat. This is also true, for if the blood of atonement is not forthcoming, they stand as the guardians of justice and the terror of the evil-doer.

In the temple, which represents the church in the Millennial age, two new and very large cherubim were made. [Probably nearly twenty-one feet high.] They are represented as standing on each side of the ark, their outer wings touching either wall, and their inner wings touching each other, thus filling the whole expanse. (2 Chron. 3:10.)

These two new cherubim would seem to represent the other two attributes that had been so obscure before, but are now made glorious by the additional light of the new dispensation. [There was one lampstand in the tabernacle and ten in the temple.] The chief work of the Millennial age will apparently be to show that these two glorious attributes—love and justice—are not lame or impotent; they stand upon their own feet; they are independent, yet in perfect harmony,

and that they are "of one measure and of one size." (1 Kings 6:25.)

We cannot in this follow minutely the description of the cherubim as seen by Isaiah and Ezekiel, neither have we sufficient light as yet, but we will notice a few points that are easily seen. These two prophets seem, like John, to represent the living saints. To them "the heavens were opened." (Ez. 1:1; Rev. 4:1.) They see "visions of God," and Jehovah sitting upon a throne. (Isa. 6:1.) They see the cherubim around and under the throne. They hear them rest not from crying, "Holy, holy, holy," etc. That is, we now see that all of God's attributes are in perfect harmony, and that in ceaseless chorus they are sounding forth his praise, and revealing the fact that "the whole earth is full of his glory,"—to those who have their eyes opened. We are sent to preach, as the Lord's new mouth-piece, a message that is offensive to "a rebellious house," even to those who believe themselves to be the "Israel of God." It is a message of "lamentations, mourning and woe." (Ez. 2:10.) We are given the book to eat. [What a blessed feast it is!] It is "like honey" in our mouths; but having been digested, it leads to self-denial, to crucifixion, to death. (Ez. 3; Rev. 10.)

We realize our weakness, but when the hot coal from the altar touches our lips, we are ready to answer, "Here am I, send me." The message is, "Go and tell this people; Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not." "Declare fat the heart of this people, and its ears declare heavy, and its eyes declare dazzled," etc. [Young's trans.] "Then, said I, Lord how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate." (Isa. 6:5-13.) At the voice of the cherubim the door posts of the temple move, and the house is filled with smoke (Isa. 6:4; Ezek. 10:4; Rev. 15:8.) [For an illustration of this see "Seven Last Plagues," ZION'S WATCH TOWER, June, 1883.]

In Rev. 4:9-11, John hears the cherubim "give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne," and immediately the twenty-four elders fall down before him, saying, "Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and honor and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they are and were created"

When we can hear the power, wisdom, justice, and love of God proclaiming in perfect harmony the glory and honor of our Father, then indeed his twenty-four witnesses ring out his praise as never before, and we realize that he created all things, both good and evil, and that they exist by his permission and shall ultimately work out his pleasure.

W. I. M.

## REVELATION—CHAPTER V

"And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back [or outside] close sealed with seven seals, and I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a great voice, Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof? And no one in the heaven, or on the earth, was able to open the book or to look thereon."

From John's exalted standpoint he is enabled to look both backward and forward over the landscape; and that he may better understand God's dealings he is shown the unfolding of the plan from the first. Hence the events of this chapter carry us back to the beginning of the Christian dispensation.

When Ezekiel and John are said to have received the scroll, or book, it was open (Rev. 10:2; Ezekiel 2:10). At this date, but at the standpoint of this view, it had not yet been opened. The book signifies the plan and purpose of God as written in the law and the prophets. It was sealed perfectly (with seven seals) until Christ began to open it.

When the disciples asked our Lord, after his resurrection, in regard to the plan, he answered: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power, [or grasp] but you shall receive power [to understand] after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you." (Acts 1:7-8). Life, immortality and sonship have only been seen since that time (2 Tim. 1:10; John 1:12). A mighty angel, with a great voice, cries: "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no one in heaven or on the earth [symbolic] was able to open the book or to look thereon." Probably this angel symbolizes the Law, which, from the time of its deliverance through Moses, had been proclaiming as unworthy all who sought to overcome by it.

The faithful are represented as weeping because of the obscurity and want of knowledge in regard to the plan.

"And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome, to open the book and the seven seals thereof." This elder proves to be the old patriarch Jacob, who made the prophecy on his death-bed when blessing his sons. (Gen. 49:8-12).

John now sees "in the midst of the throne" and of the living ones and the elders "a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain." We recognize at once the One whom John the Baptist introduced to the Jews as "The Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." He comes and receives the scroll out of the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. Not until he had passed the last test, had endured "to the end," had risen in victory a spiritual body, had been caught away in glory, did he receive the wonderful scroll which "the angels desired to look into."

Ten days after our Lord ascended, the Holy Spirit was given, which at once began to unfold the truth to the church. When this took place John saw the four living ones and the twenty-four elders falling together before the Lamb, each having a harp, with which they sing a new song, saying, "Worthy art thou to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood [men] of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they [shall] reign upon the earth."

When it was seen that these all acknowledged and testified of Jesus, it was indeed a new song and a glorious one; and when we listen to the beautiful harmony as the melodious chords ring out from all the golden harps, our prayers and thanksgiving go up in the sweet incense from the golden bowls they have brought us. It is glorious news to the called of the Gentiles. Many are striving hard to find a way to prove themselves Israelites after the flesh. How much more glorious

to belong to the spiritual family who shall inherit the divine nature and attain to the rank of the royal priesthood "after the order of Melchisedec"!

As the vision of the restitution of all under the dominion of Him who "shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zech. 6:13), rises before John, he seems to turn and look down the stream of time to the glorious consummation of the plan of salvation; and, lo, the messengers that are in the presence of the throne, even myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, he heard saying with a great voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain, to receive the power and

riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." And as the wave of thanksgiving and praise floats over the world, the whole creation catches the strain and joins in the song: "And every created thing which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. And the four living ones said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshiped."

W. I. M.

## THE OBJECT OF OUR LORD'S RETURN

### DISCOURSE I

[At the request of some of the readers, we will publish reports of six discourses delivered by the editor in Allegheny City in 1878, published at that time in some of the public prints. The edition of "OUTLINES OF SERMONS" published some time ago is exhausted. To those whom we have been obliged to refuse we suggest, that this series may meet the approval of some of you and to some extent serve your purpose. Below is the first one of the series.]

Why does the Lord return? We do not ask if he will return, for as every Christian student of the Bible well knows that is one of the central themes of the Apostles' teaching—the coming of our Lord and our gathering together unto Him. It was repeatedly used by Jesus to comfort the disciples—"I will come again and receive you unto myself."

But while all are agreed as to the fact—the manner and the object are subjects upon which there is great difference of view. As we are now dealing with the latter—the object—let us examine the various leading views on the subject, of which there are six. Four of these views make the coming of Christ "a coming" in name only—devoid of a *personal advent*. The other two views hold that the coming is a *personal presence*, but differ regarding its object, etc.

First—Among the former, we find the chief to be, that death is the coming of Christ. The holders of this view scarcely know why they think so. Simply, they have that idea. This is the most unscriptural of all views, for while not a single text supports it, there are hundreds to contradict such a thought. The church is everywhere taught to look for and "love His appearing," while death is pronounced an enemy. "The last enemy which shall be destroyed is death." "For this purpose Christ was manifested that He might destroy death." Substitute the second coming of Christ for the word death in this passage, and what would you have?

A second view is—That the power manifested on the day of Pentecost evinced Christ's return as having taken place, and to be a coming in spiritual power and energy to His people. Such forget that Jesus characterized this as the coming of another, consequently not of himself, when he said, "I will pray the Father, and He shall send you *another* comforter, even the Spirit of Truth." There is a sense in which the Spirit *represented* Christ during his absence. For instance Jesus declared that he would be present with the twos and threes gathered in His name (Matt. 18:20). This He has done by the Spirit; *comforting* those who came seeking His blessing. In the same spiritual sense He has abode with His church all the way down; as he said, "Lo, I *am with* you always, even unto the end of the age." Matt. 28:20. Yet, *personally*, he was to be absent until the end of the age, as he taught.

A third view is—That Christ came at the destruction of Jerusalem, because Jesus mentions His coming in the same conversation in which He refers to the destruction of Jerusalem. Overlooking the fact that three distinct questions are asked by the disciples, (Matt. 24:3), which received separate answers. Jesus gave them to understand that His coming was not imminent; there would be wars, etc., but the end is not yet. He said, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, (Matt. 24:7). This was not fulfilled before the fall of Jerusalem, for until that time and for long after, the Romans held the nations in the quiet and peace of servitude. Again, he says, "These good tidings of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole inhabited earth (NEW VERSION) for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." This has only been fulfilled during the last few years. America, Australia and some other large portions of the world were probably unknown to the early church. Then He mentioned certain signs and said, "When

YE SEE ALL these things then know that it is nigh, even at the door." This generation (the one seeing these signs) shall not pass away until all these things are fulfilled. The generation then living did not see all those signs.

Further, John the Revelator, who wrote some 26 years after the destruction of Jerusalem, was ignorant of Christ's having come, and Jesus himself also, for while one says, "Behold! I come quickly," the other answered, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20).

A fourth view is—That Christ comes in conversion of sinners; so continually coming, more and more. This cannot be what Jesus referred to when He said, "All tribes of the earth shall mourn and wail because of him when they see him coming." Do they mourn and wail when a sinner is converted? The chief objection to the four views just mentioned is that the real personal coming is ignored. Of the two classes who hold to a personal coming of our Lord, one is called Pre-millenarian [*before* the Millennium], and the other Post-millenarian [*after* the Millennium].

Of the latter class are most of so-called orthodox Christians. They believe that he has been coming all the way down in the growth of the church and the advancement of science and civilization, but that he will also come personally to crown his triumphant church, when *she* shall have put down all opposing authority and power; and that he, through her efforts, will put all enemies under her feet. Others, who claim only a personal coming, believe in about the same order of events; that through the missionary labors of the church the world will be converted and thus usher in the millennial age, at the close of which the Lord will come, wind up earthly affairs, reward believers and condemn sinners. They have much scripture which, if taken disconnectedly, seems to favor this view. But even these we believe, when God's word and plan are looked at as a whole, will be found to favor the view we are advancing, viz.: That Christ comes before the conversion of the world; that the church is now being tried, and that the reward promised the overcomers is: that they shall share in this reign:—"To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in my throne." (Rev. 3:21.) "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." (Rev. 20:4.) "Ye which have followed me," etc. (Matt. 19:28). "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12).

There are two texts in particular used by our Post-millennial brethren to which we would refer. One is, "This gospel must first be preached in all the world for a witness. Then shall the end come." They claim this to mean that the gospel will convert the world before the end of the gospel age. We, Pre-millennial believers, claim that witnessing to the world does not mean converting the world, that the object of the present witnessing is principally "To take out a people for His name." The church, who at Christ's coming are united to Him and receive His name. (Rev. 3:12.) The other text is—"Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The thought generally gathered from this Scripture is, that in heaven God has a throne on which He sits continually, and then when "Christ sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High," He sat down also upon the same throne. This is a misconception. The throne of God as referred to is not an ivory or golden seat, but refers to His supreme authority and rulership, for "Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool," and Paul says, "God hath highly exalted Him (Christ) and given Him a name above every name," etc. He has given Him authority above every other, next to the Father. If Christ sits upon a material throne until His enemies are made His footstool, (all subdued) then of course He could not come until the Millennial reign was fully inaugurated. But if it means the exalting

to power, it would not interfere with His coming and subduing all things unto Himself."

"Right hand" signifies the chief place—position of excellence or favor. And the words of Jesus to Pilate agree with this thought: "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Mark. 14:62). He will be on the right hand when coming and remain at the right hand forever.

These two last named views demand a thorough examination. There are able arguments possible on both sides; yet both are not true. We propose, therefore, to take a glance at the plan of God for saving the world, believing that in so doing we shall find the relation and bearing of both the first and the second comings, and know where to locate the latter.

First, then: Hast God a plan? All must agree that He has; although, almost all are inclined to think and talk of His dealings as though He were dealing by a rule of chance, and governed entirely by circumstances. No; He that would condemn a man for building a tower without first counting the cost, shall He build and people a universe without matured plans and due forethought? No, brethren, "known unto the Lord are all His ways from the beginning." God has a plan or purpose, and we know that "all His purposes shall be accomplished." But how shall we find that plan? It is revealed to us in God's Word. "Search the Scriptures," as Paul says, "Compare Scripture with Scripture," for

"God is His own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain."

We are too much inclined to ask, "What does my church say?, about any question, instead of "What saith the Scriptures? Too much theology is studied and the Bible not enough. With the thought, then, that "The Scriptures are able to make us wise," that the "Testimonies of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple" (teachable), and that "all Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished," let us study.

Notice first that the Scriptures divide human history into three great successive periods, called "The world that was," (the age ending with the flood), "The present evil world," (the age commencing at the flood and ending with the coming of Christ a second time), and lastly, "The world to come," (the age commencing with the second coming of Christ) the endless age, or "World without end." This arrangement is not mere fancy, but is strictly scriptural. A proper understanding of these ages enables us to "rightly divide the word of truth," and it seems impossible to understand his plan without first recognizing them.

Peter mentions all of them. (2 Pet. 3:6, 7, 12.) Paul speaks of "the present evil world, and of the world to come." Jesus also distinguished between them, and calls the devil the prince of this world, (John 14:30), and promised reward to His faithful followers "in the world [or order of things] to come, etc.

While Christ has all power in heaven and earth, for wise purposes, He has not heretofore made use of it, permitting evil to reign and measurably control the world, and the devil to be "prince of this world," or order of things. But the time is promised when "He shall take to Himself His great power and reign," exalting His church and giving her "power over the nations," so that instead of as now, being "subject to the powers that be," she shall "rule the nations."

But when will He thus assume control? When the Gospel church, "His body"—Ecclesia—is complete, evil now being permitted, for the trial of faith, and the perfecting of the saints. This time is synchronous with the sounding of the "seventh trumpet." (Rev. 11:15.) Here the mystery (church) of God is finished—and "the kingdoms of this world" become the kingdoms of our Lord and His anointed (church). Now, we inquire, is this transfer of authority from Satan to Christ caused by the conversion of the nations to Christ through preaching the Gospel? We answer, No; at this time the nations are not converted. See the eighteenth verse: "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come." If converted, they would not thus be hostile, neither would God's wrath come upon them. On the contrary, God teaches in many Scriptures that a great time of trouble will come upon the nations. "Come, behold the desolations which the Lord hath made in the earth; He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth." (Psa. 46:8-10). This is the way God tells us He will make wars to cease. The next clause informs us that then He "will be exalted among the heathen and in all the earth." This chastisement of nations is designed for their good, and is as necessary to them as chastisement to the children of God now, and it will have this effect; for "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the

inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Psa. 26:9). It is in this new dispensation that, with Evil or Satan bound, the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters do the sea." The conversion of the world, instead of being due now, while the devil is "prince of this world," will, David says, be "When the kingdom is the Lord's and He is the Governor among the nations, (then) all the ends of the world shall remember, and turn to the Lord, and the kingdoms of the nations shall come and worship before Him." (Ps. 22:27-28).

"The present evil world" contains three separate ages; the Patriarchal age, lasting from the flood to the death of Jacob; the Jewish age, lasting from the death of Jacob until the death of Christ—when He gave them up, wept over them, and said: "Your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 23:38.) The Gospel age, lasting from Christ's baptism and anointing until the full company of "the church of the first-born" is complete, and He comes—the "sounding of the seventh trumpet, the resurrection and reward of saints and prophets." (Rev. 11:16).

We know not how many ages may be in "The World to Come," but that there is more than one we are assured, for Paul speaks of "The ages to come." (Eph. 2:7.) The first of these alone is dealt with in Scripture—the millennial age, during which the saints shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4).

Having gotten an outline, let us look more particularly at God's doings and sayings; and now, I will astonish you, doubtless, until you reflect, when I say that, according to His word, God is not now trying to convert the world, nor has He been during past ages. What has He been doing? Taking out a people—Church—for His name. Do not think this wonderful, as it is only putting in a striking form what all Calvinists believe, among whom are Baptists, Presbyterians and others, viz: That God is now electing—or choosing His Church out of the world. Yes, and all our brethren who believe in *free grace* must admit that if "all His purposes shall be accomplished," and "God's word shall prosper in the thing whereto it was sent"; if these Scriptures are true God did not purpose the conversion of the world during the past 6,000 years, else it would be accomplished. Neither did He send His Word to convert the world up to the present time, else it *did not prosper* in the thing whereto He sent it. These two views have been dividing points in the churches for centuries, viz: Election and Free Grace.

We believe the Scripture to teach both, but that it requires the observance of "Heaven's first law," *order*, to rightly divide the Word of truth on this subject.

There is no scriptural account of God's giving mankind any law, nor but very little light of revelation during the age preceding the deluge. One promise shines out: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head"; but *even this* required future revelation to be comprehended. God had, however, a few faithful servants, some of the patriarchs, who had light above the masses; these shone as lamps in a dark way.

The Patriarchal age had increase of light. It was now revealed that this seed was not only to crush evil (the serpent) but to "bless all the families of earth." Still God's church was represented by but one man at a time—Noah, Abraham, Isaac, etc.

These Patriarchs were elected or chosen. "God called Abraham, and said," etc. Abraham and his kin was called. His parents were idolaters. He had many sons and daughters, but only one son was chosen. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Of Isaac's two sons, only one was chosen. "As it is written (says Paul, Rom. 8:11 and 12), Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (loved less). God chose before they were born, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand." Now, remember, I do not say that God elected one to go to heaven and the other to hell. Far from it. We will talk of Esau's portion and the non-elect on a future occasion.

At Jacob's death another advance step in God's plan is taken, and typical or fleshly Israel is formed. From this time one man no longer represents God in the world; but a nation; *all the sons of Jacob and their posterity*. And now we have an *elect nation* or church, and God gives all His special blessings to it. Other and larger nations—Egypt, Chaldea, &c.—are passed by; left without light and without knowledge, while these are given to Israel. "What advantage then hath a Jew? Much every way, chiefly because to them was committed the oracles (laws and testimonies) of God." This is Paul's statement. (Rom. 3:2). God speaking to them says: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2). This people alone was recognized, and this

continued until Christ came, and after that—until for lack of faith they were given up and their house left desolate.

During Christ's ministry he preached to them and would not suffer His disciples to go to any others, saying as he sent them out, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." Why so, Lord? "I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." All His time was devoted to them until death, and here was his first and grandest gift, not for Israel only, but for all; for Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for *every man*. (Heb. 2:9). And now, also, in the Gospel age, a certain sort of election obtains. Some parts of the world are more favored than others with the Gospel (which is free to all who hear). Contrast yourself with your privileges and knowledge with yonder heathen man who never yet heard the call.

When this called-out company (called to be the "sons of God," "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord"—"our high calling") is complete, then the plan of God for the world's salvation is only beginning. Not until then can THE SEED "bruise the serpent's head" and bless all the families of the earth. For the seed is not Jesus, the head alone, but the church also, which is His body, as Paul

informs us (Gal. 3:29), "Which seed is Christ; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The same company are to bruise the serpent. (Rom. 16:20.) "The very God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

The Gospel age makes ready the chaste virgin (church) for the coming bridegroom. In due time the bridegroom comes and they that are ready are united. The second Adam and the second Eve become one, the new creation and the glorious work of elevating *mankind* in the world begins. The river of living waters will flow from the New Jerusalem—the symbol of the glorified church (Rev. 22:1-3). Then the conversion of the world will be due. The church, now the "espoused virgin," will then be "the *Bride*, the Lamb's wife," and, with her Lord, she shall share in ruling, teaching and restoring mankind from the curse. Then shall "the Spirit and the Bride say, Come! and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17). What is now a "well of water in you," will then be a bountiful river—enough for *all*. Thus seen, the object of the Lord's return is to exalt and glorify his Bride—the elect church—and with and through her to "bless all the families of the earth."

## CHRISTIANITY VS. CHURCHIANITY

We are living in an age of shams and counterfeits. Satan seems to have abandoned the hope of crushing out the Christian Church by a process of undisguised hostility, and now seeks to destroy her efficiency by stealthily draining off her vitality, and robbing her of every supernatural element. He "transforms himself into an angel of light," and often assumes to be the special friend and guardian of the Church. Craftily he infuses his deadly virus and inculcates his plausible philosophy, until the moral perception is obscured, the conscience is distorted, and policy runs nearly the whole ecclesiastical machinery. Thus a popularized religion—which costs nothing and is worth nothing—is readily accepted, while the old religion of the cross is utterly discarded. The consequence is, that there is *religion* enough, and *Churchianity* enough, but a *great famine for real Christianity*. We meet with thousands all over the land who, if catechised in regard to their spiritual condition, reply with much self-assurance that they are members of such a Church. They assume that the Church is an ark of safety; and, once ensconced within her enclosures, all further anxiety ends. Let us try to unmask this dreadful delusion of the devil.

There is a difference, we may premise, between the *real* and the *nominal* Church of Christ. The former is composed of all true Christians. Its boundaries are therefore invisible, as no man can tell exactly where to draw the lines. The latter is composed of those who assume the Christian name and practice the ordinances of God's house. It is commonly called the *visible* Church, because its boundary lines are known. The epithet may apply to a single local society of a given denomination, or to the aggregate of local societies of all denominations. We use the term, in this paper, to designate the outward or visible Church.

1. *Christ and the Church are not identical.* There may be ten thousand Churches, but there is only *one Christ*. Nor can *all* those Churches supply the place of our *one, blessed all-sufficient Saviour*. A man may be saved without the Church, but he cannot be saved without Christ. A man may be in the Church and *not* be saved; but he cannot be in *Christ* without salvation. *Sinners* sometimes become members of the Church; but only *saints* are members of Christ. A person may live in the Church for years, with the old heart of carnality and selfishness; but "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

The requirements of the Church are often wrong and ruinous; but the claims of Christ are always reasonable and right. The Church may become a sink of pollution; but Christ is ever the perfection of purity. The Church may be rent with divisions; but Jesus Christ is not divided. The Church may become terribly entangled in mysticism and error; but Christ is always the embodiment of light and truth. The Church may change her name and her nature; but Christ is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." The Church may be a crutch to walk with, but she is a poor Christ to trust in for salvation and eternal life.

2. *Christian worship and Church worship are not identical.* Vast multitudes cling to some Church establishment as a drowning man would cling to a life-boat. They bow obsequiously to her priestly and official mandates, and imagine that the blind servility which they tender to the Church will be accounted acceptable service offered to Christ. The simplicity of the Gospel is lost in the imposing forms and glitter-

ing accompaniments of modern churchism. Splendid church edifices attract the eye. Splendid music charms the ear. Splendid prayers are addressed to the CONGREGATION. Splendid sermons please the fancy, and leave deluded sinners to slumber on. Church rivalry has achieved a glorious success, if success consists in gorgeous temples, tall steeples, loud-sounding bells, thundering organs, ostentatious dressing, theatrical singing, pointless praying, rhetorical preaching, careless hearing, and unscriptural practicing!

Much of the current worship is done by proxy. Lazy religionists surrender their sacred rights to others. They take it for granted that the preacher is on the right track, and readily swallow whatever may be doled out from the pulpit, without using their own brains in searching for the hidden treasures of truth. Thus religious ideas are transmitted from generation to generation, until tradition exerts a more powerful influence than the Bible in molding the sentiments of men. There comes to be a fashionable *faith*, as well as a fashionable dress. To embrace a certain stereotyped circle of doctrinal views entitles a man to the claim of "orthodoxy"; but let him not venture one step out of the beaten track, if he would not be denounced as a deluded heretic! But few have the moral courage to question the decisions of the Church, much less to discard what she has labeled as "orthodox." The verdict of a few leading denominations has thus grown up into a threatening *tyranny*; and the multitude cannot think of stemming the mighty tide. So they bow down in their narrow enslavement and worship this curiously-fashioned but pious-looking idol—the *Church*! Since all idolatry is an abomination to God, we have no more right to worship a *church* than we have to worship a *golden calf*! We rob the Lord of his rightful honor, and ourselves of the highest bliss of Christianity, by looking to the Church too much, and "looking unto Jesus" too little. What can be done to deal a staggering blow to this cruel church-worship of the day, and at the same time give us more exalted and ravishing views of Jesus Christ? There is a grand failure to carry out the ultimate design, when the appliances of the Gospel result only in the production of *Churchianity*. Our perception, our prayers, our faith, and our adoration must overleap the narrow precincts of the outward Church, and rise up to the eternal throne! "Worship God!"

3. *Christian fellowship and Church fellowship are not identical.* The followers of Christ are called upon to "love one another with a pure heart fervently." Indeed, this is one of the Scriptural tests of discipleship. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." All Christians constitute one family, and *love* is the golden tie designed to bind their hearts together around the common cross. But love is a tender plant that needs to be reared with a hand. Hence the many exhortations of Scripture to "consider one another"—to "be kindly affectioned one to another"—to esteem others better than ourselves—to "bear one another's burdens"—to exercise a forgiving spirit—to "let brotherly love continue"—to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace." All such injunctions point out the danger of alienated feelings and poisoned affections, and show the importance of making a special effort to promote Christian unity and love. How disastrous are the results of not regarding these Gospel precepts!—A. A. Phelps.

*Ques.* A Brother writes to heartily endorse our expressions in last issue relative to the Inter. S. S. Lessons, etc., and asks, Can we not have a lesson leaf for children which would rightly present the Scripture teachings to them?

*Ans.* In our opinion Sunday-schools and all kinds of schools are good and useful in proportion as they teach anything valuable or useful. Let children be taught morality of every sort, and instructed in the first principles of the Gospel, and all they can understand concerning God's character, and of the harmony between God's two revelations—the book of nature and the book of revelation. Thus they will be prepared for useful and honest lives as men and women—loyal and obedient to their Creator and Redeemer.

But we who are in training for the high calling cannot turn aside from the *special work of this age*—the work of preparing "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." The Bride is to make herself ready; and just at the present moment, when the last touches of adornment are being put on preparatory to the wedding, every member's service is required in this all-important, present work. Soon our exalted position of heavenly power with the Lord, will enable us to render substantial aid to all work, for the blessing and elevating of humanity. The very work for which we are now in preparation is the restoring and blessing of all families of earth.

To all saints who have a talent for teaching and explaining, and who see the truth clearly, we suggest that you "cast your net on the other side of the ship" and become fishers of men and women rather than of children; and fish for one class only, viz.: the consecrated in Christ Jesus, and to these do as did Aquilla and Priscilla to Apollos—show unto them "the way of God more perfectly." (Acts 18:26-28.) It is the eleventh hour, but go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right shall be your reward. It is too late now to expect fruit for this vintage from new slips, but you may be of service to the older fruit-bearing branches by tearing off some of the old withered leaves, and thus letting in the sunlight of grace and truth with power to ripen their fruit.

*Ques.* Is it possible for a parent to cast all care on Jesus and not be worried about the future condition of grown children, who, though members of the nominal church and free from gross sins, yet manifest much love for the world and have no appetite for spiritual things?

*Ans.* We think that a proper appreciation of the Lord's character and plans, while it would not lead to carelessness in using every opportunity to reach him that hath an ear to hear, yet would be free entirely from worry. Under all circumstances let us give thanks.

In the first place, probably your sons and daughters, like thousands of others, are not *new creatures* in Christ—old things have not passed away and all things have not become new to them; hence they would not be *heirs* of spiritual, heavenly things. For this reason God does not reveal to them things which they cannot have. No such *human eye* hath seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of *man* the things which God hath in reservation for those that love him [the consecrated "*new creatures*"]. But God hath revealed these things to the *new creatures* by his Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:9-10.)

Being of the earth earthy, they shall in due time be blessed by being restored to the *perfection* of the earthly condition, and to a perfect enjoyment of earthly blessings, because *redeemed* by the precious blood. In their resurrection (or perfecting) they shall come fully to the image of the first man, "very good"; but those who, through consecration, have changed their nature; will be no longer men, but "*new creatures*"—spiritual beings—and shall bear the image of the Head of the heavenly house when perfected. As *was* the earthly one, Adam, such like will they be also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly one, Jesus, such like will they be also that are heavenly.

The difficulty is, that the church, having misconstrued the Gospel's *present* mission to *witness* to the world, and to develop a little flock, came to the conclusion that she must *now convert the world*, hence she has bent her energies in that direction, and almost ignored the deeper work upon the "little flock." The work of converting the world being *slow*, she naturally concluded that she must not be *too particular* as to whom she received, else she would seem to make no progress. Accordingly she lowered her standard. Therefore many persons have been told that they are Christians, and invited to join church, who never were converted, and know nothing about entire consecration. Such are not *new crea-*

*tures*, and, consequently, cannot sympathize with the rules of *self-sacrifice* laid down in Scripture for the little flock. As such constitute, probably, three fourths of the membership of the nominal church, it is not surprising that spirituality and spiritual truths are at such a discount in it.

Again, we say, rejoice—rejoice that you may overcome and be of that *spiritual seed* which shall bless and restore the nations. Rejoice that your children are moral, and do all that you can to supply them a basis for morality in the expression and illustration of God's character in your words and conduct. Rejoice as you think of the blessings to come upon them and all mankind when the kingdom is the Lord's and he is the governor among the nations. Rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks: "For he is good—His mercy endureth forever." "Blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

*Ques.* Please let us know your opinion of the very distinct physical features of the present day, such as cyclones, sun spots, etc. I know your position concerning political and religious changes as fulfilling the scriptural statements of the shaking of the heavens, earthquakes, etc., but not concerning these physical phenomena.

*Ans.* We understand that great *physical* as well as political and religious revolutions are now in progress. Just what these are, may not be very clearly seen, but these are as certain to bring a blessing to earth as the others, though, like them, the *change* may be attended with distress.

It seems certain that to make the earth into a paradise like Eden, such as the prophecies picture, and a fit place for the restored race, some great changes of climate, etc., must occur. Looking back, we find that some important changes of climate, etc., took place at the time of the Deluge; a change which at once affected the longevity of humanity, for before that life averaged 500 to 1,000 years, but immediately afterward it was shortened. (See Gen. 6:3; 9:29; 11:32.) Furthermore, we learn that until the flood, there had been no rain on the earth, it being watered by a mist instead. (Gen. 2:5, 6.) These changes occurred at the *end* of the first world or dispensation—at the beginning of "The present evil world," or *dispensation*—and we think that a proper time to expect *another change* to a better condition would be at the close of the present *evil dispensation*, at the threshold of "The world [dispensation] to come," wherein dwelleth *righteousness*. That these changes will be sudden we do not believe, but think that the all-wise Director of the work has so planned that physical and higher changes run parallel and keep pace with each other.

As we find the forty years, from 1874 to 1914, A. D., prophetically marked out as the time for the change of earth's administration, it would seem not unreasonable to suppose that the proper physical changes might occur during the same period. "Not that we expect all changes to be completed in the specified forty years, but that by that time the new systems and arrangements will be thoroughly introduced, which will be gradually improving, and will reach absolute perfection at the same time that mankind in general will reach absolute perfection by restitution. Thus the perfect earth and its perfect lord (man) will both be prepared to enter upon the ceaseless ages of perfection into which shall never enter sin, death, pain or sorrow.

So, then, to us let the physical contortions and quakings and tempests and angry waves, speak of the better condition coming, just as the social revolutions speak of a more blessed time coming to the groaning creation who shall be delivered into the liberty of sons of God. (Rom. 8:21.)

Whirlwinds or cyclones are disturbances occurring in the air or heavens—caused by disorders therein, and which exercise a baneful influence upon the earth. These physical disorders illustrate the origin of much of the world's trouble; it will be caused by disorders in the symbolic heavens or church nominal. Notice how this trouble and whirlwind are symbolically mentioned by Jeremiah 25:29-36. Notice how the chief distress is specified as coming upon the nations [governments] and upon the shepherds and principal of the flock.

*Ques.* Why was the brazen serpent used as a type of Christ?

*Ans.* Undoubtedly to teach and develop faith. But we presume you to mean, Why was the serpent used as a symbol of Jesus? We answer, that the serpent represents sin, evil—the cruse, and brass (copper) represents the human nature. This was a fitting type of Jesus, because as a man he was *made sin* (*i. e.*, reckoned and treated as the *personification* of all the evil and sin of the race, as their representative or substitute) for us (He) who knew no sin.