

VIEW FROM THE "TOWER"

"Ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it that ye do not discern this time?" Luke 12:56-59.

Glance backward for a little more than eighteen centuries. There stands Jesus with twelve disciples; they are mostly young men, the Master himself being but little over thirty. They have never had an education, and most of them have been ordinary fishermen. But though "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13), the disciples had a confidence and power in teaching which marked them among men as peculiar; and wherever they went "they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus," for though their Master had "never learned," yet he was scholarly, a man of letters. John 7:15.

But after all, that was an insignificant little band in the eyes of the military governor Pilate, in the eyes of the chief priest, and in the eyes of the Scribes and Pharisees—the Doctors of Divinity—the apostles of legal holiness in that day. The class *chosen* to announce Jesus as the King of the Jews, saying, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15), was not a prepossessing one, and to the zealous Jew was so unlike what might be expected of their long anticipated Messiah, and so out of harmony with their great religious teachers, that they failed to recognize Jesus as such.

The miracles and teachings of Jesus, and the correspondence of these with the predictions concerning Messiah, made by the Lord's prophets long before, were the only evidence Israel had, that Jesus was the long-expected King. This could be evidence to such only as by careful heed to the "more sure word of prophecy," knew what to expect, and who by humility of mind would be prepared not only to note the prophetic utterances which foretold the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus, but to receive him who came in meekness with the escort of humble fishermen.

Even John the Baptizer, his cousin, who had immersed Jesus, and who saw and bare witness to his anointing by the holy spirit of God was sorely puzzled by the strange course events were taking. He had perhaps supposed that when anointed, Jesus would publicly announce himself with power and authority, and bring honor and dignity to all associated with him; but to the contrary of this, Jesus was going about quietly and not attempting the exercise of marked power as a ruler, while he (John) had been cast into prison. Things progressed so differently from what he had expected that even John's faith in Jesus as the Messiah began to fail, and he sent a message to Jesus, saying: "Art thou he that should come, or [are you also merely a forerunner as I was, and] look we for another," to be the Deliverer, the Messiah to bless Israel and through them all the nations?

Mark carefully the answer of Jesus to John; he in substance recalls to him the *transpiring events*, as in the Scripture at the head of this article; and he expected John to be able to DISCERN THE TIME by the events. He said, "Go and show John again, those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Matt. 11:3-6.

There was in transpiring events proof that he who was then present, was no less than the Messiah promised. But we should not forget either, that not only were Jesus' miracles performed with a degree of secrecy, but that they were done over a large area of country, and that the majority of the Jews probably never saw one of the healed persons. Nor had they the printing press and its reporters to spread reports of the details of the miracles.

The learned there, might have known from Daniel's prophecy that the time was fulfilled; (Dan. 9:24-27; Mark 1:15,) but for the masses, the evidence was simply, and only, the signs of the times: but these because blinded by the traditions of men, they did not appreciate. In following men the word of God became of none effect, so that the people as well as the leaders were blind. The blind followed the blind; both stumbled; and thus Israel as a nation received not the blessing but only the elect—those who were of the class chosen, "Israelites indeed"

And now what do we see? Messiah is present again; the time is fulfilled for his Second Advent—Jesus a spiritual being, in power, is about to exalt his "body" to his own condition, and to judge, cleanse, heal and bless the world—the House of Jacob and all the families of the earth

What are the evidences? They have been repeatedly furnished in these columns and are ever increasing. We have shown the testimony of the prophets to be that—The Day of

the Lord [the time of Christ's presence] is a day of trouble; that in it the powers of the heavens shall be shaken [earthly governments and authorities removed—Matt. 24:29; Heb. 12:27, 28; Dan. 2:44.] In it, when fully under way, all the tribes of the earth shall mourn because of him who now is assuming the control, and who will shake to pieces every evil system which hinders, binds, oppresses, or blinds the people whom he comes to bless—all of earth's families. Then the great ones shall fear as they look after those things coming upon the earth. They are already in this condition. They see the spirit of liberty working among the masses, and they truly see that it will soon lead them to madness and bring a sanguinary conflict. Again, it is noted in Scripture that in the coming troubles the rich of this world will suffer much; (James 5:1-4) and so it is, today, the aims and threats of the discontented are against the wealthy. We see these things all about us; are they not signs of the times in which we are living?

Look again; see the Jew once more finding a home in the land of promise from which for so long he has been an exile. Note, too, the fact that there is now a beginning of the turning away of his blindness, and he is beginning to recognize Him whom they have pierced and lament therefor. (Zech. 12:10.) Turn now to the apostle James' statement, and note that this rebuilding of Israel is due "after" the selection of the people for his name, the Bride from the Gentiles. (Acts 13:16, 17.) Turn to Paul and note his statement—that *when* the fulness of the Gentiles is come in [the full number selected from the Gentiles to be joint-heirs with Christ—His Bride] then, blindness shall begin to depart from Jacob—Israel after the flesh. Rom. 11:25-32. A letter from the one whom God seems to be raising up as a teacher among the Jews, will be found in another column, and is of deep interest as bearing upon this feature of restitution. What is this, if not an evidence of what the *time periods* of the prophets have already showed us?—that we are living in the harvest of the Christian age, the dawning of the Millennial age; that the selection and trial of "the Church which is His (Christ's) body" is about complete. It proves that the DELIVERER (head and body) is come, and the blessing coming to Israel is but a premonition of the coming blessings upon all nations, of which they are the first-fruits.

Look again, but in another direction. Note the increase of special healing of diseases since 1874. Some are in answer to prayer, some in answer to anointing with oil and prayer, and some without prayer, or oil, or anything. Thus in various ways today, ye see increasingly that the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, blind eyes are opened, and the Gospel (good tidings) of a "restitution for the groaning creation, of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets" (Acts 3:21) is preached.

The healings of our day are as pronounced and as true, as were those at the first advent, except that the dead have not yet been raised from the tomb. Nor is it in any one place, but everywhere, that this power is manifested and this feature of restitution work is beginning. We hear from Sweden, and Germany and Britain, in much the same strain, as from all over this land. Among the remarkable instances coming under our notice recently, is that of a family in Louisville, Ky.,* in which four deaf and dumb persons were perfectly and instantly healed. One of them aged eleven years, had never spoken or heard from birth. The two small towns of Midway and Primrose, Pa., have during the past month been much excited by six remarkable cases of faith cure from various maladies. One old man, Hamilton Smith, Midway, Pa., had been so crippled by rheumatism that he could not stoop down; but was instantly healed, and to a reporter who called to inquire regarding his healing, demonstrated his suppleness by kicking higher than his own height, and the night he was cured he jumped over a fire board fence with ease. He declared that he is stronger than ever, and that he is becoming young again. And in fact this seems true. He is seventy-two years old but in a short time his white hair has commenced to resume its original color; the wrinkles are leaving his face, and his complexion becoming fresh so that he might pass now, for a man of fifty.

We might multiply instances; one of a woman healed after an illness of sixteen years, who is now thirty-seven years old but might readily be mistaken for twenty. She though ignorant of the views presented in the TOWER relative to our being now in the dawn of Millennial Day, expressed herself as

* Mrs. Ann Mack, No 2700 Lytle St., Louisville.

satisfied that she has entered on the "Resurrection Life," as she calls it.

If these be not evidences of the beginning of Restitution work, what are they? This is the right time for the work of healing; in the time of the first advent, restitution and restitution works, healing, etc., were not due; they were premature and were only performed to manifest forth beforehand, Christ's glory and to illustrate the powers of the world (age) to come, which now is at hand. In his miracles, as in everything else, Jesus dealt with the end of that age as though it had been the gospel age which it only typified; hence the works of the restitution which he and the disciples performed, no less than offering himself then as their King, and Reaper, were but illustrations of the end of the Christian age, his assumption of kingly powers, etc., now fully due, because the "body," the church, is complete, and the time for this blessed SEED of Jehovah (Gal. 3:29) to bless all the families of earth, is at hand.

If all could see that the world's hope is restitution to perfection, many more of that class would be prepared to ask the Lord in faith for physical healing and might go on unto the perfection of human nature, instead of into the tomb. Not only is the time at hand when he that believeth need not enter the tomb, but such may go from strength to strength. If men but realized the Scripture teaching better, and did not get the heavenly hope of the Gospel church, the "body of Christ," mixed with the restitution hope of the world, they would be much better prepared to receive the blessing of restitution now within their reach. The basis of restitution simply stated is this: Man became a sinner and in Adam his right and hold upon life was lost. Since then, death has reigned over all. But Jesus was made flesh in order that he by God's favor might redeem all. He paid the full penalty, DEATH, and thus redeemed ALL. (Rom. 5:17-19).

Now, all may return to life and perfection because ransomed by Jesus. This restitution might have taken effect as soon as Jesus died and rose and ascending on high presented the sacrifice on man's behalf. Jesus might have returned at once to restore all things but another work intervened, the selection of the Christian church—"the body" "the Bride" of Christ Jesus, to be his joint-heir in the reign of blessing and work of restitution. Now the work of restitution is fully due, because the selection of the body of Christ from the world is complete, and the work of restitution is beginning while the sifting of the consecrated saints progresses to completion. Men shall be and now may be, released by faith in him who gave the ransom which not only releases from pain and sickness,

but ultimately from every degree of death, to perfect life.

So far as our observation goes, the Lord makes use of various characters as agents in these healings, even as Judas was one of the twelve who worked miracles. And some mentioned as remarkable for doing "wonderful works" (Matt. 7:22), will lack the approval of the Master, and some were not reckoned among the followers of Christ (Mark 9:38, 39). Apparently the Lord acknowledges and answers FAITH in this direction by whomsoever exercised, because it is now due time for restitution work of this kind to have a beginning.

As heretofore shown, physical restitution is not the hope set before the "little flock," but on the contrary sacrifice. It is their mission as it was their Leader's whose footsteps they follow, to "lay down" life as human beings, not to take it up. They might be agents of God in blessing others as was Paul (Acts 19:12), and yet like him suffer from maladies they were instrumental in curing in others (2 Cor. 12:8, 9). Of the Master it was truly said: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Had he saved himself, he could not have been our Redeemer. So if we would share his glory, and with him bless and restore the families of earth, we must with him, share in his sacrifice.

But while these, appreciating their covenant, will not ask for healing or any earthly blessing, it does not follow that if they asked, God would always, as in Paul's case, refuse them. Thus Jesus said in Gethsemane, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But then how shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be." Matt. 26:53, 54.

If the legions of angels had protected him from the priests and soldiery then where would have been his sacrifice? Therefore he did not ask. Likewise those who now tread the same "narrow way" [See "Food," page 134] refuse to ask for the same reason—that they may complete their covenant of sacrifice. At times, however, without asking, such have been relieved in such manner as to enable them to accomplish further labor in the Lord's vineyard (Phil. 1:12, 13, 24, 25).

What think you of the signs of our times? How is it that you can discern the fact of the sky, but cannot discern *this* time? Is it not more clearly marked than was the first advent? Are there not more convincing proofs now, than there were then, even in the signs of the times, that we are in the Day of the Lord's presence?

The Lord willing, we purpose hereafter to devote more space to the mention of cases of healing on every hand, that this sign of restitution and hence of the Lord's presence (Acts 3:21) may be duly noted by our readers.

SUNSHINE OVER ALL

"What folly, then," the faithless critic cries,
With sneering lip and wise world-knowing eyes,
"While fort to fort, and post to post repeat
The ceaseless challenge of the war-drum's beat;
And round the green earth, to the church-bells' chime,
The morning drum-roll of the camp keeps time,
To dream of peace amidst a world in arms,
Of swords to plowshares changed by Scriptural charms;
Of nations, drunken with the wine of blood,
Staggering to take the pledge of brotherhood,
Like tipplers answering Father Matthew's call.

* * * * *
Check Bau or Kaiser with the barricade
Of 'Olive leaves,' and resolutions made,
Spike guns with pointed Scripture texts, and hope
To capsize navies with a windy trope;
Still shall the glory and the pomp of war
Along their train the shouting millions draw;
Still dusky labor to the parting brave
His cap shall doff and beauty's kerchief wave,
Still shall the bard to valor tune his song;

Still hero-worship kneel before the strong;
Rosy and sleek, the sable-gowned divine,
O'er his third bottle of suggestive wine,
To plumed and sworded auditors shall prove
Their trade accordant with the law of love;
And Church for State and State for Church shall fight,
And both agree that might alone is right."

Despite the sneers like these, oh, faithful few,
Who dare to hold God's word and witness true,
Whose clear-eyed faith transcends our evil time,
And o'er the present wilderness of crime
Sees the calm future with its robes of green,
Its fleece-flecked mountains, and soft streams between,
Still keep the path which duty bids ye tread,
Though worldly wisdom shake the cautious head,
No truth from heaven descends upon our sphere
Without the greeting of the skeptic's sneer.
Denied and mocked at till its blessings fall
Common as dew and sunshine over all.

—J. G. Whittier

EXTRACTS FROM INTERESTING LETTERS

Ellenton, April 29, 1885.

C. T. RUSSELL, DEAR SIR: I wish to ask a question on a subject that does not appear quite plain to me in the TOWER. I have been a member of the Presbyterian Church for twenty odd years, having joined that Church at my old home, St. Louis, Missouri. I am quite certain that I joined the Church with a sincere desire to become one of Christ's followers, and I fully understood the nature of the vows I took, and experienced great pleasure in reading the Bible with its commentaries; and this for a number of years. I either expected too much in this new relation I had placed myself in, or

else I had never experienced a change of heart, for in spite of my earnest desire after a Christian life and holiness, I was continually breaking God's Word in some way or other. This caused me so much trouble that finally I grew cold, and of late years have taken very little interest in religion, thinking that I must long ago have been out of its pale, and might just as well let myself drift along with the masses and take my chance with others. At no time, however, has my belief in the fundamental truths of the Bible been lost, nor do I think they ever will be. I simply found I could not live up to its teachings so considered myself out of

the race. When I first read your paper, however, and afterwards "Food for Thinking Christians," I became greatly encouraged and had reason to believe that I might yet have a chance of reaching the class of those enjoying perfect human nature. This is the point, therefore, that I am not clear about from reading in the TOWER. What I wish to ask is, Does "Food for Thinking Christians" teach that persons in my condition have yet an opportunity of being brought back into closer fellowship with the Lord, and finally partake of the divine nature and become spiritual new creatures? If so, when will that change take place? And how shall one know whether he belongs to this class [the spiritual] or will only be able to attain to the "perfect human nature"? You will confer a great favor upon me by answering these questions.

Yours truly,

IN REPLY

DEAR BROTHER: We are glad to know that the truth in your case has been doing its quickening work. In answer to your question I would say that I judge you to be eligible to the high calling—"the divine nature"; but you can very soon decide that matter for yourself. If you ever gave yourself entirely and unreservedly to the Lord, you may be sure on the strength of the promise, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," you were accepted of him. And those new desires after and appreciation of heavenly things are an evidence of your adoption and sealing.

Though you became discouraged, and therefore grew cold in your love and service, because of your ignorance of our Lord's bounty and kind consideration for our frailties since covered with our Redeemer's righteousness, He has now sent you such a thrilling message of his wondrous grace as to quicken you into new life, and to remind you of your covenant and of the necessity of fulfilling it, and thus making your calling and election sure.

If you never so consecrated, of course it is your privilege to rise to human perfection; but I think from what you say, the former is your case.

I should add, that while it is possible for those who have consecrated, to so run as to obtain the great prize; it is of course possible to come short of it, "Let us therefore fear," and so run with care.

EDITOR.

Nebraska, April 8th, 1885.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL: I come to you a new reader of the TOWER. I am not of those who have come out of "Babylon" as have not been "defiled" in that way. The Lord took me out from the world as "a brand from the burning," and has been training me in the way of truth. It has been here a little and there a little. I was free from prejudice to start with, and, with God's help, have kept so. I am always ready to accept of truth and light, no matter by whom it is presented. I saw from the start that I could never join any of the different denominations and remain with them. This work has been going on in me now about five years. I have believed in the return of Christ that length of time.

Some time over two years ago "Food for Thinking Christians" was handed me by a dear old man, whose feelings I respected. So I accepted of it, took it home and laid it away, —counted it as rubbish without giving it a hearing. It went to Jerusalem and back among my other books in the year of 1883. Going and coming I sold and gave away some of my little stock of books, but somehow this little no-account affair stuck to me. Well, for over a month now I have been pleading with God for light on the "Times of the Fullness of the Gentiles." What is to mark that event? While looking to the Lord for light on this and kindred subjects, I took up this little work, and—well I give God thanks. His mercy is for all, and endureth forever. After feeding on this for two days, I started

to look up my old friend to see if he had anything more for me. I got a year's numbers of the TOWER. I want the whole truth, and pray to the Father of mercies to keep me free from error. Enclosed please find \$5. Send me Young's Greek, Hebrew and English Concordance; put me on your list for the TOWER, and the balance in the Lord's treasury. I can use some extra numbers of the TOWER to good advantage.

Perhaps it may interest you to know something of my plans for the future. I have none. I have closed up my business account with the world, and, as I believe, have made a full surrender to the Master. My only desire is to be led by him, that I might devote the remainder of my time for this age, as well as the age to come, in His service. Yours, hoping to be made ready for his appearing.

Glasgow, Scotland, April 4th, 1885.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: On Sunday night, March 29, at 7 o'clock, the anniversary of the Lord's Supper, the night on which he (Jesus) poured out his soul unto death for the sin of the world, twelve of the WATCH TOWER readers met in my house.

After prayer and singing, together we read articles from the TOWER, when all joined in reading the Scripture proofs, and then partook of the bread and wine according to the Word (1 Cor. 11:23). We were blessed with a sweet communion, and were sorry to separate at 10 o'clock. One brother remarked there were thirteen present, Jesus being in the midst of us, blest us and did us good.

Thank God for the light we receive through the WATCH TOWER. The article on "Two Baptisms," which appeared in the TOWER seems to have taken hold of the readers here.

I baptized four into Christ on April 1st., and others are wishing to be immersed into truth, which will be done. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."—Gal. 3:27.

Plainview, Neb., March 1, 1885.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: For two years I have been a reader of ZION'S WATCH TOWER, and have looked anxiously for it each month. I should like to tell you how providential were the circumstances that first brought the September (1881) number to my notice, but it would be too long a story. I read it carefully and compared it with the Scriptures, and felt in my heart that it was the truth. And although I have been a member of the Baptist Church for twenty-five years, and have tried to do the will of God by his help, doubts would often drive away trust; but the TOWER came as a shining light, and led me to exclaim with Thomas, "My Lord and my God." And it is my daily prayer that He may send abroad his light until all the world shall know and do his will.

Your Brother in Christ,

Independence, Kans.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER: I began working with you two years ago, and I am sorry to say I have not been able to send you but 50 cents in money. I am so poor in this world's goods that I can hardly support my family. And yet I shudder when I think of the many hidden pitfalls into which I would have stumbled but for the TOWER. Quite a number with whom I labored have become subscribers of your paper. I do not want you to forget me, and yet, if I am eating food which by right belongs to one more worthy, do not permit me to stand in the way. I am still teaching whenever an opportunity is afforded, but meet with the opposition promised by our Saviour. A few days back I was in a Quaker congregation. When they asked the question, "If Christ died for all, then why are not all saved?" I replied, "Paul says, How can they hear without a preacher," &c. The elder of the church asked what I would do with the heathen. I replied, "It shall be testified unto them in due time."

Your Brother in Christ,

THE WITHERED FIG TREE PUTTING FORTH FRUIT

Matt. 21:19 and 24:32.

We sometime since made mention of the conversion of a Jewish lawyer, Joseph Rabinowitz, of Southern Russia, to faith in Christ Jesus. Fully persuaded of the Messiahship of Jesus he returned to his home in Bessarabia and began to preach "Jesus our Jewish brother the true Messiah," with great success. Shortly after it was rumored that he had been murdered, but the latest accounts contradict this and say that the movement among the Jews is spreading gradually. The following translation of a letter from the Reformer to a gentleman of London will be read with interest. The fig tree cursed to the end of the age not only has leaves of promise but now begins to bear fruit.

KISHENEV, January 2, 1885.

To JOHN WILKINSON, the esteemed man.

Your valuable letter and your pamphlet, "The Work of the Lord Among Israel," were received. My heart rejoiced when I read them and perceived how great and strong the love of your heart is toward the brethren of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, according to the flesh, and how precious the salvation of the Israelitish nation is in your eyes.

I prostrate myself before Jehovah, the God of our Lord Jesus, and from the depth of my heart stream forth the words of the Sweet Singer of Israel (Psa. 35,) "Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt. Let them shout for joy and be glad that favor my righteous cause; yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant." Amen.

Herewith I send you a pamphlet, "The First Fruits of a Fig Tree," which contains my opinions and statements in reference to those children of Israel in Southern Russia who believe in Jesus as the Messiah. These documents have been edited by Professor Franz Delitzsch, of Leipzig. Out of them you will learn to know the origin of our faith in Jesus (our Brother bodily), the Messiah. He is the innermost desire and longing of our hearts. Our English friends and brethren in Jesus, our Saviour, may be convinced by this above-named pamphlet that after the Lord hath made bare his holy arms in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God, that now the time has come when there shall depart and go out from the midst of Israel all unclean persons, and the bearers of the vessels of the Lord shall be cleansed.

True, the salvation of the Lord cannot go out and come into (Joshua 6:1) the world with haste, nor can it walk with rapidity, but now as Jehovah, the Avant-guard and King of the Universe, has passed on before the people of Israel, the God of Israel shall come also as Rear-guard, as gatherer of the outcasts of Israel.

Beloved of the Lord! I herewith write to you that when my feet touched the holy city, *i. e.*, Jerusalem, and I beheld the place where they pierced Him (Jesus), then and there Jehovah enlightened my eyes, so that I understood the Law, the Prophets and Psalms in reference to the plan of salvation, and I tasted somewhat of the sweetness of that mystery which is, to the sorrow of my heart, still unrevealed to the majority of my brethren, the sons of Israel.

From that time on I devoted my time and name to the welfare of my stubborn and unhappy nation to testify unto them with a brazen forehead in the strength of God the gospel of promise, which our fathers had received, viz: that God hath raised this man, Jesus of Nazareth, out of the seed of David as Saviour (Liberator) of Israel.

Through the depth of the riches and wisdom of God, the highest, our Fathers, who were incumbents of the Promise, rebelled against Jesus, so that grace might be bestowed upon

the heathen nations, not through any promise, but through grace in the gospel of the Messiah.

Now, after the fullness of the Gentiles hath come in, the time has arrived for us, the sons of Israel, to return to the God of Israel and his King and be his beloved children. We should accept our heritage, the heritage of Jacob, which is without limit, for we are the legitimate heirs, children of Abraham, disciples of Moses, servants of the house of David in eternity. Thus our fullness (*i. e.*, the coming of many Israelites to Christ) will be our riches and the riches of the nations, according to the words of Jehovah by St. Paul, a firstborn of Israel, and at the same time the foremost among the returning heathen.

Among my brethren and in large meetings I earnestly admonish, "Shake thyself from the dust; arise, put on thy beautiful garments, my people; through the son of Joseph, Jesus of Nazareth, hath the Lord done great things with thee, O Israel, that he might also work great things among the nations of the earth, who were blessed in our fathers."

I greatly thank God that I see thousands who cheerfully listen, and I trust in Jehovah, who elected David his servant, and his seed after him, that in due time all these will be living stones built by God himself into a steadfast house and priestly sanctuary, so that acceptably sacrifices may be brought hither to the God of Israel in Jesus, the Messiah. They shall know and accept the truth, which alone can make them free children.

Many and worthy sons of Israel are waiting and long for the hour, the hour of grace of our God. I implore you, in the name of our brethren in Russia who seek the salvation, that the friends of our Lord Jesus Christ, wherever they be, may not be silent, but that they give counsel and speak out boldly, until Immanuel be with us also, until Jehovah show us him and his dwelling.

Then all who see us in our land, Russia, will say to us, "They are the blessed seed of the Lord."

These are humble words written from afar off by one who bows before you and seeks a more intimate acquaintance with you, a son of Israel indeed. JOSEPH RABINOWITZ.

OUR HOPE IN CHRIST

Paul had by the teaching of the Holy Spirit a clear conception that the "hope of Israel" as set before them in "Moses, the prophets and psalms, was *"resurrection from the dead,"* and that this hope was fulfilled, its realization made sure, in the resurrection of Christ. (See Acts 23:6; 26:6-8; 26:22-23; 28:20.)

So the light to Israel was *the hope of resurrection.* That hope is not yet realized. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Joshua still sleep. Their children scattered over the world are still in the dead spiritual condition as a people, typified by *their bones.* Light, therefore, has not yet dawned upon Israel. Whatever views may be held as to the light offered to Israel upon Pentecost, or by Stephen—and which they rejected—a reading of the prophecies (Isa. 42:6; 49:6, and 60:3), with the context, would be convincing that the light there spoken of as to come to Israel (and which Paul evidently refers to) has *not dawned.* Now the question would naturally be, what delays it? I think the answer of the scripture is, *"the waiting for the completion of the resurrection of Christ."* If we transfer to another dispensation the full fulfillment of the prophecies that "Christ is to be a light to lighten the Gentiles," and regard that the work of God now is the gathering of the body that is to share with its living head in resurrection life and power, and that the resurrection of Christ is not complete until the whole body is raised, the Scriptures are in harmony.

The Christ of God is Jesus and the redeemed Church (1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 5:23, 30, 31; Eph. 1:20-23; 2:21, 22.) With this view Acts xv is in perfect harmony. God is now visiting the Gentiles to gather THE BODY. After the resurrection, Christ will be revealed in GLORY AND LIGHT to Israel, and they shall fall before him as did Thomas, who is a type of Israel—and the veil taken from their hearts, they shall go out as the people through whom God will lighten the Gentiles. It is instructive to compare in this connection Acts 13:46, and Isa. 60:3. Does Paul speak of himself as an Israelite, commanded by this passage to go to the Gentiles, or of Christ as prophesied of as the light of the Gentiles? Perhaps both are included.

Man was created by God to bear rule and have dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26.) In his sin he lost all. In the promised SEED he is to regain all. Compare Gen. 1:26 with Ps. 8 and Heb. 2:5-10, and Rom. 8:19-24, for connecting links as to Christ our hope, as set forth in the promise of the

"SEED." A very interesting study will be found in taking up the Bible as a history of *Satan's war against the seed of the woman.* He brought the first born Cain under the curse and condemnation of God for murder, by his pride. He killed Abel the second born. He corrupted the sons of Seth the third, and brought the race to destruction in the flood, God interposing by grace to save Noah. After Abraham is called out the war is against his family. One after another comes forth in prominence as if the promises would be fulfilled in them, but all fail, until the Son of God incarnate came and stood every test. He wrought righteousness, was without sin; and overcame the power of the devil. His title as the Son of man is intended always to carry us back to Gen. 3 in adoring gratitude to God for His faithfulness to His word and His grace to the sons of Adam (Gal. 4:4-6). By Christ and in his church is the victory gained.

To Abraham, as the man of faith, how applicable is the definition of faith God gives us in Heb. 11:1, "who against hope believed in hope" (Rom. 5:18.) He died at the age of 175. Promised a land he had never seen, he was 75 years old before his feet touched its soil. His first experience in it was a famine—and in leaving it, promised a seed by Sarah, he came near losing her in Egypt. Faith with him, as with all God's called ones, was continually tried. But for God's grace and providence Abraham would many a time have made shipwreck. "Against hope he believed in hope." All of the promises center in the promises of a seed. He is to possess the land through his seed. Two or three times he tries to help God out of seeming difficulties in the literal fulfillment of his word, as do many of his children now. He fell into the line of argument that Sarah was not really to have a child—it was figurative and not literal—and so he tried to raise a figurative child—but, as do all who try to plan and interpret for God, he made a poor figure in his attempt, and his figurative child was cast out. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." "Sarah shall have a son." was the literal word of God. His hope was in a literal Isaac, and all his efforts for Ishmael hindered instead of helped the thing he hoped for. Yet "against hope he believed in hope," and at the age of one hundred, received Isaac as one born from the dead, Rom. 4:19, 20; Heb. 11:12; and rejoiced in the fulfillment of God's promises—in *faith*: literally, he had seen but a scant realization of them. He never possessed the land, he lived and died in a tent, and owned no part of Canaan except

the place of his burial. God promised him a seed as numerous as the stars, and like the sand of the seashore, in Isaac. When he died, Isaac had been married, and although years elapsed, Rebekah had no children, yet *after the birth of Isaac* we have no intimation that the faith of Abraham ever wavered. The gift of Isaac was the seal to him of everything promised, and looking upon Isaac, he rejoiced in all that was to come. And so the word presents the church as not yet having entered into the realization of her inheritance, but having Christ, knowing that with him God will freely give her all things.

It is difficult to turn away from Isaac in the manifold views of Christ we have presented through him. "He was the first to arise from the dead," in the figure of his birth, and his arising from the altar on Mount Moriah. In him the people, (Israel) were called, by the birth of Jacob—but not until God had first provided him a bride to share the riches and glory bestowed upon him by the Father. So in Christ, Israel are to be blessed, but, not until the Bride takes her place with the heavenly Bridegroom, Rom. 11:25, 26. No part of the blessed Scripture is more calculated to feed the souls of Christ's redeemed and chosen people, and to set more plainly before them Christ *our* hope than Gen. 24, where we have Abraham sending the servant after a bride for Isaac. It is not a public event—the people of the land not seemingly interested, not occupied with its import. The servant goes with the message guided by God to the one whom God has chosen to be the Bride. Caravans of merchantmen, passing from Damascus to Egypt, soldiers of the king of Shinar, on missions of conquest, may have seen Eliezer as he journeyed to Mesopotamia, and may have known his errand, but they had no interest in it and knew nothing of God's purposes. So now the Holy Ghost has come from the Father with a message for the chosen Bride, an invitation from an absent Bridegroom to share his Father's love, his inheritance—*His throne*. Noiseless as the tread of the camels' feet over the sands of the desert he pursues his way, and in every age and in every clime there are waiting Rebekahs, who have circumcised ears, believing hearts, and willing minds, to hear the story of God's dear Son—His dying love, His living power, the distant home, the coming glory, and to gladly say as did Rebekah, "I will go." The world around takes no note of his errand—of his success, occupied with its schemes of wealth and ambition, and of a glory to be built up in Ishmael instead of Isaac. So Ishmael lives, and becomes a great nation, with *twelve princes*; they care not who shall become the bride of Isaac.

What interest to-day has the world at large in Christ, God's dear Son, in the revelation made of Him in the Scriptures as the heavenly Bridegroom. What light have they on the *purpose of this dispensation* as the calling out of a people *for his name*? What sympathy have they in God's revealed plan and purposes, as centering everything in heaven and on earth in the glory of His Son? No more than the world had in Isaac's day in the call of Rebekah. Yet the message shall come with power, and the report be believed by those whom God shall choose. John 14: 17; 6:45.

Rebekah left the home to go to one she had never seen, to go to one of whom she had heard, Rom. 10:16, 17. She had a long journey over the desert under the care of Eliezer. The one hope that lead her forth was Isaac. If doubt suggested the

fear that Isaac might reject her, she knew with that rejection everything was lost, every hope perished—for all hope for everything centered in Isaac. As Isaac's chosen bride, all that Isaac had she was to share—she could have no fear for anything while confident in Isaac. So, believing the report concerning Christ, have we brethren, turned away from the world, and accepting the call of God, do we now journey on to meet our Lord? Rebekah had Abraham's words repeated to her by the servant, concerning Isaac, as the foundation of her faith. She had the constant care and companionship of the servant upon her journey, as the earnest of what awaited her when she should meet Isaac, but the purpose for which she was called was not fulfilled until she met Isaac. She did not occupy the position of Isaac's bride until conducted by Isaac himself to that position. So in Eph. 5:27; 1 John 3:2. How *much* we now have—how *little* we now have—must be the thought of every child of God.

After the calling of the bride in this wonderful chapter, we have Israel as an earthly people introduced in the birth and election of Jacob. They inherit the promise made to Abraham and Isaac. Through them God is to reveal Himself a light to the Gentiles. But every promise to them centers as to us in Christ. In contrast to the acceptance of Rebekah in humble faith of the call of God, fulfilling Rom. 9:30, we have Israel from the outset quarreling with grace, and blind as to God's purpose, as in Rom. 9:31, 32. In Jacob the earthly Israel is established, the twelve tribes formed, and covenant with God recognized.

To *this Israel* God reveals Himself, gives them His law, gives them teachers and prophets. They should have been the teachers of the world, the witnesses for Christ. They failed and were set aside, and over and over again this setting aside of the one who had the right of the first-born is acted out in the books of Moses. Ishmael and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Leah and Rachel, Ephraim and Manasseh, are examples. In their setting aside we are told plainly God has not changed His purposes. They are still His people, it is *still His purpose* to use them as a light to the Gentiles, Rom. 9:15, 26-29.

All of this shadowed forth the relations of—first, the sons of Jacob; second, the world to Joseph. Not until the eleven brothers united in bowing the knee before him, were their eyes opened to know him, and they delivered from their trouble. And through Joseph as the head of the earthly Israel was Egypt fed. Joseph was the joy and hope of three different classes. 1. Of the king upon the throne, who had given him all power. 2. Of his Gentile bride Zipporah, who in grace he had married. 3. Of the children of Israel, his kinsmen according to the flesh. So he shadows forth Christ in His relations to his Father, to the Church, and to Israel. Jacob before Pharaoh shows us the position of Israel among the nations when joined to Christ. "He blessed Pharaoh." Heb. 7:7.

Thus "Christ as our hope" is set before us in the word through Moses. Jesus said, "Moses wrote of me," and truly the one theme of the writings of Moses as we are taught of God, will be found to be Christ. May God give us grace to make Christ the *center* of study, of worship, of service, that all our springs may be found in *Him*—D. W. Whittle.

THE WORLD'S HOPE

Notwithstanding the world's seeming indifference to the future, the vast majority believe that there is a future before them. All men instinctively cling to life, and even when dying, to a hope of some existence in the great unknown. Modern as well as ancient philosophers reason from this *universal desire* for life, that man must be an immortal being; overlooking the fact that the same kind of logic would prove that every man is wealthy because there is a *universal desire* for wealth.

While denying that man is by nature such a being as could never cease to be, whose existence even God could not blot out we have from time to time shown that God has a grand plan for the restitution of the world from death, and that his promise is, that to all who appreciate that gift, and will live in harmony with His righteous will, He will supply life sustaining elements by which they may live forever. We have seen too that He has provided this gift in a certain definite way—through the gift of His son—through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

The errors with which Satan has, as with leaven, permeated the faith of Christians, has helped to hinder the world from seeing the symmetry and beauty of God's plan through Christ. The world's hope is, that after all, it will be found that faith in Christ is not essential to salvation, but that

there is a general system of evolution by which all go from a human condition to some higher condition, the marks and conditions of progress being, not faith, but morality.

To these the Scriptural account of the fall of the race from perfection is all a mere myth, consequently the *ransom* of the race from the effects of that fall, are equally mythical, and the Scripture promise to the world of a restitution, or return to that condition which existed before the fall, is absurd. Since they think that they did not "fall," they reason that they need no Saviour, and as a result, all those Scriptures which speak of ransom, sacrifice, redemption, of our being bought, etc., are meaningless to them. They place Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Confucius, and Jesus Christ, all on a common level and in *their definition* of saviour these were alike and together saviours of the world in that they all taught righteousness, and virtue, and condemned sin.

Alas poor world! It knows not God, hence it knows not his plan of salvation through Jesus only. It was not in his teachings merely that Jesus was great. His greatness was in that he was able to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." It was by virtue of his acceptable sacrifice as a ransom, that he was exalted to be a prince and Saviour and *grant* repentance and remission of sins. This none other could ever do.

Thanks be to God that His gracious plans are so far-reach-

ing that he has made abundant provision for man's willfulness and opposition, by not only redeeming them, but by providing a means by which they shall come to know and appreciate the truth concerning the only name, in order that through faith in His redemption they may live forever as it is written: God "will have all men to be saved [from death—the result of the fall] and [then] come to a *knowledge of the truth.*" 1 Tim. 2:4.

The great expounder of this, the world's hope, Mr. Henry Ward Beecher, in his discourse of Sunday, Feb. 1, '85, asked and answered this important question as follows:

"Must not a man have faith in Jesus Christ?"

"In regard to that I hold that the right understanding of Jesus Christ is the most powerful persuasion to a religious life. Nevertheless, if by any way a man has gone up; if he has found in himself the kingdom of heaven without knowing Jesus Christ, he will be saved. If you believe the old scheme of theology that men fell in Adam, that there was a council somewhere up in heaven and that a few were foreordained to be saved and that all the rest were to be damned, then you have not any room to believe anything I am telling you and my preaching is idle."

And yet Mr. Beecher calls himself a Christian and men call him reverend. Surely this is sailing under false colors. He speaks of "a right understanding of Jesus Christ," by which we understand him to mean an understanding such as he has; and since his understanding is the opposite of that of Jesus and the Apostles, we conclude that Mr. Beecher must be a new apostle of "another gospel," to which Paul refers (Gal. 1:6-9). Peter very clearly answers Mr. B. He says of Jesus: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. *Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.*" Acts 4:12. This apostle of the new gospel not only contradicts Peter, but places himself squarely at issue with Paul and what he calls "the old scheme of theology, that men fell in Adam." The old scheme is stated by Paul in Rom. 5:15, 17, 18, 19, 8 to 10, and makes necessary the *ransom-sacrifice* of Jesus, to which the new gospel and its apostles object. The same is true of Jesus' statement of the "old scheme of theology":—he declared: "The Son of man is come to *save* that which was lost." Matt. 18:11.

Of those who are building their faith on the foundation of the Apostles—Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, Mr. Beecher well says: "You have not any room to believe anything I am telling you, and my preaching is idle." This is well stated, and is just what we have been trying to show. Those who are building on the true foundation laid in the Bible, should speedily be convinced that all theories thus contrary to it are "idle," useless, profitless; and to those not filled with the truth, and who have a little room for it, this insidious form of infidelity may prove very hurtful. The more they look at it, and "wonder what he will say next," the greater the danger. Only one course is safe—when we have *proved* any theory, and find it contrary to our tried standard—[The Bible]—drop it and leave it finally. To handle such things is like handling *poison*; it is liable to be *absorbed* into the system unconsciously. We are all by reason of our fallen condition more susceptible to error than to truth; besides, evil is many sided, presenting itself in a hundred delusive guises, but truth is but one. Error always presents itself as truth, and its messengers as the messengers of light. (7 Cor. 11:13-15). Hence it becomes us to test or prove such as come in our way and claim our attention.

Nor should we be always sipping and tasting of poisons so as to have no time to feed upon the truth, or a vitiated palate which cannot appreciate truth, for we have at hand a speedy and infallible test—the Word of God. Any system or theory which *rejects* or *ignores* the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles is not of God—hence of darkness, and leads to darkness. Any system which uses Scripture passages simply as texts, and ignores the teaching of the passage in its connections, is evidently a trap and a snare, and out of harmony with our standard. Any system which uses one passage of Scripture which suits it, and contradicts another passage merely because it does not suit its theory; or, which uses one text of Scripture as an offset or contradiction of another, is manifest-

ly erroneous. Any system which attempts to use Scripture words or phrases but to deny or ignore or wrest their true meaning, is undoubtedly most deceptive and blinding error. Each of these methods would manifestly be "handling the Word of God *deceitfully*" to make it prove their theory, instead of handling it honestly to prove to them God's theory.

All such, when *proved* false by our only standard, should be dropped at once. We cannot trust to our reasoning powers and stop to parley with error, for unless fully armed with a full, clear and comprehensive knowledge of the plan of God, many of Satan's misleading theories might seem at least possible. Even the Master would do no more than show that Satan's arguments were *contrary* to the teachings of Scripture by *quoting* Scripture in reply: "It is written," etc.

By following this method, how many would find that much of the preaching, though not as injurious as Mr. Beecher's, is nevertheless "idle," and a waste of time on the part of those who attend. If governed by this rule, how many would find, as Mr. B. suggests, that they have really "no room to believe" what they hear? Judged by this scriptural test, how many theories which consume precious time, as well as confuse and perplex the mind, would be rejected as "idle"?

Let us always remember, however, that we are not to decide what is truth and what error by our prejudices and preferences, but by the Word; not by our general impression as to what the Word teaches, nor by a fragment of it imperfectly remembered, but by a careful examination of the text and context.

Any teacher who does not cite the text upon which he bases an argument claimed to be scriptural, is unworthy the name of teacher or expounder, and his products are unworthy of study. Those who do quote should be carefully examined, not only to ascertain that the Word of God is handled honestly and fairly, but also to impress the truth upon the reader's heart.

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psa. 133:1); but truth and error, light and darkness are *not brethren*, they are implacable and everlasting foes, and have been ever since error was born—for truth is eternal. And while the children of light and truth must from their very nature, love and sympathize with men as members of a common race, and whensoever they can may do them good, yet they should not sympathize in their course of error with those who have become children of darkness and whose influence is opposed to the truth. Hence, though we would not injure a hair of their heads, and would not even attempt to restrain their liberty in presenting error (because the time for *binding* evil has not yet fully come), yet we should be bold for the truth. *We must not shun* to declare the truth and show the error, else we are unworthy a place or name among those called "the children of the light."

And this is the course marked out as the true path of love. Love to God is above all, and love to God's word Jesus puts next (Mark 8:30). The apostle claims that true love not only "rejoiceth in the truth," but it *rejoiceth not* in iniquity (1 Cor. 13:6). He teaches that those exercised by true love should "have *no fellowship* with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather *reprove* them." Eph. 5:8 and 11. And we read "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath both the Father and the Son: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine [*i. e.* bring any other doctrine] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." 2 John 9:10. "God who *commanded* the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts." "Ye should show forth the praises of him who hath *called you out of darkness* into his marvellous light." "For what *fellowship* hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing." 2 Cor. 6:14-17.

* We recommend such a test of the teachings of the Tower. If then you decide that its foundation is not laid in the teachings of God's Word, you should order it stopped. If you find that its teachings are built upon and supported by the Scriptures, it will give you the more confidence in the unfolding plan of God which it endeavors to present

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—We, that is wife and I, have become so much attached to the Watch Tower that we cannot give it up now. I know not how you got my name, or how it came to us. It came as a light to our minds, clearing away the mists of creeds and enables us to see the truths of the Bible in a clearer light. We are still reading and comparing

scripture with scripture. We have the privilege of reading the WATCH TOWER "Food" and "Tabernacle," and the chart, and think that through a full consecration and an earnest search after truth, all will be made plainer still. We hope before long to be able to help advance the interests of the work. Yours in Christ,
Canton, Ill

SPIRITISM EXAMINED

"Regard not them that have familiar spirits

to be defiled by them." Lev. 19:31.

"There shall not be found among you . . . a consulter of familiar spirits, or a wizard or a necromancer . . . because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive out (the nations) from before thee." Deut. 18:10-12.

The belief that the dead are alive in another sphere or condition of being is not new. It was part of the religion of the ancients, and was the very root of all mythology. This naturally made it appear then as it now does at least reasonable that these dead persons under such circumstances should be capable of, and did hold intercourse with the living.

This very plausible reasoning, based on a misunderstanding (the facts being made known in the Scriptures only) has given cover and force to the deceptions practised by "demons" under the guise of dis-embodied spirits of men. They have eagerly availed themselves of this mode of concealing their identity, and have thus perpetuated their sway over the minds and lives of many.

God regards this intimacy or familiarity with spirits as a vile abomination, and threatened those who would engage in it (mediums) and those who would inquire of them with death.

This consulting of spirits was evidently extensively practised by the heathen nations that had inhabited the land of Canaan. Against spiritism, "orthodoxy," so-called, makes a feeble show of opposition, but it is really powerless to cope with it, because the orthodox theories give it encouragement and strength. This is shown by a sermon preached by Rev. W. J. Robinson, of Allegheny, which we quote below from the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, of November 3d, 1884:

MODERN SPIRITUALISM

An unusually large audience assembled last evening in the First United Presbyterian Church, of Allegheny, to hear an interesting and instructive sermon on "Modern Spiritualism," as delivered by the pastor of that congregation, Rev. W. J. Robinson, D. D. He had chosen for his text the words: "They have Moses and the Prophets. If they hear not them neither will they believe, though one rose from the dead." In his introductory remarks he said he did not see the necessity of any returning from the spirit land, as they could tell no more about it than had already been revealed by the word of God as set forth in the Scriptures. He cited the declaration of King David in regard to Absalom's spirit returning. David said, "I will go to my son; he shall not return," and again, Job had emphatically declared, "The dead shall not come until the heavens are no more." There are but three instances of the return of souls from spirit-land in all the records contained in the Bible. When Jesus took three of his disciples into the mount, they fell asleep, and, upon awakening, saw Moses and Elijah, was one of these; Samuel's apparition to King Saul forewarning him of his death on the morrow, and the coming reign of David was another, and the returning of Dives, the rich man who persecuted Lazarus and turned a deaf ear to his requests for the necessities of life, was the remaining one.

As to Samuel's coming, there was no need of it, as Saul knew what was inevitably to happen to him for his wilfulness and disobedience of the commands of God; but it is evident that Samuel came to convince men of the uselessness of such visitations, as he could tell only what was already known. Moses had been dead several hundred years. Elijah had departed for the other world 150 years previous. Dives' message was concerning that hell of torment of which all had heard. He told them that repentance on earth alone would save a soul, and that such a thing was impossible in hell. And that was also familiar to every one who had heard the Scriptures read or explained. All these came with messages and only reported facts which God is constantly keeping before the eyes and in the minds of men. But how different were these Bible revelations to those spoken of today. Only one in all the ages appeared in response to a call. And then the manner of their coming. Those of the olden times were voices which spoke messages of truth, while those of today, so-called, are rappings, which would indicate anything else as well as a return from Spirit Land. The Bible-told messages were the truth, while those of modern times speak a mummery that whatever else the spirits had learned they had lost their former senses. They speak drivelling nonsense. The difference lies between truth and falsehood and light and darkness. The Bible contains all men need to know! there is found the the testimony of the dead. "And now, while the dead did not come back to us, we are rapidly going to them. Study this world and your Bibles, and prepare for the world to come," were the concluding words of his sermon.

This may be regarded as the expression of "Orthodoxy" as to the condition and abode of the dead.

"Only one (says Dr. Robinson) in all the ages responded

to a call," but if one why not more? And this one was God's faithful servant Samuel. If this were true, then God's righteous servant was under the dominion of a wicked medium, and all God's servants would undoubtedly be subject to the same kind of power, and if the great God was powerless to protect Samuel from this abomination which was so abhorrent to his will, how could any of his children expect protection from the powers of darkness? We cannot find words to express our indignation and abhorrence of such blind and misguided views of God and his word. Is it any wonder that Spiritism is spreading, when teachers in high places misquote and flatly contradict the word of God? God's word declares, "The dead know not anything, . . . there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest" (Ecc. 9:5, 10). "In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" (Psa. 6:5) Either so-called Orthodoxy and Romanism and Spiritualism are right, and that the characteristics and sensibilities of life are possessed by the dead, and God's word is a lie, or else God's word is true, "the dead know not anything," and these man-made systems teach falsely. There can be no middle course. We must reject one or the other.

If Dr. Robinson had quoted Job correctly he would have demolished his own argument. Job says (Chap. 14:12), "Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost ("gasps out—expires"—Young), and where is he? . . . as the waters fall from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down, and RISETH NOT; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."

Could anything be stated more plainly than this? It shows the absence of everything that characterizes life—wisdom, knowledge, work, device, remembrance, or thanksgiving. And none are exempt from its penalty. "In Adam all die." No man can deliver his soul (being) from its power. He is cut off from the "land of the living"—all life, for the time being, shown by the words "man dieth . . . and where is he?" implying that he no longer exists—except as he has a place in God's purpose to be realized through a resurrection.

The penalty or wages of sin is death—extinction of life. There is no escaping it, nor is there any possibility of rising out of it: this is proven beyond a peradventure by these Scriptures, and is made very emphatic by the words—"riseth not," and "shall not awake," but that there will be an awakening or resurrection of the dead at an appointed time is apparent from the completion of the sentence—till the heavens be no more; i. e., till the new dispensation is introduced; the present referred to by Jesus (Matt. 24:29), and by Paul, (Heb. 12:26, 27), being shaken and removed. As no exception to these statements of God's word is possible, it should be evident that the possibility of communication with dead men is a delusion. The deception practiced in Spiritism is the more gross, because not men but demons are communicated with. There is abundant proof of this furnished by God's word. Nevertheless "orthodoxy" is powerless to cope with this abomination because of her adherence to false theories as to death and her wilful ignorance of the testimony of God's word to the contrary.

The mediums of modern spiritism are identified with those who anciently had "familiar spirits," who under the names of Witch and Wizard then claimed power to bring up and communicate with the dead as they now do. This is shown by the reply of the Witch of Endor to Saul's request: "Whom shall I bring up unto thee?" and Saul answered, "Bring up Samuel" (1 Samuel 28:11). That which she did bring up assumed to be Samuel as do the same spirits now assume to be dead friends of living men. If this spirit told the truth as claimed by Dr. Robinson, and the "orthodox" theory be right, wicked Saul would next day be with righteous Samuel.

If, however, this consulting of familiar spirits was contrary to God's express command—"Regard not them that have familiar (or intimacy with) spirits . . . to be defiled by them" (Lev. 19:31) how could God's prophet who denounced this as wickedness, be a party to it now that he was dead? And whether called up willingly or unwillingly, he would in either case have become subject to the powers of darkness in this intimacy with one that was deemed guilty of death, because of this kindness.

If it was not Samuel, then who was it? We answer, It was an evil, lying spirit who personated Samuel.

These wicked spirits eagerly avail themselves of every opportunity to bring mankind under their foul sway, deceiving those who commune with them as to their identity, notwith-

standing God's command: "There shall not be found among you . . . a consulter of familiar spirits, or a wizard or necromancer, for all these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive out (the nations formerly inhabiting Canaan—whose sin Israel's king imitated) from before thee" (Deut. 18: 10, 12). And "the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits and after wizards. . . I will set my face against that soul and cut him off from among his people" (Lev. 20:6). Of these commands Saul was well aware: he knew that he was in the most deliberate and wilful manner acting contrary to these commands in consulting the Witch of Endor; and God visited upon him the threatened punishment for this transgression. "Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the word of the Lord which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it" (1 Chron. 10:10). This settles the point at issue. Saul sinned in asking counsel contrary to God's command of one that had intimacy with a spirit to inquire of it. Therefore it is plain not only that it was not the Lord's prophet that was consulted, but that it was an evil spirit—the same in kind as those cast out by Jesus and his disciples. That they were of this same class of fallen spiritual beings, is conclusively proven by the similarity of description in the case of the "damsel possessed with a spirit of divination . . . which brought her master great gain," by soothsaying, which so grieved Paul that he "turned and said to the *spirit*, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her, and he came out the same hour" (Acts 16:16). This cor-

responds with the account in 1 Sam. 28, "Saul said to her, I pray thee divine (make known) unto me by the familiar spirit." The divination practiced by the Witch of Endor was of the same nature and through the same agency used by this damsel out of whom Paul cast the unclean spirit or demon.

Nor does the *appearance* of Moses and Elijah on the mount of transfiguration, quoted by Dr. Robinson, support the theory that dead men live, for Jesus expressly declared to these disciples that this was a "*vision*," and charges them to tell no man of this foreshadowing of the kingdom of Christ until after he was risen (Matt. 17:9).

All the parables recorded in the New Testament receive a non-literal interpretation by orthodoxy, except that of Dives and Lazarus, which, contrary to this generally accepted principle, they literalize: this involves some absurdities, such as Lazarus carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; and the great gulf fixed so that they which would pass hence (from heaven) to you (in an orthodox hell) cannot, &c. They commonly add to this literalism that "they who enter hell return no more: they who sink there, sink forever." Dr. Robinson, however, adds a new phase to it which reaches the climax of absurdity and inconsistency in trying to make it appear that Dives returned from spiritland (an orthodox hell) with a message. For a consistent elucidation of this parable, see "Food for Thinking Christians," page 154. See also page 74.

S. O. BLUNDEN.

N. B. Those of our readers who have not yet had a copy of this little book ("Food") can procure a copy *free*, by applying to the Editor.

AN OPEN LETTER

[The following by a subscriber, dated Feb. 3, 1885, was unavoidably delayed until now, in this office.—EDITOR.]

REV. R. HEBER NEWTON, *Dear Sir*:—I have just been reading the abstract of your sermon in to-day's *Tribune* and cannot resist the temptation to traverse briefly your position on the doctrine of Election. It seems to be your effort, as of many who cannot accept the old standard and are yet unwilling to flee out from the technical borders of old affiliations, to give merely a different statement to old dogmas or to show how the old statement may be reconciled to the keener or the bolder insight into all things prevailing to-day. You appear to treat the doctrine of election as formulated by protestant fathers as an attempt to account for observed conditions of human life, rather than to be purely their conception of the teaching of the inspired Word. If it was mainly the former, it would deserve from us as much reverence as any other merely human philosophy and no more. If it was an attempt to epitomize, rather, the teaching of the Bible, it deserves consideration only so far as it is found to be a truthful abstract thereof. The present day has a perfect right to decide upon that point, for the present has two advantages over that past in any question of Biblical study. The first is, that scholarship is abler and is better provided with the means of accurate historical and exegetical research. The second is, that no part or section of revelation is comprehended until the time when its vital work is to be done in the world. The later the era the more probably correct its judgment as to the real import of the divine message.

You recognize the repulsive character of the old statement by which it appears that the "ninety and nine" are not in the fold, but doomed to the mountain side and the bottomless pit forever while only the *one* is chosen to be saved. So do I. No philosophy, no terrors that can be denounced, no pleading, nothing short of a demonstration hereafter can convince me that a being of love planned such a scheme as that. How do you proceed? You would convince men by ocular evidence that in the world such a condition of things obtains, that some, a few indeed, survive and prosper while many, the mass, go under the wheels of a Juggernaut, and that what is, is right, though in a way mysterious and beyond the purview of mortal vision though aided by all the light shed by the "Lamp" of God. You would say, "Be reconciled, for such is God's way, and out of it good will come though at present his way and the world's way seem alike hopeless for the weaker of the earth and heartless for all."

My conception of your position may be all wrong, for newspaper abstracts are apt to be misleading, and I both read and write in great haste. If so, pardon me.

Now for another view. Election is true. If any reliance is to be placed on Biblical statements of plain matter of fact, God chose his prophets, and Christ his disciples and not they him. From Abraham to Simon Peter, the servants of the Sovereign of Heaven have bowed only as the scepter was laid down upon their shoulders. They could speak and act divinely only as the Spirit wrought upon their hearts and tongues. The

words of Christ incite us to believe that he continues to select his followers in this as in every other age. He giveth repentance to whom he will. The only reason why objection can be felt to the doctrine, is that he appears to have selected so small a proportion of the race, and that with the doctrine of election is conjoined that of condemnation to endless doom for all not chosen. All mankind stand related to Christ, and he is declared all powerful in heaven and on earth. Our highest sense of justice requires liberty of choice and power of action, as grounds of responsibility, which circumstances have surely denied to many who seem to fall under condemnation. Men admire striking statement, and the framers of the catechism seem to have yielded to the attractions of antithesis. If some men were chosen, elected, those not so favored must surely be doomed, they argued. The elevation of one class must be equaled by the degradation of the rest. Height must be equaled by the depth and happiness by misery. The crude and childish conception of purgatory was to be escaped from and counteracted, and the frivolousness and irreligion developed under the pomp and show of Romanism were to be frightened out of men by a stern theology. No one can say the attempt did not succeed. God's servants are his, though their words may not embody the first truth, or their acts reflect the divine will to perfection. What is the reverse to the truth of election, its other side I mean? Our version says, "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated," but we all know that "hated" should read "loved less." The election of Abraham does not argue the destruction of Lot. In fact Ezekiel, in chapter 16 says, that even Sodom shall be restored to her former estate and be a sister to Jerusalem. Abraham was told repeatedly why he was chosen; that through him or his seed all the nations, kindreds, families of the earth should be blessed. There was no antithesis in that. All the prophets were chosen to do good to other people. The disciples also were selected only as the foundation stones of an edifice whose proportions should be measureless grandeur and beauty. Who shall say what are means and what are ends? Is not the saving of the ninety and nine a grander and a better consummation than the salvation of the one? It is the weakness of every age, as of every nation and of every individual, to magnify itself and to imagine the final greatness of the truth to be near its culmination in itself. The Jew supposed Judaism to be the final truth. We know it was not. May not our sixteenth century theologians have been similarly self deluded? A new Bible is not to be given. Judaism and Christianity have their root in the same primal revelation. Suppose this Christian age in which election has merely taken a wider scope, to be but preparatory to a nobler era yet. when the converts of the present shall become the apostles mighty for the regeneration of "all the families of the earth." Do you call this a fanciful speculation? Were it no more, it would give men a better conception of the character of their Heavenly Father than the

antithetical one. The aspirations of noble souls eager for the good of all would find in it the mirror of their loftiest dreams. Instead of having to explain away inconsistencies of doctrine almost to the verge of apology, they would point to the glory of a consummation worthy of the eternal Father and of the self-sacrificing Saviour. Is it only a speculation? Go back to the Word; see whether it does not yield a footing broad and solid, for this conception of God's plan of grace. Do you ask the location and the method of the millennial regeneration? The earth, and not some distant or unknown purgatory, is to be the theatre and the resurrection as described by Paul in I Corinthians xv. the way, by which the myriads who have perished in ignorance and blindness shall be brought into the enlightening presence of the new day. "Every man in his own order," says Paul.

Death will have purged away the taint of evil heredity, and the new life will be fuller, freer, more favorable to the acceptance of Christ.

We know well enough that certain predictions of the Scriptures do not apply to our day. But when the laborers no longer are few, when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth, when Christ shall possess the uttermost parts of the earth and the heathen, when the way of life shall be so plain that the way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err therein,

when the wells of water now springing up in Christian hearts here and there shall have become the "river of the water of life," of which "whosoever will" may partake freely, then the doctrine of election will have its justification.

Christ and his Bride will not be childless, though the children may not attain equal honor with their parents. There are the hundred and forty and four thousand, as well as the multitude whom no man can number.

If we explain the very limited salvation of this and preceding ages on the basis of the survival of the fittest we must assume that the ninety and nine are not worth saving, a proposition at variance with all Christian professions as to the value of souls and presumptuous in the last degree, since none but God can know whether any of his creatures are not worth saving. That being whose visible creations are so marvellously complete and perfect has surely a plan for the restoring and perfecting of his chief creation—man.

It is natural to think that God's plan will develop in stages, and when apprehended will not require apology or defense. The fact that the old and partial views are no longer believed, proves that the revelation of a fuller truth is due, and only awaits apprehension and expression, for it is embodied in the recorded word of God. Are our windows open toward Jerusalem?

Very truly yours,
J. ALBERT STOWE.

WALK IN WISDOM

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. ['Securing the season.'—*Diaglott*; 'buying the opportunity'—*Rotherham*.] Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Col. 4:5, 6.

Paul drew such a bold, clear line of separation between himself and the world, that no one observing him need be in doubt of his inflexible purpose and his faithfulness in carrying it out. And when he wrote to the Corinthian church, "Be ye followers of me" (1 Cor. 4:16), there was no danger of misunderstanding. They could not help knowing that he meant the narrow way of sacrifice—in the very foot-prints of the Lord. Alluding as an illustration to those last exposed in the theatre to fight with wild beasts, or with each other, and who were devoted to certain destruction, he says, "I think God exhibited us the Apostles last, as devoted to death; for we are made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men." And so are all who follow in the footsteps of these faithful ones—the footsteps of our Lord.

In view of the fact that those who have consecrated themselves as sacrifices, are being made a spectacle to all those outside as well as within their own company, Paul further urges that we bear this in mind, and that we walk wisely, so that, so far as it is possible, our conduct, etc., may be transparent before the world. We call to mind many of his words of special instruction on this point. Among others he says (Rom. 12:18), "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." If circumstances have placed you among contentious and disagreeable people, here is a good opportunity to show them in your actions, and without the least ostentation, your spirit of self-sacrifice, your benevolence, brotherly kindness and love. Such a spirit will rebuke the world and show them a more excellent way, whether they are yet ready to walk in it or not. This spirit, however, should not permit continued oppression and injustice for the sake of dearly bought peace. Sometimes we, as Paul *did*, may have to speak very plainly and pointedly, and warn of a coming time of reckoning when the actions of the present time must all be accounted for. (Acts 24:25.) Thus Paul reasoned with Felix, until the strong man trembled in view of the time of reckoning.

Again he says, (Rom. 14:16), "Let not your good be evil spoken of." Even though some things may be right enough and lawful to us, if they become an occasion of stumbling to others, we should deny self if need be, that others be not caused to stumble.

"Let your speech be always with grace [liberality, favor] seasoned with salt." In reproof, warning or counsel, a spirit of liberality will not lose sight of commendable features in those opposed, nor fail to commend it. Temperance [moderation] should characterize all our conversation, and in all our dealings with men of the world, as well as with Christians, courtesy, liberality and kindly consideration for their interests, should be evident, even though their lack of such consideration toward us should be glaringly manifest. Not only should our speech be liberal, temperate, courteous, but it should also be seasoned with salt. Salt is a figure for truth.

Truth, like salt, has the power of preserving from decay that which is good and pure. We should, therefore, be well established in the truth of God's Word, that we may be able to answer every one, giving a good Scriptural reason for both our faith and our practice.

But mark the significance of the words "buying" or "securing the opportunity." Shortly those now sacrificing will be reigning. The time for sacrifice and suffering will be over. Seeing the reward as we do, we should wisely secure the present opportunity which can never again be enjoyed. When the Church has been glorified, the world's time of trial and discipline begins, and their way up to perfection will be more or less painful and difficult; but it will be a source of encouragement and comfort to them to know as they look back to our still more difficult path of *sacrifice*, that they have not a Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities.

Are we in any way hoping to escape the cross, and yet to wear the crown, as members of the Royal Priesthood? Such hope is certainly vain. Let us each ask ourselves, What kind of spectacle am I before angels and men? Let us endeavor to ever keep this thought in mind, and let everything be done with an eye to this great responsibility, counting it all joy when our names are cast out as evil, when like our Lord we are despised and rejected of men. Those who now reject and despise the sacrificing one will, by and by, be comforted and blessed through this sacrifice. At present they think it strange that we run not with them to the same excesses, often thinking and speaking evil of us. But we must bear in mind that we walk toward a shining mark which they cannot discern; and, therefore, should be patient and courageous as seeing that which is invisible to the world.

Contrast for a moment the real position of the saints with those flourishing in the world about us. Some of them are living in present affluence and gratifying themselves with every luxury, but soon these, and even life itself, must be laid down, and they must wait in the unconsciousness of death possibly many years, until their turn for the awakening comes, and then must awake without their past possessions and to be more or less severely disciplined up to perfection. But now that we are in the day of the Lord, those faithfully enduring trial and sacrificing even unto death, finish their course here, to be changed instantly in the twinkling of an eye, without a moment's unconsciousness, to the glory of their new condition—even the divine nature.

Think on these things, dearly beloved, that ye may be enabled to walk in wisdom toward them that are without, securing the opportunity for sacrifice, remembering that it is a great privilege because of its great reward, and that now is the accepted time—the time or opportunity granted. Secure the opportunity and with it the great prize of our high calling.

MRS. C. T. R.

'Show me the man you honor. I know by that symptom, better than any other, what kind of a man you are yourself;

for you show me what your ideal of manhood is, what kind of a man you long to be."—*Carlyle*.

THE FEET OF CHRIST

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth *salvation*; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." Isa. 52:7.

Among the many beautiful and appropriate figures used to represent the "little flock" and their union with Jesus, is that of a human body—Jesus the head, and the true church the members of the body.

Sometimes, as in 1 Cor. 12:13-27, all the parts are represented in any assemblage of the church, the hand and foot, &c., as well as the various excellent qualities which belong to the head—hearing, seeing and expression. Thus the *head* of the church is present with the members of his body whenever two or three or more of them meet in his name; and the body is complete and as effective for growth in Grace, Knowledge and Love, and far more so, than if hundreds of unbelievers and merely nominal Christians were present. When thus spoken of the more able and intelligent ones are mentioned in contrast with the less able, by calling one class head members, (Eye, Ear, etc.), and the other class feet (v. 21). Thus mentioned the word feet will be seen to mean the lowest members which require the especial assistance of the others.

But another sense in which feet may be understood, is as indicating the *last part*, or completion of the body. So to speak The Christ has been in process of development during the Gospel age—the head first, and we, the living, representing the *feet*, last. This certainly is not an unreasonable deduction, and there are several texts which seem to indicate that the last members of the overcoming band, are mentioned especially under the term "feet"—not in the sense of degraded but as the last—or end of the "little flock."

The Scripture above cited is of this character, and while Paul quotes a part of it (Rom. 10:15), "How beautiful are the feet of *them* that preach the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things," and while it has undoubtedly been true of all the members of the Body of Christ, that they were the bearers of glad tidings, and that to all who received the message their footsteps were welcome, yet it is true also that the proclamation of many of the sweetest notes of the glad tidings of restitution, are reserved until now during the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 10:7; Rom. 16:25), when the *mystery* of God is finished, which he hath kept secret from the foundation of the world.

Truly ours is a choice and favored day compared with any age of the church, for though God's Word has always been a lamp to enlighten "the body" all through the dark night, yet it is true, that in an especial sense it is giving light to the "feet," as we read. "Thy word is a light to my *feet*." Living in the time of the fulfillment of so much prophecy, we walk in the blazing light of the lamp, and on us and our day the eyes of all "the body" throughout this age have anxiously rested; and of our day—"The day of the Lord," and our gathering together unto him, both Paul and Peter wrote more frequently than of their own day. Hence it need not surprise us, if under the figure of "feet" the Prophet mention us.

There is but one part of the text above quoted, which certainly was never applicable to any but the present members; this part Paul omits, because it was not applicable until *now*, viz: "That saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."

As Jesus in his application of Isa. 61:1, used only that part of the quotation which was applicable at that time, and left unquoted the words—"the day of vengeance of our God," because the proclamation of the day of vengeance was not due until our day; and therefore while the whole message referred to, has been proclaimed by the Christ, yet only *the feet* have been privileged to utter it *all*, so with the scripture now under consideration; Jesus and the Apostles had a great and important part in proclaiming "the good tidings of good," but only "*the feet of him*" have been privileged to say "unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."

The beauty of the feet's position, and the honor connected with their proclamation, does not appear to the eyes of the world. Oh no, none of the members of the Christ have been of earth's heroes or wise, but in their eyes "we are counted fools." No, it is from the spiritual standpoint, the standpoint of God and of those who have ears to hear, that the bearers of these good tidings are esteemed. We rejoice then in our privilege as being among those who announce to Zion these tidings that the kingdom began in 1878.

At present our tidings can only be received by faith in the same authority on which we base our statements—the Word of God—consequently, not many are now able to hear. But soon there will be abundant evidence of the truth of the statement in the crumbling and falling of the various systems of iniquity—both in the uprooting of the blasphemous heresies of the Church, Nominal—Babylon the Great, Mother and Daughters; and afterward, in the judgment and chastisement of the

nations of the earth, who through these false teachings, have established oppressive governments, which the nominal churches assure them are Christian governments, telling the people they are of God's appointment and are the "Kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ."

Receiving their original *right* (?) of ruling from Papacy, these kingdoms are to-day recognized and blessed by all the daughters. But these are all parts of that great system of *Anti-Christ*, or opposition to the real Church and kingdom of God mentioned by Paul (2 Thes. 2:8), which the Lord shall consume by the spirit of his mouth (*truth*) and destroy by the bright shining of his *presence*.

Truth, the spirit of the Lord's mouth may come through a thousand channels, even blasphemous infidelity may be one of the agencies, and we believe it is the truth uttered, though mixed with error and blasphemy, which is the secret of power against Babylon, for it strikes her on her time honored and festering sores of error. It is *truth* with respect to human rights and equality, which is now moving Communists, Nihilists and Socialists to resist oppressive governments, and which will in time overthrow them; and *truth* it is, which will prepare the world for the blessed reign and rule of the kingdom of God, though in the development of truth, in its various branches, both the nominal church and the world must pass a terrible baptism of trouble:—Yet in all, truth will be conqueror and come off victorious, because now the rule and government has been assumed by "Him whose right it is." *He* has taken to himself his great power and his reign is commenced, consequently we may soon expect the wrath and angry nations of Rev. 11:18.

How clear it is then, that the declaration to Zion, "Thy God reigneth," is due now before the feet are joined to the body in glory, and before the judgments of the Lord go abroad; for then, it will need no proclamation; it will be manifest to all, by the outward signs, that the kingdom is set up—even the tribes of the earth shall then see—recognize—that the great day of his wrath is come.

It is the *feet* of the Christ that *bring* the glad tidings, though others may echo and re-echo the glad song.

Again, David who often represents or personifies The Christ, says: Jehovah—"Brought me up out of a horrible pit (depth of confusion), out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings." Psa. 40:2. We might make a similar application of this Scripture. The whole body of the Christ (except the head) was down in the pit of confusion and mire of sin; all through this Gospel Age Jehovah has been lifting them up, or taking out a people for his name—separating such from the world and mire of sin; and last to be lifted up are *the feet*, and truly the *feet* have been placed upon the rock of truth.

While the whole body has had truth as a basis of faith and trust, yet undoubtedly *the feet* are more firmly established by it than any previous part of the body, because we live in the time where the *light* of all past ages centers and the *mystery* of God is finished.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word."

Again, while it is true that all members of the body sang a new song of praise to God when lifted from the depths of confusion and mire of sin, yet it is especially true of the *feet*—the song of praise breaks forth as soon as the feet touch the solid rock and realize that—

"There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea."

They can now sing with double joy the restitution song—
"All nations which thou hast made
Shall come and worship before thee."

Again, we find a striking reference to the *feet* of the Christ in Psa. 91:11-12: "He [Jehovah] shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways: They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy *foot* against a stone."

This prophecy by David refers to the Christ as a whole: its *personal* application by Satan was rejected by Jesus as a misapplication of Scripture (Luke 4:12), but when we apply the reference to "foot" to the feet or last part of the body of Christ, all is harmonious. The stone referred to we understand to be the same as that of Isa. 8:14, viz.: That Jesus is the stone of stumbling.

Jesus at the first advent was a stone of stumbling before the feet of the nominal Jewish Church, and they stumbled over him because, being out of harmony with God, they could not see in him the Messiah. In their pride of heart they, especially the Pharisees and Doctors of Divinity, were sure that Messiah would come in their way, and own and accept of

them as a people. They stumbled and were broken as an institution. But the real feet of the real Jewish Church—the Israelites “indeed”—these received the then present Messiah and were blessed and lifted up by that “stone” to the higher plane of the Gospel church. “To as many as received him, to them gave he liberty to become sons of God.” (The Jewish house was the house of servants—the Gospel house a house of Sons.)

As there was a stone and stumbling there, in their “harvest” or end of their age, so the parallelism which we find associating the Christian age with its shadow, the Jewish age, demands that the stone should be present in the path of the Gospel church, to be either accepted or rejected; and if the parallelism continue (as we see it has), then we should expect that here the feet of the nominal church would stumble as its shadow did, and for the same reasons. And so we find it, the living generation of the nominal church—the feet, have failed to discern the presence of the Lord—“they know not the time of their visitation”—and all but the true feet of the true body have stumbled; as it is written: He shall be for a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to both the houses of Israel. To “Israel after the flesh” he presented himself in the flesh, and to the spiritual Israel he presents himself a spiritual being—to each on their own plane.

But we cannot for a moment doubt, that as Jesus at the first advent took special care to make himself known to every “Israelite indeed,” and gave such clear evidences (while to others he spoke in parables and dark sayings) (Psa. 78:2), so here at the second advent, every one wholly consecrated to God (not to churches and creeds), and as such a part of the true feet, are to be made aware of that presence, and consequently do not stumble over it. This special care for all such is what is referred to by the text—“He shall give his angels charge, etc., lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

Only the feet could stumble over such a stone. The stone of stumbling was not in the path of the members of the body which preceded us. And when we look back and see how closely “the lamp” has been put “to the feet” and how it has been kept trimmed and burning brightly, revealing to us the stone which nominal Zion is stumbling over and being shipwrecked upon, but which to us is a tried stone, elect, precious, the head of the corner, or the chief stone of all in the glorious spiritual Temple, we thank God for His care over us, and rejoice that we are counted worthy to be members of that company, which in the eyes of the world has no beauty that they should desire it, but which is a root out of dry ground—the feet of Him that bringeth glad tidings, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

JEHOVAH'S FEET

(This article was a reprint of that published in issue of October, 1881, which please see.)

VOL. VI

PITTSBURGH, PA., JUNE, 1885

No. 10

VIEW FROM THE TOWER

You know that you have weaknesses; special points upon which you are aware by past experience you are specially liable to fail, under trial and temptation. It may be the pride of life and love of the world, which seem to draw your feet from the narrow way oftenest. It may be that business has such an attraction to you that you have at times been almost swallowed up with its ambitions and cares, and that its demands upon your time and talent have been for a season almost overwhelming, and that you found your appetite for spiritual things forestalled by the earthly, and your consecrated time absorbed in labor for the meat that perisheth.

Or it may be that your special weakness is a love of approbation, which absorbs consecrated time in making your person, your home, and your family charming, as well as hinders you from engaging in service for the Lord and your fellow-saints in carrying them spiritual food, lest some should think you “peculiar,” and “strange,” and should “cut” your acquaintance.

Or you may have an uncongenial family relationship and opposition to study and Christian growth from that quarter.

Or, it may be that seeming duties and necessities in your circumstances demand your time and keep you as they did Martha from communing with the Master, and from engaging in and enjoying the higher and grander privilege of breaking to others spiritual food. No matter in which particular direction your besetment lies, rest assured that yours is not an exceptional case. Every soul knoweth its own burdens, and before each one Satan is permitted to lay obstacles and hindrances in order that each may be tried and thus have opportunity of overcoming and proving his love and appreciation of the prize and of the Lord's approval, by faithfulness under adverse conditions.

What is your duty? What shall you do? Give up, because the way is not smooth? Why certainly you did not expect to be classed an “overcomer” without having something opposing you to overcome. No, you knew well when you started, that the Master and forerunner on this way, said: “Strait (difficult) is the gate and narrow is the way.” You remember he said that every follower in his footsteps must expect to endure the crossing of his human will and interest all through the “way.” You remember how strongly he put it that none might deceive themselves, when he said, “If any man come to me, and hate not [love less] his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:26, 27.

And do you not know that your temptation on these weak points of your besetment is daily becoming more absorbing, more difficult to resist? Do you not see that we are living in the “evil day” which is evil or full of special danger, be-

cause of its increase of temptation on every point of weakness to every member of the body? that the besetments of the world, the flesh and the devil are more subtle and deceptive and more powerful than ever before? Yes, you realize it. To be forewarned is useless unless it leads us to action, that we may be forearmed and protected. What are you going to do about it? We answer, Break the bondage at any cost; though it be dear to your heart as your eye or hand—pluck it out, cut it off, cast it from you. Make thorough work of it, strangle it, overcome your besetments at once and thoroughly. Lay aside every weight and hindrance which impedes your growth in grace, which hinders your sacrifice, the fulfillment of your covenant in the service of the truth, that you may patiently run the race set before you. You must either overcome these besetments by changing your course and cutting them off, or they will overcome you, and bring you more and more under their control. Hence the Apostle's advice, Make straight paths for your feet. Remove from your pathway at once every hindrance and stumbling-block which the adversary may put in your way, and keep right on, running for the prize of the high calling and keeping your eye on Jesus and Paul as examples of endurance and overcoming. They endured the temptation, but speedily ended it by promptly casting it from them. We must do likewise; to parley with besetments is to fail; to endeavor to carry them along on the way is impossible—the way is too narrow. We must choose at once whether we will be turned aside by circumstances and obstructions, or whether we will turn them aside and follow on to the end of the way—to glory, honor and immortality.

With time and talents fully on the altar, and with thorough determination and work in overcoming the obstacles put before you by the adversary, what a power for the truth could be daily exercised by the readers of the TOWER. Not that the truth will fail without our effort, but that we need to make the effort on behalf of truth for our own development in grace, and as proof that we are of the overcomers accounted worthy both to suffer the reproach of Christ and to share his glory.

Everyone who possesses these glorious hopes should be a preacher of them; should let the light so shine as to glorify our Father in heaven. Some can labor in a special manner but one hour a day, some more; all can let a general halo of light shine from the daily walk before their fellow Christians and the world, but not without overcoming the obstacles and besetments with which the adversary is sure to attempt to hinder you. Who is on the Lord's side? Let him make it manifest. It is the weak and small side in the world now, but shall not be so long. Now is the grand opportunity to champion truth. Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind and fight a good fight, and soon palms and crowns of glory we shall wear.