

## "GO LABOR ON: SPEND AND BE SPENT"

Two have written that they feel discouraged because unable to do labor in the harvest field as colporteurs. They seem to feel that if not colporteurs they are not overcomers. This is a serious mistake; and since others may feel similarly, we reply publicly, although we have stated the same things in substance in previous TOWERS.

While the colporteur work is *one* of the best means of serving the truth, it is by no means the only one. If you have not the needful strength for travel, or if you have a large family dependent on you for support, or if you have not the gifts necessary to success in that work, you may know that it is not *your* work. Then look about you, while you pray the Lord to show you what you *can do*—most to his praise, most in the service of his truth and his people.

However humble your talents may be, rest assured they will be accepted if presented in the name and merit and love of Christ. But be assured that you have at least one talent, else you would not have been granted an acquaintance with the truth. Be assured, too, that whatever the number of your talents, they must be *used*—must not be *buried* in pleasure or business or work of an earthly, selfish sort. If you do not use your talents (whatever they may be), it will be a proof of your lack of love, and hence a proof of your

unworthiness to be one of the Lord's "little flock," all of whom will be so full of love for him and his that to sacrifice earthly good things in his service will be a part of their chiefest joy. And surely these are objects to draw upon our love and service, always and everywhere;—the church of Christ in general, excepting only the "goats" and "wolves," are fainting for the true bread and the true water of life—truth. Under such conditions, while God's children are striving for what we can give, to be idle or pleasure-seeking would be almost criminal,—surely loveless.

So, then, if you cannot do one thing, be all the more diligent to do another. Tracts can be distributed, and it needs just such as *yourself* to hand them out effectively with perhaps "a word in season," in the evenings, or on Sundays,—in the cars, in the hotels and on the street corners. The brethren and sisters in Cleveland have distributed thirty-five thousand (35,000) tracts during the past month, and the results are showing favorably. Turn to your TOWER for May last and read again our suggestions—"Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."—Page 140.

Our meetings are held in Bible House Chapel, Arch St., Allegheny, Pa. Readers and friends will be warmly welcomed. Preaching every Sunday at 3:30 P. M.

## IS DEATH A PENALTY OR A CONSEQUENCE?

We are requested to harmonize the statement of 1 Cor. 15:56, "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law," with the statement of Heb. 2:14, "Him that hath the power of death, that is the devil." And the further question is asked—"Are we to consider death a *penalty* for the infraction of the divine law, or as a natural *result* of disease contracted by disobedience to the divine commands?"

We will answer the question first, and then consider the harmony of the Scriptures cited.

We may properly consider *death* from both of these stand-points: it does not come *now* as an individual sentence from God; a penalty for personal disobedience; for not only do criminals and malicious persons die, but also saints and prattling babes: it is *now* a result of disease inherited and transmitted from one generation to another, under generally prevailing conditions. But, looking back to Eden, we can see that matters were different there: disease was unknown until, as an element of death, it was incurred, not from the eating of some poisonous substance in the fruit of the forbidden tree (for all trees of the garden were trees of life), but as the curse or penalty for transgressing the divine law. That the penalty did not come as the result of a poison from the tree is evident, and that God specially forced Adam and Eve into conditions productive of disease and death is also evident from the record,—that God drove them out of the garden and away from the trees (literally, *grove* or *orchard*) of life into the unfit wilderness, outside the prepared garden, where, lacking suitable sustenance, gradually dying, they died.

The proper view of the question then is this. Adam, created in God's moral likeness and surrounded by his favors, transgressed his Creator's law *knowingly*, and without any just provocation, and suffered the penalty of his transgression—death. But, as he died slowly, he begat children who, although not put on trial as he had been, and hence not sentenced by God as Adam was, died nevertheless, because they had inherited from Adam a diseased or dying organism. And thus it has been ever since, and is now. As the Apostle declares, it was "by one man's disobedience [that] sin entered the world, and death as a result of sin" As all inherit sinful weaknesses and tendencies through Adam, so they also inherit death, the penalty of sin, through him. A father can bequeath to his children no rights, privileges or conditions that he does not possess at the time of their conception.

Coming now to the Scriptures cited, we remark that, so far from being in conflict, these passages corroborate and expound each other. Sin is the poisonous sting which has blighted and killed our race. Not that the sin committed (the fruit eaten) would of itself have had this effect: the strength or power to kill lay not in the fruit,—"the strength [or power] of sin was the *law*," whose vengeance or penalty the sin brought upon the sinner. And Satan, the tempter, by starting sin amongst men, brought all under the sentence of divine law,—under the power of death. And since he is the father of sin, and thus of sinners, the power or strength or weight of sin may be said to be his power or influence. And Satan's power of death continues steadily; for, by rea-

son of man's weakness, through the fall, Satan can the more easily delude and beguile into deeper degradation; and thus by the increase of the disease of sin the power of death increases, swallowing up the human family more and more rapidly.

But in a still more particular way Satan has the power of death. When God had created man in his own image, with the divine law interwoven as a part of his being and nature, he made him ruler or king over earth, as his representative, and left matters in that way to take their course: as the Scriptures express it, God "*rested* from all his work." He did not interfere, even when man by reason of sin, disease and death became incapable of properly ruling the empire committed to his care. God had foreseen that man, in the abuse of his liberty, would become a servant of sin and Satan, and that in consequence not only man himself, and the lower animals, would suffer from lack of proper discipline and direction, but that the entire course of nature would become deranged;—and God arranged his plans accordingly;—to let men and angels see to the full the result of disobedience, and then, in due time, still "*resting*" so far as personal influence is concerned, to raise up Christ, who, first as *Redeemer* of "that which was *lost*," and during the Millennial reign as Restorer of all the willingly obedient, should bring order out of the chaos of sin and death which Satan's power would effect.

What powers of mind and body the first man enjoyed, at the time God created him in his own image and pronounced him "very good," we cannot well judge by looking at the generally degraded race,—whose fall to such depths of ignorance, misery and depravity St. Paul explains in Rom. 1:18, 21-29. Even the most intelligent of the human species give but a slight conception of what human perfection would be,—in the image and likeness of God and "very good" in his estimation;—for we know that even the best at present are accounted of God acceptable only through the *atonement* made by the death of his Son as our ransom-price.

Even the prodigies of manhood sometimes encountered,—musical prodigies, poetic prodigies, mathematical prodigies, oratorical prodigies, memorizing prodigies, mind-reading and mesmeric prodigies, who can exercise a mental power over the brute creation as well as amongst men:—none of these, nor even all of these brilliant powers if imagined as belonging to *one* person, can give us a correct concept of the *perfect* man, as he was before sin marred the likeness of God in him, and as he will be after all the traces of sin have been blotted out by the Great Physician, who, during the "*times of restitution*" (Acts 3:19-21), will restore all that "*was lost*" (Luke 19:10), to all who will receive it upon God's terms,—the New Covenant.

We think it reasonable to conclude that as the length of human life was greatly shortened, evidently by the changed physical conditions of the earth, after the Deluge, so his mentality suffered correspondingly at the same time, and from the same causes. And all that we know of man, aside from the meager records of Genesis, belongs to this period

of his degradation since that flood. The great down-pour of waters from the North pole, with its glaciers which cut great valleys, which can still be traced in the hills, evidently swept into the ocean, and into oblivion, all that would have been to us evidences of the wisdom and skill of our race as exercised before the flood of Noah's day—not only noted in Genesis, but confirmed by our Lord and the apostles, as well as by the most ancient histories of various ancient peoples. Yet even the ruins of Syria and Egypt impress us with the ability and knowledge and skill of the race, a thousand years after the deluge. We fain would know the secret of some of their "lost arts," even in this boasted nineteenth century.

**SATAN'S USURPATION OF MAN'S EMPIRE**

But what has all this to do with Satan and his power of death? Very much. It is the period since the Deluge that in Scripture is termed, "this present evil world [or the present epoch of disaster and trouble]." (See Gal. 1:4; compare 2 Pet. 3:6, 7) And it is of "this present evil world," or this disastrous epoch and condition, that Satan is declared to be the prince or ruler. He is the ruler or "prince of this world," as Christ is to be the ruler and prince of peace and blessings in "the world to come."

As Christ, the Prince of Peace, will bring in everlasting righteousness and blessing, by restoring all things to proper order, and subjection to the divine will and arrangement, it is but reasonable to suppose that Satan has had much to do with bringing about the disorder, evils and calamities of "this present evil world;"—by the misuse of knowledge and powers, in a spirit of devilishness.

Satan, the prince of this present evil world, or epoch of trouble, is also "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), both the literal and the symbolic *air*. He is the prince of earth's religious systems, sometimes in symbol represented by the "heavens" or the "air" powers. They all, from fetish and devil worship, up through the various heathen philosophies or religions, show signs of his supervision in their formation. He recognizes man's native religious tendencies, and by partially satisfying them prevents, as far as possible, escape from his slavery into the liberty of sons of God, wherewith the gospel of Christ would make all free from his bondage under ignorance, superstition, sin and death. The Apostle refers to this policy on Satan's part, saying,—“The God of this world hath *blinded* the minds of them that believe not [by supplying them with false religions], lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ . . . should shine unto them.”—2 Cor. 4:4.

Not only does Satan rule thus in false, heathen religions, but amongst Christian believers also he is a prince or ruler to a far greater extent than is supposed; for in proportion as the minds of men become enlightened, by glimpses of the divine character and plan revealed in the Gospel of Christ, Satan is on the alert to mislead them with vain philosophies and sciences falsely so called; and equally ready to give visions of heaven and hell and mixed interpretations of Scripture, to a Swedenborg, or to lead the new school of thought in the theory of evolution, to the discarding of the Bible as a relic of barbarism and ignorance—or to speak through Spiritualist mediums, and personate the dead and mislead the living,—or to lead the Mormons to a peculiar interpretation of Scripture to their own blinding,—or to open schools of Christian Science and Theosophy, and do wonderful works in the name of a Christ of their own theory, but not in the name of Jesus, the Christ of God and the Redeemer of men,—or to mislead others, who have gotten their eyes wide open, into the belief that *all men* will be saved everlastingly, and that they did not fall, and therefore needed no *ransom*, and that Christ was merely a good example, and that men are blest and brought nigh to God *not* "by the blood of the cross," but by the figurative blood of the sinner's sins, killed or destroyed by himself.

Thus, as an "angel of light," clothed in light, Satan shows himself to those who have caught glimpses of the great Light, the true Light, the Light of Life, that yet shall enlighten "every man that cometh into the world." What wonder that many are fearful of the light, and love rather the fancied security of the dark past, and of unreason. But to thus frighten some away from the light of present truth serves Satan's purposes just as well as to ensnare and mislead by his glaring, false lights. Truly, the only safe condition for any who would be true "sheep" is to be intimately acquainted with the true Shepherd—his spirit and his word. "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me. A stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers."

Thus seen, Satan is indeed the prince of the air, the present heavens—ecclesiasticism, both heathen and nominal Christian—and only the Lord's "little flock" are kept, so that the

"wicked one toucheth them not."—1 John 5:18.

But in another sense Satan is prince of the air power,—literally. When Job was given into his hand to be tried, he manifested his power of death. He caused fire to fall from heaven (probably a bolt of lightning), and destroyed several of Job's servants and his sheep. He caused a great wind (a cyclone or tornado) to come upon Job's house, and thus killed Job's sons and daughters.

Satan's object evidently was, to make Job suppose that God caused those calamities, and to thus cause Job to feel bitter and resentful against God, and to "curse God and die;" or to shake his faith in there being any God. Indeed, that such was Satan's object is implied in the narrative; and Job's friends, although God-fearing men, were deceived into this view, and tried for days to convince Job that his afflictions were the work of the Lord. But of Job it is written, "In all this Job sinned not, *nor charged God foolishly* [with being the author of his calamities.]"—Job 1:22.

Again, notice that when our Lord and his disciples were in the little boat on the Sea of Galilee, and our Lord asleep, a storm suddenly arose, which galled the hearts of those old and expert fishermen accustomed to storms, until they awakened the Master, saying, Lord, save us; we perish! We cannot presume that, if the heavenly Father had willed or caused that storm, our Lord Jesus would have commanded it to subside, or that it would have obeyed him. On the contrary, rather, we may suppose that the same Satan who used his power against Job's household sought to destroy the Lord and the infant church. But that Satan had no power over the life of Christ, *until* "his hour was come," is evident from our Lord's words upon this occasion—"O ye of little faith, why are ye fearful?"

We would not be understood to question God's *ability* to cause storms, cyclones, etc.; but from our Lord's teachings we know that such would not be his spirit; for when the disciples were incensed against the Samaritans who did not welcome the Redeemer and asked, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" our Lord's answer was, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of [—your spirit is not mine, nor the Father's]."

Remembering the Deluge and the destruction of Sodom, we can only understand, in the light of the account in Job, that God may at times use storms and fires as his servants to execute his decrees against the wicked; or that Satan is ever ready as an executioner, taking pleasure in evil, to destroy life whenever *permitted* to do so.

In thinking of how Satan has the power of death, let us not forget that in healing the diseases of the people, at his first advent, our Lord expressly stated that they were "afflicted of [or by] the devil." If God had directly caused the diseases, our Redeemer in healing the sick would have been opposing the Father, and not doing his will. Since disease is death at work, devouring the sick, to have the power of disease is to have *the power of death*.

Satan is permitted to have such a power of disease and death because of sin;—because men are under the divine and just sentence of death, as culprits. The Scriptures represent that mankind had sold itself under sin and death, and to him that has this power, Satan. The church—all truly consecrated and faithful believers—are reckoned as having *escaped* from the condemnation of the world and from the power and dominion of its prince, so that he toucheth them not, or has no power over them,—so long as they abide in Christ. Such, the Redeemer makes free from the law of sin and death and from the power of Satan. And although they die, their death is in no sense under Satan's power;—as Job's was not and as our Lord's was not. Their death is separate from that of the world, and is not even counted as being a share in the Adamic death, but, as though having been lifted out of that condemnation, and out of that death, over which Satan has power, theirs is reckoned to be a sacrificial death;—a part and share of Christ's death; "dead with him," and not with Adam.

But "the whole world lieth *under* [control of] *the wicked one*," Satan (1 John 5:19), and over *them* he has "the power of death"—including disease—subject no doubt to some divine regulations; but just what his limitations are we may not clearly distinguish. But he can have no power over God's people, except by special divine permission; and in such cases the Lord stands pledged to his own, that *all things* which he permits will work for their ultimate advantage, if they abide faithful to their covenant with him in Christ.

These can, therefore, rejoice always, and in every thing give thanks; for the Lord is their Shepherd.

"Our times are in thy hand;  
Our God we wish them there;

Our life, our friends, our soul, we leave  
Entirely to thy care.

"Our times are in thy hand,  
Whatever they may be;  
Pleasing or painful, dark or bright,  
As best may seem to thee.

"Our times are in thy hand;  
Why have we doubts or fears?  
Our Father's hand will never cause  
His children needless tears."

#### SATAN'S KNOWLEDGE AND POWER INCREASING

The foregoing being true, it seems more than possible, yes, probable, that Satan's power for evil and death finds exercise in the development of new diseases which for a time successfully baffle the skill of all except Satan's own physicians,—Christian Scientists, etc. Medical science has within recent years reached the conclusion that the majority of infectious diseases are the result of poisoning communicated sometimes through the air, and sometimes through the food, in the form of animal life, so small as to be indistinguishable except with powerful microscopes;—long-shaped, it would require nine thousand laid lengthwise to equal an inch. These disease-producing little animals breed by the millions in a few hours, carrying disease wherever they go, and are known as *Bacteria*.

The same principles apply to the numerous insects, worms and beetles which plague the farmers: new ones are continually appearing.

Knowing that God is *resting* from his creative work, since the creation of man, we are bound to attribute these new creations to some other source. Satan is wise, and no doubt merely takes advantage of natural laws in the propagation of the evils mentioned; and no doubt if mankind possessed the powers with which his Creator endowed him, when he gave him dominion over *every creature*, he would have equal knowledge of the laws governing the start and propagation of *bacteria*, and could use his knowledge and powers to prevent such formations or to destroy them. But man is fallen, and has "lost" (Luke 19:10) much that he once possessed: Satan is now his master and prince; he "now worketh in the children of disobedience;" under his misrule "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." Eph. 2:2; Rom. 8:19-23; I John 5:19, *Diaglott*.

Illustrations of this power to create, or rather to take advantage of laws of nature to cause rapid propagation amongst lower forms of life, are found in the course of Moses and Aaron, and Jannes and Jambres their opponents, before the court of Egypt. Under divine direction God's servants produced myriads of frogs, lice, flies, etc., turned the river of Egypt to corruption, caused disease amongst the cattle and a severe hail and lightning storm, which did great damage. These we are told were judgments; but the point we now make is that these were evidently brought about under some natural laws, because God has been *resting* from creative work and will continue so to do until the close of the Millennium;—leaving all the restitution work for Christ to do. "The Father worketh hitherto, and [now] I work."—Compare John 5:17; Heb. 4:4, 5, 10.

Not only so, but Jannes and Jambres, as Satan's representatives, were able to duplicate many of the plagues; certainly not by special divine power,—evidently under Satan's knowledge of natural laws.—Exod. 7:11, 12, 22; 8:7.

We may safely assume that Satan's object in using his "power of death" over his subjects is not merely to gratify a fiendish delight in their sufferings; quite probably his special object is to oppose the true light, which is now more and more breaking over the world as the Sun of Righteousness rises into place and influence. He is still striving to prevent the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God from shining into men's hearts and chasing away the dark shadows of doubt and fear which he has deeply engraved thereon for centuries by "doctrines of devils,"—by which he has made God to appear as mercilessly cruel, unjust and unkind, and the author of evil,—calamities, diseases, plagues, storms, etc.

Satan may think that he is unrestrainable, but we know that "all power in heaven and in earth" was given unto Christ, when, having finished his course, he was raised from death by the Father's power, and highly exalted.

God's foreknowledge saw that if opportunity were granted to the dead and dying members of Adam's sinful race, to return to righteousness and to harmony with God as his *children*, some would accept it; and for this foreseen class the great work of atonement was undertaken;—in order to deliver these prophetically seen "*children*" from the power of sin and Satan and death. But willing to prove to his creatures

that he is no respecter of persons, and that his dealings are equitable, God adopted a plan of atonement which would open the door to his favor, not to his foreseen "*children*" only, but to all who died in Adam—"to every creature under Heaven." Hence, the sacrifice of Christ, while it will benefit only those who became "*children*" of God, was not for our sins only, but also for the whole world. Accordingly we read, "Forasmuch as the *children* are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death [as their substitute or ransom-price before God's law] he might [legally] destroy him that has the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage."—Heb. 2:14, 15.

By that ransom which he gave, by which God's sentence against the sinner-race was legally met and paid, once for all, our Lord became the owner of the race which had by sin sold itself to Satan and came under his control,—but without any divine sanction of the transaction. Christ, the *legal* purchaser, now holds the destinies of all men. His purpose, as he explains it, is the very reverse of Satan's policy. He will set them *free* to act for themselves, by increasing their *knowledge*,—opening the sin-blinded eyes of all, to see the goodness and love and justice of God. Those who then choose righteousness he will bless and help and heal,—restoring them to the perfection lost through Adam. Those who will not hear, obey, after the knowledge of the Lord fills the whole earth, will be cut off from among the people—in the second death. Then Satan, too, he that for six thousand years has had the power of death and exercised it so relentlessly, shall be destroyed.—Acts 3:22, 23.

The permission of Satan's policy and power as "prince of this world," since the ransom-price was paid, and since all power over men passed legally into the hands of Christ, is not from lack of power to destroy Satan and release his blinded slaves, nor from lack of loving sympathy and interest in them, but because God's due time for this world (age) to end, and for the world (age) to come to begin, has not arrived; and all of God's dealings are upon lines of strictest order. God's plan provided a work for Christ to do before the setting up of his kingdom, and the taking to himself of his great power and beginning his reign. (Rev. 11:17.) That work was the selection of a faithful "little flock" of joint-heirs—"the bride, the Lamb's wife." (Acts 15:14-17.) The Gospel age was needful for the call, selection and discipline of this class; and its work will very shortly be completed.

At the close of this Gospel age, and the introduction of the Millennial age, our Lord in wisdom has purposed a great time of trouble, which shall not only be a just recompense upon the world for sins against light and opportunity, but also a time of breaking up present imperfect institutions preparatory to the better ones of Christ's kingdom; and the breaking of the hard hearts of the ungodly—plowing and harrowing them, and getting ready many (we trust) for the good seed of righteousness, which the glorified church will sow unsparingly during the Millennium.

As a part of that coming trouble, "such as was not since there was a nation," in addition to its financial and social and political and religious features, we believe that Satan's "power of death" will be permitted to a remarkable degree—increasingly and along the lines already indicated—storms, hail, drouths, pests, disease-germs and diseases. Building upon the false doctrines he has already inculcated, he will be zealous in the exercise of his power of death, that thus to some he may represent God as a being of devilish disposition, while to others the effect may be to destroy all faith in a divine power. For none, except as instructed out of the Scriptures respecting the *cause* and *object* of the permission of evil.—calamities, etc.—could suppose any reason why God should either inflict such calamities or permit them to come upon men from other causes.

And Satan's power of death makes quite possible his relief from sickness, etc., through agencies of his choice,—for the purpose of enforcing their false teachings. This deception will, we believe, be employed by him more and more in the future, and constitute part of the "strong delusion" which would, "if it were possible, deceive the very elect." But their deception will not be possible; because the true "sheep" know their Shepherd's voice, and flee from other teachers. This is another sign of Satan's desperation, and indicates the near approach of the dissolution of his kingdom and power of death. So says our Lord, in Matt. 12:25, 26.

Satan, no doubt is permitted to gain increasing knowledge since 1799 just as with men: and no doubt like them he takes the credit to himself, and supposes that he is daily growing wiser; and that through his wisdom he has a greater "power

of death." Christ, the new King, according to the Scriptures will permit Satan to use his knowledge and powers increasingly, and thus cause the wrath of Satan to praise God, and to work out features of his plan; as he so often has done with the wrath of man.

All who have "escaped" from under this prince of evil should be earnest in helping others out of his bondage—fully, completely—and into the service of the prince of life and peace and joy everlasting. Oh! what a comfort to know that,

## "THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD"

"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."—John 14: 30.

Our Lord's reference here is to the great adversary of God and deceiver of men who for six thousand years past has pursued a course of systematic opposition to, and defiance of, the Almighty Jehovah, the great Emperor of the universe. He is elsewhere called the prince of the power of the air, and that old serpent which is the devil and Satan. He is also called Beelzebub, the prince of devils.—Matt. 12:24.

Every reference to him represents him as an intelligent being of great power and influence, and an ambitious leader. Yet in the beginning of his existence he was pure and perfect, an intelligent creature of God, created through the agency of his only begotten Son, without whom nothing was made that was made.\* (John 1:3) Previous to his fall into sin he is spoken of as Lucifer, a morning star (a glorious being of creation's early morning).

Referring to his fall, the Lord, who declares that he has no pleasure in the death of him that falls into sin and the consequent condemnation to death, says, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" Then he shows that undue ambition was the cause of his fall, saying, "For thou hast said in thine heart, Into heaven [the position of power] will I ascend; above the stars of God [other sons of the morning] will I exalt my throne; and I will sit also upon the mount of the assembly in the farthest end of the north [universal dominion]; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be equal to the Most High." (Isa. 14:12-14) (That this language applies also, symbolically, to Papacy is entirely proper; for Papacy is Satan's own work in his own likeness.)

Thus, instead of humbly and thankfully appreciating the favor of God which brought him into existence and crowned him with glory and honor as a bright star of creation's early morning, and instead of returning due filial reverence, love and submission to his Creator's righteous will, Satan cultivated a spirit of pride; until his rising ambition aspired first to be a leader and chief of the other stars of the morning (the position already filled by the only begotten Son of God—John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-17), and finally to rival the Most High himself, as king of the universe.

How different was the course of him who was actually above the morning stars, the angelic sons of creation's morning,—the *only begotten* Son of the Father, his honored Agent in the creation of all things—not only of all the physical universe, but of all intelligences as well. Of him we read that, "though being in a form of God [a mighty one], yet he did not meditate a usurpation, but [on the contrary] divested himself [of his glory], taking a bondman's form, and was made in the likeness of men. And, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself [yet more], and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

"Wherefore," says the Apostle [because of his humility and obedience], "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:6-11—*Diaglott*) Thus, in accordance with a principle which God has laid down—that he will abase the proud and exalt the humble (Matt. 23:12; Jas. 4:6)—we see our Lord Jesus now exalted to the very position to which Satan through pride and ambition aspired, while Satan has been degraded, "cut down [or limited] to the earth" (Isa. 14:12), and sentenced to final destruction.

Satan evidently had no faith in God's power, or perhaps in his willingness, to destroy him. Reasoning from the fact of his long continued existence, and his unimpaired powers without any evidence of approaching dissolution, he concluded that his life could not be terminated. Consequently his schemes for power and dominion were deep laid and far reaching, having, as he supposed, ample time for full development.

His ambitious policy seems to have begun to take shape immediately after the creation of man, through whose poster-

although we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits of exalted influence and power (Eph. 6:12), yet one is on our side, the Prince of Light, against whom the prince of darkness cannot prevail. How restful to realize that *all things* are ours, because we are Christ's, and Christ is God's; and that *all things* shall work together for good to us, because we *love* God and are called and have responded, according to his promise.

ity, as they should multiply and attain the grand possibilities which he saw before them, he thought he saw his opportunity for the gratification of his hopes—for laying the foundation of his future dominion. And when he realized the restraint placed upon him, which limited the sphere of his influence to the earth, he seems to have determined to make the most of his opportunities among men.

From the promise of deliverance to mankind through the coming deliverer, he learned that a plan was already formed, the intended outcome of which was to be the triumph of the Son of God, whom he regarded with jealous hatred as a mighty rival.

It surely was no part of his original policy to prostrate the human race in death; and when to Eve he contradicted the threat of Jehovah, and declared, "Ye shall not surely die," he probably believed the lie, having first deceived himself, as most deceivers do. His object, seemingly, was to transfer man's allegiance from God to himself. He would represent God as a tyrant, curtailing the pleasures and powers of his creatures that he might have no rivals. And hence he said to Eve, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods." Thus too, Satan would pose as benefactor and liberator of men as he has often done since. And Satan's perverted heart may have reached that conclusion—that God was an ambitious tyrant and he, Satan, the true friend of liberty and progress. At all events, the death-penalty pronounced and executed upon the race was, we believe, an unlooked-for frustration of his plans. With this thought in mind, we see a continuation of the same line of policy, and an effort on the part of Satan, to outwit the Almighty, in the introduction of a new element among men, when some of the angels, under his seductive influence, were induced to leave their first estate† and to assume and retain the human form and take to themselves wives of the daughters of men (Gen. 6:1, 2, 4; Jude 6, 7), thus imparting a new life principle to the Adamic stock, the result of which was a race of "mighty men of renown," who, presumably, might live forever. This was a desperate and masterly stroke of policy; but again God put forth his power and frustrated the scheme, destroying with a flood the whole mongrel race, and preserving only Noah with his family, who was "perfect in his generation;" i. e., of pure, unmixed Adamic stock.—Gen. 6:9.

But, nothing daunted, Satan, the defiant rebel, began his work after the flood among the sons of Noah, and with varying success has since pursued his policy among the kingdoms of this world. And God has not specially interfered, and will not, until the end of this present evil world, when his time will have come for the setting up of Christ's kingdom. Then, he declares, Satan shall be firmly fettered and imprisoned for a thousand years. His policy during the period termed "this present evil world"—from the flood to the dawn of the Millennium—has been on the same line of scheming for power. Ever working in the hearts of the children of disobedience, he has always kept in power a majority who were not lovers of God and righteousness, as the pages of history fully attest; and, working through the ambitions and selfishness of men, he has overturned kingdoms and revolutionized society with reckless indifference to miseries of men, in establishing his own dominion as "the prince of this world."

To this our Lord referred when, just previous to his crucifixion, he said to his disciples, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." All along he had been in the world, and had been plotting and scheming and manipulating the affairs of men; but soon he was to come in the power of his kingdom, which we have seen to be the counterfeit kingdom of Christ, which was actually set up in the year 800 of the Christian era under the name of "The Holy Roman Empire." "Hereafter"—after his death and resurrection—earth's rightful prince would have little to say; he would not interfere with the workings of the mystery of iniquity; he would per-

\* See issue of April 15, '93

† See issue of July 15, '94.

mit the prince of this world to plot and scheme and develop his plans for setting up his counterfeit kingdom and doing what he could to frustrate the plan of the Jehovah for the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

From the pages of history we see how his kingdom was set up on a foundation of error, and how it was established on the basest principles of unrighteousness, with fire and fagot and sword and every device of torture wherewith to crush out truth and righteousness. And on the other hand, we see with what cunning craft he has endeavored to ensnare, entrap and lead astray, or, failing in this, to persecute the embryo kingdom of God, the Christian church, both the Head, Christ Jesus, and all the members of his body. But when God's time for the establishment of Christ's kingdom comes, Satan's kingdom will be brought to naught as effectually as was his former purpose at the time of the flood.

And even after the Millennial reign of Christ, notwithstanding the manifest futility of all his past endeavors, Satan's ambition, even then, will lead to an attempt to establish some measure of authority and influence among men. When, under the reign of Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the blessing of all the families of the earth has been accomplished, Satan will be loosed. It will be for only a little season (Rev. 20:7, 3); for, his heart remaining unchanged, he will soon see a new avenue to the success of his long-cherished ambition, and be inspired with a fresh hope that his original purpose may yet be accomplished, and that victory may very shortly be his. Then he will see not merely a perfect human pair with power to produce a mighty race destined to live forever, but a race restored to life and vigor. His thought will be, If I can win this mighty race to my standard, my triumph and exaltation will be speedily accomplished. Again, therefore, he will figure as a leader, though, as now, unrecognized by men. Doubtless the temptation will again rest upon his old doctrine—that they shall not surely die, even if they do disregard and oppose the will of God. And those among men in whom the goodness of God has not wrought the spirit of humility and filial submission to his acknowledged superior wisdom, but, on the contrary, in whom pride has asserted itself, will easily be deceived and led into this error of believing that God either cannot or will not destroy them in a second death. God will permit Satan to work for a little season; and no doubt he will work with all the zeal which a hope of speedy victory would naturally inspire. But he shall not succeed beyond the point which God permits for the final testing of mankind, to prove who are worthy and who are unworthy of everlasting life. When this is accomplished, then will take place the destruction of Satan and all who follow his leading.

Thus discerning the general policy of our great adversary, we are enabled the better to understand his various devices and to discover his secret workings; and hence we should be the better guarded against his influence. In all his plottings and workings we see the evidence of an intellectuality which, though like the human, is far superior to it in power and scope, and with resources upon which to draw which are beyond the range of the human powers. Before the mind's eye, as represented in the Word of God, he stands out as a great intellectual giant, with an accumulation of more than six thousand years of knowledge and experience. What a mighty foe for poor fallen humanity to combat, with our present brief

experience of three-score years and ten, and that in a degenerating and dying condition!

He is full of ambition for self-exaltation, puffed up with arrogant pride which so over-estimates his own greatness that he considers himself worthy of the honor, power and glory of God who gave him being, and is moved with merciless and continuous envy and hatred of the Son of God, as well as of the heavenly Father who exalted him; and his whole career is untiringly devoted to his own ambitions and to frustration of the divine plans, which he vainly presumes to accomplish. In the pursuance of his policy he is utterly reckless of its cost to humanity. Men in whose hearts he can work are so many tools in his hand, whom he uses to oppose the principles of righteousness and truth. (Eph. 2:2) For the accomplishment of his purposes there is no measure of hypocrisy which he would spurn (2 Cor. 11:14), no depth of iniquity to which he would not descend (John 13:27; 2 Thes. 2:9, 10), no measure of cruelty that he would spare, and no height of folly to which he would not lead his deluded victims. He is a hypocrite, a deceiver, a tyrant and a merciless enemy of all who stand in the way of his ambitions. Look out for him! He will dog your steps; he will blind your eyes; he will stop your ears; he will fetter and hand-cuff and mentally chain you to his chariot-wheels, if you beware not of him. He it is who now "has the dominion of death"—whose power is manifest throughout the earth among those under condemnation to death. Here he goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Pet. 5:8) In the great Papal system, the most complete representative of his policy, his lionlike strength has most fully appeared, and his lionlike jaws have greedily devoured every interest of his deluded victims, while with the fires of persecution he has sought to devour in another sense the faithful few, who, despite his roaring anathemas, have bravely withstood his power. But nevertheless, his days are numbered and his end is sure; for it is written that God will destroy him "holding the dominion of death [not the eternal dominion and glory and power to which he aspired, but an ignominious dominion amid sin and death, over poor fallen humanity], that is, the devil."—Heb. 2:14.—*Rotherham*.

A clear distinction, however, should be borne in mind, as between Satan and those angels that "kept not their first estate." Satan has sinned wilfully against so great light, and has so persisted in his evil course, that infinite wisdom finds no place to do more for him.

As children of God, therefore, in the midst of Satan's dominion and in opposition to his power, let us beware "lest Satan should get an advantage of us [through one or another of the numerous snares he has set for our feet]; for we are not ignorant of his devices." (2 Cor. 2:11) "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil; for we wrestle not against flesh and blood [There are mighty invisible powers under the leadership of the prince of this world plotting to accomplish the stumbling of the "feet" of the body of Christ, and flesh and blood are only used as tools for that purpose, by the great adversary], but [we wrestle] against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places [in places of authority and power]." (Eph. 6:11, 12, *margin*) Yet, if well armed with the whole armor which God supplies, and following our Captain's leading, we are safe; for greater is he than all that are against us.

## THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

III. QUAR., LESSON VI., AUG. 5, MARK 1:1-11.

*Golden Text*—"Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Mark 1:11.

This lesson presents the subject of baptism in two different aspects—(1) a baptism unto repentance; and (2) a baptism unto entire consecration to the will of God, even unto death. The first was the baptism which John preached; the second was that which our Lord instituted and exemplified. Both are distinctly referred to in Acts 19:3-5.

The preaching and baptism of John were a special call to God's covenant people, Israel after the flesh, to repent of their sins and their failure as a nation and as individuals to live up to their early covenant with the Lord. (Exod. 19:8) The stirring theme of this last and greatest (most honored) prophet was that the Messiah, the King, had come; that his kingdom was at hand, and that Israel, the chosen people, whose privilege it was to be heirs of kingdom, should at once prepare their minds and hearts, repent of their sins and be fully consecrated to God, that so they might be counted worthy to inherit the covenant blessings.

John came to that people in the spirit and power of Elias—*i. e.*, with the same disposition, zeal, energy and power of

eloquent persuasion, that characterized the ancient prophet. Even his dress and abstemious mode of life were marks of similarity; and so striking was the resemblance that the priests and Levites inquired, "Art thou Elias? Art thou that prophet?" (Mal. 4:5; Deut. 18:15, 18; John 1:21) But John replied, "No . . . I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Esaias."—Isa. 40:3; John 1:23-27.

Though John came in the spirit and power of Elias, and would have fully answered as the antitype of Elias had he been received by the Jewish people (Matt. 11:14), yet he was not the Elias, the Great Prophet, referred to by the Prophet Malachi (4:5, 6); for the Lord, foreseeing Israel's rejection of John's testimony concerning Christ, had in mind another antitypical Elias, *viz.*, the true Gospel church in the flesh, which, in the spirit and power of Elias, is the forerunner of the spiritual Christ complete, Head and body.—See *M. DAWN*, VOL. II., Chap. viii.

That the Kingdom of heaven was "at hand" in John's day, was true, regarding that kingdom and its formative or embryo state—the state in which during the entire Gospel age it

has suffered humiliation and violence (Matt. 11:12);—but it was reserved for the Elias (the church) of today to declare "the kingdom at hand" in its glory and power.

John's preaching drew great multitudes of all classes who confessed their sins and were baptized; but when later they failed to see either the King or the kingdom in earthly glory, as they had anticipated, they lapsed into unbelief, only a small remnant heeding the prophecies of the humiliation of the kingdom prior to its exaltation. Hence but few accepted Christ and became identified with his cause as prospective heirs with him of the kingdom.

With the baptism of Jesus that ordinance received a *new* significance. He had no sins whereof to repent or to symbolically wash away, but as a perfect man he had something

to offer as a living sacrifice to God. He had a human nature which he desired should be completely submitted to the will of God, even unto death; which complete subjection was symbolized by his baptism, or immersion, in water. The baptism in water was the symbol of his consecration, and the subsequent anointing with the holy spirit, outwardly testified by the opening heavens, the descending dove and the approving voice, was God's recognition and acceptance of his sacrifice. (Verses 10, 11) And the same anointing, the same baptism, is promised to all who follow in his footsteps. (See Verse 8; 1 John 2:27) As in the type (Lev. 8:12; Psa. 133:2), the anointing came first upon the Head, the High Priest of our profession, and from him it descends upon all the members of his body, the church.—See THE TABERNACLE SHADOWS, page 32.

## THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

III. QUAR., LESSON VII., AUG. 12, MATT. 4:1-11.

*Golden Text*—"In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. 4:15.

Our Lord's temptation immediately followed his consecration and baptism, and as a logical consequence. The temptation came from Satan, "the prince of this world" (John 14:30; Luke 4:5, 6), who came to our Lord just as he comes to his followers—as an angel of light, and with his real character and purposes cloaked.

VERSE 1. Immediately after his consecration, being full of the holy spirit, of zeal to accomplish his appointed mission, our Lord's most natural and reasonable impulse (which was truly the leading or prompting of the holy spirit within him) was to withdraw in solitude for meditation upon the sure word of divine law and prophecy, and for prayer, that thus he might fully comprehend the purpose of God in sending him into the world, and gain strength to accomplish it. For although as a perfect being our Lord, even as a child of twelve, surprised the Doctors of the Law by his wisdom and perception, yet he could not grasp the full import of the prophecies and of his own share in them until *after* he had been baptized or anointed with the holy spirit of God, following his presentation of himself to God's service.

With the intellectual endowments of a perfect man it was not necessary that he should take with him the scroll of the law and the prophets, when he turned aside into the wilderness for meditation; for, having been a student of them from his youth up, they were all doubtless stored in his perfect memory. As there he meditated in solitude upon the law and the prophecies touching the work before him, carefully comparing Scripture with Scripture and reasoning on them, with increasing clearness and under the influence of the holy Spirit, the divine plan opened up before him, showing a pathway of humiliation and sacrifice culminating in death, and accomplishing almost nothing for the present amelioration of suffering humanity. Though times and seasons for the full accomplishment of the restitution of all things were wisely hidden from his view (Mark 13:32), as they were also wisely hidden from the church's view until the realization of it was near at hand, he doubtless foresaw that considerable time must elapse and that the pathway to that glorious culmination must necessarily be a narrow, difficult, and to the eyes of men, an inglorious one.

Such a realization, when first dawning on the mind, would naturally bring with it some measure of disappointment to one whose sympathetic love and zeal so longed to lift the load of sin and misery from fallen humanity. God's appointed time for blessing was evidently at quite a distance in the future: his grand designs mature slowly; and only in the light of their full accomplishment can the necessity for all the painful steps thereto be appreciated. Consequently, until such time the loyal and obedient sons of God must walk by faith, and not by sight. This his only begotten Son did, thus setting us an example that we should follow in his steps.

The natural craving of the loving, benevolent, perfect heart of Jesus to lift up and bless humanity opened a way for Satan to present a temptation to him which would verily be a trying one, and he improved the opportunity, his object being to thwart if possible, the divine purpose by turning our Lord aside from it and absorbing his time and energies in other pursuits. Accordingly, his first temptation was that recorded in

VERSES 5, 6. A Scripture was brought to his attention which seemed to imply that it was God's plan that he should attract attention to himself and introduce himself to the people by leaping from the pinnacle of the Temple into the valley below, and by being preserved from harm, attract the attention of the people to himself and to the providence of God over his physical life and thus to his acceptance as

Israel's King and Messiah. The suggestion was plausible, but our Lord saw that such a transgression of the laws of nature was not probably God's will; and then he recalled a Scripture which settled the question as to his duty,—“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” Thus this temptation was ended. He must serve and trust God—not prove or test providence by disregarding his clearly understood laws of nature. It doubtless was Deut. 6:16 that decided the Lord's course in this temptation. Although filled with the spirit, he relied upon what was “written” for his replies to temptations. And our Lord's spirit or disposition was far from that of tempting God with unreasonable and unnecessary requests: he claimed no temporal favors—no protection against the legitimate, natural results of any presumptuous experiment. Thus, discerning the real spirit of God's Word by the Spirit of God which was in him, our Lord refused any misapplication of it, made manifest by its lack of harmony with its true spirit, intent or purpose.

Similar temptations have come to thousands of God's people in the claims of Spiritualism, Christian Science, etc.; and those who succumb to them have their reward in the deceptions of the Adversary who leads them boldly on from one presumptuous claim to another, until they are hopelessly entangled in his ensnaring net. Those who would escape this snare should meet it as the Lord met the temptation; for it is written, “Seek not unto them that peep and mutter and have familiar spirits,”—i. e., are spirit mediums.—Lev. 19:31; Isa. 8:19.

Other common forms of this temptation are: (1) Eating what you know does not agree with your system and asking God to bless it and keep you from experiencing its legitimate effects; (2) otherwise sowing to the flesh and asking God to give a crop of spiritual blessings; (3) from curiosity or other motives tampering with things known to be evils, and expecting blessings to result,—as, for instance, the reading of literature which you have *proved* to be off the true foundation (the ransom), and praying God to keep you in the truth. These are temptings of God's providence, and as such should be put far away from every real child of God. “*Hearken, and eat ye that which is good,*” instead of tempting God by eating that which is bad and praying and hoping for blessings from it.

(In reference to the above Scripture—Psa. 91:11, 12—we remark that its proper application is to the church, of which Christ Jesus is the *Head* and of which his living saints are the *feet*. These are the “feet” now being borne up by God's messengers of truth lest they stumble in this evil day in which all others will surely stumble.)

Failing in this attempt to ensnare our Lord, Satan's next effort was a still more subtle one—

VERSES 8, 9. The power of the kings and potentates of this present world or order of things was brought before his mind with the suggestion that with some maneuvering and wire-pulling, he, as a perfect man, and therefore so far superior to all other men, could soon win his way to a chief place of power and dominion over the whole world, which place of power he could at once begin to utilize for the blessing of mankind. In this view of the situation he mentally saw himself in the top of a very high mountain (kingdom)—an autocratic emperor having dominion over the whole world and using his power for the betterment of the entire race.

That was a suggestion worthy of the consideration of such a benevolent heart; but again he stopped to consider how it was written. “To the law and to the testimony!” said the prophet; and to the law and to the testimony he went, impelled by the same spirit of meekness and obedience that led to his consecration and baptism, to see if this suggestion was in harmony with the plan of God.

As he carefully considered it, he found it was not so—that he was not then to be exalted among men to power and influence, but that, on the contrary, he was to be despised among men, and that they would turn their faces from him, and not toward him; that he was to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Thus the suggestion was seen to be out of harmony with the divine plan, and it was promptly recognized as a temptation of Satan, who was again repelled by “the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God;” for, said he: “It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

He had come to serve the Lord's plan, and therefore not to accept any suggestions out of harmony with that plan. He foresaw that the suggested course would involve many compromises of truth and righteousness with evil men then in power in order to gain the coveted place of power and influence, just as all office-seekers under the present order of things have always found it. They must bow down and do homage to the “prince of this world” by the sacrifice of many of their principles of truth and righteousness in order to be installed in power. This the Lord would not do; nor will any of his followers; for, like him, they will discern the temptation and say, “Get thee hence, Satan.”

This same temptation has been presented to the church, the body of Christ, throughout the entire age; and the result of this test of her fidelity has been that only a very small minority of those who nominally constituted the church proved to have the spirit of the Head, which rejected the temptation and faithfully pursued the narrow way of the divine appointment. Early in the church's history the spirit of the “prince of this world” offered power and influence in consideration of the sacrifice of Christian principles and doctrine; and the masses of professed Christians accepted the offer, in consequence of which the great antichristian systems of nominal Christianity have been exalted, while the true saints, whose names are written in heaven (Heb. 12:33), have like their Lord, been despised and rejected of men—men of sorrows and acquainted with grief; because of their unflinching determination to worship God and serve him (his plan) only.

VERSES 3, 4. One more temptation awaited our Lord. During the forty days and nights of profound meditation and study and of brave resistance and conquest of temptation, he seemed to forget the demands of nature for food; or perhaps the spirit of sacrifice impelled him to ignore them in the interest of his mental and spiritual work, his perfect physical constitution permitting him to endure the privation longer than other men could. But, not until afterward—after forty days of fasting—did he seem to realize the cravings of hunger. And then there was nothing in the wilderness to satisfy it. Then came the suggestion to call in the aid of divine power to support by miraculous manner the life which he had consecrated to sacrifice,—by commanding that the stones be made bread. This temptation was equivalent to that which comes also to many of the consecrated church—viz., to request of God the healing of the body and the protection of the natural life which is consecrated to death.

Our Lord's reply was, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” That is, our meat and drink should be to do the will of our God and to finish his work (John 4:34) at any cost to ourselves; and to ask to be relieved from the *legitimate effects* of such a course would be out of harmony with the very

spirit of sacrifice, which in the present time is the way to eternal life.

Our Lord had the power to turn the stones to bread; and later he did turn water into wine, and, to feed the multitudes, he twice made food out of nothing—increasing two fishes and three small loaves into an abundance for thousands. But these miracles were an unselfish use of his power. He never used that power selfishly: to have done so would have been an avoidance of his covenant of sacrifice; and such a suggestion was this temptation.

The same principle attaches to our prayers and efforts for the sick: they should be unselfish. We, the consecrated, are not authorized to call upon divine power for the healing of our own infirmities. Our Lord healed the multitudes, but when weary himself simply sat down and rested. On the same principle, the Apostle Paul healed the multitudes, but did not cure himself. He sent napkins and handkerchiefs to the diseased, but when the consecrated were sick he sent none to them. Compare Acts 19:12; 28:7-9; 2 Tim. 4:20; 1 Tim. 5:23 on this subject. Also see TOWER for July, '88.

In consideration of these temptations of our Lord, we realize how true is the statement of our *Golden Text*—that our High Priest “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” He was not tempted like the world—to godlessness, vice and criminality; but like the church—(1) To a deceitful handling of the Word of God for the purpose of gaining its apparent support for human theories, instead of patiently waiting until the long time and painful processes of God's plan mature; (2) To ambitious efforts to gain present power and advantage, even for the apparently good purpose of blessing others now instead of waiting God's time and conforming all our present efforts to the present direction of his plan; (3) To take the sacrifice off the altar when we begin to realize what fortitude and zeal are necessary to fully render it.

These, in general terms, are the great temptations which assail the church, as they assailed her Head; and their source and channels are—the world, the flesh and the devil. The devil is the instigator, and the environments of the present world and the natural and often legitimate desires of the flesh (surely legitimate in our Lord's case) are the mediums through which his temptations are presented.

The fact that these temptations occur to us does not constitute sin. They came also to our Lord, who was without sin. The sin is not in being tempted, but in *yielding* to temptation.

VERSE 11. “Then the devil leaveth him.” The spirit of the Lord in Jesus was more than a match for the tempter, and the sword of the spirit did its work, as it always does. With this weapon “resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (Jas. 4:7) No power of art or spurious logic can stand against it; for it is mighty and shall prevail.

“And, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.” But they came uninvited. As on a similar occasion subsequently (Matt. 26:53, 54), he declined to ask any temporal favors; but the Father graciously granted on this occasion even the temporal favors; though on the later occasion it was withheld that the divine purpose might be accomplished in the sacrificial death of his beloved Son.

What a beautiful example the Lord thus furnishes of Christian fortitude which never flinches nor hesitates, but with fixedness of purpose steadily pursues the course of sacrifice!