

THE NEW CREATION

Promises and Assurances for The Spirit Begotten in Christ

Lessons and Devotions for the New Creature



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17



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**Promises and Assurances for
The Spirit Begotten in Christ**

Lessons and Devotions for the New Creature

God's Word is full of hundreds—maybe thousands—of promises, if we but look. Many have already been included in the devotionals in this series. If a favorite verse is missing in this work, you may find it in one of these books:

David: A Man After God's Own Heart
Jesus Christ: The Only Begotten Son
Solomon: Wisdom, Instruction, Warning
St. Paul: Servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ
St. Peter: Servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ

The Promises included in this devotional are merely a sampling of God's grace, goodness and faithfulness poured out upon His New Creation and ultimately the whole world. May they energize you and spur you on to be faithful to the end.

Printed and Distributed by
Chicago Bible Students
Literature Distribution Committee 2022

Second Edition – version 1.0
2023

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Scriptures in the heading of each excerpt are in the
New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.
Excerpts have been taken from the writings of
C. T. Russell, author of *Zion's Watchtower* and other works.
Reprint numbers or references are included after each entry.



May these writings serve as a source of personal reflection and devotion, as a reminder, an encouragement and an inspiration to the reader. While the words were written over a century ago, they still hold true today more than ever as the establishment of Christ's Kingdom approaches very near.

Prologue

Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore, and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

– Genesis 22:17-18 –

It was this promise of a coming blessing that worked so marvelously in the hearts of the patriarchs, fixed their minds upon the Lord and separated them from the ways of evil. And it is the same gracious promise which, in proportion to our faith in it, helps us of today as it helped the patriarchs of old. “According to thy faith be it unto you,” is still God’s rule, and those who have much faith and loyalty of heart to the Lord are sure to be blessed of him, for “the Lord knoweth them that are his.” Moreover, it is the high reward which God has promised to these, his faithful ones that constitutes a large proportion of the incentive which strengthens us in our battle with the world, the flesh and the Adversary. It was so with the patriarchs and so it is with us of this Gospel age.

It is when we get the grand sweep of the divine plan that we can see God’s ultimate purpose of vanquishing sin and blessing all the families of the earth with the knowledge of his goodness and with a favorable opportunity for reformation--- when we come to see that the election of the Jewish age and also of this Gospel age are but means to that grand end of blessing the world. Then we begin to discern how high are God’s ways above man’s ways and God’s plans above man’s schemes, and to discern the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of God’s love and provision for the blessing of the world. And proportionately as we look upon this glorious picture we are strengthened by his might in the inner man, and lifted out of our narrowness and selfishness, and more and more constituted images of God’s dear Son, and thus also images of the heavenly Father. O, then, that we might each and all be of those who are known of the Lord as the “very elect” ---of those whom he will use in the present time in connection with his present work of electing the little flock, and will be used by and by in his great work of blessing all the families of the earth. What trials and difficulties we might well endure with such a prospect! R. 3964

**Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal:
“The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone
who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”**

2 Timothy 2:19

THE NEW CREATION

The Church of the Gospel age is frequently spoken of in the Scriptures as a New Creation—its ultimate members, the overcomers, being specifically mentioned as “New Creatures” in Christ Jesus. (2 Cor. 5:17 KJV) When Jehovah God purposed the New Creation—partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4)—partakers of his own “glory, honor and immortality” (Rom. 2:7)—he determined that none could be created to so high a station and then be given a trial; but that, on the contrary, whoever should be constituted members of this New Creation must have their trial first, and must prove their loyalty to their Creator and to the principles of his righteous government most absolutely before they could be exalted to this high estate—to this New Creation of the divine nature. F59, F63

Our Lord Jesus, long before he became “the man Christ Jesus,” was “the beginning of the creation of God”; we have seen a progressive development among God’s creations accomplished by and through the Beloved Son—cherubim, seraphim, angels, the various orders of spirit beings, respecting whom little has been revealed to us. We have just closed an examination of the earthly creation and through the light of divine revelation, have seen how grand is to be its consummation during the “times of restitution of all things spoken.” But the Scriptures introduce to us the New Creation, now under consideration, as entirely separate and distinct from the angelic orders and from man.

The Heavenly Father was pleased with every feature of his work, for “all his work is perfect,” and each class, or order, is perfect in itself, or will be by the time the great Jubilee shall be introduced. The creation of these various orders, then, is not to be understood as signifying a dissatisfaction on the part of the Creator, and an attempt to make something better or more satisfactory, but rather we are to see in this an illustration of the “much diversified wisdom of God.” The variety which we see in nature in the flowers, the grasses, the trees, and amongst the animals, illustrates this—each is perfect in its own kind and plane. It was not dissatisfaction with the rose that led to the production of the pink or the pansy, but the varieties in form and beauty and in odor give us a glimpse of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine mind—diversity in harmony; beauty and perfection expressed in various forms and patterns and colors. So, too, it is with the intelligent creations—sons of God on various planes of being.

The New Creation and this selection of the Only Begotten to be the head and chief of the New Creation—subject to the trials, disciplines, humiliations and other necessary experiences to prove his worthiness—had already been determined upon in the divine counsel before man was created. It was foreknown to God that his human creature would fall; he had determined that his sentence should be death; and he had prearranged that the test he would impose upon his Only Begotten would be that he should, of his own free will, become the Redeemer of mankind, and, by so great a sacrifice as this implied, manifest his loyalty to the Father, and his faith in him. Thus, in the divine plan he was the “Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.” From this standpoint we perceive that so far from being forced to be man’s redeemer—so far from the Father’s practicing injustice toward the Son in this requirement, it was the Father’s preparation of him for the great exaltation—far above angels, principalities and

powers and every name that is named, as partaker of his own nature and sharer of his own throne. Heb. 1:4; Eph. 1:21

From this standpoint we can not wonder that the Apostle speaks of our Lord's undertaking to be our Redeemer "for the joy that was set before him." (Heb. 12:2) The joy was not merely the anticipation of the highest place in the New Creation, far above all other creations; but we may reasonably suppose that this was a part of it. Nevertheless, we notice in our Redeemer's prayer to the Father while passing through the trials, that, with characteristic modesty, he did not refer to the great dignity and glory and immortality promised him and expected; but with a beautiful simplicity and humility asked merely that he should be restored to his previous station; as though he esteemed it honor enough that he should have been chosen of the Father as his agent to carry forward other features of the divine plan, as he already had been the honored agent in the creation of all things that were made. (John 1:3) His simple words were, "Father, glorify me with the glory that I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) But the Father's answer was full of meaning when he said, "I have already glorified [honored] thee, and I will glorify [honor] thee additionally." John 12:28, Vatican MS.

But, further, the Father purposed in himself that the New Creation should consist, not merely of one individual, but that he should have "brethren." (Heb. 2:17) Who should these brethren be? from what class would they be selected? from cherubim? from seraphim? from angels? or from man? Of whichever class, they must be subjected to precisely the same tests required of the Only Begotten; for the same reason, because they are to share his glory, honor and immortality. The test put upon him was that of obedience—"even unto death" (Phil. 2:8), and all, therefore, who would share with him, as New Creatures, the divine nature, must also share with him in trials and sufferings and testings, and must prove faithful even unto death. Thus not only the testing of the Only Begotten One alone would be in connection with humanity and the sin and death prevailing amongst men, but similarly all who would be joint-heirs with him in the New Nature would have like opportunities, experiences and testings.

The fact that the New Testament writings—the teachings of Jesus and the apostles—are addressed to this "New Creature" class, or to those contemplating the steps of faith and obedience necessary to place them amongst this class, has caused many to infer, contrary to the Scriptures, that God's purposes are the same in respect to all mankind. It has caused them to overlook the fact that the calling of this present Gospel age is specially stated to be a "high calling," a "heavenly calling." (Phil. 3:14; Heb. 3:1) The failure to recognize that God had, and still has, a plan of salvation for the whole world, and a somewhat different plan of special salvation for the Church of this Gospel age, has led to a confusion of mind amongst commentators, who do not discern the difference between the elect class and its blessings, and the much larger non-elect class and the blessings to come to it in due time through the very elect. They have supposed that God's plan will end when the election is completed, instead of seeing that it will be then only beginning as respects the human nature and the restitution salvation designed for the world at large—as many as will receive it on the Lord's terms.

The beauty and symmetry of the divine plan can only be seen clearly by the recognition of the New Creation; that its prospective members are called of God to be separate, distinct from the human nature; that there is a "heavenly calling" or "high calling"; and that aside

from making their own calling and election sure, they have a twofold work to do in connection with the human family from which they are selected.

1 To be God's agents in the gathering of the elect class, delivering the while a witness message to the world, as members of the atonement priesthood, suffering at the hands of the world because of their faithfulness and the world's blindness.

2 They shall, with their Lord and Chief, constitute a divine, a royal, spiritual priesthood into whose hands the interests and affairs of the world will be committed for the correction and uplifting of each obedient member of the race—mediating between God and man and establishing amongst men a kingdom of righteousness in accord with the divine program for man's instruction and restitution.

But while this great and important work of uplifting, ruling, blessing and judging the world of mankind and the fallen angels will, as a work, be specially committed to these New Creatures of the divine nature, and while no other beings in all the universe will be so well prepared as they to do this work (for which under divine guidance they are being specially trained and prepared), nevertheless, this is not by any means their entire mission or work. On the contrary, the thousand years of the Millennial reign will constitute but a beginning of the exercise of the glory, honor and immortality of these New Creatures. At its close when the Kingdom shall be delivered up to "God, even the Father," and to mankind as the glorified agents of the Father to rule the earth, a still larger sphere for the exercise of their glory, honor and immortality will open before the New Creation; for is it not written that the Heavenly Father has not only made his Son a partaker of his own divine nature but also a sharer of his throne—and that the Son is set down with the Father in his throne? (Rev 3:21) And even though in a sense he leaves that official position during the Millennial age in order that he may specially administer the affairs of his earthly purchase and dominion, it surely does not mean that having in the fullest sense finished the work that the Father gave him to do, he will be any less glorious or occupy a position any less dignified than that accorded him when he ascended up on high after having, by the sacrifice of himself, paid for us the penalty of sin.

We know not what great works in respect to the future our Creator may have in view for his Only Begotten and well-beloved Son, whom "he hath appointed heir of all things"; but we do know from our Master's own lips that the promise is ours that when glorified we shall be like him and see him as he is, and share his glory, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Whatever, therefore, shall be the future activities of the Only Begotten as the "heir of all things," we shall be with him and share his work and share his glory as we shall share his nature also. While this is as far as the written Word of God carries us, it can not be sacrilegious for us to look into the book of nature in the light of the divine plan, and, using the divine Word as the telescope, to discern that the various planets or worlds all about us in every direction are not being formed in vain either; and that some time or other there will be works of creation in these; and that when that time comes he who in all things has had the pre-eminence will continue to have pre-eminence and will still be the chief in the direction of all the divine forces. We need not anticipate a repetition in the other planets of the sin-experiences of our world, the earth; but, on the contrary, may rest assured that this one exhibition of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin" and of its terrible results can be, and will be, used of the Lord as a perpetual lesson to the beings yet to be created in his image in other worlds, who shall learn by observation and instruction instead of by experience.

F62, F66, F67, F68, F70

You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

– 1 Peter 2:9-10 –

The Apostle notes still another distinctive feature pertaining to this “peculiar people,” [KJV] saying that it is a “chosen generation” or race. How strange it would at first seem that the Apostle should speak of this peculiar people, gathered out from amongst various races, Jews and Gentiles, as being a special, particularly **chosen race**: as though they were a different family entirely from the remainder of mankind. If tribal relationship be understood, is not this “peculiar people” a mixture of all the races? And if all humanity be considered, are not these “peculiar people” of the **same race** as the remainder of mankind?

Ah, no! they are a new race, a race separate and distinct from all others. True, they once were of the same race, and some belonged to one branch or family and some to another; but their King, in calling them to be this “holy nation,” set aside entirely their previous genealogy and started them as a new race. As members of the Adamic race they were already slaves of sin and under condemnation of death; but their Master and King, who redeemed them from sin and death, opened the way for a full completion of the great divine purpose, and they were **begotten again**, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:3.) They are therefore “**new creatures**” in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 6:15.) To them old things have passed away, and all things have become **new**. —2 Cor. 5:17.

The apostle therefore was right in his declaration that these are a different generation or race from others of mankind. He was right also in speaking of them as a “**chosen generation**”—the race which God himself is selecting for the accomplishment of his great and wonderful plan, first declared to Abraham, but not understood, and expected to be fulfilled in Abraham’s literal posterity. In reality this salvation “**began** to be preached by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” (Heb. 2:3.) True, God has certain provisions and blessings in reservation for the natural seed of Abraham, and let us remember that to them also came the first opportunity, and the first place, in this new, select, spiritual race or “**chosen generation**.” The Head or Chief of this chosen race, the twelve subordinate chiefs, the apostles, and many of the other members of this “holy nation” came from the literal seed of Abraham; but as a whole the natural seed was not worthy to become the “**chosen race**” or generation; but only to as many of them as received him (Christ), to them gave he liberty to become the “**sons of God**,”—by **regeneration**. —John 1:11-12.

When the glory of these sons of God, this chosen race, this royal priesthood, shall be revealed in the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, during the Millennium, the entire groaning creation —the whole race of Adam, condemned in Eden, but ransomed at Calvary—shall be blessed by this great “Seed of Abraham.” Instead of their groanings they may have joy and peace, through accepting the blessed arrangements of the New Covenant; and as a result, by the close of the Millennial age, all who will may have experienced the blessings of the divine promise, “God shall wipe away tears from off all faces and turn away the reproach for being his people.” Then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, He that sat upon the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” —Rev 21:4-5. (*cont’d on p. viii*)

Is it any wonder that the Apostle declares that each and all of these “peculiar people” should make it the first, the chief, practically the only business of life, “to show forth the praises [the virtues of character and plan] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light?” And the showing or the telling of these is the preaching of the gospel, whether it be done in public or in private, by word of mouth or by printed page. And this, the chief business of the peculiar people, begun now, will continue to be their business throughout the future, though under more favorable circumstances, in the majesty of the Kingdom, with power to enforce the wise and just and wholesome laws, and with love and mercy to help and to succor the weak and the erring, and gradually to restore them, if they will, to **all that was lost in Adam.**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.

1 Peter 1:3-4

When our Redeemer imputes to us His merit, covering our blemishes, this brings us to the place of vital justification. We have done nothing to accomplish this justification. We have merely presented ourselves that we might become servants of righteousness. We have merely placed ourselves in the position of readiness to receive the blessing. When our Savior’s merit was thus imputed, all our past was forgiven, our blemishes covered, the Father accepted the offering, and our High Priest sacrificed us as justified human beings. At that moment we were begotten of the Father by His Holy Spirit, “to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us.” (1 Pet. 1:4.) We became embryo New Creatures, who were then to grow and develop day by day until, in due time, we would be born as spirit beings on the Divine plane, if faithful unto death.

This is a wonderful work, a marvelous transformation! Selected from a race of bondslaves of sin, beings of a fleshly nature, depraved, death-stricken, sin-cursed, we are lifted out of the miry clay; we are washed, cleansed, from our pollution, our soiled rags of unrighteousness, and a new nature has been begun in us. Then our earthward tendencies are gradually bent Heavenward. We are transformed day by day, rising **up, UP**, until, our resurrection completed, the work of transformation fully accomplished, we are exalted to heights unimaginable—passing the nature and rank of angels, of cherubim, of seraphim, and every name that is named, and seated upon Messiah’s Throne, beside the Infinite Son of God, partakers of His glorious nature—the nature of Jehovah Himself—the Divine nature!

Can mortal man conceive so marvelous a glory? The very thought of such a Calling should cause us to bow our hearts in the dust before our God, realizing our great unworthiness of such stupendous grace—of bliss so transcendent! What can we render unto the Lord that can fittingly demonstrate our gratitude, our thankfulness, for so unspeakable a favor? Surely, the most faithful service we can give is but a very feeble return to Him who has so loved us, so blessed us, so honored us!

We are joint-heirs with the Lord of Glory to this wonderful inheritance, if only we are faithful unto death and keep our garments white. To us “old things have passed away, and all things have become new.” As old creatures we had no standing with God; we were feeding on the beggarly elements of the world. We were dead in trespasses and in sins. It is only as New Creatures that we have any standing, that we can please God, that we can work for Him. R. 2129 and R. 5855



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new.
– 2 Corinthians 5:17 –

Apparently, then, if old things **have** passed away from us, and we **are** New Creatures [KJV] in Christ, we are now receiving the blessings. There is nothing said about being **reckoned**ly New Creatures. The change is **actual, bona-fide**. When God accepts the human **will**, He does not hold the New Creature responsible for any of the deeds done **previous to consecration**. The whole account is a new one.

We are New Creatures in the sense that God has begotten us of the Holy Spirit. God has given us Heavenly promises instead of earthly promises. We are no longer striving to see whether we can attain a higher position in the world. We have new ambitions. Our aim is to live pleasing to God. And in every way this change of sentiment indicates a transformation of mind.

We are now spirit beings in human bodies. The Apostle says, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.” It is not the **body** that is risen, but the New Creature. It was not the New Creature that **died**, but the old creature. It is not the life of the **old** creature that “is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3), but the life of the New Creature. The Apostle declares, “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” He says also that we are not only to reckon ourselves **dead**, but to reckon ourselves as though we had been **raised from** the dead. “Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” —Rom. 6:11. R. 5325

For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
Colossians 3:3

The New Creation

Their hopes, their joys, their loves, their ambitions, grow continually, fed by the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word. And they bring no disappointment, but satisfaction and the peace of God which passeth all understanding come more and more into their hearts, as the eyes of their faith open wider and wider to comprehend the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of divine wisdom and love, to whose richest blessing they are heirs and joint-heirs through Jesus Christ the Lord. This land of promise which the New Creatures enter figuratively at the moment of entire consecration, when they receive the spirit of adoption, is a land flowing with milk and honey; and though it has its trials, its conquests, its fightings within and without, yet not only do its victories mean joy and peace, but, under divine instruction and guidance, even its defeats are turned into sources of hope and faith and joy, by him who is able and willing to make all things work together for their good. F660



THE PROMISES

Exceedingly
Great and Precious

*This is the promise that He has
promised us—eternal life.*

1 John 2:25



The Scriptures everywhere represent the Almighty Creator as benevolent, generous, kind toward his creatures, desiring their welfare, and, where punishment is necessary, inflicting it merely with a view to their recovery out of wrong conditions or to make examples for others who may thus be deterred from wrong doing. True, the Scriptures do also present Satan and the forces of evil, but always picture them to us as adversaries of the Almighty and of all who are good and in harmony with righteousness. Thus the Bible is in many respects a history of the conflict between good and evil, and it faithfully shows us, as an artificial record would not, that the general tendency of our race is sin-ward—that the smaller proportion escape the delusions of the Adversary, develop a reverential love for the Creator, and manifest loyalty and obedience. However, the Scriptures are very explicit in their assurances that it shall not always be thus: that the time for the triumph of right over wrong, of God over Satan, is arranged for, its time fixed, and its accomplishment certain. Everywhere also they point us to the fact that the reign of righteousness could never be accomplished without divine assistance—that our race is so impaired and weak through the fall that perfection is a matter of impossibility on our part, and hence that our help cometh from the Lord. R. 3964

In the midst of the “perilous times” of this “evil day,” and of the warning voices of prophets and apostles pointing out snares and pestilences and subtle dangers on every hand—and in the midst, too, of a realizing sense of the actual existence of such evil besetments and perils—how precious to the saints are the assurances of divine protection and care and personal love! R. 3331

Are you, dear brother or sister,

hard pressed on every side with temptations to doubt that God's protection, love and care are yours, that his precious promises belong to you? have you grown discouraged and disheartened? do the foes seem too many and too strong for you? do the reproaches come with crushing weight, and do the clouds hang heavy over your seemingly defenseless head? Ah, it is just here that faith must claim her victory! Is it not promised, "This is the victory that overcometh, . . . even your faith?" It is your faith that is on trial now. In the calmer days when the sun of favor shone brightly upon you, you were quietly laying the foundation of a knowledge of the truth, and rearing the superstructure of Christian character. Now you are in the furnace to be proved:

summon therefore all your courage;
fortify your patience;
nerve yourself to endurance;
hold fast to your hope;
call to mind the promises,

they are still yours; and "cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength," "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him," and faith has gained her victory. Then in due time the Lord's hand will be recognized in making all things work together for good to you according to his promise. This proof of your faith, says Peter, is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire. —1 Pet. 1:7.

Delve into the promises of God more and more. As you do this, the roots of faith will draw up the nutriment and send it out into your life, and you will grow, just as a tree grows, because nourished, fed. Thus alone will you become established in The Faith, and not in your imaginings nor the imaginings of others. Our faith is to grow stronger and more vigorous day by day. It is not to be a faith in ourselves or in anything apart from the Lord. Faith is what we started with in the beginning, and we shall need it in increasing measure as we go on in our upward way—faith in God and in His sure Word. All that we know as children of the Lord has come to us through the channel of Jesus, His holy Apostles, and the Prophets of old, and we are to continue feeding at this same table with thanksgiving.

**For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and
in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.
2 Corinthians 1:20**

We thus place ourselves under the Divine protection when, having come to a knowledge of God's willingness to accept us as His children, we gratefully accept the invitation and approach in His appointed way, through Christ our Redeemer, and consecrate ourselves fully to His service. Such may sweetly rest in the precious promises of God, all of which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. The world does not see the overshadowing wings of Divine protection, but the faithful have a blessed secret realization of it. Praise the Lord!

R. 1823, R. 5559, R. 4925

His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature.

– 2 Peter 1:3-4 –

Jehovah God, “who only hath immortality” of himself, or “life in himself” innately, and of whom are all things, having created various orders of beings, angelic and human, in his own moral and rational likeness, but mortal and not of his divine nature, has declared that he designs a new creation, —an order of beings not only morally and rationally in his resemblance, but in “the express image” of his person and partakers of his own divine nature—a prominent constituent or element of which is **immortality**. —2 Pet. 1:4.

We who have been blessed with the richest favors of divine grace in that knowledge of divine truth which reveals to us the high privilege of becoming sons and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for the called and chosen and faithful according to his purpose, have a never failing cause for deepest gratitude. Great indeed was the favor which revealed to us the hope of everlasting life as justified, human sons of God—of full restitution to the divine favor and likeness, as at first possessed by our father Adam. And great was our joy when first, by faith, we appropriated this precious promise and realized that legally, through merit of the precious blood of Christ shed for our redemption, we had passed from death unto life, and that in God’s appointed time the everlasting treasure with all its attendant glory and blessing would be ours. But beyond even this favor are the **“exceeding great and precious promises”** to those of this justified class who have been called, according to God’s purpose, to become the bride and joint-heir of his dear Son.

The promises of God made to this class are exceeding great and precious, and if they are really believed they cannot fail to powerfully influence the life; but if they are not received, it is manifest that they can have no power over the life. And more, if they be not fully believed, if they be not personally appropriated, they are not applicable, and no one can hope for anything in them. This is clearly intimated in the words of the Apostle— “Now the just shall live by faith.” It is not enough that, by faith, we receive the first impulse of life, but, having passed from death unto life, by the same means, we must **continue** to receive and appropriate spiritual nourishment, that we may grow thereby: we must walk by faith, following the leading of the holy spirit through the Word of Truth.

When thus considered, not as a begging arrangement, nor as an occasion of instructing the Lord as to our wills, but as a season of union and communion of heart with the Father, in which we may relieve our burdened or perplexed hearts and realize Divine sympathy, calling to mind Divine promises, reviewing Divine care, and expressing our confidence in God’s many promises, thus bringing those promises afresh and close to our hearts, as though God now audibly uttered them in our hearing—thus considered, how proper, yea, how necessary is prayer to the true child of God! He cannot live without it. To break off this communion would be like stripping a tree of its leaves; their removal would stunt and hinder its development.

But to suppose that Christian life depends **solely** upon prayer without earnest study of God’s Word, is like supposing that a tree could flourish from its leaves only, without roots and soil. Both are needful. As good soil and roots will produce leaves and fruitage, so, likewise, the promises of God’s Word absorbed by us will naturally lead to good works and to communion with God in

prayer, without which the fruits of the Spirit would soon wither and disappear.
R. 1879, R. 1281, R. 1798, R. 4983

The “exceeding great and precious promises” of God’s Word are not given to inspire thankfulness and consecration, for they are given only to the thankful and consecrated who already have presented themselves living sacrifices to God. “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom,” “God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit,” which is granted only to the consecrated. These promises are to strengthen and nerve us and to enable us to “overcome,” in fulfillment of our covenant of consecration. —2 Pet. 1:4; Matt. 13:11; 1 Cor. 2:9-10. R. 2723

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
2 Corinthians 7:1

Who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises.
— Romans 9:4 —

[The Apostles realized] that a change of dispensation was upon them, and that in some important sense Israel was rejected by the Lord, so that only the remnant accepting Christ were now in divine favor; but they did not realize fully what this meant, nor see clearly how the Lord’s promises centering in Israel were yet to be fulfilled. We can see now, in the light of providential leadings and apostolic teachings, and in the light of prophetic fulfillment, what it was not possible for them to see clearly at that time.

We can see that natural Israel was being rejected, —blinded with a blindness which would last for nearly nineteen centuries. We can see God’s purpose to elect, in the interim, the spiritual seed of Abraham; taking, firstly, from the natural Israelites all found worthy; and secondly, completing the election with chosen ones selected from among the Gentiles—possessing the spirit of Abraham, the spirit of faith and obedience. We can see, that this Spiritual Israel was not fully explained through the promises and through the prophets; but that the elect church in the prophecies was counted in the Messianic promises—as members of the body of Messiah of which Jesus is the Head, “God blessed forever.” (Rom. 9:5.) We can see, that not until this body of Messiah shall be complete will the Lord’s promises to natural Israel have fulfillment; —then their blindness being turned away (Rom. 11:26-32), they will become the leading nation of earth, representative of the spiritual Kingdom of God, the glorified Church, the Messianic body: then the forces of the Gentiles will come to them, and all earthly interests will cooperate, and a blessing through Israel shall proceed to all the families of the earth. R. 2996

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made.
Galatians 3:16

Paul assures us that “the seed” referred to in this covenant is Christ. (Gal. 3:16.) Fleshly Israel lost this, the cream or choicest part of the covenant—the spiritual. As Paul says (Rom. 11:7): “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it.” R. 4370



This is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

— 1 John 2:25 —

Our text refers to a certain class only. It does not include the world. “This is the promise which He hath promised **us**.” (1 John 2:25.) The promise is now to the Church, and to no others. All the promises for the world are made along the line of general principles. All the world are to be blessed, and the blessing that will come to them is an opportunity to gain life everlasting. God made everything dependent upon the Son: “He that hath the Son hath life” —no others. So only believers can have life now—and these not in the complete sense—only the beginning of that life which will be perfected in the resurrection. The world have no life in them, and cannot have it, except under God’s arrangement.

Those who now come to Christ are the Church, the Bride class, and are an especially privileged class. They come into the life that is incorruptible.

The Lord will make it quite possible for the world to gain life everlasting on the human plane, just as He is now making it possible for the Church to attain life on the Divine plane. The thing for the consecrated people of God to do, then, is to strive to be of the “us” class. This term applies to those who become disciples, those who believe in the Kingdom glory and honor offered them, and who, so believing, devote their lives to walking in the footsteps of Jesus, even unto death. R. 5608





**Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,
for He who promised is faithful.**

– Hebrews 10:23 –

The Apostle is here writing to some in the early Church who had given evidence of wavering, who were failing properly to hold on. He is telling them that while they had been faithful at one time they apparently had become lukewarm, at least, respecting the Lord and the Christian way. He intimates that the firmness of faith in the child of God, and the firmness with which he holds the profession of his faith, has much to do with his consistency in Christian life. Our faith was the mainspring that led each of us to make a consecration to the Lord. We believed that God had provided the Redeemer for the forgiveness of sin. We believed that we would be acceptable and our sins forgiven through the Lord Jesus Christ; and that we would be made sons of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus. These were the inspiring incentives that first led us to God.

We all know from experience how things that are brought before our minds may afterwards become dim and hazy. When spiritual things become thus hazy, when we cannot grasp spiritual verities as once we could, when we are fearful and our joy in Christ is fading, we are getting away from this mainspring of our consecration. We are losing our faith. So let us earnestly hold fast to this anchor of our souls lest we drift and be dashed upon the rocks.

The Apostle's argument is that we should hold fast the faith which began our Christian life and which is also to be the finisher of our Christian life. The Lord is able to carry us through and He will do it, if we do our part. But the terms on which the Lord has received us are that we purpose to abide faithful. Hence everything depends on our holding fast to this faith which we have professed, without wavering, without harboring any doubts and fears; and the basis of our faith in our ultimate triumph is the assurance that "He is faithful that promised." We know that in the Bible there are "exceeding great and precious promises" for us. While the Lord tells us that there is nothing in ourselves that we can depend on, He assures us that His grace is sufficient, that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. We have only to lay hold upon it. If therefore we hold fast to our faith, we may obtain all that God has promised us. He will be faithful; He will not disregard His promises; He will do all that He has said.

The character of our God assures us that any offer coming to us from Him, with rigid conditions attached, must be infinitely worthy of our acceptance; and the "exceeding great and precious promises" accompanying this offer assure us of His assistance and sustaining power. So by availing ourselves of His strength and of His aid, we shall be able to meet all the conditions and to attain the glorious reward set before us. Hence our faith has a strong and sure foundation upon which to rest; "faith can surely trust Him, come what may." R. 5698 and R. 5497

May He grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

– Ephesians 3:16-19 –

Finally, all of these exceeding great and precious promises [2 Pet. 1:3-4] are summed up by the Apostle in his declaration that, through this knowledge of God and through the influence of these precious promises, it is God's will that we who by nature were children of wrath even as others "might become partakers of the divine nature." Oh, what a rich promise is here! How exceedingly great and precious! Who could have thought such a thing?

Such knowledge is too wonderful for us: we cannot comprehend why our great Creator should exalt to his own nature such poor, helpless creatures of the dust as we by nature are. But this and all the other gracious promises exhibit to us more and more the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths, of the love of our God, which surpasses human knowledge.

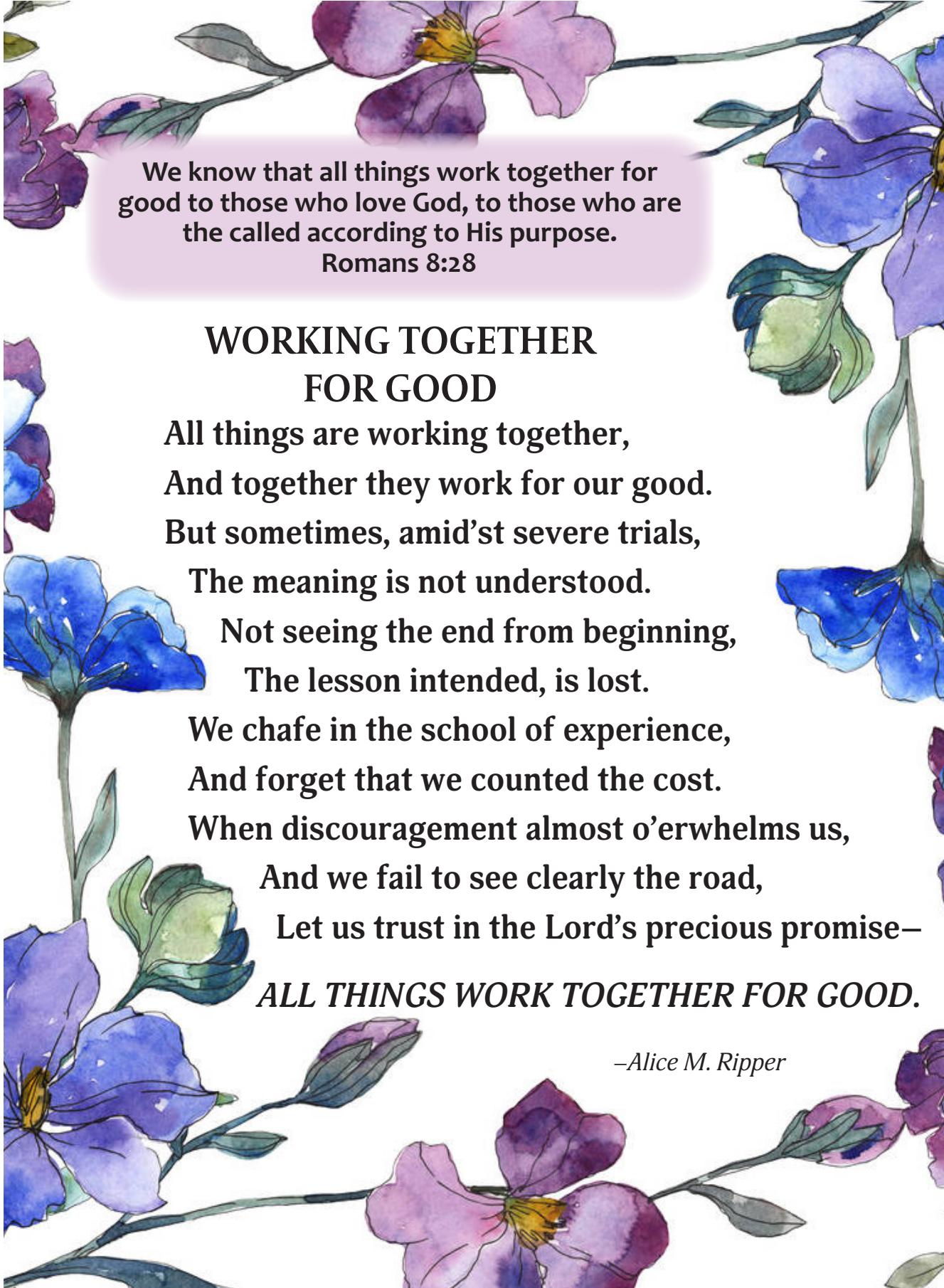
In view of what we already know of our Creator, especially as revealed to us in and through our Lord and Redeemer, Jesus, shall we not, as those who have come to see something of his glorious character, "press toward the mark" (Phil. 3:14) for the attainment of all that he may be pleased to reveal to us concerning himself, that thus we may be more and more partakers of his spirit, more and more conformed to his likeness, more and more acceptable, and by and by be actually and everlasting accepted in the Beloved, to the full realization of all those blessings which God has in reservation for them who love him, and of which now we have the exceeding great and precious promises?

Such promises and such knowledge properly inspire our hearts to love, obedience and self-sacrifice, that we may please him who has called us to his own nature and fellowship; and, as the Apostle says, "He who hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [the Lord] is pure."

It was to this intimate knowledge of or acquaintance with the Lord and its reward that the Apostle Paul referred, saying,— "That I might know him and [experience] the power of his resurrection [the First or Chief Resurrection, by] being made [fully] conformable unto his death [—which full surrender is possible to those only who know him well and have drunk in his spirit].”—Phil. 3:10. R. 2138

Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.

Philippians 3:8-10



We know that all things work together for
good to those who love God, to those who are
the called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28

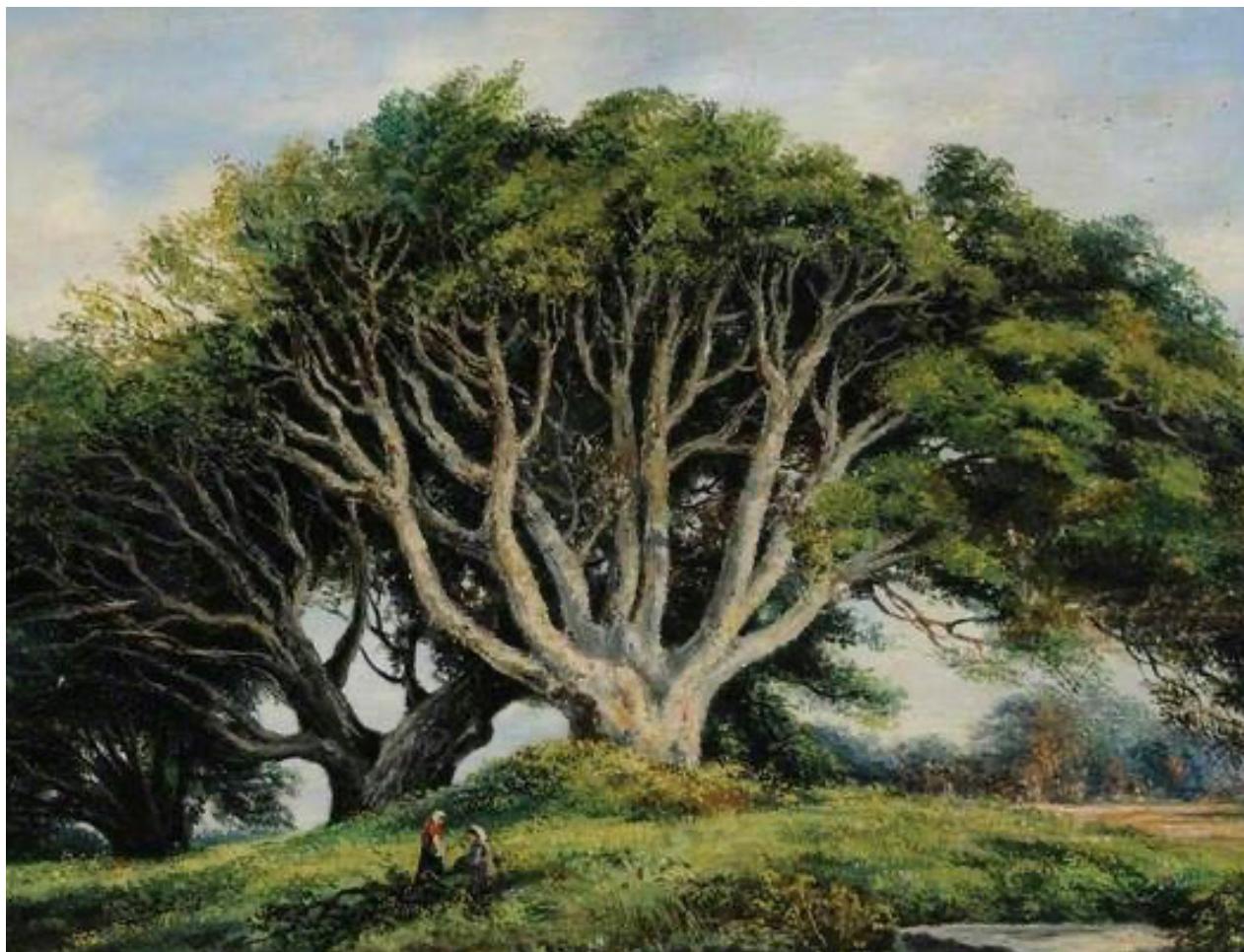
WORKING TOGETHER FOR GOOD

All things are working together,
And together they work for our good.
But sometimes, amid'st severe trials,
The meaning is not understood.
Not seeing the end from beginning,
The lesson intended, is lost.

We chafe in the school of experience,
And forget that we counted the cost.
When discouragement almost o'erwhelms us,
And we fail to see clearly the road,
Let us trust in the Lord's precious promise—

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD.

—Alice M. Ripper



Terebinth Tree

PROMISES and ASSURANCES

Delivered by

**THE
HOLY PROPHETS
OF OLD**

*Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and
searched carefully, who prophesied of
the grace that would come to you.*

1 Peter 1:10

The Bible claims to be a book written under divine inspiration. The word *inspire* signifies to breathe in, to infuse, to fill, to inhale—as to inspire the lungs with air. (See Webster's Dictionary.) Hence, when it is said that certain scriptures, or writings of godly men, were given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16), it signifies that those men were in some way, whether through miraculous or natural means, inspired by, or brought under the influence of God; so as to be used by him in speaking or writing such words as he wished to have expressed. The prophets and apostles all claimed such inspiration. Peter says,

**Prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God
spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.**

2 Peter 1:21

Through Moses we have the law of God and the only existing credible history of mankind from the creation of Adam down to his own time, covering a period of about 2500 years. While Moses and the other Bible writers were holy men, inspired with pure motives and holy zeal, and while personal pride, ambition, etc., were no part of their spirit, we learn that Moses was inspired with the knowledge of God's law, both in its great principles and also in the minutiae of its typical ceremonials, by direct revelation from God at Mount Sinai, and of some points of duty at the burning bush at Horeb, etc.

As for his historical writings, Moses was evidently guided of God in the collation and presentation in its present complete and connected form of the history of the world down to his day, which was really in great part the history of his own family back to Adam with an account of the creation doubtless given by God to Adam while he was yet in fellowship in Eden. Nor does a correct handing down of family information, covering a period of over 2300 years, seem impossible, or liable, as it would now be, to have become polluted; for, aside from the fact that it was handed down through the God-fearing family line of Seth, it should be remembered that at that time the bodies, brains and memories of men were not so weak as they are now, and as they have been since the flood; and finally, because the long lives of two men link Adam with the family of Abraham, the family of covenant favor, —with Isaac, the typical seed of promise. These two men were Methuselah and Shem. Methuselah was over 200 years old when Adam died, and had abundant opportunity, therefore, for information at first hands; and Shem, the son of Noah, lived contemporaneously with Methuselah for 98 years, and with Isaac for 50 years. Thus, these two living, God-fearing men acted as God's historians to communicate his revelations and dealings to the family in whom centered the promises, of which Moses was one of the prospective heirs.

In addition to these facts, we have the statement of Josephus that Methuselah, Noah and Shem, the year before the flood, inscribed the history and discoveries of the world on two monuments of stone and brick which were still standing in Moses' time.

As for the writings of the prophets, their devoted, godly lives attest their sincerity; their lives were spent for God and in the defense of righteousness, and not for gain and worldly honor. And as for proofs that God acted through them and that they merely expressed his messages, as Peter declares, it is to be found in the fulfillment of their predictions. [See *Studies in the Scriptures*, Volumes 1-4]

Our first definite information with reference to the Sacred Writings is afforded by the direction given to Moses to write the law and history in a book, and put it in the side of the ark for preservation. (See Exod. 17:14; 34:27; Deut. 31:9-26.) This book was left for the guidance of the

people. Additions were made to it from time to time by subsequent writers, and in the days of the kings, scribes appear to have been appointed whose business it was to keep a careful record of the important events occurring in Jewish history, which records—Samuel, Kings, Chronicles—were preserved and subsequently incorporated with the Law. The prophets also did not confine themselves to oral teaching, but wrote and in some cases had scribes to record their teachings. (See, Josh. 1:8; 24:26; 1 Sam. 10:25; 1 Chron. 27:32; 29:29,30; 2 Chron. 33:18,19; Isa. 30:8; Jer. 30:2; 36:2; 45:1; 51:60.) As a result we have the Old Testament Scriptures, composed of history, prophecy and law, written by divine direction, as these citations and also Paul's testimony (2 Tim. 3:15,16) prove. These writings collectively were termed "The Law and The Prophets," and the Hebrews were taught of God to esteem them of divine authority and authorship, the writers being merely the agents through whom they received them. They were so taught to esteem them, by the miraculous dealings of God with them as a people, in confirmation of his words to them through the prophets, thus endorsing them as his agents (See, Exod. 14:30,31; 19:9; 1 Kings 18:21,27,30,36,39); and further by the establishment and enforcement of the law as proclaimed and recorded by Moses.

The political interests and the religious veneration of the Israelites, under God's immediate overruling and protection, combined to preserve and protect these writings from contamination. Religiously, they were rightfully regarded with the deepest veneration, while politically they were the only guarantee which the people possessed against despotism. The Jewish copyists regarded these documents with great veneration. A very slight error in copying often led them to destroy it and begin anew. Josephus says that through all the ages that had passed none had ventured to add to, take away from, or transpose, aught of the Sacred Writings.

In the degeneracy of the Jewish nation, under the idolatrous administration of the successors of Rehoboam, these Sacred Writings fell into disuse and were almost forgotten, though they seem never to have been taken from their place. In the reformation conducted by Josiah, they were again brought to light. Again, in the Babylonish captivity this book was lost sight of by the Israelites, though it appears that they were accustomed to meet together in little companies in Babylon to be instructed by the scribes, who either taught the Law from memory or from copies in their possession. On the restoration of the Jews to Jerusalem, the Scriptures were again brought out, and Ezra and his companions read the law to the people, commenting upon and explaining it. (Neh. 8:1-8.) This public reading of the Scriptures was the only means of keeping them before the people, as printing was yet unknown and the cost of a manuscript copy was beyond the reach of the people, very few of whom could read. At the time of our Lord's first advent, these O.T. Scriptures existed substantially as we have them today, as to matter and arrangement.

One of the strongest evidences of the authenticity of the O.T. Scriptures is found in the fact that the law and the prophets were continually referred to by our Lord and the apostles as authority, and that while the Lord denounced the corruptions of the Jewish Church, and their traditions, by which they made void the Word of God, he did not even intimate any corruption in these Sacred Writings, but commends them, and refers to and quotes them in proof of his claims.

R. 1148 and R. 1145

Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

Luke 24:44

Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid, for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.
– Deuteronomy 31:6 –

With great patience and long suffering the Lord had mercy upon the typical people, the house of servants, called to constitute and to make types illustrating his gracious purposes for the house of sons which would follow it, and, incidentally, to prepare the “Israelites without guile” for the spiritual blessings to result from their transfer to the “house of sons.” And not only preparing this remnant, but also all those who were faithful as members of the “house of servants,” attesting their loyalty to the Lord, whose reward is to be the privilege of representing the heavenly Kingdom as its human agents on the earth. But while this is true, **how much greater is God’s mercy as seen and experienced by us who are of the house of sons, accepted in the Beloved One!** How merciful is the Lord toward all those who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of the Captain of their salvation! How bountiful are the provisions made, not only for their ultimate reward, but also for their encouragement during the sojourn toward the heavenly city, with provision also for the passing over, the covering and the ultimate blotting out of their weaknesses by and through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

Psalm 103:8

Amos [in chapter 5] is noted as being one of the earliest prophets to write down the message which he delivered. True, Moses was a prophet, and his teachings we have in written form—and David was a prophet, and we have his in the Psalms; but Moses’ prophecies were chiefly through the types which, under divine direction, he instituted, and David’s prophecies were in poetic form, which were not discerned to be prophecies until our Lord and the apostles so pointed them out. Samuel, the Prophet, seems not to have written any of his inspired messages, neither did Elijah, nor Elisha, nor others of their time. Amos belongs to a period about a century after Elijah and nearly a century before Isaiah, and about two centuries before Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Amos declared himself to have been of humble birth; his parents were not illustrious, neither was he educated amongst the sons of the prophets. Like David he was a sheep tender, a farmer, upon whom the Lord poured his spirit with mighty power, sending him to proclaim the disasters sure to come upon Israel unless a change of course should turn aside the deserved punishment for their iniquities.

Seek me and live!
Amos 5:4

In drawing a lesson from these experiences of Amos applicable to ourselves of today, we must remember that the Lord no longer sends his messages after this manner. Conditions have changed, circumstances have changed, and prophecies of the kind inspired by the Lord in early days are no longer his method. Respecting these prophecies, the Apostle Peter tells us, “Prophecy came not in olden times by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21), and . . .



... to them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven —things which angels desire to look into.

1 Peter 1:12

In view of the changed conditions and difference of operation of the divine power, it is for us to preach the Word to whomsoever hath an ear to hear, to call attention to the application of the prophecies and testimonies of ancient times, and thus to make known the divine plan as it becomes due to be understood by those for whom it is intended—the Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile. For any one to undertake at the present time to copy either Elijah or Amos or others of the ancient prophets would indicate a total misapprehension on his part respecting the divine will and message—it might even be surmised to indicate a mental unbalance. As the Apostle declares, we speak the things that we know and testify to the things spoken aforetime for our admonition. There is a good lesson for us, nevertheless, in the method which the Lord guided the Prophet to take in delivering his message.

Our Lord leaves to us of this Gospel dispensation considerable latitude in the choice of means for serving his cause, exhorting us, however, to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, and promising us rewards in proportion as we exercise such carefulness in his service as he can specially bless and use. Those who use wisely the talents and pounds intrusted to them are to have proportionate rewards when the Kingdom shall be set up. Let us then, in the exercise of our liberty and in accord with the Master's injunction to be wise as serpents, notice how the Prophet's message respecting unpleasant and direful things, all true, began in such a manner as to rivet the attention of his hearers.

The Prophet proceeds to particularize some of the wrongs on account of which [the Israelites] were in danger. He declares that they cast down righteousness to the earth; equity was not a matter of primary consideration; but, as he proceeds to point out, bribery was rife, and wealth and power and influence could accomplish almost anything. There must be a turning from this condition, and relief could only come from turning to the Lord. Pointing his hearers to the group Pleiades in the constellation Taurus, and to Orion, he would have them see that the one whose assistance they needed was the one who was able to create the earth and the heavens also. This great God was the one that they needed, and all others assisting them would be powerless against him.

He made the Pleiades and Orion. He turns the shadow of death into morning and makes the day dark as night. He calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth. The LORD is His name. He rains ruin upon the strong, so that fury comes upon the fortress.

Amos 5:8-9

The lesson closes with an exhortation from the Prophet that his hearers should make a thorough reformation—seek good and not evil, love righteousness and hate sin. If they would do these things then indeed they might apply to themselves the promises of God, as they were already disposed to do, claiming that they were his people. Such claims would be appropriate enough if they would conform to the divine requirements, but not otherwise; the Lord would be gracious to them if they would come into line as a people with his regulations and requirements, but otherwise they must expect the chastisements and punishments already foretold. (*cont'd on p. 16*)

**Seek good and not evil, that you may live,
so the LORD God of hosts will be with you.
Amos 5:14**

The close of Amos' prophecy [Amos 9:11-12] tells of the recovery of Israel and the blessing of the Lord that will be upon all mankind, including the Gentiles, at that time. It is this prophecy that the Apostle James quoted in the Council at Jerusalem, saying, "After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." (Acts 15:16,17.) We are living at the time when this prophecy is about to be fulfilled. The recovery of natural Israel is about to take place under the reestablishment of God's Kingdom in the world—the one that was once typically represented in King David, but which is to be actually established in the greater David—the "Beloved One." Under that Kingdom, reestablished under more favorable conditions, a heavenly Kingdom, the residue of men will be given an opportunity to seek the Lord, for the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth. R. 3425 and R. 3424

"On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages. I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name," says the LORD who does this thing.

Amos 9:11-12



God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

— Genesis 2:3 —

Here God established the order of sevens—an order of time to be observed throughout his plan subsequently. Six periods of equal length were to constitute the working days, and the seventh was the appointed period of rest. To this principle he subjected his own course in the work of creation. No special reference is here made to the seventh day of the week; but rather to the seventh period in any future division of time which his plan might indicate. In conformity with this principle the seventh day was appointed to the Jews under the law as a day of rest, a sabbath. So also their seventh week, seventh year and their culmination in the Jubilee or Sabbath year were on the same principle. (See *Studies in the Scriptures*, Volume 2, Chapter 6.) And likewise the seventh millennium or seventh thousand-year day is to be a Sabbath, a blessed and hallowed day of rest; for so God appointed in his ordering of time.

The seventh day of God's rest, which began just after man's creation, has continued ever since, and is to continue one thousand years into the future—to the full end of Christ's Millennial reign—in all a seven-thousand-year day. During this long day Jehovah God rests—avoids interference with the operation of the laws under which originally he placed all his earthly creation. (See Heb. 4:3; Heb. 4:10; John 5:17.) He rests from or ceases his direct work, in order to let Christ's work of redemption and restitution take its place and do its work as a part of his divine plan. R.1609
See also entry for Mark 2:27-28 on p. 188

The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

– Genesis 2:16-17 –

God could have arranged the matter very differently; He is not an unresourceful God. He is an All-Wise God, an All-Powerful God. We can see, for instance, that God could have decreed that Adam should be excluded from the Garden of Eden for a time, and that after he had suffered somewhat for his disobedience, and had thereby learned a lesson, he should then be restored to favor. By that experience Adam would, no doubt, have been taught a very good lesson. So all of Adam's children might have undergone some penalty, some purging experiences, whereby they might have profited, and then have come back again into harmony with God.

But the Wisdom of God is a Mighty Deep, and He has a great and wise Plan! He had purposed that all of His intelligent creatures—angels, cherubim, seraphim, and humans—who would gain eternal life, must be absolutely loyal to Him, and hence that they should all be tested in respect to their loyalty. They must all be tried and tested characters. It was His purpose, therefore, that all His intelligent creatures in Heaven and on earth should be brought to perceive His goodness and worthiness of all praise, that they might be able to exclaim from the heart: “Blessing and honor and might be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne... forever!”

God declared that death should be the penalty for sin, in order that all might know the Law of His Government—that only the righteous shall live, and that all sinners shall **eventually** be destroyed. Hence God arranged beforehand that man's sin, which He foreknew, should bring upon Adam and his posterity the extreme penalty of His Law.

Many would not have chosen sin if they had known its sure results, and had been born with perfect ability to choose the right. But God purposed that Adam's posterity should come into the world under fallen conditions, as the result of his disobedience. He purposed to make manifest here on the planet Earth what is the natural tendency and certain outcome of sin. Sin's tendency is always downward; and not only so, but it aggregates itself, and leads to ruin and death.

(cont'd on p. 18)



Before the creation of our first parents God had arranged that *only one man* should have the opportunity to fall and to be *sentenced to death*, that thus *only one man* would be required as a *Redeemer*. This Divine arrangement was most economical because it will bring *all* the masses of humanity back to life at the cost of but one human life as the redemption-price. No *fallen man* could be a ransom, a corresponding price, for the perfect man Adam. Therefore God purposed from the very beginning that His Only Begotten Son, the First-born of all creation, should become man's Redeemer and that in order to become the Redeemer He should become a man. R. 5430

Justice

We see that the Plan, which God has adopted, furnishes opportunity for the manifestation of the principles underlying His own glorious character, which neither angels nor men could so clearly have understood by any other means. When the great work of restoration is fully accomplished, angels and men will see the **Justice of God**—a Justice which permitted the penalty of death to be executed upon our race for six thousand years—a Justice which provided a Redeemer to pay this penalty for Adam, that he and all his posterity might go free—a Justice, too, which provided a great reward for the faithful Son who carried out, at such a cost to Himself, the Father's Purpose! This is the highest conception of Justice of which men or angels could conceive!

Love

By this means God will also manifest His sympathetic Love, which otherwise neither angels nor men might ever have known. Had there been no sin, no death, no sorrow, no pain, they might never have known the depths of Divine Mercy. After sin had entered the world, the angels beheld the **Love of God**, in that He "gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever [of mankind] believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his **life** for another! The Father's Love was thus shown in His Plan to send His Son to die for the world. This Love will be manifested to all men in the incoming Age, now very near at hand.

Power

Through His Plan God will manifest **His Power** also; for while His Power has been shown in the creation of the worlds, of men and of the various orders of angels, still this manifestation of energy is small in comparison to the Power which He will yet exercise. This Power will restore every individual of the race to his former condition; every soul of man will be awakened from the tomb. This will be a manifestation of Power that is beyond the comprehension of humanity.

Wisdom

Then, too, **God's Wisdom** will be wondrously manifested. When the grand outcome of the Divine Plan of the Ages shall have been seen in its glory and majesty by all the created intelligences of God, all will hail Him as the infinitely Wise One—who fittingly ordained that every creature formed in His image should be tested as respects absolute loyalty, that only the loyal and obedient should have life, and that all others should be destroyed!

Thus we see that in His wonderful Program for dealing with sinners, angelic and human, God chose the very best way, the one most profitable to angels and to men, the one which most redounds to His own ultimate glory and honor. R. 5429 and R. 5430

Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested.

Revelation 15:4



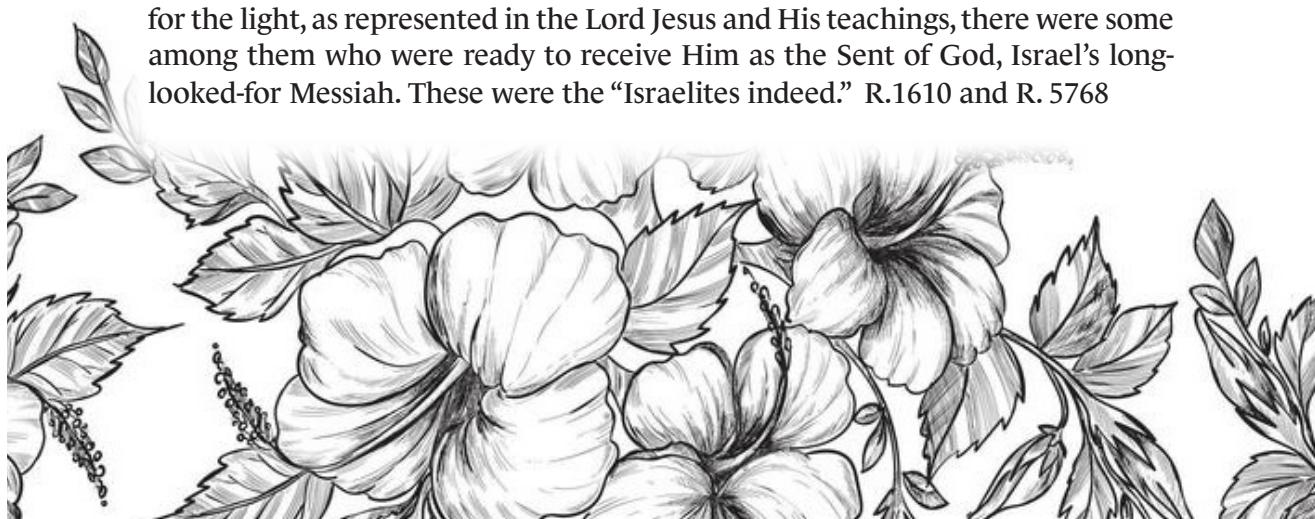
I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

– Genesis 3:15 –

Although [Satan] would be permitted to bruise the heel of humanity, ultimately a mighty son of mankind, the seed of the woman, should deal the fatal blow upon his head.

Mark, it is the seed of the woman that shall do this; for he is to be the Son of God, born of a woman, and not a son of Adam, in which case he would have been an heir of his taint and penalty, and could not have redeemed us by a spotless sacrifice in our room and stead. God was the life-giver, the father, of the immaculate Son of Mary; and therefore that “holy thing” that was born of her was called the Son of God, as well as the seed of the woman; and because thus, through her, a partaker of the human nature, he was also called a Son of man —of mankind.

[Here] was the mere glimmer of a promise that God would at some future time do something for mankind. First there had been a declaration to the serpent who had brought about man’s downfall, that the Seed of the woman should bruise, or crush, his **head**, while he would but bruise the **heel** of this Seed. Then came a gradual working out of a feature of that Promise to Abraham, through the Hebrew people, to make of them, if they would prove worthy, a nation who would be light-bearers to all other nations and peoples. God had not given instructions to other nations, but had given Prophets, Laws, etc., to the people of Israel. (Amos 3:2.) But while this especially favored nation was quite unready for the light, as represented in the Lord Jesus and His teachings, there were some among them who were ready to receive Him as the Sent of God, Israel’s long-looked-for Messiah. These were the “Israelites indeed.” R.1610 and R. 5768



**I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for
the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.
– Genesis 9:13 –**

The rainbow in the clouds was given as a sign of God's covenant with man, that the earth should never again be destroyed by a flood of waters. So ended the first dispensation, or the first world, the heavens and earth that then were, as Peter describes it (2 Pet. 3:6); and so began the second dispensation, "this present evil world" (2 Pet. 3:7; Gal. 1:4), the heavens and earth which now are, which are soon to pass away with a great noise, which are to be burned up with the fire of God's jealousy, and whose elements are to melt with fervent heat; for, like that first great dispensation, it also has become corrupt. 2 Pet. 3:10-12; Zeph. 1:18.) And when this present evil world will have thus passed away, then the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, shall appear. —2 Pet. 3:13.

**The world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.
But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the
same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and
perdition of ungodly men. Nevertheless we, according to
His promise, look for new heavens and a
new earth in which righteousness dwells.**

2 Peter 3:6-7,13

In this destruction of worlds it will be seen, as the Prophet also declares (Eccl. 1:4; Psalm 104:5; 119:90); that "the earth abideth forever." The same physical earth remains, and is the scene of all these great revolutionary changes, which so completely destroy the preceding order of things as to justify the mention of them under the significant symbols of a new heavens and a new earth. See *Studies in the Scriptures*, Volume 1, Chapter 4.

While the present world—this present order of things—is also doomed to pass away, and will be replaced by another new dispensation, the new heavens and earth, God's promise, of which the bow in the clouds was a pledge, will be kept: he will never again destroy the world with a flood of waters; but it is written that all the earth shall be consumed with fire: not a literal fire, but the fire of God's jealousy (Zeph. 3:8) —a symbolic fire, a great calamity, which will completely destroy the present order of things, civil, social and religious. R. 1615

**"Thus I establish My covenant with you:
Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the
waters of the flood. Never again shall there
be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said:
"This is the sign of the covenant which I make
between Me and you, and every
living creature that is with you,
for perpetual generations."**

Genesis 9:11-12

**The earth abides forever.
Ecclesiastes 1:4**

Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great. And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

– Genesis 12:1-3 –

God agreed to make a covenant with Abraham while he was still living in the land of Chaldea, and that the covenant itself was consummated and made applicable to Abraham from the time that he set his foot upon the land of promise in obedience to the divine call. But for his encouraging and the strengthening of his already great faith, God repeated this promise over and over in different terms. (See Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1,5,18; 17:1-10; 18:19; 21:12; 22:16-18.) There was in fact but one covenant, but various statements of it.

The characters which the Lord loves and chooses are those which are unselfish, generous as well as just. In these respects Abraham showed that he had a considerable measure of the original image of God still remaining with him, not obliterated by the fallen conditions through which himself and his ancestors as members of the race of Adam had passed. On the other hand we see in Lot a less noble character naturally, a less strong character. This is evidenced afresh in the fact that even after this experience and deliverance he continued to reside in Sodom, to choose the life of luxury and ease, unfavorable to himself and his family, morally and religiously. Abraham chose the better part: his God was his friend, in whom he delighted; and such experiences in life as would best enable him to comply with the divine arrangements respecting him were the ones that he chose, and to the attainment of which he pressed his energies. R. 3944

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.”

– Genesis 15:1 –

These words were addressed to the “father of the faithful,” and as a heritage they descend to his children—to all those who are of the faith of Abraham (Gal. 3:7; Rom. 4:16), whether of the fleshly or the spiritual seed. Abram had entered into covenant relationship with God. God had called him to separate himself from his native country and kindred and friends to follow the course of his providential leadings toward an unknown land. And Abram, in full reliance on the promise of God, had obediently severed the familiar social and business ties, and, with his wife and family and father and nephew who shared his faith and obedience to God, started on his pilgrimage to the unknown land. And having entered the land and received the promise—“All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever,” etc. —though he was not then permitted to own a foot of it, he wandered up and down in it as a pilgrim and stranger, encountering difficulties, too, in coming in contact with the godless inhabitants of the land and with the

Egyptians, yet always believing that what God had promised he was able and willing also to perform in his own good time and way.

But that which taxed Abram's faith most was that, as the years rolled by, not only was the promise of the land delayed, but also the promised heirs who should inherit it; for not even one heir had yet come.

It was in one of these seasons of discouragement—though not of despair, for Abram never relaxed his faith, but trusted and hoped still when in darkness and perplexity—that God in a vision graciously encouraged his fainting heart with the above words of cheer and hope—“Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thine exceeding great reward.” Then Abram was permitted to inquire into the mysterious ways of God and received the renewed assurance that the promise had not been forgotten, and that his hope would certainly be realized.

And are not these precious promises applicable to the spiritual seed of Abraham? Is not this the essence of the Apostle's declaration to the Church—“All things are yours, for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's”? Again we hear the Apostle saying, “It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?” (Rom. 8:33.) Again we hear the Master's word to the same class, “The Father himself loveth you.” (John 16:27.) O, what rest and comfort it brings to our hearts, amongst the trials and vicissitudes of life, to realize in the depths of our hearts that these are not merely words but truths. But only as we are able to realize an obedient faith are we able to apply these gracious promises to ourselves or to rest therein. This same thought is expressed respecting Abraham:

He believed in the LORD.
Genesis 15:6

The word in the original signifies more than mere belief; it signifies what only believers can fully comprehend, viz., a rest of faith in God.

The declaration, “I am thy shield,” would set at rest any doubts or fears along this line, as we elsewhere read, “When he giveth quietness who then can make trouble?” If the Lord would shield him how then could all the kings of earth do him harm or interrupt the divine program for blessing him and his posterity? The other statement is also worthy of notice: “I am thy exceeding great reward.” Already he was the recipient of God's favors, rewards for his faith and obedience, and the promises also were in the line of rewards. But the statement here made went beyond all this and enumerates a still higher, grander truth, namely, that as Abraham had given himself fully to God, the latter now declares that in a sense he would give himself to Abraham, he would be his reward—to have his friendship, his fellowship, his love, his care, would be the highest and best reward that could possibly be given to Abraham for his fidelity. R. 3944

The consolation here offered to Abraham is that offered to all who are of the faith of Abraham, and its parallel in the New Testament is that precious statement of our Lord (John 14:21-23), “He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him, . . . and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” So in the midst of all the temptations and trials that beset us in our earthly pilgrimage, while we walk by faith toward the blessed inheritance reserved for the overcoming saints, we also may recognize the voice of our God, saying, “Fear not: I am thy shield, and thine exceeding great reward.” R. 1905, R. 3944, R. 1906

Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”

And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.”

– Genesis 22:7-8 –

Abraham and Isaac journeyed to the top of Mt. Moriah, which long centuries afterward, in the time of Solomon, was the site of the Temple. The very rock upon which Isaac is supposed to have been bound, became the very location for the Brazen Altar. The grand old man, Abraham, accompanied by his loyal son, the heir of the promises, and well acquainted with them, came to this spot. There the wood was placed; and then the father, with faltering lips, but determined heart, told his son of the Divine command. There he offered up his son, even though the knife did not strike the fatal blow. The offering was complete in the sight of Heaven, and the hand was stayed.

These incidents of olden time had their own effect upon the actors; but to God's people, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, they have still further meaning. We have seen that Abraham serves as a type of the Almighty, and that Isaac serves as a type of The Christ—Head and Body. Here then we have the antitype. The Heavenly Father freely offered up His Son on our behalf, for the sins of the whole world. “God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” “God gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life”—that in Him all the families of the earth might be blessed.

But there is more to the antitype. In God's providence He arranged that Jesus should be the Head to the Church, which is His Body. Hence the sufferings of Christ, accomplished by Jesus the Head, which ended nearly nineteen centuries ago, were only a part of the sufferings of the antitype of Isaac. Here the Apostle declares, “We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”—Gal. 4:28. The Church which God has been calling out of the world since the day of Pentecost is required to prove her loyalty and faithfulness and worthiness of sharing in the First Resurrection, by being made conformable to Christ's death. “If we suffer with Him”—as His members—“we shall also reign with Him”—as His members.

When God through the angel stayed the hand of Abraham from accomplishing the sacrifice of his son's life, a ram caught in the thicket was provided as a sacrifice instead. Thus a ram in sacrifice became a symbol of the Seed of Abraham, and an indication of a part of the process by which reconciliation of Divine Justice will be made on behalf of all the families of the earth. R. 5180

We are to remember that this same thought was kept up in God's subsequent dealings with Israel. Thus the Passover Lamb was slain, and its blood, sprinkled figuratively, typically, foretold the fact that there could be no Church of the First-born saved during this Gospel Age, except through the slain Lamb, “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” Similarly, the sin-offerings and burnt-offerings of Israel spoke of the necessity for a redemptive work to be accomplished before any blessings could come to Israel, or through them to other nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues. R. 5180

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise, for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR SEED SHALL BE CALLED," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.

Hebrews 11:8-10,17-18



Abraham and Isaac

Abraham's call of God was the result of his having faith in God and because he lived at an appropriate time for the Divine purposes to begin to be expressed. First his faith was tested by the Divine command that he leave his native country to wander up and down through Palestine as a shepherd, dwelling in tents without any fixed habitation, without any attempt to take possession of the land and to establish himself in it by building fortresses, etc. The promise was that in after times God would bring his posterity to this land and give it to them for a possession.

The promise went further and declared that if obedient the Lord's blessing would continue and that the seed of Abraham would become great and influential and that through it all nations would receive a blessing—and by implication all would come under its control. It required great faith to believe all this under the circumstances. And the test continued, as, year by year, Abraham's wife grew older, until the time of motherhood was long past. Still we read that Abraham's faith "wavered not."

Still later, after Isaac the son of promise had been born and had grown to manhood, the Lord tested the faith of this wonderful man by telling him to offer his son as a sacrifice. We are not to assume that this instruction was given by any mere impression of the mind, nor would it have been proper for Abraham to have accepted and acted upon anything short of an absolute demonstration of the Divine will in such a matter. The father love, the hopes of years, and apparently the Divine Word and Oath were all about to be wrecked. Yet his faith "faltered not," for he accounted that God was able to raise his son from the dead and that surely God would fulfill his every promise to which he had bound himself, not only by his Word, but also by his Oath.

While we exclaim, Wonderful faith! let us remember that this was the very quality of Abraham which specially commended him to the Almighty as his particular friend. And let us remember that if we would have the particular friendship and blessing and fellowship of the Lord this is the channel through which it is to be sought—the channel of faith, of trust, of obedience. R. 4387

By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son---blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore, and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

— Genesis 22:16-18 —

When God made a Covenant with Abraham, saying, “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” He said that Abraham’s seed should be as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the seashore. This is a spiritual Promise, which, of course, the Jews at that time were not able to appreciate, as the Apostle Peter intimates. When realizing that as a nation they had crucified the Son of God, many said, What shall we do? St. Peter said, “Repent. . . for this Promise is unto you, and to your children.” (Acts 2:38,39.) It was a spiritual Promise and belonged to them, but on condition that they would take certain steps.

Only a few of the Jews were in the proper attitude to meet this condition. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power [the privilege, the right] to become the sons of God. (John 1:11,12.) And these, coming into the relation of Spiritual Israelites, were enabled by this begetting of the Holy Spirit to appreciate the spiritual things given to such Israelites. All the truths that we have are drawn from those things God gave to the Natural Israelites. And we can understand them, though the Natural Israelite could not. The Apostle says, “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” (Rom. 11:7.) So then, they were seeking for the spiritual, whether they understood it or not. Except the few, however, they did not attain the spiritual, because of an improper condition of heart. But the spiritual must have been there for them to seek after, else they could not have sought it. R. 5295

All of God’s blessings come under the Abrahamic Covenant, either directly or indirectly. [The covenant] has two parts, the *seed* and the *blessing* of the world. Only the first part of this blessing is realized by us who are coming into membership with Christ, as the Seed of Abraham— “If we be Christ’s, then are we Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” What is that promise? That promise is that, as the seed of Abraham, you shall bless all the families of the earth. Secondly, you see this Abrahamic promise covers the whole blessing of the Millennial age, as well as the special blessing that comes to us in the Gospel age. But under this Abrahamic Covenant, God arranges this New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah: namely, that He will have mercy on their iniquities, etc. Now this Covenant does not conflict with the old one at all. The old one said merely, there would be a blessing, and that was a sufficient guarantee to our faith that it would be a good blessing, not merely a nominal blessing, but a blessing in reality. Secondly, the New Covenant comes in and explains to us *how* this blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant will reach mankind; it will reach them through the forgiveness of their sins, through Christ as the great Prophet, Priest and King, who will establish His Kingdom, causing the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth, and forgiveness to go to every individual, and his assistance out of degradation. Q165

I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven. I will give to your descendants all these lands, and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

– Genesis 26:4 –

It will be noticed that in [Gen. 28:14] the Lord likens the seed of Jacob to the dust of the earth, but not to the stars of heaven. We remember that in the divine promise to Isaac (Gen. 26:4) the reverse of this is stated: the posterity like unto the stars of heaven is mentioned, but no illustration of the dust of the earth, while to Abraham God used both of these illustrations, saying, “Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the seashore for multitude.” In the Abrahamic promise both the spiritual seed, likened to the stars of heaven, and the natural seed, likened to the sands of the seashore, are properly mentioned, because both the heavenly and earthly seeds and the heavenly and earthly blessings proceed from that original Covenant. We remember in this connection the Apostle’s statement, “We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise”: we are the spiritual Seed of whom in the First Resurrection the Prophet says, “They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever.” (Dan. 12:3.) The Apostle refers to the same class as celestials, comparing them to the stars— “as one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the [first] resurrection of the dead—it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” (1 Cor. 15:40-44.) Similarly Jacob is referred to by the Apostle as a representative of natural Israel: for instance, telling us of the blessing that shall come upon natural Israel at the end of this Gospel age, when the Spiritual Israel shall have been glorified, he says,

**And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:
“THE DELIVERER WILL COME OUT OF ZION, AND
HE WILL TURN AWAY UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. FOR THIS IS
MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.”**

Romans 11:26-27

The Lord has held that people under his care nor let them go for over thirty centuries, and as surely as it is here written he will accomplish for them the promised blessing and will yet make them a blessing to all nations.

A comforting lesson comes to all of us who are Spiritual Israelites also, for we reflect that it is the same unchangeable God who has given us the chief blessing, which the natural Israelite failed to receive, as it is written, “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” We, the elect, Israel spiritual, may feel sure that if God’s promises to natural Israel are all to be fulfilled, his promises to Spiritual Israel are yea and amen in Christ. To us he has also promised that, into whatever situation we may be brought in his providence, he is able to make all things work together for our good, and to bring us off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors, through him that loved us and bought us with his precious blood. R. 3965

Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.

– Genesis 28:15 –

[On his journey by foot], Jacob, after the custom of the people of that country even today, at night wrapped himself in his outer garment and slept in any convenient place, using a stone for a pillow. On the evening of probably his third day from home he slept in a place near to the town of Luz, and was there granted a vision or dream in which he saw a ladder extending from earth to heaven and on it holy angels ascending and descending, and at its top the Lord himself, who spoke to him precious words of encouragement.

And behold, the LORD stood above it and said:

“I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac.

The land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.

Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth. You shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south, and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 28:13-14

Thus did the Lord comfort one who trusted in him—one who had so great respect for the divine covenant made with his grandfather Abraham that he esteemed it of more value than all earthly riches and comforts. It was largely on account of his faith in the Abrahamic Covenant that Jacob was now practically an outcast from his home, fleeing in reality through fear of his brother Esau. It is not wonderful that God rewarded such a heroic faith, neither does it surprise us that it was because of the lack of this faith that God took the inheritance of this Covenant from the unbelieving Esau, “profane Esau,” as the Apostle describes his sacrilegious disrespect to the divine Covenant.

It is so still: God always honors faith. Those who now for his sake and because of their respect for the divine promises suffer the loss of earthly home and privileges and comforts may be sure that these testings of their loyalty to God will not go unrewarded. The Lord seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth, only with such is he well pleased, only to such does he let down the golden ladder, only to such do the angels of heaven minister, for we read, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Heb. 1:14.) That golden ladder fitly pictures our dear Redeemer, who is the Way to God as well as the Truth and the Life. His own words are, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” Upon this Mediator between God and man all the blessings of God descend to us, and through him our prayers and our offerings are acceptable to the Father. And as the Father spoke to Jacob from the farther end of this ladder, so with every one of us: it is the Father’s drawing, the Father’s message, the Father’s love that our dear Redeemer has revealed to us, and brought us into contact with every good and every perfect gift coming down from the Father of Lights. All things are of the Lord, and all things are by the Son. R. 3964

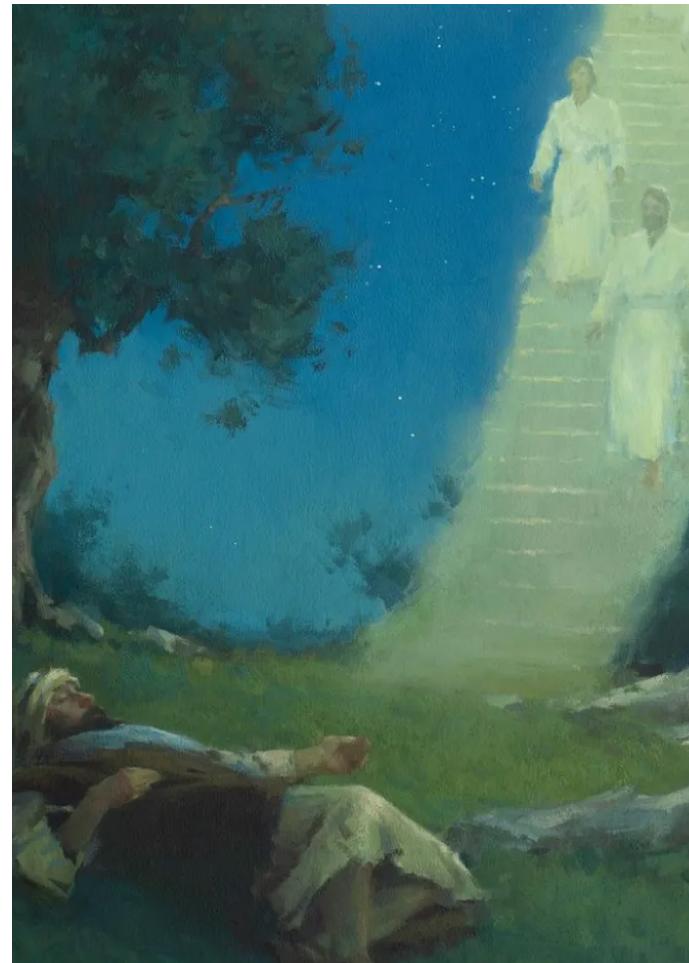
How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!

– Genesis 28:17 –

When Jacob awaked from this refreshing vision, dream, he said [these words]. He was awe inspired, and if the dream inspired the future patriarch with awe, what should the knowledge of the reality bring to us, we who with the eyes of faith see Jesus as the ladder reaching from our humble, fallen condition clear to the heights of the heavenly glory and presence! With what reverence should we look up and hear the Father's voice coming to us through him. How little we should feel ourselves to be, how great the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Surely, as Jacob said, the resting-place of this ladder must be the house of God, the place where we may meet with our Almighty Creator.

It was this that was symbolized by the Tabernacle of old, which was called the tent of meeting, not because the Israelites entered it, but because Jehovah could enter and there meet with the people through their representative, the priest, the Lord's presence being indicated by the light on the Mercy Seat, the Shekinah glory. Similarly the Temple was a house or meeting-place between God and his people, and similarly now with Spiritual

Israel—Christ at the lower end of the ladder is the meeting-place between God and man. This meeting-place for the present time is not a building made with hands—is not a Temple nor even a tent, but a house or household of faith, the house or Church of God. Wherever this may be is “Bethel,” — “wherever two or three of you are met in my name there am I in the midst”; there the ladder, at the upper end of which is the Father, touches the earth. And every such assemblage is truly a gate of heaven. What wonder, then, that the Scriptures encourage the Lord's people to meet in his name, to have fellowship with the Father through him, and to have their petitions borne upward to the Father and the blessings to come down from the Father upon them. R. 3965



Jacob's Dream at Bethel by J. Ken Spencer

Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel.

Genesis 28:18-19

Genesis 37:4-11

4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him. 5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers, and they hated him even more. 6 So he said to them, “Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: 7 There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright, and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.” 8 And his brothers said to him, “Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. 9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, “Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.” 10 So he told it to his father and his brothers. And his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?” 11 And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

*Joseph's Dream*

We are not to account for these dreams as the work of the boy's imagination and ambition, although such may be the case in respect to many dreams; rather we are to understand that those dreams were prophetic: that God was foretelling, foreshadowing the future—to the intent that Jacob and Joseph and his brethren might all eventually discern that the Lord's hand was connected with all the peculiar circumstances of his life; —that God foreknew and overruled them in the manner in which they ultimately resulted. This forestatement would make the lessons many times more weighty, when they would be understood, just as prophetic declarations respecting our Lord and his experience, are the more convincing on this account. The dreams were fulfilled later on, when Jacob and his family presented themselves before Joseph, a prince in Egypt, and made obeisance to him as to a king. R. 2880

**The patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt.
But God was with him.**

Acts 7:9

A sound heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones.
– Proverbs 14:30 –

So rank had been [the growth of envy] in the hearts of Joseph's brethren that when he came to them in the field at Dothan with a message from his father, their envy overflowed all bounds, and they premeditated murder. Subsequently, at the instance of Reuben, one of their number, his life was spared, and he was merely put into a pit, a dry cistern, to die of starvation; Reuben, however, premeditating his deliverance. Subsequently, at the instance of his brother Judah, his life was spared from the pit, and he was sold to some traveling merchants as a slave for the Egyptian market, where shortly afterward he was installed as a servant in the house of Potiphar. How hard must have been the hearts of these brethren, and how sore and affrighted the heart of Joseph, the favored child of his father! The narrative tells us nothing respecting his tears, his entreaties, and the refusal of his brethren, but an account of this is given us elsewhere (Gen. 42:21), for the guilty brethren, when in trouble themselves, exclaimed,

“We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear. Therefore this distress has come upon us.”

Genesis 42:21

Whoever finds envy, hatred or malice in his heart in any degree should know that he is harboring an enemy; a spirit which, under certain circumstances, might quickly develop into a spirit of murder. The Apostle Paul, therefore, urges all who have become new creatures in Christ Jesus to mortify, to kill, to bury, to put away, the spirit of evil, of hatred, of strife, of envy, and through the transforming influence of the Lord's spirit to put on more and more, day by day, the spirit of love, the spirit of Christ. We can see a lesson in the experience of Joseph's brethren; and even though envy never led us thus far, it should be an illustration to us of its tendency, and we should hate it and proportionately eradicate it from our hearts.

For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.
Matthew 27:18

As Joseph was hated by his brethren, and that without a cause, and figuratively killed, when sent to them by his father, so Jesus came to his own brethren, the Jews, came in their interest, as the representative of the Father, was hated without a cause, and was actually put to death, murdered. Nevertheless, in the Lord's providence this very hatred will ultimately bring him to the throne of earth, and to the place of power, and give him control over all the food, the "bread of life," and thus indirectly make him the life-giver, not only to the world of mankind, represented by the Egyptians, but also to his brethren, the Jews—to as many as will receive the bread of life upon the generous terms and conditions then laid down.

This happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.'

John 15:25

And "as he was, so are we in this world"—as members of his body—as his fleshly representatives now, and, if faithful, to be his joint-heirs in the throne by and by, and with him to dispense life to the dying world. As our Master was hated without a cause, so let it be with us, so far as possible, that the hatred, malice, envy and murder which may be poured out against us may be wholly unmerited by us—that our lives shall be as nearly pure as possible; that so far as possible our thoughts and words and deeds may show forth the praises of our Lord, and speak of our love for all men, especially for the household of faith. R. 2880

The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man.
– Genesis 39:2 –

In the Lord's providence Joseph was purchased by a wealthy official of Egypt named Potiphar. As a servant in this man's house he was faithful to his duties small and great, and grew in his master's confidence and esteem until, at the age of twenty-two, he was made manager of his entire estate. When twenty-seven years of age—ten years after coming to Egypt, in the prime of young manhood, he unwittingly attracted to himself the love of his master's wife, but when it manifested itself he persistently resisted it on the lofty grounds of faithfulness to God and faithfulness to his master. Dr. Blakie pointedly remarks of this trial of Joesph's virtue:

“We may believe that it was no ordinary temptation when, day after day, the mistress of the house, expert in amorous arts, came to spread the net, with every allurement which her skill and her passion could devise. We may conceive how even Joseph might be moved by the thought that, slave as he was, he had attracted the admiration of a woman of such rank, and how the vision might flit before him that through her influence he might recover his liberty and in a bright career realize his dreams after all.”

This probably seemed to Joseph a mysterious providence, yet in the light of the subsequent story we can see how the Lord's providence had not forsaken him, but was ready to make even this experience work out to his further instruction in righteousness, patience, experience, faithfulness, and to prepare him for still greater blessings by and by—on the throne. The lesson for us of this spirit dispensation is most evident and most striking: as it was not because of Joseph's unfaithfulness that the Lord permitted this trial to come upon him, so it does not speak unfaithfulness on our part and retribution from the Lord if trials and difficulties may be permitted to come upon us. R. 3972

Joseph's noble heart probably reasoned that while it would have been no more than justice to have revealed the wickedness of the woman, such a course would not only have damaged the wife but have dealt an irreparable blow to Potiphar's affection for her, thus destroying his master's confidence and breaking up his home. Willingness to endure under such conditions is a marvelous illustration of high and noble integrity—character. Such a man was indeed fit for a throne—but not yet; God had other experiences for him before he would be ready for the exaltation intended. So with us: God has called us to the throne of the Millennial Kingdom to be associated with our Lord and Redeemer in his great work; but first we must be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and trials and buffetings and testings of patient endurance are essential to the development of such character as the Lord seeks. R. 3973

And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand.

– Genesis 39:3 –

Joseph's experiences in prison are referred to by the Psalmist saying,

They hurt his feet with fetters. He was laid in irons.

Psalm 105:18

What was the effect of this new experience upon Joseph? Was he discouraged, cast down, embittered in soul? Did he say to himself or to others, If this be the reward of virtue, give me vice? Did he repine against the Lord's providences in permitting this experience, or was he patiently submissive, trustful? Joseph was in all these experiences the most wonderful, model example of the proper course of a true Christian and saint. And again we suggest that if he could be faithful with as little light as he enjoyed respecting the Lord's permission of this evil, what might not the Lord reasonably expect of us who have been blest with so much greater light and instruction, and with the noble example of Joseph and scores of others in the Scriptures and in our own experiences—what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness and faith in God? For very shame's sake we should strive at least to come up to the standard of Joseph—we who have the exceeding great and precious promises—we who have the explanation of why our trials and difficulties are permitted and how they are to prepare us for the Kingdom and its glorious work.

Joseph's experience in the stocks was a limited one. Evidently the prison-keeper discerned that he had a prisoner of no ordinary character and ability, whatever might be charged against him. His reverence for the Lord and his faithfulness to duty made him a marked man, and the keeper of the prison was glad to give over one responsibility after another into Joseph's hands. According to the story, Joseph's own experiences made him tender hearted toward the other prisoners, whose degradations and sorrows he was enabled to enter into by reason of his own experiences. He was learning noble lessons, which would fit and prepare him for higher usefulness as the governor of Egypt. The secret of the whole matter is told in the lesson in a few words, "The Lord was with him, and that which he did the Lord made to prosper." R. 3973

A picture of how Joseph dealt with the prisoners is given in the lesson: instead of treating them rudely and roughly, he looked after their interests to such an extent that he noticed one morning that two of the prisoners were of peculiarly sad countenance, and he tenderly inquired, "Wherfore look ye so sadly today?" They had dreamed, and they were in trouble lest their dreams boded further adversity. Joseph said unto them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you." How evidently the secret of Joseph's faithfulness and strength of character lay in the fact that he had faith in God—that he believed in the great Oath-Bound Covenant that God had made with his great-grandfather Abraham, confirmed to his grandfather Isaac, and again to his father Jacob, and of which he was an heir. What a power faith has in life to hold it steady in every storm and cloudy trouble!

Remember that it is the same promise that we are heirs to, as the Apostle declares—Christ is the heir, and if we be Christ's then are we Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. —Gal. 3:16,29. R. 3974

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word. Only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.”

– Genesis 41:39-40 –

Joseph's three years' experience as a prisoner, most of it as the superintendent of the prison, undoubtedly brought to him a rich experience of patience and sympathy, and tended to confirm and deepen those beautiful elements of his character manifested in his boyhood. The Lord had him in training for a great work: not only was it appropriate that his character should be developed, but also that his faith should be tested and made very strong.

Pharaoh had two dreams which impressed his mind deeply, and he earnestly sought the interpretation of them. When the wise men of Egypt were unable to interpret Pharaoh's dream, his butler naturally enough called to mind his own dream and how accurately it had been interpreted by the kind and sympathizing Joseph, and his own promise to do something for the interpreter, and his neglect until this time. Perhaps he was not entirely to blame; he could only be useful to Joseph when God's time for favoring the latter had come. When Pharaoh heard the story of the wonderful interpretation of the dreams of his butler and baker he sent with haste to the prison, eager to know the meaning of his own dreams. Here we have a further test of Joseph's character. Let us notice carefully how he demeaned himself in the presence of the king. Was he haughty, boastful, self-assertive? Did he throw around himself a mystery and seem to call from the recesses of his mind some deep wisdom? Not so. He was the very personification of modesty, and when the king expressed the hope that he could interpret his dreams he answered,

It is not of me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer.

The Lord's time and method for delivering Joseph from the prison transcended all of Joseph's expectations; and lifted him from the prison to the palace of the greatest nation of that time.

Here we have one of the secrets of the greatness of Joseph: he honored God, and was therefore of the kind whom God is pleased eventually to honor and exalt. The humility of Joseph was not merely assumed: his crediting of the wisdom to the Lord was the genuine sentiment of his heart, so that he did not feel thus elated when he had delivered the Lord's message, but with coolness and self-possession he proceeded to suggest to the king what might be the proper steps to be taken so that the dream might indeed prove a blessing. He said, “Let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years; and let them gather all the fruit of those seven years as the property of Pharaoh, to be kept in store in cities for use in the seven years of famine that will follow.” We cannot suppose that Joseph had the slightest suspicion that he would be the one appointed to this work.

The exaltation of Joseph from the condition of a slave and from a dungeon to be the second person of power in the world suggests to us further the typical character of Joseph's life. Did not our Lord Jesus take a bondsman's form? and did he not enter the great prison-house of death? and was he not suddenly raised up to the throne—to be next to the Father, the Governor of the universe? And did not the experiences of Jesus under God's providence have to do with preparing him for his great work of the future, the blessing of the whole world? And as Joseph saved the lives of the people of Egypt, will not the antitypical Joseph save the lives of the world? While thinking along these lines let us remember, too, how we are invited to be members of the body of Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together. (Rom. 8:17.) R. 3979

Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had, and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him over all the land of Egypt. Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."

– Genesis 41:42-44 –

When the time came for King Pharaoh to introduce the new governor or prime minister of the empire to the people he first provided for him suitable apparel, to indicate the rank; next, the second state chariot, and, third, that he should be escorted in parade before the people by criers, who should announce his rank and call upon the people to bow the knee—to acknowledge him as the king's representative. How this reminds us of the Apostle's words respecting our Lord Jesus and his high exaltation after his trials were concluded. Paul says,

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth.

Philippians 2:9-10

And while we contemplate this high exaltation of the Master let us not forget that his Bride is to be joint-heir with him in all of his glory, honor and immortality, and that the privilege of becoming members of the Bride class belongs to the "called, chosen, faithful," the "very elect" of this Gospel age.

If we could but have this in mind continually, what manner of persons would we be in all holy conversation and godliness—how trifling all earthly pleasures and sorrows, all riches and poverty, all weakness and debasement would seem to us! so intense would we be in our desire to make our calling and election sure to those exceeding great and precious promises. Pharaoh gave Joseph a new name, the meaning of which is suggested to be something like—Deliverer from death by the bread of life. We remember how our dear Redeemer said of himself, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." God provided in Jesus the bread of life, by which the whole world may be saved eventually from Adamic death if they but eat of the divine Word, appropriate its lessons and experiences, under the ministry and discipline of the great Redeemer during his glorious Kingdom. And all this was considerably illustrated in Joseph's course as the governor of Egypt.

The abundance of corn gathered by Joseph typically assures us of the abundance of God's provision for granting eternal life to every member of the human family willing to receive it from the Son upon the terms of loving obedience to the extent of full surrender. While the surrender of the will and of all that we possess to a fellow-mortal would be a very dangerous matter indeed, against which we should properly strive, it is not so as respects the Lord. He is the grand exception. To give ourselves wholly and unreservedly to him is to bring to each of us, through his blessing, the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and to have him mould and fashion our characters with all our interests of life to our highest welfare and his glory. What a blessed prospect then is before the world! and how we who by faith eat of this Bread in advance, and participate with the antitypical Joseph in all of his trials and sufferings for righteousness' sake, may rejoice in our privilege. R. 3980

Do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

– Genesis 45:5,7 –

The final test put upon the brethren by the Lord and by Joseph was met successfully. It was demonstrated that they were changed men, that instead of coldness, indifference and gross brutality, they were tender hearted, sympathetic and willing to suffer one for the other. The time, therefore, had come for the clouds and shadows that had been over them for some time to break away. Joseph, the governor, could refrain himself no longer. He ordered the place cleared of the attendants that he might be alone with his brethren—the matter was too sacred for the eyes of others. The time had come for him to throw off his reserve and reveal himself to them. Alone with them he wept, and his voice shook with emotion as he told them who he was and how their designs against him of twenty-two years before had, under God's providences, been overruled for his good. A more dramatic scene could scarcely be imagined, yet through it all runs the thread of simplicity and honesty, and above all the spirit of love and mercy, which could emanate only from the one great instructor, God, and could be exemplified only by those who have been near to him and received his instructions.

It is most manifest that Joseph was taught of God. Vengeance against his brethren he had none. Whatever punishment would come to them for their sin would not be his to inflict, but God's. And that punishment they evidently did receive in the mental torture, fears and forebodings of many years. Joseph had nothing to do with regulating the Divine arrangements whereby Justice always metes out punishment for every wrong. It was his to be generous, loving, kind, an exemplification of the great Redeemer and His Messianic Kingdom.

It was the same in respect to his own experiences. We note with astonishment that a man with so few opportunities had such a comprehensive grasp of the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Christ. We who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and who have the example of the words of Jesus and the Apostles and the history of all past ages, may still sit at Joseph's feet, and be amazed to perceive how thoroughly he learned of God, and may apply similar lessons to ourselves. Never a murmur, never a word of repining, against the bitter lot that had been his! In every word, in everything, he testifies to God's Goodness, Wisdom, Love and Power. He realized that to have made a single change or alteration in the experiences that had come to him would have been to do injury to the Plan as a whole, and he would have failed to learn some of the lessons of life which he needed.

Had Joseph been a saint of this Gospel age, begotten of the holy Spirit and illuminated thereby through the manifold revelations of the divine purpose and character as we have them in the Bible, his conduct would still be worthy of the very highest type of Christian development. But when we think of the circumstances and conditions under which his character was developed, in a heathen land and with but a small revelation of the divine character and plan, we stand amazed. Do we not properly say to ourselves, while studying this lesson, What manner of persons ought we to be considering our great advantages every way? Would we have proven as noble and generous as Joseph under the same circumstances and conditions?

The more we each realize our own indebtedness to the Lord for the forgiveness of our sins and for our adoption into his family and for the blessings that come to us as the sons of God, the more should we seek to copy after his glorious character and be copies of our dear Redeemer, the

essence of whose character is nothing less than justice to every one—with as much additional of love and mercy as we can possibly attain to. The larger our attainments of this God-like quality the more pleasing we will be in the Father's sight and the better fitted for joint-heirship in the heavenly Kingdom, in the dispensing of the bread of life to all the world of mankind.

R. 3981 and R. 5235

Joseph said to the people, “Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land.” So they said, “You have saved our lives. Let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s servants.”

– Genesis 47:23,25 –

In this beautiful story of the course of divine providence in the life of one of the beloved of the Lord, while we see and gather from it precious lessons of confidence in God and faithfulness and zeal in his service, the thoughtful reader can scarcely fail to observe its typical foreshadowing of Christ, the Savior of his people and of the world also.

Joseph was another illustration, like that of his father, of the chief blessing coming specially upon a younger son, as the chief divine blessing is also to come upon the Christ, Head and body, the Gospel Church, not the elder Jewish church. While all of Jacob's sons were elect in respect to inheriting in common a share in the Abrahamic blessing, Joseph was specially chosen as a type of Christ—Head and body—the one through whom blessings will come upon the natural seed of Abraham, that they in turn may bless all the families of the earth.

Hated of his brethren, the fleshly Israelites, sold as a slave (thirty pieces of silver being the price of slaves, or twenty pieces for those under twenty years), he was thus prefiguring the hatred and sale of Christ by his enemies—his brethren of the Jewish nation, unto whom he came, as did Joseph, and they received him not. Joseph's three years' imprisonment seem to represent the three years of our Lord's ministry, the years after his baptism, when he was dying daily, giving up his life for others, or they were parallel also with his three days' imprisonment in the tomb, from whence, like Joseph, he came forth and was highly exalted, next to the King—to the right hand of the Majesty on high, all power in the Kingdom being given unto him.

Joseph was given full charge and used his power to bless others, storing up food for all. So Christ has been given full charge: he is Lord of all and lays up for all sufficient grace to give everlasting life to all. Nor is Christ ashamed to own as his brethren those who have nothing to commend them to his favor but humble contrite hearts. He will not be ashamed to own them before his Father and all the holy angels. This also was beautifully prefigured in Joseph's treatment of his father and brethren. He was not ashamed to present them before the king, although he knew that shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians. Then, in the period of famine, Joseph used the grain (life) to purchase for Pharaoh the land, the people, and all that they had. —Gen. 47:14-25. R. 1645

Joseph, the life-giver of Egypt through that bread of life, was unquestionably a type of the greater Life-Giver, The Christ, Head and Body. R. 4437

“As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid. I will provide for you and your little ones.” And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

– Genesis 50:20-21 –

During the Millennial age Christ will give the bread of everlasting life (himself, his merit) to all who desire it, but all must give their all in exchange to Jehovah, whom Pharaoh typified in this affair. Thus as Joseph, Pharaoh's exalted servant and representative, gave life to, or saved the lives of many, so Christ, as Jehovah's Prime Minister, has provided life for all, and offers it to all on the same conditions of faith and obedience to the King.



Joseph Forgives His Brothers

Mark how beautifully Joseph's noble and benevolent treatment of his erring brethren prefigures the foretold course of our exalted Lord Jesus with his former enemies. Charity, always a noble quality, is specially admirable when seen in such a setting as this. Joseph did not even suggest what he might justly have done to his brethren as punishment for their sin against himself twenty-three years before. After testing his brethren and finding them changed in heart and penitent, he reveals himself a true, loving, forgiving friend and brother. He makes no boast of his own wisdom or virtue as the causes of his exaltation, but ascribes all the honor to God's overruling providence. He does not even remind them of his prophetic dream, which they had all just fulfilled in prostrating themselves before him.

He simply forgave them and gave all the glory of the present deliverance from famine to God. How simple, and how beautiful! Just so will Christ forgive his penitent enemies. R. 1645



By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he looked to the reward.

– Hebrews 11:24-26 –

In various ways did Moses testify his faith in God, but in none of them, perhaps, in a more remarkable fashion than in renouncing the privileges of the throne of Egypt, to which he was by adoption the heir. He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of the Abrahamic promise than to dwell in luxury with the others. The people of Israel were the people of the Messiah, the people of Christ; hence in associating himself with them he was showing his esteem for the reproaches of the Anointed. Indeed, faith marks every step of the progress of Moses in Divine favor and service.

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

Hebrews 11:27

“He endured as seeing him who is invisible.” How graphically this describes the matter and how true it is today as well as then that the endurance of trials and testings is only possible to those who have the eye of faith—to those who can see invisible things, things invisible to others: especially those who can see the invisible King of glory and his, as yet, invisible Kingdom! It was through faith also that he instituted with Israel the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, though we have no reason to suppose that to any considerable extent it was possible for him to comprehend the real meaning of the passover and the antitypical significance of the blood and its sprinkling. His faith again was demonstrated in the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. His obedience matched his faith in all these matters.

By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

Hebrews 11:28-29

While we stand in awe at the presence of so great faith, nevertheless we are encouraged thereby, because we realize that perfect faith is possible to us, although perfect works are not. Let us, then, hold fast by faith to the Divine promises and continue to walk by faith and not by sight, until, by and by, our change shall come and we shall enter into the realities of which now we have only the promises. R. 4388

**Faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen.**

Hebrews 11:1

The LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

– Exodus 12:23 –

The Israelites were commanded to celebrate this Passover as the first feature of the Jewish Law and as one of their greatest memorials as a nation. The event which we celebrate is the antitype of the passing over, or sparing, of the first-borns of Israel. Only the first-borns were endangered, though the deliverance of all depended upon the salvation of the first-borns. Applying this in harmony with all the Scriptures, we see that the First-fruits unto God of His creatures, the Church of the First-borns, alone, are being spared at the present time—being passed over—those who are under the blood. We see that the remainder of mankind who may desire to enlist and to follow the great antitypical Moses when He shall ultimately lead the people forth from the bondage of sin and death are not now endangered—merely the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven.

We understand that all these matters were types, figures, illustrations, foreshadowings of matters on a higher plane, and that the realities belong to the Church of Christ during this Gospel Age since Pentecost. From this standpoint the Church of the First-born, through the begetting of the Holy Spirit and the greater knowledge and privileges they enjoy every way, have a greater responsibility than the world, for they are the only ones as yet in danger of the Second Death. This is the lesson of the type and applies to Christians only.

The Apostle clearly and positively identifies the Passover lamb with our Lord Jesus, saying, “Christ our Passover is slain for us; therefore let us keep the feast.” (1 Cor. 5:7-8.) He informs us that we all need “the blood of sprinkling,” not upon our houses, but upon our hearts. (Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2.) We are also to eat the unleavened (unfermented, pure) bread of Truth, if we would be strong and prepared for the deliverance in the Morning of the New Dispensation. We also must eat the Lamb, must appropriate Christ, His merit, the value that was in Him, to ourselves. Thus we put on Christ, not merely by faith, but more and more to the extent of our ability we put on His character, and are transformed day by day into His glorious image in our hearts. We are to feed upon Him as the Jews fed upon the literal lamb. Instead of the bitter herbs, which aided and whetted their appetites, we have bitter experiences and trials, which the Lord provides for us, and which help to wean our affections from earthly things and give us increasing appetite to feed upon the Lamb and the unleavened Bread of Truth. We, too, are to remember that here we have no continuing city, but as pilgrims, strangers, travelers, staff in hand, girded for the journey, we are en route to the Heavenly Canaan and all the glorious things which God hath in reservation for the Church of the First-born, in association with their Redeemer as kings and priests unto God.

With these thoughts respecting the passing over of the sins of the First-born through the merit of the precious blood, we may indeed keep the Feast of the Passover with joy, notwithstanding trials and difficulties. So doing, and continuing faithful as the followers of Jesus, very soon we shall have the great privilege of leading forth the Lord’s hosts—all who ultimately shall hear and know and obey the great King—out of the dominion of sin and death, out of Egypt into Canaan. R. 5640

The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

Exodus 12:13

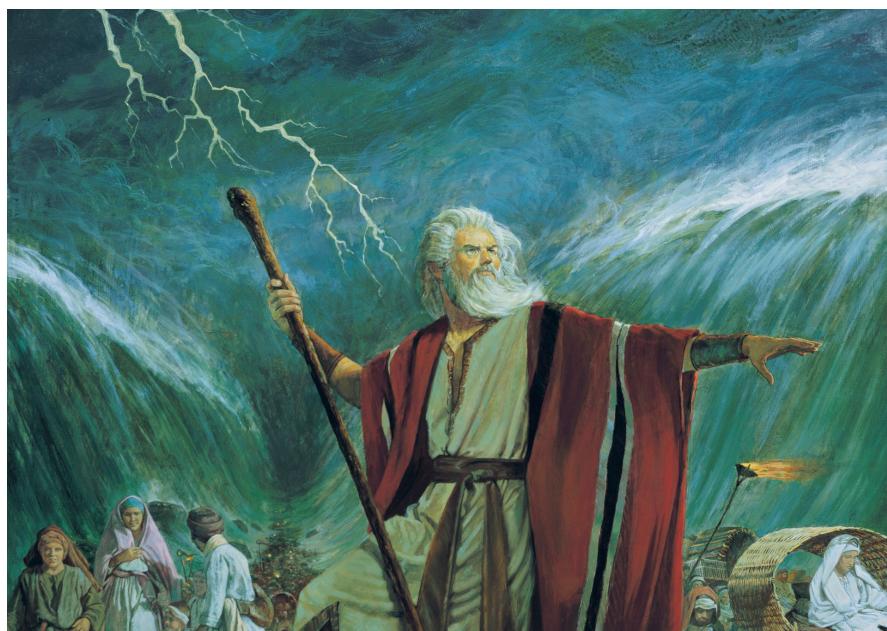
And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The LORD will fight for you and you will hold your peace.”

– Exodus 14:13-14 –

There are valuable lessons for the Christian in connection with the manifestations of Divine Power on behalf of typical Israel. These lessons suggest that the same God is no less willing and no less able to deliver the Spiritual Israelites from their bondage to sin and Satan, and is no less able to provide a way of escape, even through bloody seas of difficulties.

There is a lesson, also, for us in respect to the interpretation of God’s Word. As we see it beginning more and more to open up unto us with clearness, simplicity, beauty, let it increase our faith in God and in the revelations which He has made through the Prophets of old, as well as through the words of Jesus and the inspired Apostles.

As God had already arranged Israel’s affairs before they knew about their difficulties, and perceived that they were hemmed in on every side, so the same God foreknows all of our difficulties and has arrangements made for our relief and deliverance, and is merely waiting for us to appreciate the situation and to cry unto Him in faith. “Before they call, I will answer.” Another thought is, sometimes we come to the very end of all human possibilities. Then, and not till then, should we apply the words of Moses to ourselves: “Stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah.” R. 5278



Moses Parting the Red Sea by Robert T. Barrett

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Exodus 14:21-22

St. Paul, in Hebrews 12:18-24, points us to the antitype: as Israel was delivered from Pharaoh and his hosts, so ultimately all mankind is to be delivered from Satan and his hosts, the fallen angels, and from all evil influences. As the journey to the Promised Land brought the Israelites to Mt. Sinai and the Law Covenant, so the journey of God’s people will ultimately bring all the willing, obedient and faithful to the antitype of Mt. Sinai; namely, Mt. Zion, God’s Kingdom. R. 5285

The LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.”

– Exodus 16:4 –

The supply of manna was a beautiful figure of the supply of grace in Christ: it needed to be gathered daily; it would not keep over for succeeding days. The lesson of this would seem to be that those who accumulate much of God's grace and truth must also be dispensers of it. It is not provided with a view to the creation of a spiritual aristocracy. How often we have seen this exemplified: those who study the Word merely for themselves, and who do not commingle with the brethren and share their blessings, are not in the long run as much advantaged as we would have expected. Our gathering of the manna is to be day by day: our feeding on the heavenly bread is to be a continuous privilege, without which we will not have the strength for the journey of life; but with it we would be strong in the Lord, and may perchance be permitted to assist others by the dispensing of divine grace to them.

When our Lord declared himself to be the Bread from heaven, many of his hearers failed to comprehend the simile, and said, “This is a hard saying. Will this man give us of his flesh to eat?” They failed to see that our Lord personified the Truth, the great plan of God which centered in him, the life which he had come to give on behalf of the world, that we might live through him. To eat the flesh of Jesus literally would have merely produced flesh, but to eat of him in the sense of partaking of the blessings and mercies of God provided in him, and in the sense of appropriating his Spirit and disposition, is the proper thought. As we partake of our Lord's qualities they become ours, as we feed upon him in our hearts we become strong in faith and in all the graces of his Spirit. Let us then daily gather our portion of manna and daily seek to use it all, and realize that it will be our portion until we reach the heavenly Canaan. R. 4012



The Gathering of the Manna by James Tissot

I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever, and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.

John 6:51

“Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

– Exodus 17:6 –

Two months after the Passover deliverance, the Israelites arrived at Mt. Sinai, but on their way they had two valuable lessons respecting God's Grace and Power. When they reached the Valley Rephidim, they were thirsty and found no water. Here Moses, in the name of the Lord, smote the rock with his rod, and from it gushed water, abundantly refreshing Israel at this time, and as a rivulet following them through much of their subsequent journey.

St. Paul, by inspiration, points out to us that that rock represented Christ, that the smiting of the rock represented the putting of Christ to a shameful death, but that only by this means is the Water of Life provided for those who desire to be the people of God. As the waters of that rock followed the Israelites, so the stream of God's favor, through the sacrifice of Christ, refreshes Christ's disciples throughout their wilderness journey.

Refreshed in body and in faith, Israel journeyed onward, but encountered new obstacles. The Amalekites, a warlike people, considered the coming of Israel as an invasion of their country, and attacked them in battle. A people used to peaceful pursuits, as the Israelites had for centuries been, would naturally be at a disadvantage in a conflict with such opponents. Yet God gave them the victory. He indicated, however, that it was not by their prowess or skill, but of His grace that they conquered.

In the antitype, we realize that Spiritual Israelites have conflicts with enemies too mighty for them without the Lord's assistance. The world, the flesh and the Devil make common cause against all who are seeking the Heavenly Canaan. We who are followers of Jesus have success in our warfare only as we have Him as our Advocate—

We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
1 John 2:1

Through Him we may come off conquerors, yea, more than merely conquerors, victors in the highest sense— “through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.” R. 5285

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people, for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

– Exodus 19:4-6 –

All of God's dealings with the Israelites were in accord with His great Covenant made with Abraham, and certified with the Divine Oath— "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Neither Moses nor any of those who followed him could possibly have understood the full import of this great oath-bound Promise; for it is a double Promise, the spiritual portion of which was hidden until God's due time—at the First Advent. Even since then, St. Paul assures us, it is a hidden mystery, appreciated only by the very few.

**The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him, and
He will show them His covenant.**

Psalm 25:14

The Promise is divided into three parts:

- 1 Abraham himself (and all the Ancient Worthies, whom he represented) was to have a share;
- 2 Abraham's Seed was to be the chief agent, or channel, of blessing; and
- 3 all the families of the earth were to be blessed as recipients of God's favor through these channels. But only by the light of the Holy Spirit during this Gospel Age are these lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Abrahamic Covenant made manifest.

When inviting the Israelites to come out of Egypt, God did not explain the Covenant to them nor tell them which portion they might have a share in. But when they had come to Mt. Sinai, God made inquiry as to whether or not they could keep the Divine Law, and thus prove themselves eligible to the highest favor included in that Covenant.

In other words, the Lord said to them at Mt. Sinai, Are you ready now to enter into a Covenant of full consecration to do My will? You have seen how I dealt with the Egyptians in delivering you. You have seen how, ever since then, I have borne you on eagles' wings over all the trials and difficulties of your journey to this place. Have you faith? Have you loyalty? Do you wish to enter into a Covenant? "If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My commandments, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people... and ye shall be unto Me a Kingdom of priests and an holy nation." R. 5285

***The Body of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, of which Christ Jesus is the Head—
His faithful, saintly followers— are now being tested as respects their worthiness
for so high a station. St. Paul's words are very forcefully applied to these:***

**Since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have
grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.**

Hebrews 12:28

You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.

– Leviticus 18:5 –

Israel, hopeful that the long deferred blessing of the original promise was now to be fulfilled, readily assented to the terms of this Law Covenant addition, and said, “All that the Lord hath spoken we will do” (Exo. 19:8); and no doubt they honestly intended full obedience and considered it possible. Moses, fulfilling his part, ratified the covenant on behalf of God and the people, by sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice on the people and on the tables of the Law, saying, This is the blood of the Covenant which God hath enjoined unto you, —or by which you and God are joined in Covenant. —Heb. 9:19-20; Exo. 24:8.

This covenant was unlike the original Abrahamic Covenant, which required no mediator, because it was unconditional on Abraham’s part except as to obedient faith. When Abraham entered Canaan, the terms on his part were complete, and God at once announced the Covenant and confirmed it with his own oath, thus assuring Abraham, and all who are similarly full of faith in God, that all of its provisions will surely be fulfilled regardless of human cooperation. Abraham’s Seed shall bless all the families of the earth.

The Law Covenant, whatever its object, the Apostle assures us, could not (and hence it did not) make the original or Abrahamic Covenant useless, nor could it in any manner or degree impair its gracious promise; for it was complete in itself, and God had confirmed it most absolutely.

—Gal. 3:8; Gal. 3:17.

What, then, could be God’s object in making the Law Covenant with Israel, and (so far as they were concerned) adding it to the Abrahamic Covenant? The Apostle answers our query, saying, “It [the Law Covenant] was added because of transgression [sin], till the promised seed should come.” (Gal. 3:19.) The promised seed of Abraham, which God had in mind when he made the Covenant with Abraham, was Christ our Lord (and incidentally the Church which is his body, his bride, whose blemishes he covers). And by giving Israel the Law Covenant God purposed—

- 1 to show them their own sinfulness and unworthiness to be the “Seed” which could and should bless all mankind.
- 2 The Law addition to the Abrahamic Covenant insured that the “promised seed” would be a perfect man, able to keep all the requirements of the Law Covenant perfectly, as our Lord Jesus alone did or could do.
- 3 If the Israelites learned the lesson of their own inability to fulfill the requirements of the Law Covenant, it would prepare them to expect Messiah’s birth out of the usual order, to insure his freedom from Adamic condemnation and weakness.

Thus the Abrahamic Covenant and its confirmations assured that the “Seed” must be of Abraham’s descendants, while the Law addition just as surely proved that he would be “holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.” R. 2121



My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.
– Exodus 33:14 –

The experiences of Natural Israel have very important lessons for Israel according to the Spirit. A people originally a part of the world, we have been invited to come out from the world and to journey to a new Country, to come into a Heavenly inheritance. We are marching toward the glorious Kingdom promised us if we are faithful. There are trials and difficulties along the way. But our God has promised us, as He promised Moses His servant, that His presence shall go with us. Sometimes He **seems** to withdraw from us and to leave us to ourselves; but He does not really do so. He tests our loyalty and our faith in Him by withholding the **sense** of His presence at times.

Shall we, then, like Israel of old, conclude that God is no more with us, and turn again to the gods we formerly worshiped—gods of wealth or of pleasure, gods worshiped by the nations around us? Shall we give ourselves up to revelry, worldly merry-making and sin? Shall we forget all the way by which our God has led us, all the great deliverances which the past of our lives have recorded? Shall **anything**—either “tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, or any other thing in creation, be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?” Surely not!

The closer we live to the Lord, and the greater our faith, the more we shall realize the Divine direction, and the more we shall make use of the means He has provided for our strengthening and upholding. We may call upon Him in time of trouble; we may go to Him in prayer; and He never fails those who put their trust in Him and earnestly seek to walk in His appointed way. This being true, we may go forth upon our journey in perfect trust and confidence. Having consecrated our all to the Lord, we are to seek for His guidance, for His presence is with us, in all the affairs of our life.

Few have such mighty burdens to carry as Moses had. But all of God’s children have burdens to bear, and important responsibilities are resting upon each of us who have taken upon us the vows of our God. Each member of the Body of Christ, the true Israel of God, is privileged to have the continual guidance of the Lord in every experience of our wilderness journey. Heavenly Manna is furnished for our daily sustenance. The Water of Life flows out to us for our daily refreshing, from the smitten Rock of Ages. Our Father’s chastening rod restrains us when we are in danger, or when we wander into any forbidden path. How lovingly He brings us back into the right way, and heals our wounds, and graciously forgives our stumblings and weaknesses! Surely we may have implicit confidence in our Heavenly Guide. Thus we may rest in Him and be kept in perfect peace. R. 5548



You are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.
– Deuteronomy 14:2 –

[The] close relationship of the Church to Christ was set forth in the Lord's words to his typical people (Deut. 14:2), which the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 2:9) shows belonged, not to them, but to their antitypes, the elect Church. To them he said, “For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and **the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself**, above all the nations that are upon the earth.” And the Apostle, after showing that the typical people of God stumbled and proved themselves unworthy of such special favor, applies the promise to the Gospel Church, saying, But ye are the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which **in time past were not the people, but are now the people of God.** —1 Pet. 2:9.

You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.
1 Peter 2:9

And to us God has made exceeding great and precious promises—promises, not only of redemption and deliverance from sin and death, and recognition as sons and heirs of God through Christ to the inheritance of eternal life, but more: he has called us by his grace to be the bride of his only Son and heir—the “heir of all things;” to be his intimate and eternal companion in all things; to be “**joint-heirs**” with him of all his possessions, so that “all things are ours” also, “if we are Christ’s;” to be “partakers,” too, of the “divine nature” and glory and kingdom; even to sit with him in his throne, and with him to constitute a “royal priesthood” in whom all the world shall be blessed. R. 1820

For you are a holy people to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments.
Deuteronomy 7:6,9

Deuteronomy 2:8-11

2 “And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

3 So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

4 Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years.

5 You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you.

6 Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.

7 For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills,

8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey,

9 a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper.

10 When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

11 Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today.”

What an exhortation! What an incentive to faithfulness! Who would not worship and serve such a God! And what a wonderful application can Spiritual Israel make of this Scripture! How marvelously has our God led us, His Covenant people, through the wilderness of this world, and provided for our needs day by day! How the chastenings of His loving hand have kept our feet from wandering; or if we have turned at any time to the right hand, or to the left, how has His love drawn us back! And has He not brought us into a good land, a land of brooks of water, a land of fountains and depths, a land of oil olive and honey, a land wherein we eat bread, the Bread of Heaven, without scarceness? Truly, we have not lacked anything in it. If Israel of old had reason to prove their gratitude and love to God, how much more reason have we, Spiritual Israel!

After Moses had reminded Israel of all the loving kindnesses of the Lord on their behalf and of their solemn Covenant, he proclaimed to them the ordinances of the Lord by which they were to be governed, and then gave them most solemn warnings of the consequences of forgetting God and breaking their Covenant. This discourse, of which our text is a part, and which comprises the larger part of the Book of Deuteronomy, was delivered to Israel just before Moses' death in Mount Nebo—the highest point of the ridge of Pisgah—whence the Lord showed him all the land of Canaan, and where he was buried. God had told Moses that He should not go over Jordan, because of his disobedience at the waters of Meribah, when he smote the rock contrary to the command of God. This discourse was his last message to Israel, and is very touching and impressive.

Moses finished his message with these words:

“I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live, that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days, and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

Deuteronomy 30:19-20

Such words were very forceful at such a time; for Moses had told them that he was about to die, and that God would give them a new leader to go with them over Jordan. R. 5528

God is proving the Church now. There are many of the professed Church of Christ who have never made a covenant with God at all. But He is testing all those who have made a covenant, as to whether or not it is a heart-consecration—whether it is self first or God first—whether it is success in life or the honor of God and the doing of His will. Ours, therefore, is not only the high honor of being sons of God during this Gospel Age, but also of being proved for the lasting rewards. The Jews that knowingly lived in violation of their Law lost merely their temporal life, but did not forfeit their opportunity for the eternal life. But if any of us do likewise, we shall forfeit the life eternal. Therefore, the dealing of God with us goes beyond His dealing with Natural Israel. Our responsibility, then, is so much the greater, and the issue is final. R. 5528

For I proclaim the name of the LORD: Ascribe greatness to our God. He is the Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice. Righteous and upright is He.

– Deuteronomy 32:3-4 –

The Scriptures are clear in their statement that “all his work is perfect;” that “God is not the author of confusion;” that “God tempteth no man,” and is not in accord with any suggestion to the effect that evil may be done so that good results may follow. (Deut. 32:4; Rom. 3:8; 1 Cor. 14:33; Jam. 1:13; 1 Pet. 3:11.) It is in full agreement the declaration that “all his work is perfect,” that having made Satan a perfect being, as also he made our race perfect, representatively in Adam, God has not hindered his free moral agents from taking a course of sin in violation of his commands. His wisdom and power are such that he will eventually bring a blessing out of these evils to those who are not in sympathy with them, but the evils themselves, yea, and “all the wicked, will he destroy.”—Psa. 145:20. R. 3145

He found him in a desert land and in the wasteland, a howling wilderness. He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye.

– Deuteronomy 32:10 –

“The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Psa. 111:10.) This we treated as upon a previous occasion, emphasizing the fact that as our coming to the Lord was inspired by reverence for him so our faith in Christ was based on reverence for God’s message of grace. Then consecration followed, a result of further reverence. Then reverence aided in perfecting our sacrifices and kept us back from presumptuous sins and helped to fix the characters God had predestinated should alone be acceptable to the elect. In such faithful ones personal ambition will not only be subjected to the Divine arrangement, but will be crushed out, “mortified,” eradicated, and the highest ambition of the heart will be that expressed by our Lord, “I delight to do thy will O my God; yea, thy Law is written in my heart.” (Psa. 40:8.) Such delight in sacrifice in the Lord’s service and never forget that obedience is still more highly prized of the Lord than sacrifice. Such the Lord will keep by his own power, “As the apple of his eye,” “In the hollow of his hand.” (Deut. 32:10.) Nothing shall by any means injure these. All things must work for good to these. Even their weaknesses and blemishes shall not stumble them, because their hearts being loyal, their unintentional imperfections are covered by the Lord’s grace and will be made to serve them as stepping stones instead of stumbling stones. Should they lack in talent or education, the Lord will make up to them such deficiencies in his own way. He stands pledged to do so through Christ, because they are members of his Body. R. 4452

As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so the LORD alone led him.

– Deuteronomy 32:11 –



AN EAGLE AND ITS NEST.

The Scriptures give us the illustration of the Lord's dealings with his people in the words, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest."

(Deut. 32:11.) Thus does the Lord at times permit trials, persecutions, etc., which outwardly seem to imply the wrecking of most precious interests, and sometimes cause surprise to his people by the roughness and jarring conditions. Nevertheless, under Divine supervision, the stirring up of the nest and the throwing of responsibility upon his people can be made advantageous to them, strengthening, helping them. Then comes a time of rest and opportunity for spiritual edification, comfort, growth in grace and knowledge. Happy are those who, in the time of the stirring up of the nest, are rightly exercised by the Lord's providences and taught of him and made more and more active in his service—the service of righteousness, truth and love. It brings them preparation for the period of rest and development.

But to others who are not rightly exercised by the siftings, the shakings, the stirrings up of the nest, the experience is different. They are sifted out, alienated, and develop a hard spirit, foreign to the Lord, and out of accord with his Word. The one class goes on from grace to grace and from strength to strength; the other goes back into the outer darkness of the world. Thus, as the Apostle says, our message is a "savor of life unto life to some, but of death unto death to others." —2 Cor. 2:16. R. 4335

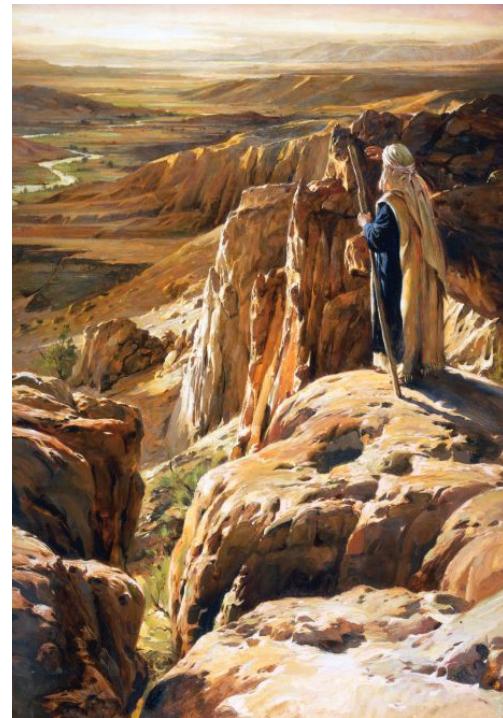
You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.

Exodus 19:4

Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho. Then the LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I have caused you to see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.”

– Deuteronomy 34:1,4 –

By the Lord's direction the living representatives of the Body of Christ, the antitypical Moses, are already on Mount Pisgah, and, looking beyond, are getting the antitypical vision of the glories of the age to come—of all the blessings that shall come to the world of mankind during the Millennial reign of Christ. With the eye of faith we perceive the blessing of all the families of the earth through the faithful ones of Spiritual Israel and the Ancient Worthies. We see gathering to their leadership and instruction, not only Israel, but all the families of the earth. We perceive the blessing of the light of the glory of the Lord as it shall fill the whole earth and make it no longer necessary for each to tell his neighbor and his brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know him. We perceive the fall of Babylon, the antitypical Jericho, and the rescue at the time of the Great Company of the Lord's true people who there were represented by Rahab. With the eye of faith we perceive the victory after victory which the people will gain over their various foes under the Spiritual Joshua, the Christ of glory. We perceive that ultimately, with still continued victories, even the last enemy shall be destroyed, and the whole groaning creation brought to the glorious place where there shall be no more sighing, no more dying, no more crying, because all the former things of sin and condemnation shall have passed away. This is our present vision from Mount Pisgah, and surely it is glorious and heart-inspiring. Soon in our changed condition beyond the veil we shall be members of the great Joshua, leading all the families of the earth to the victories and blessings promised through faith and obedience. R. 4054



Moses viewing the Promised Land

So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

Deuteronomy 34:5

In the Hebrew language the expression, “according to the word of the Lord,” would literally be, “by the mouth of the Lord,” and Jewish rabbis have given this a poetic turn and say, “by the kiss of the Lord.” It is a beautiful thought, for while Moses was about to pass to the extreme limit of the curse—death—he was recognized of the Lord and dealt with as a faithful servant; and in view of the fact that the divine plan had arranged for his redemption from sheol, the grave (Hosea 13:14), his death is appropriately described as a sleep. And thus we have the picture of a father kissing his child to sleep, and the other picture of the glorious morning of the resurrection in which the antitypical Moses, as the Father's representative, will awaken him to the blessings and eternal rewards which are his in the divine plan because of his faithfulness. R. 4054

No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

– Joshua 1:5-6 –

The nation of Israel needed to be encouraged, because, although they had been forty years in preparation for this very event, still they realized that great difficulties stood before them. The river Jordan was to be crossed, and at this particular time it was swollen and large; the enemy, ready to repulse their advances, was keen and on the alert and better used to warfare than they. If they should succeed in crossing the river in the face of their enemies it would appear to mean a great expenditure of energy and a great loss of life. They had no bridges nor pontoons from which to construct temporary bridges; and on the other side, if they ever reached it, they knew that the cities were strong walled, with a view to withstanding attacks and sieges, and they were comparatively unprepared as respects military equipment, battering rams, etc. What wonder if the people of Israel needed encouragement to undertake such a conflict—to take possession of the land which God had given them.

Three times is Joshua encouraged by the Lord, “Be strong and of a good courage,” “Be thou strong and very courageous,” etc. (vs. 6,7,9.) There are different kinds of courage; one sort is begotten of egotism and self-reliance, another kind is begotten of a recklessness which fails to take into account the difficulties of the situation, but the courage which the Lord inculcates and which all the spiritual Israelites are to seek to possess is the one which, while coolly and calmly discerning the trials and difficulties of the way and while humbly realizing its insufficiency for the occasion, is supported by a faith in the Lord—a trust in the divine promises which enables them to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. This was to be Joshua’s courage and it is to be ours in respect to all the things of the present life, as well as in respect to all the things of the Kingdom, confidence in the Lord whose servants we are, and whose work he has commissioned us to perform. The expression, “Turn not from it (the Law) to the right hand or to the left” does not signify a turning aside completely, but rather, according to the original, it means, Require neither more nor less than the divine standard; seek to keep as nearly as possible in absolute alignment with the divine Word. Truth is truth; God’s Word is God’s Word; we are not authorized to take from it or to add to it.

**Only be strong and very courageous, that
you may observe to do according to all the
law which Moses My servant commanded you.
Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that
you may prosper wherever you go.
Joshua 1:7**

No clearer expression of the divine will could be made to the antitypical Joshua and the members of his Body than is given in this Scripture. Its teaching is that there is no safety, no real success for those addressed, except in obedience to the divine will, as recorded in the divine Word. Thus also the Lord Jesus is represented as saying, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart”; and again prophetically—“O, how I love thy Law! It is my meditation all the day.” (Psa. 40:8; 119:97.) Meditation on the divine law day and night is not, of course, to be understood literally—that we should do nothing else day or night than think upon the Scriptures. We are to understand the Lord to mean that we should ever have in mind, in connection with all of our

life's affairs, the thought that we are his, and that he is our guide and director in all things, and that the slightest matter that would pertain to our lives and our interests, day or night, should be undertaken with due consideration of the Lord's will respecting the same. R. 3080 and R. 4062

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Joshua 1:8

God's encouragement of Joshua was not along the lines common amongst men. He did not say to him, "Remember your age and long experience and previous successes as a general," etc., but he did give to him the better counsel, the assurance that as he had stood by Moses as his servant so he would be with him and would not forsake him and would not fail him in any hour of test and trouble. As a consequence of the Lord's assistance he was assured that no one would be able to withstand him all the days of his life, nor would any Israelite be permitted to occupy his place as the captain of the hosts during his lifetime.

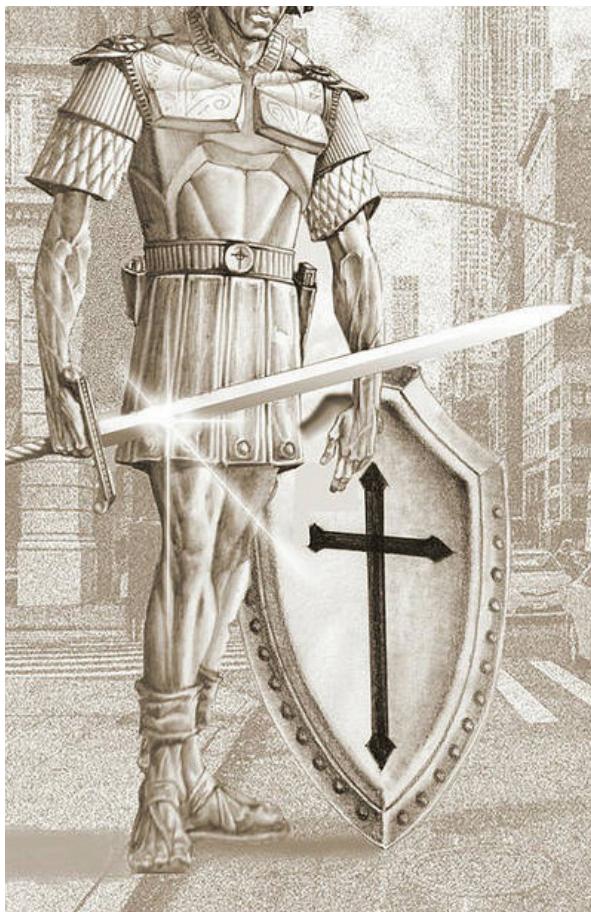
Was it not thus with our Lord Jesus, too? And is not the Lord's message a similar one to all the members of the Body of Christ— "I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee"? In this let us rejoice while realizing that of ourselves we can do nothing. Remember the Master's words to the disciples returning joyful when they had been used in his service. When they recounted how in his name they had been able to heal the sick and even cast out devils the Lord said to them, Let not your rejoicing be on this account, but rather that your names are written in heaven—rejoice rather that your Father himself loveth you, that you have been accepted of him, and that he is on your part as you are enlisted in his service. R. 4061



Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

– Joshua 1:9 –

This question is asked by way of stimulating Joshua's thought—that he might realize that he had not commissioned himself nor been commissioned of man to undertake this great work [of crossing over Jordan and entering the land]. Similarly the Apostle points out that our Lord Jesus took not the honor upon himself to be the High Priest of our profession, but that he was called of God to this position. Similarly, also, we who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus are to consider that we have not chosen him but he has chosen us, commissioned us and authorized us, so that we can go forth in his name as ambassadors for him and the Kingdom which he represents. What strength and courage this gives to the true soldiers of the cross—to realize that his labor is not in vain in the Lord. How it nerves him to be and to do in harmony with the Word and Spirit of his Master.



The Christian Soldier by James Robinson

No wonder that these are in the Scriptures termed “more than conquerors.” And no wonder, either, that the Lord has made the conditions of their present experiences such as to necessitate a good fight and a victory. He seeketh such, strong, courageous—not in themselves, but in the power of his might and through faith. As soon as Joshua got this message from the Lord he proceeded to put the people in order for an aggressive campaign, and instructed the proper officers to prepare the people and to prepare victuals and to be ready within three days to obey the divine command to enter in and possess the land which the Lord had given them. The promptness and zeal here displayed are worthy of emulation. We may be sure that, as we read, “The Lord loveth a cheerful giver,” so he loveth those who are prompt and energetic in everything they undertake to be and to do for him and his cause. Let us who are members of the greater Joshua, the antitype, be very courageous also, very prompt, very zealous, that we may be used and useful more and more in the Master’s service. R. 4062

It shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap.

– Joshua 3:13 –

A man from each of the twelve tribes was selected; each one was to carry a stone from the midst of the Jordan to the shore, and these twelve large stones were to be set up as a memorial, a reminder to Israelites for coming generations of how the Lord had brought them over Jordan. (Josh. 4:2; Josh. 4:9.) The priests bearing the ark were separated from the remainder of the Israelites by about three-quarters of a mile (two thousand cubits). They went upstream this distance, and were thus prominent before the eyes of Israel in what they did. As soon as the feet of the priests before the ark touched the waters of Jordan the waters began to subside, and as the waters subsided they took another step and another and another until they were able to walk on firm ground to the center of the river-bed, where they stood firmly until all the hosts of Israel—in all about two millions—had passed over. Still in no haste, they waited until twelve stones were placed where they had stood, and then the priests with the ark of the Lord passed over.

Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

Joshua 3:17

We see how appropriate it was that the Ark of God's covenant, representing the Lord himself, his grace, his goodness, his promises, should stand in the midst of Jordan—effecting a cancellation of the sentence of death—in order that the Millennial blessings might be attained by all under the lead of Joshua's antitype. That the Ark of God was borne by the high-priest and the under-priests, and that these first passed into Jordan, is also significant: it represented how our great High-Priest and the Royal Priesthood, his Church, must first pass into Jordan before any of the people could pass over. And the fact that the high-priest and the under-priests stood in the midst of Jordan while the people all crossed over, illustrates how the passing over, free from divine condemnation, will be effected by the work of the great High-Priest, and his associated "brethren." He gave himself for our sins; he became a curse for us; he, as the man Christ Jesus, stopped in the midst of Jordan, that the world might pass over; the Royal Priesthood are following him in this sacrifice, and they too are stopping in the midst of Jordan; they also, as joint-heirs with their Lord, lay down their lives on behalf of the brethren, —to the intent that the whole world of mankind, or as many as will, may enter into the glorious Kingdom privileges, according to the divine arrangement. R. 3084

For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.

Joshua 4:23-24

And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor."

– Joshua 6:2 –

Four-Hundred and Seventy years had elapsed from the time God gave Canaan to Abraham, by promise, before his descendants actually crossed Jordan and began to inherit the land. The promise had been long of fulfillment, and doubtless had severely taxed the faith of the people to whom it belonged; yet even in this respect the delay was a blessing to them, as serving to stimulate and develop faith. Nor are we to forget that the original promise has not yet been fulfilled; because the land was promised, not only to Abraham's seed, but also to himself, and the noble patriarch still rests and waits in the sleep of death for the accomplishment of the divine promise, which will be fulfilled on a far larger scale when the people of God shall have passed the antitypical Jordan into the antitypical Canaan—the Millennial Kingdom condition. If in all this there was a lesson of patient waiting on the Lord and confident trust in his promise, to Abraham and his natural seed, there is a still larger and fuller lesson in it to Spiritual Israel, the spiritual Seed, along the same lines of faithful, patient waiting on the Lord for the fulfillment of the exceeding great and precious things he has promised us. R. 3084

They were now ready to take possession of the land which God had given them, and were encamped near the city of Jericho, which occupies a sort of key position to Canaan from the direction of their approach. Joshua, the new leader, evidently had in mind the necessity of prompt action against Jericho, and was, no doubt, considering the fact that his army had no implements suitable for attacking such a walled city defended by well armed men, even though the latter were comparatively few in number. It was while on this reconnoitering expedition that he met an angel of the Lord with drawn sword in hand, who, in answer to his question, informed him that he was the Captain of the Lord's hosts. Joshua, after doing reverence to him, received instructions how he should proceed for the capture of Jericho.

It came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times. And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people: "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city!" . . . So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

Joshua 6:15-16, 20

Cont'd on p. 58

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.
Hebrews 11:30

After entering Canaan the covenant of circumcision was renewed by the Israelites. The land of Canaan prefigures the Millennial Kingdom with its rich

blessings which may be secured by all who, under the command of the greater Joshua—Jesus and his glorified Royal Priesthood, desire to be the Lord's people. The renewal of circumcision on entering the land, would thus signify that one of the first institutions of the Millennial Age will be a consecration to the Lord—to put away sin, to live separate from sin as the Lord's assisting grace will enable. The renewal of the passover would symbolize that in the Millennial dispensation the important work of redemption by the precious blood will again be brought prominently to the attention of all who desire to be God's people, and that they can only be his people by a full recognition of the Lamb that was slain, and by an eating of his flesh—partaking of the mercies and blessings flowing from his sacrifice. The ceasing of the manna, and the eating, instead, of the fruits and grains of Canaan, may be understood to signify that the new dispensation will have spiritual food and sustenance of its own, and that in great variety and abundance; and that mankind will no longer be dependent upon the divine revelation contained in the Scriptures —upon the Word of God through ancient prophets and apostles. When the Sun of righteousness shall arise and the whole earth be flooded with the glorious light of truth and knowledge, the lamp which at present we cannot prize too highly, will cease to occupy its present exalted and indispensable position, although it will always be appreciated and reverenced.

Another thought respecting Canaan: we have already noted that the Royal Priesthood may in some sense of the word be said to be already in the land of Canaan throughout this Gospel age —by faith—already in the place or condition which Israel after the flesh and the mass of mankind “entered not into because of unbelief” (Heb. 4:3; Heb. 4:6; Heb. 4:10.) To this class, Jordan would fitly represent consecration unto death; and Canaan would represent our present newness of life while still in the flesh. To these, the circumcision represents, as the Apostle explains, circumcision of the heart and putting away of sin from the wills; to these the passover signifies not only the acceptance of the merit of Christ's atonement on our behalf, but also a communion and participation with him in his sacrifice. These, as justified persons, having been fed with the manna from heaven, have been strengthened and brought across Jordan; and now as new creatures they live “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”—they live upon the divine promises—“Thy words were found and I did eat them.” (Jer. 15:16.) To these the capture of Jericho and all the battlings with the Canaanites represent victories of the “new creature” over the flesh; not accomplished by their own strength, but accomplished for them by the Lord in recognition of their faith and trust in him.

The sum and essence of this lesson is expressed in the words of the Apostle, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Phil. 4:13.) Faith is an essential; but we must have crossed the Jordan; we must have been justified; must have partaken of the antitypical passover; must have been sanctified before we could have of the Lord either a promise of victory over our Jericho, or before we could exercise such a faith as would result in that victory. If in the type faith could bring the fall of the strong walls of a city, how great must be the value of faith in the antitype! R. 3086 and R. 3087

This is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.
1 John 5:4

Some have been inclined to question the justice of God's giving to Israel the land of Canaan, already inhabited by others; —the justice of not only permitting but commanding them to destroy the inhabitants of that land, and to take possession of it as their own. This transaction is held up as an illustration of the "land-grabbing" disposition of natural man, which seems to increase century by century, notwithstanding the increase of civilization and the general appreciation of justice. We are not of those who would defend the course of nations of modern times along these lines. As Christians, guided by our Master's example and instruction, we should seek to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, and to leave them in peaceable possession of their homes, property and liberties. We are to recognize a difference, however, between the divine law of love, placed upon and accepted by the Lord's consecrated people, and the law of selfishness, under which the mass of mankind—including the vast majority of nominal Christendom—still operates, and will continue to operate until the new dispensation and its new laws shall be ushered in by divine power. Nevertheless, seeing that the Church is separate from the world, in the Lord's plan and in his dealings, we can look with comparative equanimity upon the overriding of justice and equity by the kingdoms of this world, and may realize that in many instances the Lord may take advantage of their natural disposition toward warfare and conquest and empire-building, and may allow the wrath of man thus to work out certain features that will be ultimately favorable to the accomplishment of the divine purposes.

Surely the wrath of man shall praise you.

Psalm 76:10

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" He, therefore, had the right to give Canaan to the descendants of Abraham without giving a reason why to any creature. He had a right to give it when and how and to whom he pleased. He does, however, condescend to inform us that in blotting out these many little nations of Palestine, descendants of Noah's grandson Canaan, he did so not along arbitrary lines, but along lines of justice. These Canaanites (also known as Hittites, and by various other tribal names, Hivites, Perizzites, Gergashites, Jebusites and Amorites) were not ignorant savages, but quite civilized peoples who, after the manner of the Sodomites, had gone into great excesses of licentious idolatry. In Abraham's time God foresaw where their course would lead them, but he delayed to bring the promised seed of Abraham into their land for a time, because as we read, "the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet come to the full." —Gen. 15:16.

These people were to be destroyed by the Israelites for two reasons; first, to have permitted them to live and to become incorporated with the Israelites in the land, by intermarriage, etc., would have been injurious to the seed of Abraham which God intended to develop, and of which he designed to make types of spiritual Israel. Furthermore, in the type which the Lord was making on a large scale, these Canaanites or Amorites represented the weaknesses and imperfections of the fallen nature. They symbolized sin; and their destruction by the Israelites prefigured the destruction of sin, the blotting out of the blemishes of sin, and the gradual uplifting of God's people in the antitype of Canaan—in the Millennial Kingdom.

We can readily see that no injustice was done to the Canaanites by the Lord's decree, and that so far as they were concerned they suffered no more than, if as much as if some pestilence or famine or other common disaster had come upon them. They suffered the death-penalty, as all the human family suffer it, and our confident hope respecting them and all mankind is built upon the fact that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem all from the curse or sentence of death which came upon all through father Adam's disobedience; —and that he who redeemed the world is shortly to bless all the families of the earth with a gracious opportunity to come back into harmony with God, back to human perfection. R. 3084

The LORD will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you His people.

– 1 Samuel 12:22 –

As the Israelites were far better under such leaders as the Lord raised up from time to time—Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah and Samuel—he would, nevertheless, bless them as much as would be possible according to their course under the new arrangement which they desired. He would overrule the further experiences they would have under their kings, so that they might from these learn a great lesson in respect to the wisdom of God. So, too, in Spiritual Israel, the Lord has not forsaken Israelites indeed, even in the midst of spiritual Babylon; but as related in the parable [of The Wheat and The Tares] which foretold present conditions, the Lord said, Let both wheat and tares grow together until the harvest; in the time of harvest shall be the separating; so now the Lord, still mindful of his true saints in Babylon, sends forth the call, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues.” (Rev. 18:4.) Those desirous of being under the Lord’s direction have constituted a little flock, for whose shepherding and care the Lord himself has always been responsible, sending assistance and messages from time to time through under shepherds who were never recognized by the great systems, but merely by those who had an ear to hear and the right condition of heart to appreciate the message of truth and grace. R. 4200

Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart, for consider what great things He has done for you.

– 1 Samuel 12:24 –

Samuel appealed to fleshly Israel to remember the great things that God had done for them, as a ground for thankfulness and faithfulness—their delivery from Egypt, their guidance through the wilderness and their entrance into the land of Israel;

but if we apply these words to Spiritual Israel, with what greater force do they come to us!

The Lord has delivered us from Egyptian bondage, the bondage of sin and death. He has led us out of darkness into his marvelous light. He not only lifted our feet from the horrible pit and the miry clay, but he placed them upon the Rock, Christ Jesus; yea, more! he has put a new song into our mouths, even the loving kindness of our God. He not only forgave our sins, but accepted us in Jesus, and invited us to joint-heirship with Christ. He not only gave us exceeding great and precious promises to cheer our hearts in the wilderness journey, but has in reservation for us things exceeding great and precious, of which he has given us a glimpse or foretaste through the holy Spirit, an earnest of our inheritance. R. 4201

For the LORD does not see as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.

– 1 Samuel 16:7 –

What an unseen warfare is being waged amongst the followers of the Lord wherever they are! The world sees not and knows not of this conflict; but it is very real, and the Lord takes note of the loyalty and faithfulness of these covenantors—these who have made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice—consecrating their little all of time, talent, influence, prospects. Having consecrated, they are to maintain this attitude of consecration daily, hourly—presenting their bodies “living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1.

If weak or fallen according to the flesh, these are to remember that they are no longer fleshly or human beings, and that the weaknesses are not theirs; for they are now New Creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away and all things have become new. They have new ambitions, new ideals, and new relationship with God. They do not love sin, but love righteousness. They hate sin. They have enlisted to death to war a warfare against sin, especially in their own flesh. They have the satisfaction of knowing that while fellowmen might not see their battlings, might not know of the courageous effort they put forth in opposition to sin, yet the Lord looketh not at the outward man, but at the heart, and His judgment is not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit—the mind, the intention, the endeavor. Thus there are some great, valiant soldiers of the Cross, whom the world knows not; but all of these will eventually be crowned and have a share with Jesus in His Kingdom. R. 5947

And the LORD said, “Arise, anoint him, for this is the one!” Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward.

1 Samuel 16:12-13

This principle of the divine selection of things that are not [esteemed amongst men], to bring to naught the things that are [esteemed by men], is noticeable all throughout this Gospel age. Often have we, like Samuel, looked about us amongst men seemingly eligible to a place in the Kingdom—upon those who are high in position, —socially, intellectually, morally, educationally, —and in the esteem of men, and expect that surely the Lord would sanction their anointing with the oil of gladness, and grant them a knowledge of the truth pertaining to the Kingdom, etc., only to find ourselves mistaken, and to get a fresh lesson that God looketh not on the outward appearance but upon the heart. We concede that we are unable to read the heart, but we are fully satisfied to accept the divine decision in such matters, and to trust that when in due time all the secrets of this present time shall be disclosed, we then shall be able to understand the meaning of the Lord’s selections more completely than we do now—we shall then be able to see what a difference there was between the hearts of those the Lord accepted and the hearts of those outwardly humble, whom he did not so highly favor in respect to the Kingdom call. Meantime, we must simply wait and trust the Lord and accept his decisions, as expressed by our dear Redeemer when he said, “I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight. —Luke 10:21.” R. 3226

Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand. . . . Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear, for the battle is the LORD’s, and He will give you into our hands.”

– 1 Samuel 17:45-47 –

David, a youth of probably twenty years, visited the army of Israel, in which three of his brothers were soldiers, taking food and delicacies for their refreshment. To his amazement he found the army of Israel facing the army of the Philistines, who had invaded from the west. They were not fighting, each apparently fearing the other. A champion from the Philistines came forth every morning, a giant in size and strength, wearing a bronze armor weighing two hundred and twenty pounds, and brandishing his spear, the head of which weighed twenty-five pounds, and the shaft of which was nearly three inches thick. He defied the Israelites, declaring that a battle between individuals would settle the war. He defied not only the nation of Israel, but its God.

Young David was amazed that this had progressed so long, and that nobody accepted the challenge. A believer in the true God, he realized the Covenant between God and his nation. His faith in the Almighty was such that he accepted the Divine promises implicitly. He wondered at the lack of faith manifested by his brothers and his countrymen. He intimated that, backed by God's promises, he himself dared to meet that Goliath.

We see clearly the feature of David's character which God so highly esteemed, and which he has always esteemed in everyone to the extent that he possesses and manifests it. This quality which God esteemed in David was his faith—the same quality that he esteemed in Abraham and in all the faithful of the past. Of all who had “this testimony that they pleased God,” it is written that by faith they did thus and so, “and it was counted unto them for righteousness.” —Gal. 3:6.

R. 5662 and R. 3230

Having faith, we need no carnal weapons, and no armor of human invention is of any service to us; but trained and practical faith can work wonders as great as did David's sling and stone. The sling and stone were not an untried weapon with David. He was in constant practice with them, and thus he had gained skill and confidence in their use. So the Christian must practice dependence upon God continually in all the small affairs of life, and then when the giant trials come his practised faith will be abundantly able to meet and overcome them. And the more severe the trial, the more glorious the victory of faith and the greater the strength of character derived from its exercise. Doubtless it was the previous struggle with the lion and the bear, and the victory God gave him then, that gave David such boldness in defying the power of Goliath. So every battle we fight and every victory we win through faith in God develops strength for future conflicts and makes the more sure our final overcoming. R. 1902

When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

– 2 Samuel 7:12-13 –

In this promise concerning the prosperous reign of David's son and heir to his throne, it is plain that there was more implied than was ever fulfilled in Solomon. True, the reign of Solomon was one of unprecedented prosperity and he did build the house of the Lord; but his kingdom did come to an end, the glory departed, the temple perished, whereas the promise to David was,

Your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you.

Your throne shall be established forever.

2 Samuel 7:16

The fact is that the promise or prophecy was of twofold application, referring only partially to Solomon and the temple which Solomon was to build, but ultimately to David's greater Son and Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ, whose kingdom is indeed an everlasting kingdom and of whose dominion there shall be no end, and also to that glorious spiritual temple, the gospel Church, exalted and glorified with her Head, toward which all the world shall worship during the Millennial reign. The reign of David, the man of war, prefigured the preparatory work of this Gospel age—the struggles of God's people against the oppositions of sin, the preparation of the living stones for the spiritual temple; while the reign of Solomon represented the glorious reign of Christ and the wealth and wisdom and peace and prosperity which shall characterize it.

A small class follow the example of David, and receive instruction from the Lord to the effect that the present is not the time for temple-building; that he could have built his temple heretofore, and found many willing to serve him in this respect, but that he prefers that his representation in the world in the present time shall be extremely simple and unostentatious. Such receive of the Lord assurances, however, that in his own time and way, under a succeeding form of the kingdom, a much more glorious temple shall be constituted than would be possible for us to build at the present time—an enduring temple which shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.

R. 2010 and R. 3259

Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:7

The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah.

– 1 Kings 17:16 –

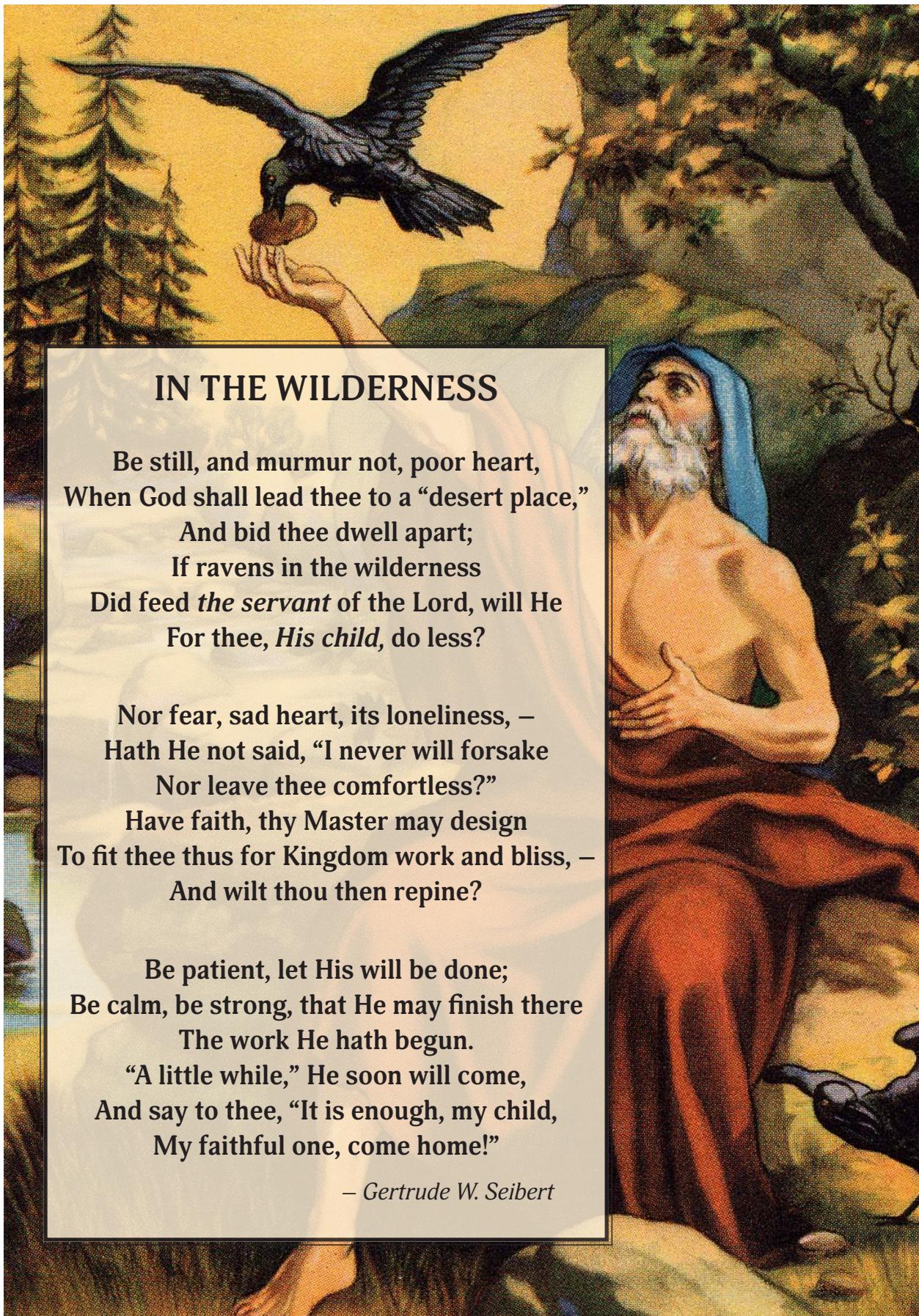
Under divine direction, Elijah appeared in the presence of King Ahab and delivered a message, saying, “As the Lord God of Israel liveth [whom you seem to think is dead] before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.” At first, probably, the matter was considered a foolish boast, but when the dew and rain ceased and scarcity and famine resulted, the full purport of the judgment began to be understood, and the King sent hither and thither, everywhere, to find Elijah; presumably to induce him, either by entreaty or by cruelty, to lift from the land what he probably considered to be an evil spell or curse. But God had directed Elijah where to hide, in a place where he could himself be supplied with water, and where he could be fed by ravens.

Elijah’s prediction of a famine was not merely a prophecy; rather, it was the declaration of a divine judgment upon Israel. The object of the famine was to bring the Israelites to their senses —to show them that they were leaving the true God to trust in idols. The force and appropriateness of this particular kind of a judgment may be recognized, when we remember that the claim made for Baal was that he was specially the god of the forces of nature: his worship was presumed to bring increase in the home and in the field. The drouth and consequent famine would be a contradiction, therefore, of these claims made in the name of Baal, and would shatter faith in him, and prepare Israel to recognize and worship again the true God, Jehovah.

Meantime, Elijah, following the directions of the Lord, lived for about two years at the brook Cherith, drinking of its waters, and fed there by the ravens. Various efforts have been made to discount the miracle implied in the statement that the ravens brought Elijah bread and flesh morning and evening. Some have claimed that the word translated “ravens” might, with a little different accent, be translated “Arabian,” or signify the inhabitants of a village called Orbo. But, in addition to the fact that God is abundantly able to work such miracles as are necessary to his plans, we know that the raven of the East is in many respects a peculiar bird, which exhibits not only extraordinary intelligence but sometimes also sympathy.

The lesson to us is one of the divine care and providence over those who are devoted to God’s service. He who sustained Elijah can equally sustain us. The important question with each of us should be, Am I the Lord’s servant, in the place and doing the work which he has directed? If so, our bread and our water shall be sure, and no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly. —Isa. 33:16; Psa. 84:11. R. 2326

The meal, the bread, of that time might fitly be considered as a symbol of the bread of truth, of which we are privileged to eat, and of which our supply is continued from day to day. The olive oil, used by the ancients much as we use butter, is frequently used in the Scriptures as representing divine grace and the holy spirit; and so we, as the Lord’s people, are not only supplied with the bread of truth, but also with the spirit of truth, which helps to make it nourishing and profitable to us. Another prophet speaks of the experience of the world during the dark ages, saying, “There shall be a famine in the land, —not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.” —Amos 8:11.



IN THE WILDERNESS

Be still, and murmur not, poor heart,
When God shall lead thee to a "desert place,"
 And bid thee dwell apart;
If ravens in the wilderness
Did feed *the servant* of the Lord, will He
 For thee, *His child*, do less?

Nor fear, sad heart, its loneliness, —
Hath He not said, "I never will forsake
 Nor leave thee comfortless?"
Have faith, thy Master may design
To fit thee thus for Kingdom work and bliss, —
 And wilt thou then repine?

Be patient, let His will be done;
Be calm, be strong, that He may finish there
 The work He hath begun.
"A little while," He soon will come,
And say to thee, "It is enough, my child,
 My faithful one, come home!"

— Gertrude W. Seibert

Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, “Arise and eat.” Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again.

– 1 Kings 19:5-6 –

The lesson here to us is God's care over those who are fully consecrated to him, and who seek to do his will. He cares for our bodily necessities as well as for our spiritual wants. “Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of.” Another lesson is found in the character of the food which the Lord supplied to Elijah. It would have been just as easy for Omnipotence to have provided dainties and luxuries for the prophet, but instead the provision was very simple—bread and water. The bread is called a “cake,” for the customary food of that country then was, and still is, bread made about a quarter inch thick, and somewhat in the form of a pancake, baked on heated pebbles. Our Lord's promise to us, as his faithful people, is that our bread and water shall be sure; we are not to ask for more than this; whatever is received more should be accepted with thanksgiving and to the Lord's glory. Elijah's food also was a symbol of the Church's spiritual food: water is a symbol of truth—water of life; the unleavened bread is a symbol of Christ, whom we appropriate to our needs, for our refreshment through all the journey of life. R. 2333

**Then He said, “Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD.”
And behold, the LORD passed by.**

– 1 Kings 19:11 –

Having journeyed to Mount Horeb (that is, Mount Sinai) the Prophet seems to have been without any special aim or purpose before his mind, for he simply dwelt in a cave there. The Lord brings this fact that he had no definite purpose or aim in life, to the prophet's attention by the inquiry,

What doest thou here, Elijah?

Elijah told the Lord how discouraged he felt, and why, —that he had in his zeal for the Lord attempted to do all that he could, but that apparently everything was wrecked, and the people of Israel had lost their courage and their faith in the Lord, and that apparently nothing further could be done to help them. And the Lord proposed to give Elijah a little lesson on various methods of work—so he sent him out upon the mountain, and there exhibited his power to him in various forms:

- “A great and strong **wind** rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rock before the Lord.” Here was an illustration of power such as Elijah had probably never before seen—wind with a velocity to rend the rocks; yet notwithstanding all this power, this was not God; it was merely the power of God.
- He showed him an **earthquake**—the power of God to lift and to shake the mountains; yet neither was this the Lord; but an exhibition of his power.
- A wonderful display of celestial **fire**, lightning, was next presented; but this was merely another grand manifestation of omnipotence.
- Finally, in a great stillness, he heard a **small voice** speaking to him. Ah, here he recognized God. It had an influence upon him that all the manifestations of power did not have. He wrapped his face in his mantle, and fled back to the cave.

We are not informed what the voice said to Elijah, but we see that he learned the lesson designed, namely, that God has a way of appealing to the heart of man more powerfully than by the wonderful gymnastics and phenomena of nature. Perhaps the small voice told Elijah that he should have had greater faith in God, and should have remained at his post, notwithstanding the threat of Jezebel, and that the Lord could have delivered him from her power.

And a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire, a still small voice.

1 Kings 19:11-12

The lesson given to Elijah represents a lesson which God has for his people now—to keep us at work undiscouraged or to revive the fainting. Dismay and discouragement are followed by perplexity. But now as “meat in due season” the Lord gives his people an inkling respecting his plan for man’s salvation and it restores confidence and zeal on the part of his people. He shows them that his power will first be manifested and that afterward he will speak to the people by the still small voice of the spirit of the truth which shall be surely heard. R. 2333 and R. 2334

The Lord’s inquiry of Elijah may be variously emphasized, and may be applied fitly to each one of the Lord’s consecrated people. It may be profitable to us if each one will ask himself the question, What doest thou here? What are we doing for the Lord and for his cause? What are we trying to do? Are we fleeing from the threats of the Lord’s enemies? Are we discouraged in his service? Having begun in the spirit, are we hoping, contrary to his Word, to find earthly blessings and victories? Has the courage which enabled us for a time to fight the good fight deserted us? After being courageous for the Lord and his truth and his people are we in danger of being put to flight by a woman or a man, or any other creature? Is the Lord’s arm shortened that it cannot help us and deliver us? Shall we receive of his marks of kindness and provision for our necessities of spiritual food, yet doubt his care and ability to supervise our temporal interests, and our endeavors to render service to his cause. Let us gather a blessing of instruction from the experience of Elijah, as delineated in this lesson, lest we be weary and faint in our minds. Greater is he that is on our part than all they that be against us. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape. His grace is sufficient for us. Nevertheless, for these things he will be inquired of by us, and he demands that we shall exercise faith in him corresponding to his mercies and manifold favors to us, for “without faith it is impossible to please God.”—Heb. 11:6. R. 2334

Then the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all whose spirits God had moved, arose to go up and build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.

– Ezra 1:5 –

We have seen that natural Israel's captivity in Babylon is Scripturally represented as a figure of the captivity of Spiritual Israel in mystic Babylon; and that the deliverance by Cyrus was to some extent a representation of the deliverance of Spiritual Israelites from mystic Babylon by Christ; that the fall of Babylon before Cyrus was figurative of the fall of "Babylon the Great," and that the message, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," applied not only to literal Babylon, but also now applies to mystic Babylon. In view of these things it is but proper that we should consider Israel's return from Babylon as to some extent representing the deliverance of the zealous of Spiritual Israel from mystic Babylon—a work now in progress. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." —Rev. 18:4.

But now, as then, comparatively few, even of the consecrated class, are willing to undertake the trials and difficulties incident to the leaving of the settled affairs, comfortable quarters, contracts, engagements, etc., entered into in Babylon. The only ones disposed to risk the hardships and to go forth into the desert, leaving the strong walls and protection of sectarianism, are those who have great confidence in God and great respect for the promises made to the Seed of Abraham. The call to return to the old paths, and to rebuild the Temple of the Lord, and to replace therein the vessels of gold and silver (the precious truths of the divine Word—setting them in order as at first) is appreciated by the few only; yet these are encouraged by the Lord's providences, by the riches bestowed upon them from every quarter—not riches of an earthly kind, but of a spiritual sort, —precious truths, valuable lessons and experiences, providential leadings, etc. These encourage such as are of faithful heart to go forward and by obedience to become heirs of those glorious things that God has promised to them that love him.

As all the bitter experiences through which Israel passed were, under providential guidance, used to sift, separate, purge and purify the proper class to be ultimately brought back into the Land of Promise as the heirs of the kingdom, so the experiences through which the Lord's people have passed during the "dark ages" in captivity to Babylon, no less than through recent experiences, all tend to show us the necessity for separation from the world and its spirit, all lead us to appreciate more than ever the divine arrangements by which the Lord is making ready for himself and his service a peculiar people, zealous for the Kingdom, zealous for the Lord's Word, and zealous for all good works. —Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9. R. 2510

Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

Titus 2:13-14

And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD: “For He is good, for His mercy endures forever toward Israel.” Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

– Ezra 3:11 –

The foundations of our temple were laid at Pentecost, under apparently very unfavorable conditions from the world's standpoint—a dead leader, and a handful of a few hundred disciples scattered and considerably discouraged. Nevertheless, those who recognize the Lord's hand in the matter see things differently: with the eye of faith they discern in Jesus the great rock of our Salvation typified by the “rock of the dome,” the top of Mt. Zion, on which the altar of sacrifice stood. The same eye of faith now discerns that the twelve apostles are the foundation stones of divine appointment, built upon the rock Christ Jesus; and that upon the ministries of those appointed representatives of Christ, a glorious church, a glorious temple of the Lord is being erected. Those who then had the eye of faith shouted for joy, and all who since possess the same spiritual vision rejoice in the greater work which the Lord is accomplishing, as they see the preparation now of the “living stones,” which, by and by, in the first resurrection, shall be brought together complete as the glorious temple of God, in and through which all the families of the earth [will be blessed.]

If those Israelites, the house of servants, returning from their bondage, and remembering the covenant promises of God to them, had cause for singing and shouting Jehovah's praise, much more have we, who belong to the house of sons, great cause to tell abroad the great things which the Lord hath done for us. We were all servants of sin once, under the bondage of sin, ignorance, superstition and death, but God, through the great Cyrus, has permitted us to go free. Appropriately, therefore, our first step should be to recognize the sacrifice of the altar, and then to offer praise to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, for “He hath put a new song into our mouths, even the loving kindness of our God.”

The Apostle assures us that, however appropriate, inspiring and refreshing are the songs of our lips, still more appropriate and still more appreciated of the Lord are our heart-songs, the joy and rejoicing of the new nature— “singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord.” (Eph. 5:19.) And this joy and singing in the heart, this heart-thankfulness to the giver of all good, necessarily finds expression, not only in Christian carols, but also in all the acts and words of life—all of which constitute the hymn of praise and thanksgiving continually ascending before God from his people. R. 3649 and R. 2511

That so far as the Christian Church is concerned, the Lord has left her entirely without restrictions in such matters—to praise the Lord with heart and voice, according to her love and zeal and judgment. It is not, therefore, for one to judge another respecting the use of his love, zeal and judgment in offering the Lord worship in songs of praise, whether with instrumental accompaniment or without: it is for each individual and each church to exercise the liberty which the Lord has granted. However, we do urge that all remember that it is not the excellence of our music that will make it acceptable to our Lord. For we may well suppose that the harmonies of the heavenly choirs quite out measure the best efforts of earthly choirs, and hence could not hope that the Lord will receive our songs of praise because of their intrinsic merit. Their acceptance at all will be because they are expressions of the heart sentiments; and this being true all who have heart sentiments of thankfulness and gratitude should be encouraged to make “a joyful noise unto the Lord,” as acceptable and pleasing to him through the merit of our Redeemer. R. 2511

The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him. So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer.

– Ezra 8:22-23 –

That there is an advantage in fasting and prayer to the spiritual Israelite is beyond question. Our case is not exactly that of the Israelites under Ezra, and yet there is some similarity. We are not guaranteed earthly blessings or earthly protection against earthly adversaries. As spiritual Israelites, however, we have a still higher guarantee, for in our estimation our spiritual interests as new creatures are higher and grander than all of our earthly interests, beyond comparison. We have the guarantee that, whatever shall befall us, the Lord is able and willing to overrule it for good if we trust in him. It is in proportion as this gracious promise of the Lord fails to be appreciated by us that we look to the world for protection. The very experience of realizing danger and feeling timidity may prove indeed a superior blessing to us if it will but lead us nearer to the Lord—through fasting and prayer.

Fasting, as we have seen heretofore, signifies self-denial. The thought is not the weakening of the body by absolute abstention from food, but rather a disciplining of the body by abstaining from delicacies, relishes, etc. No doubt such fastings are profitable to us in other ways than one. They not only relieve the physical system of over pressure, but with many tend to clarify the mind and make it more acute, more spiritually inclined. We all recognize this as a fact whether we can explain the philosophy of it or not. To all believers, especially to all starting upon a course of consecration, of self-devotion to the Lord and to his cause, we commend fasting in reasonable and proper ways, the denying to one's self the gratification of natural passions, and in general the living moderately, abstemiously, using this world and its comforts and blessings as not abusing them—the using of them in so far and in such a manner as will be to the highest advantage as new creatures in Christ. With the consecrated Christian this is not only the incident of a day but the course of a life. His every day is a fast day, a day of self-denial as respects any and everything sinful, and as respects any and everything that would not inure to the spiritual advantage of himself or others.

Ezra says, “So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was entreated of us.” This verse could be applied in full measure to the spiritual Israelites who, under the lead of the great High Priest of our profession, are travelling to the New Jerusalem. Their fasting and prayers to the Lord for protection and help along the narrow way and for success to the journey’s end are heard, and the Lord assures us in advance that all such petitions are granted. R. 3659



So it was, when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, that she found favor in his sight, and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther went near and touched the top of the scepter. Esther 5:2

And the king said to her, “What do you wish, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given to you—up to half the kingdom!”

– Esther 5:3 –

There is a beautiful lesson of faith here that should appeal to all of the Spiritual Israelites. Whatever we have, whatever positions we occupy of influence or power or wealth or confidence in the esteem of others, is so much of a stewardship granted to us by the Lord and respecting which we should expect to give an account; and if the account would be rendered with joy, we must be faithful even to the risking of our lives in the interests of the Lord's people, the Lord's cause. Let us lay this feature of Esther's experience to heart, that we may draw valuable lessons therefrom, helpful to us in the spiritual way. The suggestion that she had not come to a place of honor and privilege by accident, but that the Lord had overruled in the matter, is one that should appeal to all Israelites indeed. Whatever we have is of the Lord's providence; let us use it faithfully and as wisely as possible for him and his; thus our own blessings and joys will be increased as well as our favor with the Lord.

[Esther] used wisdom and sought to cooperate with her prayers for divine guidance and blessing. The king was very gracious to her and extended the golden sceptre, which she touched, and then perceiving that only some urgent matter of request had thus brought her into his presence he inquired what he could do for her, assuring her that it should be done even to the extent of half of his kingdom—the latter expression, however, being doubtless a mere formality indicating great interest.

When we note the divine providential care over God's typical people it increases our faith and trust as his spiritual children, for with the Apostle we reason that if God so loved us while we were yet sinners as to give his Son for us, much more does he love us now that we are no more sinners, aliens, strangers, foreigners, but consecrated to him and seeking to walk in the footsteps of our Redeemer. Likewise we reason that if God exercised his providential care in the interests of the typical people he is both able and willing to do as much and more for his spiritual Israel—Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile—those who have entered into covenant relationship with him and are seeking to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. During the Gospel age, divine blessings are conferred upon those who will constitute the Church, the body of Christ, who love him more than they love houses or lands, parents or children or self. All who can thus affirm to their own hearts their loyalty to the Lord, their faith and trust in him, may be assured that all things are supervised for their good and working out for their welfare, in matters temporal and eternal. R. 3657



Queen Esther in the King's Court by Gustave Dore, 1885

God is wise in heart and mighty in strength.
– Job 9:4 –

Job, considering the testimony of nature to the glory of God, says, “He is wise in heart and mighty in strength . . . which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south; which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.” (Job 9:4; Job 9:9-10.) And the Lord, desiring to reassure Job of his superior power and grace, inquires of him,

**Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion?
Can you bring out Mazzaroth in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear with
its cubs? Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you
set their dominion over the earth?**
Job 38:31-33

Thus, by their numberless multitude, their orderly grouping in various constellations, their continual yet never conflicting movements, their perfect harmony, their magnitude and their mutual benign influence, do the shining hosts of heaven declare the glory of God, by day and by night. He who meditates upon these things will scarcely be “the fool” who saith “in his heart, There is no God;” for all nature testifies to the Creator’s glory and power. R. 1390

Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.
– Job 13:15 –

When Job was rich, prosperous, God tested him by taking from him all his family, all his wealth, his health, and even allowing his wife to turn against him. Yet in all this Job did not turn against God. He did indeed express wonder, but he looked to the Lord in faith and said, “Though worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” I shall yet receive the manifestation of His favor, and learn what He means by these experiences, these afflictions, coming upon me. “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” —Job 13:15.

After his testings had been accomplished, God gave him back children, houses, lands, friends. And these coming in abundance shadowed forth the blessings of Restitution—how the tribulations of mankind will eventually work out for good to those who will love God. If those who are now suffering affliction because of their loyalty to the Lord, because of their trust in His arrangements, will take afflictions and trials joyfully, these will surely work out good to them—“a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

Applying these lessons to ourselves, we may say that to whatever extent we may be privileged to speak the Word of God and to suffer persecution therefore, if we take it with patience, it will bring us a corresponding blessing and commendation from the Lord. But we cannot think it would be pleasing to Him if, when we suffer, we think, Oh, how terrible, terrible, terrible! Such an attitude would not be taking His Word for it, that “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus **shall** suffer persecution,” and that all things shall work out for our good. —2 Tim. 3:12; Rom 8:28. R. 5333

**He stretches out the north over empty space.
He hangs the earth on nothing. By His Spirit,
He adorned the heavens.
– Job 26:7,13 –**



God has established laws so governing the motions of all the heavenly bodies that no clash or discord occurs among them. Each world has its appointed pathway and its regulated time, and the most exact calculations of astronomers find them always true to time and order. How wonderful is our God! The magnificent pageantry of the heavens daily and nightly should elicit our praise and adoration, and should inspire in our hearts holy and reverent devotion. Let the noiseless activity, the perfect obedience to divine law, and the blessed shining of the heavenly hosts, impress their wholesome lessons upon us—of zealous activity without commotion or ostentation; of perfect obedience to the will of him who doeth all things well, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; and of letting the glory of the Lord which has illuminated us shine from us in turn upon every beholder. Indeed, to those who have been brought into close fellowship with the Lord through a knowledge of his plan of the ages, all his works should be viewed with a keener sense of appreciation—from the tiniest organism seen through the microscope, to the worlds revealed by the telescope.

With the Psalmist our hearts exclaim, “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens;” —for, however grand and glorious are the wonders of creation, they proclaim only the superior grandeur and greatness of their Creator.

High indeed was the honor conferred upon man and the glory of his dominion (lost in Adam, redeemed in Christ) over the earth which God made “not in vain,” but for human habitation. And while, as Job tells us, he “hanged the earth upon nothing,” but launched it out in the abyss of space subject to those fixed laws which his wisdom established, we rejoice to know that “The Lord hath prepared his throne [power, dominion, control] in the heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all.” (Psa. 103:19.) Surely no confusion or mishap can befall the remotest fragment of his vast empire, the Universe. Yea, Lord, we rejoice to realize it! R. 1814 and R. 1815

For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth.

– Job 19:25 –

Job had a hope for the future—he was not desirous of being annihilated; hence his prayer is:

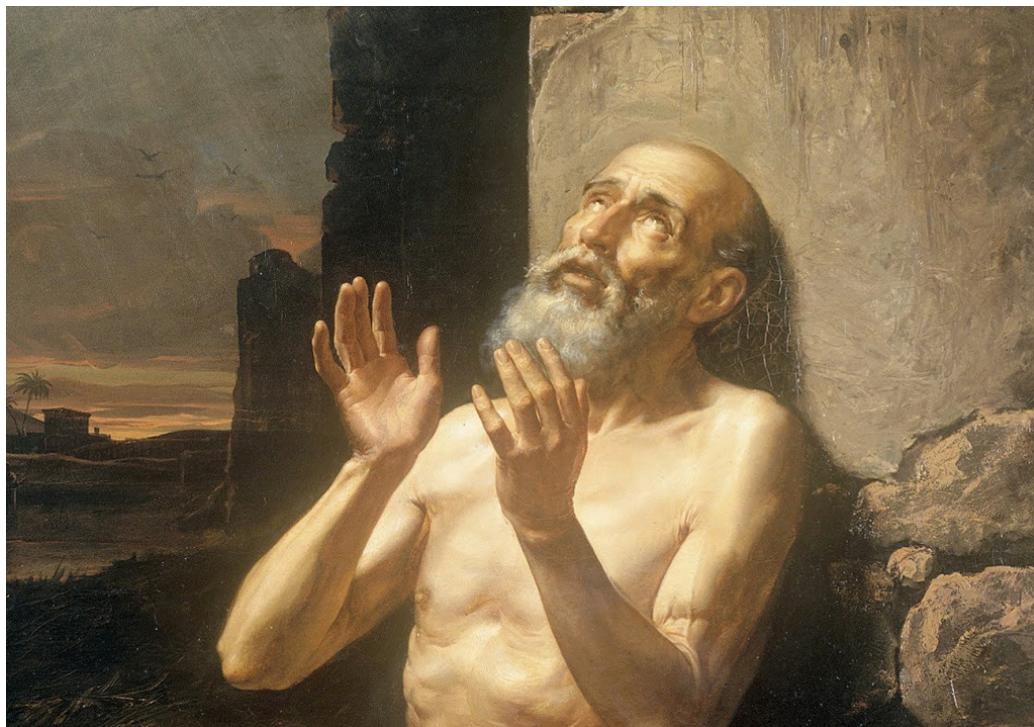
**Oh, that You would hide me in the grave, that
You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, that You would
appoint me a set time, and remember me!**

Job 14:13

The “wrath” here mentioned is elsewhere called the “curse.” Job was looking beyond the period of the permission of this “curse” or “wrath” to a time future, when the “curse” would be removed, and instead of it a “blessing” would come to every member of the race, himself included. As a Prophet he recorded his hope of a coming Redeemer: “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth.” Through this Redeemer’s work he realized that the “curse” would be abolished, and his prayer to be hid in Sheol, the grave, the tomb, was merely until the “curse” the “wrath” would be over—until the great blessing time, the Millennial Reign, should begin. His prayer continuing shows his hope of a resurrection, “that Thou wouldest appoint me a set time and remember me.” Then particularly referring to the resurrection, he says, SM525

**You shall call, and I will answer You. You shall
desire the work of Your hands.**

Job 14:15



Job on the Dunghill by Gonzalo Carrasco, 1881

When He gives quietness, who then can make trouble?
– Job 34:29 –

It is quite true that Job's trouble could not have come upon him if God had not permitted it. If God had wished him to have quietness, no one could have made him trouble. But He permitted trial to come to test His servant, just as He permits trouble to come upon His Church, and as He permitted it to come upon His well-beloved Son. He permitted that men should do all manner of evil against His Son—should scoff at Him, should spit upon Him, should smite Him, should scourge Him, and finally crucify Him. The Lord has not always given quietness in these cases, but often trouble.

The lesson of the text for those who have put themselves in God's care, is that no one can make them trouble without Divine permission. The Lord tells us that during this Gospel Age He will make all things work together for good to His children, and that He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, (1 Cor. 10:13.) In our Lord's case it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, to allow suffering and death to come upon Him. (Isa. 53:10.) It pleased God to adopt this Plan for the recovery of the world, because it best illustrates His Justice, His Wisdom, His Love and His Power. It also resulted in great honor and glory to our Lord Jesus.

As concerns the Lord's people, there might be certain matters relating to dispensational changes that could best be accomplished through severe trials coming upon them. Then, additionally, God wishes certain trials to come upon His people because He desires them to trust Him where they cannot trace Him. He wishes them to have unwavering faith in Him. The children of God, then, can take these words of our text in a very different way from that originally suggested to Job by Elihu. We may truly say, "When God giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" We recognize that there is a certain quietness and rest of heart that all the Lord's saints may enjoy. We realize this even when He permits severe trouble. The Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews says, "We who have believed do enter into rest." We enter into rest by coming into the attitude where we can believe, where we can and do exercise entire trust in God. R. 5878

**When all around our souls give way,
 He then is all our hope and stay.**



Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.

– Psalm 1:1-2 –

David, the Prophet, in the first Psalm, has significantly marked out the proper Christian course and its blessings and outcome. In the first verse he designates three classes from whom the Lord's people should stand aloof—three classes with whom, if they have fellowship, it will be to their detriment.

- (1) **The ungodly**, or more properly, the **wicked** (margin, Leeser, Young).
- (2) **Sinners**.
- (3) **The scornful**.

Applying this Psalm prophetically, it is proper that we should determine what classes of persons are meant by the **wicked**, the **sinners** and the **scornful**.

The “**wicked**” are to be looked for in the Church, and in harmony with this thought is our Lord’s parable which, referring to the Church and the talents bestowed upon its members, declares respecting the one who received the talent of the Lord, but failed to use it— “Thou wicked and slothful servant.” The “**wicked**” of this age would seem to be those who have enjoyed the light of divine favor, who have come to a knowledge of the truth, been made partakers of the holy spirit, etc., and who then, despite all these favors and blessings, and despite their covenant with the Lord to be his servants and to lay down their lives in his service, neglect the same. Those who would be of the class pronounced “**blessed**” of the Lord, in our text, must not follow the counsel of these “**wicked**,” but, on the contrary, should stand firmly by the Gospel of the redemption, and seek no other.

“**Sinners**” are mentioned as another class, separate and distinct from the “**wicked**” above referred to, and they are evidently a class whose transgressions are much less heinous in the sight of the Lord: these sinners we must look for in the Church also, not in the world. Since the world is not yet on trial there is nothing to demonstrate the standing of any of its people. The “**sinners**” of our text we would understand to be those who, without repudiating the covenant, without denying the Lord that bought them, and thus falling utterly from divine favor, are nevertheless failing to live according to the terms of their covenant, their consecration.

The “**scorners**” are designated as a still different class, and might possibly represent some not of the Church, but possessing more or less knowledge of holy things and rejecting them, speaking of them lightly and scornfully. The Lord’s people are not to be intimately associated with such, nor make them their companions and friends. They cannot have fellowship with such without receiving injury; hence, so far as possible the Christian is to avoid this class, in business partnerships, in society, and especially in marriage. No one who could speak lightly or scornfully of our Heavenly Father or of our Lord Jesus or of the exceeding great and precious things set before the Lord’s people in his promises, could be other than a hindrance to those who are seeking to gain the prize of our high calling.

[The “**blessed**”] see that love is the Law which must govern all of his conduct toward the brethren in Christ and toward all men; and he finds in this abundant and satisfactory food for reflection in his leisure hours. Such an one, the Lord declares through the Prophet, will be like a tree planted near rivulets of water, [Psa. 1:3] which will always be abundantly refreshed and never fail in his yield of the fruits of the spirit, which under such circumstances must grow and flourish exceedingly. And as his fruit will be abundant, so his leaf (his hopes) will be ever green; he can and will have faith in him who promised the coming blessings, and whose riches of grace he comes to appreciate more and more daily. R. 2698

He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither. And whatever he does shall prosper.

— Psalm 1:3 —

Some might suppose that one thus isolated would have an unhappy lot; but no, he is truly said to have a delightful experience. He delights day and night in meditating upon God's will and plan. In this he finds a joy and a peace which the world and a worldly church can neither give nor take away. One thus consecrated and full of the spirit of the Lord finds that God's laws of righteousness are not restraints which he would fain be freed from; but, like the Master, he can say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: thy law is engraven in my heart."



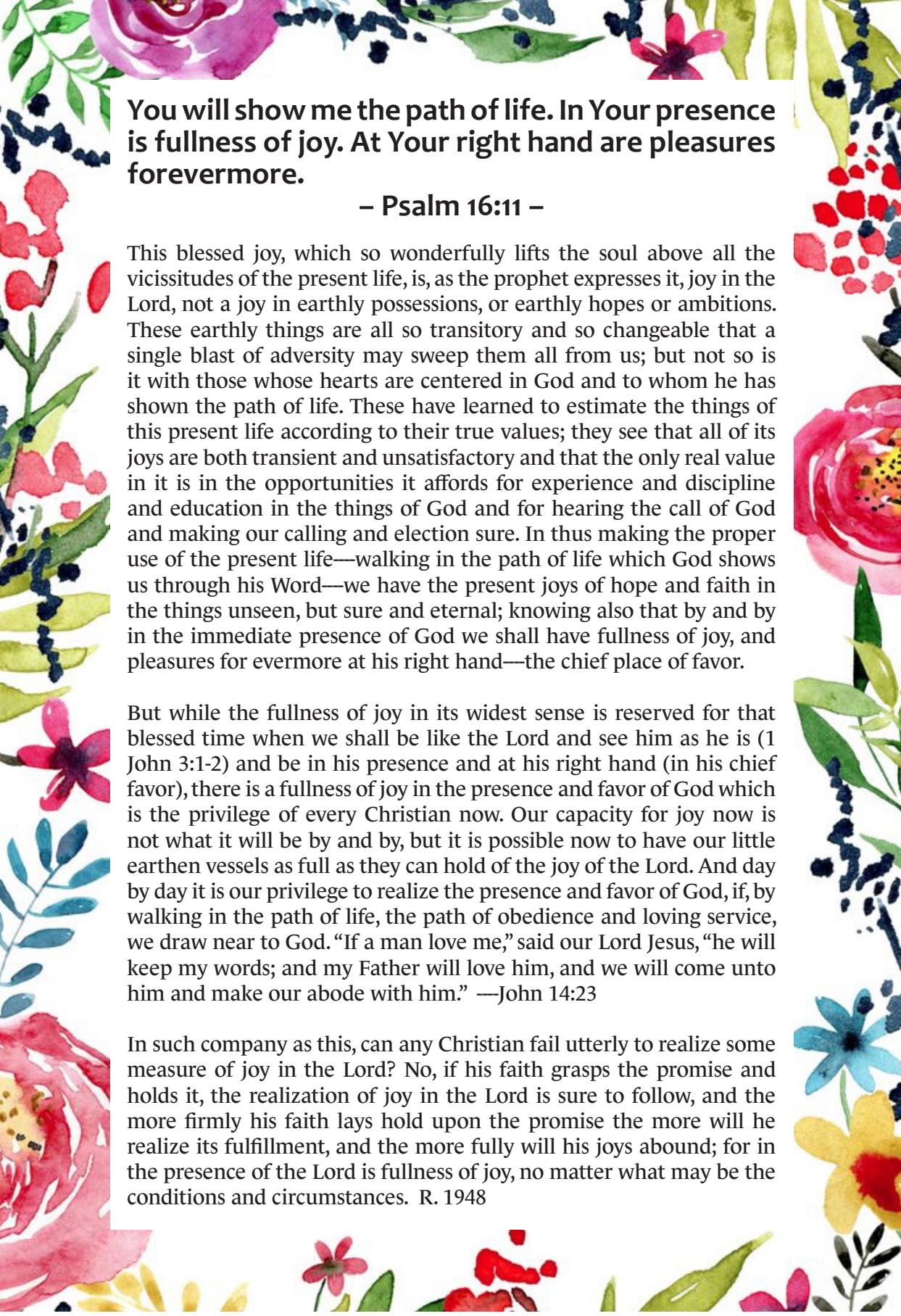
Such children of God as have reached this degree of development do not wither away and become dead and barren, but, since the root of their new life is fed by the river of God's grace and truth, they are always fresh and joyous and fruitful—adding to faith virtue, brotherly kindness, love, and so are not unfruitful in either the knowledge or the wisdom which surely comes to all who have communion and fellowship with God.

Such an one, the Lord declares through the Prophet, will be like a tree planted near rivulets of water, which will always be abundantly refreshed and never fail in his yield of the fruits of the spirit, which under such circumstances must grow and flourish exceedingly. And as his fruit will be abundant, so his leaf (his hopes) will be ever green; he can and will have faith in him who promised the coming blessings, and whose riches of grace he comes to appreciate more and more daily.

"All that he doeth shall prosper." This is literally true, though not, perhaps, in the way in which the world might view the subject. But what is it that such a child of God doeth? What is his aim?

What is his object in life? Wealth, fame, worldly honors? No, none of these. His aim, that which he doeth, that which he seeketh, is to glorify his Heavenly Father and eventually to attain to the glory, honor and immortality which God has promised to them that love him. (Rom. 2:7.) If then the Christian but attain these his objects, surely all his experiences will have been prosperous, and that abundantly. Surely indeed, all that he doeth shall prosper—not because of his own wisdom, not because of infallibility in the management of his affairs, but because his infallible Lord is supervising his interests, and outworking them for good to him.

They have no plans of their own: they desire that God's will shall be done. And since God's plan shall prosper (Isa. 55:11), their plan shall prosper; for his is theirs. R. 1383 and R. 2698



You will show me the path of life. In Your presence is fullness of joy. At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

– Psalm 16:11 –

This blessed joy, which so wonderfully lifts the soul above all the vicissitudes of the present life, is, as the prophet expresses it, joy in the Lord, not a joy in earthly possessions, or earthly hopes or ambitions. These earthly things are all so transitory and so changeable that a single blast of adversity may sweep them all from us; but not so is it with those whose hearts are centered in God and to whom he has shown the path of life. These have learned to estimate the things of this present life according to their true values; they see that all of its joys are both transient and unsatisfactory and that the only real value in it is in the opportunities it affords for experience and discipline and education in the things of God and for hearing the call of God and making our calling and election sure. In thus making the proper use of the present life—walking in the path of life which God shows us through his Word—we have the present joys of hope and faith in the things unseen, but sure and eternal; knowing also that by and by in the immediate presence of God we shall have fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore at his right hand—the chief place of favor.

But while the fullness of joy in its widest sense is reserved for that blessed time when we shall be like the Lord and see him as he is (1 John 3:1-2) and be in his presence and at his right hand (in his chief favor), there is a fullness of joy in the presence and favor of God which is the privilege of every Christian now. Our capacity for joy now is not what it will be by and by, but it is possible now to have our little earthen vessels as full as they can hold of the joy of the Lord. And day by day it is our privilege to realize the presence and favor of God, if, by walking in the path of life, the path of obedience and loving service, we draw near to God. “If a man love me,” said our Lord Jesus, “he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.” —John 14:23

In such company as this, can any Christian fail utterly to realize some measure of joy in the Lord? No, if his faith grasps the promise and holds it, the realization of joy in the Lord is sure to follow, and the more firmly his faith lays hold upon the promise the more will he realize its fulfillment, and the more fully will his joys abound; for in the presence of the Lord is fullness of joy, no matter what may be the conditions and circumstances. R. 1948

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever. The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

– Psalm 19:7-11 –

Here is the secret of a pure and noble life, acceptable to God. It is to be attained, not merely by prayers and righteous resolutions, but in addition to these, by careful, painstaking heed, by systematic and diligent effort at self-cultivation, by the careful and persevering weeding out of evil thoughts and the diligent and constant cultivation of pure, benevolent and noble thoughts, and by nipping in the bud the weeds of perversity before they bring forth their hasty harvest of sinful words and deeds.

But observe, further, that this heed or care is to be taken, not according to the imperfect standard of our own judgment, but according to God's Word. The standard by which we test our lives makes a vast difference in our conclusions. The Psalmist further commends this standard to us, saying: "The **law** of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." [That is, if we take heed to our ways according to God's law, it will turn us completely from the path of sin to the path of righteousness.]

The **testimony** [the instruction] of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple [the meek, teachable ones—clearly pointing out to them the ways of righteousness].

The **statutes** [the decrees, ordinances and precepts] of the Lord are right [the infallible rules of righteousness], rejoicing the heart [of the obedient].

The **commandment** of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The **fear** of the Lord is clean [not a menial, servile fear, but a noble fear, begotten of love—a fear of falling short of his righteous approval], enduring forever.

More to be desired are they [the law and the testimony of the Lord] than gold; yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned [concerning the dangers of the way and the snares of the adversary, and concerning everything which is calculated to discourage, or to hinder his growth in grace], and in keeping of them there is **great reward.**"

If we make the Word of God the theme of our constant meditation, its principles will soon be assimilated and become part of our mental make up, making our characters more beautiful and commendable both to God and to our fellow men; and in harmony with this habit of the mind the acts of life will speak. R. 1296

Let us constantly keep before our eyes the model which the Lord Jesus set for our example—that model of the complete fulfillment of the will of God, in which the whole law was kept blamelessly. Let us follow his steps of righteousness and self-sacrifice as nearly as a full measure of loving zeal and faithfulness and loyalty to God will enable us to do, and we shall have a blessed sense of the divine approval now and the glorious reward of divine favor in due time. R. 1296

The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.

– Psalm 25:14 –

The privilege of this “royal priesthood” to know “the Secret of the Lord,” to comprehend “the deep things of God” hidden from others, was beautifully symbolized and typified in the privileges of the Jewish priesthood. When the Tabernacle was set up, with its beautiful golden furniture, lamp stand, table of shew bread, golden altar, etc., all symbolizing spiritual things, they were covered over, hidden, not only from the ordinary Israelite, but even from the Levitical “servants” of the Tabernacle, who were not even permitted to look therein. The privilege of seeing those typical secret things, reserved exclusively for the priests, thus typified “the royal priesthood” and their exclusive privilege of understanding the mysteries of God, his Secret.

But our text adds, “He will show them his covenant.” This is stated as though it were a very important matter to see or clearly understand God’s Covenant: and it is an important matter, for God’s Covenant is really the key to the entire divine plan. What God promised to Abraham in the Covenant, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” included directly and indirectly all the riches of divine grace. Yet, how few see this. We do not say how few of the world see this, for we should not expect any appreciation of the divine Covenant on the part of “them that are without.” But we say, How few of those who have named the name of Christ, and nominally stand related to spiritual Israel—how few of these know or care anything whatever about the divine Covenant. R. 2209

The LORD is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident.

– Psalm 27:1-3 –

It was in view of the Lord’s providences and of his many deliverances from the power of his enemies, and of the uniform kindness and mercy of God as he meditated upon them, that David exclaimed, “The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?” This consolation, variously expressed throughout the Scriptures, comes with all its blessed potency in our times of greatest need: the more desperate and determined the foes we encounter and the more fierce the conflict with the powers of darkness, the more glorious is the deliverance and the clearer are the manifestations of divine grace. And, as a consequence, faith takes deeper root, and, with renewed confidence and assurance, lays hold upon all the precious promises of God; and love and gratitude well up from hearts refreshed with an increased sense of the divine favor and blessing.

So it was with David; and so it is with God’s **faithful** people who lead a life of prayer and faith and close fellowship with God. Such fellowship with God in adversity and in prosperity naturally

tends more and more to center the heart's affections and desires in God, until the one thing supremely desired and sought after is that expressed by the Psalmist—to continually dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple.

Psalm 27:4

To dwell continually in the house of the Lord signifies to be continually counted worthy and to be recognized of God as a member of his Church, "whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. 3:6.) These, who hold fast their faith, and by faith overcome the allurements and temptations of the world, dying daily unto its spirit, hopes and ambitions, and living more and more unto God—these shall indeed dwell in the house of the Lord, in his holy, spiritual temple, his Church, forever. Now they dwell in the holy place of consecration and adoption.

This one desire is the sum and substance of the Christian's ambition as more and more he becomes dead to the world and alive toward God. Let us more and more seek after it and conform to it; for in so doing Christian courage, boldness, fortitude and zeal will be greatly multiplied. These all are not only born of faith, but they increase and grow strong by a living faith developed and strengthened by the lessons of experience.

Courage, born of faith and strengthened by endurance, cries with humble boldness in the midst of the deepest darkness of the most perplexing difficulties, and in the midst of the wildest storms and most threatening dangers, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" R. 1915

The LORD will give strength to His people. The LORD will bless His people with peace.

– Psalm 29:11 –

This promise, that God will give peace to his people, seems to apply only to a peace of heart. Our Lord and the Apostles possessed it to such an extent that they enjoyed themselves much more than did their enemies. While Paul and Silas were in prison they sang praises to God, instead of berating the governments and threatening what would be done to them; instead of butting their heads against the bars and saying, "God does not care for us; we will go about our own business, hereafter." So with us. In proportion as we see matters from the Divine viewpoint and appreciate the precious promises and let them inspire our hearts, we shall rejoice in those promises, and our hearts will be blessed. Even if we have trials and difficulties that we are not able to surmount, if these are working out for us the fruits and graces of the Spirit, we may rejoice and give thanks for these evidences of God's love. "The Lord will give strength unto his people (his trusting, faithful servants, those who are using to his praise the talents consecrated to their Master, however many or few those talents may be); the Lord will bless his people with peace." R. 4818

Be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD.

– Psalm 31:24 –

The Lord's people have come into special relationship with Him and He with them. They are, therefore, to hope in the Lord, to trust in Him. They are to heed the things which He has said, and to take courage in the thought that their affairs are under His supervision. God's people have stepped out from the world and joined the standard of the Lord Jesus Christ—the standard of righteousness, truth, holiness, opposition to sin and the Adversary.

A courage from **right** principles, based on faith in the Lord, is not one of braggadocio, but a courage that is noble and pleasing to God. It has its source in a realization that **God has promised**, and that God is watching, and desires us to be joint-heirs with His Son in His Kingdom. He is merely testing us to see whether we will prove faithful. And this courage with us must also be to do things in the right way.

We are assured that we shall be strengthened in the “inner man” through the Spirit of the Lord. None have this particular kind of strength, that of the “inner man,” except those who have become New Creatures in Christ, to whom “old things have passed away, and all things have become new.” (2 Cor. 5:17.) With this particular Spirit-begotten class all of the Lord’s dealings are intended to develop character. R. 4817



Dear friends, be of good courage, of strong faith, of heroic determination, and see that your faith is not in yourself, nor in your vows, nor in your very best endeavors, but in the Lord. Trust in the Lord and the practice of your faith to control your thoughts and words and deeds and to bring you closer to our Father and Redeemer. We live in a time when worldly wisdom is taking hold of this need of courage and is advising people that it should be based upon self-confidence, self-assurance, self-esteem. This is the world's counterfeit, the Adversary's counterfeit of the true courage which the Word of God inculcates and through which we may not only rejoice in all of the present experiences of life, but ultimately “come off conquerors; yea, more than conquerors through him that loved us.” R. 4378 and R. 5330

The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them.

– Psalm 34:7 –

The Apostle assures us that the angels of God are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto and to serve those who shall be heirs of salvation, the saved ones of this Gospel Age—not only the overcomers of the little flock, but also the overcomers of the great multitude. All of these, because believers in Christ, because at heart faithful, because fully consecrated to the Lord and begotten of his Spirit, are the special and happy objects of his grace, ministered to and served by the invisible messengers. Our Lord Jesus sets forth practically the same thought in his declaration, “Their angels do always behold [have access to] the face of my Father.” (Matt. 18:10.) The Master’s words seem to imply at least one or more angels having charge over the consecrated ones, the very elect. He uses a still different figure of speech in illustrating the matter, as though he would assure us that these messengers would not be delayed in caring for our interests, would not be hindered by more important heavenly business, but would at once have direct access to the divine presence and attention, so that our interests would have all needed consideration.

Gathering together these various pictures, we have as a whole before our minds something like this: Our great all-wise, all-powerful heavenly Father has numberless messengers at his command, and has deputized and appointed many of these to care for the interests of his cause on earth—especially to watch over and minister unto the very elect. Nothing can by any means, therefore, harm these, except as the heavenly Father sees that the earthly injury or disadvantage would prove profitable either to the individual new creature or to the Lord’s general cause. This is in full accord with his general assurance that all things shall work together for good to them that love him. R. 3441

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way.

– Psalm 37:23 –

We believe the principle of our text should be considered in the daily lives of all the Lord’s people. Some may fail to see the particular interest which the Lord takes in each one who is His. Every true child of God is the Lord’s in the particular sense of having entered into a Covenant of Sacrifice. We should always remember this. Thus as we grow in grace we shall undoubtedly come to see that all “the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord, and He delighteth in his way.” “He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.” (Psa. 37:23; 34:20.) The Lord will surely direct the path of such. The Master emphasized His peculiar and personal interest in each of His followers. He calls Himself their Shepherd, and says, “He calleth His own sheep **by name**, and leadeth them out.” (John 10:3.) This means a very special supervision of the affairs and interests of each one of His true disciples. Whatever may come to these is not a matter of chance or luck.

Another Scripture gives us a suggestion respecting our part in the ordering of our steps. It represents the Lord’s people as praying, in harmony with the Lord’s provision, saying,

Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me.
Psalm 119:133

This is the proper course for the Lord’s people; to seek to walk carefully, circumspectly; to take

heed to the instructions of the Lord's Word, so that thus their mistakes, their blunders, may be fewer and fewer, as they grow in grace and grow in knowledge of the Lord. But meantime, in connection with all of the weaknesses and imperfections incident to our imperfect bodies, we all have need of special comfort and consolation which the Lord has provided us in our text. It is the source of weakness in many of the Lord's people that they do not properly grasp by faith this and similar promises; for only in proportion as they have this faith and grasp these promises can they be buoyed up by this, and be encouraged to press along the line for the mark.

The steps of the world are not ordered of the Lord. But God's people in proportion as they walk by faith and realize that "all things are working together for good to them that love God, to the called according to His purpose," in that proportion will they be able to have joy, blessing and peace in every experience that comes to them. R. 5711 and R. 3157

Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the LORD upholds him with His hand.

– Psalm 37:24 –

it requires time and a continual application of faith, in order to rightly appreciate God's promises, and to appropriate them to ourselves; and this is Scripturally called "growing in grace and knowledge." We grow in knowledge as we take note of the promises of God, and by faith apply them to ourselves, and seek to discern in our lives the fulfillment of those promises; we grow in grace simultaneously, for unless each item of knowledge be received into a good and honest heart, and bring forth its measure of obedience and righteousness (grace) we will not be prepared for the next step of knowledge, and would be thus stopped, or possibly turned back.

Though the child of God may stumble at times in the way, these will never mean to him an utter fall, because his hand is still held by the Lord! What a comforting thought is here! How well calculated it is to deliver the Lord's people from utter despondency in respect to themselves and each other! The all-important thoughts to be kept in mind are, Am I still the Lord's? Am I still trusting in the precious blood? Am I still consecrated to the Lord and his righteous way? If these can be answered in the affirmative we can still realize that we are God's children, and that our hands are still in his; that the spirit of begetting and adoption, which began in us the new life, has not perished; and that it is God's will that we should recover ourselves as quickly as possible from any stumbling, and looking well at the difficulties and trials which led us into it, we should fortify our characters against those difficulties as respects the future, and thus go on really stronger, because of our difficulties, and yet all the while realizing that our recovery from the difficulty was not of our own strength, but because of our trust in the arm of the Lord, to which we are still holding.

He will not let us go so long as we are striving to walk in his way; but will order our steps so that they shall bring to us the best blessing possible, and will recover us and help us in our stumblings, because we are seeking and delighting to walk in his way. We address those who are seeking the old paths; seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus; seeking to know and to do the Father's will, and whose discouragements are the result, not of willful wrong, but of the weaknesses of the flesh against which they are continually striving. These the Lord would have us encourage, and draw to their attention the precious promises of his Word, and his assurances that "as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitith them that reverence him." R. 3157

Many, O LORD my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done. And Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to You in order. If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

– Psalm 40:5 –



He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps. He has put a new song in my mouth—

Praise to our God!

Psalm 40:2-3

Looking back at the things that God already has done for us, we see that the Prophet has defined some of these, saying, “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.” (Verse 2.) If we can apply this heartily to ourselves, what a cause it is for thankfulness. As we look about us, and see the whole world lying in the Wicked One, without God and having no real hope, —merely vague impressions —and when we look back and see how the Lord has delivered us from the horrible pit of condemnation and sin, how he has had mercy upon us and delivered us, and established our feet of faith upon the rock foundation, Christ and his redemptive work, well may we give thanks, and tell his mercies all abroad. Looking back we may see that happy day that fixed our choice upon our Savior and our God, as being the time from which our goings have been established,—our course no longer vacillating. It was there that we obtained a fixed purpose, a ballast which has hindered us from being upset when tossed, hither and thither, by the varying winds of philosophy and human speculation.

Praise God for this which he already has done for us! No wonder, as the Prophet proceeds to say, we realize that “He has put a new song into our mouth, —even praise unto our God.” The new song is not one of doubt or of fear, nor concerning anguish of sinners; but a song of God’s Justice and Mercy and Love, —reasonable and harmonious in its every cadence. Thank God! It has brought a new life to us; a new pleasure in life, as well as new aspirations and new hopes for others as well as for ourselves. We can never thank the Lord enough for the blessings which we have already received at his hands, —for the things which he has already done for us.

And yet the things that we already enjoy of the Lord’s favor we are assured are but a foretaste of the blessings yet in reservation for them that love him—blessings which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to see or appreciate, but which God hath lovingly declared, and which we grasp by faith, seeing through a glass only obscurely, as yet, the glory, honor and immortality promised to the faithful. What we now have are not realities so much as promises and hopes. Present experiences being but the beginning of our comfort, we agree with the Prophet, that the number of God’s favors cannot be reckoned, computed. We are exceedingly his debtors; we can never discharge the obligation. But then we are his children; he is pleased to give us these things, and his request in return is that we shall act toward him in such a manner as will betoken our gratitude, and that we are indeed his offspring, begotten of his spirit. R. 3000

PSALM 46

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A Song for Alamoth.

1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.

3 Though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah

4 There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.

5 God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.

6 The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved. He uttered His voice, the earth melted.

7 The LORD of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.

8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, who has made desolations in the earth.

9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth. He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two. He burns the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

11 The LORD of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
– Psalm 46:1 –

From the time we become acquainted with the real facts of our case, we realize that a death sentence has been issued which involves each one of us. We realize, too, that justice has a full right to pursue us unto death because we have “all sinned and come short of the glory of God”; and because the “wages of sin is death.” The Apostle Paul points out this matter distinctly (Rom. 5:12), saying “By one man[’s disobedience] sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so [thus] death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” From the moment, therefore, that we recognize that we are sinners—that we could not stand approved in the divine presence, —from that moment we realize that the avenger, Justice, is upon our trail, and that it is only a question of time when we will be overtaken and destroyed unless we reach some place of refuge. As we flee we see finger-posts which God has set for our instruction pointing us to Christ as the only place of refuge, and to him we have to flee.

We are abiding now within the hallowed precincts of this salvation, deliverance, refuge, which God himself has provided for us; even as it is written, “It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?” And yet it is with us even as it is shown in the type, a place of refuge not from willful and intentional violation of the divine Law, but a refuge to cover our weaknesses and ignorance—the results of the fall.

**You shall appoint three cities on this side of the Jordan, and three cities
 you shall appoint in the land of Canaan, which will be cities of refuge.**
Numbers 35:14

As a thorough investigation was made in the type, so we may be sure that in our cases a thorough investigation of motives, intention, etc., will be instituted.

Fortunately for us, this refuge in Christ is specially intended for those who are “new creatures in Christ Jesus,” whose sinful course prior to coming to a knowledge of the Lord is accounted, not as intentional or willful, but, as of ignorance. Our responsibilities for willful sin may, therefore, be said to begin with and keep pace with our knowledge of the divine Law. Although acquitted as respects willful sin whose penalty would be the Second Death, it is necessary that we continue to “abide in him”—that we do not put off the robe of Christ’s righteousness. If we leave the city of refuge, —if we abandon our trust in the precious blood which cleanseth us from all sin, we become liable again to the demands of Justice and that without mercy. The entire arrangement is of God—Justice is the avenger of sin, and Christ is the refuge and deliverance. R. 3093

Our text pictures that coming “time of trouble” as a great “storm,” which will entirely remove, or change the earth, or the present construction of society, and carry the “mountains,” the kingdoms of this present time, into the sea of anarchy. God’s people will to some extent be associated with all of these troubles; but they are not to fear, they are to realize that God is at the helm. “When all around their souls give way, He then will be their Hope and Stay.” Although sharing with others in the great disaster, the troubles will not invade their hearts. With them will dwell faith in God and in the glorious promises of His Word, and they will be kept in peace thereby. R. 5059

God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.

– Psalm 46:5 –

The Apostle, in stating that the kingdom of God—the true Church, the elect—cannot be shaken, thereby intimates that it shall not be exempted from those blasts that shall shake and utterly remove all other organizations, but rather that the true, elect Church shall not be moved by them.

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Hebrews 12:28

Her foundation is sure. “God is in the midst of her, and she shall not be moved.” (Psa. 46:5.) As a matter of fact, we find ourselves today in the midst of these perilous and disintegrating influences. The storm is rising, and, as predicted, it is felt first by the Lord’s little flock of consecrated believers. Their faith and patience and zeal and endurance are being tried by every means that the adversary can devise. Every device of error is being put forth in its most pleasing and subtle form; and advantage is being taken of every weakness of the flesh to overcome those who are endeavoring to fight the good fight of faith and to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.

And when we consider that “we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph. 6:12), we realize that the contest is a very unequal one unless we lay hold upon the strength which God supplies to us through Christ.

The Apostle’s language further intimates that since only that which **cannot be shaken** will remain and will inherit the kingdom, all others will fall. And in this light the words of the Psalmist—“A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand”—are seen to be no exaggeration. Nor should the faithful few be at all dismayed when the various shakings sift out their number; for so it must be until only that which cannot be shaken shall remain. Thus the whole nominal church, both within and outside the various organizations, must be shaken until only the true and faithful remain; for God will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend. —Matt. 13:41.

It is this body of Christ, this spiritual house of Israel, which, though lashed by many a storm, nevertheless “cannot be shaken,” because it is firmly founded upon the Rock Christ Jesus: it is this house that Paul calls “the temple of God” (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19) that is to inherit the kingdom of God, and that Jehovah says he is going to fill with his glory. He will fill it with the glory of the divine nature: he will make every member of it like unto Christ’s glorious body: he will endue them with power from on high to execute faithfully all of the divine purpose for human restitution, and for the establishment of universal harmony and peace. Praise the Lord for such a prospect for both the Church and the world. May its inspiration be felt by every devoted heart. R. 3053

While assuring us that the nominal church will be utterly broken to pieces in this her *judgment day*, after, by her own strife of tongues, she has confessed her own blindness to truth and reason, her own nakedness, so far as the robe of Christ's righteousness, and her own unfaithfulness to her espoused Lord, God assures us it shall not be so with his true Church. Hidden for centuries in the great mass of tares of the nominal systems, the true Church as represented by its living members will now be manifested; although the world which knew not her Lord and Head will not recognize her worth or beauty. But the Lord knoweth them that are his, and will be gathering his elect ones out of the various divisions of Babylon, and will bless and feed them, while Babylon is falling. Hence now the cry, "Come out of her [Babylon] my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev 18:4.) The peaceful keeping of his true Zion, by the Lord, throughout this stormy day, of judgments upon civil, religious, social and financial systems, is shown in prophetic symbology in Psalm 46:1-11. R. 1548



In the Storm Jesus Walked on the Water by Julien@fineartamerica

As our Lord came to the disciples in the midst of the storm, in the fourth watch of the night (that is, in the early morning), so his second coming in the Millennial dawn is to the Church and to "help her," rescue her from her toil and weariness and peril, as the Prophet says, "The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (Psa. 46:5.) And as the manner of our Lord's coming to his disciples was different from that they had expected, so the manner of his second advent differs from what has been expected, and Peter would seem to represent a class living now, in the end of the age, who being fully convinced of the Lord's presence are privileged to walk to him by faith. But as Peter's faith was unequal to the occasion, except as the Lord came to

his rescue, so all of the faithful now will need the Master's hand stretched to their relief, otherwise they would sink in discouragement, because of the lack of faith.

Is there not a good lesson here for all who have been faithfully laboring in self-control, and in the Lord's service, to bring all their thoughts and words and doings into full accord with the will of God in Christ, and who experience from the world and the flesh and the Adversary serious opposition as the Lord's people? The lesson here, in harmony with its presentations elsewhere in the Scriptures, is that little progress can be made by the Lord's people until the Master himself shall join them; and that then their blessedness and privileges will be proportioned to the measure of their faith. How strongly this speaks to us, then, of continued faithfulness and of growth in faith, not in ourselves but in the Lord, and of his ultimate deliverance of all who put their trust in him. R. 2650

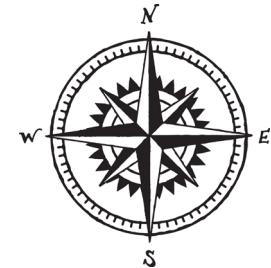
Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

– Psalm 48:2 –

There seem to be fewer stars in the North than in any other part of the heavens. Thus the North seems to have been given a very prominent position, the other points of the compass giving it homage, as it were. This fact was observed by the ancients, as the Prophet Job declares

**He stretches out the north over empty space.
He hangs the earth on nothing.**

Job 26:7



Throughout the Scriptures the North seems to be closely associated with Jehovah's government of the earth.

One watching the stars night after night, would observe that while each one has its own motion, yet all seem to revolve around a fixed point which we call the North Star. This fixed star is apparently motionless, and therefore is a point by which a man may gage his course. As we all know, the magnetic needle of the mariner's compass always points due north.

From the clearer astronomical knowledge of our day, it has been ascertained that while the planets of our solar system revolve around our sun, yet there are vast numbers of other suns each having its own retinue of planets, which with their satellites are revolving around it as a center. Furthermore, Science declares that there is a far mightier Center, around which these countless millions of suns revolve, accompanied by their planets and satellites. This great Center seems to be associated with the Pleiades, particularly with Alcyone, the central star of this renowned group. For this reason the suggestion has been made that the Pleiades may represent the Residence of Jehovah, the place from which He governs the Universe. This thought gives new force to the question which the Almighty asked the patriarch Job: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth the constellations of the Zodiac in their season?" —Job 38:31-32. R. 5710

God has a special dealing with His people—those who have already left the world, who have consecrated their lives to Him, who have been accepted through the Lord Jesus Christ and counted members of Christ's Body. These are in the way to a promotion, a prominence, greater than that of all others. Satan's ambition was for self-exaltation; Christ's ambition, on the contrary, was to please the Father and to do good. So likewise the class called to be Christ's associates in the Kingdom have a similar purpose and spirit to that of their Lord and Head.

This is the class which will receive the preeminence over all other classes, all other stations, in earth or in Heaven. With their Lord they are to receive glory, honor, immortality. They will be exalted far above angels and be granted the Divine nature, as has been their Master and Forerunner. (Rom 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:53-54; 1 John 3:2-3; 1 Cor. 1:26-27; 2 Thes. 2:14; 2 Pet. 1:4.) These will share the

First Resurrection, Christ's Resurrection. (Rev 20:5-6; Phil. 3:10.) Their mortal bodies, now merely the instruments of the New Creature, will be laid down forever in death—"Sown in weakness," they will be "raised in power"; "sown in dishonor," they will be "raised in glory"; "sown an animal body," they will be "raised a spiritual body."

Such is the great promotion which God purposes to give His true saints of this Gospel Age, and this promotion can be received from no other quarter than God Himself, on His own terms. This is the glorious inheritance of Zion. When she has been thus exalted and glorified with her Lord, it will be said of her, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North, the City of the Great King." (Psa. 48:2.) Thus the great eminence which Lucifer in his pride and presumption sought to grasp, that he might "sit upon the sides of the North," [Isa. 14:12-17] will be granted as a reward to The Christ, Head and Body. R. 5710



Polaris, known as the North Star, sits at the center of this image, which captures the movement of stars around the north celestial pole over several hours. Credit: Preston Dyches. NASA Science.

**I was so foolish and ignorant. I was like a beast before You.
Nevertheless I am continually with You. You hold me by my right hand.**
– Psalm 73:22-23 –

It is indeed impossible to understand this—to rightly appreciate the deep philosophy of God's plan of the ages and our **privilege** of trial and discipline under the present reign of evil—until we come into the sanctuary condition of entire consecration to the will of God, where the meat of the Word and the light of the holy Spirit are granted to us. Then, like the Psalmist (verse 22), we see how ignorant and foolish we were in being envious of the prosperous wicked. And though, in our former ignorance and foolishness, our feet were almost gone, and our steps had well nigh slipped, we have reason to thank God that he held us by the right hand and did not suffer us to fall. And in view of such care in the past, we joyfully and confidently trust him, not only in the midst of the present trial state, but also for the future outworking of his plan with reference to ourselves and all mankind. The Psalmist has well expressed the present confidence thus acquired, and the grateful adoration of all the consecrated or sanctuary class, saying:



You will guide me with Your counsel and afterward receive me to glory.

– Psalm 73:24 –

It will be noticed that this prophetic promise is not, "Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel" and *if* I will render obedience to the counsel, I will afterward be received to glory. On the contrary, the statement is made, not to nominal Christians, nor even to all who make a consecration to the Lord; it refers merely to those who will ultimately be overcomers and constitute the body of Christ, the glorified Church, the bride. The promise in other words is to the entire Christ, Head and body. Each member of the Christ will be guided by the divine counsel and as a result will be received to glory. **All who hear** the counsel of the Lord and are **guided** by it in this present time, will be ultimately accepted as members of the body of Christ, and as such will be received to the divine glory.

The Counselor is wise, infallible, unerring; he knows the end from the beginning, he knows exactly what will please himself; he knows therefore how to direct us in his way. His Word of counsel "is sufficient." His spirit is the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love, the spirit of the truth; and wherever this spirit dwells in the hearts of his people it must be through a conformity to his Word of counsel, his guidance. For all who thus put themselves completely under the Lord's supervision, and who resign their wills entirely to his will, there can be no question as to the result. Assuredly, such will afterward be received into glory. R. 1562 and R. 2242

Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Psalm 73:25-26

For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south. But God is the Judge: He puts down one, and exalts another.

– Psalm 75:6-7 –

The principle expressed in our text is operating now in the Church—the setting up of one and the putting down of another. That the Lord does take an active part in the affairs of the Church we truly believe. St. Paul says that

**God has set the members, each one of them, in
the body just as He pleased.
1 Corinthians 12:18**

This surely indicates a Divine supervision in the Church. We believe that a great deal of trouble is caused by the failure of many of the Lord's people to view matters from this standpoint. They are too apt to forget about the supervision and oversight which the Lord is taking of His Cause. Some therefore have felt great distress if they were not elected to be a Deacon or an Elder in the Church. Instead of looking at the matter from this viewpoint—that the Lord Himself has the supervision of the affairs of His Church—they are too liable to think, It was that brother who opposed me, or this brother, etc.

We believe that these take a wrong view. Perhaps the Lord permitted the matter to result thus in order to test their humility. The Apostle James intimates something of this kind: "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, and the brother of high degree in that he is made low." We should look beyond the mere circumstances of the moment; we should consider and remember well that all prominence, all promotion, and all control of the Church, is in the hands of the Lord. Not only might the Lord wish to give a lesson to a brother who might have been a faithful Elder or a faithful Deacon, but it might also be a good lesson to the Class. They might have failed to appreciate what zeal, energy and ability this brother had. If so, their neglect to reelect him to the position would in time prove a lesson to them. The same is true in the case of a brother who has energy, zeal and ability with spirituality, who has never been elected to eldership by the class.

In any event it is for each of the Lord's children to exercise faith, and to remember that real prominence, true exaltation, is of the Lord. R. 5711



Surely the wrath of man shall praise You. With the remainder of wrath You shall gird Yourself.

– Psalm 76:10 –

Men of energy and ambition are, more frequently than others, used of the Lord; because they are instruments **ready** for service. If the energy and ambition be thoroughly subjected to the Lord—controlled by high spirituality, humility and veneration toward the Creator, and with large individuality and independence of character and firmness toward men—it will lead to reverent and careful study of the Divine will and to persistence and assiduity in its prosecution. Such characters God is pleased to use for the great things of His service. Next to our Lord Jesus, the Apostle Paul is an ideal illustration of such a character: God was pleased to use him largely as a mouth-piece and as a servant of the Truth—in proportion to his humility, loyalty and energy.

And likewise, but in an opposite direction, God has been pleased to use the energetic and ambitious among the worldly—whose motive power was not love, loyalty and humility, but to the contrary—selfish pride, vainglory. God often uses such characters in another kind of service—causing their ambitious energies (“wrath”) to praise Him, and the remainder (beyond what suits His purposes) He restrains. Illustrations of this stamp of character are seen in Satan, in Judas, and in persons in less prominent positions in the Church—even today. These are active in planting “roots of bitterness, by which many are defiled” and sifted out, stumbled—leaving the remainder stronger and purer. It is doubtless as necessary that the Church be sifted, purged, tested, as that it be “built up”; and for either work God uses the ready and willing.

Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander and Napoleon are notable examples of the past—men of destiny, over whose affairs Providence had a supervision. God utilized the energies and ambitions of these men in the forwarding of His plans and in the fulfillment of His predictions—and their further ambitious efforts He restrained by His superior power, as it pleased Him.

The “Watchers” know, from the unfolding of the Scriptures which God has provided them, that astounding changes, social, religious, and political, are just before us. While the cries of Peace! Peace!! are still heard, will come the great cataclysm of social revolution which shall demolish all present institutions and demonstrate the futility of all selfish human schemes, and by heart-breaking discouragements prepare mankind for the great blessing which God has in store. The “Watchers” are on the lookout for every sign of the times seeming to harmonize with the known coming events. Indeed, our interest in the “news of the day” is chiefly with the fragments, which seem to have a connection with or a bearing upon the fulfillments of prophecy, knowing that God generally uses “a man of opportunity” for His work.

In the midst of the unsettled and unsatisfactory conditions of the past and the present, while the groaning creation waits for the establishment of God’s kingdom in the earth, how comforting to the hearts of them that believe are the words:

No creature is hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.
Hebrews 4:13

In far-seeing wisdom God has permitted all the present disorders, yet, in the end, even the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he restrains. (Psa. 76:10.) R. 5527 and R. 1408

The LORD God is a sun and shield. The LORD will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

– Psalm 84:11 –

As our sun he enlightens us and fills us with a sense of his greatness and perfection, and yet through Christ he is also our shield. After realizing the divine perfection from the divine law we might indeed feel that in our own imperfection it would be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But whilst showing us the perfectness of his law he reveals to us the shield which he has provided because of our present weakness—the merit of Christ our Redeemer freely imputed to all who will accept it as their covering or shield. To such as long for his courts and who wait at his threshold and who trust in him as both their sun and shield, even now “the Lord will give favor and honor [as his children—even though mixed with tribulation, working patience, etc.], and no good thing [nothing really advantageous to such and useful to fit them for the Father’s house] will he withhold from them that walk in uprightness in this way.” Yea, verily—“O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man [both now and forever] who trusteth in thee.” R. 1402

O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in You!

Psalm 84:12

Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound! They walk, O LORD, in the light of Your countenance.

– Psalm 89:15 –

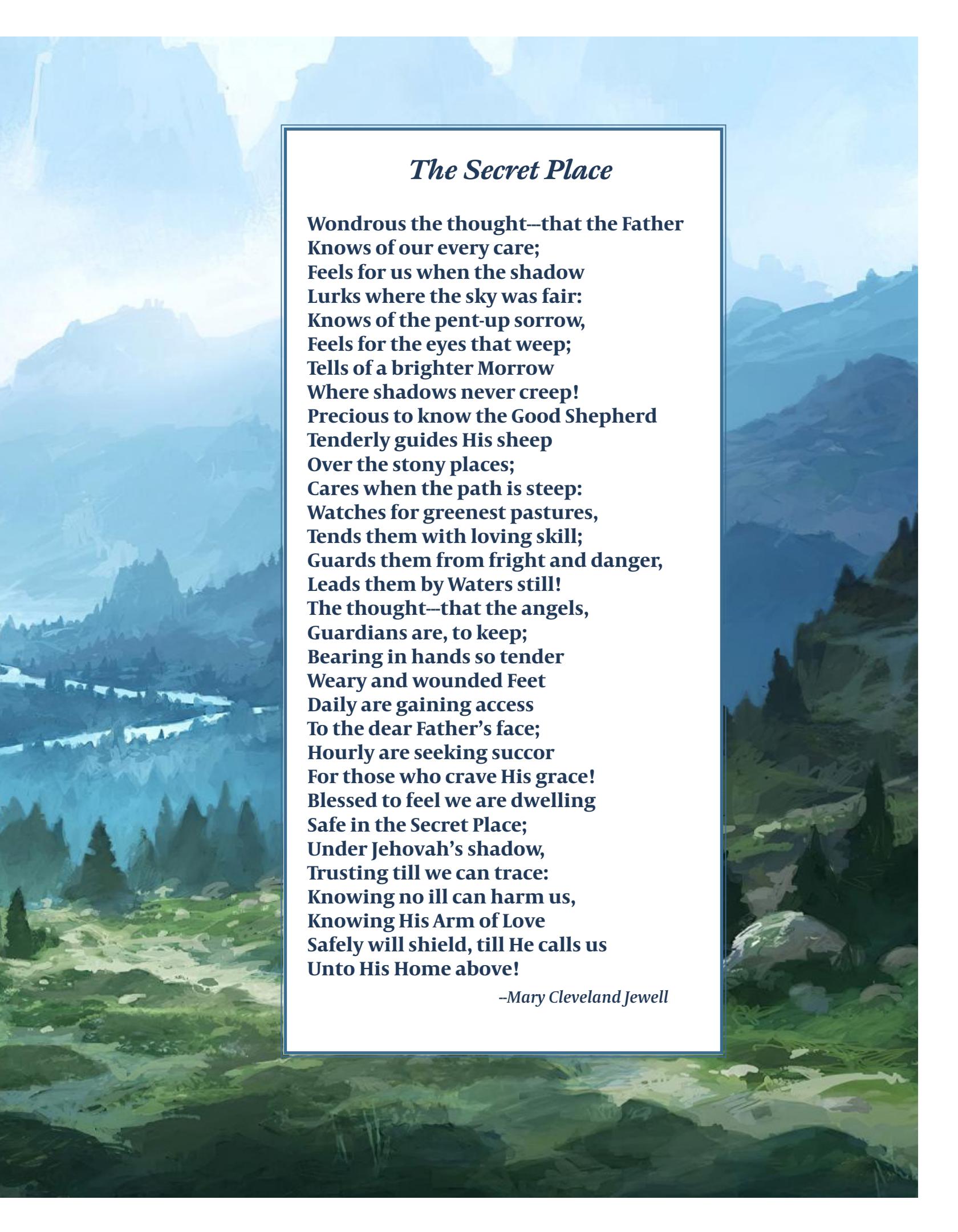
This joyful salvation sound is the Gospel, as declared by the angelic messengers—“Good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people.” But alas, how few have heard this joyful sound! [This verse] implies that in order to be of the people who will know the joyful sound it will be necessary to “walk in the light of God’s countenance.” Or, reversing the statement, the thought is that all who walk in the light of God’s countenance shall be his blessed people, and shall know the joyful sound.

What a lesson of holiness is here: not a lesson of human perfection and self-commendation to God, but a lesson of abiding in Christ under the robe of his righteousness, and of walking continuously with him and in the path of the just, which “shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” And whoever would walk with Jesus in the light of divine favor, in the smile of divine approval, must needs walk the narrow way of self-control and self-sacrifice—“even unto death.” Whoever delights in sin and sinful practices cannot walk in the company of Jesus, cannot be recognized as a member of his body or under his robe—can have neither part nor lot in this matter, whatever may be done with him or for him in the future age. As the Apostle expresses it, those accepted of Christ, and who would maintain affiliation with him, must remember that all of the “royal priesthood” are given the truth, not to make them vain or boastful, or heady and high-minded, but to purify them, and to sanctify them. He declares “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

We suggest to the friends of the truth the adoption of the precious words of our text as a talisman for the year, if not for the remainder of the pilgrim journey. We believe that these inspired words will help all who understand them to more and more measure up to the divine ideal which they present to our minds: “Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.” R. 2569 and R. 2570

PSALM 91

- 1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
- 2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress, My God, in Him I will trust.
- 3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.
- 4 He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge. His truth shall be your shield and buckler.
- 5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day,
- 6 nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.
- 7 A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not come near you.
- 8 Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked.
- 9 Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place,
- 10 No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling,
- 11 for He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.
- 12 In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.
- 13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.
- 14 Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him. I will set him on high, because he has known My name.
- 15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honor him.
- 16 With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation.



The Secret Place

Wondrous the thought—that the Father
Knows of our every care;
Feels for us when the shadow
Lurks where the sky was fair:
Knows of the pent-up sorrow,
Feels for the eyes that weep;
Tells of a brighter Morrow
Where shadows never creep!
Precious to know the Good Shepherd
Tenderly guides His sheep
Over the stony places;
Cares when the path is steep:
Watches for greenest pastures,
Tends them with loving skill;
Guards them from fright and danger,
Leads them by Waters still!
The thought—that the angels,
Guardians are, to keep;
Bearing in hands so tender
Weary and wounded Feet
Daily are gaining access
To the dear Father's face;
Hourly are seeking succor
For those who crave His grace!
Blessed to feel we are dwelling
Safe in the Secret Place;
Under Jehovah's shadow,
Trusting till we can trace:
Knowing no ill can harm us,
Knowing His Arm of Love
Safely will shield, till He calls us
Unto His Home above!

—Mary Cleveland Jewell

The 91st Psalm very clearly applies to the Church, and would seem to be especially applicable to the Church in the end of this Age. But since it is addressed in a personal way, as though to one person, it may be The Christ as a whole that is referred to, from the Head to the last member of the Body. Our Lord Jesus had trials and difficulties, and needed protection and care. He went to the Heavenly Father and sought the necessary aid. And so with all the Lord's people continually. R. 5437

**A thousand may fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand.
But it shall not come near you.**

– Psalm 91:7 –

Great will be the falling away from the Truth, even amongst those who, like ourselves, received it once with joy and who did for a time run well; but the Church, because of their loyalty and uncompromising faithfulness and because of the ample armor of Truth and righteousness, shall stand and not fall.

We are not to think of those who will be injured and who will fall ("A thousand at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand") as of the world, but rather as being friends of the Church; closely associated with the Church. The world could not fall from Divine favor, for it has not been in Divine favor. The whole "world lieth in the Wicked One," and, therefore, could not be overthrown. This verse seems to apply to those who were actually begotten of the Holy Spirit or who have assumed a position such as those begotten of the Holy Spirit; as, for instance, the tares which affect to be wheat. They never were wheat, and will not be garnered with the wheat class. Time will show that they are not of this class. So in this picture we see the fall of these in general and of the consecrated in particular. There is a distinction between the thousand falling at the side and the ten thousand at the right hand. We might infer that the one thousand may fall into total unbelief, and the ten thousand, the "great company," into the great time of trouble to wash their robes white and to purify themselves. They will be partakers with Babylon in her sins and have part in her great fall. —Rev. 14:18; 18:10.

None too extravagant is the prophetic declaration, "A thousand shall fall at thy side." Only the sanctified in Christ Jesus, copies of God's dear Son, will be able to stand complete in Him. These will be the very elect, and it will not be possible for them to be deceived and ensnared; for God will give His messengers a charge [message] for them ["present Truth"] and thus these "feet" of the Body of Christ shall be upheld that they stumble not. R. 4925

We are rapidly approaching a time of famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord. Those who have always fed on the husks of human theory and tradition will not be aware of this famine; but those who do know the Lord will begin to feel the pangs of hunger. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." The Lord will hear their cry for the bread of Present Truth and will send it to them by the hand of some of his willing servants. Verily they shall be fed and led into green pastures; because they are true sheep and under the care of the true Shepherd. —Psalm 23. R. 3295

Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.

— Psalm 91:9-10 —

Applying this to our Lord, we see that no evil befell him as a New Creature. All the things that happened to him were necessary. Without these he could not have fulfilled the calling that was given him. Similarly we, as New Creatures, as his followers, could never have attained to this calling except by the crucifixion of the Lord. “Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth.” —Col. 3:5.

Thus, through suffering, he learned obedience to the perfect will of God, down to the lowest depths of self-abnegation; and God permitted it so to be, because such proving was necessary, both for the development and the manifestation of that perfection of character which would be worthy of the high exaltation to which he was called. And so we also must suffer if we would be footstep-followers of the Lamb.

Our text has reference to only one class of [the Spirit Begotten]: the Body of Christ, representing the priestly order, the antitypical Melchisedec—Jesus the Head and the Church his Body. They have kept nothing back of their love and devotion; things may happen disastrous to their fleshly interests; but they remember that they are “not in the flesh, but in the spirit,” and realize that no outside influence can mar their real interest as New Creatures, nor hinder them, if faithful, from attaining to the glories of the Kingdom with their Lord and Head. They have entered into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and do not withdraw; they “abide in the secret place of the Most High”; they will continue unto the very end. It is to this class, and to all the things that may befall them, that the assurance is given—“There shall no evil befall thee.” R. 4767

If the very elect will be in danger, what must we expect respecting the world of mankind in general, and nominal Christianity? We must expect, as the Scriptures forcefully picture it, that many will “fall from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.” We must expect the number thus to fall from the faith to be large, as again it is prophetically stated, “A thousand shall fall at thy side; ten thousand at thy right hand—but it shall not come nigh thee, . . . because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation.” —1 Tim. 4:1; Psa. 91:7-9. We have the assurance of the Lord that there is but one place of safety at this time—into which more and more deeply we penetrate day by day. This place of safety is under the shadow of the Almighty, which figuratively signifies very close to the Lord. “No harm can come nigh that dwelling place,” so far as the New Creature is concerned. Trials, tribulations, slanders may be exercised against us according to the flesh, but these cannot harm us as New Creatures, nor even disturb our peace of soul, while we are close to the Lord. R. 2770 and R. 4331

He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

– Psalm 91:11-12 –

The Apostle Paul assures us that the angels of God are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto and serve those who shall be heirs of salvation, the saved ones of this Gospel Age—not only the overcomers of the “little flock,” but also the overcomers of the “great multitude.” Our Lord Jesus sets forth practically the same thought in His declaration, “Their angels do always behold [have access to] the face of My Father.” (Matt. 18:10.) The Master’s words seem to imply, at least, that one or more angels have charge over the consecrated ones, the “very elect.” Nothing can by any means, therefore, harm these, except as the Heavenly Father sees that the earthly injury or disadvantage would prove profitable either to the individual New Creature or to the Lord’s general cause. This is in full accord with His general assurance that all things shall work together for good to those that love Him.

—Rom. 8:28.

To which of the angels has He ever said: “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, TILL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES YOUR FOOTSTOOL”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

Hebrews 1:13-14

Such a use of the heavenly messengers by no means invalidates the thought that the Lord’s earthly children are frequently used of Him as ministers, servants, the one to the other. Indeed, we may be assured that the invisible messengers or servants, generally, if not always, are required to act through human instrumentalities—preferably through “the very elect.” Of this kind of service done by the brethren, one for the other, we have illustrations in the Harvest work, for instance—supervised by our present Lord and His heavenly hosts, yet in the maincarried on by the members of His Body still in the flesh.

How do such messengers bear up the feet of Christ? By helping them to a clear understanding of the Truth, and teaching and encouraging them by word and example how to be faithful to the Truth, and how to run so as to obtain the prize of our high-calling. While doubtless the heavenly messengers are connected with this work, yet it is surely done through the Church in the flesh. R. 4926

Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him. I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honor him.

– Psalm 91:14-15 –

The Lord has already told us in His Word that we are to rejoice even under tribulation; for tribulation, rightly received, will work out for us a “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” So while the Lord does not promise us that we shall escape trouble, He does promise that with the trouble He will give His children consolation of heart, sustaining grace, that will enable them to rejoice in the midst of their tribulation. (2 Cor. 4:6-18; 12:9,10; Isa. 43:1-2.) This was exemplified in our Lord Jesus and in the Apostles. Paul and Silas were able to sing praises to God in prison with their feet fast in the stocks and their backs bleeding from the whippings which they had received. They could rejoice in tribulation for Christ’s sake. The Lord is ever with His people; therefore they should not be discouraged. His children have the comfort and assistance of the letter of the Truth and the spirit of the Truth. But they have all these blessings only in proportion as they are willing to exercise faith; for the glories promised are not yet theirs in reality; these are theirs only by promise now.

The deliverance of the Lord’s saints, in the fullest sense of the word, will be by their participation in the First, Chief Resurrection. Our Lord Jesus was delivered from all His trials and afflictions when He was raised from the dead. The promise to the Church also is that we shall be delivered when our resurrection “change” shall come to us. “Sown in weakness,” we shall be “raised in power”; sown an animal body, we shall be “raised a spiritual body.” This will be the full deliverance, and with it will come the promised honor and exaltation.

There are deliverances, of course, for the children of God at the present time, according to our need. And the Lord gives us a certain kind of honor, but not usually the kind of honor that the world appreciates. This honor may come mixed with such tribulation as would make it not desirable in the world’s eye. But the honor that will come to the saints in the end will be such as all will know and will appreciate. All the members of Christ will share in the Kingdom glories and honors with their Head. He and the members of His Body glorified will reign in the Father’s Kingdom, and will be associated together throughout all eternity in the great work of God. R.5757

With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation.
Psalm 91:16



Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.
– Psalm 97:2 –

What a glorious vision we have of the divine justice, which we promptly recognize as the very foundation of God's throne (Psa. 97:2), as well as the foundation of all our present and future security. If we could not recognize the justice of God we could have no assurance that his gracious promises would ever be fulfilled; for we would say, Perhaps he will change his mind. But, on the contrary, we can say, He changeth not, and whatsoever he saith shall surely come to pass. See with what inflexible justice the sentence upon our sinful race has been executed! Generation after generation, for over sixty centuries, has witnessed it; and no power in heaven or earth could revoke that sentence until the claims of justice had been fully met by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Justice, says the Word of God, must be maintained inviolate at any cost. And herein we read not only our rightful condemnation as a race of sinners, but also our final, complete and glorious deliverance, because "God is just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9), since the precious blood of Christ redeemed us from the curse of death.

And while we thus read justice in the character of God, and mark with what scrupulous care he regards and respects this principle in all his dealings with his creatures, we see how he would have us respect the same principle in all our dealings. Thus we are led to consider what is the exact line of justice in this and that and the other transaction; and to remember also that this must be the underlying principle in all our conduct: or, in other words, that we must be just before we can be generous. This principle should, therefore, be very marked in the character of every Christian.
R. 3656

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases.

– Psalm 103:2-3 –

[This text] from the Psalms is most interesting. The Prophet David may have appropriated the words to himself as a Jew, and may have thought of his own physical healing and blessing as evidences of the Lord's favor under the Law Covenant. But the prophetic application of this Psalm to spiritual Israel is still more interesting. The spiritual Israelites are New Creatures, and have this treasure in earthen vessels.

With these it is the New Creature that recognizes his healing, his forgiveness, his reconciliation to God; and, according to God's promise, all things are working together for good to him, because he loves God and has been called according to the Divine purpose. Continually the New Creature has cause to exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases!" St. Paul, carrying out this same thought, declared that the great Redeemer will ultimately present His Church before the Father faultless and perfect in love— "sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spirit body." We shall be like Him and see Him as He is and share His glory. R. 4981

The work of Christ for the Church, of blotting out sins and healing all blemishes or diseases of mind and body, will not be complete until the Millennial morning; and this Psalm must be understood from this standpoint. It cannot be understood from any other standpoint, for in no other way is it

true. Those who have received physical healing either by “gifts” or “prayers of faith” have never yet been completely healed of all their diseases. At very most they receive a temporary blessing and must wait until the “Morning,” when the Redeemer shall heal all the diseases of all his people by giving them the bodies prepared for those who love God. R. 2028

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him.

– Psalm 103:11 –

The Lord does not wish to awaken dread in the hearts of those who do love him and seek to know and to do his will. Hence when these find that their lives are imperfect, much as they desired and endeavored to have them otherwise, they are not to be in fear of the “wrath” and “vengeance” which are to be let loose upon willful sinners in due time. Ah, no! God considereth our frame; he knows our weakness, and as the Apostle declares, we shall be saved from wrath through Him (Christ, our Redeemer). Toward all such as love and reverence him, and who are in covenant relations with him, and hence under the blood of the new covenant, God’s compassion is far beyond that of an earthly parent. As high as the heaven is above the earth, so great is his love for such, and as far as the east is from the west, he has removed their transgression—laying our sins upon his own spotless Lamb, our Redeemer, and imputing his purity to all who will accept it, as in due time this gift of love is testified to all. And not only does God’s blessing rest upon these his “saints,” but in some degree it follows even to their children. R. 1403

As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Psalm 103:12

As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust.

– Psalm 103:13-14 –

The Lord has promised grace sufficient in every time of need, to the faithful. He tells us that He knoweth that we are dust; He remembereth our frame, that we cannot do what we would like to do. But at the same time He requires that we do all that we are able to do, assuring us that for all such His grace will be sufficient; that is to say, to all such He will make up the deficiency.

How loving and tender is our God, and how wise and strong! His promises have never failed those who have put their trust in Him. We may feel that our efforts to be good and to do good are very unproductive, that the opposition from without and within is very strong. But it is when we are weak, when we realize our own helplessness and incompetency, that we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. It is then that we may realize that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. The fact that we are weak and lame does not separate us from the love and power of our God, while we are striving to do His will; for “He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust.” R. 5437 and R. 5803

He calms the storm, so that its waves are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet. So He guides them to their desired haven.

– Psalm 107:29-30 –

If there is anything in the world which causes a man to feel his own littleness it is a storm at sea. The voyagers realize that no human arm could calm that storm. The text here, then, refers to the Almighty One, our Heavenly Father. Our Heavenly Father, however, always uses instrumentalities. The Scriptures tell us that after He had created one great being, He rested. This One was the Logos, the Only Begotten of the Father, the First-born of all creation. (Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:14.) All the power the Father has since exercised has been through the Lord Jesus.

The passage of Scripture used as our text may not have been understood fully and completely by the Psalmist, the one who uttered this prophecy. Like many other Scriptures it has a special application to the Church of Christ. The Apostle Paul tells us that these things were written beforehand for our admonition, instruction. (1 Corinthians 10:11.) We believe that nearly all the prophecies recognize the Lord and His Body first.

Psalm 107:1-43 seems to be prophetic, tracing to a considerable degree the experiences of the Church of Christ throughout this Gospel Age. It may be applied individually and also in a worldwide, international way. The cause of all the trouble in the world is sin. There might be various ways of trying to remove the difficulty, but God in His Wisdom arranged the one Plan. He will permit sin to bring storms and difficulties of life so that humanity shall be tossed about, and thus learn to appreciate our great Savior, whom God has provided to be the Great Deliverer of the Church and of the world. The whole matter has been arranged in a judicial manner, and in due time Christ will have the full right to bid all storms to cease and to bring order out of confusion. Yet this must await the Divine appointment. During the present Age the Church class has been selected, and the storms and difficulties of life have been valuable to them in developing faith, hope, patience and in preparing them for the Kingdom honors, privileges and opportunities.

It is ours as God's people to favor peace and righteousness and to live in harmony with these conditions. But it is ours also to know what is coming on the world—more, it is ours to know the outcome, to know something of God's Truth. The Lord has already given us an inward peace which no outward storm can affect. We are trusting in the promises He has given. We realize what the present condition is, and rejoice that the Church will soon be glorified. What a lasting peace and joy will then be ours beyond the veil! This realization brings into our hearts even now great rest of soul, a great calm! We remember that God is able to make **all things** work together for good to us, and He has **promised** so to do; therefore we may have blessed experiences coming out of these stormy times and trials of life. The Lord has a peculiar way of bringing **peace** to His people—not usually by interference with people of the world. The storms of life may go on just the same as ever; our way may be just as thorny as ever. But the Lord speaks peace to us! We hear His Voice, the Word of God! By the knowledge He gives us, by His precious promises, He assures us of His Wisdom, His Love, His Power, and of His loving purpose for His people. These things give us peace and rest of heart in the midst of outward trials and trouble. He makes known to us also His great Plan for the world in general. He informs us now of the significance of the present conditions and of the glorious outcome of the great trouble about to break upon the whole world.

Whoever is wise will observe these things, and they will understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

Psalm 107:43

Satan knew that Jesus and the disciples were in the boat on the sea. Perhaps he thought that by causing this storm he could destroy Jesus and thwart the Father's Plan. Jesus rebuked the storm. This He would not have done, we suppose, if it had been caused by the Father. Then He applied the lesson to the disciples, saying, "O ye of little faith, why did ye doubt?"

The Lord's evident intention in letting the storm go as far as it did was to test the faith of the disciples, and to give a lesson such as this text is giving us now. It would cause them to remember in future years, in all their difficulties, whether from their own imperfections, or the imperfections of others, or as the result of the work of fallen angels, that all things were under Divine oversight. This also we should remember: We have the assurance that all these things will work for good to us, and that He will with the temptation provide also a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. ---1 Cor. 10:13.

This was illustrated in the storm on the sea, and the Lord's act in rebuking the storm. So if we have trials and difficulties, we should cry unto the Lord—we should exercise faith enough to cry unto Him. It should not be that blind faith which would say, "Whatever the fates have ordained, that is my portion; and there is no escape." This latter is the condition of the heathen, but is not the case with us. The Lord allows the storms to press us more and more so that we will cry unto Him. Then He will hear us and give us the necessary deliverance. He may not always make it a very speedy deliverance, but He will make a way for us to escape. We must remember also that it is the New Creature with which He is dealing. These storms may be right *inside*, in our own person—storms of passion, of anger, of resentment. These we are not to allow to go on; but we are to cry for the Lord's help, that we may be overcomers of these storms—trials. R. 5239

From the time we have the Lord's presence we have peace, and ultimately He brings us to the desired haven of Heavenly rest. Applying the picture to the Church collectively it is equally fitting: Storms and trials have beset the way of the Lord's faithful all through the journey from Pentecost until now. In the morning watches He has appeared. In the light of His Word we discern His presence. Our hearts are comforted; the storms and billows of life have no terror for us in the presence of our Master, in whom we trust. As He takes His seat in our midst we find ourselves at the close of the journey, at the desired haven. We have not yet fully reached that consummation except by faith. We are still nearing the port; but the realization of the Lord's favor and presence is our comfort and our strength. Let us continue to the end of the journey, and presently we shall effect our landing on the other side the veil. That will be glory for us, that will be satisfaction, that will be more than heart could wish or tongue could tell. R. 5239, R. 5695, SM748

**As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness.
I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.**
Psalm 17:15

He shall drink of the brook by the wayside. Therefore He shall lift up the head.

– Psalm 110:7 –

[This verse] refers directly to our Lord Jesus, and secondly to all the members of the church, his body, each one of whom must share his experiences—walking in his steps and drinking of the same “brook,” if they would in due time share with their Lord in his exaltation, to glory, honor, and immortality; this exaltation being represented in our text by the expression, “lift up the head.” In ancient times as at present, human language was full of figures and symbols, water representing truth, and drinking of water representing appropriation of the truth, namely, wisdom (See Pro. 18:4); and lifting up the head, exaltation. —See Gen 40:13. Our text is given as the reason for the glorious blessings and honors predicted of the Christ and described in the preceding verses of the same psalm.

Psalm 110

1 The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”

2 The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

3 Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power. In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.

4 The LORD has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

5 The Lord is at Your right hand. He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath.

6 He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries.

7 He shall drink of the brook by the wayside. Therefore He shall lift up the head.

Verse 1: The first verse is directly applied to our Lord by the Apostles (Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13; 1 Pet. 3:22), and our Lord applied the same to himself. (Matt. 22:44.) A figure of speech is again employed, descriptive of our Lord's relationship to the Father in Glory; he is not literally seated beside him at his right hand, but he has been honored with a superior station, a position above all others—he specially is at the right hand of divine power. Nor does his second coming hinder or change this relationship; at his second coming he will still be at his Father's right hand as he himself, declared (Matt. 26:64.) At the Father's right hand during the Millennial Age, the Father, through him, shall subdue all things to himself—put down all opposing authority and insubordination; blessing those who come into heart-harmony with his kingdom of righteousness.

Verse 2: The description of the Millennial Kingdom is continued by the Prophet, who declares, "Jehovah shall send the rod of thy strength out of (or through) Zion" —primarily the Church, the "Bride," the "body" of Christ; the rod or sceptre or authority shall be exercised through the Church, by the Lord Jesus the Head of the Church, under the divine commission,— "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." This is not in any measure fulfilled yet. Jesus when in the flesh did not rule in the midst of his enemies, and the Church has not thus ruled; on the contrary, both he and his followers have been subject to the powers that be, and the violent have taken the kingdom by force and have despitefully used the Head and the body members. (Matt. 11:12.) The enemies are not yet made the footstool of the Lord, Zion has not yet been glorified, and Messiah's sceptre or authority has not yet gone forth therefrom. On the contrary we are still in "this present evil world," we still wait for the completion of the elect Church that together she may be glorified with her Lord—enter into His glory—when he, the due time having come, "shall take unto himself his great power and reign;" —then the nations will be angry, etc., (Rev. 11:18) and divine wrath will come upon them; and following that "day of wrath" shall come the promised blessing, upon all who shall demonstrate under the good opportunities of that Millennial Kingdom, that they love righteousness and hate iniquity.

Verse 3: This latter class—those who during the Millennial age, during that day of his presence, shall become the Lord's people (1 Cor. 15:23) —are referred to by the Prophet when he says,—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The day of his power is not yet here, as the poet declares: "Wrong and evil triumph now." The "Prince of this world" still rules and is "god of this world" as the Apostle asserts; because our Lord has not yet taken to himself his great **power** nor begun his reign. The people who shall be willing in the day of his power are not, therefore, the saints of this Gospel age: these latter are only the "first fruits unto God of his creatures" and are willing before the day of his power—willing to hear the Shepherd's voice and to follow him; willing to sacrifice all and to lay down their lives in his service, for the brethren.

Evidently, therefore, those referred to as "Thy people" who shall be willing in the day of Christ's power, the Millennial Age, are those whom our Lord represents as his "sheep," in the parable of the sheep and the goats. They are those who after the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of his glory, and after his Church is seated with him in his throne, and after the judgment or trial day for the nations, the world, is ended, —after the knowledge of the Lord has filled the earth, after it has gradually proved the savor of life unto life, or death unto death to the world, shall be found truly "his people," —willing, nay, glad to serve him when they know him and understand his will. As his sheep they will desire to follow in the way of righteousness, truth and holiness; as his people they will not need to be coerced further, but learning the truth in the day of his power, when the adversary is bound and when the eyes of their understandings are opened, they will be

willingly his people. And all who shall not then become willingly his people will be esteemed his enemies, "goats," angels or messengers or servants of the adversary, and be destroyed with him in the Second Death.

"In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." That is to say, as morning after morning comes forth fresh and vigorous as its predecessor, as the sun grows not old and feeble, so with Messiah, and so also with those accepted as the members of his body, they will have perpetually the freshness and vigor of youth, —glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature—this is part of the blessing that is promised, and which will result, our text tells us, from drinking of the brook in the way.

Verse 4: Having told us of the kingly power and authority of Messiah, it is appropriate that the Lord through the prophet explains to us that Messiah's priestly office is to be also of a higher type than the earthly, —that his priest and kingly offices are to be blended and united as was typified in Melchisedec, who was both king and priest. Our Lord when on earth was not of the Aaronic priesthood, nevertheless, Aaron was his type, and the sacrifices which Aaron performed were typical of the "better sacrifices" performed by the antitypical priest, in the laying down of his own life and in the consecration and sacrifice also of all those who are his during this Gospel age, who thus "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." By and by our High priest will have completed all that was illustrated in the Aaronic type, he will have finished the Day of Atonement sacrifices, and then the glory promised will follow, —instead of a suffering priesthood there will be "a royal priesthood" —a reigning priesthood. —1 Pet. 2:9; Rev 5:10.

Verses 5 and 6: Then follow assurances that this glorious priest-king will prosper, that his reign of righteousness will be successful; the assurance being that God will be at his right hand supporting him and bringing matters to a successful issue,—smiting down kings and wounding the heads over many countries, and subduing all things mightily. The great day of trouble coming is very generally referred to as "the day of Jehovah,"* the day of His wrath, although it will be under the direct supervision of our Lord Jesus, for the purpose of introducing and establishing his Millennial dominion.

These, foregoing, descriptions of the greatness of Messiah and his kingdom, lead up to our text; and it, as before suggested, is given as the reason why so great blessings, honors, and dignities and authority are conferred:

**He shall drink of the brook by the wayside.
Therefore He shall lift up the head [be exalted].**
Psalm 110:7

Our dear Master's time for drinking at the brook is past, yet the lessons and encouragements therefrom are still before us in the Scripture records. It is now our time to drink of the brook of experience, —to learn the lessons that are necessary to our preparation for the Kingdom. It is not enough that we have tasted of the brook of experience, that we have learned something of obedience, that we have endured some trials, that on some occasions we have learned obedience through the things we have suffered; we must continue drinking until we can gladly say—Father,

thy will, not ours be done! If we drink not of the brook in the way we shall not share in the glory to follow.

Drinking of the brook does not, however, imply that we sorrow and are disconsolate above others; on the contrary, those who drink of the brook properly are full of joy. As the apostle declares, they are enabled in everything to give thanks unto God,—in life's difficulties, as well as in its pleasures —even as he again says, Count it all joy when ye fall into divers difficulties, knowing that under divine providence they will work out for you a greater blessing. (James 1:2.) It is the world, which must also share its part of life's difficulties, that sorrows as those who have no hope, or who have false hopes. [The Apostle] explains the position of God's people, begotten of his spirit, who are walking in the Lord's footsteps, and drinking of the brook in the way, saying, "We ourselves also groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of the body"—the body of Christ, the Church. This hope, which we have, gives a changed coloring and silver lining to every dark and troubled subject which comes to us in common with mankind; so that inspired by draughts from the brook we can sing in the house of our pilgrimage, even though as yet we must also groan, because we are in this imperfect tabernacle, this unsatisfactory mortal body.



We want to ask the Lord, our Master and Head, that he will bless us more and more, as with fresh zeal we shall endeavor faithfully and rejoicingly to drink of the brook of life's experiences, and gain wisdom therefrom. Let us, as we drink of the brook, take a lesson from the little birds, which when drinking repeatedly lift the head as though giving thanks to God. Let us continually give thanks to our Lord for every taste of life's experience, for every lesson, for every trial—appropriating them all to our spiritual development. The time for lifting up our heads in glory is nearing, too, and already the Master directs that, seeing (with the eye of faith) the evidences of their approach, we may lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh. —Luke 21:28. R. 2935 and 2936

There is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.
– Psalm 130:4 –

While we are waiting for our deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive them should be a matter of deepest concern; for according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or its adversity and trial bear to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increases or friends multiply or a large measure of earthly joy comes to us, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in the things of earth! But when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment is felt, when riches or health fail, when friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural tendency is to despondency and despair.

Just here is a very important part of the great warfare of the Christian's life. He must fight the tendencies of his old nature and must confidently claim and expect the victory, in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not yield to the alluring influences of favorable outward conditions, neither must he sink beneath the weight of trials and adversity. He must not permit any experience in life, however hard and painful, to sour and harden him or make him bitter, morose or unloving. Nor may he allow pride or love of show, or self-righteousness, to feed upon the temporal blessings which the Lord in His loving providence has given him to prove his faithfulness as a steward.

Sorrow and griefs may, and perhaps often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord will be our Stay and Strength in every experience which He permits. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the joy and preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow and grief, when we draw near to the Lord, that He draws especially near to us. So the Psalmist found it, when in his deep affliction he cried to God, saying,

**Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD! Lord, hear my voice!
Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.**
Psalm 130:1-2

Feeling his own weaknesses and shortcomings, longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying of the bountiful provisions of the Divine Plan of Salvation through Christ, he adds, "If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities [imputing them to us], O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared [reverenced]." —verses 3,4.

How precious are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities, of its utter inability to fully measure up to the perfect law of righteousness! How blessed it is to know that when our hearts are loyal and true, our God does not mark against us the unavoidable blemishes of our earthen vessel! If we come daily to Him for cleansing, through the merits of our Redeemer, our failures are not imputed to us, but freely forgiven and washed away. The perfect righteousness of our Savior is our glorious dress, arrayed in which we may come to God with humble boldness, courage—even into the presence of the great Jehovah, the King of kings and Lord of lords. R. 5802

It is when continued trust in the Lord and His many responsive providences in our lives have ripened into precious personal acquaintance and intimacy that we learn to delight in Him. Yes, it is when heart answers to heart, when pleading prayer brings recognized answers of peace, when the Divine love and care have been clearly seen in the guidance of our way, that we can recognize the abiding presence with us of the Father and the Son. Then, however dark may be our way, however severe may be the storm that rages about us, the thought of Divine protection is ever with us, so that as the children of the Lord we are never in despair; though cast down, we are not destroyed; though persecuted, we are never forsaken. We know our Father's hand is ever at the helm, that His love and care are sure and unfailing.

Those who have come into real heart sympathy with God have learned to see Him as the Fountain of all goodness and Truth and blessing. To them He is the One altogether lovely. His Law is their delight. His friendship and love are their very life. When the heart has become thus centered in God, it is the most natural impulse to commit its way unto Him. These can truly sing with the poet:

*So on I go, not knowing,
I would not if I might;
I'd rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light;
I'd rather walk by faith with Him
Than go alone by sight.*

Surely these have the desires of their heart, and no good thing shall be withheld from them. Their fervent prayers avail much, and in the Lord's good time their righteousness, however much it may now be misunderstood, misrepresented and evil-spoken of, shall be brought forth as the light—clear, cloudless and widely manifest; and their judgment, the justice and righteousness of their course and of their hearts, shall be brought forth as the noonday. Even while we remain here as aliens and foreigners in the enemy's land, we shall be fed, nourished, temporally and spiritually, and shall rejoice and be glad in the "house of our pilgrimage." Precious indeed are the promises of God; and to the praise of His abounding grace, His saints of the past and of the present all bear ample testimony to their fulfillment. R. 5803

O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle.

– Psalm 140:7 –

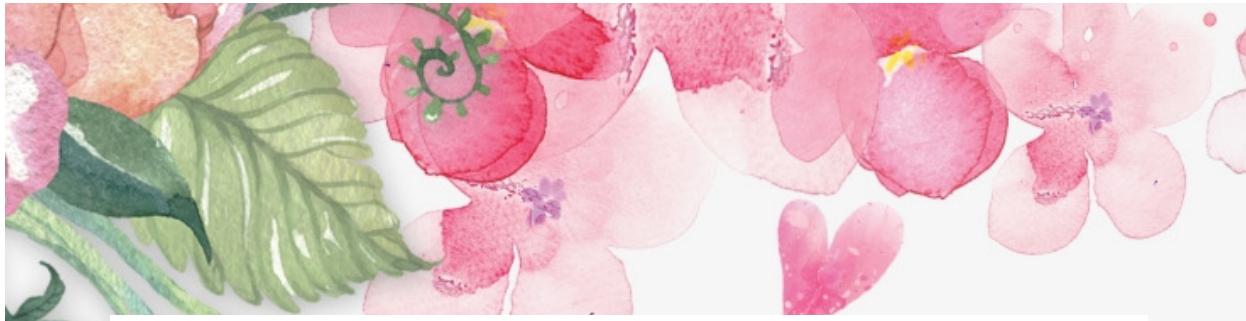
As soldiers under our great Captain, we have enlisted in no uncertain struggle, unless our own faint-heartedness or unfaithfulness should make it so. We are fully supplied with the whole armor of God, which will amply protect us against the fiery darts of the Adversary, if only we accept it and carefully buckle it on. We have with us the constant presence of our Captain, so long as we are closely following his leading. Above the din of battle his inspiring voice may be heard saying, “Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom”; “Be of good cheer; I have overcome!” (Luke 12:32; John 16:33.) If we are weak and incline to faint-heartedness, we have only to remember the blessed promise, “The Lord will give strength unto his people”; and by our faithfulness we shall glorify God, who will deliver us from all our foes, both seen and unseen. R. 4817

The LORD takes pleasure in His people. He will beautify the humble with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory. Let them sing aloud on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth and a two-edged sword in their hand to execute on them the written judgment—This honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD!

– Psalm 149:4-6,9 –

It is written, he “giveth songs in the night,” and “He hath put a new song into my mouth.” It causes us no surprise to know that the saints will “be joyful in glory” and sing aloud with the high praises of God in their mouths, when it shall be given to them to execute the judgments written (Psalm 149:4-9); but it may strike some as peculiar that the present conditions of God’s people, the condition of imperfection and physical frailty, in which we groan and are burdened, should be a condition in which songs and thanksgiving and joy should prevail with us. Nevertheless, this is the divine will, as it is the divine statement, respecting all who are truly overcomers: they are all to be joyful in the house of their pilgrimage. Respecting this joy our Lord declares “Your joy no man taketh from you.” “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” —John 14:27; 16:22.

So then, while there is a measure of groaning because of some burdens on the part of those who have attained to the new life, there are also blessed joys which the world cannot give, neither take away: and these are the source and cause of the unceasing joy and “songs in the night,” before the glorious dawn of the new Millennial day: these songs are inspired by the joys granted us in the house of our pilgrimage—while we are actually absent from our “home.” R. 2231



**He brought me to the banqueting house, and
his banner over me was love.**

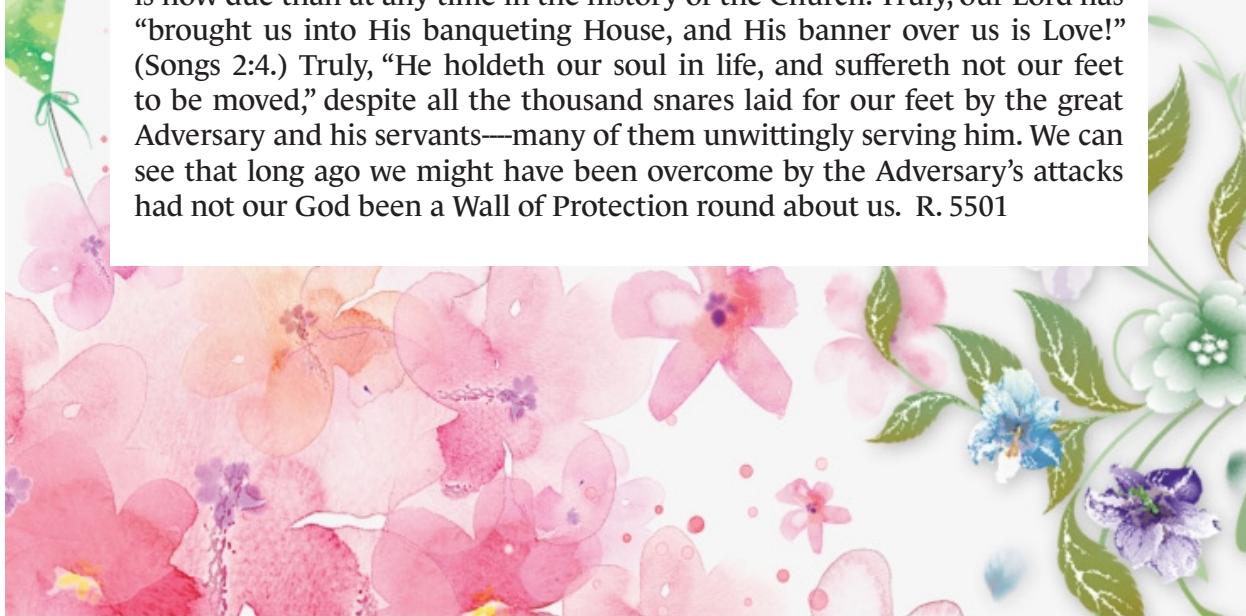
– Song of Solomon 2:4 –

Our God never fails His children: His name is Faithfulness! He has never permitted His Church to be exterminated, notwithstanding all the assaults of error and of the powers of darkness. There are still true people of God in the world, and ever have been. Throughout the Dark Ages, the great fact of our Redeemer's sacrifice for sin was still held by some of the true saints of the Lord. This precious truth was never completely lost during those years of darkness and obscurity, and in God's due time His Church emerged from the wilderness, "leaning upon the arm of her Beloved." The light has since grown brighter and brighter to the faithful, watching ones. And what a flood of glory now shines upon the path of the saints!

**Looking back, we praise the way
God has led us day by day!**

The saints of God during the past centuries did not need these additional blessings which are supplied to the faithful of today, but their every need was supplied. We are living in the days of the "cleansed Sanctuary." More Truth is now due than at any time in the history of the Church. Truly, our Lord has

"brought us into His banqueting House, and His banner over us is Love!" (Songs 2:4.) Truly, "He holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved," despite all the thousand snares laid for our feet by the great Adversary and his servants—many of them unwittingly serving him. We can see that long ago we might have been overcome by the Adversary's attacks had not our God been a Wall of Protection round about us. R. 5501



“Come now, and let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

– Isaiah 1:18 –

Isaiah was one of the grandest of the Lord's prophets. Not only is his message couched in kindly, sympathetic terms, but it is most comprehensive, including, with the rebukes and exhortations appropriate to his own day and nation, sublime glimpses of the glorious future which the Lord in his own due time will bring to pass for the blessing not only of Israel, but of all the families of the earth. This variation in the style of the prophets teaches us that although all the holy prophets spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy Spirit, nevertheless the Lord was pleased to permit his messengers to throw into their words a certain amount of their own personality.

The Prophet addresses Israel as sin-laden and corrupt through having forsaken the Lord. He tells them that their course implies that they have despised the Lord—his promises of blessing to the obedient and his threats of retribution to evil doers; then he inquires what would be the use of any more stripes or chastisements, what hope would there be of effecting a reformation?

**Why should you be stricken again?
You will revolt more and more. The whole head is
sick, and the whole heart faints. From the sole of the
foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it.**

Isaiah 1:5-6

The Prophet declares that, except for the small remnant left to the Lord [vs.9], the nation and its hopes would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah—would have been utterly destroyed. Because of this faithful remnant in natural Israel to whom God's promises and favors belonged, he specially cared for that nation even after he permitted the full overthrow and desolation of their land to come upon them. So it was again with natural Israel in the end of their age when Messiah appeared. He found only a remnant worthy of the Kingdom, and the great mass were cast off and the time of trouble destroyed them nationally. The faithful remnant, however, were accepted of the Lord to be the nucleus of the house of spiritual Israel, and to this number he has since been adding out of every nation, kindred and tongue.

Similarly also in the end of this Gospel age, at the second advent of Christ. The Scriptures assure us that only a remnant will be found Israelites indeed, while the majority, the great mass of Christendom, will be rejected. To these remnants the oppositions of their evil surroundings serve as polishing instruments to prove them, to test them, to prepare them for future services and honors. Otherwise, had there been no faithful ones found, all hopes of Kingdom privileges and blessings, so far as the people are concerned, would have failed, and Messiah alone, without his Church, would have been the King of the Millennial age. Had God not foreseen these remnants, Israel and Christendom would have received no more consideration than did the other nations of the earth.

**Wash yourselves. Make yourselves clean. Put away the evil of
your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil. Learn to
do good. Seek justice. If you are willing and obedient,
you shall eat the good of the land.**

Isaiah 1:16-17,19

As an exhortation [vs. 16] reminds us of the words of John the Baptist and his disciples and of Jesus and his disciples when appearing to the Jewish nation in the harvest time of their age. It is a plea for reform to a people already justified, consecrated. We are to remember that the whole nation of Israel was baptized into Moses in the sea and in the cloud, and that, as the mediator, Moses, by divine arrangement instituted a covenant between God and Israel by which that nation was recognized as under special divine care, and by which their sins were typically atoned for every year in advance on the Day of Atonement with the blood of bulls and goats. These sacrifices, as the Apostle points out, could never really cleanse them from sins; they were merely temporary coverings of those sins, and typical lessons respecting the necessity of blood atonement for the sins of the whole world, into which they were precipitated by Adam's transgression. It was for the Israelites to learn later in God's due time, about the better Mediator than Moses, about his better sacrifices for sins, and concerning the eternal redemption effected thereby. Meantime they were to recognize their responsibility for such sins as they could have avoided, and they were to cleanse themselves from these and to seek the Lord with their whole hearts.

Hence this entire exhortation is as appropriate to spiritual Israel as it was to natural Israel. As they had their typical cleansings in their typical atonement sacrifices, we have our real cleansing in the better sacrifice of Christ. It is appropriate, however, that we remember that if we would be of those who will constitute his elect, if we would be of those who would be used of him as kings for the blessing of all the families of the earth, we must not only be justified from all the evils of the past but we must develop character by putting forth effort against evils which are natural to us, by overcoming those evils. The command is, "Cease to do evil." R. 3451

The application to spiritual Israel is that we should continually remember that we were bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, and that his sacrifice and not any works that we could do are the basis of our acceptance with God—that by his stripes we are healed. Another lesson is that no matter how gross or dark our condition was before we thus came to the Lord, no matter how sinful we had been in ignorance and darkness, the merit of the great Atonement Sacrifice covers all these blemishes and makes us from the moment it is applied absolutely clean, "whiter than snow." We are to remember that those sins do not cling to us afterward, that we will not be held responsible for them even though some weakness of the flesh resulting from sin may be with us even until the day of death. The New Creature accepted in Christ is counted as being without spot or blemish. We are to appreciate this standing granted to us as sons of God, and not, like the prodigal, eat the swinish husks nor walk carelessly in life, so as to have the robes of our justification sullied by contact with the world and the flesh. We are, as the Apostle declares, to "keep ourselves unspotted from the world."

Thus appreciating our standing, relationship and favors, we are to enter willingly and obediently into all the good will of God, seeking to cultivate in ourselves the principles of his righteousness—justice and love. The assurance is that under these conditions we shall "eat the good of the land." To us this would not refer to natural good things, but to spiritual good things, for have we not exchanged our interest in all earthly things for the heavenly, the spiritual? Thus it is fulfilled: the Lord's true followers have the best there is so far as heart and mind, peace and rest and joy are concerned—the "peace of God which passeth all understanding," and a realization that "all things are ours, for we are Christ's and Christ is God's." R. 3454

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

– Isaiah 11:1-2 –

In this prophecy under consideration the Lord pictures natural Israel as entirely cut off, leaving nothing behind but the root of divine promise, and yet he shows that out of this root shall ultimately come all the blessings originally promised to Abraham, and confirmed unto Isaac, unto Jacob, and unto David. Our Lord is not spoken of as the root out of David, but as the root out of Jesse, David's father; because David himself is a type of Christ, his name signifying *beloved*. Hence also the fact that in many prophecies our Lord's Millennial reign is spoken of as the reign of David, the reign of the Beloved.

Here, then, we have the thought of the Lord, expressed through the Prophet, respecting Christ Jesus, our Lord, that he from the time of his baptism and anointing with the holy spirit, became the new **spiritual shoot** out of the Abrahamic promise, and out of the roots of Jesse. But they greatly err who see in this study our Lord Jesus only, and who fail to recognize the fact that he is the Head of the Church, which is his Body. The true vine is therefore the entire body of Christ, as our Lord explains. (John 15:1-27.) This stem or new Vine had its start in our Lord Jesus, and has grown and prospered and had branches which have borne their fruit under the great Husbandman's care in all these centuries of the Gospel age.

**I am the true vine, and my
Father is the husbandman. (KJV) By this My Father is glorified, that
you bear much fruit, so you will be My disciples.**
John 15:1,8

[The prophecy] begins with our Lord at the time when he reached manhood's estate, at thirty years of age, when he made his consecration, and was accepted, and the acceptance was sealed by the impartation to him of the holy spirit, of which John bare record. (John 1:32.) From that time onward the spirit of Jehovah rested upon him, and was in him a spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, making him alert in the use of his knowledge in reverence and submission to the divine will. And the same observations are applicable in respect to the Church of Christ—the members in particular of his Body, of which he is the Head. Like their Master, each branch in the Vine is the recipient of the holy spirit, through him—for the anointing oil (typical of the holy spirit) was **all** poured first upon the head of the high priest and subsequently flowed down over his person. Those who are made partakers of the Lord's spirit have that spirit as the beginning of their new life, for “if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his.” And this spirit of Christ and of Jehovah, coming upon the Body of Christ, from the Head, is to each (as it was to the head) a spirit of wisdom and of understanding and of counsel and of power; and a spirit of obedience to the Father's will, in proportion as this spirit dwells in them. R. 2372

In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people. To it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. (KJV)

– Isaiah 11:10 –

When Christ is thus exalted in the earth and men begin to realize his power and goodness, he will indeed be for an “ensign of the people,” and there will indeed be a great turning to him. Men will say, “Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. . . . And all nations shall flow into it.” (Isa. 2:3,2.) And truly “his resting-place shall be glorious”—so different from the miserable resting-places now afforded by human creeds, so aptly described by the Prophet (Isa. 28:20), saying, “For the bed is shorter than that a man [a developed Christian] can stretch himself [or grow more] on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.” [He knows so little of the divine plan that he is constantly subject to doubts and fears.] But the blessed resting-place which the new King will discover to all men, in making “the knowledge of the Lord fill the earth as the waters cover the sea,” will indeed be a glorious resting-place. God’s plan and each man’s place in that plan will be clearly manifest and blessedly satisfying. R. 1352

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11:9

The LORD of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?

– Isaiah 14:27 –

It is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend this, because for us to change our course of action usually means to change our minds or plans as well—because of our shortsightedness. To comprehend Omniscience and Omnipotence is as difficult as to comprehend eternity or the infinitude of space. But what no one can fully comprehend, we, as God’s children, may at least apprehend by faith, guided by his revelation to us. To those whose eyes are anointed with eyesalve (Rev. 3:18), the fulfillments of the prophetic statements of God’s Word, in both the Old and the New Testaments, now discernible, give ample proof that God does know the end from the beginning; that he changes not from his original purpose. (Mal. 3:6; Isa. 14:27.) God’s plans were perfect before they began to be executed; hence all the changes of God’s course or conduct are working out the accomplishment of his **original purpose** which contemplated these very changes. Those who recognize the gradual development of God’s original plan can see clearly that the various **changes in his course or dealings**, as displayed in the Jewish, Gospel and Millennial Ages, do not at all indicate so many changes of his mind or plan, though they are doubtless so misunderstood by many. R. 2026

**You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is
stayed on You, because he trusts in You.
– Isaiah 26:3 –**

*Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.
Perfect--yet it floweth fuller every day;
Perfect--yet it groweth deeper all the way.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.
Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand.
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there.
Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the sun of love.
We may trust Him solely all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.*



Come, my people, enter your chambers and shut your doors behind you. Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past.

– Isaiah 26:20 –

There is an affectionate tenderness about these words of our Heavenly Father which helps us to realize his great love for his people, and his special care over them. Through his prophet, taking the standpoint of the end of this age, he is forewarning us of a great time of trouble which is just imminent (verses 5,6,21)— “a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation,” when the whole present order of things, civil, social and religious, shall be swept with the besom of destruction. Yet in the midst of it all he would have his people in rest and peace in him, as saith the prophet, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.” —Verses 3,4.

[This] place of hiding is the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty. (Psalm 91:1-9.) This secret place of the Most High, Beloved, is the place of intimate communion and fellowship with God, through the blessed privilege of prayer and through faith in his precious

Word and his promised providential care. Oh, how precious is this hiding place! What rest and refreshment we find in the midst of the commotion that is even now bestirring the whole world, but especially the nations of Christendom—rest from the pride and folly of man in their abortive efforts to readjust the present unsatisfactory social order; and rest from the strife of tongues in an equally vain attempt to evolve the clear principles of truth and righteousness from the present confusion of human traditions. (Psalm 31:20.) Here we find rest, peace, light and joy, which the world can neither give nor take away.

It is well, especially in this time of greatest need, that the Lord's people should consider the value of this portion of the Christian's armor, and that the doors of their faith should thoroughly shut them in to the secret place of the Most High. [Now] is the time for firmly grasping the shield of faith and for adopting the triumphant language of the Psalmist: “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? . . . Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. . . . In time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me upon a rock. . . . When my father and my mother [my most trusted human friends] forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.” “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.” —Psalm 27:1; Psalm 27:3; Psalm 27:5; Psalm 27:10; 23:1,4; also 56:4.

It is to inspire such a faith as this that the Lord has offered us, in addition to all his precious promises, so many encouragements to simple, childlike trust in him, and that he has bidden us turn a deaf ear to the reproaches of men, saying— “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. . . . I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord, thy Maker, that has stretched forth the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? . . . I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens [establish the new heavens], and lay the foundations of the earth [the new earth], and say unto Zion [the people tried and proved by these afflictions to be the worthy heirs of the new Kingdom—the new heavens and earth], Thou art my people.” —Isa. 51:7; Isa. 51:12-13; Isa. 51:16.

While the storm of trouble that is to engulf the whole world will affect all men, both individually and collectively, the Lord's people, who seek only to draw yet closer to him, entering more fully into the secret place of communion and fellowship and rest in him, and shutting the doors of faith about them, will there be safely hidden from the alarm and fear and trembling that will take hold upon all other classes; and while they patiently endure its effects upon their temporal interests, they will rejoice not only in the knowledge of God's overruling providence, in the whirlwind and in the storm as well as in the calms of life, but also in his blessed assurance that his wrath will be thus revealed only “**for a little moment**,” and then will his righteous Kingdom be manifested in power and great glory, and they shall shine forth as the sun. R. 1787 and R. 1788

**Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee:
hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.**

Oh blessed invitation! Lord, we will trust in the covert of thy wings.

Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.

– Isaiah 30:21 –

While these words of the Prophet were addressed directly to **fleshly** Israel, their application to **spiritual** Israel is nonetheless forcible. While the way of life will be made very clear to Israel and to the world, in the Age to come, it is made none the less clear now to the children of God who walk by faith and not by sight. It is shown to be, first, a way of faith; and those who now walk by faith are the true Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16; Gal. 3:29), to whom pertain the Covenant and the exceeding great and precious promises, in their largest fulfillment. Second, It is a way of entire consecration to God, even unto death, which implies the burial of one's own will into the will of God—the presenting of self a living sacrifice. In harmony with these two principles—faith and consecration—we are taught to walk in newness of life, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds, but circumspectly; “not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time”; not by sight, but by faith. —Rom. 6:4; 8:1; Eph. 4:17-18; 5:15,16; 2 Cor. 5:7.

The child of the Lord has learned where to seek counsel; and the counsel of wisdom is always ready to come to his aid. The Prophet describes it as a word, a voice “behind thee.” It is not a voice before thee, of some new theology—of Evolution or Spiritism or Christian Science or other human philosophy—but it is the old theology, with its blessed doctrine of hope through Christ our Redeemer and Lord, our Teacher, our Example and our Leader. It is the voice of the Lord through His inspired Apostles and Prophets, from two thousand to four thousand years ago. It is to this Word of Divine inspiration, then, that the Prophet would direct the attention of all those desiring wise counsel; and in that Word we hear the voice of God, saying, “This is the Way, walk ye in it.”

Look for guidance to the voice behind—the Lord's messages through the apostles and prophets. (Isa 30:21.) Expect your guidance as it has been sent all down this Gospel Age by the holy Spirit's supervision and through the members of Christ. —1 Cor. 12:11-29. Thus the voice behind brings comfort, peace and rest in the midst of all life's cares and trials, if we walk in obedience to all its principles and precepts. “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God!” —Psa. 37:5; Pro. 3:6; Matt. 11:28; Gal. 6:16. R. 4882 and R. 4136

He will dwell on high. His place of defense will be the fortress of rocks. Bread will be given him, his water will be sure.

– Isaiah 33:16 –

To all who unflinchingly stand for truth and righteousness in this evil day, is the blessed promise of God— “He shall dwell on high [above the fears, the unrest and the distress which will overwhelm the world]; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks [the Lord, the Rock of ages, the Most High shall be his hiding place]; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure [he will be sustained with the bread of life and refreshed with the water of life both spiritually and physically]. Blessed are all they that put their trust in the Lord, for they shall never be confounded. The Church of Christ is in the protected place. Everything is working together for good to them. Their bread and water is sure. “No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly”; “the meek will He guide in judgment; the meek will He teach His way.” R. 1875 and R. 5032

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.

– Isaiah 40:8 –

Tyndale's project of publishing the Bible in the English language was so seriously opposed in England that he removed to German cities, and in the year 1525 A.D. his translation of the New Testament was issued. Copies of it poured into England. The Bishop of London was so opposed that he collected and burned as many copies as he could at St. Paul's Cross in London. Yet more copies came. He could not destroy them. The Bishop collected monies wherewith to buy up the whole edition. The purchase was entrusted to a merchant named Parkington, who went to Germany and purchased the books. Tyndale was glad, because thus he could get out of debt, and the money from the same enabled Tyndale to get out a new edition with errors corrected and much better than the one that was burned.

The Scriptures from first to last give us to understand that God's Word is to shine more and more brightly down to the very end of this Gospel Age. St. Peter declares it to be the "more sure Word of prophecy to which we do well that we take heed as to a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn." —2 Pet. 1:19.

The Bishop of England opposed the Tyndale translation because the practices of the time were not in harmony with the Scriptures. Similarly today there are doctrines, traditions, creeds from the Dark Ages, still reverenced, and which a better understanding of the Bible would correct and put to shame. Hence the opposition to the better understanding of God's Word. Nevertheless, the Word of God shall stand forever, and the spirit of the Truth shall make free indeed all the children of the Truth. R. 4857

It is still possible to endeavor to destroy God's Word, though all such efforts will fail: the Word of God will eventually triumph. It may be attempted variously:

- 1** — By rejecting the Word of God, the Bible—perverting its statements and ridiculing them.
- 2** — By speaking of its truths irreverently and connecting them with funny stories, and thus vitiating its influence upon speaker and hearers.
- 3** — By neglecting it, leaving it unread, unstudied.
- 4** — By forbidding people to read the Bible, or even by limiting or hindering Scriptural investigation.
- 5** — By persecuting those who preach and teach it conscientiously because their interpretations are contrary.
- 6** — By misrepresenting the Word of God, substituting for its teachings the traditions of men—hymnbook and creed theology, misrepresenting it to be Bible theology—and thus misrepresenting God's character and plan, while professedly serving him, honoring his Word.
- 7** — By skipping over and ignoring certain teachings of the Scriptures, because they do not harmonize with preconceived opinions and preferences, as on election, free grace, the Second Death, etc.

All of these are modern methods of fighting against God, sure to bring punishments —darkness, divine disfavor. R. 2401

Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you. I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

– **Isaiah 41:10 –**

The deliverance of Israel from Egypt was a marvelous deliverance, and yet the prophets tell us of a still greater deliverance for the people, yet to be accomplished, when they shall be gathered out of all nations whither they have been driven, and when even the generations of them that are in the graves shall come forth, and they shall be brought into their own land and securely planted there. (See Jer. 16:14-15; Eze. 37:12-14; Isa. 65:21-23.) In comparison with this deliverance yet to be accomplished, we are assured that the former from Egypt will seem so insignificant as not to be named any more; for that was but a type of the one to come. Then Abraham will realize the reward of his faith, when he and his posterity actually come into the land which God promised him for an everlasting possession (Gen. 17:8), and which Stephen said (Acts 7:5) he never owned a foot of in his past life, but died in faith that the promise would be fulfilled at his return, —in the morning of the resurrection. R. 1652

Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him. He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

– **Isaiah 42:1 –**

Here our Lord Jesus, the Head, and the Church, “members in particular of the body of Christ,” are unitedly declared to be God’s elect, in whom he is well pleased. The Father was well pleased in the Son, who came not to do his own will but the will of him that sent him, and by his obedience won all the gracious things promised under the Law Covenant, and redeemed Adam and his race; and the Father is well pleased also in us, whom, though “we were children of wrath even as others,” he has accepted in Christ, justified and sanctified by his Word and spirit, and who, if we abide in Christ, faithful unto death, will be fitted and prepared for his promised Kingdom. In these statements of the Prophet, reference evidently is made to the work of the Lord’s anointed (Head and Body) in conferring restitution blessings upon the world of mankind during the Millennial age; and this in full accord with all the New Testament declarations respecting the work of the elect. R. 3587

**I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand.
I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, as
a light to the Gentiles.**

Isaiah 42:6

See also entry for John 16:33 on p. 226

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.

– **Isaiah 43:2** –

As Israel in passing through the Jordan had nothing to fear because the ark of the Lord, the symbol of the divine presence stood in the midst of the threatening danger, so the Christian has nothing to fear so long as he realizes the divine presence and approval. Through rivers and seas of trouble he may wade, and through fiery furnaces of affliction he may pass, but none of these things can harm him while the Lord is with him. The Lord's presence and love realized under such circumstances as they cannot be under ordinary conditions give such strength to faith and hope and love as could not otherwise be gained.

The waters of affliction, disappointment, perplexity, trouble, will be about us, and we are not to float with the current either, but are to endure hardness as good soldiers. But our source of strength in battling with the current of life is never to be forgotten— “When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee.” Blessed thought! “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me,” and he assures us, “My strength is made perfect in weakness.” (Phil. 4:13; 2 Cor. 12:9.) Our text implies rivers of trouble, but assures us that when we pass through the rivers they shall not overflow us, they shall not extinguish us; on the contrary the Lord will pull us safely over to the other side, where we shall have life, and that more abundantly, with the glory, honor and immortality which he will provide for his Bride—his Elect. R. 1857 and R. 4005

I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die, and of the son of a man who will be made like grass?

– **Isaiah 51:12** –

It is to inspire such a faith as this that the Lord has offered us, in addition to all his precious promises, so many encouragements to simple, childlike trust in him, and that he has bidden us turn a deaf ear to the reproaches of men, saying— “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. . . . I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord, thy Maker, that has stretched forth the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? . . . I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens [establish the new heavens], and lay the foundations of the earth [the new earth], and say unto Zion [the people tried and proved by these afflictions to be the worthy heirs of the new Kingdom—the new heavens and earth], Thou art my people.” —Isa. 51:7,12,13,16. R. 1788

I have put My words in your mouth. I have covered you with the shadow of My hand, that I may plant the heavens, lay the foundations of the earth, and say to Zion, ‘You are My people.’

Isaiah 51:16

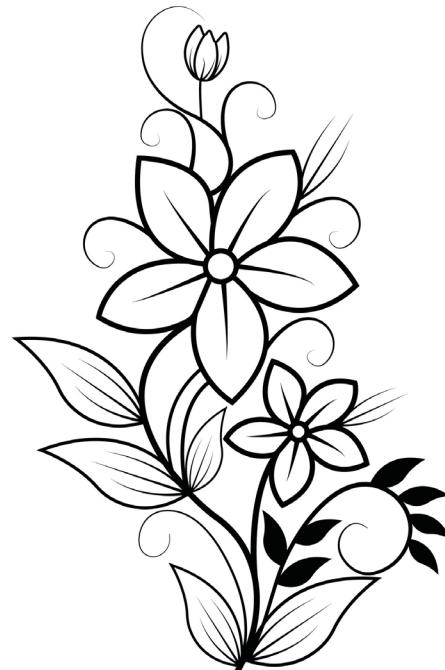
I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death.

– Isaiah 53:12 –

Because of his faithfulness as God's righteous servant, because guided by his knowledge in his obedience to the Father, because faithful in bearing the iniquities of the many, therefore "God will divide him a portion with the great." How great a portion is not here stated. Other Scriptures inform us that the Father has given him a portion with himself—he overcame and sat down with the Father in his throne. He has indeed been granted a portion with the great—the great Jehovah. In turn he shall divide the spoil with the strong, the spoil of his great conquest over sin and death at the cost of his own life, the spoil of victory, the reward of his own high exaltation far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named—the reward of his high relationship with the Father, the reward of his Millennial Kingdom and its opportunities and privileges of blessing the whole groaning creation, the reward of the Father's smile and favor eternally.

This "spoil," which all came to the dear Redeemer as the one who kept the Law and redeemed the world with his own precious blood, this spoil he proposes to share with the faithful of his followers, the overcomers, here called "the strong." O, what a thought! In all our weaknesses and imperfections we are by the Lord's grace enabled to come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

With the Apostle we can say, "When I am weak, then am I strong;" when I realize my own imperfections and shortcomings then, by faith realizing the strength and perfection of my dear Redeemer and his provision for all who are his, I can be strong in faith and trust and love, and realize that the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word are yea and amen to me. In the present life, then, by faith we have a portion with the Lord, and may reckon ourselves as having passed from death unto life, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. But the attainment of all these things, their fullness and completeness, lies beyond the grave, beyond the resurrection, when all the faithful shall be with him and, like him, share his glory, for "he will divide the spoil with the strong." R. 3592 and R. 1360



In accordance with this privilege granted him by the Father he
left the gracious promise on record for us—

**To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also
overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.
Revelation 3:21**

All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.

– Isaiah 54:13 –

Our text may to some extent be applicable to regathered and re-favored Israel after the flesh, in the near future when the Lord will fulfill to them all his good promises; but without question it belongs to spiritual Israel—new creatures in Christ Jesus, joint-heirs with him of the Abrahamic promises as the seed of Abraham. —Gal. 3:29.

The context bears out this thought, declaring, “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.” Ah yes, the spiritual sons of God need the instructions of the Lord’s Word in order to understand his dealings—in order to enable them to have the great peace here predicted. God’s children in the school of Christ learn not their lessons all at once, but gradually, “Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little,” by degrees they come to comprehend the exceeding great and precious promises of the Father’s Word which unite in declaring that under his supervision “All things shall work together for good to them that love God—to the called ones according to his purpose”; this is a sufficiency for the beginning of faith and, therefore, a sufficiency for the beginning of the peace. As our instruction progresses we learn the philosophy of our experience—that by the trials and vicissitudes of this present life, by our warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil, by our strivings in this battle, we are forming characters in accord with righteousness; and, additionally, we learn that God seeketh such characters, and is thus developing us because he has for the world in general a great and wonderful plan of salvation not yet fully made known, in which he desires that the “elect” Church of this Gospel age shall be co-workers, joint-heirs with their Lord and Redeemer, as the royal priesthood under him, their Head, —the great Prophet, Priest and King so long promised, whose work shall be to overthrow the powers of evil, to bind the Adversary, to lift up and enlighten the world of mankind and to grant to every redeemed child of Adam a full, gracious opportunity of return to the Father’s favor through obedience and restitution.

As the teaching of the Lord to the Church belongs to the present time, so does the peace of those who are taught apply in the present time, and is in proportion to our readiness to receive instruction and come to a knowledge of God. Those who instructed by the divine Word have reached a large degree of knowledge of the divine character through the divine plan, may, should, must have the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in their hearts. Let us all take heed lest we let slip those things which we have heard, remembering that the earthen vessels in which we have the treasure of the new mind are leaky, and that and this necessitates our keeping near to the fountain spring—near to the Lord, near to his Word and, hence, near to all others who are close to the Lord and to his Word. R. 3051

When once the eyes of our understanding are opened to appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of our Father’s plan, we see that the world of mankind are not in torture and hopeless misery, but are in the great prison house of death; we see that our Lord Jesus has by the grace of God tasted death for every man; and we see that it is on the strength of this redemption for the whole world by the one sacrifice of sin that the promise has gone forth that all shall be brought to a knowledge of the truth that they may be saved. From this standpoint everything becomes new; old fears and perplexities pass away, and the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God shining into our hearts, becomes more and more a transforming power therein, —changing us from glory to glory. We see that it is because of God’s desires to have us thus members of his “elect” Church that he has favored us in advance of the world with the knowledge of his goodness and redeeming love, and that he has anointed us with his spirit and called us to this high, heavenly calling. Praise his name! R. 3051

In righteousness you shall be established. You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear, and from terror, for it shall not come near you.

– Isaiah 54:14 –

This [verse] also applies to the present life and not to the life of glory. Those who are not established in righteousness now will not be accounted worthy to be sharers in the first resurrection, respecting which it is written, “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.” Righteousness, justice, must be the foundation of every character acceptable to God: as justice is the foundation of the Lord’s throne, so it is the foundation of all with which he has to do; and if we are his it must be the sub-stratum of our Christian character. We must learn to be just before we are generous; we must learn that while love may call for sacrifices, duty, obligation calls for justice first. In the blindness and darkness which came to us from the dark ages, before the anointing of our eyes with the eyesalve of truth from the words of the Lord and his apostles—when in our blindness we conceived of God as unjust and unloving because of misrepresentation of his plan, we had so low an ideal before our minds that we found it easy to excuse injustice or cruelty or selfishness, since, according to our false standard and misconceptions of God, he was the exemplar of all this. The Lord undoubtedly had mercy upon us on account of our ignorance and blindness; but now since he has opened the eyes of our understanding, has shown us his own justice and his own boundless love, and since we are seeking to copy these, there is no longer room for us to excuse unrighteousness or injustice in our hearts. It may require time to bring every word and act and thought into harmony with the new mind instructed from the Word; —we may never succeed to our own satisfaction in this matter in our present life, because of the weaknesses of the flesh through which our wills must operate; but we can at least make strong effort, and by the Lord’s assisting grace accomplish great things in righteousness, not only of intention, but in righteousness of thought, of judgment, of conduct. R. 3051

As the light of the truth comes into our hearts giving us a true knowledge of the Lord, instructing us as his children, perfect love casts out fear, and proportionately it casts out superstition and intolerance and oppression, as the Prophet here declares. The Lord’s people are to love religious liberty for themselves and are correspondingly to grant the same to all others. “Thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear.” This class will be anxious to set men free, not anxious to enslave them. On the other hand the declaration is, “Thou shalt be far from terror, for it shall not come near thee;” the Lord’s people ought to be the most fearless people in the world as respects earthly disasters and calamities; taught of the Lord they have learned that there is only one being who needs to be feared—the one who has the power to destroy the soul. They do indeed fear to displease or offend him; and yet, having learned of his goodness, mercy and love, they do not fear him in the ordinary sense of the word, but rejoice in him, confide in him, trust him as a child trusts a father, and this confidence grows in proportion as they are taught of the Lord—in proportion as they learn to trust, both from the Word of the Lord and from his providences, his dealings with them.

The text further shows that there will be not only individual oppositions to be encountered, but that Zion as a whole will be assailed by foes; as we read,

**Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me.
Whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake.
Isaiah 54:15**

Wonderful words of consolation!

“No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me,” says the LORD.

– Isaiah 54:17 –

What a heritage! What would one not give, sacrifice, to have this assurance which pertains not only to the life which now is, but goes far beyond, lays hold upon and blesses the eternal interests of all who attain this heritage. It is not applicable to one individual alone, but as declared, it belongs to all the servants of the Lord—every true spiritual Israelite may claim it, rest upon it and rejoice in it.

Spiritual Israel may sometimes feel as our Lord himself expressed the matter, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and may not always realize the object and necessity for some of the experiences through which the Lord permits Zion as a whole, and each individual Christian as her members or children, to pass; they may see that at times the Lord has apparently permitted the great adversary or his deluded servants to forge against them grievous weapons of destruction, and to assail them in health or in their social peace or financially; sometimes these weapons of the adversary have seemed to do terrible execution against them, and many may wonder how the Lord’s good promise of our text is being fulfilled: “No weapon that is formed against her shall prosper.”

Many tongues have arisen against the Lord’s Zion as a whole and against each member individually—tongues laden with the “poison of asps”, tongues bitter with envy, malice, hatred and strife,—tongues which hesitate not to slander and misrepresent, to say all manner of evil falsely. And to a large extent these weapons and tongues have succeeded, have wrought havoc with the sheep, as also with the Shepherd; and God permitted it—he neither stopped the weapon nor stilled the tongue; and yet he assures us apparently to the contrary of this in our text. What is the true explanation of this situation?

The explanation is that “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you”—ye are “new creatures” in Christ Jesus, “old things are passed away, behold all things have become new.” (Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 5:17.) The weapons and tongues attempt to assail us as new creatures, but fail of this and merely do injury to the old creature—to the flesh, which we have already consecrated to death anyway. By helping to kill or to mortify the flesh, our adversaries are really helping us as “new creatures” instead of hindering us as designed. God thus turns what seems to harm us into everlasting joy and blessing. R. 3051



Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you--The sure mercies of David.

– Isaiah 55:3 –

The invitation is synonymous with that of Rev. 18:4 to the same class, to come out of Babylon (confusion—the confusion of sectarianism); for while they remain in those systems of error, endeavoring to support and defend them, they are prejudiced and blinded against God's truth, wherever it conflicts with their creeds, so that they cannot progress in knowledge while they thus continue to spend their “money”—their influence and their labor—for that which is not bread and which satisfieth not.

But, thank God, there is a satisfying portion for those who earnestly crave it, and some are eating that goodly portion, and their souls are delighting themselves in fatness. Let the thirsty hear further the gracious invitation, “Incline your ear [turn your ear away from the clash of conflicting creeds, and incline it towards God's own precious word, in simple faith accepting all of its testimony, notwithstanding the testimony of men to the contrary], and come unto me: hear [my word] and your soul shall live.”

To those who thus heed the invitation there is a special promise given, over and above the promise of life and the satisfaction now, of receiving this gift by faith. It is this: “I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” [He will make an agreement with such that they may share in those sure, holy promises which belong to his beloved Son—the kingdom, power and glory of the world to come.] The name David signifies **beloved**; and the Apostle shows (Acts 13:33,34) that it here refers to our Lord, the Beloved Son of God. And not only is the name David sometimes used in prophecy, as here, to refer to God's beloved Son, but David himself frequently figures as a type of our Lord, as in Psalm 22:1,17,18. Moreover, “the sure mercies” or holy promises here referred to as belonging to our Lord, and in which we of this Gospel age are invited to share with him, were made to King David (2 Sam. 7:8-16) and will evidently have a partially literal fulfillment, although the substance is in Christ. R. 1364

These Sure Mercies or holy things of David (Christ) are clearly set forth in Psalm 89:20-37, to be:

- 1 That the Lord would anoint him to be a great king, and that he would establish his throne forever—as long as the sun and moon endure;
- 2 That no enemy should have advantage over him, but that all should be made subservient to him;
- 3 That God's covenant to bless all the families of the earth should stand fast with him, or be fulfilled by his reign;
- 4 That his children (by redemption and regeneration) should have such reformatory discipline under his reign as would be necessary for their correction and establishment in righteousness;
- 5 And that all the willing and obedient who shall profit by the discipline shall endure forever—that thus he might see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

Thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

– Isaiah 57:15 –

Besides being very great and lofty, our God is particularly sympathetic towards those who are of a broken and contrite heart, whose spirit is humble, who realize that they are imperfect, who desire to be in accord with Him, and to dwell in holiness. To such He is ever near—to revive the spirit of the humble, to give them strength. He will not trample them into the dust, as many an earthly potentate has done to his subjects, but will assist them in the right way, and revive the heart of the contrite. These are to know that our God is a God of sympathy, compassion and love, who takes pleasure in reviving their hearts and in bringing them back into harmony with Him, if they are willing to be led.

There is a difference between a broken and a contrite heart. A **heart is broken** when it is bowed down with grief and sorrow; a **heart is contrite** when it has a quiet, deep, continual sorrow for acts not in harmony with righteousness. A broken will is not necessarily the same; for there are those whose wills are broken, but who are not submissive to the Divine will. To be repentant is to be thoroughly submissive to the Divine will, and implies a change of mental attitude toward sin. This humble, discouraged condition becomes a very favorable one if the person will seek Divine assistance, if he will become submissive to the Lord and ready to do the Divine will. Such will surely receive the blessing of God; for the Lord is very nigh to every one who is broken-hearted. The way to full consecration would be very short to him.

If such as be of contrite heart will be submissive to the Lord, He will save them from their difficulties and bring them into a large place, as the Prophet David states. (Psalm 18:19.) A just man will not fall into sin. The very most that could happen to him would be to stumble. There are various causes for stumbling. But if the heart is right, the man will rise again; for the Lord will show him that he has made a mistake and will point out the way to him by which he may recover himself. If he is a lover of righteousness, he will desire to press on toward that which is right, just, approved of the Lord, even if he should stumble many times.

**He also brought me out into
a broad place. He delivered me
because He delighted in me.
Psalm 18:19**

Only the humble-minded can really appreciate their own condition. God not only will revive their spirit, but is willing to lift them up and to make them again sons of God, with all that this implies of blessing. He has this attitude toward the humble and contrite in the present time, and He has always had this spirit toward the humble and contrite ones. —Psalm 37:23-24; Pro. 24:16 R. 5217

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the LORD upholds him with His hand.

Psalm 37:23-24

Arise, shine! For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people, but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you.

– Isaiah 60:1-2 –

The words of this prophecy have a double application, —first to spiritual Israel, and second to Israel after the flesh. The great and long-looked-for light is the Lord Jesus Christ, the light of the world; and the time indicated is the end or harvest of the Gospel age, when he comes in glory and power to shine as the sun in his Kingdom. That the prophecy had a partial fulfillment to fleshly Israel at our Lord's first advent is true. He indeed was the light and glory of Israel; but as a nation they knew not the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44): the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. (John 1:5.) Consequently the glory of the Lord was not then seen upon Israel: they did not know their King, nor enter with him into his Kingdom, though the privilege was then offered to them. They did not arise and shine, and therefore darkness came upon them; and, as a nation, blinded to their highest interests, they stumbled into the ditch (Matt. 15:14), a great time of trouble, which, beginning with the destruction of their holy city and the complete wreck of their national polity, drove them out of their own land and left them as fugitives in every land and the subjects of more or less persecution even unto the present day.

Observe that the Prophet calls upon the saints to shine now, and also tells of a glory about to be revealed in them. The thought of the passage is plainly that they have something to do with the shining to which they are exhorted, while the glory to be put upon them is apart from their own doing, a reward from God to the faithful ones who now diligently let their light shine for him.

Jesus said to his disciples in the beginning of the age, “Ye are the light of the world;” and so the true followers of Christ all through the age who have been with Jesus and learned of him have been the lights of the world. (Matt. 5:14-16.) But this prophecy, taking the standpoint of the end of the age, indicates that greater light is due here than at any previous time. And so we find it. Although the Lord has been enlightening and leading his people ever since the days of his first advent, yet now they are to arise and shine as never before. Within these days of the Lord's presence (since 1874) the light of divine truth has been shining more brightly than ever, so that his people have been able to discover and understand God's deep designs, and to see in his mighty work a grand and benevolent plan of ages, fully worthy of the wisdom, power, justice and love of our God.

The exhortation to arise and shine is therefore to all who have been enlightened by the harvest message in these days of the Lord's presence. The prophet tells us that this truth which so fills our hearts with joy and gladness is nothing less than the glory of the Lord which is risen upon us. How blessed the thought, how precious the truth! The humblest saint who has been brought to a knowledge of it, and who has been thrilled with its blessed inspiration, may rejoice in the realization that the glory of the Lord has already risen upon him. R. 2036

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

– Isaiah 61:1-3 –

When the Prophet Isaiah uttered these words he spoke by the power of the Holy Spirit. As the Apostle Peter tells us, “Holy men of old spake as they were moved of the Holy Spirit.” Not unto **themselves**, but unto **us** they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel, with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven.”
—2 Peter 1:21; 1 Peter 1:10-12.

This anointing that is on the Church comes to us through Christ, flowing down from the Head over all the Body members, as shown in the type of the high priest of Israel, and as declared by the Psalmist. (Psalm 133:2.) The Lord Jesus is our great Advocate with the Father, and in Him alone have we any standing before God. We are thus received of the Father as spirit-begotten sons, even as was our Head. We are begotten of the Spirit, as was He.

While the prophecy was primarily fulfilled in Jesus, and applied especially to Him, we understand that it applies also to the members of Christ. These by becoming His Body, thus became a part of Himself. It is not because of any merit of their own.

Our vital union with our Lord as members of His Body is also further shown by the Prophet Isaiah. Read carefully the 49th chapter, vs. 7-9, and their interpretation by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:1,2. This same Apostle further declares, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” Again, “The cup for which we bless God, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the participation of the Body of Christ? For we, the many, are one loaf and one Body.” “Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular.” (1 Corinthians 12:12; 10:16,17; 12:27.) Again, the Apostle Paul declares of the Church, “Whereunto He [God] called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” How the deep sayings of the Savior become luminous in the light shed upon them by the Apostles after their anointing of the Spirit! How the Master fulfilled to them His promise made just before His crucifixion! He said, as we remember, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, it shall guide you into all Truth, for it shall not speak of itself; but whatsoever it shall hear, that shall it speak, and it will show you things to come.” (John 16:12,13.) These were the deep things of God, which only the spirit-begotten, spirit-taught children of God can understand.

The anointing of the Church is for a work yet future. The work of Christ and the Church will not be accomplished in this present Age. But God gives to those whom He has accepted opportunity to use in His service in the present life talents which He has entrusted to them. They are, as far as they are able, to bind up broken hearts and give “the oil of joy for mourning,” and thus to help to allay the sufferings of others, especially of the Lord’s Household, though they are to assist any as they have suitable opportunity. But their special work in blessing and comforting the world will be in the kingdom. R. 5536

For as the earth brings forth its bud, as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

– Isaiah 61:11 –

THY KINGDOM COME!

*Thy Kingdom come! Give ear, O King of ages!
This earnest prayer is knocking at thy door;
The Church of God with one accord engages
In hopeful pleading till the night is o'er.*

*Thy Kingdom come! We wait the promised glory
That, like the sea, embraces every shore.
We wait the time proclaimed in psalm and story,
When strife shall cease and nations war no more.*

*Thy Kingdom come, and bring its feast of gladness
To groaning creatures wasted by despair;
To dry all faces with the breath of gladness,
And soothe our sorrows with thy love and care.*

*Thy Kingdom come! To darkened minds revealing
The blissful springs of gratitude and praise.
Come, Sun of righteousness, with beams of healing;
Dispense thy light in universal rays.*

*Thy Kingdom come! O, haste the Bride's appearing;
Let every soul her wand of healing feel, --
While all the ransomed of the Lord, revering,
Adore Jehovah, and in homage kneel.*

-- G.M. Bills

The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will name. You shall also be a crown of glory In the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

— Isaiah 62:2-3 —

In one place the Prophet Jeremiah declares, “This is the name whereby **He** shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness.” In another place he says, “**She** shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness [or, the Righteousness of Jehovah].” And so the Apostle declares, “That **we** might be made the Righteousness of God through Him.” —Jer. 23:6; 33:16; 2 Cor. 5:21.

The two expressions, “a crown of glory” and “a royal diadem,” express practically the same thought, the repetition making the sentiment doubly impressive. A diadem is a crown. Crowns are generally used to add dignity and honor to the individuals wearing them; but the Scriptural expression, “A crown of glory, . . . a royal diadem in the hand of thy God,” does not include the thought of a diadem that is to be worn, as giving glory to God; but rather as representing a beautiful ornament in the Divine hand, as you take something in your hand to look at the beauty and workmanship.

The jewels that will make this diadem beautiful, when properly tested by the great Master-Workman, are the Church. The Lord will come to make up His jewels, to secure His jewels. “God hath set the members in the Body.” The text refers to the final setting in the future, in the Kingdom condition. As star differeth from star in glory, so shall these jewels differ in setting and position. This also applies to the present time. The present arrangement is subject to change in proportion as the **individual** will or **will not** be fully submissive to the Lord’s will. There has been a selection of a jewel class; and the experiences of this class during the Gospel Age have been the polishing processes; and there will be a setting in the end of this Age, when the Church is completed. This began when the First Resurrection began.

The first setting in this royal diadem was, undoubtedly, our Lord Jesus Himself. He is the first in this great diadem which Jehovah has in His hand. Next will come the members of the Body, as they shall be perfected in the First Resurrection—the Apostles and sleeping saints, each as he is granted his change, “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” Each jewel will be placed in that particular setting for which Jehovah has seen that it is prepared.

The Church in the hand of God is the Church in the hand of Divine power. That power will use the Church and she will be a crown of glory and a thing of beauty, **gloriously reflecting to all eternity the workmanship of our God.** How glorious it will be! How beautiful! The Lord Jehovah will have the setting of these precious jewels, one reflecting upon another in that crown of glory and diadem of beauty, with the Lord Jesus in the chief place, for the Father will not give to the Church any glory that He would not give to the Lord Himself. The Church is to be displayed before men as “a thing of beauty and a joy forever”—God’s handiwork. R. 4913

He is selecting the jewels now, and is providentially dealing with them. When the process of polishing shall have been completed, He will use them in a very special sense for a thousand years. As a star blazes in glory, so the Lord will make use of each one of the Church. But the use of the Church which the Lord will make at that time will be only a part of the work which He intends to accomplish. The Apostle says,

That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:7

Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

– Isaiah 65:17 –

The Scriptures frequently use such expressions as this. The Lord uses the words heavens and earth in a symbolical manner. We have the symbolic heavens representing the ecclesiastical powers, and we have the symbolic earth representing earthly society, organization; we have the symbolical mountains representing kingdoms; we have the symbolical rivers representing the streams of truth; we have the symbolical seas, representing the restless masses of mankind and the Lord declares this present order of things is not in harmony with the divine law, that it is now under disorder through sin and disobedience.

Another Scripture says that the whole course of nature is wrong at the present time, that everything is disorder under the prince of this age, this dispensation. The Lord Jesus is to be the new prince, the new king, the new one to take charge or rule over mankind, and he declares, “Behold, I create a new heavens and a new earth.” This is in harmony exactly with the statement here of Isaiah. So we read in Revelation, He that sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new”—a complete change from all this disorder, and sin, and present arrangement—a new order of things entirely. The symbolism will be carried out, and the heavens of the new order of things will not be the earthly nominal church systems of the present time, but the church of glory will be the new heavens—Christ and the church with him on the spirit plane, invisible to men, will be the new heavens, the new ruling power, and the new earth will be with righteousness controlling, the prince of this world will be cast out, and the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory, will be the king over all the earth, and instead of the darkness will be light and blessing.

The meaning of this last part, that the former should not come into mind nor be remembered—Does this signify that we are to forget all of these things? No, the thought would be that whatever we might have thought worthy of recording, and worthy of remembering, wishing to treasure up as things that were worthy of note, we will not think of them as worthy of mention at all. We will try to forget all of those things of death and imperfection; they will be so overwhelmed by the new order of things in the new dispensation that they will not be worthy of being mentioned, or being especially recorded. We will still be able to remember them, in fact we may say that we will even remember the imperfections of this present time. Some of us will sometimes say, thinking of something unpleasant in the past, “I will try to forget that.” A sister remarked to me the other day, when some question came up, “Oh, that is among the things I am trying to forget.” Not that she did really forget them, but she was putting them away, they were not worthy to be remembered in comparison with the better things. So all the most precious and grand things of earthly arrangements today—for instance we speak of the inauguration of a president, and that we had been there on such an occasion, and remembered the honor of sitting on the platform with the President at the time, or you were a member of congress—these things would seem so trivial and unworthy you would want to forget all about them, the things we will have in the future, being so far superior to these. Q580

**Then He who sat on the throne said,
“Behold, I make all things new.”
Revelation 21:5**

ALL THINGS NEW

The world is old with centuries,
But not for these she bows her head;
Close to her heart the sorrow lies,
She holds so many dead!
Sad discords mingle in her song,
Tears fall upon her with the dew,
The whole creation groans---How long
Ere all shall be made new?

Yet brightly on her smiles the sun,
A bounteous heaven delights to bless;
Oh, what shall be that fairer one,
Wherein dwells righteousness?
Oh, happy world! Oh, holy time!
When wrong shall die, and strife will cease,
And all the bells of heaven chime
With melodies of peace.

No place shall be in that new earth
For all that blights this universe;
No evil taint the second birth,
'There shall be no more curse.'
Ye broken hearted, cease your moan;
The day of promise dawns for you;
For He who sits upon the throne
Says, 'I make all things new.'

We mourn the dead, but they shall wake!
The lost, but they shall be restored!
Oh, well our human hearts might break
Without that sacred word!
Dim eyes look up, sad hearts rejoice,
God's bow of promise through,
At sound of that prophetic voice:
'I will make all things new.'

--Gertrude W. Seibert

“Before she was in labor, she gave birth. Before her pain came, she delivered a male child. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children.”

– Isaiah 66:7-8 –

The travail that is coming is to be upon nominal Zion—“Christendom,” “Babylon;” and it will be a great and sore affliction—“a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” But the marvelous thing the Prophet here has to record is that a man-child (KJV) is to be born out of Zion before this travail comes. This is a striking reference to the fact, elsewhere clearly taught, that the ripe wheat of the Gospel Church is to be separated from the tares, that they are to be exalted and glorified before the burning, the consuming trouble, shall come upon the latter. This man-child is, therefore, the little flock—the true Zion in God’s estimation, the body of Christ; as it is written, “There shall come out of Zion [the nominal gospel church] the deliverer [the Christ, Head and body], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [the fleshly Israel or Zion].” —Rom. 11:26.

This is the man-child that is to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:16,29.) The birth of the man-child is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the first resurrection. Such are now begotten of God by the Word of truth, and quickened by the holy spirit (Jas. 1:18; Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:11), and in due time—before the travail—they will be born in the glorious likeness of Christ. The birth of this man-child began over eighteen hundred years ago with the resurrection of Christ Jesus. There the head of this body of Christ came forth; and as surely as the head has been born, so surely, shall the body come forth. “Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God.” (Isa. 66:9.) Ah, no: “the man-child,” the Christ complete, the Great Deliverer, shall come forth.

Yet “who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?” for not only shall the body of Christ, the true overcoming Zion, the “holy nation, the peculiar people,” be

“Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?” says the LORD. “Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb?” says your God. “Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her. Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her.”

Isaiah 66:9-10

delivered out of nominal Zion, before the travail; but when she travails a great company of other children will be born. This is the great company described in the Apocalypse as coming up out of the great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:14.) The body of Christ, the man-child, born before the travail, will be composed of those who heard and obeyed the call, “Come out of her, my people,” etc. (Rev. 18:4), and who were counted worthy to have part in the first resurrection; while the many children born through the great tribulation will be those believers in nominal Zion, Babylon, who have allowed themselves to become measurably intoxicated by the spirit of Babylon, the spirit of the world, and who, therefore, are not quick to discern and prompt to obey the voice of the Lord in this harvest time.

While those who are truly begotten of God and who have been quickened by his spirit to the new spiritual life, and who are faithful in fulfilling their covenant of entire consecration as living sacrifices unto God, may well rejoice in hope of the first resurrection, and of being born before the travail upon nominal Zion, it is also a cause for rejoicing that many of the weaker children of God, now stumbling with nominal Zion, will, nevertheless, by and by be recovered and saved so as by fire (born) through the great tribulation (travail), in which nominal Zion shall expire, but from which they shall come forth. R. 1649

They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you,” says the LORD, “to deliver you.”
– Jeremiah 1:19 –

The faithful Prophet, Jeremiah, was persecuted because he boldly declared the word of the Lord which foretold only trouble upon Israel, and how the government foolishly thought to avert the trouble by persecuting the Lord’s warning messenger, instead of by heeding his wise counsel.

In this, the faithful Prophet typified the faithful of the Gospel age who will also suffer persecution in some shape or form, if they boldly declare the whole counsel of God; for, until the Kingdom of God is established in the earth, “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Tim. 3:12; Phil. 1:29.) And the Apostle Paul points those of the Gospel Church, who are running for the prize of our high calling, to the noble, self-sacrificing faithfulness of the ancient worthies who endured so much for their faithfulness to the Lord and his truth. —Heb. 11.

The deliverance promised to Jeremiah in the words of this text was not to be a deliverance from persecution or even from death, but merely such protection as would prevent his enemies from prevailing against him to hinder the Lord’s purposes in him. The Lord does not engage to deliver his children from all the ills of this present life. They are permitted to share them with the rest of mankind, and even to suffer injustice and abuse and often martyrdom for righteousness; but if faithful unto death—loyal and true to God and to his truth and to conscience—their glorious deliverance will come at last with an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. R. 1372

Thus says the LORD: “Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it. Then you will find rest for your souls.”

– Jeremiah 6:16 –

The finding of the Word of God seemed to begin afresh with the introduction of the art of printing, at a time when certain of the Lord’s people were aroused to inquire more particularly for the “old paths.” (Jer. 6:16.) In Luther’s day, when printing was considerably advanced, history tells us that although he had been in a religious college for years, and was a professor and teacher, he never saw a copy of the Word of God until he was twenty years of age. Thank God that today his Word is abundantly distributed in all civilized lands and is obtainable in all heathen lands and in all languages.

We are living now in a time of great falling away from the faith when few intelligent people any longer believe in the Bible. We are in the shaking time, the burning time when all the wood, hay and stubble of falsehood must be consumed, when only the precious truths of God’s Word, gold, silver and precious stones of faith will stand the test. The Lord, through the Prophet Jeremiah, tells His people to “inquire for the old paths”; and this is the appropriate lesson for each of us. We do, indeed, need to discard the creeds of the past, not because they contain nothing of truth, but because error commingles in them to such a degree as to make them perversions of truth as a whole. We need to come to the Bible afresh, to hear its message. Thus coming, many of us have been surprised as we have found its purity, consistency and harmony with itself.

R. 3609, SM343, SM302

Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches. But let him who glories glory in this: That he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the LORD.

– Jeremiah 9:23-24 –

Things highly esteemed among men are wisdom, power and riches. But it is not the wisdom that cometh down from above, nor the power of godliness, nor the true heavenly riches that moth cannot destroy nor rust corrupt that is sought after by the world. Men of the world have not learned the value of these, and therefore they “spend their strength for naught, and their labor for that which satisfieth not.” “The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;” the faith that lays hold upon the might of the Lord is the beginning of power; and the poverty that freely surrenders all things to the will and service of God is the beginning of true riches. Worldly wisdom, which has not its foundation in the reverence of the Lord, tends to self-exaltation and pride; power in the hands of the ungodly tends to haughtiness and overbearing selfishness; and riches, among those who have not learned from God the responsibilities of stewardship, tend only to dwarf the soul, rendering it impervious to the noble sentiments of love and brotherly kindness.

What folly is it then—especially for any one who has been enlightened by the truth, and made a child and heir of God—to forget the importance and value of the unseen heavenly treasure and turn to minding earthly things. For any to glory in such a course is to glory in their shame and folly. But let it not be so with us: “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” “Let him glory in this,” saith the Lord, “that he understandeth and knoweth me.” “And this is life eternal,” said Jesus, “that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” —John 17:3.

To thus know the Lord is not merely to know of him, to know something of his works and ways, but it is to know him by that intimate fellowship and communion which, by a living faith, seals the testimonies of his Word upon our hearts and makes us to realize that they are ours personally, that the Lord himself is our personal friend and helper and counselor and guide. We thus become acquainted with his spirit, his principles and methods of action, —we understand him, —we know how to interpret his providences, to mark his leadings, to observe his attitude toward us and thus daily to walk with him. Thus also we are led to a fuller appreciation of the Lord’s righteousness and of his loving kindness, which will in due time establish justice in all the earth. Well, indeed, may we glory in the Lord and in the fact of his great condescension to us personally, when thus we come to understand and know him. R. 1919





**In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely.
Now this is His name by which He will be called:
THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.
– Jeremiah 23:6 –**

By his faith Jacob obtained a rank, a standing, amongst his posterity with his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham, and in olden times no Israelite would appropriate any of these three names—they were considered too sacred for others than the originals. The changing of Jacob's name reminds us of other similar changes: for instance, amongst our Lord's disciples Simon was renamed Peter, and again Saul of Tarsus was renamed Paul, and this gradually led to the custom prevalent throughout Christendom of giving to every convert a new name, a Christian name, and this principle was eventually applied to children of believers and ultimately to all children.

But God proposes a new name for his people—his Church—the Bride, the Lamb's wife. As Jesus was our Lord's name and he became the Christ, the Messiah, so all who become members of his body come under his new name, and are recognized of the Lord and may be recognized of each other as members of the Christ (Rev. 3:12); and again, the Lord, prophetically speaking of Christ, says, "This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Righteousness of Jehovah," (Jer. 23:6): and again, speaking of the Bride of Christ, we read, "This is the name by which she shall be called, The Righteousness of Jehovah." (Jer. 33:16.) The name of the Bridegroom is given to his Bride—"They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels." (Mal. 3:17.) And those who will get this new name, we may be sure, will all be called upon to demonstrate that they will be overcomers. They must all pass approval before the Lord for their faith and their persistency in holding to him and his gracious promise—the Oath-Bound Covenant. R. 3970

**In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will
dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called:
THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.
Jeremiah 33:16**

In one place the Prophet Jeremiah declares, "This is the name whereby *He* shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness." In another place he says, "She shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness [or, the Righteousness of Jehovah]." And so the Apostle declares, "That we might be made the Righteousness of God through Him." —Jer. 23:6; 33:16; 2 Cor. 5:21. These statements refer to Zion. The *typical* Zion is the Jewish nation; and the *antitypical* Zion is the glorified Christ. Very properly, then, we may understand that the blessings which belong to the Church on the spirit plane will, naturally, on the earthly plane, belong to the Ancient Worthies, who will be in Divine favor forever. R. 4913

You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

– Jeremiah 29:13 –

Judah represented those Israelites who were **faithful** to the Lord, those who trusted in the promises, all of which centered in Judah: and, as we have seen, into their territory many of the faithful of the ten tribes removed. Yet with all these lessons, and with the instructions of the prophets, the history of the nation was one of unfaithfulness to their great King, Jehovah. Now the time for the change which God saw best to bring upon them had come, and nothing could avert it. Nevertheless, they were given a hope that at the end of a certain period of seventy years' chastisement the Lord would graciously bring back those who revered him. And it is worthy of note that only those who had respect unto the Lord and to the promises made to their fathers would find any inducement to return; for the Land of Promise meanwhile had become a veritable wilderness, while seventy years residence in a new land would root and attach to it all who had not considerable faith in God's promises. And although the edict of Cyrus gave permission to **all** of the multitudes of the entire twelve tribes then in captivity in his dominion to return to Palestine, less than fifty-five thousand persons availed themselves of it and returned. The others were faithless, better pleased to remain in Babylon. The whole number of the children of Israel at that time must have been at least two millions "scattered abroad."

Thus did the Lord sift out from that nation all except the more faithful families; to give them a better opportunity of profiting by his instructions and disciplines, and to the intent that, if possible, a sufficient number of that people should be brought to a condition of heart-readiness to receive Messiah at his first advent, and to be received by him as his joint-heirs, his elect.

During the period of Moses and Joshua and the Elders that outlived Joshua, Fleshly Israel prospered, because obedient to the Lord: so the Church, Spiritual Israel, prospered during the days of our Lord and his apostles. By and by, neglecting the Lord, they became worldlike, and the result was the splitting off of the ten tribes: so the Christian Church, becoming worldly through neglect of the Word of the Lord, suffered the loss of the great majority in the "falling away."

Let us weigh well [this counsel,] as the principle applies to us with double force. "And it shall be when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, ... to give thee great and goodly cities which thou buildedst not, and houses full of all good things which thou filledst not, and wells digged which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; then beware lest thou forget the Lord which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage." Beloved, shall the goodness of God ever cause us ungratefully to forget him? Many indeed are the forgetful recipients of his favors. How much of the divine bounty in spiritual things has been accorded to the children of God! R. 2401 and R. 1850

The Christian who abandons the daily reading of the Word of God and meditation upon its precepts is not a growing Christian. The precepts and promises of God are very rich; but they have no sweetness to the soul that does not keep them ever fresh before the mind and delight himself in them, and shape all his course in life in strict adherence to the principles therein set forth. Let us say with the Psalmist: "With my whole heart have I sought thee [Lord], O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." —Psa. 119:10,11. R. 1850

Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah---not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

– Jeremiah 31:31-33 –

That the Israelites were in covenant relationship with God through Moses, the mediator of their Covenant, is demonstrated by the fact that Moses said, “He hath declared unto you His Covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments.” (Deut. 4:13.) Therefore the Jew is bound by the Law so long as he lives. (Rom. 7:1.) Although the Law Covenant is not intended to be an everlasting arrangement with the Jew, yet the only ones who have been able to get from under it are those who have come into Christ; the remainder cannot rid themselves of it. But the days draw nigh when the Lord God will make a New Covenant with them through a new Mediator, The Christ, who will assist them to keep the Law satisfactorily and thus to be delivered from the evil features of their Covenant.

The Abrahamic Covenant, as it was given to Abraham, is a complete covenant, whose provisions include all mankind; for it reads, “In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 12:3; 28:14.) Its promise is to THE SEED: (1) Jesus; (2) The Christ, Head and Body; (3) the earthly seed through them. Its provisions extend to all who have the faith of Abraham. The promise of God was that a blessing shall come to **all** the families of the earth. This promise was confirmed by an oath on the part of God, so that by two immutable things—the oath and the promise of God—the heirs of the promise may be sure of its fulfillment. —Heb. 6:13-18.

During the Gospel Age, Jehovah has been selecting the members of this Spiritual Seed, that they may lay down their human life and earthly interests in order to attain to the spirit nature. The selection of this Seed has been the work of the Gospel Age.

In Jer. 31:31-33, we read, “I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and with the house of Judah . . . after those days.” The expression, “those days,” we understand to refer to Israel’s “seven times” of punishment, promised by the Lord for the violation of their Law Covenant. This New Covenant is to be made with Israel alone; for God never purposed to make a covenant with the Gentiles. The New Covenant will properly be so called because it will take the place of the old Law Covenant, which God made with Israel and which was broken by them. After Israel shall have been fully established under their New Covenant, all other nations will be privileged to come into this relationship after the manner set forth in the Law. All the world will eventually be blessed thereby.

The New Covenant, then, is to be made with such of Abraham’s descendants as are able to receive it. Since the people are not worthy to enter directly into relationship with God, that Covenant must have a Mediator. The Mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Church, His Body. The Scriptures indicate that the Mediator is nearly completed. Divine Justice having accepted this arrangement, the Mediator will antitypically sprinkle the people; that is, he will show them how to come back into full accord with God, and the New Covenant will begin to swallow up the old Law Covenant as soon as the Kingdom is established. R. 5163

I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good, but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.

– Jeremiah 32:40 –

Both the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant are Scripturally styled “The Everlasting Covenant,” in contrast with the Law Covenant, which passed away, a failure because of its “unprofitableness.” (Heb. 7:18.) The one is perpetuated in the other, even as the spiritual Seed (spiritual Israel) will rule and bless through the earthly Seed (fleshly Israel). Note the Scripture testimony that the original Grace (or Sarah) Covenant is everlasting. (Gen. 17:7,13,19; 2 Sam. 23:5; Psa. 105:8-10.) Note other Scriptures which apply the same term prophetically to the New Covenant. (Jer. 32:40; 31:31,32; Ezk. 16:60.) Note carefully the context in each instance, that the reference is to the Millennium.

It was for a purpose that the Master brought the figure of a yoke to the attention of the Jews. They knew something about the burdens of the Law under which they as a people had long groaned. They had learned that they were unable to gain the everlasting life which it promised on condition of perfect obedience to its requirements. For sixteen hundred years they had been trying to keep the Law, and had failed. They remembered that God had promised them the Messiah, and they knew that somehow or other He would bring in a new arrangement; but they did not know how or when. Through their Prophets God had foretold that He would take away the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh. So the faithful ones had been watching and waiting with longing for this Messiah and all that had been promised through Him. And devout Jews are still waiting for the fulfillment of those promises.

But when Jesus came He began a work not clearly understood before. He did not then bring in the New Covenant which had been promised through the Prophets. (Jeremiah 31:31-34; 32:38-41; Ezekiel 11:19; 36:25-30.) He did not then take away their stony hearts and give them hearts of flesh. This was to be a still future work, the work of the Kingdom, when it should be set up in power and great glory over all the earth.

But now, previous to all this, the Messiah had come for a different purpose; to do a preparatory work. He was instituting a new thing; He was starting a New Creation, and was inviting as many of the Jews as were in the proper attitude of heart to join with Him—not waiting for the New Covenant of the future, but to have a part with Him in this matter of becoming sons of God. “Yoke up with Me,” Jesus said. And His Message was appreciated by those who had been sincerely trying to keep the Law. “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28.) Here was a new proposition. It must have seemed very strange to them, even if they had fully understood the figure of speech which He used.

**Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.
Matthew 11:29-30**

Although we who are Gentiles by nature were never under the yoke of the Jewish Law, yet, in another way, we have had a great burden which we were unable to bear—the burden of sin and death. Adam first came under the burden of sin which has brought so great a curse upon the world. We have all borne and felt the weight of sin and all its evil accompaniments. So the Master's words of hope and comfort have brought joy and refreshing to our hearts also, and we have found this offered rest—rest in Him, our true Yoke-Fellow.

All who are heavy-laden, who appreciate the nature and the bitterness of sin, who know and fear it and are striving against it—all these are invited to come to the Master. They are invited to take His yoke upon them and to learn of Him.

R. 4321 and R. 5885

We have seen oxen yoked. We have seen the great wooden yokes upon their necks bear down with heavy pressure upon the skin and muscles. A yoke that does not fit an animal will chafe him and cause restlessness; whereas a yoke that is properly fitted will be comfortable and will make the load much more easily drawn. Our Lord declares that He has a yoke that is easy, comfortable and enjoyable. His yoke is, so to speak, an elastic yoke. It meets the varied conditions of the different individuals who wear it. It is large for the large, small for the small, medium for the medium. It is a yoke by which the greatest, the highest and the most talented may yoke up with the Lord—or the most insignificant, may do the same. The Lord is able to bear for us all that we lack ability to bear. There is no yoke which will enable one to bear burdens as this yoke does. True, it requires perfection to bear this yoke and we are weak and imperfect beings; but if we have only one-tenth of perfection, and nine-tenths of imperfection, our Lord will bear for us the lacking nine-tenths. If we have one-half imperfection, He will bear that. Thus the weakest are provided for, and the strongest get what they need. Here is the great opportunity of the Gospel Age. R. 5886

**Come to Me,
all you who
labor and are
heavy laden,
and I will
give you rest.
Matthew 11:28**



See also entry for Matthew 11:28-30 on p. 175

Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them. And they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

– Ezekiel 11:19-20 –

The most important piece of restitution work relates to man. The hard, stony selfishness of heart which is world-wide is not God's likeness nor to God's glory. Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn.

Nineteen centuries of preaching shows that the cure of this malady is not in our power, and that only the few even desire or seek for the Lord's spirit of gentleness and tender-heartedness. The great King of Glory is also the Good Physician. He only can cure the disease of sin and its results. Through him God's promise to Israel will be fulfilled: 'I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.' And this work will proceed from Israel to all the families of the earth—uplifting all the willing and obedient out of sin and death to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. And, thank God, the unwilling and disobedient will not be consigned to endless torture, but to 'the Second Death'—'everlasting destruction.'

The Lord, speaking of the operation of the New Covenant, declares that under it (Christ being the minister of that New Covenant and its administrator during the time of its operation) he will take away the stony heart of selfishness, and will make a new heart of flesh, tender, sympathetic, generous, God-like. In other words, he will re-write in the organism of mankind, by the processes of the Millennial age, —the times of restitution, —all the original character and God-likeness and law which he possessed as originally created. When perfection shall have thus been accomplished for so many as will receive the Lord's favor on his terms of love and hearty obedience, it will no longer be true that the mind of the flesh will be at enmity with God, as it was not true originally, when Adam was in accord with God. R. 4674 and R. 3202

“As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways!”

– Ezekiel 33:11 –

There has been great commotion in the disrupted family of God—commotion in which the Lord declares He has had no pleasure (Psa. 5:4); but, nevertheless, **the Peace of God** has never been disturbed. In the full consciousness of His own moral perfection, His unerring Wisdom, His mighty Power, and with the fullest appreciation of Justice and the keenest and most ardent love of the beauty of holiness, patiently and peacefully, and even joyfully in the midst of tribulation, He has endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself for six thousand years.

But during the seventh millennium, according to the Divine purpose, it will be the joyful privilege of our Lord Jesus fully to manifest to all creatures in Heaven and in earth the Father's glorious

character. Then will the Father rejoice in the grandeur of His finished work and in the everlasting peace and happiness of His family in Heaven and on earth, "reunited under one Head."—Eph. 1:10. —Diaglott.

This blessed consummation will not be realized, however, until the incorrigible fallen sons of God, disowned and disinherited because they loved unrighteousness and would not be reclaimed, shall have been cut off. This will be the last unpleasant duty of the Creator and Father of all, who positively declares that it is a sad duty, yet nevertheless one which He will have the fortitude to perform in the interests of universal righteousness and peace. Hear Him: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" —Eze. 33:11. R. 1834

Thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land. I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country."

— Ezekiel 34:11-13 —

The Great Shepherd Himself is with His flock, and is causing His voice to be heard; and the sheep will be gathered to Him out of every nation and out of every denomination. Truly, Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me"; and "a stranger will they not follow; for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:27; John 10:5.) The voice of the Lord, of the Great Shepherd, amongst His sheep is to be heard now because it is the time of His Second Presence. He is about to complete His flock of this Gospel Age and to glorify them with Himself in the First Resurrection. Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow them; they shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever.

The Homeland of the Lord's sheep of this Gospel Age is Heaven itself, and His bringing them to it will mean their resurrection change. Then they shall be in the Kingdom with Jesus Himself —still His sheep, still His flock, still His Bride, still His members. But He declares also, "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." —John 10:16.

These other sheep of the Lord [Eze. 34:16], we believe, will include all of mankind who, during the Millennial Kingdom, will be glad to avail themselves of the great provision the Lord has made for them in His Plan. They are other sheep in the sense that they will be of a different nature from the flock which the Lord is selecting during this Gospel Age. The flock now being called and gathered are being begotten to the Divine nature, a spirit nature, and they will attain to this spirit nature by a resurrection change; as it is written, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." —1 Cor. 15:50. R. 5693

You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

– Daniel 2:34-35 –

The Prophet Daniel, in explaining Nebuchadnezzar's dream regarding the Great Image, shows that the Kingdom of God when first set up at the introduction of the Millennial Age will be but a small Stone, which has been "cut out without hands," but which will become a "great Mountain and fill the whole earth." (Dan. 2:31-45.) This Stone Kingdom is quarried out of the "earth" by the Lord. It is at first insignificant in size, and it seems to the world as powerless. But as soon as set up in power, this Kingdom will smite the "great image" of earthly rulership, and shall grind it to powder (in the coming Time of Trouble), and the wind shall carry it away. This Stone Kingdom is the holy Mountain referred to in Isa. 11:9.

When this Kingdom shall be set up it will be but a small stone, a little flock, which in the end of this age shall, with divine power, smite the dominion of earth, and crush it to dust in the great time of trouble. (See Dan. 2:34-35; Dan. 2:44-45.) But after crushing present institutions under and connected with the prince of this world, God's Kingdom will not remain small, but will gradually expand, until it shall fill the whole earth. This is the holy mountain mentioned in the prophecy [in Isaiah 11:1-10], a mountain being a symbol of a kingdom. Nothing shall be permitted to do violence or work injury throughout all God's holy kingdom, as a result of its establishment. Love shall be the law, and divine power shall be the force which will enforce that law, and all who will not conform thereto shall be "cut off from among the people," as the Lord has declared through the Apostle. (Acts 3:23.) How evident it is that this Kingdom has not yet come, when we see that so far from love being the rule of mankind, selfishness is the rule, individually and nationally, and that there are many influences of evil, hurting and destroying throughout the world today. This is an evidence that God's kingdom is not yet set up, and hence we continue to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

R. 5575 and R. 2375



The image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11:9

Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king.

– Daniel 3:17 –

Not all of God's people are in such prominent positions as were these Hebrews; and not many have testings of exactly the same kind as were theirs, with a literal fiery furnace before their eyes. Nevertheless, there are trials before the Lord's people today that are fully as severe. Who will not agree that questions respecting a public acknowledgement of an idol and thus a public disavowal of the true God would be a point more quickly and more easily decided by nearly everyone than some of the subtle temptations of our day? For instance, various idols are set up all over Christendom, each of which, it is claimed, represents the true God, and each of which demands worship in honor and substance.

There are some the world over who, with a courage not less than that of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, declare publicly that the Lord God alone shall have the worship and the service which they can render. None, perhaps, know better than the writer the various fiery experiences to which these faithful few are exposed—boycotted socially, boycotted in business, slandered in every conceivable manner, and often by those of whom they had least expected it, who, according to the Lord's declaration, say "all manner of evil against them falsely." —Matt. 5:11-12.

But with these, as with the three Hebrews of [this verse], the chief trial is in connection with their faith; after they have taken a firm stand for the Lord and his truth they may indeed be bound and have their liberties of speech and of effort restrained, and they may indeed be cast into the fiery furnace, but nothing more than these things can be done to them. As soon as they have demonstrated their fidelity to God to this extent, their trials and troubles are turned into blessings and joys. As the form of the Son of God was seen with the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, so unseen, the Lord is present with those who trust him and who, because of faithfulness to him and to his Word, come into tribulation. R. 2495

"Let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished, and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Daniel 3:18-25

So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.”

– Daniel 6:16 –

Daniel continued to worship the Lord as before. He would not sell his conscience, he would not deny his God, he would not pretend that he was praying to or worshipping Darius. All of the Lord's people should be extremely careful about compromising the conscience. Our consciences may require education, because through the fall our judgments may be warped and twisted and need to be corrected; but conscience must be followed in any event.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

Daniel 6:10

Shortly after the signing of the decree the princes reported Daniel as having violated its terms, and then and there the king's eyes were opened and he beheld the trap into which his vanity had gotten him.

The king was greatly displeased with himself that he had fallen into this trap, and was displeased undoubtedly with the princes who had entrapped him. The words “with himself” are lacking from some of the reliable manuscripts, which makes the displeasure all the broader to include his counselors. He appreciated Daniel as a man of God and as an able servant of the empire, and set about at once to do everything in his power to annul his own decree— “he labored until the going down of the sun to deliver him,” but he found no excuse.

Perceiving the king's endeavor to rescind the decree, the counselors called upon him in a body to impress the necessity for its execution. In compliance Daniel was cast into the den of lions. It was probably a lion pit surrounded by high walls, just as we have today in some parts bear pits. The entrance to this pit from certain protected enclosures was through a door, and there the lions were enclosed at night by a stone, which, pushed across the entrance to the pit, served as a door and was fastened. The king's sealing wax was placed upon this and also the seal of his counselors, thus indicating that the pit might not be opened except with the consent of both the king and his counselors.

What must have been the feelings of the aged prophet and ruler as he realized the condition of things, and as the king talked with him and told him of his inability to gain the consent of his counselors to any change in the decree, and of his deep sorrow in connection with the execution of the sentence. How well Daniel had let his light shine is evidenced by the words of the king in this address— “Daniel, thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.” We may reasonably suppose, too, that a man so firm and strong in his faithfulness to the Lord and to principle could go to the lions' den without fear. Some one has said that one with God is a majority; the Prophet has said, “Greater is he who is on our part than all they that be with them.” Although Daniel did not live under the favored conditions of this Gospel age and its influences of the holy Spirit, he did have what by the Lord's arrangement is common to all mankind, namely, strength and courage in proportion to his honesty of heart and faithfulness.

On the one hand he knew that God was able to deliver him from the lions if he chose to do so; on the other hand he knew that if the Lord permitted the lions to devour him he could give him strength and courage to endure the pain and trials, with other Jews who looked forward in hope and anticipation to the glorious Millennial time when Messiah should reign, when all of his faithful will be blessed, yea, when all the families of the earth will receive a blessing. Why should such a man have special fear or dread as respects a den of lions? Much more, why should we, if likewise faithful to our trusts and obligations to the extent of our ability, and if living in the enjoyment of our privileges and with the still greater light upon the divine plan—why should we fear or quake under such circumstances? God is able to deliver us from every evil, and has promised that whatever may come to us shall work for our good, because we love him and are called according to his purpose. It requires faith to pass through such an ordeal triumphantly, and it requires character and obedience behind that faith to give it strength; and above all it requires that behind the faith and the character shall be the realization that Christ is our sufficiency, that he not only has redeemed us with his precious blood but that he lives to succor us. R. 3640



Daniel in the lion's den

Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?” Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him, and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.” Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should

take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

Daniel 6:18-23

The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, says the LORD of hosts.

– Haggai 2:9 –

It is when the Lord's people begin to feel that the Lord is afar off, and that they are depending on themselves or on each other, and when they realize their weaknesses, that discouragement is apt to creep in—especially upon those who, having returned from mystic Babylon, are seeking to build again the spiritual Temple, the Church, the Temple of the living God. There are many temptations to these to attend to earthly affairs, to build their own reputations and earthly prosperity, and to neglect the great work for which ostensibly they came out of Babylon. Let all such take courage from the Word of the Lord, through Haggai:

Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel, says the LORD. And be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and be strong, all you people of the land, says the LORD, and work, for I am with you, says the LORD of hosts.

Haggai 2:4

To those who have no interest in the work the message respecting the Lord's presence will be undesirable; but it encourages and strengthens the truly devoted who are merely discouraged by the fightings without and within.

The Lord, through the Prophet, called the attention of the Israelites to the fact that he had made a covenant with them after they had come out of Egypt, assuring them of his willingness to perform it; and that his spirit, his power, his energy, was in their midst to guide, to overrule and to bless, and on this account they should not fear nor be discouraged. Spiritual Israel may well say, I will not fear; for if God so loved us while we were yet sinners, much more now that we are accepted in the beloved are we the special objects of divine care and grace.

The message of verses 6-9 was doubtless considerable of a riddle to the Israelites who heard it. It seemed an extravagant statement; indeed, it was so, if applied to the house which they were seeking to reconstruct. But the holy spirit, through the Apostle, shows us that this prophecy did not relate wholly nor even specially to the literal Temple at Jerusalem, but to the symbolic Temple, the Temple of God, "which temple are ye"—the Church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven. This Gospel Church is the "latter house" or Temple, Spiritual Israel, as the former house was natural Israel, represented in the natural Jerusalem and its Temple. Ours is the New Jerusalem and our Temple is being built by the new Master-builder himself, as it is written, "Ye are his workmanship." (Eph. 2:10.) The Apostle shows us that Christ Jesus himself is the great Corner-Stone of this house of sons, and that all of the faithful followers of Christ are being shaped, fitted, polished, prepared, as "living stones," for places in this antitypical Temple, whose builder and maker is God. —1 Pet. 2:7; Heb. 11:10.

It is only when we get a glimpse through the New Testament of the glory, honor and immortality which shall attach to the great spiritual Temple now under construction, and realize by faith the "glory that shall be revealed in us," in God's due time, that we can realize even slightly the significance of the words of the Prophet, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace."

The peace and joy and blessing which the world needs and craves cannot come, will not come, until this latter house of the Lord's building shall be completed and filled with his glory—until the elect Church, whose Head is Christ Jesus, shall be given the Kingdom, the dominion of earth—

then a King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall execute judgment, the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and none shall need to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, and great shall be the peace of that Millennial day, when the Prince of Peace shall reign. —Luke 12:32; Rev. 5:10; Isa. 11:9; 32:1; 54:13. R. 2520

**I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and
I will fill this temple with glory, says the LORD of hosts.**
Haggai 2:7

Haggai's prophecies were delivered to Israel about the time of their return from the captivity, and therefore at the time of the founding of the Temple, the prophet at this time being advanced in years. Zechariah, a younger prophet, was raised up by the Lord at this time, and other messages were sent to the discouraged Israelites to show them that they must not expect great national prosperity at the time, but that nevertheless the Lord was with them, and that going on faithfully in an apparently small, insignificant matter, they would be accomplishing his purposes. R. 3650

He answered and said to me: This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.

— Zechariah 4:6 —

The message here to the Zerubbabel class is to encourage the work, that the Temple must be built, that it shall be built, and that ultimately great blessings shall flow to all people through it. The message reads: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." The implication is that the Lord's Church is not to be established through Crusades, nor through mighty organizations combining with worldly systems and powers, nor by unions of wealthy sects. These all build along different lines. The Temple which the Lord is building is to have a beauty, an honor, a dignity, not in its construction, nor in the value of its stones, but by reason of its completion and of its then being filled with the glory of the Lord—in the first resurrection.

The oppositions of the surrounding neighbors and the difficulties which they put in the way of the building of the Temple must have seemed to the people of that time like an impassable mountain before them blocking their way. And so throughout the Gospel age the various agencies of evil, the civil power and subsequently the ecclesiastical and civil powers in combination, have seemed to have thoroughly blocked the way for the development of the living stones for the Kingdom. From the human standpoint, discerning the class which the Lord is selecting, all the outward circumstances have been unfavorable.

The lesson to us is that God is supplying to us the light amidst the surrounding darkness of the world—the light of truth, the light of the holy Spirit. The Lord's Church is to be filled with his spirit and to shine as lights in the world in the midst of darkness, in the midst of crooked and perverse peoples. From this standpoint they are not to expect that their success in the building of the Temple will be in the nature of worldly success. They are rather to expect that the Lord will furnish them with this supply of oil and light because they are his people and because they are doing the work, and they are thus to be assured of its ultimate accomplishment no matter how or what agencies are in opposition. R. 3651

The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple. His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.

– Zechariah 4:9 –

The message here through the prophet is intended to encourage the Zerubbabel class, representative of all those who are co-laborers with the Lord in the building of his Temple, in the preparation of the stones. The assurance is that however great and formidable the opposition, the apparent mountains of difficulty shall disappear. What we need is faith in the Lord that he is carrying out his work and that ultimately all his good purposes shall be accomplished. Instead of mountains before us shall be a plain, and ultimately God will bring forth the headstone, the capstone, to the great complete Church, and Head and body together shall be glorified, and then will be the shoutings of Grace, grace unto it! God's favor upon it! Then the Shekinah glory shall fill the Temple, every member, every stone, shall be glorified, made partaker of the divine nature, and be fully qualified to carry out all the gracious purposes of our God.

The message adds that as Zerubbabel laid the foundations of the house, he also would complete it, and the message to us is that as our Lord Jesus was the Father's representative and founded the house of sons at Pentecost, so in due time he will complete the work and it will be completed along present lines, not by power of men nor by the might of men, nor by the riches of the world, but by the Lord's spirit, seeking those who are his and operating in them through the Word to the chiseling and polishing, the shaping and preparing, of them for the glorious positions they are to occupy. He who began the good work in us is able and willing to complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ. —Phil. 1:6. R. 3651

Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"

Zechariah 4:7

Our Lord Jesus himself laid the foundation of the spiritual Temple, and he himself will complete it as its top-stone, and it shall be acclaimed glorious, not only by men, but by angels, in God's due time. The work is in his hand, and although from outward appearances at the present time there may seem to be discouragements, and little progress may seem to have been made, yet his servants should be of good courage and should remember that their victory is to come, not through human might, popularity and influence, nor by their own power, but by the Lord's spirit. The possession of his faith and his spirit will give us the victory over the world, the flesh and the Adversary, and make us more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood. Our struggles, our efforts, our building, are all on a discouragingly small and insignificant scale, but we see not and build not the real Temple, the living stones. We see each other according to the flesh, to some extent, despite our efforts to know no man after the flesh, and to recognize each other only as new creatures in Christ. We look more or less, however unintentionally, at the things that are seen, which are temporal and imperfect. We think more or less of the work of construction from the standpoint of numbers, influence, outward polish, etc. Instead, we should be looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, who laid the foundation-stone, and who is to be the finisher of it, and is the cap, the climax, of his great and wonderful work, the new creation in glory.

—Heb. 12:2. R. 2522

Who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.

– Zechariah 4:10 –

To the Jews returned from Babylon, the effort to build the house of the Lord and the materials with which they worked all seemed insignificant and poor and unlikely to result in anything great or glorious or lasting. And so with us who now are free from Babylon and who are seeking to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the present time seems a day of small things; not many great, not many wise, not many learned are to be found amongst the living stones, but the Lord knoweth them that are his, and our confidence is to be in him. If we despise not these small things we shall ultimately rejoice. We are to recognize the plummet in the hands of the Lord, squaring, straightening, proving, testing, not only our faith but also our characters. We are to recognize that only those who will stand the testing of the Lord shall ultimately constitute the living stones in this glorious Temple. We are to recognize also that the eyes of the Lord are upon all his people and upon all their interests, to note their tears and their joys, their trials and difficulties and their prosperity, to care for all their interests.

**He will not fail nor be discouraged, till
He has established justice in the earth.**
Isaiah 42:4

In this symbolical picture the eye of the Lord is represented as seven or complete all-seeing, everywhere, all-knowing. This is our confidence, this is our rejoicing. Let us then in our double capacity not only be conformed to the plummet line, to all the elements of justice and truth and righteousness and love, but let us also, as associated with our Lord in the work of upbuilding the Church, build one another up in the most holy faith. Let us use the plummet with love, with kindness, and let us encourage one another with the assurance that ultimately the glorious plan of the Lord shall be accomplished through the small things, the mean things, the insignificant things of the world, the little flock whom he is choosing to be his agents and representatives in the great and glorious work which is to follow. Let us accordingly seek to be more and more filled with the spirit. Let us remember that we are the golden candlestick of the Lord, to shed the light abroad in the present time, whether men will heed or whether they will forbear. R. 3651

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you. He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

– Zechariah 9:9 –

Many are blinded to the fact of the Lord's presence, so clearly indicated in the Scriptures, by their misapprehension of the manner of his coming. Expecting to see him in the flesh, and his coming to be announced by the blast of a literal trumpet and visible to the natural eye in the literal clouds, they are unable to see, to recognize, him as having come and as now present, not in the flesh, but a spirit-being, invisible to the natural eye, yet clearly attested to the eye of faith by the sure word of prophecy, and to discern his presence and power in the midst of the clouds of trouble now so rapidly casting their dark shadows over the whole world. Nevertheless, these are facts, and of most solemn import, especially to all that name the name of Christ. (cont'd on p. 154)

And when the chief priests (Matt. 21:15,16; Luke 19:40) expressed their displeasure against those who glorified the new king (as the chief priests—the clergy—do today against those whose blindness and lameness the Lord has healed), Jesus said, “I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” Why? Because the Prophet Zechariah (9:9) had foretold the shouting and rejoicing, and now the time had come and the prophecy was sure to be fulfilled—“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee,” etc. So it was in the type then; and so it is in the antitype now. As truly and as necessarily as there was shouting and rejoicing there, so there is and must be now. Great is the joy now among the saints as they recognize the King; and their proclamation of his presence and Kingdom is the “shout,” heard, if not believed. “Yea,” said the Master, “have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?” Even so is it now also in this antitype of that day; for it is not from the chief priests, the clergy, of today that the hosannas rise in recognition of the King’s presence and power here, but out of the mouths of the common people—“of babes and sucklings” are heard the notes of praise and jubilee—“Hosanna to the Son of David” who has come to reign, and who is even now setting up his Kingdom. R. 1795

Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!”
Matthew 21:9

“They shall be Mine,” says the LORD of hosts, “On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.”

– Malachi 3:17 –

Like many other prophecies, the words of the Prophet Malachi seem to have a general application throughout the Gospel Age and a particular one at the close of the Age. In a certain sense God has been making up His jewels for more than eighteen hundred years—in the sense of preparing them. But there is still a final gathering, or assembling, of this class, which has not yet been completed. The gathering of these jewels must include the resurrection, not merely of those who have been sleeping as members of the Body of Christ, but also of those who are alive and remain to the end of the Age. These all experience a change from animal to spirit conditions—“changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” (1 Cor. 15:51,52.) In the assembling of this class—the mounting of the jewels, as it were—the Lord will show His own workmanship, what He has selected out of the filth and mire of the sinful race of mankind, and what He has made of them.

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.
Ephesians 2:10

These gems must all be found by God, who is making up these jewels. But having been found of Him, they are placed in the hands of the great Lapidarist, our Lord Jesus, that He may cut, polish and fit them for the glorious work of shining with Him in the Kingdom. Our Heavenly Father has appointed our Lord to be the great Master Workman in the preparation of the jewels.

In our text, the Lord Jehovah says that in that day of preparation of the jewels He will spare this class as a man spares his only son that serves him. He has not spared this class in the sense of relieving them from all suffering, for if they were thus spared they could not share the glory to follow this trial time. He did not spare Jesus, the Head over the Church, which is His Body. But He will not permit them to be tempted above what they are able to bear. (1 Cor. 10:13.) He has an interest in them and a sympathy for them, and delivers them from those things which would prove too weighty for them.

In a short time the Lord will spare His people—not from the trouble altogether, but from any unnecessary experience. We cannot expect that He will spare them as jewels any more than He did His Only Begotten Son. He allowed that Son to be put to death—even the death of the cross. Yet He protected our Lord and did not permit any of the things which He suffered to work to His detriment. And so the Lord will spare us as New Creatures. He is preparing for us the glorious things which He has in reservation for the faithful. R. 5119



The Lord is seeking his precious jewels. Many of them are indeed diamonds in the rough. The real diamond is a noble, loyal, faithful character, devoted and uncompromising in its allegiance to God. Sometimes the circumstances of life have deprived such of education or culture and have left them only sufficient means for the bare necessities of life. But no matter, God's eye is on them: character is what he is looking for, and in due time, when that character is sufficiently developed, confirmed, tested and proved worthy of exaltation, he can and will add to it all the glories of knowledge and wisdom and grace and beauty. But first he will subject it to all the necessary tests. If it is a true diamond it will receive and it will also transmit to others the light of divine truth. Nothing so gloriously reflects the light as the diamond; and nothing so gloriously reflects the truth as the worthy character of the true and faithful saint. R. 3104





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OUR LORD AND MASTER

*Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
John 6:68*

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and His Truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if He were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal Church systems. Now, instead of crucifying Him literally, or roasting Him at the stake, they would "roast" Him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who did reverence to the Doctors of the Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the Law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But He appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in His steps, to stand for the Truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit—particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

As our Master was hated **without a cause**, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the Truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the Household of Faith.

As the faithful disciples realized a meaning in the Master's teachings at the first harvest which the majority could not realize, so now at the second advent his words have a preciousness and a meaning and a force to those who are in heart-harmony with him, which they do not have to others; hence now, as at the first advent, some are stumbling and going back, and others are being drawn to the Lord more closely than ever, by the "present truth" which he is supplying as "meat in due season." As we progress in the way, toward the close of this harvest, we shall not be surprised if the way should grow still narrower, more difficult, and if the tendencies to "stumble"

should become more frequent. Let us each, therefore, more and more be on our guard against the wiles of the Adversary; and let the perfect love of God rule in our hearts, driving out self-love and world-love, and their pride and ambition and folly; and let this devotion to God bring into our hearts the promised fullness of joy and rest and peace; and let us abide in him, the Vine, and be fruitful branches, responding to all the prunings of the great husbandman with more abundant fruitage; and if beguilements come to us, let us view the matter as did the apostles and say, "Lord, to whom should we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." R. 5545, R. 5546, R. 2258



**Jesus, my Lord, Thou art my life,
My rest in labor, strength in strife;
Thy love begets my love of Thee;
Thy fullness that which filleth me.**

**Mine effort vain, my weakness learned,
Weary, from self to Christ I turned,
Content to let His fullness be
An unbought fullness unto me.**

---R. 5913

Some Christian writer has well said: "Wherever there has been a faithful following of the Lord in a consecrated heart, several things have, sooner or later, inevitably followed. Meekness and quietness of spirit become in time the characteristics of the daily life. A submissive acceptance of the will of God, as it comes in the hourly events of each day, is manifested; pliability in the hands of God to do or to suffer all the good pleasure of His will; sweetness under provocation; calmness in the midst of turmoil and bustle; a yielding to the wishes of others [where there is no conflicting principle involved], and an insensibility to slights and affronts; absence of worry or anxiety; deliverance from care and fear—all these, and many other similar graces, are invariably found to be the natural outward development of that inward life which is 'hid with Christ in God.'" R. 5913

The Only Begotten

From far in the great aions of eternity,
From space unlimited, unmeasured by the steps
Of worlds, from silence broken only by the voice
Of him, the Self-Existent One, whose skillful word
Created him, came forth the glorious Son of God.
(O sacred moment! which with shaded eyes we dare
With holy boldness to approach; not with a vain
Desire to see and know what God has hid, but drawn
Thereto by that blest Spirit which in reverence
Delights to search the deep and precious things revealed.)
O glad Beginning of Creation's early morn!
O glorious Finish of Creation's noon and night!
O blessed Son, begotten of the Father's speech,
Thou Only Well-belov'd, in whom all fullness dwells!
Silence and space alone were found to worship thee!
But deep within the counsels of th' Eternal One
Lay countless hosts whose praise should celebrate the Son;
And to the Son was giv'n prerogative to call
Them to existence, in abodes of him prepared,
And crown with happiness each creature in its sphere.
Rich in insignias of his high rank, he still
Delighted in the emblems of humility;
And wore upon his heart the gem obedience,
And clothed his arm with zeal, his feet with haste, to do
The holy will of Him who loved and cherished him.



And now reigns silence, solemn, still, as that which on
His natal day received him; for the angels watch,
With awe constrained, while he divests himself of all
His wealth and glory, and becomes a babe; then loud
Hosannas sing, "On earth be peace, good will to men!"
And lovingly they watch him as the perfect man's
Estate he magnifies with like obedience,
Unflinching loyalty and firm humility;
Till, daunted not by Calv'ry's cross and shame, he gives
His life---a ransom for a helpless, dying race.
That awful day the darkened sun and quaking earth
Creation's anguish voiced; but One yet reigned supreme,
Who loved him with the power of infinity,
And in His master-hand the mighty issues held--
The matchless Son had won the title to a throne!
What throne? Could all the boundless universe produce
A worthy coronet for his escutcheon which
Nor honor, glory, shame nor death could mar? Behold,
The heav'ly myriads worship, while the Father crowns
The risen Son---divine, immortal, Lord of all.
O hail, Immanuel! Prince of life and glory, hail!
Let earth with heaven unite in adoration, praise,
Thanksgiving to thy God, whose attributes thou hast
Exalted, and to thee, whose love and sacrifice
Constrain a race redeemed to endless gratitude!

--R. B. HENNINGES

Wonderful Words of Life

Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

– John 6:68 –

The Apostle Peter's words, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life," are full of meaning. He had known what it meant to seek God's favor and everlasting life through keeping the Law, and, like most of the Jews of the humbler class, had been discouraged, finding himself condemned both by the doctrines of the Pharisees and by his own conscience. Doubtless, also, he knew something of the various heathen philosophies respecting a future life; and, if so, he knew them to be merely human speculations or guesses.

But for three years he had known Jesus and heard his words on this subject of eternal life. His teaching was not speculative guessing as to what might be. "He taught them with authority, and not as the scribes." Nor did he teach them to hope for eternal life through the keeping of the Law (which they knew to be an impossibility). His teaching, on the contrary, was different from that of every other teacher. He taught them that he had come into the world, not to be served or honored and titled, but to serve men and to finally give his life a ransom or purchase-price for the forfeited lives of all who lost the right to life in Adam's trial and disobedience. (Matt. 20:28.) His teaching was that as a result of this ransom-sacrifice, which, by divine love and arrangement, he was about to give for all, all shall have the opportunity of everlasting life through obedience under the gracious terms of the New Covenant; and that to this end not only they, but also, "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth, and they that hear [obey] shall live"—attain perfect life. (John 5:25; John 5:28-29.) Peter had heard this simple and beautiful gospel—this, the only real good tidings of everlasting life; he recognized Jesus as the Messiah sent of God to be the Life-giver to the world, the true light that shall ultimately lighten every man that cometh into the world. —John 1:9.

What wonder, then, in view of this, that Peter answered as he did, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Peter's faith and hope had found in the doctrines of Christ a foundation and anchorage which they could not find elsewhere.

And the same is true of all intelligent believers today, in proportion as they have heard and understood the wonderful words of life, of which Christ's death is the central theme, the hub, whose spokes are the love and favor of God, including all his exceeding great and precious promises reaching to the circumference—everlasting life. Having once seen the truth, having once heard the good tidings—the words of everlasting life—for what would they exchange it?

The Master's words were "words of life" in the sense that they conveyed the great Message of the terms upon which we may have everlasting life and become His joint-heirs. Although the Apostles explain the philosophy of the Divine Plan in great detail, and mention more than did Jesus, yet in His sayings we find the very essence or kernel of the Gospel. Nowhere are the terms of discipleship more carefully laid down than in Jesus' words, because the disciples could understand what would be the meaning of the figures of self-denial, cross-bearing, and walking in His steps, even if they could not understand the philosophy of justification, sanctification, election and Divine foreknowledge.

From Jesus' words more clearly than from any other words we get the thought of the "water of life," and how it is now in His followers a "spring" of truth, grace and everlasting life. Nowhere else do we more clearly get the general statement that the Father hath life in Himself, and hath granted unto the Son life in Himself, and that He might share this life with His disciples—with whomsoever He would. Thus, as St. Paul says, the words of this salvation in which we rejoice began to be spoken by our Lord. It is He also that declared that He brought life and immortality to light, thus distinguishing between the general reward of everlasting life to be given to the world, and the special reward to be granted to the Church.

Ah, yes! wonderful words of life, tell them over again, think them over again, rejoice in them more and more—let them fill our hearts and be in our mouths a new song of the loving-kindness of our God, whose tender mercies are over all his works. Of these words, which the Master spake as never man spake, the Apostle further declares that he spake of our salvation. He says, "Which salvation began to be spoken by our Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." [Jesus] brought life to light and immortality to light—life for the world, eternal life to be conferred during the Millennial age—immortality for his Church, his Bride, his little flock, his joint-heirs. These were never brought to light before; they were faintly seen and vaguely described, but it remained for the great teacher to set forth before us the salvation which God had proffered through him. Thank God that our hearts have made our lips more and more tell forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. Through faith in him we are already reckoned risen to walk in newness of life, and through him by and by the Father will raise us up by his own power, that we shall be like him and share his glory, honor and immortality.

Blessed have been our eyes, for they have seen many of the "deep things" in the divine plan of the ages; and blessed have been our ears, for they have heard with wonderful clearness the lessons of the great Teacher—the words of glory, honor and immortality—words of eternal life. Truly, where should we go? Our Leader, and he alone, has the words of eternal life. Since we have heard his words, all other gospels have lost their charm. We will abide with and follow the great Captain of our salvation: in his words and in his love and in his service we live and move and have our being as the elect of God. R. 1711, R. 5088, R. 3795, R. 5570

Have we heard the Call to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, to come out of the world, to be dead to the world, to give our wills to Him, to sacrifice our earthly treasures? Have we become footstep followers of Jesus? "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself [give up his own self-will], take up his cross and follow Me." Have we been following the Master, and will we continue to follow Him? In our hearts we should be saying,

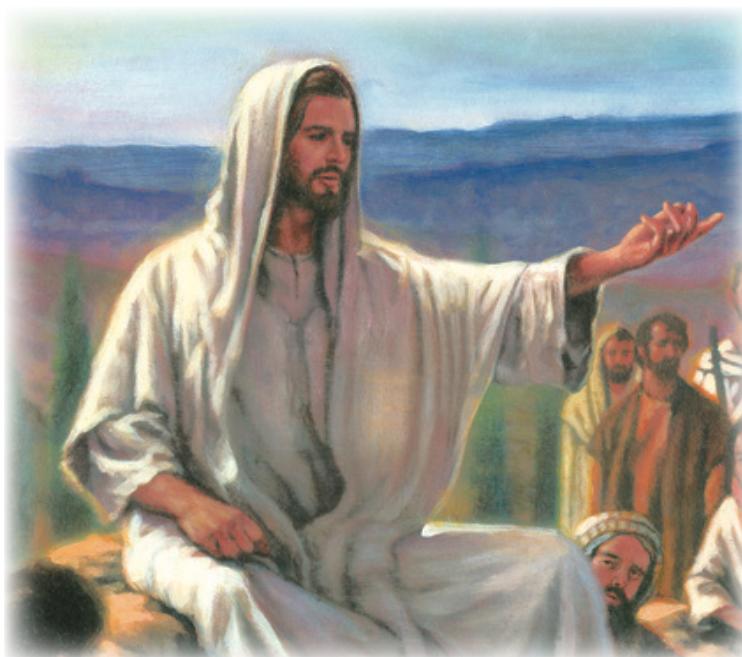
Yes.



Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
– Matthew 5:3 –

It is only when, as faithful and obedient children of God, we reverently turn the sacred pages of his holy Word and read them as a loving epistle from our faithful God, full of wisdom and counsel and wholesome instruction, that we gather from it all the refreshment of divine grace contained in it. Thus, for instance, in the first lines of our Lord's sermon on the mount, heavenly love breaks forth in showers of blessing— “Blessed,” “blessed,” “blessed are ye!” Who are the blessed ones thus addressed? Are they the holy angels who do always behold the Father's face? Truly they are blessed; but these words were not addressed to them, but to the redeemed sons of men—to men rescued from the fall, whose feet were taken out of the miry clay and set upon a rock, and in whose mouth is put the new song of praise and thanksgiving for redeeming love and grace.

Blessed are ye!



Jesus preaches on the Mount

What refreshment and joy are here for all the faithful sons of God who feed upon his Word, who lean in simple faith upon the promises and obediently walk after the spirit of God. Observe again the conditions of this blessing: they are not such as we cannot comply with: they are not conditions of absolute perfection which we cannot attain while we are in these imperfect bodies; but they indicate a reaching out after that perfection, —a hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of God, a mourning for all that comes short of that righteousness, especially in self, but also in others, and a consequent inharmony with the general spirit and course of this present evil world. And together

with the heavenly desires and aspirations there must be a meek and contrite spirit—a pliable, teachable disposition. “Blessed are the poor in spirit”—the lowly in mind, the studious, teachable ones. Such the Lord can and will lead by his spirit into the paths of righteousness, and finally into the glory of his Kingdom: — “Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

The benedictions are for the poor in spirit; for those who mourn because iniquity abounds; for the meek (the teachable and humble); for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for the merciful; for the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and the reviled and persecuted for righteousness' sake; for those whom the Lord calls “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.” Blessed, yes, blessed are ye of the Lord of hosts! Yours is the Kingdom of heaven; you shall inherit the earth; you shall be comforted; you shall be filled with the spirit of God; you shall obtain mercy; you shall see God, and shall be called the children of God; your reward in heaven is great; you shall be as a city set on a hill that cannot be hid.

**“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad;” for
 these heavenly benedictions are upon your heads. R. 2138**



Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

– Matthew 5:11-12 –

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the Truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the Truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that His people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world—the world that hated Him] hate you. Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in Heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get there—in the Kingdom. R. 5545

Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

Matthew 6:25-34

25 Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

28 So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin,

29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.



Many and varied are the precious lessons taught by the Master during His earthly ministry, and they never grow old. To the true disciple of Christ they are ever new, ever fresh. Whether He taught by the seaside or on the mountains or by the wayside, as He walked and talked with His chosen Twelve, His words of wisdom and grace come to us vibrant with meaning, pulsating with life, full of strength and power, cheering, encouraging and blessing our hearts.

Consider the lilies of the field.
Matthew 6:28



In using these words under our consideration, our Lord, as was His custom, drew an illustration of something familiar to all His hearers. God's care over the lilies seemed a fitting reminder of His greater care over His own people, of His infinite Wisdom, Power and Love. He who so carefully supervised the clothing of the simple flower—which bloomed only to fade in a day—that its robes were more regal than the kingly vesture of Solomon, would surely provide for the clothing of those who trusted in Him!

To the Christian this lesson of unfailing trust and confidence in God is a very important one, and to have learned it represents a very considerable growth in grace and in knowledge—in the spirit of love, which casts out all fear. It means a nearness to God, a fellowship with Him, which those who have not learned this lesson cannot enjoy.

Our Lord said that His disciples were to realize that God knew what things they had need of before they asked Him, and should rest fully content in the matter of what God would provide them respecting their temporalities. Jesus wished them to be sure that God would so supervise their interests that they should not want anything really good and needful to them.

This seems to be the whole lesson that our Lord was inculcating in bringing in this illustration from nature—“Consider the lilies of the field.” It was a forceful reminder that the things of the Kingdom were the things of paramount importance, and that in seeking these things first, they might have the assurance that all needed earthly things should be theirs.

What is it that we are to consider about the lilies? “How they grow!” As New Creatures, since we have given our hearts to the Lord we are not to be worried, anxious, about the things of the present life. Nor are we to be over-anxious regarding our spiritual growth. We are simply to do our best, and trust the growing to Him. If we give our attention to [spiritual] things, the Master assures us, the Heavenly Father will so supervise our affairs that we shall not lack any necessity of a spiritual kind or of an earthly kind. He will give us whatever of spiritual blessings and of temporal blessings we need as spirit-begotten children of God that we may finish our course with joy. R. 5990

**Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and
all these things shall be added to you.**

Matthew 6:33

Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you, for everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

— Matthew 7:7-8 —

All the consecrated followers of Jesus are to be free to come in his name to the Throne of grace to make request for the things which they need—the things promised in the Word of God to the faithful. We are to seek for them and we shall find them. Knocking, we shall have Divine blessings unlocked before us.

Elsewhere the Master tells us that the good thing which the Father is specially pleased to bestow is his holy Spirit. This is the all-important thing, for only as we become possessors thereof, only as we attain to the mind, the disposition of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall we be fit for a place in the glorious Millennial Kingdom to which we have been invited. His holy Spirit is manifested in us by meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness—



We read that the Heavenly Father will give good gifts to those who ask Him; [Matt. 7:11] that is, He will give that which would be good for them. We are not to dictate to Him what His blessings are to be. We are not to ask for all manner of earthly things. In the case of the Jews, they asked chiefly for the earthly blessings; because Heavenly blessings were not promised them. But we who come into the relationship of sons of God are to pray for what He has specifically promised us—the Holy Spirit. And our Father in Heaven will give us those things which are best to fit and prepare us for the Heavenly Kingdom.

The Lord will give whatever temporal blessings are to the best interests of the New Creature. Everything that He would give will be a good gift. We do not always know what would be best for us. A parent dealing with a child might find it necessary at certain times to give medicine instead of food. The parent gives this for the good of the child. So with our Heavenly Father. Sometimes He gives us tests of faith, tests of loyalty, tests of love. All these experiences are designed to develop in us strength of character, and to thereby fit us for further and more advanced blessings.

If the Lord's consecrated people would all come to the point where their chief desire, their highest aspiration, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might be filled with the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of a sound mind, that they might know and do His will, what a great blessing it would bring! It is the will of the Lord that His children should have in large measure this chiefest of all blessings, but He grants it only on certain conditions. He withholds it until they learn to appreciate its value and to so earnestly desire it that they will apply themselves diligently to meet these conditions, and will continue in supplication until their importunity shall bring down the answer. R. 4568 and R. 5835

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

– Matthew 7:11 –

Choosing an illustration from life, our Lord reminded the disciples that few if any earthly parents, if their children cried to them for blessings, would give them injurious things instead.

What man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?

Matthew 7:9-10

The force of our Lord's language is seen if we remember that the bread of oriental countries very much resembles a stone, being about the size of a large hand and baked in an oven provided with stones and whitened with the ashes. Some kinds of serpents resemble certain kinds of fish, too. And there is a small white scorpion which rolls itself up in the shape of an egg. Basing his argument upon these illustrations, which would commend themselves to his hearers, our Lord proceeds to institute a comparison as between the dealings of earthly parents with their children and the dealings of God with his children. His words are, If ye being evil, being imperfect through the fall, more or less selfish in all of your thoughts and words and dealings, still would be disposed to give good gifts to your children, how much more would your heavenly Father give the good gift of all gifts, the holy Spirit, to them that ask him for it.

The clear intimation is that this should be the essence of our petitions to our heavenly Father, for more of his holy Spirit, and that we should look to the experiences of life, its trials, disappointments, discouragements, oppositions, not as being really injurious to us, not as being stones, scorpions and serpents, but as being blessings in disguise, if we receive them in the proper spirit. The Lord is able to make all things abound in the interest of his children, the New Creatures in Christ Jesus. These know from experience that some of their severest trials and disappointments of an earthly kind have worked out for them development of character, elements of the holy Spirit, which they probably could not have so well received in any other manner. Hence, when we pray to the Lord for his blessings, we are with patience to wait for them, and to seek them and to find them in the various circumstances of life which his providences will permit. R. 3807



Remembering that the holy Spirit is the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love, we may well ask ourselves how else could the Lord work out for us these elements of character which we desire did he not permit to come upon us the trials and difficulties of life necessary to their development. R. 3808

When they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak, for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

– Matthew 10:19-20 –

The Greek here seems to give the thought: Do not be worried when you shall be brought before kings and judges. The way in which God will give us a mouth and wisdom may vary according to circumstances—perhaps by suggestions from another; perhaps in the hearing of the testimony of some one else; or it may be that a text of Scripture that would be especially helpful would come to our mind. But the thought is that our trust is in the Lord, and that we are not to be in fear and trembling.

In the Acts of the Apostles, the persecutions of the Church seem to have been largely at the hands of the Sadducees. The Sadducees should scarcely be considered a religious party, for they denied the resurrection of the dead, and denied also the existence of spirit beings, and hence believed principally in a religion for the present life merely. The Sadducees were the policy-men of that time. They favored harmony with the Roman Empire, and might, indeed, be termed the politicians of the Jewish nation. History says that the high priest and his family, and those principally in influence, were Sadducees. It is evident, therefore, that the preaching of the resurrection of Jesus, and of some spiritual power by which he could work through the apostles to the healing of the man born lame, would be an aggravation to these Sadducees, because it was directly in conflict with their belief and teachings.

Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD.

Psalm 31:24

It may at first seem peculiar that a court trial should be held in respect to the healing of a cripple. [Acts 4]. However, the object of the trial evidently was, if possible, to condemn the apostles for having practiced necromancy, sorcery, the black art. For, according to the law, a witch or wizard or necromancer, a spirit medium, was to be put to death.

If Peter had been filled with fear he would not have spoken as he did to this Court, or if he had been filled with the spirit of egotism and boastfulness he would have spoken differently; —he would have spoken unwisely, rashly, no doubt. But filled as he was with the holy spirit, the spirit of meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, and guided in his words by this spirit, he made an address which is beautiful, both for its simplicity, its directness, and its meek-boldness. R. 5330 and R. 2939

When they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

Mark 13:11

Not that we are to expect to have miraculous powers of speech granted us, but that we are to be filled with the truth and its spirit; and then indeed it will be true that it will not be our own wisdom that we shall speak, nor our own plan that we shall declare, but the wisdom that cometh from above, and the plan of the Lord our God. R. 2636

You will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

– Matthew 10:22 –

While, in God's estimation, the church is now regarded from the standpoint of her future exaltation as a glorious body, yet now, in the estimation of men, she is despised, rejected and hated, as was her Lord; because the world knows her not even as it knew him not. The world does not realize that this body, now in humiliation, is a body of kings and priests who shall by and by bear rule over angels and men. If they thought so, the saints would be very differently regarded and treated. They have found their Lord's prediction fully verified in their experience, — “Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.” (Matt. 10:22.) They must, however, be patient in their humiliation and suffering unto the coming of the Lord. Their exaltation and glory is not due until then.

Though our Lord was changed from his condition of humiliation, and highly exalted to his present glorious condition nearly two thousand years ago, mankind in general is not even yet aware of his exaltation. Though they hear the church speak of it, they see no evidence of it, and have no faith in what they hear. The time when his glory will be manifested to all, so that none shall fail to recognize it, will be at his second advent; and we are further assured that the church's exaltation and glory shall occur, and shall be manifested at the same time— “When Christ ... shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col. 3:4.) Then, the church shall in reality be a glorious body, a body suitable in every way for the high position she shall fill as the bride of Christ—the companion of the Son of God for all eternity. R. 1102



Let us, dearly beloved, as we realize that thus far God has counted us worthy to look upon the scroll of his plan which has been unsealed for us by our blessed Lord Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, prove our worthiness to continue to look therein and to read the wondrous things of his law, by faithful obedience and loyalty to it in all things. Let us not undervalue our great privilege in being counted worthy to suffer some reproach and some hardness as good soldiers for the truth's sake; and also in being counted worthy to have some part in the blessed ministry of reflecting the light of divine truth; let us prove ourselves jewels of rarest value, diamonds indeed, heartily receiving and beautifully transmitting to others the light of truth, and faithfully enduring the severest pressure that God may permit to come upon us; for, if faithful in these small things we shall in due time be counted worthy also to reign with Christ in power and great glory. If it is a real diamond it will stand the pressure, for the diamond is the hardest substance known; but if it is not a real diamond it will go to pieces and thus prove itself spurious. So God allows us to come under the constant pressure of years of toil and care and self-sacrifice to see how we will endure; and blessed is that diamond-proved character that endures to the end. —Jam. 1:12; Matt. 10:22. R. 3104

Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body.

– Matthew 10:28 –

In proportion as any who seek to know God are led to see His true character, they have confidence in Him. After such have come to the point of full consecration to the Lord, they receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and become of the Church class, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, the set apart ones—set apart by the Holy Spirit. Of these the Apostle Paul says,

God has not given us a spirit of fear.

The New Creature must repel every attack of servile fear—which belongs to the flesh, the fallen condition. The new mind must triumph over this natural tendency, must cultivate trust in the Lord.

No man could do more than take away our earthly life. No man can take away our future life. “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body.” So the child of God is to be very courageous, knowing that no one can do him harm, knowing that God will not permit anything to come to him that will not be for his good. The enlightened child of God would have no fear, or dread, of eternal torment. He would still have proper fear such as a husband would have toward a wife, or a wife toward a husband—a fear of displeasing or disappointing, and thus losing the esteem and confidence of the companion.

In respect to all the brethren we should have such fear. We should have a filial fear toward God, but not with the thought that He would harm us or torment us or do us violence of any kind, but fear lest we should lose our fellowship with Him. So, then, whatever fear we have of a slavish kind is not from God. Such fear brings a snare. But love, inspired by a true knowledge of God, and begotten of His Spirit, delivers us also from the fear of man, in proportion as this love abounds in us.

God has given us the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of power. The Christian knows that “all things work together for good to them that love God.” This is to him a source of power, of strength. Circumstances and conditions which would quite overwhelm others, he may expect to have. This spirit is not only a spirit of power, but a spirit of love—a spirit of kindness and gentleness. It is a spirit that loves to do good, to do right, to be helpful. And so the Christian with this spirit of love and of a sound mind becomes more and more Godlike. This enables him to have more and more compassion for those who are out of the way. And as God sent His Son, and as the Son came and provided the blessing of life for all at such a great cost to Himself, so all who have His spirit will strive to bless others. R. 5977

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:7

WHY SHOULD I FEAR?

Whene'er the storms come down on thee,
And days of peace all seem to flee;
This thought thy peace again shall bring,
Why should I fear? – the Lord is King.

E'en when the tempest rages high,
And darkest clouds are drawing nigh,
With hands of faith to this, O! cling –
Why should I fear? – the Lord is King.

Amid the stormy waves of life,
Above the tumult and the strife,
The chimes of hope still sweetly ring –
Be not afraid – the Lord is King.

Thy ship is toss'd by wind and wave,
But there is one whose power can save;
Across the sea he hastes to bring
Both rest and peace – the Lord is King.

Yes, Jesus walks upon the sea,
And in the storm he comes to thee;
Then trust in him, rejoice and sing;
He calms the waves – the Lord is King.

He stretches out his hand to thee,
And from thy fears he sets thee free;
Beneath the shadow of his wing
He keeps thee safe – the Lord is King.

– *L.S. Cuthbert*

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

– Matthew 11:27 –

Our Lord did not want to receive any except those whom the Father drew to him, “No man cometh unto me except the Father which sent me draw him, and whosoever cometh unto me [drawn by the Father] I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:44.) This is the sense of verse 27. “All [that come unto me] are given to me by my Father, and no one can recognize the Son except by the [aid of the] Father, neither recognizes any man the Father, except by the [aid of the] Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.”

The class that the Father and the Son unitedly are seeking during this Gospel age, are a class who feel oppressed of the Devil, oppressed by sin, and who desire the great Deliverer and his salvation. Such “babes,” and from the human standpoint foolish, are invited to accept Jesus; to believe in him as their Redeemer, and to follow in his footsteps as their guide.

Jesus declared that no one can know the Father except as first they come to know the Son, or as the Son reveals the Father to him. Hence those who have failed to recognize Jesus as the Son of God have not yet come to the full appreciation of their privileges. Blessed are our eyes, that now they see, and our ears that now they hear, that we may know Messiah, and through Him know the Father; and Jesus may come in to us and sup with us, and we with Him. —Rev. 3:20.

We are glad that all mankind in due time will be brought to a clear knowledge and full opportunity. But oh, how much greater is our blessing, besides the privilege of now being the sons of God, and joint-heirs in his glorious Kingdom! We may well rejoice with the Lord in His thanks to the Father, not only that some cannot hear, see, or understand, but also that some of us can hear, see and understand the Divine Message now, and thus share its blessing.

The Father hath delivered all of his great work into the hands of the Lord Jesus, and only by knowing him can we know the Father in the proper sense, in the intimate sense, because the Son, as the Great Teacher, reveals the Father to all who are pupils in his School.

R. 2268, R. 5075, R. 4599

[The passage] closes with our Lord's invitation to those who now have the hearing ear and seeing eye of obedient faith. To these, life's experiences, sin's burdens, and general unrest are preparations for the Divine message:



Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

– Matthew 11:28-30 –

This coming to Christ for rest is the first step toward a Christian life; it is justification, the acceptance of him as the satisfaction for our sins; and from the time we thus accept him, as the Apostle declares, we have joy and peace through believing. (Rom. 5:1; 15:13.) But having been thus received and blessed, there is something more for us to do, viz., to learn that there is another burden and another yoke which we should take upon us voluntarily.

A yoke is a symbol of servitude, and so our Lord implies that those who are set free (either from the yoke of the Law Covenant, as were the believing Jews, or from the yoke of Satan, as were the believing Gentiles) should become his servants, should take his yoke, should learn to do his will. A yoke generally is arranged for two, and our Lord speaks of it as his yoke, by which we are to understand that he also is a servant; having come to do the Father's will, and having put on the yoke of servitude, he invites us to become true yoke-fellows with himself in the doing of the Father's will, co-laborers together with Christ in the great work of the world's deliverance from sin and death.



The secret of the ability to wear this yoke, and to have companionship with Christ in his service, and to have as a result a great blessing in our own hearts, a rest unto our souls, lies, he explains, in our learning to be meek and lowly of heart as he was. It will be impossible for those who are proud, haughty, self-willed, ambitious, worldly-wise, etc., to labor in the same yoke with Jesus, or to find the true rest of soul which we properly seek. But if we are meek, teachable, humble-minded, ready to know and to do the Lord's will at any cost, then indeed we shall find rest to our soul's satisfaction—the peace of God which passeth all understanding will rule in our hearts.

We notice a difference between the two rests of verses 28 and 29. Of the first it is said that the Lord will give it to him who comes to him in faith; of the second, it is said that he finds this rest to his soul through becoming a yoke-fellow with Jesus. And so it is: there are two blessings; the first blessing is that of justification—the joy of having our sins forgiven, realizing ourselves no longer strangers and foreigners from our heavenly Father, but brought nigh by the blood of Christ; the second is the joy which comes more gradually, a fruitage, a grace, a development in the heart, the growing and abiding peace and joy of the holy spirit. R. 2625

[Our Lord] is watching out for the interests of all those who take his yoke upon them. Their burdens are his burdens, their trials are his trials, their interests are his interests; yea, all things shall work for good to them because they love him. Let us remember, however, that the Lord takes no slaves in this way; he does not fasten the yoke upon any; he merely invites us to come, and then to fasten his yoke upon ourselves, to make a full consecration of ourselves to him and to his service. R. 2625

See also entry for Jeremiah 32:40 on p. 143

Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear.
– Matthew 13:16 –

The true children of God love the truth because they have an affinity for it. They love righteousness, they love their fellow men, and desire to bless and help them. They have large benevolence and brotherly kindness. They are meek, too, and not anxious to make a show of self and to glory over their fellows in argument; nor are they mere curiosity-hunters. When they have found the truth they recognize its value; they prize it and meditate upon it; they view it as a grand and systematic embodiment of the highest ideal of righteousness, love and benevolence. They rejoice not only in its gracious provisions for the elect joint-heirs with Christ, but also for all mankind, as well as in the merciful dealings of God with the finally incorrigibly wicked whom he will mercifully destroy, but not torment. They say, It is just like God: it is the manifestation of his glorious goodness, the reflection of his loving, benevolent, wise and just character. And therefore they love the truth and the God who gave it: they treasure it up in their hearts and [turn] it over again and again; and as they look into it, and admire all its symmetry and beauty, they strive more and more to conform their own characters to the same lines of beauty and seek to commend it by word and conduct to others, that they also may be blessed by it.

This is what it is to receive the truth into good and honest hearts. For such the truth was intended; and it is not possible for them to be deceived by the sophistries of error. They know a good thing when they have it, and therefore hold it fast. They cling to it just as steel filings cling to a magnet, because they have an affinity for it. If you run a magnet through a box of sawdust and steel filings it will come out covered with the steel filings. A little sawdust may rest lightly on it, too, just as some people associate themselves with the truth and with those who hold it very dear; but the sawdust is easily blown off, while the steel filings hold fast.

The one thing for all the called to look to first is that they have received, and that they still hold, the truth in the love of it. Freely imbibe its blessed spirit and live in its hallowed atmosphere; “for, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” “Through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth” you are chosen to the great salvation now shortly to be revealed (2 Thes. 2:13.) But the belief of the truth will avail nothing if it be not permitted to produce its legitimate fruit in a good and honest heart—viz., sanctification of the spirit, a complete setting apart to the divine will and service. Let us lay this lesson well to heart, and so run as to obtain the prize of our high calling. “Buy the truth” at any cost of self-sacrifice, “and sell it not” for any paltry present advantage. R. 1950

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
John 17:17

Only a very few have made this Covenant of Sacrifice with God, have presented their bodies a living sacrifice with Christ, in response to God's special Call during the Gospel Age. God is not trying to attract the world now. He tells us that they are blind and deaf. As Jesus said, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Again, He said to His disciples, “Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear!” (Matt. 11:15; 13:16.) We thank God on behalf of those who have the seeing eye and the hearing ear. It is a great privilege to hear and see. SM343

**Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in
the kingdom of their Father.**

– Matthew 13:43 –

They will shine forth for the blessing of mankind, to bring order out of present confusion, to scatter present darkness and ignorance and superstition, to cause the knowledge of the glory of God to fill the whole earth, to enlighten every man that has ever come into the world, to cause all to know from the least to the greatest of the love of God and the abundant provision which he has made.

God has had definite and stated times and seasons for every part of his work; and in the end of each of these seasons there has been a finishing up of its work and a clearing off of the rubbish, preparatory to the beginning of the new work of the dispensation to follow. Thus in the end of the Jewish age order is observed—a harvesting and complete separation of the “wheat” class from the “chaff,” and an entire rejection of the latter class from God’s favor. With the few judged worthy in the end of that age, a new age—the Gospel age—began. And now we find ourselves amidst the closing scenes, the “harvest,” of this age: the “wheat” and the “tares” which have grown together during this age are being separated. With the former class, of which our Lord Jesus is the Head, a new age is about to be inaugurated, and these “wheat” are to reign as kings and priests in that new dispensation, while the “tare” element is judged as utterly unworthy of that favor.

Hearken now to the Master’s words respecting the consummation of the Church’s hope in the end of this age. He says, “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”! “He that hath an ear to hear let him hear.” Not every one has the hearing ear, but this is the Lord’s message to those who have the proper attitude of heart—to all who have the ability to understand spiritual things. Let such understand that with the close of this age the Lord’s saintly ones, irrespective of the earthly Church systems, will be associated with the Redeemer in the glory of his Millennial Kingdom and will shine forth as the sun for the blessing and enlightenment and uplifting of the human family. R. 3770, R. 2606, R. 4636

For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.

— Matthew 18:20 —

O, that as we meet (personally or through the printed page) we could always realize our Heavenly Father's interest in us and his willingness to bless our efforts in the study of his Word and in the development of character! Let us more and more remember as we meet in the name of our Lord his promise, "Where two or three are met in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Those who realize the Lord's presence amongst his people when they meet will be very careful of the words of their mouths, their actions and the very thoughts of their hearts: pride, vainglory, slander, and all evil things ("works of the flesh and of the devil") will be carefully shunned, if his presence is clearly realized by the eye of faith.

May we enjoy more and more of the blessings of communion with the Lord and with each other. If our hearts are humble, earnest and true; if our delight is in the Lord and his truth; if our actions are guided by the noble principles of truth and righteousness; and if our candid, thoughtful endeavor is always to find the purest principles and the exact truth to the end that we may conform our lives thereto, then indeed the Lord will be pleased to dwell with us and to manifest himself to us as he does not unto the world. —John 14:21.
R. 2543 and R. 1823

**He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and
I will love him and manifest Myself to him.**

John 14:21



IN MY NAME

There were only two or three of us
 Who came to the place of prayer –
 Came in the teeth of a driving storm;
 But for that we did not care,
 Since after our hymns of praise had risen,
 And our earnest prayers were said,
 The Master Himself was present there
 And gave us the living bread.
 We noted his look in each other's face,
 So loving, and glad, and free:
 We felt his touch when our heads were bowed,
 We heard his "Come to Me!"
 Nobody saw him lift the latch,
 And none unbarred the door;
 But "Peace" was his token in every heart,
 And how could we ask for more?
 Each of us felt the relief from sin,
 Christ's purchase for one and all;
 Each of us dropped his load of care,
 And heard the heavenly call;
 And over our spirits a blessed calm
 Swept in from the Jasper sea,
 And strength was ours for the toil of life
 In the days that were yet to be.
 It was only a handful gathered in
 To that little place of prayer.
 Outside were struggle and strife and sin,
 But the Lord himself was there.
 He came to redeem the pledge he gave –
 Wherever his loved ones be,
 To give his comfort and joy to them,
 Though they count but two or three.

--*Poems of Dawn, 97*

With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.
– Matthew 19:11 –

Jesus taught that as a camel could go through the Needle's Eye, or smaller gate, only by having its load removed, so a rich man could enter the Kingdom of God only by renouncing his burdens, giving up all to the Lord.

All this placing of the rich, the favored class, apparently at a disadvantage as compared with the poor, or disfavored class, caused amazement to Jesus' disciples. They inquired, "Who, then, can be saved?" The rich seemingly had all the opportunities of time, influence and money to enable them to give more and better service to the Lord than could others; and if they would have such difficulty in getting into the Kingdom, how would it be with others, less favored apparently? Jesus answered that "all things are possible with God." That is to say, if the rich man's heart be pleasing to the Lord—if he be honest-hearted and humble, and his riches alone stand in the way—the Lord would know how to show him His will in respect to their use; or if this did not avail, the Lord would know how to strip him of his wealth, even as the master of the camel would unload his beast to permit him to pass through the Needle's Eye.

Many have had this very experience. They have been rich in honors of men, in social standing or in a financial sense; and God, in love and mercy, has stripped them of all these, giving them the necessary lessons, fitting and preparing them for a share in the Kingdom. With God this is possible. He knows how to overrule all things for good to those who love Him with all their heart, mind, soul and strength.

St. Peter seemed to get the thought that joint-heirship with the Master in the Kingdom would mean a full surrender to God—a leaving of all and a yielding up of all—in order to a close approach to God and full acceptance by Him. St. Peter said:

See, we have left all and followed You.
Matthew 19:27

Jesus did not fully endorse St. Peter's statement. He knew about Judas, who had not nearly left all. He knew about St. Peter himself—that some self-will still remained, and that self-preservation would lead him to deny his Master. But the answer that Jesus gave fully covered the question, not only for the Apostles, but for all who have become followers of Jesus from that day until now. He said:

Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.
Matthew 19:29

What a broad promise, and how abundantly fulfilled in its earthly respects to many! The persecutions they are sure to get; but everything sacrificed for the Lord's cause is compensated a hundredfold in the present life. How gracious the Divine arrangements; and then beyond, the everlasting life and, if faithful, a share with the Master in the Kingdom! R. 5466

Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.**– Matthew 21:22 –**

Every trial of faith and patience is an occasion for prayer for the promised succor. Every failure to gain victory is an occasion for a prayer for forgiveness, and as well for divine blessing, that the lesson of our own weakness may be deeply impressed, so that in the next similar trial we may promptly apply for and lay hold upon the “grace to help” promised. Every victory over self is an occasion for prayer that we be not high minded and puffed up, but kept humble and watchful for the next attack from the great Adversary. Every service for the truth becomes an occasion for a prayer of thanks for the privilege of serving the Great King and mayhap to have suffered something for his cause; and a cause for supplication for further opportunities of service and grace to use them wisely.

If you have trials and temptations which you are able to overcome, and which are working out in your character patience, experience, brotherly-kindness, sympathy and love, rejoice and offer the prayer of thanksgiving and acknowledgment of divine mercy and help. If your trials seem heavier than you can bear, and likely to crush you, take the matter to the great Burden-bearer, and ask his help in bearing whatever would do you good, and release from all that would not do you good, but which would injure you.

[There] is a wide range of subjects (and it might be widely expanded) upon which we may go to the throne boldly in the name of Jesus and ask and receive, seek and find, God’s grace sufficient. But the range of subjects upon which we may not approach God in prayer is also large. We may not ask anything to minister to pride or selfishness or ambition, nor anything which would injure another; nor anything which would conflict with the Lord’s plan as revealed in his Word. Oh! how many “ask and receive not, because they ask amiss,” that they may consume the desired favor upon their earthly desires.

Our Lord’s prayers, like all his acts and teachings, are models of unselfishness. Therefore, before we ask anything of the Father, one question should be carefully considered; viz.—

***Why* do I want this?**

Remember the course of our Lord and the apostles:

[Jesus] healed the lame and the palsied miraculously when it would glorify God, but when he himself was weary, he “sat on the well” to rest, or used other natural means. Though he prayed often to the Father, and knew that he was heard always, and although sometimes heavy and sorrowful, as in Gethsemane, yet his prayers were requests for grace and strength to do the Father’s will, and to finish the work he had come to do. And though he tells us that by asking he could have had “twelve legions of angels” to protect his person and his life, yet he would not ask—preferring to have the Father’s will accomplished, which he had come to perform; namely, to give himself a “ransom for all.” So notable was this a characteristic of his, that even his enemies noticed it, and said, “He saved others [from sickness, etc.], himself he cannot save.” They could not appreciate the self-sacrifice which he was performing. And so, too, we may reasonably expect that many nominal Christians today will not understand the same motives and conduct in those who prefer to share in Christ’s sufferings, to join with him in sacrifice, in order that they may share also in his coming glorious work of blessing and restoring “that which was lost.”

[The Apostles], too, had the gift of healing as well as privilege of prayer, but they did not use these selfishly. In all the records we find no instance of the exercise of the gift of healing on behalf of

any of the apostles or any of the church; nor have we any record of prayer for health, or other earthly luxuries, being offered by any of them for themselves or each other, except in one case —that of Paul (2 Cor. 12:7-9), and his request was not granted; but he was told that instead he should have a sufficiency of grace to compensate and enable him to bear it patiently. This should command the attention of all.

**And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for
My strength is made perfect in weakness.”
2 Corinthians 12:7**

In view of the Scripture teaching, we must therefore advise the consecrated to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus and those who followed him most closely; ignoring in this as in other things their own preferences as to how they would like to think about it, and how they would like to do and have God do in such matters. Let us fully submit our wills and methods to God's plan and arrangement as expressed and illustrated in his Word. As “new creatures” we may ask freely and persistently for all spiritual blessings and graces, and unselfishly for all our necessities promised. Then, sure that such will come, we should seek for them and acknowledge them with thankfulness, by whatever agency or channel sent. R. 2006 and R. 2008

**Our God is love. He loves to hear our voices.
In Christ we share the riches of His grace.
He loves to fold His arms of comfort round us,
And let us nestle in the children's place.**

**He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best,
But in His own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest.**

-R. 5547

Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

— Matthew 23:12 —

How much easier and how much wiser is the course of humility. The humble spirit seeketh not its own, is not puffed up, and does not attempt to speculate on inflated values, does not think of self more highly than it ought to think, but thinks soberly—neither overrating nor underrating its own acquirements or achievements. Humility strives always to do business on a solid basis, though it strives lawfully to acquire a real worthiness and to achieve the true glory of the divine commendation and favor.

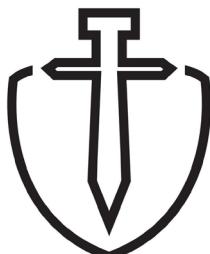
The man who underrates his worth comes much nearer the truth than the man who overrates; for the fact is that no member of the fallen race, however favorably he may compare with some of his fellows more bruised by the fall, has anything whereof to boast. Consider, for instance, how meager is the aggregate of human knowledge in every direction. As a race we are unable to trace

our own history for centuries from the beginning, or to account for our origin, or to prognosticate our destiny. We are unable to fully comprehend the deep philosophy of our physical and mental organisms. There are mysteries within us and all around us which the wisest men cannot fathom; and only those narrow souls whose world of thought is bounded by the horizon of their own temporal interests ever vaunt their learning or wisdom, or feel that they have aught of which to boast. Their fellow-men may call them great and wise and reverend, but they know too well how small and ignorant they are and how unworthy of reverence, realizing that beyond the ken of their short vision are vast unexplored fields of knowledge. The truly noble soul feels humbled upon the borders of the vast unknown, thankfully accepts the divine revelation as to his nature, origin, destiny, etc., and patiently awaits the Lord's good time for a fuller understanding of all the mysteries of his wondrous grace. Pride of wealth or of fame is of still more ignoble character. Wealth selfishly hoarded and enjoyed certainly adds no degree of merit to the possessor, whether he inherited or acquired it; and fame among fallen men only proves that he who gained it has not to any considerable extent outstripped the popular limit of advancement. At best he is only abreast of his times. The man who has outstripped the current of popular thought is never a popular or famous man. Every such one has had to attest his true moral courage by facing popular opposition and enduring the popular reproach; or, in other words, by humbling himself.

In view of these considerations we see how just and wise is the divine rule for abasing the proud and exalting the humble, and how sound our Lord's counsel to his disciples, to cultivate the spirit of humility and to avoid even the appearance of pride. Observing the growth and manifestation of this spirit among the Pharisees, who did all their works to be seen of men, who loved the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi, he said, "But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" —or, in the language of today, Be not ye called Reverend Doctors of Divinity, and let there be no distinctions of clergy and laity; for one is your truly reverend Lord and instructor, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. "Let him that would be greatest among you be servant of all;" for the divine rule is that "whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

God's plan, viewed as a whole, shows that the exaltation of any individual or class of his creatures is always for the purpose of blessing others who are not so exalted. Thus, for instance, the exaltation of our Lord Jesus and his Church is for the blessing of all others; so also was the election and special favor to Israel to result in blessings to the nations not so favored.

Such a rule, it will readily be seen, is the prompting of the highest benevolence and of the fatherly love of God for all his creatures of every name and order, and manifests the depth of his wisdom as well as his love, both in rewarding the truly worthy and in bringing righteous and benevolent power forward for the accomplishment of righteous and benevolent ends. Thus in benevolent service and mutual love he will in due time bind together in one the whole family in heaven and in earth, through the mediation and service of the greatest of all servants, Jesus Christ. R. 1487



It is when we are thus humble and faithful that the Lord makes us his chosen vessels to bear his name to others. Thus emptied of self, he can fill us with his spirit and with his truth, and we can go forth strong in the Lord of hosts and in his mighty power to do valiant service as soldiers of the cross. R. 1487

He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

– Matthew 24:31 –

We are not to expect spirit-angels to appear with wings and to fly through the air blowing a great trumpet, and here and there catching away some of the saints—no more than we are to expect to become literal fish and to be put into literal baskets, or literal grains of wheat to be put into a literal barn. The angels or messengers used by our Lord in this harvest gathering will, we believe, be such messengers as he has used in his service throughout this age—earthly servants, begotten of his holy Spirit—“new creatures in Christ Jesus.”

The “great trumpet” we understand to be the antitypical “trumpet of Jubilee,” the “seventh trumpet,” as symbolic as the preceding six (Rev. 11:15-18), none of which ever made any literal sound. It has been symbolically sounding since October 1874, and will continue to the end of the Millennium. With the beginning of this trumpet began the “harvest” and the reaping and separating, which must continue until the “elect,” the “wheat,” are all gathered out of the present heavens (ecclesiastical systems) —unto the Lord. The “angels” (messengers) are those who carry the message of the Lord’s Word which produces the separation and gathers his elect to himself.

Our Lord in the parable of the wheat and tares tells of the harvest work and how in the present time he would gather “together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (Matt. 24:24.) It is by thus gathering them that they will be protected in the time of strife and trouble when others will be deceived. But they are not to be gathered physically into one place, but spiritually; their minds, their hearts, their affections are to be gathered together, centered. Our text tells us that our Lord is this great Center to which his Elect must all be gathered if they would have rest or peace, if they would overcome the world, the flesh and the peculiar snares of the Adversary, which will now be laid for the feet of all and will more or less entrap all except the Elect class.

**Gather My saints together to Me, those who have
made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.
Psalm 50:5**

Figuratively all of these “very elect” ones are gathered, and the place is thus described, “I will say to the Lord, he is my refuge; in him will I trust”; and again, “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” (Psa. 91:1.) Ah! no wonder that we also read, “No harm shall come nigh them.” How could harm come to any who are thus close to the Lord? A thousand shall fall at thy side; ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee; because thou hast made the Lord thy refuge; thou hast made the Most High thy habitation.” —Psa. 91:7.

This nearness to God, into which his “very elect” will be gathered, will be the source of their protection. And the dangers to others will be in proportion to their distance to this great citadel of strength, this fortress, this refuge or tower. D601 and R. 4379

**I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress,
My God, in Him I will trust.”
Psalm 91:2**

Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near---at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

— Matthew 24:32-35 —

It is our understanding that the fig tree was a type or picture of the Jewish nation, to whom Jesus came when it was proper to expect fruitage. But coming to the Jews, he did not find the nation bearing fruit. The great ones of the nation were cast off; and only the publicans and sinners were ready to accept his message—the very ones the others would not recognize at all.

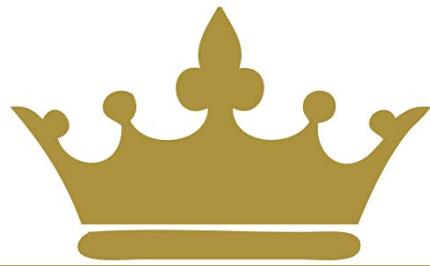
It is remembered that the nation had a blight upon it. At the end of his ministry, Jesus, riding to the brow of the hill overlooking Jerusalem, said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Luke 13:34,35.) A very short time afterwards it began to lose its power; and the Jewish nation lost its identity completely as a nation in the year 70—37 years after.

While the Jewish nation has thus been in hades, in the tomb, so to speak, it is as a nation that they are referred to thus. Of course, they go into the tomb as individuals, as every one else; but as a nation also they have gone into the tomb. But according to the Scriptures there will be a resurrection of the Jewish nation, and a picture of that raising up is given where it says, “the bones came together, bone to his bone,” etc. (Ezek. 37:7.) Those bones represent the whole house of Israel, which is referred to as saying, “Our hope is dead” (Vs. 11); our ambitions are all gone or are asleep! So God is telling them that all the Kingdom hopes of that nation are to be revived. As Jesus said to his disciples—When ye see the fig tree beginning to put forth its tender leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. We see the fig tree putting forth its leaves today* (see Matt. 24:32; Mark 13:28); we see the Jews looking back to Jerusalem, and we thus see the fig tree putting forth its leaves, or giving signs of life, looking forward to the re-establishment of the Jewish nation. God says there will be such a Jewish nation again.

The generation which witnesses the signs promised in the verses preceding our lesson and which witnesses this putting forth of the green leaves of hope by Israel will see to the full the accomplishment of the glorious change of Dispensation so long foretold. They will witness the passing of the reign of the Prince of Darkness and the inauguration of the glorious reign of the Prince of Light—Messiah with his glorious Bride class; not, however, that mankind will see Messiah with the natural eye, nor see even his glorious Bride, except with the eyes of their understanding. “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God” in this highest sense. Flesh and blood, however, will see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the Prophets in the Kingdom, and will have full testimony and practical demonstration of the Kingdom power in the great transformation that will be wrought and the restitution blessings which will be showered upon Israel and upon all who will come into harmony with God through Israel’s New Covenant. —Jer. 31:31.

*Israel indeed became a nation in 1948, decades after Pastor Charles Russell wrote these words.

The present ecclesiastical heavens and the present social earth will, indeed, both pass away in the great time of trouble with which this age will end; but following these, supplanting them, will come the new heavens and the new earth—the new religious institutions of the Lord—the Church in glory, and the new social order amongst mankind. Then the words of the great Teacher will surely have fulfillment. R. 4788 and R. 4706



All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

– Matthew 28:18 –

St. Matthew's account of our Lord's benediction upon His disciples and His commissioning of them to declare His Message, is full of interest to us. By His appointment the Eleven met Him in a mountain in Galilee. For a few moments only He appeared to them. They worshiped, some fully convinced, others wavering. It was for the convincing of those wavering that Jesus remained during the forty days. And we are sure that He fully accomplished His work of convincing the Eleven; for they were all of one heart and one mind when they waited in the upper room for the Pentecostal blessing.

Jesus came near to them, and declared that full authority had been given unto Him in respect to both Heavenly things and earthly things. Unless they could realize this, it would be impossible for them properly to represent Him before the world. He had not this power and authority previously, during His earthly ministry. He was then in process of trial as respects His faithful loyalty even unto death, even unto the death of the cross. But after He had demonstrated His loyalty, the Father had raised Him from the dead to a glorious fullness of power. He was thus declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead. He wished His disciples to know that He was no longer under the human limitations or under the limitations of the Death Covenant. That work He had finished. He had entered into the blessing, the reward. He had experienced His change and now had all power, not only in respect to earthly things, but also in respect to Heavenly things. R. 5587

I am with you always, even to the end of the age.
– Matthew 28:20 –

The Lord has been with his representatives in all their labors of love and self-denial, throughout the entire age, noting their efforts, assisting, encouraging, sustaining them, and surely watering and refreshing all who are making his service their special object in life, —ministering his grace to others, watering and feeding them. And if this has been true in the past, all through the age, how specially true we may realize it to be now, in the end of the age, in the time of harvest, in the time of our Lord's second presence! How we may realize that he is with us, in sympathy, in cooperation, in assistance, in sustaining grace, —able and willing to make all of our experiences profitable to us, and to use us abundantly in showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light!

Let these thoughts quicken us to fresh and greater energies, and to an appreciation of the fact that the things of this present time are but transitory (both its joys and its sorrows); and that the ambitions and hopes of the world are not worthy of comparison with these noble and laudable ambitions to serve and to please our Master, and to have his rewards—the chief of which will be fellowship with himself in glory, and the privilege of being co-laborers with him in the blessing of the world, —the grand fulfillment of the heavenly Father's gracious plans for the world of mankind.

Jesus' words have been understood to signify that the world is to come to an end; whereas what the Master really said, according to the Greek, is that He would be with His people, even to the end of the Age—down to the time when this Gospel Age will have accomplished its Divinely purposed mission of gathering out a sufficient number of disciples of Christ to complete the Divine purpose—until the Gospel Message shall have accomplished the sanctification through obedience to the Truth of a proper number to complete the Bride of Christ in glory, the Royal Priesthood. Then the end of the Age will come. Then will come the Master Himself, to gather His Elect, to glorify them with Himself, to establish His Kingdom, to bless the world of mankind. R. 3166 and R. 5588



**The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.
Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.
– Mark 2:27-28 –**

We are glad that one day in the week is so generally observed as a day of rest or Sabbath (Sabbath day signifies rest day). We are glad that the day so generally set apart is the first day of the week, because it so beautifully commemorates the Christian's hope, attested by our Lord's resurrection from the dead on that day. And if God's people had two Sabbaths, or seven of them in the week, we believe they would have that much more of blessing.

Indeed, to the Christian, every day is Sabbath, every day should be used as holy to the Lord, and nothing should at any time be done contrary to the Divine will or the principles of the Divine Government. Jesus' declaration that He was Lord of the Sabbath reminds us afresh of St. Paul's declaration that God the Father rested from His own work on the Seventh Day; He left the work entirely for Jesus to do.

**For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way:
“And God rested on the seventh day from all His works.”
Hebrews 4:4**

The Seventh Day of Jehovah's rest was one of the great Days of the Creative Week, each seven thousand years long. Six of these great days had passed and man's creation was in the end of the sixth.

St. Paul clearly intimates that to the Church, the New Creation, every day is a Sabbath day, in the sense that God's consecrated people rest as God rests, in faith, in hope, in trust that Jesus will eventually deliver the groaning creation and bring them into a glorious Sabbath, Rest. St. Paul says, "We who believe do enter into rest." Literally, we who believe have a perpetual Sabbath. Seven days in the week, and fifty-two weeks in the year our hearts rest in the Lord and take comfort in the glorious promises of His Word through faith. Thus we rest from feelings of responsibility and worry on account of the world's salvation in exactly the same way that the heavenly Father rests.

We, like the heavenly Father, have the fullest confidence that the Redeemer will yet accomplish the blessing of all the families of the earth, and bring all the willing and obedient into the great Rest Time of the future—the thousand years of the Messianic Kingdom, in which the world will be released from the slavery of Satan, sin and death—in which the groaning creation "will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God"—so many as are willing and obedient.

But while the Church is thus resting by faith and now enjoy a Sabbath, even though, according to the flesh, we are passing through tribulation hoping to attain a share in Messiah's Kingdom, the Apostle points out that "There remaineth a rest for the people of God"—still a different one from that which we now enjoy. The actual rest or Sabbath will be not merely that of faith and rest of heart, it will include also a rest from all labor, while our works will follow with us. In other words, the resurrection change will bring us full relief from the trials, the toils of the way, and usher us fully into the glorious blessings of the resurrection state. R. 4996

See also entry for Gen. 2:3 on p. 16

See also entry for Heb. 4:3 on p. 290

To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to those who are outside, all things come in parables.

— Mark 4:11 —

The majority of the multitude heard, wondered at his gracious words, thought of him as a wonderful teacher sent of God, but took no deeper interest. They had not the ears to hear, they were not hungry for the truth, their hearts were not prepared. The Prophet had foretold that our Lord would open his mouth in “parables” and in “dark sayings” (Psa. 78:2), and the evangelists record that thus he did, and now to those who inquired the meaning our Lord answered, “Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but unto them that are without [outsiders—not disciples—not consecrated] all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted [turned to a proper course] and their sins should be forgiven them. —Mark 4:11-12.

I will open my mouth in a parable. I will utter dark sayings of old.

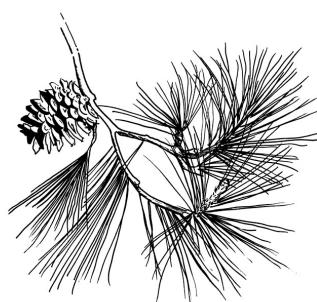
Psalm 78:2

Our Lord was not only in process of laying down his life, dying daily, hourly, but also engaged in attracting to himself an elect class who would be suitable for his Bride, his Kingdom, his Church. It was some of this Kingdom class, this elect class, that had come around him and asked the interpretation of the parable. He declared that it was his wish, his desire, to make the matter clear, very plain, to these; that it really belonged to them to know, because they were in the condition of heart that would be profited by the knowledge—because the knowledge thus imparted would be essential to their development, to their strengthening, to their guidance, to their preparation for the Kingdom— “To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom.” Nearly all of our Lord’s parables related to the Kingdom, and all of them therefore are to be understood by the Kingdom class, the elect, the consecrated. All of this class should be earnestly desirous of an understanding of “every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

R. 3763

He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Mark 4:9



If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.
– Mark 9:23 –

How great stress the Lord lays everywhere upon the exercise of faith in the Divine Power! “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” Those who cannot exercise the faith cannot have the blessing which others may have who do exercise faith; and our blessings increase in proportion as we will exercise our faith. Thus the Lord puts a premium upon this element of character, and makes it essential to His favor.

This does not imply that people who cannot now exercise faith will never get any blessing. On the contrary, while the Lord has given certain exceeding great and precious promises to those who can believe and who do believe, and who follow their belief with obedience to the extent of their ability, He has also promised that by and by, during Messiah’s Kingdom, the way of faith and obedience will be made so plain, so simple, that all will be able to follow it and to gain a reward—but a lesser reward than that now extended to those who can and do exercise faith and obedience. The reason for this is manifest. God is now seeking a special class of specially faithful and obedient children, to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus in His glorious Messianic Kingdom. He is now selecting the class which by and by He will use in bestowing His blessing world-wide; and He desires that in this class shall be only such as can exercise absolute faith in Him. Hence, now, God’s rule for dealing with the Church is, “According to thy faith be it unto thee.” R. 5128

But many who are first will be last, and the last first.
– Mark 10:31 –

These are the concluding words of our Lord in [his] lesson. What did he mean? His words stand related to the recorded discourse just preceding. The rich young ruler, the priests and Scribes and Pharisees and wealthy generally, appeared to the disciples to have much better opportunities for the Kingdom than would the less learned, the less noble, the less influential and the less wealthy fishermen and tax gatherers, etc. Yet the latter, though seemingly less favored of God, seemingly handicapped by lack of influence, etc., were really advantaged. It was easier for them to humble themselves, to sacrifice earthly interests and ambitions, to make a complete consecration of themselves to the Lord than for those who had greater advantages everyway. On the contrary, as we have seen, position, honor of men, wealth and education were all barriers to becoming disciples of Jesus. Thus those who were first or most prominent apparently in opportunity were really less favored, while those who had less opportunity were really first or most favored from the divine standpoint.

Let us, dear friends, whatever our station, remember that there is only one narrow way to the Kingdom, and that it is open only during this Gospel age, and that the highway of holiness belongs to the next age. While rejoicing that the world, now unwilling to travel the narrow way, will have the glorious opportunities of the highway by and by, let us rejoice that the great favor of God respecting this narrow way has been brought to our attention, and that it is our privilege to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, with the assurance of his assistance all the journey through to the farther end, and with the gracious promise of life eternal and participation in the Kingdom. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself [let him sacrifice himself, his personal interests, ambitions, etc.], and take up his cross and follow me.” R. 3845

Assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

– Mark 11:23-24 –

A great deal passes for faith which is merely credulity. If some one were to swear to us that the moon is made of green cheese, it would be credulity to believe him—not faith. We should inquire, “Who is it that says this thing, and what does he know on the subject more than we may know?” The faith commended in the Bible is that which relates to things which God has promised. We are encouraged to be full of such faith in God—nothing doubting—not questioning that He is able to accomplish all His good promises.

The disciples of Jesus were evidently impressed with the grandeur of His teachings, and the difficulties that must lie in the way of the accomplishment of all the wonderful things recorded in the Law and the Prophets, and told by Jesus—respecting His Messianic Kingdom, etc. They therefore asked the Lord to increase their faith. Jesus replied in words that are greatly misunderstood in our day. He said, “If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say to this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.” On two other occasions Jesus made similar remarks respecting mountains, saying that the word of faith would have been sufficient to remove them to the midst of the sea.

Evidently the Master did not mean to encourage the Jews to attempt to command the mountain to be carried into the sea; but rather He wished them to realize that if they had proper faith in the power of God, and should receive a command from God to move the mountain into the sea, and should give the command with faith, the results would follow. But God gave no such command in respect to the mountains nor in respect to the tree. Hence faith would have no basis for operation in such cases.

The child of God must therefore be a close student of his Father’s Word; because he is expected to ask that he may receive, that his joy may be full; and he is cautioned to ask only for such things as his Father has expressed a willingness to grant; and he must ask in faith or not at all.

There can be no doubt that in this matter of prayer, as in other matters, our Heavenly Father designs to cultivate faith in his people. He tells us that “Without faith it is impossible to please God;” and that “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.” Hence, only those who exercise faith, and ask in prayer for the promised favors, are really ready to receive them according to God’s judgment and arrangement. This being the case, it should be the prayer of God’s people today, as amongst the Apostles, “Lord! increase our faith.” And thus praying, and laboring to this end, each would be more and more helped in overcoming the world and its faithless influences.

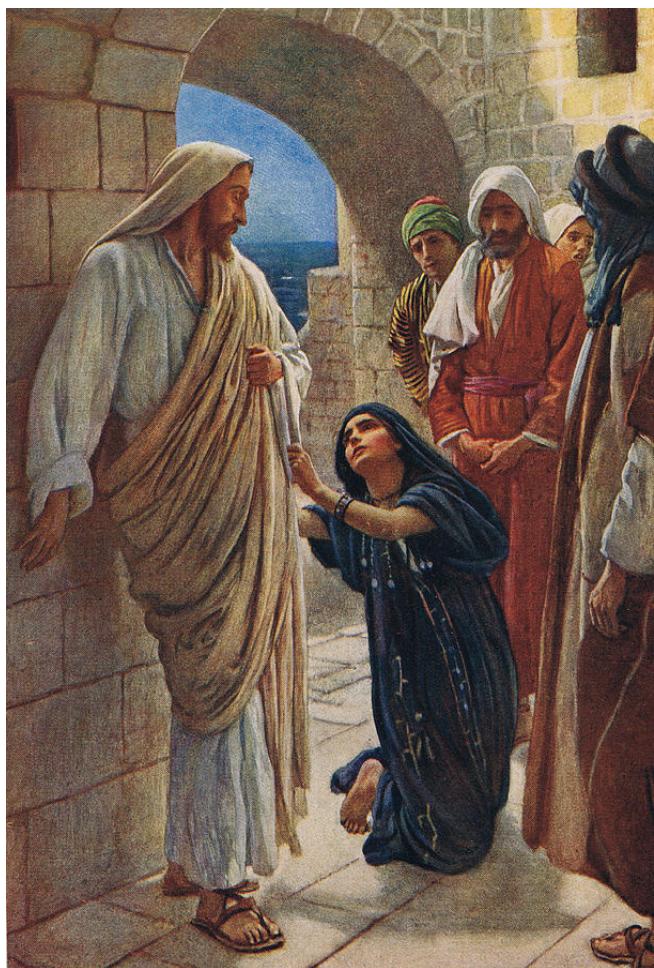
True faith is not credulity. It is critical, and believes only upon good evidence. It criticizes closely and distinguishes clearly between the teachings of men and the substantiated Word of God. But, having found the Word of God, it trusts it implicitly, knowing that its Author cannot lie; and that all his purposes and promises will be accomplished. R. 5446 and R. 2005

The Heavenly Father has multiplied mercies, blessings and providences in store for his obedient and faithful children who will ask for them. R. 2005

Your faith has made you well. Go in peace.
– Luke 8:48 –

No essential element of Christian character is given greater prominence in the Scriptures than faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." In this requirement we see the condescending grace of our heavenly Father, who, though so far above us, yet, like a tender parent, desires the reciprocal love and implicit confidence of his intelligent creatures. Since Christ is the appointed agent of God in his dealings with men, whom God bids all men to honor, even as they honor the Father, and since he is the appointed way of access to God, faith in Christ is necessarily a part of our faith in God. Those who believe in Christ, believe the testimony which God gave of his Son through the prophets and through Christ's own teachings and the mighty works which God wrought by him, to the end that men might believe, having a sure and abundant ground for confidence; so that faith might not be mere credulity, but a reasonable thing.

To believe in Jesus in those days, when his mighty works astonished the people, and the beauty of his holiness impressed every beholder, was most reasonable to those of simple hearts, who desired only to know the truth of God and to obey it, and who therefore had no cross-grained will or prejudice of their own to oppose it. Nor are the evidences, the foundation of faith in Christ, any less reliable today than they were then. On the contrary, they are still more abundant and strong, —a firm foundation that can never be moved.



Woman of Canaan by Harold Copping

The Lord rewarded even the weak faith, and gave them additional and overwhelming evidence to strengthen and establish their faith. The Lord did not expect or desire the people to have faith without good substantial evidence upon which to base it; but he did desire and reward the faith that was exercised to the extent of the evidence. A faith without substantial evidence upon which to base it, is mere credulity, and generally degenerates into gross superstition unworthy of the intelligence which God has given us. R. 1938

**When the woman saw that
she was not hidden, she
came trembling. And falling
down before Him, she
declared to Him in the
presence of all the people
the reason she had touched
Him and how she was
healed immediately.**

Luke 8:47

Faith

Faith in God consists in taking him at his word—accepting and believing his Revelation of his Character and his Plan in respect to ourselves and others. We should clearly distinguish between **faith** and **credulity**. Some very good people make the mistake of supposing that the more absurd the thing which they believe, the greater is the faith. Faith does not spurn reason, but uses it within certain prescribed and rational lines. In order to have faith in God, we must first satisfy our reasoning faculties:

- 1 That there is a God
- 2 That he has a dependable character—is Just; is Wise; is Powerful; is Gracious
- 3 We must reasonably assure ourselves that what we accept as his message is worthy of acceptance—bears marks of truthfulness and harmony with the Divine Character. He who does not seek such evidences as a foundation for faith is merely credulous—not faith-full.

Because so many Christian people ignore the proper definition of faith many candid minds are repelled from Christianity, refusing, they tell us, to believe absurdities. We urge Christian people to a more rigid examination of their faith in God and in the Bible, that, as the Apostle says, We may be able to “give a reason for the hope [the faith], that is within us.” (1 Pet. 3:15.) We owe this to ourselves, as well as to those whom we would endeavor to interest in God’s Word. In the light now shining upon God’s Word it is possible, as it was in the days of the Apostles, for the man of God to be “thoroughly furnished” and able “to rightly divide the Word of Truth” and to show to his friends and neighbors solid, logical grounds for each item of his faith. R. 4588

Of all religious books ever written or ever read, the Bible is perhaps the most candid. It tells of the mistakes and the sins of the very characters which it holds up as models and examples of men after God’s own heart. Yet the Bible leaves no room for any one to assume that God loves wickedness, or that the friends of God are the depraved of mankind. Quite to the contrary, the highest possible standards of righteousness, in word, in deed and in thought, are inculcated, and we are distinctly told that full acceptance with God can be only along the lines of truth and righteousness.

God tells us that we and all mankind are by nature sinners. He tells us that we could do nothing to clear away our own guilt and the sentence that stands against us as members of the fallen race. But He also tells us that He purposes to adjust that matter for us satisfactorily; and hence that our responsibility is not for what we cannot avoid, but for what we **can** avoid—not for what we cannot do, but for what we **can** do. He tells us that the foundation of all our noblest endeavors will lie along the lines of confidence in Him. This confidence He calls **faith**. He assures us that without faith it is impossible to please Him, and He has shown us this in all the lessons of the Bible. R.5243

Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

– Luke 12:32 –

Truly, the apostle declares, “The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not”—our Captain. It is difficult for many of the Lord’s true followers to learn that they must not expect everybody to enlist with them; that they must be content to let the world enlist in its own warfares, fight for its own projects and fight out its own ambitions, and that the soldiers of the cross must take a different path and fight under the command of the Captain of our salvation, and be content so far as the world is concerned to give the word of counsel and advice only “to him that hath an ear to hear”—not to expect all to hear and obey and to enlist with us, but to remember that the “King’s own is in all a little flock to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom in due time. (Luke 12:32) Surely it is as true today as it was in Jesus’ day that a very small number of humanity, comparatively, have the true light of the Gospel of God, the Holy Spirit illuminating their minds and hearts, and who set this light upon a candlestick that it may give light in the midst of darkness. But although these are few in number, they are very precious to the Lord. NS61 and R. 5038

Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.

– Luke 12:37 –

The injunction to watch implies not only some advantage in watching, but also that the manner of the Lord’s second advent might be so contrary to the general expectation as to require some discernment on the part of the watchers. The advantages of watching have been to keep fresh in mind the inspiring hope of the Church—the reunion with Christ in glory, the reign with him in his kingdom, and the privilege of cooperating with him in the blessing of all the families of earth, and to keep the heart in love and harmony with the Lord and his work. Thus, at his coming, the watchers would be found in readiness to sit down to meat and be served by the Lord, who himself would make known to them the secret of his presence. As at the first advent he was present some time before his presence was declared and recognized, so at his second advent his presence, which was due in 1874, only began to be recognized subsequently as he drew the attention of the watchers to it through the Word of truth.

Those who have been watching thus unto the sure word of prophecy, and who have also been watching unto prayer and thus keeping their hearts in a humble teachable attitude, have been and are being made to sit down to meat at the Master’s table, to realize his presence, and in his light to read with unclouded vision the wonderful working of the divine plan of the ages and to see the duties and privileges of the hour. These will receive a special spiritual feast. It will be special because it is on a special occasion and intended as a special reward for their manifestation of interest and devotion. It will be special also, because the Master of the household, turned to be its servant, would have all the keys to all the riches of grace and blessing, and, as elsewhere explained, will bring forth from his treasures—his pantries—things new and old, substantials and delicacies. The faithful ones will surely have a royal feast, such as never before was granted them. The servants of the household are taking notice, and each one as he opens his heart and mind to the fact of the Lord’s presence receives a fulfillment of the blessing promised—receives a feast of fat things, spiritual—an understanding and appreciation of the divine plan and a soul nourishment and strengthening such as was never his before. R. 1796 and R. 3355

See! Your house is left to you desolate, and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’

– Luke 13:35 –

Our Lord's words emphasize five points:

- 1 The Jews as the natural seed of Abraham had the first opportunity under the divine arrangement of becoming fully and exclusively the elect of God, the Church, the Bride, the Lamb's wife. But only a remnant of them were worthy, because only a remnant were in the heart condition of Israelites indeed. The majority were praying to the Lord with their lips while their hearts were far from him, as Jesus declared.
- 2 The time had come for the end of their national favor. The “house of Israel” according to the flesh had received all the favor God intended for it up to this time, and now, being found wanting, it was cast aside—“Your house is left unto you desolate.”
- 3 When that typical house of servants was left desolate it furnished the opportunity for the installation of the antitypical house of sons. The Apostle expresses this, saying, “Moses, verily, was faithful as a servant over his house, but Christ as a Son over his house [house of sons]; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” —Heb. 3:5,6.
- 4 Our Lord's absence during the period of the selection of spiritual Israel is indicated by his statement that natural Israel should see him no more “until *that day*.” Spiritual Israel would see him, but only with the eye of faith, as our Lord again expressed it—“Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more, but ye shall see me.”
- 5 Our Lord's words indicate further that when that day shall come the blindness of natural Israel shall be turned away, their eyes of understanding shall open, and they also will see out of the obscurity, out of the darkness under which they were then laboring and under which they have been for more than eighteen centuries of this Gospel age.

The Apostle emphasizes this point, telling us that as soon as the spiritual Israel class has been completed and glorified, then favor shall return to natural Israel, and the blindness which came upon them because of the rejection of Messiah and because their house was rejected from the Lord's favor will pass away—“All Israel shall be saved” from their blindness. The Lord through the prophet tells the same thing, assuring us that in *that day* he will pour out his Spirit upon the house of David and the house of Judah, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced and shall mourn because of him. He assures us that in that day he will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication.

How glad we are for these assurances that God hath not cast away perpetually the natural seed of Abraham, whom he foreknew and to whom pertained the promises, and who are sure to get a share in those promises, although they have forfeited their privileges as respects the chief part, concerning which the Apostle declares, Israel hath not obtained it, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. So, then, while sympathizing with Israel in their loss, we rejoice that in God's providence our eyes have seen and our ears have heard of the King and his Kingdom, and that we have become his spiritual Israel and are to be with him the seed of Abraham, through whom all the families of the earth will be blessed, natural Israel being the first of those who will receive the divine favor. R. 3539

I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

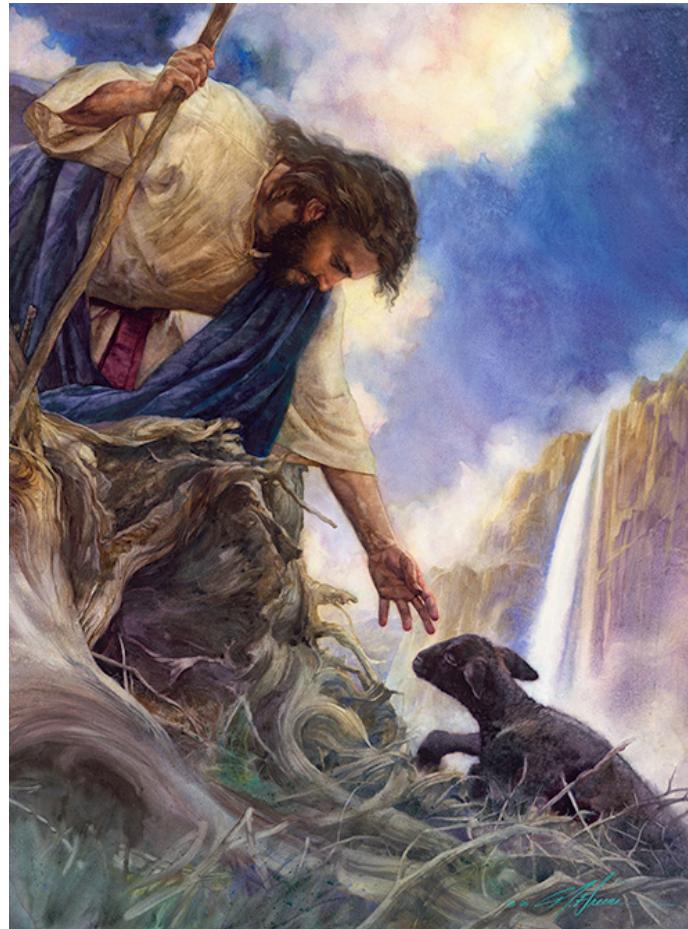
– Luke 15:7 –

The Scribes and the Pharisees held themselves aloof from the common people—the Scribes, because the masses were illiterate; and the Pharisees, under the claim that the people were sinners, cut off from relationship to God, and therefore not proper to be recognized by the holy of humanity, which they claimed to be. Jesus, however, received the common people, even the publicans, acknowledged sinners. His superior knowledge did not make Him haughty, and His superior righteousness did not make Him proud and unsympathetic. He has set His followers an example that they should walk in His steps. And the more closely they follow Him, the more pleasing will they be to the Father, and the more ready for a share in the Kingdom.

The Pharisees and the scribes murmured against Jesus, charging against Him as a sin that He received sinners and ate with them. Whatever did not harmonize with their standards they could only contest. Their difficulty in part was that they had too high an opinion of themselves.

Jesus, knowing the thoughts of the Pharisees, and perhaps noting their gestures and looks or hearing their words, answered them in a parable, saying, “What man of you, having a hundred sheep and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?” And finding it, he lays it upon his shoulders rejoicing, and tells the fact to his neighbors exultantly. This course of the shepherd, Jesus declared, illustrates the attitude of God and all the holy angels associated with Him. They have a special feeling of interest in those who have strayed, and especially rejoice in the recovery of such. There is more rejoicing over the repentant sinner than over ninety and nine just persons needing no repentance.

Oh, how encouraging it is to us to know that this is the sentiment of Heaven, and that the fall of man and our imperfections do not stand as a perpetual bar to recognition by the Lord, if we return to Him! He is merciful, and will abundantly pardon, and will remove our sins from us as far as the East is from the West. But this interest is in the repentant one or in the one who has not sinned beyond repentance. Any sheep, having been found by the Shepherd and then preferring the wolfish, would no longer be interesting to the Heavenly ones.



The Rescue by Nathan Greene

Many apply this parable inconsistently. They seem to think of the whole world of mankind as representing the flock of a hundred sheep, and the one straying as representing the sinners of earth, comparatively few. Surely this cannot be the true interpretation! Rather, as the Prophet has declared, "All we like sheep have gone astray." "There is none righteous, no not one."

Let us rather interpret the parable on a broader scale, in comportment with the facts and the Scriptures. Let us understand the one stray sheep to represent Adam and his family; and the ninety and nine just persons needing no repentance as representing the holy angels. To this view every feature of the parable inclines. The Good Shepherd left the Heavenly flock and came to earth to find, to redeem, to recover, mankind, the lost sheep; and there is more rejoicing in Heaven over human recoveries from sin and alienation from God than over the holy ones themselves, than over each other, who have never been alienated, never needed redemption.

The lesson to the Pharisees is plain. They had a different spirit from that of the holy ones. Theirs was an earthly view, a selfish one, a proud and haughty one, out of accord with the Divine spirit, and not pleasing to God. Jesus would have all of His disciples copy God. "Be ye like unto your Father which is in Heaven." "He is kind to the unthankful." "His mercy endureth forever" —to a full completeness.



His mercy sent His Son, the Under Shepherd, to be our Redeemer, and to help us back into His favor. His mercy will pursue the lost sheep until every member of Adam's race shall have been brought to a knowledge of the Truth and to a full opportunity of returning to the fold of God. To this end the Messianic Kingdom is to be established. To this end also is the present call for the Church, to be a Royal Priesthood, that under the guidance of the great Deliverer, they may be co-laborers with Him in carrying the Message of God's grace to all the members of Adam's family.

Oh, how different this view of our loving Creator from the one which was handed down to us from the Dark Ages! How different from the one which represented the Almighty as angry in a vicious sense!—as having prepared in advance a place for the eternal torture of the human family, except a few who would have the hearing ears and happen to hear the Message in the present life. On the contrary, we find that God's loving provision is only beginning to be manifested, in His favor toward Christ and the Church; and that ultimately the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth, until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God. R. 5426

**Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.
– Luke 21:28 –**

Our Savior, in describing these matters, prophetically declares, “Unless those days should be cut short, no flesh would survive.” (Matt. 24:22.) But we are glad that He also gives us the assurance that because of the Elect (Himself and His Church in Kingdom power and glory) those days will be cut short—Messiah’s Kingdom will be set up. But we are not to expect the interposition of the Lord’s power to stop the great Time of Trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, until mankind shall have been greatly humbled to the dust and shall call upon the Lord in great trepidation.

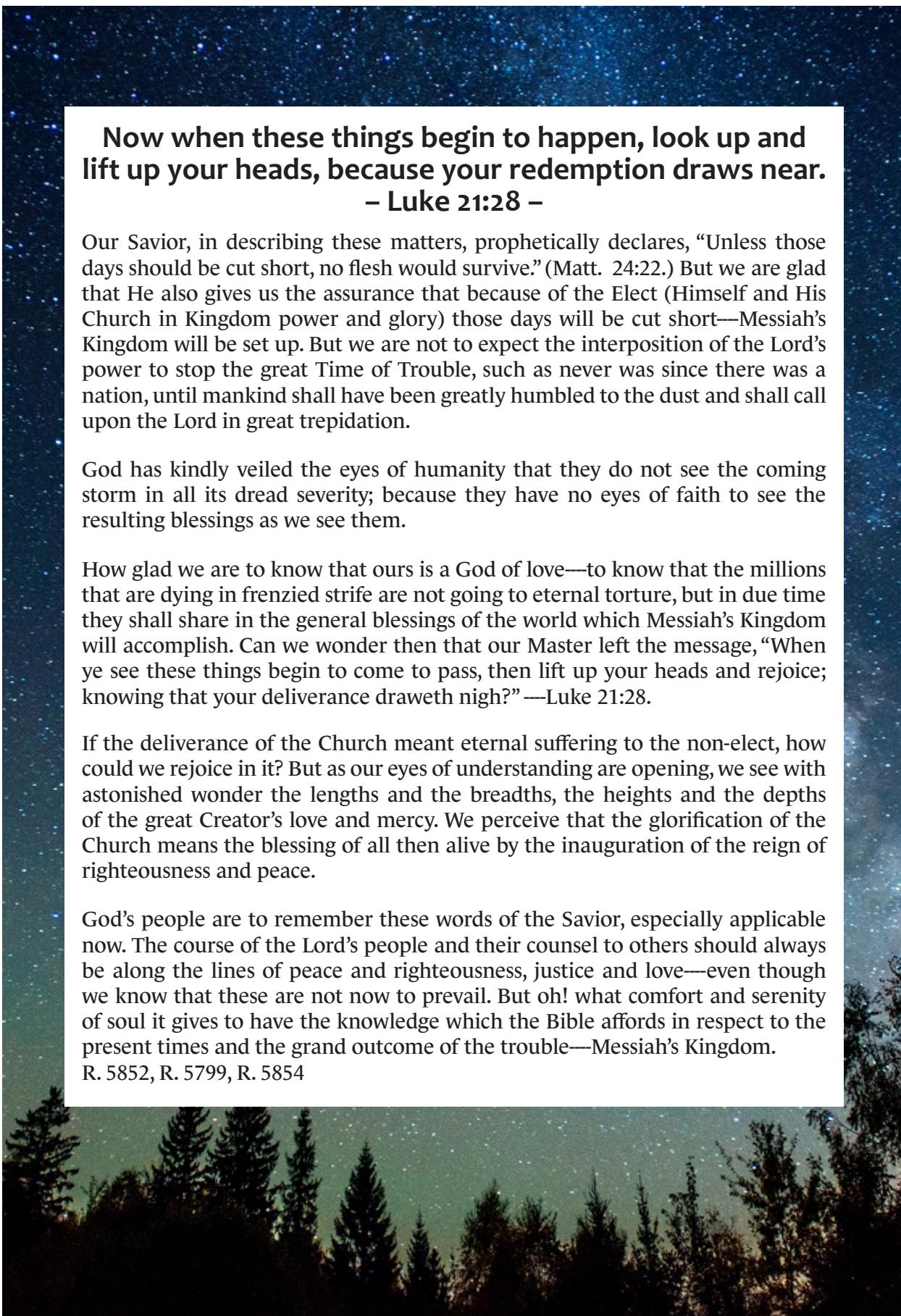
God has kindly veiled the eyes of humanity that they do not see the coming storm in all its dread severity; because they have no eyes of faith to see the resulting blessings as we see them.

How glad we are to know that ours is a God of love—to know that the millions that are dying in frenzied strife are not going to eternal torture, but in due time they shall share in the general blessings of the world which Messiah’s Kingdom will accomplish. Can we wonder then that our Master left the message, “When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice; knowing that your deliverance draweth nigh?” —Luke 21:28.

If the deliverance of the Church meant eternal suffering to the non-elect, how could we rejoice in it? But as our eyes of understanding are opening, we see with astonished wonder the lengths and the breadths, the heights and the depths of the great Creator’s love and mercy. We perceive that the glorification of the Church means the blessing of all then alive by the inauguration of the reign of righteousness and peace.

God’s people are to remember these words of the Savior, especially applicable now. The course of the Lord’s people and their counsel to others should always be along the lines of peace and righteousness, justice and love—even though we know that these are not now to prevail. But oh! what comfort and serenity of soul it gives to have the knowledge which the Bible affords in respect to the present times and the grand outcome of the trouble—Messiah’s Kingdom.

R. 5852, R. 5799, R. 5854



Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you.
– Luke 24:49 –

[Here] we have a part of the general commission which Jesus gave just before He parted from His disciples and was received up into Heaven. Whatever features of the great Plan the Master unfolded, we have the assurance that His auditors were deeply interested. Their sadness disappeared. Their first thoughts were merely that they had lost their blessed Master, His counsels, His instructions; but now, through this enlightenment, their hearts burned with a fresh inspiration of knowledge. They saw heights, depths, lengths and breadths that they had never dreamed of in God's Plan. They saw that the death of Jesus was necessary for the carrying out of all the hopes and prospects inspired by the promises of God. They saw that they themselves were privileged also, not only to suffer with Him, but also to be glorified.

The concluding part of the Master's Message on that occasion was, "Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you." The Father had promised in various types that the Church, the Bride of Christ, would receive the Holy Spirit from Jesus, their Head. It was typified, for instance, in the holy oil which, poured upon the head of Aaron, typifying Jesus, flowed down upon the body of Aaron, typifying the anointing of the Church.

This promise of the Divine acceptance of the Church was all-important. Without it the disciples would have no commission, and could not be ambassadors for God. Jesus indeed had sent out The Twelve, and afterwards the Seventy; but they were His personal representatives, and He had given them of His own spirit, His own power, by which they worked miracles, cast out devils, etc. But they had never been recognized of the Father. As we read, "The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39.) They must wait for this begetting and anointing of the Holy Spirit. It alone could imbue or qualify them for the Divine service—to be God's ambassadors and representatives.

While Jesus appointed especially the Twelve Apostles to be His mouthpieces to the Church, and declared that whatsoever they would bind on earth we might know was bound in Heaven, and that whatsoever they would declare was not bound on earth was not bound in the sight of Heaven, nevertheless the Lord arranged that each member of the Church should be His representative, and that each in proportion to his opportunity and ability might have a share in proclaiming the Gospel Message. Whoever receives the Spirit of begetting, the anointing, is included in the statement of Isa. 61:1-3 as a member of the Body of Christ, under the anointed Head, Jesus.

R. 5587 and R. 5588

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Isaiah 61:1-3



For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does, and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

– John 5:20-21 –

The declaration that “the Son can do nothing of himself,” if it were not backed up as it is by a score of other testimonies from the same interested and inspired Teacher, is a contradiction to the common thought of Trinitarians, that the Son is the Father: it is in direct conflict with the statement of the catechism, that they are “equal in power and in glory.” Nevertheless the Father “loveth [filio—has affection for] the Son,” and as a consequence of this affection has shown, is showing, and will show forth through him greater marvels, greater wonders. And our Lord Jesus has promised us that, as the Elder Brother (of the Gospel house of sons), whatsoever the Father shall make known to him he in turn will make known to us. This is brought forcibly to our attention in the Book of Revelation, which expressly declares that it is—“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which **God gave unto him**, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.” (John 15:15; Rev. 1:1.) Our Elder Brother, our Bridegroom, our Captain, has promised further, that in due time we also shall share with him in doing greater works than any which he performed at his first advent. —John 14:12.

Amongst the greater works the Lord mentions the quickening of the dead—claiming that, as the Father has the power to raise the dead, so also this power is granted to the Son. Nor should we suppose that our Lord, in this statement, referred to the awakening of Lazarus, and the son of the widow of Nain, and the daughter of Jairus. These at most were awakenings, and not, in the full sense of the word, resurrections—these individuals were not lifted up completely out of death into the perfection of life. Rather, we may suppose that our Lord was looking down into the future—to the resurrection of the Church in glory, honor and immortality, and to the subsequent resurrection (under trial or judgment) of the world during the Millennial age.

This thought is borne out by the statement of vs. 22, that all judgment has been transferred to the Son.

For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,
John 5:22

The resurrection life is to be the reward of those who will successfully pass the judgment. The first resurrection will be the reward of those who are “overcomers” in the trial in progress during this Gospel age, under the conditions of the high calling, and its narrow way to glory, honor and immortality. R. 2434

In the tabernacle and in the temple gold was used as a symbol of this divine nature, the highest of all natures, superior to the angelic. Our Lord described this immortal condition as signifying the possession of life in himself—life not derived from other sources. “As the Father hath life in himself (immortality), so hath he given unto the Son to have life in himself” (immortality). John 5:26. And he has been given the privilege of giving this to whomsoever he will—to the worthy ones constituting his elect Bride, otherwise styled “members of the Body of Christ,” vitally connected with him, their living Head. It is to this glorious quality of the divine nature, symbolized by the gold, and again in [2 Tim. 2:20-21], styled the vessels of gold, that Peter refers, saying “God hath given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature.” 2 Pet. 1:4 HG752

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

— John 5:24 —

It is a great mistake to say, as some do, “Jesus is our Judge, **like** the Father,” for our Lord’s own words assure us that the Father judgeth no man, having “committed **all** judgment unto the Son.” (v. 22) The judgment of the Church, in progress during this Gospel age, is referred to in vs. 24: those who now **hear** and believe and obey to the extent of their ability have everlasting life guaranteed to them, as a result of thus favorably passing the present judgment or trial. These are assured that they will not need to come into the general judgment of the world during the Millennial age, because they pass from death unto life as the result of the judgment of this age. The word “condemnation,” in this verse [KJV], signifies judgment, and is so rendered in the Revised Version. —Compare 1 Cor. 11:32.

Those who now accept Christ come into relationship with him, and may be thought of and considered as having made a union now in advance with the great life-giver; and if they make that arrangement with him now, and by faith walk in his footsteps as his disciples, they will not need to come into the world's condemnation, the world's judgment, trial, because they pass from death unto life immediately. That is to say, they are counted already as having passed from death unto life; they are counted already as becoming new creatures and are merely waiting for the time to come when by the change in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, in the first resurrection, their course will be completed and they will be like their Lord, and share his glory. Q137

Our Lord realized that his hearers could not appreciate the possibility of his doing so great a work as a man, and hence he makes the explanation that the Father, who has life inherent (immortality), hath given (promised) the Son the same inherent life (immortality), as well as given commandment (authorization) that he, the Son of Man, to whom the work was committed, as declared in the prophets, should execute judgment—the divine will. And it is in view of this high honor conferred upon the Son by the Father that we are told:

All should honor the Son just as they honor the Father.
John 5:23

The explanation of this statement follows, and shows that the honor to the Son is as the Father’s appointed representative and agent in the great work, saying, “He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father **which sent him.**” R. 2435

For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.
John 5:26-27

I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

– John 6:35 –

It is evident that in the words “cometh to me” our Lord did not mean to approach him as his hearers had done, coming across the lake. The expression “cometh to me” must be understood, therefore, as coming to the Lord with hunger and thirst for righteousness, with a desire for the life eternal, and hence for the bread of life by which it might be attained. All who would thus come to Jesus, in this proper attitude of heart, would find him to be indeed a satisfying portion. Likewise the expression, “He that believeth on me shall never thirst,” must be understood to mean more than merely believing that such a person lived, for it is written that “devils also believe and tremble:” to “believe,” therefore, must be understood to signify accepting the Lord, not merely intellectually, but with the heart, as it is written, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness” [to a change of heart which aspires to righteousness]. He who thus believes in the Lord from the heart, recognizing him as the Son of God, through whom are to be fulfilled all the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word, receives such a refreshment, such a slaking of thirst, such a satisfaction, as will never end so long as he maintains this faith. (Rom. 10:10.) Such find the divine provision in Christ so abundant that they could not ask for more, and exclaim, — “It satisfies my longings, as nothing else could do.”

Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.

John 6:27

Our Lord would have his hearers, including all his followers down through the age, note this message from his lips: that although the meat that perisheth is necessary under present conditions, those who are his followers will remember that their heavenly Father knoweth they have need of these and will not suffer them to come to serious want. And thus being without anxious care for the bread that perisheth they might turn their entire attention not to earthly but heavenly ambitions—the noblest, the grandest of all they might aspire to, because such blessed children come within the range of divine blessing of life everlasting. The meat, the food that would develop in them such an ambition and lead to its satisfaction, would be food indeed and well worthy of every exertion to obtain it.

For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

John 6:33

Jesus explains that he himself had come down from heaven—not merely like the manna from the clouds, but from heaven itself, having laid aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, having humbled himself to an exchange of his previous spirit nature for the earthly nature in which he was then addressing them—the man Christ Jesus. But they could not eat him while he was alive, nor could they even understand what he meant when he said, “My flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed,” and they reasoned, Will this man give us his flesh to eat? Is that what he means? The lesson was too deep for them; but, thank God, not too deep for us. As then some of the disciples forsook Jesus and walked no more with him, saying, “This is a hard saying, who can receive it?” so today there are some who cannot receive this teaching, which is the fundamental one of the Gospel of Christ. Whoever cannot receive this lesson cannot receive the other lessons which are built upon it. Our Lord further explained, “My flesh I will give for the

life of the world." He had not yet given his flesh, though he was in the process of giving it; he was drawing out its vitality, its strength, in their service, but would complete the work of his sacrifice by surrendering his all to death—even the death of the cross. And this he did later.

As the Church now partake of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and become members of His Body, the one Loaf, and thus are made partakers of the eternal Life through Him, so in God's due time the Bread from Heaven is to feed the multitudes of earth. During the thousand years of His reign, the Bread of Life will be freely distributed amongst all mankind. That Bread of Life is the Truth—particularly the Truth related to and connected with the great redeeming work of Jesus.

He is to be the Bread of Life to the world, because He bought the world with the sacrifice of His own life. The Bread that came down from Heaven they may all freely partake of and live.

R. 2651, R. 4146, R. 5087

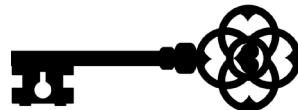
My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

— John 7:16-17 —

We are living in a day when the very word doctrine seems to be offensive to the majority of Christian people. Each denomination realizes that its own system of doctrines is imperfect, unsatisfactory, undefendable. And the same is believed in respect to all other doctrines. Hence by mutual consent Christian people seem disposed to henceforth and forever ignore doctrines; for they believe that, if after nineteen centuries they are thus confused, the matter never was clear and never will be clear to anybody.

All this is a great mistake; the doctrines of Christ, as presented by the Great Teacher and His Apostles, was a great message, of which none of them were ashamed. The difficulty with the Lord's people today is that we gradually fell away from those doctrines—we gradually put darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus gradually got into the spirit of Babylon, and into the spirit of bondage to human traditions and creeds. Instead of shunning doctrines, we should realize that they are the very things needed to cause the scattering of our darkness and superstitions, and to draw all of God's people nearer together.

Here is a message from the Master's own lips. He gives us the key to a clear knowledge of His doctrines, namely, that the student must be fully consecrated to God and fully desirous of knowing His Will and His Plan. In order to see light in God's light—to see the Truth, from the Divine standpoint of the Divine revelation, we must draw near to God in the spirit of our minds, consecrated in our heart. We must will to do His will.



For those who have come into harmony with God, through Christ—for those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice—for those who have Jesus for their Advocate, a provision has been made, whereby the willing, all desiring to do the Divine will, and manifesting endeavors so to do, are counted as righteous. It is to these that the promises of our text apply, that they shall know to do the Divine will, shall know whether Jesus merely made up these teachings of Himself, or whether He was the active agent of Jehovah in what He did and in what He taught. R. 5136

He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory, but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.

– John 7:18 –

True, our Lord had come down from heaven and had knowledge of things of which others were ignorant; but it was not respecting these that he taught, we may be sure from his remark to Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how could you believe if I told you of heavenly things?” On the contrary, our Lord’s discourses were along the lines of divine revelation—the Law and the Prophets, and the fulfillment of these. This is clearly indicated by his declaration, “I speak not from myself; but the Father which sent me he hath given me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak.” (John 12:49.) Again he said,

My teaching is not mine, but His who sent me. (YLT)
John 7:16

We pause here to remark that the teachings of all the Lord’s representatives should be along this same line—not human speculations and philosophies, but the Word of God—

- *He that hath a dream let him tell a dream, but he that hath my Word let him speak my Word.* (Jer. 23:28.)
- *To the Law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word it is because they have no light in them.* (Isa. 8:20.)
- *Teach the Word, be instant in season, and even when inconvenient to yourself.* (2 Tim. 4:2.)
- *The Word of God is powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword.* (Heb. 4:12.)
- *Sanctify them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth.* (John 17:17.)
- *They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, and learned of him.* (Acts 4:13.)

Thus it is that those who are faithful and loyal to the Lord and the word of his testimony speak not vaguely and indefinitely to the world, but declare the message of God, the “good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people,” “in due time.” R. 3726 and E50

Our Lord Jesus was and still is the Great Teacher of men by the appointment of the Heavenly Father, the great Master Teacher above all. And this is precisely what our dear Redeemer claimed and taught. Did he not publicly declare that his teachings were of things he had already learned of the Father? saying,

I speak what I have seen with My Father.
John 8:38

THE LIGHT OF THE WORD

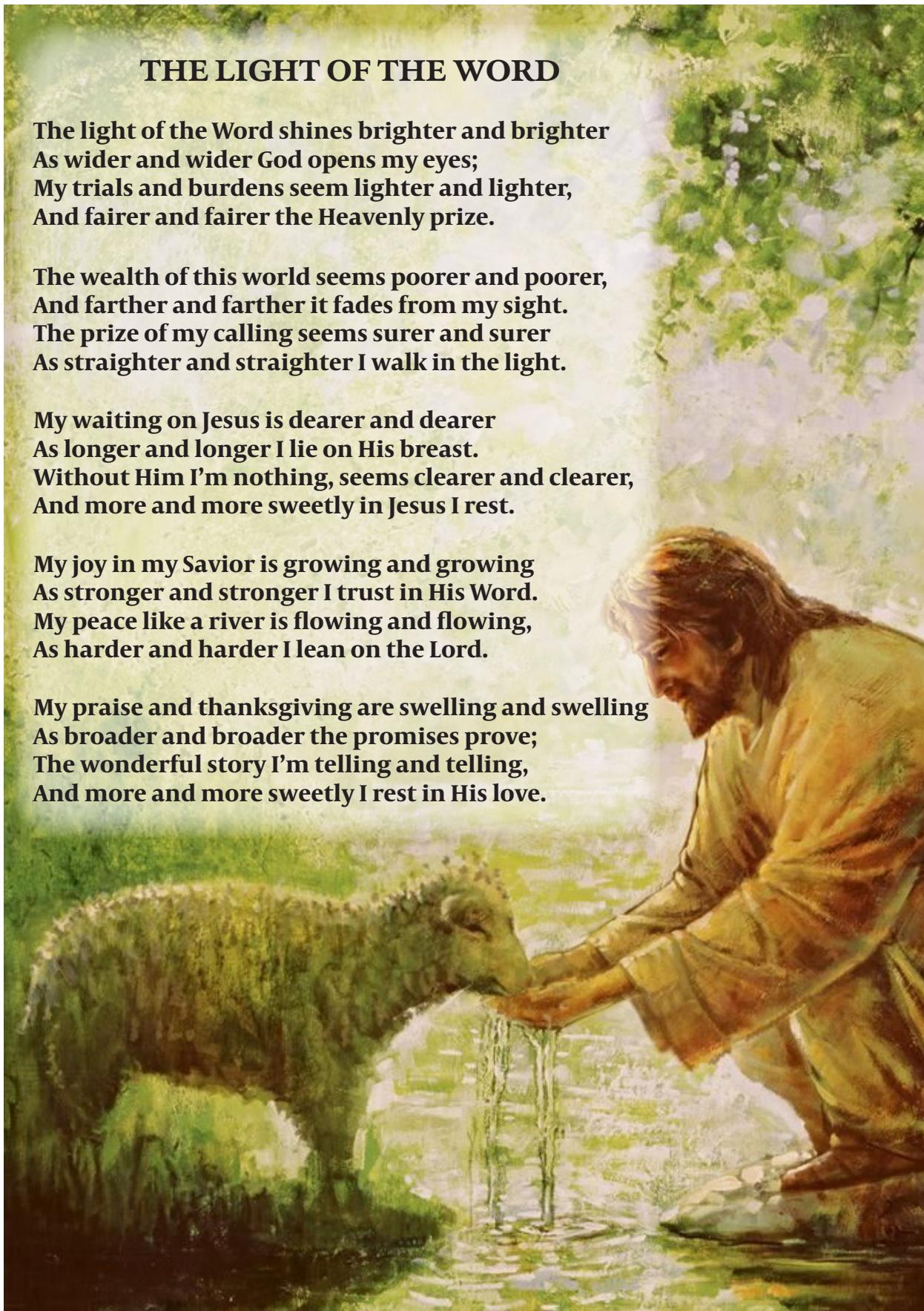
The light of the Word shines brighter and brighter
As wider and wider God opens my eyes;
My trials and burdens seem lighter and lighter,
And fairer and fairer the Heavenly prize.

The wealth of this world seems poorer and poorer,
And farther and farther it fades from my sight.
The prize of my calling seems surer and surer
As straighter and straighter I walk in the light.

My waiting on Jesus is dearer and dearer
As longer and longer I lie on His breast.
Without Him I'm nothing, seems clearer and clearer,
And more and more sweetly in Jesus I rest.

My joy in my Savior is growing and growing
As stronger and stronger I trust in His Word.
My peace like a river is flowing and flowing,
As harder and harder I lean on the Lord.

My praise and thanksgiving are swelling and swelling
As broader and broader the promises prove;
The wonderful story I'm telling and telling,
And more and more sweetly I rest in His love.



Gentle Shepherd by Youngsung Kim/R. 5560, p. 315

I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

— John 8:12 —

John the beloved Apostle of Jesus wrote, “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” This figure of speech pervades the entire Bible. Everywhere light stands for Truth, for righteousness; and darkness represents error, superstition, sin. Our Lord Jesus being in full harmony with the Father, was the Light of the world. To this end came He into the world. One of the titles He assumed was “The light of the world.” (John 8:12.) Although He was in the world, the world knew Him not. They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

The Apostle Paul explains that the darkness on the part of the world comes either directly or indirectly from the Adversary. He says that “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.” Then he proceeds to tell us why this is so. Satan does this “lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them,” shine into their hearts. In order to keep mankind away from God, Satan has put light for darkness and darkness for light. This has been largely through good people, whom Satan has more or less used, ignorantly on their part, as his tools. As a matter of fact, darkness is very gross in the world, and light is seen only by the few. Thus the Apostle prays for the Church that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened, indicating that the eyes of even the consecrated people of God are not fully enlightened, not fully opened. He prays for this in order that they may be able to comprehend what is the length, the breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God, the love of Christ, which passeth all understanding.

We perceive, then, that to see God—to see the Truth, to know the deep things of God—is to have a very glorious conception of the Almighty, of His character and of His Plan. We see that the Adversary tries to keep us in the dark, and that God is permitting this for a time—permitting the ignorance, superstition, sin, darkness, which envelops mankind. But those who learn of the Savior whom God has provided, who put themselves into His hands, who study God’s Word, and thus struggle against the darkness of error, superstition and infirmity, get their eyes more widely open. As they do this, they become stronger of character. So there is a good purpose served in these battles. We are, therefore, to maintain a good fight against sin and against selfishness. R. 5718

Praise God for this great light and life provided for a dying world; and although it is true that the light shone amidst the darkness of human depravity without being generally comprehended or appreciated, it is also true, nevertheless, that “that was the true [antitypical, the real, genuine, not counterfeit or typical] light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” It matters not, therefore, that this true light was not comprehended and appreciated by the Jews in the days of his flesh, and that he is not comprehended even today by the world of mankind; he, nevertheless, is the true light, and in the Father’s due time he shall accomplish the great plan of God, of which he is the center, the expression, the Logos; —he shall enlighten every man born into the world. Nor shall any be permitted to languish in darkness, or to fail of eternal life by reason of lack of knowledge; in due time all the blind eyes shall be opened, all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the blind shall see out of obscurity the great Light which God has raised up, to be a prince and a Savior for whosoever cometh unto the Father through him. —Isa. 35:5; John 8:12; 14:6. R. 2409

If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.
– John 8:31 –

The Lord's expression, "Then are ye My disciples **indeed**," implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be Jesus' sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in **My Word**, then are ye My disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall know the Truth"—not, Ye shall be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth." (2 Timothy 3:7.) Divine Truth is found only in the Divinely appointed channel—our Lord, the Apostles and the Prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in the inspired writings of the Prophets and the Apostles, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and to faithfully conform our characters to them, is what is implied in "continuing in the Word" of the Lord.

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
John 8:32

And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions, however, are still under the blinding influence of error. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because they hypocritically claim Divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful Tyrant, consigning the vast majority of His creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God! We who have received the Truth have awokened from that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken.

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see coming upon the whole world as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror; the alarm of all is increasing as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more apparent. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God as to the terrors of the conflict through which the world will soon have to pass, the true disciples of Christ who abide in His Word are not afraid, but rejoice; for they know that God's object in permitting this mighty storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that after the storm, there shall come, by His providence, an abiding peace.



Blessed promise! — "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this wondrous favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines but bringing forth its blessed fruitage in our lives? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious Light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling. R. 5508

If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.
— John 8:36 —

Through Christ, [God] has redeemed us, so that if we repent of our sins and believe on him, we may now have eternal life, being made free from the condemnation which passed upon all men through Adam. Thus we are made free from condemnation to death; and not only so, but now it is also our privilege to be liberated, through Christ, from the bondage and tyranny of Sin.

While the actual freedom or liberty of the sons of God is not yet enjoyed by any, the inheritance of it being lost by the fall, a few have regained their **title** to that inheritance through faith in Christ, who purchased it with his own precious blood for all who will accept it as the free gift of God's grace, through faith in him. And these few have, by faith, passed from death unto life (John 5:24; 1 John 3:14), and are now, therefore, **reckoned free**—free from sin and its condemnation, death, the righteousness of Christ being imputed to them by faith. Thus they hold a **sure title** to this glorious liberty, which all the sons of God will possess when fully restored to the divine likeness. Those who have this title the Apostle Paul urges to hold it fast, saying, "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." —Gal. 5:1.

This exhortation can mean nothing more nor less than to hold on, by faith, to our justification —our title to life through Christ our Redeemer. This he was urging the Galatian Church to do, the exhortation being prompted by the efforts of some Judaizing teachers to bring them again under the bondage of the Law Covenant. —Gal. 3:1.

Let us, then, while we willingly submit ourselves to Christ our Lord, partake largely of his spirit, and fully cooperate with him as a wise and skilled physician; and in so doing we will surely realize our liberty of mind as sons of God, even while we are undergoing the tedious and painful processes which are designed to accomplish our complete emancipation from the bondage of Sin.

While we enjoy this blessed freedom in Christ, we are nevertheless under strictest bondage to Christ. As the Apostle Paul states it, we are bond-servants of Jesus Christ, and, like him, we glory in being so branded. (Gal. 6:17.) We realize that we are not our own, but that we are bought with a price, and that the consecration of our lives to him who purchased us is but a reasonable service.

Even now while our standing as free men in Christ is only a reckoned one, the freedom which we gain through Christ is:

- 1** freedom from the condemnation of sin, and consequent access to God in whose favor is life eternal;
- 2** freedom from the bondage of fear concerning the future, and consequent rest and reliance upon him who has said, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee;"
- 3** and daily as we submit ourselves to Christ we come to realize more and more of a release from the hereditary bondage of Sin. One after another, under the treatment of the Great Physician, we find the symptoms of the old disease of Sin disappearing, and we rejoice to find it so. R. 1737

Our Sufficiency Is Of Christ

Where's the day I'll call dreary,
While his favor shines so bright?
Where's the time in which I'll weary
Of his loving words of light?

Where's the test of faith that's greater
Than the measure of his grace?
Where's the loss of goods more precious
Than what's given in its place?

Where's the stone on which I'll stumble
While I trust to him my hand?
Where's the fear to make me tremble
When his words the winds command?

Where's the cross that is too heavy
When his strength doth lend me aid?
Where's the crowned head I'd envy
Since he's having my crown made?

Where's the home that we could long for
Like his palace up above?
Where's a way more fit to get there
Than his narrow way of love?

--*B. H. Barton*



He who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

– John 10:2-3 –

The fold described in the parable is well represented in the accompanying illustration. It was a place of safety, of rest, of protection from prowling wild beasts and from robbers. There was but one doorway into these folds and it was supposed to be guarded by a porter who would know the true shepherd and admit him and no other. Our Lord declared himself to be the true Shepherd of Jehovah's flock, the only one to whom the porter would grant admission and the only one, therefore, who had the right to control the sheep and who alone could provide for their safety. The porter who could thus discriminate between the true and the false was the Law Covenant. Those who could not answer the Law, who could not fulfil its demands, could not substantiate their claims to being the Shepherd, the Messiah. But our Lord did meet the demands of the Law fully, completely—"in him was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." He was already holy, harmless, separate from sinners. He is thus identified to us as the rightful Shepherd.

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

John 10:1

There was but one way to become the true Shepherd of the Lord's flock and to have a right to lead his flock—out to the green pastures and still waters of truth and grace and into the rest and security of the fold. That way was the way of the cross—to give himself a ransom for all. This our Lord did and thus he became the door to the sheepfold, opening up a new and living way, or, more correctly, a new way of life. Nevertheless, this is not



Jesus, the Door to the sheepfold.

the making of a new door into the fold, but the opening of the door which had previously been closed. The door was the Law, which could not open except by obedience to the Law; and now our Lord Jesus, having kept the Law, has made it possible for all of his true sheep to enter in by the same door, by the keeping of the Law—not, however, the letter of the Law, which would be impossible to us, but its spirit. Thus the Apostle says of the true sheep and their entering into the fold, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit," (Rom. 8:4); because our Shepherd has made an appropriation of his grace on our behalf which makes up for us all that we lack.

So long as we are his and are striving to walk in his ways every deficiency is compensated out of his abundance. To him the porter openeth, to him the Law and the prophets bear witness. R. 4157

Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

John 10:7

And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

– John 10:4 –

The tales told respecting the shepherds of eastern countries and their flocks are remarkable and illustrate well our Lord's declarations of this parable. Let us examine a few of these that we may sympathetically enter into the spirit of the Lord's words. Those who heard him were familiar with these facts. One writer says:

“ It is one of the most interesting spectacles to see the number of flocks of thirsty sheep water at a fountain. Each flock in obedience to the call of its own shepherd, lies down awaiting its turn. The shepherd of one flock calls his sheep in squads, and when the squad has done drinking, orders it away by sounds which the sheep perfectly understand, and calls up another squad. The sheep never make any mistake as to who whistles to them or calls them. In a flock of hundreds or thousands each individual sheep has a name, knows it and is known by it. The Greeks had a similar custom. The names frequently corresponded to certain defects, as for instance, ‘Torn’ or ‘Broken-Legged,’ ‘One Eye,’ ‘Curly Horn,’ ‘Bald Head.’ As lambs they are taught to answer to their names by patient drill, being led back and forth from the rest of the flock and not allowed to go to their mothers for food until they respond properly to the calls. The shepherd never drives his sheep in the East, but goes before them, they follow him, they run after him if he appears to be escaping from them and are terrified if he is out of their sight or any stranger appears instead of him. He calls for them from time to time to let them know that he is at hand, they listen and continue grazing, but if anyone else attempts to produce the same peculiar sounds they look around, startled, and begin to scatter. A Scotch traveler changed clothes with a shepherd, and thus disguised began to call the sheep; they remained motionless; then the true shepherd raised his voice and they all hastened to him in spite of his strange garments. ”

Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

John 10:5

The voice of the Lord is the voice of justice, of truth and of love, and all who are his sheep are expected to be able to discriminate between his message and the various false messages which more or less particularly represent the Adversary, who seeks to mislead the flock, using human instrumentality to accomplish the purpose. We have the Lord's assurance that none of the true sheep will be satisfied with the false Gospel; it will not appeal to their hearts, and equally we have the assurance that the true sheep will be satisfied with the true Gospel, because it will satisfy their longings as nothing else will do. This is an important point to keep before our minds. It indicates to us the importance of becoming fully, truly, emphatically the Lord's sheep, of entering into covenant relationship with him and thus making sure his protecting care and instruction. R. 4157 and R. 4158

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

– John 10:27-28 –

The link between the Shepherd and the sheep, as here indicated, is love. The Shepherd loves the sheep, and has demonstrated this in having laid down his life for them; and the sheep speedily learn to love the Shepherd, as their care-taker; they recognize him through his voice—the Word of God. This voice appeals to the hearts of all the true sheep, who quickly respond, “Never man spake as this man.”

The voice of the Good Shepherd is a blending of various sounds in a manner in which they are blended by no other voice. His voice sounds forth the chord of justice commingled with the chord of love, and the whole intoned with wisdom and with power. Other theories, plans and schemes of men and of devils, have no such harmony of sound as has the message which the great Shepherd has sent us through his Son. His voice speaks to us of a just penalty for sins—death; it speaks of love, in our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, and the opening to us of the way of life, through resurrection. This “word of grace” constrains all the true sheep as no other message or voice could do. Moreover, when the true sheep hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, it satisfies their longings as nothing else could do. They will no longer be in danger of being attracted by other sounds or voices, theories or schemes, but will reply to all, “Jesus has satisfied; Jesus is mine.”

This voice, once heard, can never be mistaken for another; and those who know this Shepherd and his voice need never be misled by others. The Lord’s true sheep, whom he knows by name and who follow him, will not heed the voice of strange shepherds, but will flee from them. They know when they hear a false voice, that it means that the Adversary is seeking to ensnare them; and such will flee from the voice of error that they may come the closer to the true Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep. R. 2672

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep.

John 10:11-15



Jesus and the Lamb by Katherine Brown, 1982

How comforting are these assurances! What a beautiful description we here have of the precious relationship between the Lord and his own! The comparison between his knowledge and that of the Father is forceful, and, as our Lord elsewhere pointed out, they that know not him know not the Father. How important from the divine standpoint is knowledge, not merely head knowledge, but heart knowledge, intimate acquaintance with the Lord and his glorious plan! R. 4158

My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.

– John 10:29 –

[This text] assures us that God will not withdraw from us any favor he ever bestows; he will never cast us off or cause us to fall. And, more than this, his love is so great that he will not permit others to separate us from his favor contrary to our own will. And since his love is so great and his power all-mighty, we have full confidence that no power in earth or heaven can forcibly separate us from his love and the favors granted us in and through our Redeemer. Here rests our full assurance of faith—none can pluck us from our Father's favor and protection:

*In God I have found a retreat,
Where I can securely abide;
No refuge nor rest so complete,
And here I intend to reside.
Oh! what comfort it brings,
My soul sweetly sings,
I am safe from all danger
While under his wings.*

Since the Lord is our [Great] Shepherd, no one is able to pluck us out of His hands.
We are as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. R. 1458 and R. 5118

**Keep me as the apple of Your eye.
Hide me under the shadow of Your wings.
Psalm 17:8**

If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

– John 12:26 –

[Explaining] the requirements of present discipleship, our Lord declares, If any man will be my servant let him follow me; where I am there will also my servant be. By this language our Lord shows that his faithful followers shall ultimately share his divine nature in the spirit realm. Again he states the same matter in different language, saying, “If any man will serve me, him will the Father honor.” The Father honored the Son because of his faithfulness even unto death; the Father accepts as sons the followers of the Son, justified through his blood; and those who are faithful in walking in his steps the Father will surely honor as he honored Jesus, the first-born, whom he raised from the dead to glory, honor and immortality, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. Let us all be faithful followers. R. 3540

Those who despise service, and long for release from all its restraints and its supposed dishonor, never made a greater mistake; for the only men and women worthy of remembrance when they have passed away are those who have faithfully and ably served their fellow-men. It is only such persons whose names come down through history covered with glory, while those who lived in selfish ease were long ago forgotten. R. 1708

And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.

– John 12:32 –

Our Lord's lifting up was as the antitype of the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, looking to which the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpents, were healed, —in type of how the world of mankind, bitten by sin, poisoned and dying, may have life through the exercise of faith in the Redeemer, based upon his great sacrifice—his lifting up as our redemption price.

A secondary thought connected with this passage would be that our Lord's obedience in laying down his life as our sin-offering led directly to his own exaltation to power and great glory, as the Apostle has stated it, “Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” —Phil. 2:10-11.

It is by reason of our Lord's **lifting up**, in both of these senses, that the blessing is to come to the world. His lifting up as the sin-offering was our purchase-price; his lifting up in exaltation as our great Prophet, Priest and King, is equally necessary to the drawing of the world of mankind, and the resultant blessing upon all who yield to the drawing influence.

While considering this passage, it is well to have a proper thought in mind respecting the **drawing**. That our Lord is not drawing all men to himself at the present time is evident to every one: moreover, the Scriptures assure us that he is not drawing men at the present time: on the contrary, his own words are that during the present age the Father does all the drawing:

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.

John 6:44

The drawing by the Son will not begin until the drawing by the Father has accomplished its intended purpose. That purpose, as Scripturally expressed, is “to take out of them a people for his name”—to gather out of the world an elect Church as a bride for his Son, to bear the name of Christ, to be his Bride and joint-heir, “members in particular of his body.”

When the election of this Gospel age shall have accomplished this purpose, and the Church shall have been glorified, Bride and Bridegroom made one, then will begin the time in which the Son will “**draw all men**,” the world of mankind, as the Father has been drawing the Church during this age. R. 2519

In My Father’s house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

— John 14:2-3 —

What joyful hopes, what exuberant anticipations, cluster around this promise, in the hearts of the Lord’s faithful! In a few words it sums up all the good things that God hath in reservation for them that love him.

Our Lord was not speaking to, nor of, the natural man when he used the words of this text; he was speaking to the New Creatures, begotten through the Word of Truth to heavenly promises. Thus far no provision existed for a family of sons on the divine plane; our Lord Jesus was the first born to this condition, and it is only through his merit and by his assisting grace that his Church can become meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Our Lord’s departure was to this end—that he might not only present the ransom sacrifice on our behalf, but also that he might, as our Head, succor and help us to the eternal city, and might correct and discipline us, and thus prepare us for the new conditions, as well as by his sacrifice make possible our attainment to those new conditions. R. 3191 and R. 4064

Whether the New Creation are afar off or on the earth, they will ever be of the spirit nature. Their particular place is on the Divine plane. The various orders of spirit beings have each its own sphere, but the Church of Christ has no place among them. She is invited to occupy a position next to her Lord, who is on the right hand of the Majesty on High (Heb. 1:3)—higher than all other planes of spirit being.

At the time of the First Advent, this place had not been prepared for the Church, although the Father evidently had it in mind. Our Lord ascended on High in order to prepare that place. (John 14:2,3.) This He did by making an imputation of His merit on behalf of the Church, thereby permitting them to become participants with Him in the sufferings of the present Age, that they may also become sharers with Him in the glories to follow. Thus He has prepared the way for the Church to enter the highest of all planes. R. 5181

I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He* may abide with you forever---the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him, but you know Him, for He* dwells with you and will be in you.

— John 14:16-17 —

The Apostle John and others of the Lord's disciples heard his wonderful teachings and witnessed his exemplification of this holy spirit of love and marveled; but it was not their privilege to possess the same spirit until Pentecost. Before that they received him and became his followers, disciples, and received some instruction respecting the way of life; but it was expedient for them that he should go away—that he should pay the ransom-price, be raised from the dead by the Father's power and ascend up on high to appear as their high priest and make an atonement for their sins —else the Comforter could not come, they could not receive and be begotten by the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, the holy spirit. (John 14:16,17; 15:26; 16:7.) And this is the declaration of the Apostle John, "As many as received him [Jesus], to them gave he power [privilege] to become the sons of God [beginning at Pentecost]; even to them that believe on his name: which were begotten [beginning at Pentecost] not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." —John 1:12,13.

If we have this holy spirit, this anointing, this unction, we surely know it as a fact, whether or not we have always discerned it as being the spirit of our adoption to the divine nature. However true it is that this holy spirit is to be a gradual development in the Lord's people, a growth in grace, it is nevertheless equally true that it had a definite time of beginning. It **did not begin** when first we came to know the grace of God in Christ, in the precious blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins. With repentance and faith came **justification**, and its "joy and peace through believing;" but it was not until **later** that we had, by the same faith, "access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of [sharing] the glory of God." —Rom. 5:1,2.

This latter grace we attained only by learning to admire to some extent God's character of love. He invites us to consecrate ourselves fully to him, to lay aside and to sacrifice our own wills and to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ, who did not his own will but the will of his Father who sent him: and it is when we reach this point of full surrender of our own wills to the will of God that we may be purged of selfishness, the spirit of the world and of earthly ambitions, and be filled with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love. **Then** we are accepted of the Lord as "new creatures in Christ Jesus" and receive an impartation of his spirit of holiness, love, as the seal or mark of our acceptance— "being transformed by the renewing of our minds." Thenceforth, all holy things, the things of God and the people of God, as well as God himself, draw forth our hearts; no matter who they are nor under what circumstances, we love the Lord's people and everything which is in harmony with the Lord's Word and character. And correspondingly from the same moment of full consecration we are the enemies and opponents of sin, we "hate every evil way" and everything sinful, mean, selfish, contemptible, and contrary to love, whether we find its stain upon our own flesh or upon others of the fallen race. Thenceforth it is our mission as new creatures to be representatives of God and his truth and his spirit of love, and all other considerations are secondary. This is the new life, and from the time it begins we are reckoned as "new creatures in Christ Jesus; old things have passed away, all things have become new." R. 2225

* See Note on p. 218

He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.

— John 14:21 —

The Master pointed out to us distinctly that in keeping his sayings we are not merely pleasing and obeying him, but that he is in all this matter the mouthpiece of Jehovah, the Father, and consequently that in pleasing and obeying him we are pleasing and obeying the Father. This much he could tell them while still with them, but he had many things that he desired to make known to them, and that were necessary for them to know, but that they could not receive as yet, because the holy spirit had not yet come upon them, and could not until after the ransom sacrifice had been made at Calvary and offered in the Holy of Holies, after he ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us. —John 7:39; Heb. 9:24.

Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words, and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.

John 14:23-24

Our Lord pointedly declares that he who does not seek to please him by conforming to his instructions, thereby manifests that he does not love him. (verses 23, 24.) Surely there can be no better test of love than devotion, and no better test of devotion than obedience. Our enlightened consciences render hearty assent to the Master’s words, and with the Apostle we exclaim, “The love of Christ constraineth us, for we thus judge that, if one died for all, then all were dead, and that he died for all, that they who live [justified and begotten to newness of life] should henceforth not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again.” —2 Cor. 5:14-15. R. 2456

The Lord knew how necessary to our spiritual life would be this communion with himself. Tempest-tossed and tried, how much we need our Father’s care and the comfort and consolation which his presence and sympathy realized imparts. And have not all the meek and contrite in heart the promise not only of the occasional attentive hearing, but of the abiding presence of both the Father and the Son, our Lord Jesus? Jesus said, “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas—not Iscariot—saith unto him, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” —John 14:21-23. The thought which this promise of the abiding presence of the Father and Son conveys to our minds is that their thought and care and interest will be constantly upon us, and that at any instant we may engage the special attention of either or both. We cannot come too often, then, to the throne of the heavenly grace, if we are of those who can claim the abiding presence of the Father and the Son—if we are of them that love him and keep his commandments and who recognize the Lord Jesus as the only way of access to the Father. R. 1865

**The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name,
He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all
things that I said to you.**

– John 14:26 –

Our Lord's assurance is that this Comforter or strengthener, the holy spirit of the Father, sent on account of and at the instance of Jesus our Redeemer, Mediator and Head, will be our instructor—using various instrumentalities for bringing the instruction to us—the Word of truth, the writings of the apostles, and the various helps and agencies which the Lord, through the holy spirit, has and shall from time to time, as needed, provide to his flock.

It should not be overlooked that, although the holy spirit, like all other favors, is of the Father, it, like all others of his gifts, comes to us through the Son, and not by any direct relationship between the Father and us. Our prayers addressed to the Father are to be answered by the Son, — “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it;” —so we see in this lesson that the gift of the holy spirit comes to us, not because of any direct relationship between the Father and us, but at the instance of our Lord Jesus. “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter” —at my request and my account the Father will do this for you. (verse 16) The same thought is again expressed in verse 26, “The holy spirit whom the Father will send in my name.” R. 2456

Note: The masculine pronoun is often used in our Common Version Bible in referring to the Holy Spirit of God, because God, who is a Spirit, is represented as masculine, as indicative of strength. The pronoun translated “he” when referring to the Holy Spirit can with equal consistency be translated “it”, and is often so rendered. See Diaglott rendering of John 14:17; John 14:26, as an example. For further elucidation of this subject of the Holy Spirit, we refer the interested reader to our Fifth Volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*, Chapters 8-11, where we have treated the subject at length. R. 2456



Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

– John 14:27 –

With abounding compassion and tenderness, did our Lord, on the last night of His earthly life, bestow upon His beloved disciples His parting blessing, His legacy of **Peace**. It was the richest legacy He had to bequeath, and was one of priceless value. It was the promise of that tranquility of soul, that rest and ease of mind, which He Himself possessed—the **Peace of God**. It was the same peace which the Father has Himself always enjoyed, even in the midst of all the commotion which the permission of evil has brought about; but it was **not derived** from the **same source**. In Jehovah this peace was **self-centered**; He realized in **Himself** the omnipotence of Power and Wisdom; while the **peace of Christ** was centered, **not** in Himself, but in **God**, by faith in His Wisdom, Power and Grace. So also if we would have the **Peace of God**, the peace of **Christ**—“**My peace**”—it must, like His, be centered in God by faith.

How beautiful, how consoling to their troubled hearts, and how refreshing to ours, is the legacy of love and peace left to us by our dear Redeemer, as expressed in the 27th verse! “**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**” This peace and joy which surpasseth human understanding, was not given to the world, nor is it given to the nominal Christian professor, nor to the formalist and ritualist, however zealous they may be. It is intended for and can be had only by those who receive riches of grace through the holy spirit—those who by obedience to the truth and its spirit grow up into Christ their living Head in all things. Such have peace, deep and abiding, and ever increasing proportionately as they come to comprehend with all saints through faith and obedience the riches of divine grace—the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God.

This is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference and carelessness, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ—“**my peace**.” Looking back we can see that the Master preserved his peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice and power, a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord’s faithful—that nothing shall be any means hurt his faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes.

Yes, the peace of Christ was a priceless legacy. Yet how quickly the storm cloud of trouble, which was even then growing very dark, burst in its fury upon the heads of those very disciples to whom the words were directly addressed. It followed almost immediately the gracious bequest, and struck consternation, bewilderment, confusion, to their hearts and shook their faith from center to circumference.

Three days later hope was revived by the news of our Lord’s resurrection, confirmed to them by His appearance in their midst. Again forty days later hope was strengthened by His ascension after His parting counsel and blessing and promised return, and the instructions to tarry in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of adoption, not many days thence—at Pentecost. Then the peace of Christ, the Lord’s rich legacy, began to be realized, and the tarrying days of prayer and expectancy were days of abiding peace—peace which flowed as a river. But when on the day of Pentecost the promised Comforter came, the river of their peace found a deeper bed; and their joy knew no bounds! R. 5284 and R. 2456

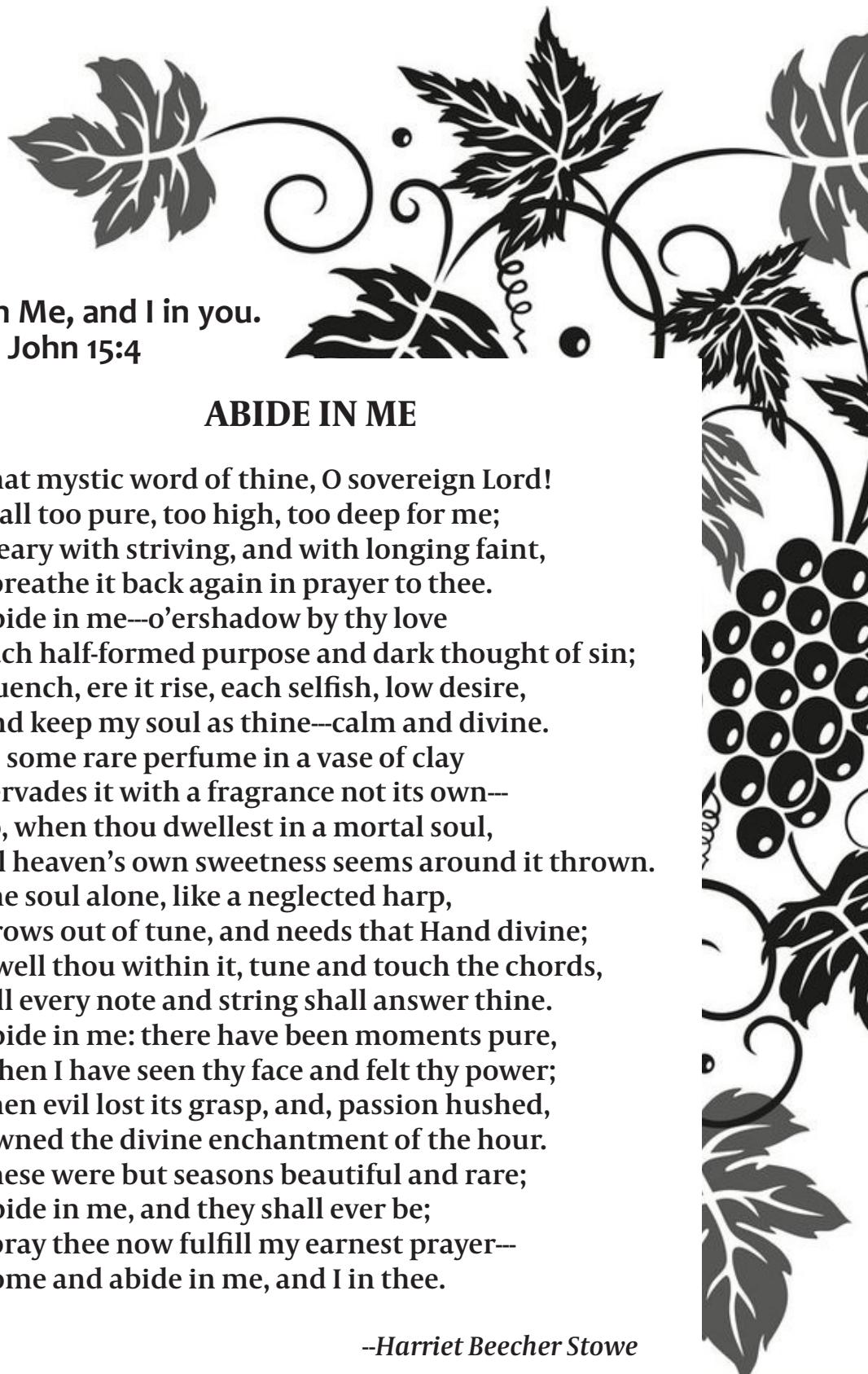


I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

– John 15:1-2 –

It is worthy of note that the Scriptures, in speaking of the Gentile governments, symbolize them as trees, and their destruction as the cutting down of those trees. Many trees do not sprout again from their roots when once cut down, as for instance, the cedars of Lebanon to which great Babylon was likened. On the contrary, the Lord speaks of Israel as a vine of his own planting; and one peculiarity of the vine is that it seems to thrive the better in proportion as it is pruned. Thus our Lord also speaks of Spiritual Israel, as branches of himself, the true Vine, and declares that the Father prunes the vine to the intent that it may bring forth more fruit. It is said that amongst the vine-growers of Palestine it is customary to cut back the vine clear to the roots yearly, in order to get fresh sprouts therefrom. And so we find that the Lord, with Fleshly Israel, frequently pruned them by disciplines, captivities, etc., cutting off many of the branches, and preserving only a remnant. This process was followed at the first advent in the cutting off of Israel from all further share in the spiritual features of the Abrahamic promise,—except the remnant which received the Lord, and on this account were granted privileges to become members of the house of sons. (John 1:12.) During this Gospel age the Lord deals with his people not collectively, not as a nation, but individually: each branch is pruned, and every branch is expected to bring forth fruit, or else it will be entirely lopped off. R. 2373





Abide in Me, and I in you.
John 15:4

ABIDE IN ME

That mystic word of thine, O sovereign Lord!
 Is all too pure, too high, too deep for me;
 Weary with striving, and with longing faint,
 I breathe it back again in prayer to thee.
 Abide in me--o'ershadow by thy love
 Each half-formed purpose and dark thought of sin;
 Quench, ere it rise, each selfish, low desire,
 And keep my soul as thine--calm and divine.
 As some rare perfume in a vase of clay
 Pervades it with a fragrance not its own--
 So, when thou dwellest in a mortal soul,
 All heaven's own sweetness seems around it thrown.
 The soul alone, like a neglected harp,
 Grows out of tune, and needs that Hand divine;
 Dwell thou within it, tune and touch the chords,
 Till every note and string shall answer thine.
 Abide in me: there have been moments pure,
 When I have seen thy face and felt thy power;
 Then evil lost its grasp, and, passion hushed,
 Owned the divine enchantment of the hour.
 These were but seasons beautiful and rare;
 Abide in me, and they shall ever be;
 I pray thee now fulfill my earnest prayer--
 Come and abide in me, and I in thee.

--Harriet Beecher Stowe

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

– John 15:7 –

What is it to **abide in Christ**? Only those can abide in Christ who are in Christ, who have come into Him by faith, repentance and consecration; and to abide in Him means that the faith will abide, the repentance for sin and the opposition to it will abide, and the consecration to the Lord and His service will abide, and it will be manifest that our will has been wholly consecrated—swallowed up in the will of Christ.

“If My Word abide in you.” Ah! how evident it is that our Lord meant to associate Himself and His Word, the Scriptures, in the minds, in the hearts, in the lives of all who are truly His! They must search the Scriptures to know the will of the Lord; to know what He has promised and what He has **not** promised; to know what they may ask and what they may **not** ask; and, ascertaining these, one fully consecrated—one controlled entirely by the will of God—will not want to **be**, to **have**, or to **do** anything except that which will be pleasing to the Lord in respect to himself.

When this position has been reached, the will of Christ governing him, the words of Christ abiding in him, we can readily see that whatever would be asked by one thus well informed with respect to the Divine promises and fully submissive to the Divine will would be things which the Father would be pleased to grant in answer to his requests. We are to think of our Heavenly Father as rich and benevolent, kind and generous, yet **wise** as well as **loving**. We are to suppose that He will have pleasure in giving us the desires of our hearts if those desires are in harmony with His plan, which He has already framed on such lines as to include not only our very highest and best interests, but the highest and best interests of all His creatures. Then, whatever comes, His well-informed children can have all the desires of their hearts, because their hearts are in full accord with the Lord; and they desire nothing of the Lord except the good things of His purpose and promise. R. 4983

Let us, dearly beloved, be more than ever careful respecting the Word of the Lord; let us not by negligence give evidence of a decay of love. Our Lord points out that His continuance in the Father’s love, as the well-beloved Son, with all which this implies, was because of His *obedience to the Father’s will*; and that following the same line, He must require that we should be obedient to Him if we would *abide in His love* and share His Throne and glory. —John 15:10.

If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

John 15:10

Our Lord’s instructions and commandments are not intended to terrify us, nor to deprive us of happiness. On the contrary, “These things have I spoken unto you that *My joy may be in you*, and that *your joy might be filled full*.” (John 15:11.) Those who give surest evidence of living nearest the Lord well know that obedience to the Lord’s words, together with the privilege thus obtained of abiding in Him and His love, is the greatest joy, a joy which wholly outweighs all the trifling pleasures which the world has to offer. It is the joy and peace which “*passeth all understanding*,” which rules in the heart, and which brings with it the promise, the assurance, “not only of the life which now is, but also of that which is to come.” —1 Tim. 4:8. R. 5082

No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing, but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

— John 15:15 —

Our Lord at the first advent spoke in parables to the nominal house of Israel, that “Seeing they might see and not believe, and hearing they might hear and not understand;” yet, a certain few, full of faith and obedience and consecration to the Lord, were not thus treated; but, on the contrary, were treated as “friends” and had much explained to them. Thus our Lord said to the disciples when they inquired concerning the significance of a parable, “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to them that are without, these things are spoken in parables.” And again he said to the same devoted disciples, I have not called you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends, because whatsoever I hear of the Father I have made known unto you. —John 15:15.

The thought, that God’s consecrated people will have intelligence respecting his plans far different from any the world will have, is everywhere kept prominently before us in the Scriptures, and must therefore be considered a very important indication with all who profess to be God’s people; —distinguishing whether they are merely his “servants,” or whether they are still more intimately connected and have received the spirit of adoption as serving “sons,” and are being treated as sons; —made acquainted with the Heavenly Father’s plan.

If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

John 15:19-21

True, our Lord Jesus was not only the Redeemer, but also the great Shepherd and Guide of His followers. True, He sent forth the Twelve Apostles as His special representatives and mouthpieces in the establishment of the Church, a mission which entailed upon them special obligations and duties, as well as special privileges and opportunities. Respecting all of His followers, His “sheep,” He says, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” To them He says, “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” Again, “If any man will serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant be.” —John 17:16; 15:18,19; 12:26.

That all of our Lord’s followers—not only the Apostles, but the very humblest of the sheep—are included in these conditions and in the rewards promised to the faithful, is distinctly shown in our Lord’s references to His Second Coming and to the blessings then to be administered to all of His faithful disciples, amongst whom He includes, not only His Twelve Apostles (who are indeed to have the most honorable position in glory), but also every member of “the Church which is His Body.” In the parables of the Pounds and the Talents our Lord evidently addresses those who will be alive at His Second Advent, and speaks as if they were the representatives of all of His faithful followers throughout the Gospel Age, to each one of them He has entrusted certain gifts and responsibilities as His servants, as New Creatures in Christ. —Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27. R. 2208 and SM629

I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I depart, I will send Him* to you.

– John 16:7 –

Our Lord gently broke to his sorrowing, bewildered disciples the news of his prospective departure to the Father who sent him. They did not ask where, for they believed his word, that he had come forth from the Father and that he would return to the Father who sent him. But sorrow had filled their hearts. What would they do without the Lord! How could the promise of the Kingdom ever be fulfilled if he went away! Had they been following a delusion for three years? They would not doubt the Lord, but they were perplexed. Our Lord, therefore, explained that if they understood matters properly, it would relieve them of much of their distress, as it really was to their advantage, in their interest, that he should go away. Had he not gone away it would have been impossible for the Father to beget them of the Spirit and recognize them as sons of God; hence it would not have been possible for them ever to be more than human beings, ever to become spirit beings or partakers of the divine nature, together with its glories and honors. Indeed, without the departure of our Lord it would have been impossible for them to attain even to human restitution, for the entire work of salvation, both as respects the Church and the world, was dependent upon our Lord's fulfilling the demands of justice. On the following day, as the Lamb of God, he died for the sin of Adam, which rested upon the entire race, and on the third day the Father raised him up by his own power. In this great transaction on our behalf a most important work was accomplished; but the benefits of that work, under the divine arrangement, could not come either to the Church or to the world, until first our Lord would ascend on high and appear in the presence of the Father and present the merit of his sacrifice as an oblation on behalf of his people. Had Jesus remained with his followers all through this age, even as a spirit being (as he was with them during the forty days), no one could have been begotten of the holy Spirit. It was necessary for Christ to ascend and present the merit of his sacrifice before we could be accepted and adopted, before we could receive the holy Spirit.

When the apostles received the holy Spirit at Pentecost, they said, “This is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel”—not, This is he who was spoken of by the Prophet Joel. They called it a baptism with the holy Spirit! A baptism with a person is not a conceivable or proper thought; nor could it be a proper thought that the holy Spirit as a person is personally present in each believer's heart! Whenever we attach the thought of personality it implies place. Thus we see that God is a spirit, not that God is spirit; but we do not speak of the holy Spirit as being separate, as though it were a person separate and distinct from the Father and from the Son; it is referred to in the Scriptures as the Spirit of God, belonging to God, emanating from God; a Spirit of Christ, emanating from Christ; a Spirit or influence or power which is all pervasive, which can exercise itself in any place or in any number of places at any time and perform any kind of work or mission. How much more satisfactory is the true thought respecting the holy Spirit than the absurd and unscriptural ones! We might remark in this connection that the word “him” of verse 7 in the Greek could, with equal propriety, be translated “it”—“I will send it unto you”—nevertheless, we have no objection whatever to urge against the use of the word Him, since this holy Spirit or influence is of or from him, the Father. R. 4165

*See Note on p. 218

All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

– John 16:15 –

Our Lord prepared his followers for a still larger amount of instruction after his ascension than they had received from him during his presence. He explains that the necessity for this was their unpreparedness until they should be endued with power from on high. Until this they would be natural men, and, as the Apostle points out, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” This is the explanation, then, of why our Lord Jesus did not present as deep teachings along spiritual lines as did some of the apostles. It was not inability on his part to present them, but those truths would have been meat out of season to his disciples, which might have choked them, injured them. Hence the deeper things of our Lord’s teachings were stated considerably in parabolic form, which would not hurt them at the time and which later they would come to appreciate and understand. Thus he said again, “I have told you earthly things and ye believed not [are unable to receive them], how would you believe if I told you of heavenly things?” —John 3:12.

I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth. . . . He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

John 16:12-14

But the spirit of truth, when it shall come, will guide you into all truth, yet it will be only a channel and not an authority, for it will make known to you various features of the divine plan and these will include things not yet made manifest to you, but which in due time will be brought to your attention through the Word and through the influence of the holy Spirit. I shall be glorified by this holy Spirit, for it will be my things that will be shown unto you, for all things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that he [it] shall take of mine and shall show them unto you. Note in this statement the prominence of the Father. All things are of the Father, but the Father hath made the Son joint-heir with him, his associate, and nothing is said to belong to the holy Spirit, because it is merely the divine channel or agency through which communications, blessings, instructions, etc., will be communicated. The holy Spirit is not a person, but the spirit or influence or power of the Almighty God and his everlasting Son, our Lord. For a full discussion of this subject see *Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol. V., Chap. VIII. R. 4166

There was a recognized oneness of possessions clearly expressed by our Lord, who declared, “All things that the Father hath are mine.” (John 16:15.) And the Apostle says, God hath appointed the Son the “heir of all things,” and hath “set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” —Heb. 1:1,2; Eph. 1:20,21. R. 3161

You now have sorrow, but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

– John 16:22 –

Our Lord, when telling the disciples of the disappointments they would have in respect to the crucifixion and the blasting of their hopes, declared that later on they would have the reverse of this, rejoicing. He said, “I will see you again [I will reveal Myself to you] and your hearts shall rejoice.” (John 16:22) So we, like the disciples, rejoice not merely that our Lord died as our Redeemer but that He rose again from the dead, and that not only is He to reveal Himself in the end of the age at His second advent shortly, blessing all the families of the world, but that all through the Gospel Age He has been spiritually present with His disciples to bless, refresh, comfort and strengthen us.

It is a fact that those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, those who have received the joy which no man can take from them, those who have tasted of the grace of God in Christ, will not only rejoice and literally sing musical songs with their lips, but they will also rejoice to have their entire lives a song of praise and thanksgiving unto God. The song will bubble over on every proper occasion, wherever hearing ears are found: so fully will the cleansed, justified and consecrated heart appreciate God’s goodness. HG374 and R. 2232

And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.

– John 16:23 –

As the disciples had freedom toward Christ, and confidence in approaching him, he was showing them that the time was coming when they could approach the Father direct, in his name, “because the Father himself loveth you,” and that, as soon as the sacrifice of atonement would be completed and accepted, he could recognize these, because redeemed with the precious blood. —John 14:13.

Prayer, it was shown, consists not merely of petition or request, but as a general term also includes invocation, adoration, communion and thanksgiving. It was pointed out that the prayers of “babes in Christ” are usually requests for earthly favors and blessings, whereas the advanced Christian rarely requests earthly favors. His prayers are usually thank offerings and communion seasons—telling the Lord (the Father or the Son, either or both, for the Father, as well as the Son, loves us; —John 16:27—and we have promise of communion with both; —John 14:23—both are to be worshiped and loved equally, for “all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father;” —John 5:23—but intercourse with the Father can be had by us only in the name and merit of his Son our Redeemer; —Heb. 10:19) of all his trials and troubles and temptations, and calling to mind the gracious promises of his Word, but not attempting to urge his will upon the Lord—fearful even to move the Almighty’s arm, which, with his super-human wisdom, is pledged to cause all things to work together for good to them that love him, the called ones according to his purpose. Concerning earthly blessings our Lord remarked, After all these things the Gentiles seek—but your Father knoweth [better than you do] what things ye have need of. The requests of the advanced saints are for spiritual favors, concerning which our Lord said, Your heavenly Father is more willing to give the holy spirit to them that ask it, than earthly parents are to give good (earthly) gifts to their children. —Luke 11:13. R. 1580

Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.**– John 16:24 –**

This blessed privilege is ours also, if by faith we enter fully into the Lord's will and favor. And with a blessed realization of the abiding presence of our heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus at all times, and of their love and favor, and a faith that lays hold of all the exceeding great and precious promises of God, what soul may not rejoice and be glad, even in the midst of deep sorrow or great tribulation? In the Lord's presence, no matter where we are, is fullness of joy.

It is indeed the will of God that all his children should be happy in him, that they should be always rejoicing; and if any one lacks this blessing, he is living below his privileges. Beloved, let us not be contented to live beneath our privileges. Let us appreciate the favor of God to the extent of seeking for it more and more diligently, remembering the exhortation, "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." All the riches of divine favor are ours if in faith and humility we claim them and place ourselves in position to receive them as directed through the Word of God. "Ask and receive, that your joy may be full." And your joy can no man take from you, so long as you abide in Him who is our life, our joy, our rest, our hope. R. 1949

For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.**– John 16:27 –**

When we come to really know the God of the Bible we find Him the very personification of love itself, that his anger against us was not assuaged by our dear Redeemer's sufferings, but that on the contrary God so loved mankind before Jesus came into the world that He sent His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

From this standpoint we begin to have peace, for we discern as the Master declared, "The Father himself loveth you," the Father himself is love. (John 16:27; 1 John 4:8)

And while he has been just to punish the sins of mankind it has been a reasonable punishment, though severe, and he has made provision for recovery from it eventually for all the members of our race who may if they will come back to his Father's favor and mercy and to life everlasting. Those who thus see have the foundation for love to God and appreciation of his true character and thus have the foundation for the peace of God, the peace which He gives, the peace which a true knowledge of God affords and which cannot be secured from any other quarter. NS524

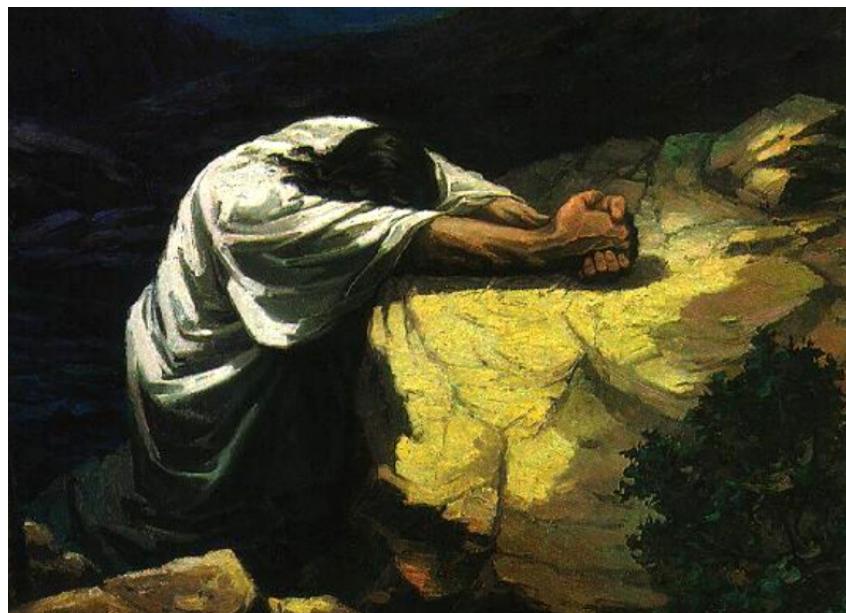
We can readily see why our **Lord Jesus** was greatly beloved, for He expressed and fully manifested the Father's love. But it **astounds** us to know that this same love is exercised by the Father toward **us**! "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon **us**, that we should be called the **sons** of God!" "The Father Himself loveth you"! —John 3:1; John 16:27. R. 5082

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

– John 16:33 –

Our Lord's words [here] should comfort us, as they have comforted his people for the past eighteen centuries: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." There is no suggestion that we can escape similar tribulation. Indeed, if we escape the sufferings of Christ we will be denied a share in his coming glories. Hence, we should not desire to escape tribulation, but rather go on courageously; nevertheless, not too boastfully, not too courageously, but in meekness, in fear, in trust of the Lord's promises that he has overcome and is able to succor us in temptation's hour, and will do so if we but abide in his love and seek his protection. It is in view of this promised aid that we are exhorted to "be of good cheer." "Greater is he that is for us than all they that be against us." Not only will victory be ours, but, more than this, it is ours already. "Nothing shall by any means hurt you." What may seem to others to be injurious to us, must, under Divine supervision, work out blessings.

How much depended upon our Lord's fortitude in that awful hour [in Gethsemane], alone and defenceless in the darkness of overwhelming night, awaiting the certain arrival of his betrayer and the will of his persecutors maddened with hate and full of the energy of Satan! Oh, how the destinies of the world and of himself seemed to tremble in the balances! Even the perfect human nature was not equal to such an emergency without divine aid, therefore it was that he offered up prayers and supplications



Jesus' agony in the Garden

with strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from death, by a resurrection. The necessary comfort was provided through the Prophet Isaiah (42:1,6), by whom Jehovah said,

**Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom
My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him. He will bring forth
justice to the Gentiles. I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, and will
hold Your hand. I will keep You and give You as a covenant to
the people, as a light to the Gentiles.**

Isaiah 42:1,6

When the fearful ordeal in Gethsemane strained the powers of endurance almost to their utmost tension his prayer was only, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." Then, though the cup might not pass from him, an angel came and ministered to him. Just how, we know not, but probably by refreshing his mind with the precious promises and prophetic pictures of the coming glory, which none of his disciples had sufficiently comprehended to thus comfort him in this hour when the gloom of thick darkness settled down upon his soul, crowding out hope and bringing a sorrow exceeding great, "even unto death." Ah, it was Jehovah's hand upholding him, blessed by his holy name! according to his promise, that he might not fail nor be discouraged.

**He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has
established justice in the earth.**

Isaiah 42:4

The result of that blessed ministry was a reinforced courage which commands the deepest admiration. It was not a courage born of stoical indifference to pain and shame and loss, but a courage born of that faith which is anchored fast within the vail of the divine promises and power. With his eye of faith upon the glorious victory of truth and righteousness, when he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied—satisfied with the eternal joy and blessedness of a redeemed world, with the welcome and wealth of the Father's blessing, and the love and gratitude of every loyal creature in heaven and in earth—yes, comforted and encouraged thus with a realizing sense of the rewards of faith and faithful endurance to the end, he could now calmly and even courageously, go forth to meet the foe. Yes, this was the victory by which he overcame, even his faith, and so we also are to overcome.

As we thus view our Lord under a trial so crucial, and mark how the hand of Jehovah upheld him, let it strengthen the faith of all who are endeavoring to walk in his footsteps, to whom he says, Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world: and this is the victory that overcometh, even your faith. (John 16:33; 1 John 5:4.) Has not the Lord, Jehovah, commissioned his angels also to bear up the "feet" of the body of Christ, lest at any time they be dashed against a stone (lest some overwhelming trial should prove too much for them)? (Psa. 91:11,12.) Yes, as surely as his hand upheld the Head, our Lord Jesus, so surely will he bear up the feet. "Fear not, little flock: it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom," though through much tribulation ye shall enter it. The angels are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. Though their ministry is unseen by us, it is not therefore unreal, but potent for good. Our fellow-members, too, in the body of Christ are all the Lord's active messengers to each other, thus in turn sharing the privilege of bearing up the feet.

But to have this help in time of need we must invoke it. Every day and every hour is indeed a time of need; hence our necessity of living in an atmosphere of prayer—to pray without ceasing. And if the Lord needed often to seek retirement from the busy scenes of his active life to be alone with God, to keep the close bond of loving sympathy established, surely we need to do so; and in so doing we shall always find grace to help in time of need. In seasons of heavy trial the darkness may indeed so deepen upon the soul, as in our dear Lord's case, as almost to shut out the stars of hope; yet if, like the Lord, we hold on to the omnipotent arm of Jehovah and meekly say, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done," his grace will always be sufficient; and with the Psalmist we can say, Though my flesh and my heart fail, yet God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (Psa. 73:26) R. 4417 and R. 1801

Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

From Our Lord's Prayer in John Chapter 17 Before Entering The Garden of Gethsemane

In this prayer, as elsewhere throughout the inspired Word, a sharp line of distinction is drawn as between the Church and the world. A great loss is sustained by those who do not see this, for it wonderfully assists in the "rightly dividing of the Word of Truth." "God so loved the world," Jesus "by the grace of God tasted death for every man," and was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, yet he is not of the world, and those who become his disciples are not of the world. "Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world." The losing of the clear line of distinction between the Church and the world has been a serious injury to true Christianity.

Our Lord prayed not for the world, because the Lord's time for dealing with the world had not yet come—would not come until after the selection of the Church, the body of Christ. He prayed for the apostles especially, because they would be his special representatives in the world, and his prayer included also all of the five hundred brethren who up to that time had believed on him with sincere hearts. Not only so, but (v. 20) he extended the petition so as to cover all of a similar class even to the end of the age—all who should believe on him so thoroughly, so sincerely, that their faith would separate them from the world to be his disciples, his followers in the narrow way in very truth. R. 3551

**I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will
believe in Me through their word.**

John 17:20

All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.
— John 17:10 —

It is blessed to mark this oneness between Christ Jesus and the members of His Body. Our Lord does not selfishly grasp all the glory and seek to retain it for Himself. On the contrary, with loving solicitude He marks the progress of His Body-members as they develop in character-likeness to Himself, and says, "They are Mine; and I am glorified in them" (John 17:10); and He would have them all bound up together with Himself in the Father's Love. He would also have them with Himself, beholding and sharing the glory which the Father has conferred upon Him as a reward for His loyalty and obedience throughout all the crucial testings which came upon Him.

All the Divine family are bound together in one bond of love and fellowship and confidence and sympathy and harmony and common interest; and the honor and glory of one are the honor and glory of all. The Lord's prayer abounds with petitions for this oneness. Mark the expression—"That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, are in Me and I in Thee" [Thy Spirit, or disposition, and purposes and aim being common to us all]. (John 17:21.) Hence He would have us adopt the same Father's Spirit, aim and purpose, and devote all our powers with zeal and faithfulness to the accomplishment of the Father's will. R. 5213

They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

– John 17:16 –

The prayer, continuing, points out two things—first, how the Lord's followers will be kept, and, secondly, why they will be kept. (1) They will be kept because they are not of the world, because they have taken a positive stand on the Lord's side, because they have reckonedly died to the world and sin and been begotten again of the holy Spirit to newness of life. (2) They will be kept in the world, but not of it, by the power of the Truth in their hearts. The Truth will sanctify or separate them. Not any truth, not all truth, but the Truth—the Truth of the divine revelation respecting the divine character and the divine plan, and their relationship to these. Summing this all up the Lord declares, "My Word is Truth"—the Truth which only sanctifies and separates my disciples from the world. R. 3552

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

John 17:17

The glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

– John 17:22-23 –

The love of God pervades our hearts so that selfishness has no room there, and thus it was that our dear Redeemer, instead of feeling jealous that any others should be exalted to the divine nature, participators in the Kingdom, in this prayer to the Father declares his full acquiescence in the plan, his hearty cooperation, his joy to have it so. What a thought this gives to us as the prospective Bride, already espoused to the heavenly Bridegroom. He is pleased to exalt us from our lowly estate to be one with himself in his Kingdom, in his throne, in his Father's love.

Wonder of wonders! Where will the divine compassion cease! While we were yet sinners, under divine condemnation of death, we were loved and redeemed at a great price; and now, having been redeemed, we hear the voice celestial saying, "Come up higher," yea, even to the throne, to joint-heirship with the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Could we keep ever before our minds this grand display of love and unselfishness how thoroughly it would scatter from the minds of all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son every thought of rivalry one with another. How it would cause us to rejoice in the growing usefulness and advancement in the Lord's service of every member of the body. How we should more and more feel what the Scriptures describe as "in honor preferring one another," and which rejoices in the prosperity of a brother, in his growing usefulness in the Church, in the growing evidences of his favor with God and man. Those who can thus rejoice in the prosperity of the fellow-members of the body have another evidence of their growth in the likeness of our great and glorious Head.

Our Lord's prayer, "That they all may be one," has been fulfilled throughout the age. All who have been truly his have had a oneness of heart, a oneness of purpose, a oneness of spirit, with the Father and with the Son—a fellowship divine which cannot be produced by earthly creeds and fetters. So it is today, and so it is always between those who are truly the Lord's. R. 3553

Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

– John 17:24 –

This is not a petition, but a declaration of the Lord's will, as though he were saying, Father, I understand that this is thy will in respect to these my followers, and I will it also, acquiescing in this great and liberal arrangement which thou hast made. I will be glad to have my followers ultimately on the same plane of glory with me, and that they may there be blessed by seeing and sharing the glories thou hast conferred upon me whom thou hast loved always even before the foundations of the world—even before the arrangements were made for these my disciples.

The closing words of the prayer are beautiful and give us an insight into the Lord's confidence in the Father and fellowship with him. He knew the Father, and so he has declared respecting us that this is the highest evidence that could be granted us of our acceptance with the Father and of our participation in the life eternal which he has provided, namely, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Our Lord declares, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." And I have made known unto them thy name, thy character, thy greatness, thy goodness, thy love, thy benefactions, and will make known still further as they are able to bear it, as they grow in knowledge of the Truth, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.

How wonderful is this love of God and love of Christ! How impossible it seems for us to measure its lengths and breadths and heights and depths! Those who have accepted the Lord as their Redeemer and have entered into covenant relationship with him, giving him their little all and accepting from him a participation in all these blessings of his provision, if ever cast down because of weakness or opposition or what not, should call to mind this great love which the Father has for us and which the Son shares, the love which not only redeemed us while we were yet sinners, but which since then has called us to such wonderful blessings and privileges, making us joint-heirs with Christ our Lord, if so be we suffer with him; —this love will not be lightly turned away, this love would chasten us rather than permit us to fall away into the second death; this love will finally deliver, either in the little flock or in the great company, all who continue to trust in Jesus and continue to hold the faithful Word. But in proportion as this love of God dwells in us richly, in proportion as Christ is enthroned in our hearts, in that same proportion we will have a responsive love which will delight to do those things which are pleasing in our Father's sight and acceptable to our Lord, and in the same proportion we will be loth to do anything which would bring a cloud between the Lord and our souls. Let us, then, have fresh courage because of what we discern of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love divine, and let this love of God constrain us to greater zeal and devotion to him and to his cause. R. 3553

O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You, and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.

John 17:25-26





**My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world,
My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews,
but now My kingdom is not from here.**

— John 18:36 —

Art thou the King of the Jews?

This was a question which our Lord could not properly evade. He was the King of the Jews; he had left the heavenly glory to assume this very position; his coming had been heralded for centuries before and had constituted the basis of the divine promises and prophecies. He could not deny the fact now before Pilate; to have done so would have been to counteract and overthrow his own teachings and the very faith which he wished to establish according to the divine plan. At the same time it was due to Pilate and to us all that he should plainly show by his answer that he was not seeking to wrest the government from Pilate and the Romans at this time.

Our Lord was calm and moderate, yet just to the point: "My Kingdom is not of this world," not a kingdom of the present order or arrangement. This was as much as was necessary to be told under the circumstances, as much as Pilate could have understood—more probably would have confused him. How brief and how wise was this answer! Our Lord proceeded to call Pilate's attention to the fact that his followers were not fighting for him, not seeking to establish his sway, his Kingdom authority by force; that if his Kingdom were thus to be established he would never have permitted himself to thus have been left at the mercy of his enemies; that his Kingdom was not from hence, was not yet due to come into power.

**You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause
I was born, and for this cause I have come into the
world, that I should bear witness to the truth.**

John 18:37

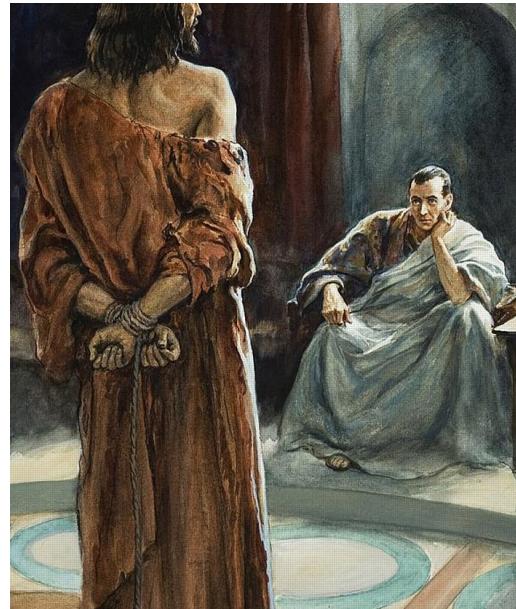
Pilate evidently caught the thought, as is implied in his answer, "Art thou not a King, then?" —Do I understand you to mean that you are to be a King, but have not yet become a King, that your reign is in the distant future? Our Lord replied, Yes, you were right in your original assumption that I am a King. I was born a King, I came into the world for this very purpose of being a King, all my testimony is in line with this great truth; every one who is honest, everyone who is of the truth heareth my voice and is thus drawn to be my disciple or follower and to appreciate me as King. Others, however, are in the majority and do not recognize me now, and will not until the time shall come when I shall set up my Kingdom. Thus we paraphrase the record.

Our Lord had come into the world for the very purpose of being that great King who was to bless all of Adam's fallen race. He came proclaiming this Kingdom, and the Jews said, "How can He be a King? He cannot accomplish anything!" And now, here He was before Pilate, still declaring Himself to be a King. For three and a half years He had borne witness to the great Truth that God's will should be accomplished, that God's Kingdom should yet be established under the whole heavens. And it will be fully consummated, through the great One who was there crucified as a malefactor. R. 3555 and R. 5898

Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.
– John 18:37 –

Our Lord's reference to truth, sincerity, honesty, seemed to touch a tender spot in Pilate's conscience. Few worldly people respect insincerity. Many would not wish to lie or deceive egregiously or injuriously, but nevertheless deception is considered a part of the life and character and practice of every successful person in business and in society. So, catching at our Lord's last statement, Pilate, as he turned on his heel to go back to the Jews, said, Yes, but who will tell us how closely that word truth or sincerity should be or could be applied in life's affairs?

It is well for the Lord's people to have clearly in mind that as the Master designated himself the Way, the Truth, the Life, so all who are truly his disciples must be of the Truth, must be sincere. It would appear that the Lord is during this Gospel age especially calling this class, the truth-hungry, the sincere, the honest-hearted, and that others are not apt to be much influenced by any of the hopes and promises now extended; but that even if such persons should now get a clue of the Truth they do not hold it long, not being at heart children of the Truth, children of the Light. How important, then, that we should be honest-hearted to begin with, sincere in all our words and thoughts and conduct; and while this honesty of word and deed should guide all of our relationships with the world, we should be doubly careful to have them measure our relationship to the Lord and to his people and to his Word! Only the sincere will ever be truly overcomers.



Christ In Front of Pontius Pilate by Henry Coller

Poor Pilate, as he thought of his own disregard for sincerity in many of the prominent affairs of his life, and as he looked at the leaders and rulers of the Jewish nation, which claimed to be the most holy people in the world, feared that question of

What is truth?

What is it to be sincere? How true and how sincere should we be? These were questions beyond his depth, beyond his power to properly weigh, and apparently equally beyond the power of appreciation of the chiefest of the Jews. Jesus himself apparently was the only representative and exponent of the Truth—he was preaching a doctrine which evidently was too high above the heads of his own nation. We may see, however, that in the Lord's plan this preaching of the Truth is the means whereby the Lord would gather together a people for himself, his jewels during this Gospel age. R. 3555

No wonder the Scriptures tell us that those whom the Lord is thus choosing along the lines of truth and sincerity are peculiar people, different from the majority, and no wonder either that they tell us that in all they will be but a little flock. Let us, dear readers, make every effort that by the grace of God we may be amongst these very elect ones. Let us prize the Truth above riches or honor of men—yea, above life itself; so shall we be true disciples, followers of him who is the truth, and who prayed for us saying,

Sanctify them through thy Truth, Thy Word is Truth.

You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.

– John 19:11 –

This is equally true of every member of the body of Christ, from the moment of his begetting as a New Creature. Yea, we have every reason to believe that in some measure divine providence extends even beyond the New Creation to those whose lives and interests are closely linked to theirs. If, then, the New Creatures experience fiery trials they are not to think these peculiar, as though some strange thing happened unto them, but are to know that corresponding trials have happened to all the members of the body of Christ, from the Head downward, and will happen to all until the last members of the feet class have been tested, polished, accepted, glorified. If these, then, come in the nature of oppositions and persecutions in the home, or from former friends or neighbors, or from nominal church people, or if they come in the form of financial disaster and poverty, or if they come in the nature of sickness, pain, physical accident, etc., no matter how, the Lord's people are to be content, conscious of the Father's love and providential care in respect to their every interest. To have full confidence in this is a part of the test of faith. To be assured of the Lord that we are children, and heirs, and to be told of God's oversight, and at the same time to be permitted to suffer tribulations, is a severe test of faith in those who are required to walk by faith and not by sight if they would eventually be accepted as overcomers. Let us, then, receive with confidence, love and trust, whatever benefits or troubles the Lord's providence may send us and let us profit by them, learning their lessons. F646

The world has often wondered at the calmness of the Lord's humble little ones under circumstances which would cause the stoutest heart to quail. But to follow the course in life which will glorify our God and magnify His grace, to be able to meet wisely and courageously the trials and difficulties as they come to us as Christians, representatives of the King of Heaven, and to meet them in the spirit of rejoicing, counting our tribulations all joy, it is necessary that our hearts be in attune with the Lord, that we have no will but His, and that the fear of man, which bringeth a snare, shall be overcome. We cannot accomplish this in our own strength, but in the strength of God alone. We are instructed to fear Jehovah, and not to fear a weak mortal. The righteous are as bold as a lion, as gentle as a dove, as meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination of boldness, gentleness and meekness should characterize every Christian. R. 5540

And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” But they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!” Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led Him away. And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him.

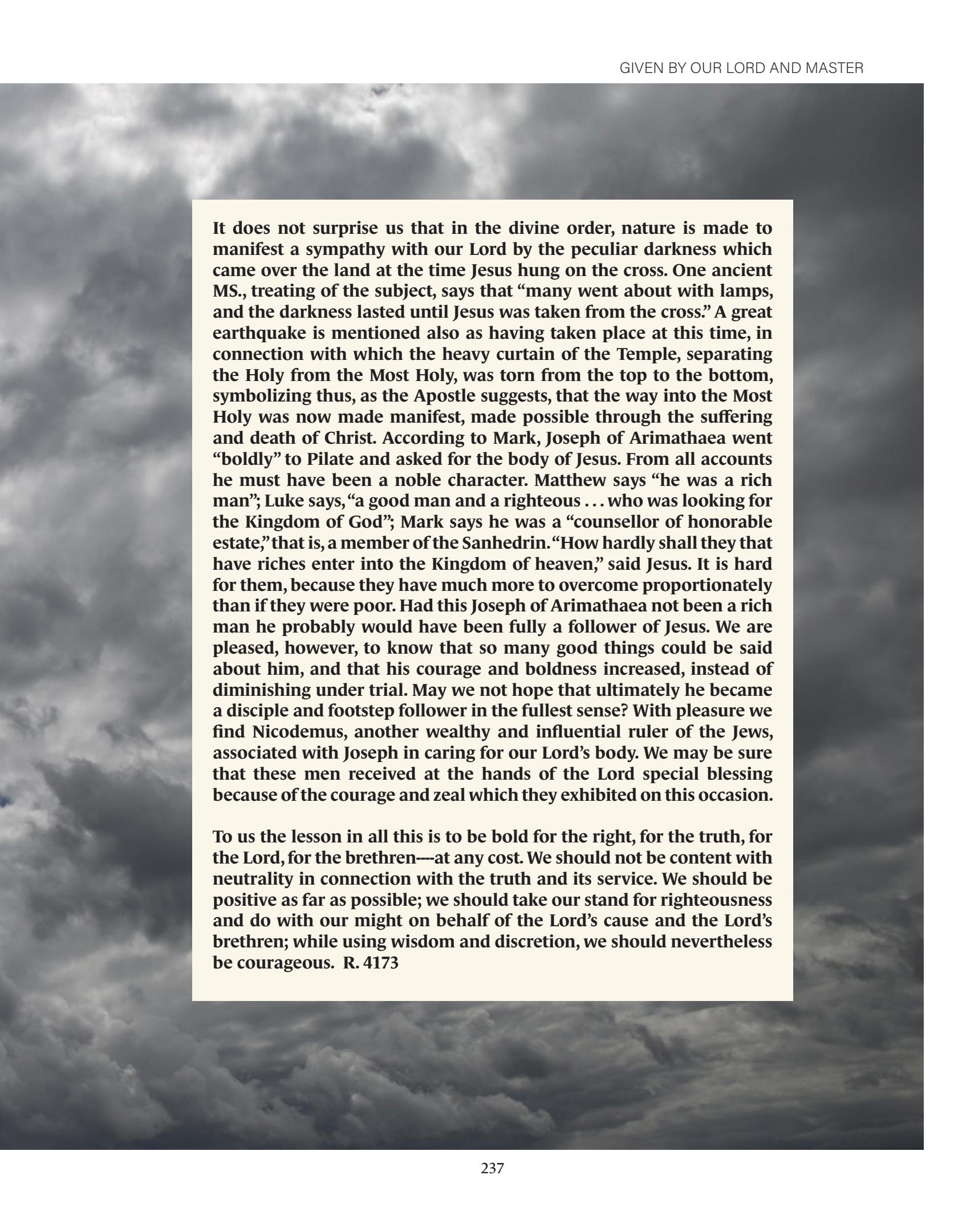
John 19:14-18

It is finished.
– John 19:30 –

This [declaration] was one of triumph. He had finished the work which the Father had given him to do; he had been loyal from first to last, self-sacrificing. He was glad, surely, that his earthly course was at an end, glad because it ended in victory and because this meant ultimately the blessing of the world of mankind and their release from the power of sin and death and the Adversary. It might be said in this sense of the word that our Lord began his work when he left the heavenly courts and humbled himself to take the human nature; and that it progressed during the period of his attaining manhood's estate, thirty years: however, Scripturally considered, the work that was finished was the work of sacrifice which began at Jordan when he was baptized, when he made a full consecration of himself even unto death. Just before his crucifixion he had said, "I have a baptism to be accomplished and how am I straightened until it be finished." Three and a half years was the period of his baptism into death, and now the final moment had come — "It is finished."

We rejoice to think that since the great sacrifice has been **finished** (and especially in view of the fact that the Heavenly Father subsequently declared that it was finished acceptably), we may realize that there is now, therefore, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. —Rom. 8:1.

"Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." This is supposed to have been the last word, the last act of our Lord's earthly ministry, its finishing touch. How appropriate that he who had sought to do the Father's will at any cost should have absolute confidence that in his death his spirit of life would be in the Father's care and keeping, and that he should thus express himself! And this should be true of all who are his followers. Having resigned our all to the Lord we should so fully appropriate his gracious promises as to be without fear as we go down into death. Death in our Lord's case, however, must have meant far more than it could possibly mean to any of us. We not only have the Lord's assurance of a resurrection, but we have in our Lord's own case an illustration of the divine power. It was he who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead whose power will be exercised through him in bringing us forth to glory, honor and immortality. Our Lord was the forerunner; none before him had ever been raised from the dead, either to the perfection of human life or to the perfection of the divine nature. R. 4173



It does not surprise us that in the divine order, nature is made to manifest a sympathy with our Lord by the peculiar darkness which came over the land at the time Jesus hung on the cross. One ancient MS., treating of the subject, says that “many went about with lamps, and the darkness lasted until Jesus was taken from the cross.” A great earthquake is mentioned also as having taken place at this time, in connection with which the heavy curtain of the Temple, separating the Holy from the Most Holy, was torn from the top to the bottom, symbolizing thus, as the Apostle suggests, that the way into the Most Holy was now made manifest, made possible through the suffering and death of Christ. According to Mark, Joseph of Arimathaea went “boldly” to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. From all accounts he must have been a noble character. Matthew says “he was a rich man”; Luke says, “a good man and a righteous … who was looking for the Kingdom of God”; Mark says he was a “counsellor of honorable estate,” that is, a member of the Sanhedrin. “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of heaven,” said Jesus. It is hard for them, because they have much more to overcome proportionately than if they were poor. Had this Joseph of Arimathaea not been a rich man he probably would have been fully a follower of Jesus. We are pleased, however, to know that so many good things could be said about him, and that his courage and boldness increased, instead of diminishing under trial. May we not hope that ultimately he became a disciple and脚步 follower in the fullest sense? With pleasure we find Nicodemus, another wealthy and influential ruler of the Jews, associated with Joseph in caring for our Lord’s body. We may be sure that these men received at the hands of the Lord special blessing because of the courage and zeal which they exhibited on this occasion.

To us the lesson in all this is to be bold for the right, for the truth, for the Lord, for the brethren—at any cost. We should not be content with neutrality in connection with the truth and its service. We should be positive as far as possible; we should take our stand for righteousness and do with our might on behalf of the Lord’s cause and the Lord’s brethren; while using wisdom and discretion, we should nevertheless be courageous. R. 4173



Our Lord's keeping of the Divine Law was not the ransom-price of the sinners. It merely demonstrated that our Lord could be an acceptable ransom-price for all. The giving of his life at thirty years in consecration was finished at Calvary. By that consecration, by the things which he suffered, by the laying down of his life, he laid down the world's ransom-price. It mattered not that the testing of his personal loyalty and his consecration of himself unto death were simultaneous. It was just as proper that it should be so as it was that he should have been tried and tested first and should subsequently have surrendered his life willingly as man's ransom-price.

The ransom-**price** of the world was secured by our Lord by the sacrifice of his human life, but the use of that **price** for the purchase of the treasure was a later and a totally different transaction. [See parables found in Matt. 13:44-46]. It was after our Lord had risen from the dead and sojourned with his Apostles forty days and had ascended up on high that he "**bought us** with his own precious blood." "He appeared in the presence of God **for us**" and there applied on our behalf the merit or ransom-**price** which previously cost him his life.

**For Christ has not entered the holy places made with
hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now
to appear in the presence of God for us.**

Hebrews 9:24

Those whose eyes of understanding are open to a discernment of "the mystery of God" will readily see the further application to us, the Lord's followers and members. By the grace of God our Lord paid the price and **bought us** for whom he appeared. He did not buy the world, but the "Church." He "loved us and bought us with his own precious blood." "Ye were redeemed (bought) not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. 1:18,19.) But this application of the ransom-**price** to us is provisional, conditional. To be of the class included in this purchase requires that we shall not only flee from sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ unto justification, but that additionally we must have our Lord's character-likeness and must, like him, sell all that we have, that we might share with him in his great work and thus **pass his merit on** for the purchase of the world—for the cancellation of the sins of the whole world, at the close of this age.

In the transaction, be it noted, the merit, the value, all proceeded from the **one man** —the man Christ Jesus. No more was needed. No more was demanded by Justice for the sins of the whole world. So to speak, our Lord Jesus loaned to the "elect" the merit of his righteousness, imputing it to us by faith as a wedding garment. Thereby he qualifies us as his members and in his name to share in his sacrificial work in order that we may be permitted to share with him in his Millennial Kingdom glory and its great uplifting work for the world of mankind. R. 4536

Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father, but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’

– John 20:17 –

There is no more important lesson in connection with the Gospel than that of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. The death of Jesus indeed exhibits to us his love, and the love of the Father on our behalf. But in the divine plan, in order for the proper benefit to come to man from the death of Jesus, he must rise from the dead; he must become the Captain of our salvation, as well as our Ransomer. A dead Christ could not be our Savior; as it is declared,

We are not surprised that Mary did not know her Lord until he revealed himself by speaking her name in as a familiar manner. Then how quickly her faith surmounted every obstacle; with as a woman's intuition she stopped not to inquire why there were no marks of the nails in his hands and in his feet but crying, "Master!" she clasped him by the feet with as a fervency that meant, Now that I have found you again I will not let go of you! Her love, her devotion, her persistence, gained for Mary the great honor of being the first to whom the Lord revealed himself after his resurrection. She had been forgiven much, and she loved much, and our Lord manifested his appreciation of her devotion.

Because I live, you will live also.

John 14:19

Those who get the proper grasp of the importance of the resurrection of Jesus will perceive the necessity for the very explicit description thereof given us in the Gospels, because without faith in the resurrection of Jesus we must be without faith in the merit of his death, in the sufficiency of his sin-offering on our behalf and consequently uncertain in respect to our own resurrection, the salvation which shall be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1:13.) This accounts for the minuteness of detail. Moreover, not only is it to be remembered that the apostles and the five hundred brethren, converts to our Lord's teaching at the time, were natural men and needed such proofs as would appeal to the natural mind, but it should be remembered also that the message of our Lord's death and resurrection would go to natural men all the way down the Gospel Age and must be so plain and distinct as to be understood by all. After the apostles received the holy Spirit they understood matters connected with our Lord's death and resurrection which they did not understand before. It is similar with us; when we receive the holy Spirit we come to a deeper appreciation of the features of divine truth. R. 4175

We see that two great lessons were to come to our Lord's followers:

- 1 That their Master was no longer dead but alive, risen from the dead;
- 2 that he was no longer the man Christ Jesus, but Jesus "changed," glorified.

"Now the Lord is that spirit." —2 Cor. 3:17.

Our Lord's declaration, I have not yet ascended to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God, emphasizes the fact that he went not to heaven when he died, but into the tomb, into the state of death. It emphasizes also the fact that he is our Elder Brother, our forerunner into the Father's presence and into the glories which God hath in reservation for all those that love him, that love him to the extent of willingness to follow in the footsteps of Jesus at any cost along the rugged narrow way. R. 4174 and R. 2478

Peace be with you.
– John 20:19 –

Jesus, the spirit being, immediately transferred himself from Emmaus to the upper room where the disciples were assembled and the doors were fastened because they were fearing the Jews and also that the persecution which had come to the Lord might also extend to them. They were having their evening meal when our Lord, discarding the body and the clothing in which he had appeared to the two at Emmaus as a spirit being, came into their midst while the doors were shut, just as an angel could do. There he materialized, created for himself a body of flesh with clothing and in an instant stood before the disciples, who were terrified and were scarcely calmed by his familiar salutation, "Peace be unto you." It was still the first day of the week, the day of his resurrection; we may be sure the disciples were discussing the great and momentous event and the news they had indirectly received of our Lord's resurrection. They were endeavoring to harmonize the various stories told by the women, wondering to what extent they had been deceived, etc. And now to hear the Master's own words saying, "Peace be unto you,"—what could it mean? It meant a confirmation of the story of the women that they had actually seen the Lord, that he really was no longer dead. Then the Master showed them the wounded side and lacerated feet and hands, and their fright was turned into joy. The perplexities were not all gone; but they were getting the lesson that their Master was triumphant over death.

Now as believers the words had to them a new meaning; they began indeed to find a peace for their troubled hearts which they had not known for some time. Since they realized their Master to be again alive they could afford to have peace, for they had learned to have confidence in him and in his love, and intuitively realized that all things would work together for good to them, under his care, though as yet they knew not how. And so it is still. It is only those who realize in Jesus their Redeemer and Lord, who died and who rose on their behalf, and who have given themselves to him to be his disciples—only such can really receive of his peace—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding" ruling in their hearts. So today, as well as then, and even more abundantly under the holy spirit's guidance, they can realize that they are not their own, and that all things are under divine supervision, working for their highest welfare.

"My peace I give unto you," were our Lord's words on the night of his betrayal, at the supper, and "Peace be unto you," were his words when first he met the disciples together after his resurrection. He is indeed the Prince of Peace, and the grace of peace which he gives to his faithful disciples is a blessing beyond all measure, such as the world can neither give nor take away; but this peace is based upon certain conditions of the heart: first, faith, trust in God; secondly, obedience, on our part, endeavoring to do those things which are pleasing in God's sight. To such and such only comes the heavenly peace, and in proportion as either the faith is lost or the obedience lacking, the peace flies away. Whoever, therefore, believes himself to be a child of God, trusting in Jesus and consecrated to the Lord's service, and seeking to walk in his footsteps, should expect the Lord's peace to rule in his heart, giving him rest, no matter what his circumstances or conditions in life; and if any of this class are without the peace let them look to it and repair the difficulty, for they are lacking either in faith or in obedience, and with the revival of these the dove of peace will surely return.

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."
John 20:21

Here our Lord took occasion to give his commission to the apostles, saying, "As the Father sent me, even so send I you." I have done the work the Father gave me to do; I now appoint to you a

great work, which you are to do in my name, even as I worked in my Father's name. Symbolically then, as conveying to them a lesson, Jesus breathed upon them and said, "Receive ye the holy Spirit." He thus represented that he would put his Spirit, his disposition upon them which would enable them to carry out their commission, even as his own reception of the holy Spirit at the time of his baptism enabled him to carry out his consecration. What he did was rather a pantomime teaching; they must tarry at Jerusalem before they would really be endued with power from on high, before they would be endued with the holy Spirit. And why must they wait for Pentecost?

And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."
John 20:22



Jesus appears in the Upper Room

Because the holy Spirit could come only upon those who were fully reconciled to the Father, and before they could be acceptable to the Father the great Redeemer must first ascend on high and appear in God's presence on their behalf and on behalf of all the household of faith to apply for them the merit of his sacrifice as a covering for all of their blemishes, that through him they might be acceptable to the Father and be permitted to receive the full adoption of the holy Spirit as the sons of God. R. 4182 and R. 2803

The disciples had not yet received the holy Spirit. Only Jesus had ever received it in the sense of a begetting, although the prophets had received it in a mechanical sense to work in them and through them. This is in harmony with the statement elsewhere made, that "the holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified." In other words, God could not communicate his spirit to any until after the merit of Christ's sacrifice had been appropriated to them. This was done after the Lord had ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Forthwith the holy Spirit, in Pentecostal power and blessing, was shed forth.

The Lord would have the disciples anticipate the blessing that was to come to them; he would have them understand that the holy Spirit he would send would not be a person, but the Father's spirit and his own spirit—the breath or spirit of God, the breath or spirit of Jesus, the spirit of truth, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of a sound mind. R. 3565

The messages of our glorious Lord, sent through the Apostle John and given to us in the symbols of the book of Revelation, are as truly the Savior's messages as those uttered during his earthly ministry and those subsequently sent us through the apostles. R. 3568

Do not be afraid!* I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

– Revelation 1:17-18 –

As John heard a voice behind him and looked in that direction, so we who now are having the realities find that the message is behind us, and turn and look toward the past to see the fulfillment of the various features of the divine plan and to hear and understand the message given to his people by the risen Lord. His comforting assurance to us is:

- 1** “Fear not.” The same message that the Father sent us through the prophet Isaiah, saying, “Their fear of me is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of men.” (Isa. 29:13.) This lesson, “Fear not,” is one of the first that we must learn. We cannot come into close sympathy with our Lord and be taught of him respecting other features of his plan until we learn this lesson, “Fear not,” until we learn to have confidence in him as the one who loved us and bought us with his precious blood, and whose purposes toward us continually are for our welfare and, if we submit ourselves to his guidance, to bring us off conquerors and more than conquerors.
- 2** “I am the First and the Last.” We must recognize our Lord as the one who was the beginning of the creation of God and the end of it, the one by whom were all things, the one who is next to the Father, his very representative in everything pertaining to the affairs of the universe.
- 3** We must recognize him as the one who was dead, the one who really died for our sins, but who as really was raised out of death by the power of the Father.
- 4** We must realize that he is alive for evermore, that death has no more dominion over him, that the work is finished, that neither sacrifices of the mass nor death in any other sense or form has dominion over him nor ever will have, nor will ever be needed; his work is perfect, and, as he cried on the cross, “It is finished.”
- 5** We must recognize that he has the keys, the authority, the power over the tomb, to deliver from it all who are there imprisoned. We must also realize that he has the “key,” the power over death, so that those whom he liberates from the prison-house of death, the tomb, like those who have not yet gone into it but who are under the sentence of death, may all be ultimately delivered, set free from the dominion of sin and death, delivered into the full liberty of the sons of God, righteousness and life eternal.

* “Fear not” is omitted by the Sinaitic MS but included in Vatican MSS.

We admit that to produce a body with the same convolutions of the brain, the same individuality, the same soul, the same sentient being, is a miracle so great that we cannot conceive of it. Yet it is that very thing which God purposed to do for the whole human family—thousands of millions in number.

In Isaiah's prophecy we read that Jesus "poured out His soul unto death," that His soul was made "an offering for sin." (Isaiah 53:12,10.) Then again we read, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in Sheol [the grave]; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." (Psalm 16:10.) Explaining this prophecy, the Apostle Peter says that God would not leave Jesus' soul in Hades—the grave. (Acts 2:22-31.) The soul of Jesus was not left in the tomb.

Speaking of His own resurrection, Jesus said, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Revelation 1:18.) God raised Him up from the death condition on the third day. On the very morning of His resurrection He said to Mary, "Touch Me not; for I have not yet ascended to My Father. . . . I ascend to My Father, and your Father, and to My God and your God." (John 20:17.) He was the first One who descended to the tomb, and was raised from the dead, and who has ascended far above angels, principalities, powers, and every name that is named. —Ephesians 1:20-23; Philippians 2:9-11.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11

Since our Lord has passed through these experiences, the Apostle's suggestion is that He who brought the Lord Jesus from the tomb is also able to bring us. He tells us that we need not sorrow as do those who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, let us believe that He will bring all that are in the death condition back to life. (1 Thessalonians 4:13,14.) Let us believe that "all who are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth" (John 5:25-29) —the Church first. As it is written, "Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the First Resurrection; on such the Second Death shall have no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ; and shall reign with Him a thousand years." —Revelation 20:6.

We do not see him as he is now, for we are still in the flesh, still human; but when our resurrection change shall come we shall be made like him—we shall be satisfied when we awake in the glorious likeness of our Redeemer. Our Lord, who declares that he actually died and that he actually became alive again from the dead, assures us that he dies no more, that he is alive forevermore, and assures us also that he has the keys of death and of the tomb. Understanding and believing his Word, we are waiting for the Father's appointed time, when he shall take to himself his great power and reign, to restrain sin and evil and death, and enlighten and lift up and bless all the families of the earth.

R. 3570, R. 5612, NS178

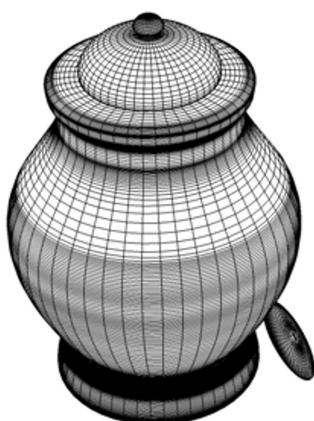
To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.

– Revelation 2:17 –

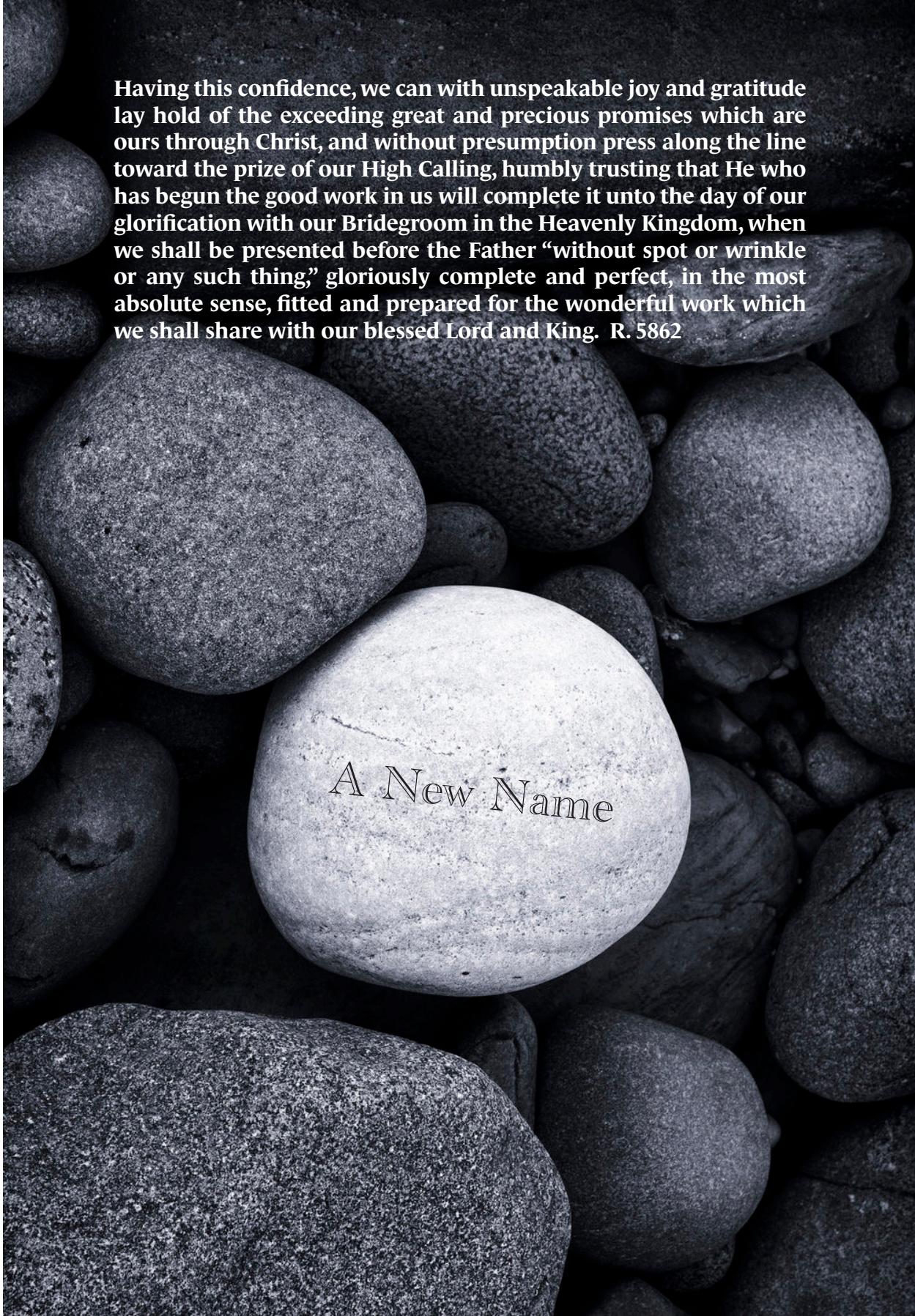
In ancient times the Greeks and the Romans had a custom of noting and perpetuating friendship by means of a **white stone**. This stone was divided into halves, and each person inscribed his name on the flat surface, after which the parts of the stone were exchanged. The production of either half was sufficient to insure friendly aid, even from the descendants of those who first divided the stone. A similar custom was sometimes observed by a king, who would break a white stone into two parts, one of which he would retain and the other part give to a special ambassador. That part could be sent to the king at any time and would insure aid. Thus the divided stone became a mark of identification.

This verse seems to refer to this ancient custom. The white stone signifies a precious token of the Lord's love, and the new name written in the stone suggests the Bridegroom's name. The statement indicates a special acquaintance with the great King of kings, secret between Himself and the individual. The overcomers are not to be recognized merely as a class—the Bride class—but each will have the personal favor of the Lord. Of this no one will know save himself and the King. There is an individual and personal relationship between the Lord and the overcomers, who may be said to receive the mark of identification—the antitypical white stone—**now**, in this life.

This mark is the sealing of the Holy Spirit by which the Lord identifies the overcomers. While this is said to be a part of the **final** reward of the Church, yet from the very beginning of our experience we have this personal acquaintance with the Lord. The full seal of the Holy Spirit will be given in the Resurrection, when we receive the new body. Then we shall have the complete knowledge of the name by which we shall be known to the Lord and He to us forever. R. 5113



It was some of this manna that by divine direction was put into the golden pot which was hidden in the ark with the scroll of the Law under the golden mercy seat, typifying, illustrating, the immortality which the Lord has provided for the Church of the First-born, to whom he has sent the message, “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna.” (Rev 2:17.) That incorruptible hidden manna in the golden pot represents the grace of God in the Church of the First-born, and teaches what is elsewhere plainly stated in the Scriptures, that the “little flock” shall enjoy the incorruptible life, immortality. R. 4012

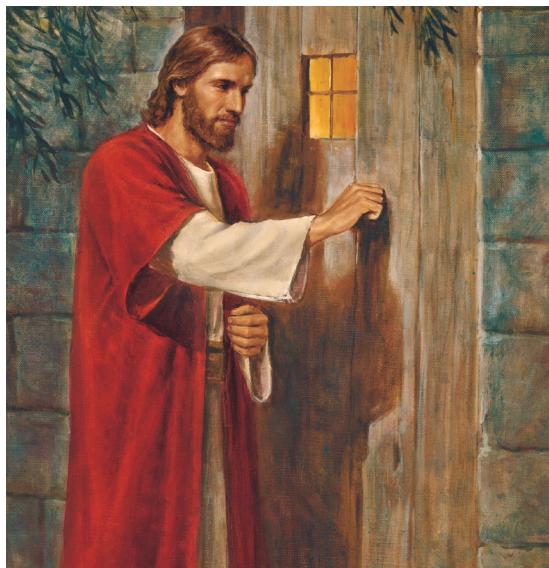


Having this confidence, we can with unspeakable joy and gratitude lay hold of the exceeding great and precious promises which are ours through Christ, and without presumption press along the line toward the prize of our High Calling, humbly trusting that He who has begun the good work in us will complete it unto the day of our glorification with our Bridegroom in the Heavenly Kingdom, when we shall be presented before the Father "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," gloriously complete and perfect, in the most absolute sense, fitted and prepared for the wonderful work which we shall share with our blessed Lord and King. R. 5862

A New Name

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

— Revelation 3:20 —



Jesus Knocking at the Door, by Del Parson

We should expect that at the time of our Lord's Coming His people would hear His "knock" —the knock of the prophecies, and whoever would open his heart and receive the things in a consecrated attitude of mind the Lord would gird Himself as a Servant and would come forth and serve Him.

Our Lord, present, but invisible, has brought us light along every feature of the Divine Plan, not only respecting those things that were old—justification, sanctification and redemption—but also respecting the philosophy of God's dealings —how our Lord became flesh and dwelt among us, how He was holy, harmless and undefiled, and yet was born of an earthly mother. All these things which were once confusing to us, but which are now brought to light, are evidences that the Lord is here serving His people. We **know** that we have

received these things. We do not believe that we have received them from any human tongue or pen, but from the Lord, who is giving us "meat in due season." The result of receiving this spiritual food is that many people have been sanctified —have experienced a transformation of mind that leads them to rejoice in laying down their lives for the brethren and in walking in the footsteps of Jesus. R. 5566 and R. 2978

This message to the present Laodicean phase of the Church, intimates very clearly:

- 1** that the "knock" and "voice" will be inaudible to natural ears, and heard only by the ears of the understanding, the hearing of faith;
- 2** that it will not be a denominational knock or call (as to Adventists, Presbyterians, etc.), but
- 3** that it will be a knock that must be heard individually, and responded to individually, — "any man" who hears the "knock" or "voice," if he so wills, may **exercise faith**, open the door of his understanding, and realize his Lord's second presence.

Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.
Revelation 22:16

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

– Revelation 3:21 –

When we remember that the perfect Adam was a little lower than the angels, we must see that the perfect man Jesus was also a little lower than the angels. But that He did not keep this lower condition is fully asserted by St. Paul, who, after telling about His faithfulness even unto death, declares, "Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and hath given Him a name above every name." (Philippians 2:9, 10.) The exalted Jesus is a spirit Being of the very highest order—"of the Divine nature"—who sat down at the Father's right hand, on the Father's Throne, waiting for the time when He would take His own Throne, establish the Millennial Kingdom and associate the Church with Him in His Throne as His Bride. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His Throne." R. 5830

It is a great privilege to offer ourselves in sacrifice and to get so great a reward in return. This is a great favor under grace. But there is another sense in which we are under grace; namely, the arrangement was made not only by which we get so large a reward for doing so little, but by which our sacrifice is made acceptable. This also is grace. Grace means what the Lord does for us *freely*, not as a *reward* of any kind. R. 5073

I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.

– Revelation 22:16 –

It was not the prehuman **Logos** nor yet the man Jesus that was David's Lord and David's Root; but the resurrected Messiah. When David in spirit (i.e., speaking under the prophetic spirit or influence) called Jesus Lord, saying, "Jehovah said unto my Lord [Jesus], Sit thou on my right hand," etc., the reference was not to the sacrificing one, "the man Christ Jesus," who had not yet finished his sacrifice, but to the victor Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, "the first born from the dead, the prince of the kings of earth." (Rev. 1:5) It was of this one that Peter said, "Him God raised up the third day. . . . He is Lord of all." (Acts 10:36,40) Of this one also Paul declared that at his second coming he will display himself as "King of kings and Lord of lords." 1 Tim. 6:15 E136
See also entry for Rev. 22:6 on p. 311

**He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest.
 And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.
 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and
 of His kingdom there will be no end.**

Luke 1:32-33





PROMISES and ASSURANCES

Confirmed by

THE INSPIRED APOSTLES

We did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawns.

2 Peter 1:16,19

The earliest copy of the New Testament known is written in the Syriac language. Its date is estimated to be about the year A.D. 100. And even at that early date it contained the same books as at present with the exception of the Second Epistle of Peter, the Third Epistle of John, Jude and the Book of Revelation. And these omitted books we know were written about the close of the first century, and probably had not been widely circulated among the Christian congregations at that time. All the books of the Old and New Testaments as we now have them appear, however, in the Greek, in the Sinaitic Manuscript, the oldest known Greek MS., whose date is about A.D. 350.

The Apostolic Epistles were written to the various local congregations or churches, and were directed to be publicly read, and to be exchanged among the churches; and the same authority was claimed for them by their writers as that which was accorded to the O.T. Scriptures. (1 Thes. 5:27; Col. 4:16; 2 Pet. 3:2,15,16; Heb. 1:1,2 and 2:1-4.) These letters and the five historical books were carefully preserved by the different congregations, and were appealed to as authority in matters of doctrine.

The letters of the apostles, claiming, as they did, divine authority equal to that of the O.T. Scriptures, were treasured and guarded with special care by the various congregations of the early church. The New Testament was completed by the Book of The Revelation, about the close of the first century A.D., after which, these epistles, etc., began to be collected for more permanent preservation.

This brings us to the examination of the inspiration of the New Testament. Of the four gospel narratives and the book of the Acts of the Apostles, which are merely historic narratives, it might with considerable force be argued that no inspiration was necessary. But we must remember that since it was God's will that the important doings and teachings of our Lord and his disciples should be handed down, for the information and guidance of his Church throughout the age, it was necessary that God, even while leaving the writers free to record those truths in their own several styles of expression and arrangement, should nevertheless exercise a supervision of his work. To this end it would appear reasonable that he would cause circumstances, etc., to call to the memory of one or another of them items and details which, otherwise, in so condensed an account of matters so important, would have been overlooked. And this was no less the work of God's spirit, power, or influence than the more noticeable and peculiar manifestations through the prophets.

The Apostle Peter tells us that the prophets of old time often did not understand their own utterances, as they themselves also acknowledge (1 Pet. 1:12; Dan. 12:4,8-10); and we should remember that the twelve apostles (Paul taking the place of Judas—Gal. 1:17; 1 Tim. 2:7) not only filled the office of apostles—or specially appointed teachers and expounders of the Gospel of the New Covenant—but they also, especially Peter and Paul and John, filled the office of **prophets**, and were not only given the spirit of wisdom and understanding by which they were enabled to understand and explain the previously dark prophecies, but in addition to this we believe that they were under the guidance and supervision of the Lord to such an extent that their references to things future from their day, things therefore not then due to be fully understood, were guided, so as to be true to an extent far beyond their comprehension, and such consequently were as really prophetic as the utterances of the old-time prophets. Illustrations of this are to be found in the Revelations of the Apostle John, in Peter's symbolic description of the Day of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:10-13), and in numerous references to the same period by Paul also, among which were some things hard to be understood even by Peter (2 Pet. 3:16) and only partially then by Paul himself. The latter, however, was permitted to see **future things** more clearly than others of his time, and to that end he was given special visions and revelations which he was not allowed to make

known to others (2 Cor. 12:1-4), but which, nevertheless, influenced and colored his subsequent teachings and his epistles. And these very items which Peter thought strange of, and called "hard to be understood," are the very items which **now**, in God's due time, for which they were intended, so grandly illuminate not only Peter's prophecies and John's Revelation, but the entire word and plan of God, —that the man of God may be **thoroughly furnished**. —2 Tim. 3:16,17.

That the early church considered the writings and teachings of the apostles different from all others, in authority, is manifest from the early arrangement of these writings together and the keeping separate from these, as apocryphal, other good writings of other good men. And yet there were, even in the days of the apostles, ambitious men who taught another gospel and claimed for themselves the honors of special revelations and authority as apostles and teachers of no less authority than the twelve apostles.

And ambitious men of the same sort have from time to time since arisen. These would-be apostles, boastful, heady, high-minded, have "another gospel," a perversion of the gospel of Christ; and above all they despise and seek to cast discredit upon the words of Paul who so clearly, forcibly and logically lifts up the standard of faith and points to the cross—**the ransom**—as the sure foundation, and who so clearly showed that **pseudo**-apostles, false apostles, would arise and deceive many.

Of course the writings of all such as have their wills fully subjected to the mind of God, as revealed in his Word, must be also somewhat inspired by God's spirit, received **from** his Word **by** their complete subjection to its leading. Yet **such an inspiration**, common to all the saints, in proportion to their development, should be critically distinguished from the special and peculiarly guided and guarded inspiration of the twelve apostles, whom God specially appointed to be the teachers of the church, and who have no successors in this office. Only twelve were "chosen," and when one of these, Judas, fell from his honorable office, the Lord in due time appointed Paul to the place; and he not only has never recognized others, but clearly indicates that he never will recognize others in that office. —Rev. 21:14.

With the death of the Apostles the canon of Scripture closed, because God had there given a full and complete revelation of his plan for man's salvation; though some of it was in a condensed form which has since expanded and is expanding and unfolding and will continue to expand and shine more and more until the perfect day—the Millennial Day—has been fully ushered in. Paul expresses this thought clearly when he declares that the Holy Scriptures are able to make **wise** unto salvation, and that they are **sufficient**.

As we consider, then, the completeness, harmony, purity and grandeur of the Bible, its age and wonderful preservation through the wreck and storms of six thousand years, it must be admitted to be a most wonderful book; and those who have learned to read it understandingly, who see in it the great plan of the ages, cannot doubt that God was its inspiring Author, as well as its Preserver. Its only parallel is the book of nature by the same great Author. R. 1145 and R. 1148

The Lord from time to time has raised up evangelists, pastors and teachers for this glorious service of preparing the "chaste virgin," the Church, to be the Bride in glory. But the Apostolic office, as represented in The Twelve specially provided by the Father, has continued and needs no replenishment. We still have their instructions as fully as the early Church, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." —2 Tim. 3:16-17. R. 5067

Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

– Romans 5:1-2 –

Verse 1 shows that the immediate effect of faith is a blessed realization of peace with God; not through personal worthiness of his favor, but through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement, his righteousness being imputed to us by faith. In thus accepting him whom God has appointed for our salvation, as our redeemer and Lord, we thereby acknowledge our own imperfections and sins and the necessity of redemption by the payment of a ransom, a substitute, an equivalent price, for that which was lost through sin.

From the time we first approach God we begin to have a measure of this peace. (Romans 5:1.) It continues with us as long as we are walking in the right direction, growing in knowledge and in obedience. Those whose faith or obedience stops find their peace with God diminish. If the faith and obedience extend to the point of full consecration and the begetting of the holy Spirit it becomes the “Peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts.” (Phil. 4:7.) The latter text refers to the perfected peace imparted by the holy Spirit, resulting from a full consecration to the Lord.

Verse 2 has reference to a second privileged step of faith, an access by faith into a still higher grace, or position of favor, wherein also we stand by faith and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Elsewhere we have been shown that this higher grace is the privilege of being “transformed” to a higher nature, of being made “partakers of the divine nature,” “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that we suffer with him,” and of being made like him and seeing him “as he is” — “the express image of the Father’s person.” (Rom. 12:2; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:17; 1 John 3:2; Heb. 1:3.) This is the “high calling” (Phil. 3:14) of those who, being justified by faith, have enough faith to go still further and accept and appreciate this great privilege of our high calling and enough of the spirit of Christ to follow in his footsteps of self-sacrifice faithfully, even unto death. The access into this higher grace cannot be obtained except from the standpoint of the previous grace of justification. R. 1585 and R. 4579

Then, dearly beloved, appreciate more fully than ever before your privilege as a Son of God and understand the Apostle’s words, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access (by faith) in to THIS GRACE [special favor] wherein we stand, —rejoicing in hope of the glory of God” [as sons, as joint-heirs with our Redeemer in his great work of reconciling the world, whom he has already redeemed.] And from this standpoint of hope and grand anticipation, knowing that we must be tested and tried, “we glory in tribulations also,” knowing that it is by such means, with his promises, that the Father would develop in us patience, experience, and hope, as well as the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the holy spirit of the truth imparted to us from the truth. —See Rom. 5:1-5. R. 1007

And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Romans 5:3-5

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

– Romans 5:9-10 –

The Apostle points out our helpless condition—that we were without any strength to help ourselves, and that our salvation is therefore the **free gift** of God, through Christ, and hence a manifestation of his great love. He further indicates that the time of the payment of our ransom price was definitely prearranged—

**For when we were still without strength,
in due time Christ died for the ungodly.**

Romans 5:6

This is a marked reference to the fact that time is a special feature in God's great plan of the ages. There was a particular **appointed time** for the payment of our ransom, as well as for every other feature of the wondrous plan. Those who wish to consider this important time element, will do well to study *Studies in the Scriptures*, Volume 2, *The Time is at Hand*.

Verses 9 and 10 teach us to build upon this manifestation of God's love in the gift of his Son, and our justification through faith in his blood, the reasonable, as well as Scriptural, hope of final complete salvation **through him**. **When we were enemies**, God, by the death of his Son, manifested his sympathy for us by paying our penalty for us; and "**much more**, being reconciled [being justified and recognized as sons of God], we shall be saved from wrath [restored to the proper condition of sons—liberated from sin and death, the manifestation of God's wrath] through him."

Thus, as long as we continue to trust in the merit of our Redeemer, gratefully accepting the free gift of God's love, we have the fullest reasonable and Scriptural assurance of salvation.

**And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through
our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have
now received the reconciliation.**

Romans 5:11

Verse 11 points out a further cause for rejoicing in the fact that we who believe have **now** received the atonement—that we are **now** reckoned of God as perfect through Christ, and as worthy to be called his sons, and to receive the favors of sons. Having this reckoned standing now, we are in position to receive the additional favor of our high calling to be the bride and joint-heir of his dear Son. May all the consecrated duly appreciate their high calling, and strive to make their calling and election sure. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." —1 John 5:4. R. 1586

To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

– Romans 8:6 –

The Apostle Paul uses the expression “spiritually-minded” in describing a certain class who have become followers of Christ, who have made a full consecration of their lives to the Lord and who, in harmony with this consecration, have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. These are spiritually-minded. These are granted a spiritual insight into Divine things.

Our Lord had a mind such as Adam had before the fall—a mind in perfect harmony, perfectly balanced. Our Lord received the spiritual mind, however, at the moment when He was begotten of the Spirit, when He made full consecration at baptism, and as a consequence the Holy Spirit descended and lighted upon Him in bodily form like a dove.

Following that begetting, the Lord had an enlargement of understanding and was granted to see certain deep things of God which He had not seen before His consecration; so we read in that very connection that “the heavens were opened” to Him—the higher things became clear to Him—the more spiritual things. These things St. Paul calls “the deep things of God.” “The natural man,” St. Paul says [the natural man would be a perfect man; fallen man is imperfect, unnatural], “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:14.) Then he proceeds to say that we have received the Spirit of God through the begetting of the Holy Spirit; and that having the new mind, this spirit begetting, we are enabled to understand the deep things of God. “The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God; and we have received . . . the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” Thus to us is it given to know the deep things of God. —1 Cor. 2:11,12.

So, then, the one who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit is spiritually-minded. He sees things from the new standpoint which God specially brings to the attention of the spirit begotten. As the Apostle John says, “Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it.” (1 John 2:20.) Whoever receives this begetting of the Holy Spirit, this anointing, has an understanding of heart and of mind which is different from that which any natural man would have, a quality that will progress with him. He has the privilege of growing in grace and in knowledge and in the appreciation of the deep things of God; and he should grow.

The mind that is in harmony with God finds delight in his Law, in righteousness, purity, goodness, peace, faith, through the promises of God, and looks forward with joy to the glorious realization of all the wonderful hopes inspired through those promises. “He that hath the Son hath life,” and may have, too, a joy and peace of the new mind in Christ. R. 4968 and R. 3202

**But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit
searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. But the natural man does
not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him.
Nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**

1 Corinthians 2:10,14

If you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

– Romans 8:13-14 –

Let us ponder over these gracious words of the Lord's mouthpiece and have their lesson impressed more deeply upon our minds. St. Paul is here addressing the Church of Christ only. He is not addressing the world. The Church have entered into a solemn Covenant with the Lord to lay down in sacrifice earthly things, the earthly nature. The Apostle assures us that if we succeed in faithfully laying down our earthly life with all its hopes and prospects, we shall live. It is not merely that we shall covenant at the beginning of our Christian course to do this, but we must carry out to its completion this mortification of our body—the deeds of the body.

As we come to understand the matter more clearly, our thought on the subject changes gradually. When we first came to God, we had the thought that God's will toward us was that we should enjoy ourselves, live good, moral lives, and take care of our bodies; and that if we are God's people, we should have abundance; and that those who could not live in harmony with God would be destroyed. This would be the thought of the natural man. The Apostle says that the natural man cannot see the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. But this is not at all God's way of dealing with us.

By and by we begin to discern that our Heavenly Father prepares us for the spiritual things by showing us how to destroy the earthly condition and how this will be brought to an end. This is a new thought to us; and we ask ourselves, Does God wish me to mortify, deaden, destroy, the earthly condition? Am I not to seek to cultivate my talents and to live a natural life?

The natural man says, Follow natural things; do as you please so long as you are not interfering with the rights of others. But the New Creature is not to heed the natural inclinations of the flesh. We have asked the Lord to transform us, to renew our mind, and ultimately to give us what He has promised. Therefore we do not belong to the world at all, and our course is to be that which is marked out in the Scriptures.

We see, therefore, that the Christian life is of necessity a warfare, a battle, between our new nature and the tendencies of the flesh, supplemented by the attacks from the outside, from the world and the Adversary with his hosts. It is a conflict which we dare not relinquish; for not only is the prize of our High Calling dependent upon it, but also the issues of life and of death are in it. How solemn a thing it is, therefore, to live under these circumstances; for daily and hourly we are standing before the bar of judgment! "If we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if we through the Spirit, do mortify [put to death, refuse to gratify] the deeds of the body, we shall live."

R. 5807 and R. 5584

During this Gospel Age the Lord is selecting and directing those who of their own will desire to lay down their lives in His service. They love Him, and He is pleased to call them His holy ones. No good thing will He withhold from this class. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, what God hath in reservation for those that love Him—those who have through consecration been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and who are going forward from grace to grace, living not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For this class God has provided His very best things. R. 5807

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself* makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He* makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

– Romans 8:26-27–

The poet has well defined prayer as being “The soul’s sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed.” Another has well declared that it “is the Christian’s vital breath” —that is to say, Christian character cannot be maintained without prayer any more than a human life could be maintained without breathing. Who has not noticed that all the great Bible characters used of the Almighty were accustomed to go to Him regularly in prayer and to seek for guidance from Him in respect to every matter. Even the great Redeemer, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, needed to pray to the Father—needed His fellowship and communion—needed to be in touch with the Infinite One. Several of His prayers are recorded, and we are told that He spent the entire night in prayer on more than one occasion.

As the receiving of the new mind brought us into a new relationship to God, and into new hopes, so “likewise the spirit (our new holy mind) also helpeth [maketh up for] our [bodily] infirmities. For we know not [even] what we should pray for as we ought; [much less are we able to do] but the spirit itself [our holy mind] maketh intercession [for us—omit] with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts [God], knoweth what is the mind [Gr. *Phronema*—inclination] of the [our] spirit; because he [it] maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” It is God’s will that the heart-desires of his children shall be accepted, both in prayer and service, and not the imperfections of their earthen vessels.

O, how comforting is this thought! How often you have experienced it. You were perhaps overtaken in a fault, entrapped by the weakness of the human nature, or trouble, and almost disheartened, you went to your Father in prayer. You had no words for utterance, but you groaned in spirit to God—“being burdened.” God heard you and blessed you, answering your unuttered prayer and giving strength. Paul’s conclusion is ours; we have every cause for rejoicing. What shall we say then? “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (vs. 31.) R. 4913 and R. 373

These New Creatures, sons of God, in their weakness and ignorance might ask amiss. But the Lord would not deal with them according to their imperfection of asking; He would accept the spirit of their request. The groanings and desires of our spirits, our minds, will be taken by the Lord as instead of our imperfect utterances in prayer; for God, who knoweth all things, yea, the thoughts of our minds (spirits), accepts these. All such may know that “all things work together for good to them” —because they love God—because they have been called according to His purpose. —Rom. 8:28. R. 5838

**For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom* we cry out, “Abba, Father.”
The Spirit Himself* bears witness with our spirit that
we are children of God.
Romans 8:15-16**

*See Diaglott and RVIC translations. Masculine pronouns "he" and "himself" are translated "it" and "itself." "Whom" is translated "by which" or "whereby."

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

– Romans 8:28 –

The consecrated saints, the Church of the Gospel age, are a “peculiar people,” different from the rest of the redeemed race; and God’s dealings with them are peculiar and different also. Calamities, great and small, continually involve God’s saints as well as the worldly, and seemingly as much by accident. But herein the Lord provides a test for our faith; intended either to turn us back, if we have not sufficient faith to permit further progress, or to develop and strengthen and increase our faith if we have it, and will exercise it under divine direction.

The Lord’s assurance to his truly consecrated spirit begotten children is, that all things shall work together for good to them. (Rom. 8:28) God assures them that having entered into a new relationship with him, all of their affairs are henceforth his affairs and concern. Consequently, they may realize, fully, that however the world may be subject to accidents, incidental to present imperfect conditions under the curse, God’s “little ones” are his peculiar care. Not a hair of their heads may suffer injury without his knowledge and consent. (Matt. 10:30; Luke 12:7) How wonderful! And yet how reasonable when we recall the assurance that, “Like as a father [earthly] pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that reverence him.” Psa. 103:13 HG294

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called. Whom He called, these He also justified, and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

– Romans 8:29-30 –

The very object of the begetting of the New Creature, the very object of giving it the opportunity of the present life, is to develop character and to crystallize that character. This seems to be the thought of the Apostle when he says, “Whom He [God] did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son” — not partly conformed, but fully conformed to the image of His Son. Our mental state, our will, must be fully fashioned after the mind of Jesus Christ. And His will was full obedience to the Father’s will, to the extent of self-sacrifice, even unto death.

[Here] the Apostle explains the character and methods of the divine selection of the elect Church: and we cannot do better than notice its details, because so much depends upon this point. If we can find in the Apostle’s description good and sufficient evidence to assure us that we are of this elect Church, then we shall have great cause for thankfulness, confidence and joy, in realizing that God with all his almighty power, and wisdom and love is enlisted on our behalf. A great difficulty with many seems to be, not that they doubt that there is such an election in progress, nor that they doubt that God is for some, but that they doubt that they belong to that elect class—doubt, therefore, that they are of the “us,” and that God is for them; and that he is causing all things to work together for good to them.

By reason of their natural constitution, some of the humble-minded of the Lord’s people lack the confidence which they should have, while in some instances others who have such confidence,

have no real basis for it. Knowledge, therefore, clear knowledge of the Apostle's argument, is essential to proper faith respecting this subject, and proper confidence in God's care over those who have been adopted into his family and are seeking to make their calling and election sure.

The Apostle begins by asserting divine foreknowledge; a divine attribute which will not be questioned by any Christian. God not only foreknew the sin that would enter into the world through the liberty given to father Adam and mother Eve, but he also foresaw the fall that would take place as the result of his own sentence, and the mental, moral and physical degradation which have resulted. Moreover, he foreknew that in due time he would send his "Only Begotten Son," our Lord, to ransom all from sin and its penalty, so that ultimately he might be the Deliverer of all who desire to return to harmony with their Creator. He not only foreknew the humiliation of our Lord, his First-begotten Son, from his condition of glory and spiritual nature to the lower conditions of human nature, but he foreknew his trials, and his faithfulness through them, even unto death, even the death of the cross. In all this he foresaw our redemption sacrifice. He foresaw also the glory which he designed to bestow upon our Lord Jesus following his obedience, as expressed by the Apostle Paul, saying, "Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name [title, honor, etc.] above every name." But our Heavenly Father foreknew and foreordained still more than all this,—the selection of the Church to be the "body" of Christ, the "bride" of Christ, his associate, not only in the sufferings and trials of the present life, but also in the subsequent glory, and great work of "blessing all the families of the earth." This is distinctly stated by the same Apostle in his letter to the Ephesians (1:4), where he declares that "God hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world." The same foreordination is distinctly stated by the Apostle Peter, who writes to consecrated believers, addressing them, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the spirit," etc. —1 Pet. 1:2.

But the **predestination** of this verse (Rom. 8:29) is not at all what has generally been understood: it is not said that God predestinates that some should go to heaven and others to eternal torment. The Apostle's statement is very clear, that God predestinated that all who shall be of this elect, foreknown and foreordained Church in glory must first be "**conformed to the image of his Son**" —or, as the literal reading would give it, "copies of his Son." How reasonable this predestination, how unreasonable the false view! God is calling a number of sons to "glory, honor and immortality," and has made Christ Jesus the Only Begotten, faithful in every trial, the Head or Captain of this foreordained company, whom he has since been calling, testing and preparing for the foreordained glory. And as it was but a reasonable thing that God should determine that if our Lord Jesus would be faithful he should receive the highest exaltation, so it was equally right and proper that the divine will should be forcibly asserted and that he should **predestinate** that none could be of that glorified "body of Christ," except as they would become imitators of Jesus, who is the firstborn among these his "brethren."

Having thus stated the matter concisely, the Apostle proceeds to apply it to the Church individually, and to show the steps which God is taking during this Gospel age for the purpose of finding amongst men this class which he has foreordained shall be found. The Apostle gives the particulars in the following verse (vs. 30); and although it is simply stated, it has very generally been stumbled over because of two things:

1 The last word of this verse translated "glorified" should be translated "honored;" and should be understood to refer to the honor conferred upon all who, during this age, are brought to any knowledge of Christ—the true light. This **honor** went first to the Jews, and selected a "remnant;" but when that nation proved unworthy of this "**honor**" it was turned to the Gentiles, to gather out of them a peculiar people, a holy nation, to bear the name of Christ. (Acts 15:14.)

2 The reader naturally expects the Apostle to begin with present conditions and trace them up to the grand result—the glorified Church,—while on the contrary the Apostle very properly begins at the other end, and traces the results downward. He does not begin, as is generally supposed, by saying, God honored you with the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ, and when you believed he justified you, and after you were justified he called you, and if you are faithful to your calling he will by and by exalt you to the condition which he foreknew. Indeed, it would not be possible to state the matter truthfully from that side; because, many are honored with a knowledge of the Gospel of Christ who are never justified (because they do not accept the knowledge—do not accept Christ), and of those who do accept Christ and who are thus justified, it would not be true to say that they will all be sanctified; nor would it be correct to say that all who once are sanctified will reach the condition of glory; for “many are called but few chosen;” few “make their calling and election sure.”

But the Apostle argues the matter from the only proper and logical standpoint: having stated that God has foreknown or fore-intended the election of the Church, he steps forward to the time when God’s purpose and intention will have been completed, accomplished—the time when the election will be finished and the Church accepted to glory. From that future standpoint he indicates the various steps which **led up to it**, saying, —All those of the foreknown ones, glorified, will previously have been called; because it is a matter of grace, and no man taketh this honor unto himself, but “he that is called of God;” —as the “Head of the body,” so each member of the body. And, says the Apostle, every one thus “called” will previously have been “justified;” because God calls no enemies, no unreconciled sinners, to this high position. It was for this reason that Christ died, that through faith in his blood repentant believers might be **“justified”** and might be thus **prepared** to be “called.” It is thus evident that the high calling to this glorious position of joint-heirship with Christ is a very different thing, indeed, from the calling of sinners to repentance. Sinners are called to repentance anywhere and everywhere and at any time. And when they repent, the Lord engages that in due time he will point them to

**The fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins;
Where sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.**

When they have lost their guilty stains, through repentance and faith in the Redeemer, they have reached the condition of **justification**, and are ready to be “called” to sonship and joint-heirship. But the Apostle is still going backward in the argument and, having told that the foreordained class would all be “called,” and that they would all previously have been “justified,” he declares that the justified ones would all previously have been favored or “honored” (not glorified): honored or favored with a **knowledge of the truth**, a knowledge of the gospel.

True, many more were **called** than will be acceptable—many more than will acquire the likeness of the Beloved Son; and many were **justified** who did not, after believing, consecrate themselves, and whose justification consequently lapsed; and many were honored with a hearing of the Gospel who, after hearing a little of it, rejected the message of mercy and favor. But **all** the preaching, justifying and calling of this Gospel age has been to the intent that the foreknown class of the predestinated character might be selected and made joint-heirs with Christ. —See also 2 Tim. 1:8-10. R. 4975, R. 2376, R. 4213, R. 3282

What shall we [who have been so highly favored by God, and for whose successful running of the race every necessary arrangement and provision has been made] say to these things?



What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

– Romans 8:31 –

Who can prosper against us, who can accomplish anything against us? That God is for us is already manifested in that he spared not his own Son, but redeemed us with his precious blood; and in that he has called us in Christ Jesus to be his “elect” Church, his Bride.

Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies.
Romans 8:33

In harmony with this, Isaiah declares:

“No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me,” says the LORD.
Isaiah 54:17

Some may endeavor to condemn them and may indeed succeed in finding fault with them for having imperfect judgments, and being sometimes imperfect in their conduct or words; but what will it matter that such should condemn those whom the Lord approves? The Lord informs us that he knows our imperfections better than any could know them; but that of his own grace he has provided a covering for our unintentional blemishes through the merit of the sacrifice of his Son. Who then shall succeed in condemning these whom God approves, whom God justifies, whom God declares to be right and acceptable to him through Jesus Christ? Others may claim that they are actually as nearly perfect as some of the faithful “elect,” but the difference is that whereas God must reject all to any degree blemished, these have the covering of his Grace in Christ and are accepted according to their intentions and endeavors; and, therefore, they shall be able to stand, for he is able to make them stand in their testing or judgment. —Rom. 14:4.

Who are you to judge another’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls.
Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.
Romans 14:4

Let us as members of the house of Sons, accepted in the Beloved, take from our Father’s Word in this text the strong consolation which he intends it should give us. Let our faith triumphantly sing, and our joy and rejoicing in the Lord know no bounds. According unto our faith it will be unto us. But while it will be on account of our faith that the Lord will approve of us, accept us, and bless us, he has, nevertheless, assured us in advance that where the tree of faith exists and grows, the character development, the fruitage of the faith will surely also abound, and that thus by our works (imperfect though they be) we shall give evidence of the faith that is in us. Such a living faith may well cause rejoicing in the house of our pilgrimage, with this assurance that even the machinations of our enemies shall work out for us blessings, under our Heavenly Father’s supervising care, wisdom, love and power. R. 3052

**He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,
how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?**
Romans 8:32

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE KILLED ALL DAY LONG. WE ARE ACCOUNTED AS SHEEP FOR THE SLAUGHTER.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

– Romans 8:35-37 –

It was this strong persuasion, this confident faith, of the Apostle that gave him such joy in the midst of all his tribulations. His faith laid hold upon the promises of God with a strong and steady grasp, and love and gratitude impelled him to prompt obedience to the will of God and ardent zeal in his service; and evidently the Lord's promise was fulfilled to him in the abiding presence of Father and Son with him at all times and under all circumstances.

This blessed privilege is ours also, if by faith we enter fully into the Lord's will and favor. And with a blessed realization of the abiding presence of our heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus at all times, and of their love and favor, and a faith that lays hold of all the exceeding great and precious promises of God, what soul may not rejoice and be glad, even in the midst of deep sorrow or great tribulation? In the Lord's presence, no matter where we are, is fullness of joy. Let us cultivate the Lord's acquaintance more, drawing near to him in prayer, in the study of his precious Word, in meditation upon all his goodness, his providential care, the marked manifestations of his grace in our own individual experiences, and his precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Thus “draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you” (James 4:8), he will manifest himself to you and take up his abode with you. R. 1948

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39



As it is written: “EYE HAS NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD, NOR HAVE ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN THE THINGS WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.” But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

– 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 –

Everyone who has seen beautiful fields and lawns and gardens and who has a soul appreciative of the beauties of nature, can to some extent imagine what Paradise restored will be. Everyone who discerns the noble and true qualities of the human mind can approximately estimate what perfection of mind and heart would mean in the fully restored race of Adam, the result of restitution times at the end of the Millennial age. But not a soul on earth, not a saint that ever lived, has been able to imagine the heavenly things, the spiritual things, because he has never seen anything of the kind, has no powers whereby to contrast these with earthly things, and because they are not described in the Scriptures. As the Apostle declares, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” (1 John 3:2.) He gives the key to our faith and knowledge when he adds, “But we know that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” Our knowledge is purely a faith knowledge, dependent upon our confidence in our Lord and his promises. We walk by faith, not by sight, whom not having seen we love, whose heavenly home not having been described to us we realize to be grander than all earthly things, because our heavenly Lord has assured us that “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him.” These things he tells us God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:9.) Not that he has given us pictures of them either by visions or mental pictures or word pictures, but he has revealed them to us in the sense that he has revealed himself to us; and as we come to a knowledge of the Lord and to an appreciation of his great wisdom and love and justice and power—as we come to realize that he is the grand exemplification and illustration of all that is good and great and loving and wise and beautiful and true, so we know that his heavenly home and all the arrangements which God has prepared for his special elect ones must be in some very special sense far above the very glorious things which he has prepared for those of the world in general, who during the Millennial age will accept his favors and his blessed provisions. R. 3891



During the Jewish Age the Holy Spirit acted upon the servants and mouthpieces of God in a mechanical manner. Now the people of the Lord have both His Message in His written Word and the begetting of the Spirit, which gives us a spiritual understanding impossible to His people of past Ages. The mysteries of God are now opened up to His faithful children, the watchers; and we are granted a clear understanding of “the deep things of God,” some features of which were never revealed until the present time, even to the most faithful of the Lord’s saints. —1 Thes. 5:1-6. R. 5489

For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.
– 1 Corinthians 3:17 –

While the saints are thus individually the temples of God, they also collectively constitute the great temple in which Peter likens each individual to a living stone, and Christ to the chief or foundation corner stone, “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, . . . ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 2:5.) Paul also refers to this same thought, saying, “Ye are . . . of the house of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets [the foundation of hope in which they trusted, and which they pointed out to us], Jesus Christ, [he] being a foundation corner stone of it; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple for the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the spirit.” —Eph. 2:20-22. The living stones are being quarried out of the world, and being shaped and polished for places in the glorious Temple of which Christ is the Head. That Temple will be spiritual, unseen of men, each member like unto the glorified Jesus, far above angels.

In that Temple God by His Holy Spirit will dwell in fullest measure. Through it all mankind, during the Millennium, will be privileged to draw near to God and to receive Divine favors and uplift out of sin and death, back to the original image and likeness of God lost in Eden, redeemed for all at Calvary, and to be offered to all during Messiah’s Kingdom Reign of a thousand years. Then in the largest sense of the word it will be God’s Holy Place. Nothing defiling shall be brought into it. All merchandising and money-sharking will be far from it. It will be the House of Prayer, the Channel of Prayer, the way of approach of mankind to draw near to God for forgiveness of sins and for the reception of all the blessings and mercies which God has provided in Christ for whosoever will.

It was because the Temple at Jerusalem was a type of that glorious Temple of perfection that all business of every kind done in it was profanation—was spoiling the beautiful perfection of the type—was misrepresenting the future, the reality—God’s intention in giving it.

As in the future the Church will be the Temple of God, perfect on the Heavenly plane, so each individual member of the Church of Christ, who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit as a New Creature, has to that extent God dwelling in his mortal body. The world in general are not temples of the Holy Spirit, however good or moral or kind or generous.

No one becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit until begotten of the Holy Spirit. That spirit-begetting constitutes him a New Creature, a son of God, even though only the will, the mind, is begotten again—even though the body is still an imperfect body of flesh. The new mind, dwelling in the old body and using it, constitutes that old body thenceforth a temple of God, and gives to that body a holiness or sanctity which it did not have before. R. 2367 and R. 5504

**Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that
 the Spirit of God dwells in you?**
1 Corinthians 3:16

For all things are yours. And you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.
– 1 Corinthians 3:21,23 –

It is proper that each one should decide for himself positively, whether or not he has ever accepted the Divine invitation to give himself (Prov. 23:26; Rom. 12:1) to the Lord, to be ultimately accepted as a member of his Bride if he continue faithful to his engagement to the end. If we are faithful, and so long as we continue to be faithful, it is our privilege to look up with confidence and be assured, "My Beloved is mine." And if we will, it is possible for us to continue in this attitude, "faithful unto death"; and so doing we may know that in the resurrection we shall be with our Lord, and be like him, and share his glory and his throne. —Rev. 3:21.

I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.
Song of Solomon 6:3

How much is implied in this statement, "My Beloved is mine"! We are reminded of the Scripture which declares, "He that hath the Son hath life"—eternal life. More than this, the Apostle assures us that those who have Christ, who can truly, Scripturally say, "My Beloved is mine," are really possessors of **"all things."** For since Christ is the heir of all things, if we have become associates with him, then, indeed, "all things are yours (things present and things to come) for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3:22,23.) If it lifted from us a great load to know that our sins were graciously forgiven through the merit of the precious blood, how much more of a load of care does it lift from us to know that we are vitally united with the illustrious Son of the great King of the Universe—the Son in whom the Father is well pleased and whom he has made his sole associate in the glory and dominion of the Universe.

Whether things present or things to come—all are yours.
1 Corinthians 3:22

Nor does this promise of blessings in Christ apply merely to the future. The glories and honors truly are not now, but by and by to be revealed; but the Bridegroom's care, protection, provision and comfort belong to his betrothed even now, while we are in this tabernacle; so that while we are passing through the "valley of the shadow of death," we need fear no evil, for he is with us, and his rod and staff comfort us.

All who abide faithful to him, all who truthfully can say, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine," have not only the promise of the life that is to come, but also the promise of this present life. They hear the Master's voice saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the Age," and in the end of the Age he is to be specially near, specially precious, and is to reveal himself to his faithful in an especial manner, even before she is so changed as to behold him in his glory.

What a blessing of peace, quietness of spirit, ability to endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, and sustenance and strength in time of trial, lies behind these precious assurances of the Bridegroom to those who can see and realize unquestionably, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine," no tongue can express. It has in the past permitted his faithful ones to pass through many dark and trying experiences with a fortitude that has surprised the world, which has seen them in the fiery furnace, but has not seen that there is with them the form of the Son of God. (Dan. 3:25.)

They have endured as seeing him who is invisible. (Heb. 11:27) R. 4784

If anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.**– 1 Corinthians 8:3 –**

Our relationship to God is that of the New Creation, a heart relationship; and the blessing which the Lord gives us is as newly begotten children—not along lines of the flesh, but along the lines of the spiritual and of heart development, which shall ultimately be perfected in the resurrection.

We might have a great deal of knowledge and yet not know God and not be known or recognized by Him; but no one can have a large development of true love in his character without personally knowing the Lord and having obtained the spirit of love through fellowship with Him. Hence the getting of love is sure to build us up substantially (thus avoiding the inflation of pride) in all the various graces of the Spirit, including meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, knowledge, wisdom from above and the spirit of a sound mind. R. 3145 and R. 4920

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

– 1 Corinthians 10:13 –

Every Christian has recognized that, if his heart has been faithful to the Lord and the victory has been only a partial one even, nevertheless valuable lessons have been learned by the New Creature, and its faithfulness and endurance have demonstrated its loyalty to the Lord and the principles of His righteousness, His government.

It is for the Lord to permit increasing trials and tests to come upon us as we grow older and stronger. Sometimes He permits a great fight from within or without, or both; and the New Creature is put to the test of endurance. It is not the Lord's intention that these trying experiences shall crush the New Creature; but, on the contrary, that the putting forth of endeavor to resist the Adversary and every evil shall make the New Creature the stronger. We have the promise, "He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with every temptation provide a way of escape." —1 Corinthians 10:13.

In the midst of the cares, perplexities and difficulties that come to the children of the Lord, we are to trust Him fully, and to possess our souls in peace and patience! We are to wait patiently for the Lord to outwork the issues of our experiences in His own good way. How necessary is the patient waiting on the Lord! The Psalmist says, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning." (Psalm 130:5-6.) In every experience of sorrow and distress, and when the strain of the jarring discords and the stinging vexations, and wounds that make the heart bleed, threaten to overwhelm the spirit, let the child of God remember that "He knows, and loves, and cares," and that His ministering angel is ever near us, and that no trial will be permitted to be too severe. The dear Master is standing by the crucible, and the furnace heat will never be permitted to grow so intense that the precious gold of our characters shall be destroyed, or even injured. Ah, no! If by His grace the experiences may not work for our good, they will be turned aside. He loves us too well to permit any needless sorrow, any needless suffering. R. 5902, R. 5802

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

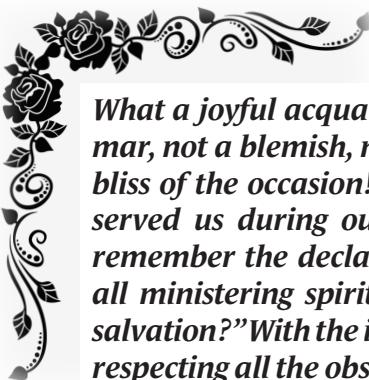
— 1 Corinthians 13:12 —

Our ego, our personality, is to pass from this earthly body and be given a new body. The power by which this can be done is Divine Power. If anybody can explain what that is, of what the first man was made a soul, perhaps we could explain how it is with the New Creature. Or if any one can explain what makes the germ of wheat grow, perhaps we can explain how the New Creature has this germ and how it grows. We must trust in God's Power for this whole matter of the resurrection, not only of the New Creature, but also of the world in general.

Whoever doubts Divine Power cannot believe in a resurrection. We cannot imagine, for instance, how Moses or Abraham or anyone else of the remote past can be raised to life so that he would know himself, read the story of his life in the Bible, and remember that the events therein recorded were true. How that can be **God only knows**. We **believe** it because **God says it**. If we **knew how to do it**, perhaps we could make a resurrection ourselves.

But it is just as easy to understand about the resurrection of a man to the human plane and the bringing of him into a new human body as to understand how the New Creature, the new soul, can be brought into its new body. It is the New Creature that will get the new body. When we get our spirit bodies we shall know all about the process; for it is written that when we get the spiritual bodies we shall know even as we are known. —1 Corinthians 13:12.

God has made us New Creatures. He is the All-powerful One who knows how to do this. And the more we come to know about Him and the length, the depth, the height and the breadth of His Wisdom, the more we know how to appreciate all He has told us, and the more we have absolute confidence in Him. It is wise foolishness that God should promise a resurrection. The world cannot understand—to them it is foolishness. They cannot believe in a resurrection; therefore they cannot have the joy we can have through the exercise of our faith. R. 5560

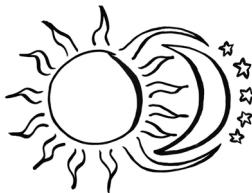


What a joyful acquaintance, how wonderful to think that there will be not a mar, not a blemish, not an imperfection of thought or word or act to mar the bliss of the occasion! By and by we shall learn which of the angels specially served us during our pilgrim journey toward the kingdom condition. We remember the declaration of the words respecting the angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?" With the information thus supplied to us we shall be fully informed respecting all the obscure places in life's experiences and be enabled to rejoice more than ever in the divine love and care which not only bought us and sought us, but shielded us and helped us on to God in the glorious things of His provision in Christ. Finally the gala day of all will come when we shall be ushered into the presence of the great King Eternal, the "God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," and we shall see His face and join with the angels and cherubim and seraphim in chanting "Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God Almighty; the whole earth shall be filled with Thy glory!" CR38



There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.

– 1 Corinthians 15:41-42 –



If the careful student will take his *Emphatic Diaglott* or any Greek New Testament he will see that the words “resurrection” and “dead” are both emphasized in verse 42; as though the Apostle would say, Thus will be the special or first resurrection, of the special class of the dead. To ignore this feature of the Greek is to blind one’s self to the real force of God’s Word.

It may be asked, May it not have been a custom with the Apostle to use emphasis when speaking of the resurrection in general? We answer, No; and refer the student to other instances of the use of the same expression without emphasis in the same chapter. (See verses 12,13,21.) And be it noticed that in each of these verses the words “resurrection” and “dead” do not refer to a special class and a special order of resurrection, as in verse 42. Furthermore, notice that whenever the Lord or the Apostles refer to the resurrection of the overcomers, the word resurrection is in every case made emphatic, and when the word occurs in a general way it is without emphasis.

St. Paul declares that as star differs from star in glory, so it will be with those who attain unto the First Resurrection—all will come forth glorious, but some will blaze with a more resplendent brilliancy, because of their great zeal, and therefore their great likeness to their Redeemer and Lord. Jesus likewise mentions the distinctions amongst those who will sit with Him in His Throne. He assured James and John that, if they were willing to drink of His cup and be baptized into His death, they should surely sit with Him in His Throne; but as to whether or not they would have the chief places of honor and distinction was not for Him to say. Those places will be given according to the Father’s determination.

It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

1 Corinthians 15:43-44

The Scriptures tell us that our heavenly Lord himself will introduce us to the Father; and oh, what holy joy is in the assurance that He shall “Present us faultless.” (Jude 24.) Faultful we were by reason of the fall and, having been born in sin and shapen in iniquity, through Christ redeemed and the various operations of His word and spirit and the various agencies and our own cooperation we have experienced a purifying influence in our hearts and gradually been changed from glory to glory until finally the climacteric change of the First Resurrection makes us faultless by His grace. As the Apostle explains, “It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body,” like unto our Lord and to be forever with Him, His body. This glorious presentation to the Father is in the Scriptures termed the marriage feast—the nuptial feast—a feast of joy, of exhilaration, of blessing such as has never been known on earth, nor even in heaven before. R. 1511, R. 5039, CR38

To Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Jude 1:24-25

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

— 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 —

Now in the close of this age matters are different from what they ever were before. Living as we are in the presence of the Son of man, we realize that although all must die, yet the overcomers will not sleep, but will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—in the moment of dying—changed to the glorious spirit condition which the Lord has promised to them that love him. From our standpoint, then, not only has death lost its terrors, because Christ has redeemed us from the power of the tomb and will by and by bring forth all from it that are in it, that they may have an opportunity for coming into harmony with him and attainment to eternal life, but to us death has lost its dread in another sense, namely, that we shall not need to sleep—ours is the blessed time of the change. Let us wait for our change and seek by the Lord's grace to be so prepared for it in heart and character development that we shall welcome it with joy. R. 3589

We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

— 2 Corinthians 3:18 —

Like the Apostle, then, addressing all the consecrated and faithful, we also of today may say, We all are being changed from glory to glory under the molding, fashioning influences of the Spirit of God. We can see it in each other, thank God! and we glory in it. But while the mallet and chisel and the polishing sand of divine providence do a very necessary part of the transforming work, by way of relieving us of many of the old and stubborn infirmities of the flesh, which cannot be so promptly and so fully eradicated by the gentler influences of the Spirit, the Apostle points us to the specially appointed means for our transformation in the careful and constant contemplation of the glory of God as revealed in his Word, and also in his blessed Ambassador, Jesus Christ, saying, "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory."

"With open face" would signify without any intervening vail of prejudice or fear or superstition, but with simplicity of heart and mind. So we behold the glory (the glorious character) of the Lord—not with actual vision, but as in a glass, as reflected in the mirror of his Word and as exemplified also in his living Word, Jesus Christ. And to aid us in this study we are promised the blessed influences of the Spirit of the Lord, who will guide us into all truth and show us things to come.

The Apostle says that by looking on Jesus we are changed, we are transformed from glory to glory, in the present life. As we thus go on from one stage of heart development to another, from one step of glory to another, on this side of the veil, we are making the necessary progress, and we will be ready for the great final step, the final stage, when we shall see Him as He is and share His glory. R. 3656 and R. 5727

Therefore “COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, SAYS THE LORD. DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN, AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU. I WILL BE A FATHER TO YOU, AND YOU SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS, SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY.”

– 2 Corinthians 6:17-18 –

What a promise! What a suggestion! —that we, by nature defiled and imperfect, should not only have the notice of our sovereign Creator, but should be invited to become His children and be given the assurance of His parental affection for us—that “like as a father pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that reverence Him.” How wonderful it seems! And then, as the Apostle elsewhere declares, this is not the end of the matter, but merely the beginning, for he says, “If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.” —Rom 8:17.

Yes, it is this thought of what is implied in the term children of God, sons of God. The blessings and riches of the Father are to be extended through our Lord Jesus, especially to the Little Flock, which is now being selected from amongst men to be His Bride and associates in the Kingdom. These are not accepted into the Kingdom at once, but as it were on probation; as the Apostle says, “Now are we the sons of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be”—if we are faithful. As sons of God in the present life we have the joy of knowing of our Father’s character through His Word, which we are permitted to understand, but which the world does not understand. We are assured of Divine supervision; so that not the slightest thing can happen to these sons except as their Father sees would be to their advantage. But they must show their love, their devotion, their oneness of spirit with the Father and the Redeemer ere they can be counted in as His Bride in the full, absolute and complete sense, and be granted a share in His glories. R. 5739

If you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

– Galatians 3:29 –

The New Creation is not under the Law but under grace—not under the Law Covenant nor under the New Covenant, but under the original Covenant, the “Everlasting Covenant,” which reads, “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” As the Apostle assures us, it is the privilege of the Church of the First-born, who make their calling and election sure, to constitute members of the “Seed,” which under the New Covenant is to bless first natural Israel and subsequently all nations: “Ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.” (Gal. 4:28.)

It is the Spiritual Seed of Abraham to whom belong the great promises of God. Of this class St. Paul says, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s Seed, and heirs according to the Promise.” (Gal. 3:8; Gal. 3:16; Gal. 3:29.) The Promise was made to Abraham, and declares, “In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 22:18.) We have St. Paul’s word for it that Christ and His Church are this Spiritual Seed, whose mission it will be, in God’s due time, to bless all mankind — “all the families of the earth”—not only those who are alive and remaining at the time of the establishment of the Kingdom, but all who have ever lived. R. 4011 and R. 5818

Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”
— Galatians 4:6 —

[In the Epistle to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul] proceeds to show that while the Gentiles were not to be brought under bondage to the Jewish law, neither were the Jews justified by it; for it proved to be unto condemnation to every one that ever was under it, save the one perfect man, Christ Jesus, who fulfilled all its conditions, and, being blameless, rendered himself an acceptable sacrifice to redeem those who were under the Jewish law (3:10,11,13), as well as all of the Gentile world who were under the curse of the Edenic law, which was the same law written originally in the heart of the first perfect man, Adam. Thus “by **one offering** he hath perfected forever [made complete in his righteousness] them that are sanctified [fully consecrated to God],” whether Jews or Gentiles. —Heb. 10:14.

In the words of our text, he then bids them mark the fact that the witness of the holy Spirit with their spirits is to the effect that they are the recognized sons of God, and that they came into this grace without the works of the law. He says, “Because ye are sons [i.e., because you have believed on Christ alone for salvation and have consecrated yourselves to him and therefore been adopted into God’s family], God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son [the seal of your adoption—Eph. 1:13] into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a **son**; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Blessed privilege! why then go back to the beggarly elements whereby the Jews so long and so vainly sought to find salvation? (Gal. 4:9.) In Christ alone is full salvation for both Jew and Gentile; and in him there is no difference, for we are “all one in Christ Jesus.” R. 1658

**There is neither Jew nor Greek,
there is neither slave nor free,
there is neither male nor female, for
you are all one in Christ Jesus.**
Galatians 3:28

**Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if
a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**
Galatians 4:7

The providence of God over these, his sons, is a very particular providence: — All their steps are ordered of the Lord (Psa. 37:23); and the very hairs of their head are all numbered (Luke 12:7.) His eyes are ever upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers. (1 Pet. 3:12.) All the angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to these heirs of salvation. (Heb. 1:14.) All things are made to work together for good to these, who love God and are called according to his purpose (Rom. 8:28); and no good thing is withheld from them. (Psa. 84:11.) How wonderful and particular is this care; and they have the promise of it to the end of their trial state. God is indeed a Father to all that put their trust in him; but there is a wide difference between those who are his sons, and those who remain aliens, and even enemies. R. 1561

He who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

– Galatians 6:8 –

The heart of the Christian is consecrated soil from the start—from the time that God accepts him as a child. Under Divine instructions special flowers and fruits are to be cultivated. These are styled fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. All Christians obedient to the Voice from Heaven are seeking to eradicate and destroy the weeds of sin and selfishness, which spring naturally in their flesh because of heredity.

The Christian who would expect to receive the reward of the Master’s “Well done; enter into the joy of thy Lord!” must be very diligent in the sowing of the proper seeds in the garden of his heart. Acts, words and thoughts are the good seeds; and they must be sown carefully and persistently. They will yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. And these fruits and flowers of the Holy Spirit abounding in the garden of the heart, St. Peter tells us, will make such a Christian ready for an abundant entrance “into the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” —2 Pet. 1:11.

It is important that we sow good seed; and there is just one storehouse from which this is supplied—the Word of God. Whoever gives most attention to the words of our Lord Jesus through the Apostles and the Prophets, and whoever keeps this seed pure, free from contamination with worldly wisdom and from the traditions of men is best prepared to produce fruits and flowers to the Master’s approval.

There is a principle at stake here. God operates along the lines of justice, and He cannot be deceived. His eye reads the heart, the motive, the intention. We might even temporarily deceive ourselves with specious arguments, but no one can deceive God. It is a principle of the Divine arrangement that sowing shall bring reaping, and that the thing reaped shall be of the same character as the thing sowed. —Gal. 6:7.

**Do not be deceived. God is not mocked.
For whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.**

Galatians 6:7

Unless we manifest to the Lord an appreciation of the spiritual things, we shall not make progress therein, shall not be fit for everlasting life and shall not receive it; whereas, on the contrary, if our conduct shall manifest to the Lord our love for truth and righteousness and our desire to please Him, however weak our flesh, He will account such worthy of everlasting life, knowing that when they shall have the perfect bodies of the resurrection, they will be glad to live in absolute harmony with the Divine arrangements. Thus the Apostle on another occasion wrote:

The righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:4

God is seeking to develop and to fix character in His people; and in due time, after they shall have suffered awhile, fought and battled for a time against the weaknesses of the flesh, they will reap the reward; they will get the new bodies that God has promised—the Resurrection bodies. Then their battling and trials will all be ended; for the new bodies will be in perfect accord with the new will, and there will be no cause of conflict between the two. The work of grace will then go grandly forward, through them, for the blessing of the world. R. 5899 and R. 5562

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. In whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

– Ephesians 1:13-14 –

The use of the term “sealed” in this connection is very significant when we consider the importance of the seal, which has been in use from remote antiquity. A seal is an authoritative impression affixed to an important document. When affixed by the originator of the document it testifies to its genuineness, and to the deliberation with which it has been executed. When affixed according to legal requirement, it not only thus authenticates, but it also ratifies, confirms and declares the document legal; and thus it becomes the pledge or assurance of its fulfillment.

It is thus that the inspired writers symbolically apply the term to God’s gift of the holy spirit to the Church, which testifies to their divine recognition as sons and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that they suffer with him, even unto death. This sealing with the holy spirit is not accomplished by act of the individual sealed: it is the stamp of God, impressed by God upon all his believing and truly consecrated children.

The holy Spirit now granted to the Church is the earnest or foretaste of our inheritance. What are we to inherit? We are to “inherit all things.” First of all we are to inherit the Divine nature, and secondly, we are to inherit the great Abrahamic promise that through us, in union with our Lord Jesus, as members of his Body, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. We speak of ourselves as being of the Lord’s purchased possession, and when we are changed to receive his glory, this part of his possession will be complete and we shall be perfected with him and be under his direct control. R. 2064 and R. 4634



In this view of the matter how important it is that those who hope for the deliverance should see to it that the seal of God is clearly stamped upon their hearts, that they have this holy spirit of promise constantly witnessing with their spirits that they are in deed and in truth sons and heirs of God. R. 2064

The Lord gives us a solid basis for our hope, for our faith. It is a hope which He has Himself inspired. This hope is backed by all His sure promises and by His Oath; and He reminds us that “He is faithful that promised.” (Hebrews 10:23.) It is as yet a promise only; it is all of faith. We have now but the begetting of the Holy Spirit to this new nature, and the sealing of the same Spirit, “the earnest of our inheritance.” (Ephesians 1:13,14.) But we have learned to know our God and to trust His faithful Word. We have proven His gracious promises in many a time of stress and danger, and we know that He will not fail us. And “he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” R. 5497

By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.

– Ephesians 2:8 –

Our recovery did not begin with something in ourselves, —good resolutions, good works, etc. We did not improve ourselves, and thus commend ourselves to God: on the contrary, God was the prime mover in our release and recovery. He was inspired to give us aid by the benevolence of his character, for he is “rich in mercy.” He is rich in all of his attributes, rich in wisdom, rich in justice, rich in power, rich in love; but it is with the attribute of love and its corresponding benevolence, or mercy that the Apostle is here dealing. How necessary it is for us to get this thought of God’s richness of mercy well rooted and grounded in our hearts—that we may never doubt his generosity, his kindness, his sympathy, his mercy toward all those who desire and seek to know and to do his will! We need great faith in our heavenly Father, and it is only as we come to a clear knowledge of his glorious plan through the Word that we can exercise such a confidence in his love and mercy.

God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:4-7

It is to those who had the “ear to hear,” and who hearing, have responded and laid hold upon the grace of God in Christ, that the Apostle is now writing. He calls attention to the blessing of such an experience. He does not here differentiate between those who have taken merely the first step of faith and obedience unto **justification**, and those who have gone on and taken also the second step of **full consecration** to the Lord, “even unto death”; but addresses the latter class only—those who, having made a full consecration to the Lord of their justified selves, have been begotten of the spirit, quickened and energized by that spirit as members of the body of Christ. The Apostle here interjects in parenthesis (Eph. 2:5) a reminder that all this blessing has come to us, not of our worthiness, nor of our work, but by divine “grace are ye saved”; we reached this position in the new life, this reckonedly saved position, by faith; —delivered from the sentence of sin, saved from the darkness and delusion of the Adversary, saved from the wrath of God, and brought, instead, into his loving favor. Oh, how great is the salvation which accompanies a complete conversion and full consecration to the Lord! What a wonderful change it brings to us, in thought, in word and in act! And yet this is only the beginning of our salvation, or what the Apostle elsewhere speaks of as being “saved by **hope**.” (Rom. 8:24.)

Counting the new life as beginning now—counting ourselves as members of the New Creation, which by and by is to be glorified, we ask ourselves with the Apostle, What great thing must God work, then, in us and for us, eventually, if present foretastes of his goodness and grace are so superlatively grand? The Apostle answers such a query (v. 7) assuring us that “in the ages to come God will show forth the **exceeding riches** of his grace through [in] his kindness toward us [who are] in Christ Jesus.” He does not attempt to tell us what these riches will amount to. He would have us see that God is rich in mercy, rich in grace, and rich in every other grand and estimable quality, and he would have us trust that so rich a Father will do for his adopted children “exceeding abundantly more than we could ask or think.” R. 3165

To Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory.
– Ephesians 3:20-21 –

Those who recognize the sacrifice of Christ as the Ransom-price of the race have it as an assurance of the sincerity of God's promises of deliverance, and as a practical demonstration of his sympathy and love which amounts to a conviction that he will in his own due time do all that he ever promised; —“exceeding abundantly more than we can ask” or at present imagine. —Eph. 3:20.

Will not this thought be with us to the end of life's journey—that we are ambassadors of God and that our time is valuable, that he is proposing to pay the faithful exceedingly and abundantly more than we could have asked or thought and that even aside from the pay, ours is a most pleasurable privilege—to testify on behalf of Him who loved us and who bought us with His precious blood and who has adopted us into his family of God and made us heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ in the glorious Kingdom? R. 1178 and NS468

Therefore He says: “WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, AND GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.”

– Ephesians 4:8 –

This grand expression respecting the glorious outcome of the Savior's work is quoted by the Apostle Paul from the Psalms. (Psa. 68:18.) The figure thus thrust before our mental eye is that of a great Conqueror whose victory is being heralded. With the Romans we know that it was a custom that generals returning from various wars were granted what were termed “Triumphs”—that is to say, triumphal processions, that the people might have tangible evidence of their victories.

Let us permit our mental eye to feast upon the scene presented in our text. Jesus, in fulfillment of the Divine Program, had left the heavenly condition and descended to earth, taking a bondman's form or nature in order “that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man” (Heb. 2:9); in order that He might rescue Adam and his race from the dying and death condition in which they were—under Divine sentence and under the power of Satan.

Therefore the Redeemer counted not His life precious to Him, but freely delivered Himself up for our offenses and died, “the Just for the unjust,” that He might bring mankind back into harmony with God. His humiliation ended in death, but His triumph began when, as is recorded, God raised Him from the dead by His own power, and set him at the right hand of His own Majesty—“far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.”

The prophecy says nothing about our Lord's descending from the heavenly glory to the earthly nature, but St. Paul supplies this feature saying,

“He ascended” ---what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?
Ephesians 4:9

It was the custom in olden times that a king coming into authority and power should give gifts according to His wealth. Governors and princes would be needed and he would dispense the honors of these offices to those found faithful in his service, loyal in the defense of His cause. So, in this prophetic reference to our Lord's ascension, it is declared not only that He would lead forth a multitude of captives, granting them freedom, liberty, blessings, but also that He would confer certain gifts.

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-12

Not merely for a few days or years were these gifts to the Church provided; on the contrary, they were to endure throughout this entire Age, until the Church perfected shall pass beyond the veil and be forever with her Redeemer, to share His glory, honor and immortality. That the Apostle did not understand the matter to be merely for a day, but throughout this Age, until the completion of the Church, is clearly evidenced by his statement, namely, that all these gifts were for the edification of the Body of Christ and the perfecting of the saints to the last—

Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:13

With most of the conquerors in olden times the captives were made slaves. Not so, however, will be the result of Jesus' victory. He leads forth to liberty and eternal life those who have been slaves of sin and death. His train of

captives is a long one indeed; the procession has already occupied eighteen centuries, and is yet to be the great work of the thousand years of the Messianic reign! The Captain of our Salvation has gone before, He has accepted us as His joint-heirs, and we are following on, blest by the gifts which He dispensed when He ascended up on high; and we, in turn, will be His gifts to the world of mankind. R. 5066

Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

– Philippians 1:6 –

Let us never forget that He who has begun this good work in us changes never, and that if we keep our hearts in harmony with Him, if our faith is still firm and clear in the great Atonement made for our sins, and we continually renew our consecration to Him, keeping our all on the altar of sacrifice, letting the Lord consume it in His own way, seeking not our own will, our own way, but His will alone, we have every reason to have full confidence that this good work in us will be finished, that we shall enter with joy into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord, and shall hear His blessed words of approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant." R. 5425

His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Matthew 25:21

It is God who works in you.

– Philippians 2:13 –

“It is God who worketh in you,” declares the Apostle Paul. We did not begin this work ourselves. It would never have occurred to us, uninvited, to endeavor to obtain a share in the glory, honor and immortality of the Lord Jesus. It would have been the height of presumption for us so to do without an express invitation. It is God who planned the whole matter. He has been working in us by His promises, by His providences in our daily experiences, and by all the instructions, warnings and counsels of His Word, and we rejoice in this. There is no changeableness with God; and when once He made this proposition, He meant it to the full. It would never mean anything else. He never makes an arrangement which He would wish to abrogate or amend.

We are assured by the Apostle Paul that “He who has begun the good work in us will complete it, unto the Day of Jesus Christ.” The only condition is our own faithfulness. God will never fail. “We are His workmanship.” He is really doing the work. We are submitting ourselves that God may work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He is the great Master Workman. Thus the work of grace goes on in our hearts and lives, making us ready for the exalted position to which we are called. And it is only if we are negligent of these great privileges granted to us that God will take them from us and give them to others. R. 5855

We also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

– Philippians 3:20-21 –

That blessed day is the resurrection day, the Millennial day, early in the morning of which the overcoming Church will be delivered. — “God shall help her when the morning appeareth.” (Psa. 46:5, margin.) While carefully guarding the seal of promise, we may, therefore, as the apostles indicate, look for that blessed hope at the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who shall then change our vile body—the Church, both individually and collectively—and make it like unto his glorious body; for, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Titus 2:12-13; 1 Pet. 1:7; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4.) It was to this blessed day that Paul looked forward with joyful hope, and to which he bade all of those look forward who, like himself, were sealed with the same holy spirit of promise, the earnest of their inheritance, saying, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” —2 Tim. 4:8. R. 2064



The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
– Philippians 4:7 –

If God gives peace of heart, who can upset the one who is thus in harmony with God, in whom this peace of heart is ruling? This, then, is the greatest blessing of all. And He grants this peace to those who are faithfully striving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We have a Refuge which none but His own can know. No harm can reach us within this Shelter; no storm can shake us from our moorings, for we are securely anchored to the Rock of Ages. “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to the called according to His Purpose.” (Rom. 8:28.)

This peace can come only to those who have given themselves unreservedly to God—their time, their talents, their influence, their life, their all. These have a peace that none others can know. This peace of God rules the heart even amid turmoil and trouble; it is an inward tranquility and rest which is the direct result of a close, personal relationship of the soul with God. It is the peace of God because it is a peace that God only can give, a peace which only His very own can fully know.

We learn to trust God in all of our affairs, and it is the peace of God—the peace which comes to us from a realization of God’s power and goodness and willingness to hold us by his right hand as his children—that comes in, to keep us from worry, from anxiety, etc. The thought is that this peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It keeps the Christian’s mind, so that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion;—and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the divine power and wisdom and love. But it does not assure him of anything respecting his own perfection or worthiness of acceptance before God. This proper peace merely assures us of our standing in divine favor through Christ Jesus,—his worthiness, his sacrifice, his aid. R. 5879, R. 5432, R. 3129

**Finally, brethren, whatever things are true,
whatever things are noble, whatever things are
just, whatever things are pure, whatever things
are lovely, whatever things are of good report,
if there is any virtue and if there is anything
praiseworthy ---meditate on these things.**
— Philippians 4:8 —

After speaking of prayer and thanksgiving to God and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, keeping their hearts and minds, the Apostle sums up this advanced position of grace with the words of our text as the finality or finish of the argument, and of the process of character-development: "Finally, brethren."

Our thoughts must not only be true, honorable and just, but they must be pure, they must be beautiful. By the word beautiful we understand, not only the thoughts relating to the beauties of nature, the flowers, the animal creation, the fruits, etc., but also and chiefly the things of character—the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. With these things our minds can become filled and enamored. If, on the contrary, we allow ourselves to neglect these things that are pure, just, lovely, we shall not grow in the fruits of the Spirit; but by thinking on these things and cultivating them in our hearts we become more and more God-like. If we do not cultivate these desirable qualities, then will be developed envy, hatred, strife, works of the flesh and of the Devil—the fruits contrary to righteousness.

In a word, then, we can hardly overestimate the importance of right thinking. There are on record instances of persons who were naturally depraved in mind, but who, by giving their attention to the things of the Truth, have become very noble characters, indeed. We can scarcely overestimate the power of the mind over the body. If we take pleasure in the cultivation of the fruits of the Spirit, they will prove a rich blessing to ourselves and to others. Thus shall we become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the First Resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness. R. 2891 and R. 4828

The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

– Colossians 1:26 –

There is a secret which the Apostle repeatedly calls the “Mystery” of God (Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 3:9; 5:32; Col. 1:26; Rev. 10:7). This mystery, as [the Apostle Paul] explains, relates to the Gospel Church; —the peculiar relationship between the Gospel Church and its Head and Lord is not intended to be understood by the world or by the nominal Christian nor by even the true Christian who is not in a proper attitude of heart and fully consecrated to the Lord.

When we catch a glimpse of this “mystery” it explains the whole situation. It shows us that from the divine standpoint, the promised Messiah, the Deliverer of the world from the bondage of sin and death—the Restorer, the great Prophet, Priest and King, whose Millennial reign as “the seed of Abraham” is to bring blessing to all the families of the earth—is not our Lord Jesus alone, but also with him, and under him as its Head, the entire Church of God—the faithful in Christ Jesus —the “little flock,” whom God is selecting from amongst men during this Gospel age, —these, unitedly, are the Christ, the Messiah which God promised and is providing for the deliverance of the world.

Grasping this “mystery,” it shows us that the first advent of Christ—in the flesh—for the suffering of death—has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. First came “the Lord Jesus, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,” who was the forerunner; none could precede him, all who would be associated must be followers and under his control and direction, for he is the “Head over all, God blessed forever.” (Rom. 9:5.) He learned certain lessons which would qualify him to be the great High Priest for the world, as the Apostle declares, “Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”—Heb 2:17.

We see that the Master has acknowledged these members of his body, made them his ambassadors, and through them has borne witness to the world, and in their sufferings he has suffered; for, as the Apostle declares:

I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church.
Colossians 1:24

The Apostle Peter declares, that the prophets “spake of the sufferings of Christ [which, as we have seen, have extended over a period of nearly nineteen centuries] and of the glory that should follow”—as soon as the sufferings are completed. (1 Pet. 4:13.) The sufferings evidently did not end at Calvary, else the glory would have begun long ago. The Master addressed not the world, but this very class, his brethren, his Church, the members of his body, “you.”

If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.
John 14:3

His declaration implies that when all of this “you” class shall have been found, tested, tried and approved —when the elect company shall be complete, the Head, who meantime passed into glory, will reappear to be then and ever afterward associated with the members of his body in glory— “in power and great glory” —a spiritual company. R. 3192

To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

– Colossians 1:27 –

The Heavenly Father purposed not to have Jesus alone, but that He should be the **Head** of the Anointed, and the Church the **Body**. (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:29-32; Col. 1:24.) This was the Mystery. The great Messiah was to bless the world as the antitypical Prophet, Priest, and King. God appointed Jesus as the Head, and elected certain saintly ones to be the members of His Body.

We find that as yet we have no glory. What blessing we have received is the possession of the Holy Spirit, the evidence of our adoption into the family of God. This, however, is merely the beginning of the glory which God has promised to those who are faithful—merely the earnest. To have the Holy Spirit in us is to have the anointing in us. If we allow the Holy Spirit to operate in us, and ourselves faithfully co-operate therewith, the end will be glorious.

Thus the anointing which we have received—the Spirit of Christ in us—is the hope or basis of the glory which we are expecting—a glory which is to be like that of our Redeemer—a glory which is above that of angels, principalities and powers—a glory which is next to that of the Lord. This anointing, this Spirit of Christ within us, is the earnest, or hope, or basis, of all that is coming.

R. 5391 and R. 5229

May the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

– 1 Thessalonians 5:23 –

It has been said that every man is the sculptor of his own career. To a large extent this is true, but with the Christian it is different. He gives himself to the Lord and the Lord undertakes to work in him “both to will and to do his good pleasure.” Again, as it is written, “We are his workmanship.” True the Lord does not do the work in us without our co-operation; but in our case he is the Principal or Superintendent and we are the assistants co-working with God for the attainment of that which he has set before us as his ideal, his design for us. The glorious pictures set before us in the inspired Word—of participation in the Divine nature and sharers, joint-heirs with our Lord and Redeemer—are so transcendently bright that they overwhelm us; nor are we able to realize their details except as, more and more, we become transformed by the renewing of our minds, by the Spirit of the Truth.

The model or ideal of this character lesson is found in the closing verses [of 1 Thessalonians] (vs. 23,24). Here the Apostle holds up before our minds the culmination of the Christian character, which the preceding verses tell us how to attain. He says (R.V.), “The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”; “Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it.” In other words, this condition of complete sanctification is the Divine ideal before you and God will complete it in you if you will but follow the directions prescribed. R. 4417

1 Thessalonians 5:15-23

15 See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

16 Rejoice always.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

19 Do not quench the Spirit.

20 Do not despise prophecies.

21 Test all things. Hold fast what is good.

22 Abstain from every form of evil.

23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.
– 1 Thessalonians 5:24 –

Call to mind, for your comfort, how God's elect ones, to whatever position he had called them, were always thus tried. Paul in Romans chapter 9 cites the cases of Jacob and Esau. Jacob was the chosen, the beloved one, and Esau was loved less and not chosen; yet it was Jacob that suffered tribulation, while Esau flourished and increased in goods. So also the chosen nation of Israel was disciplined under suffering, while other nations took their own course and received no discipline. The present is the time of discipline to the chosen ones. What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? If we receive no chastisement, then we may be sure we are not sons.

Then what shall we say to these things? Is there any space left for doubts and fears? May we not have the full assurance of faith, in proportion as we are faithfully conformed to the image of God's dear Son, in meekness and entire consecration to the will of God? The promise of God is not to the fearful and unbelieving, but to those who like Joshua and Caleb say, Since God has called us, we be fully able to go up and possess the land of promise. What God has promised, he is able also to perform. R. 1142

By giving us His Holy Spirit God binds the contract into which we have entered with Him. In giving us this advance payment the Lord says, "Now prove to Me how faithfully you will keep your part of the Covenant into which we have entered. You keep your part, and I will keep Mine." "Faithful is He that calleth us, who also will do it." The only question is whether we shall do our part faithfully; for God will surely do His part. R. 5907

God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

– 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 –

During the Gospel age, which is now drawing to a close, the Lord has been making ready a peculiar people for a very peculiar and very glorious purpose. They were first chosen out from among men, “through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.” (2 Thes. 2:13.) Or, in other words, having believed the message of salvation through Christ the Redeemer, and having gratefully accepted the same, and being earnestly desirous of perfect personal conformity to the divine will, and having therefore humbly submitted themselves entirely to God, they were chosen of God to be his peculiar people.

This is the class which will receive the preeminence over all other classes, all other stations, in earth or in Heaven. With their Lord they are to receive glory, honor, immortality. They will be exalted far above angels and be granted the Divine nature, as has been their Master and Forerunner. (Rom. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:53-54; 1 John 3:2-3; 1 Cor. 1:26-27; 2 Thes. 2:14; 2 Pet. 1:4.) These will share the First Resurrection, Christ’s Resurrection. (Rev. 20:5-6; Phil. 3:10.) Their mortal bodies, now merely the instruments of the New Creature, will be laid down forever in death—“Sown in weakness,” they will be “raised in power”; “sown in dishonor,” they will be “raised in glory”; “sown an animal body,” they will be “raised a spiritual body.” R. 1567 and R. 5711

Godliness with contentment is great gain.

– 1 Timothy 6:6 –

In becoming new creatures in Christ we are supposed to eradicate from our hearts everything that could in any sense of the word develop into covetousness—by the consecration of our wills, our hearts, to the Lord, by the acceptance of his will as instead of our own. But let us as new creatures, remember that covetousness can come into a heart otherwise pure, and defile the whole, as we see illustrated in the case of Satan, so that of all the things which we need to guard against most carefully this is one of the chief. All the graces of the spirit are opposed to covetousness—meekness, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love, all forbid that we should covet the things of our brethren or the things of the world. Rather, thankfulness should so fill our hearts—gratitude for the manifold mercies and blessings already received, that there will be no room for a covetous thought. True, the Apostle, in our Common Version, is made to say, “Covet earnestly the best gifts” (1 Cor. 12:31), but it would be a great mistake to suppose that the Apostle taught that the Lord’s people were to covet positions of influence in the Church. We are indeed to desire to have, to enjoy and to use in the Lord’s service, as many talents and gifts as possible, but we find the very reverse of the Apostle’s thought and teaching that we should covet the honors or possessions of one another. This seems to be a danger point with many, and when we remember that it has proven to be the wreck-rock for many, it behooves us to be extremely careful to covet merely the Lord’s favor and the gifts and talents by which we can best serve one another and not ourselves.

The godly contentment which the apostle would inculcate is of the kind that is “not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” It finds contentment in being in accord with the Lord, and finds the divine plan so grand, so superior to anything that human ingenuity could

devise, that it rejoices to adopt the divine will in every particular. It says, in the language of the poet, "Content, whatever lot I see, Since 'tis my God that leadeth me." This is the godliness and this is the contentment which the apostle in our text declares to be great gain. It is a great gain over what we possessed as natural men, without God and without hope, or with little appreciation of God and little hope. It is a great gain, too, as respects even the present life, for, as the apostle elsewhere declares, it has "the promise of the life that now is, and also of the life which is to come." (1 Tim. 4:8)

We are aware that many sincerely believe that the Lord's people who have godliness are miserable, and their condition anything but enviable. This is because the worldly mind measures the Lord's people by its own standards and from its own standpoint; the worldly think how destitute of joy and blessing the life would be for them were they in a condition which they imagine the Lord's people to be in. But they are not in that condition. The world is continually seeking for happiness, seeking for pleasure, like the hunter who forever hunts but finds little. On the contrary, the Lord's true people have found the pearl of great price; they have found that which satisfies their longings as nothing else can do; they have secured the happiness, the joy, the peace, which the world is seeking after, but vainly, because seeking in the wrong direction. Speaking of this same class controlled by godly contentment the Lord says, "My peace I give unto you—not as the world giveth give I unto you—let not your hearts be troubled neither let them be afraid." (John 14:27)

For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

1 Timothy 6:7-9

The lesson which the apostle crystallizes in our text he still further amplifies in the verses following it, in which he addresses the rich and exhorts them to contentment, as in the preceding verses he exhorts the poor and the servants to be content. The gospel of the Lord Jesus is adapted to all conditions. The common leveling of humanity was not the design of the Lord for, nor is it applicable to, present time arrangements and conditions. Not until the "little flock" shall reach the kingdom will they reach a plane of full equality; and ever then the scriptural assurance is that amongst those enjoying a participation in the Lord's resurrection, the first resurrection, there will be differences. "As star differeth from star in glory."

Dear friends, let me urge upon you that you daily and heartily seek to live the new life, as new creatures in Christ Jesus; to enjoy in this present time the privileges and peace which are properly ours through Christ Jesus our Lord—rest in His finished work as the ground of our peace with God; rest of heart in His promises that those who seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness shall have all their necessities supplied according to divine wisdom; rest in the thought that divine wisdom is superior to all other wisdom and superior to any of our own plans and projects. While active in the Lord's service, seeking to let our light shine out before men, seeking to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His, seeking to be "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit serving the Lord," the peace of God will dwell in us richly, and we shall be content with the results of His work; content that having done all in our power to do, the Lord will graciously accomplish His own great purposes in us in His own due time.

R. 3046 and NS66

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

– 2 Timothy 1:7 –

In proportion as any who seek to know God are led to see His true character, they have confidence in Him. After such have come to the point of full consecration to the Lord, they receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and become of the Church class, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, the set apart ones—set apart by the Holy Spirit. Of these the Apostle Paul says, “God hath not given us the spirit of fear.” The New Creature must repel every attack of servile fear—which belongs to the flesh, the fallen condition. The new mind must triumph over this natural tendency, must cultivate trust in the Lord.

We should have a filial fear toward God, but not with the thought that He would harm us or torment us or do us violence of any kind, but fear lest we should lose our fellowship with Him. So, then, whatever fear we have of a slavish kind is not from God. Such fear brings a snare. But love, inspired by a true knowledge of God, and begotten of His Spirit, delivers us also from the fear of man, in proportion as this love abounds in us.

God has given us the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of power. The Christian knows that “all things work together for good to them that love God.” This is to him a source of power, of strength. Circumstances and conditions which would quite overwhelm others, he may expect to have. This spirit is not only a spirit of power, but a spirit of love—a spirit of kindness and gentleness. It is a spirit that loves to do good, to do right, to be helpful. And so the Christian with this spirit of love and of a sound mind becomes more and more Godlike. This enables him to have more and more compassion for those who are out of the way. And as God sent His Son, and as the Son came and provided the blessing of life for all at such a great cost to Himself, so all who have His spirit will strive to bless others. R. 5977

The spirit of a sound mind is a most wonderful manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the Lord's people. It gives them much advantage every way over the remainder of mankind. It sees in the present life opportunities for the attainment of character. It broadens and deepens the mind along all good lines. It makes one less touchy in respect to his own rights, privileges and preferences, and more considerate of the rights and feelings of others.

The spirit of a sound mind makes one's judgment clearer, truer, more trustworthy than before, for it impels him to accept the instructions of the Word of God in respect to what he should and should not do, and to reject his own faulty judgment. The meek will He guide in judgment. Whatever may be the imperfection of mind and body resulting from the fall, those who receive the spirit of a sound mind are thereby made purer, kinder, gentler, less selfish and more thoughtful in regard to others. Those who are thus rightly exercised will develop the spirit of love increasingly until that which is perfect shall have come and that which is in part shall have been done away. —1 Cor. 13:10. R. 5095

Now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, God has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

– 2 Timothy 1:9-10 –

When Jesus came, He brought the words of eternal life, everlasting life. As St. Paul declares, Jesus Christ “brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” (2 Tim. 1:10.) The fact that our Savior brought these to light demonstrates that they were not seen before. Although there had been an intimation of God’s Plan given to Abraham, yet everything looked contrary to this. The death penalty which God had pronounced in Eden seemed to preclude all hope of life everlasting. Although God had stated more or less vaguely that He would one day deliver humanity from the curse of sin and death, no one could tell how this could be—how God could remit the death penalty and still be just. But when Jesus came, He brought the whole subject to light.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

He showed that His redemptive work, provided by God’s gracious arrangement, would eventually give life everlasting to all who would accept of it upon the Divine terms. He also brought immortality to light. He revealed the fact that God purposes not only to give the world of mankind life everlasting, but to give the faithful followers in Jesus’ footsteps a higher kind of life—immortality. Thus a new thought was brought out—one never even dreamed of before. R. 5608

And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one.

John 17:22

When Christ came he “brought life [everlasting] and immortality [clearly] to light through the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10); and, proportionately as men have come directly or indirectly in contact with this gospel, their responsibility has been increased, whether they accepted or rejected, opposed or ignored it. As it is written, “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

--John 3:19. R. 1655



Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

– 2 Timothy 2:7 –

Consider — reflect, think, study, ponder. Whatever may be said of the heathen religions and of churchianity in respect to their requiring little thought, little study, this is not the case with the religion of the Bible. It is not a religion of credulity—“shut your eyes and open your mouth,” and swallow what is put therein. True, it is a religion of faith; —but a faith based upon reasonable evidences—a knowledge of God, whose plan and character it reveals. Hence it is that the Scriptures invite the faithful to **consider**, to search, to prove, saying,

Come now, and let us reason together.

Isaiah 1:18

And it is worthy of note that all the false systems of religion and churchianity, misnamed Christianity, to a large extent reverse this scriptural order, endeavoring to obtain harmony, union, on a basis of comparative ignorance, rather than on a basis of growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Truth.

As we see this to be true today in nominal spiritual Israel, so we find it was true in olden times in fleshly Israel, to whom the Lord declares, —“The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel doth not know, my people **do not consider.**” (Isa. 1:3) We are not to understand the Lord to mean that the Jews had no knowledge of him whose sacrifices and ceremonial law and worship had their daily attention: neither should we be understood to imply that nominal Christians, who in various ways manifest some respect and reverence for the Lord, are wholly ignorant of him. The thought is rather that God’s professed people today, as in olden times, while knowing something about their Creator and Redeemer, do not **know him** in the sense of being really acquainted with his character. In many respects they worship a strange God, because they have failed to get rightly, thoroughly, acquainted with him. Such an acquaintance can only be obtained along the line suggested in our text: by giving heed, by **considering**, reflecting, studying the revelation which God has made respecting himself. Not that the Scriptures give us a detailed description of our Creator; but, rather, by revealing to us his plans, they permit us through an understanding of the divine plans to have an understanding of the divine character which those plans exemplify and illustrate. As a man is known by his works, so God is known by his works. Whoever, therefore, would know God—appreciate the divine character—must come to such a knowledge through an acquaintance with the divine plan which God is outworking.

Let us note how the Scriptures urge God’s people to **consider**. They are to consider the natural things of the Lord’s provision, as they touch with these in the course of human life, and are to read in them certain great lessons respecting the Creator. For instance, notice our Lord’s statements, “**Consider** the lilies of the field.” (Matt. 6:28.) “**Consider** the ravens.” (Luke 12:24.) Our Lord calls attention to how such simple things in nature should be studied, be **considered**. The lessons to be learned in connection with all the affairs of life will be helpful to such as approach the study from the right standpoint, of faith in the Creator, and a realization that he is necessarily the embodiment and representative of the very highest and very noblest qualities of which the human mind could conceive; —that he is perfect in Justice, perfect in Wisdom, perfect in Power, perfect in Love. From this standpoint of faith we can learn a great lesson from **considering** the lilies. Their beauty teaches us that the Lord has a keen appreciation of the beautiful, and the fact that it comes to them without their toiling or spinning, teaches us that God is abundantly able to produce the beautiful without our aid, and that if necessary he could likewise clothe us miraculously. It teaches, further, that since he has not thus made provision for our necessities, it

must be because he has seen (as the Word declares) that the experiences of life in the development of the resources of nature, in providing for our own needs, will be helpful to us. Faith can learn in all the affairs of life lessons of divine wisdom, and may assure itself reasonably, in harmony with the Lord's suggestion, that human beings are much more valuable than many sparrows, many ravens, many lilies, in God's sight; and that we may therefore more reasonably trust to his goodness and his interest in human affairs.

Thus **considering**, and looking through the little affairs of life, and noting the divine character as revealed in them, the mind is prepared for the still greater revelation of God's goodness set forth in his Word, which assures of his sympathy for humanity in its fallen condition, and of his willingness to assist in man's recovery from sin and death along lines in harmony with justice and love. **Considering**, from this standpoint, the love of God revealed through his Son Jesus commends itself at once to our hearts as being in full accord with what we find to be his general character—justice, wisdom, love. The heart that thus **considers** makes progress, grows in grace, in knowledge, in love.

If such a consideration of the things of nature are profitable and helpful, how much more profitable is the consideration of the still higher things revealed to the Gospel Church through the holy Spirit since Pentecost. The Apostle Paul calls our attention in this direction saying,

**Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,
consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.
Hebrews 3:1**

Again the Apostle speaks of the high spiritual things which we are to consider, after we have taken our first lessons in considering the natural things.

**For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against
Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.
Hebrews 12:3**

Such consideration of the Lord and what he endured and the reflection and realization of their own imperfections while seeking to walk in his footsteps, would tend to bring them not only to appreciation of the Lord's sympathy for his people and his grace toward them in covering from his sight their unwilling imperfections, but additionally, this consideration would lead to sympathy for their fellows in the narrow way. The Apostle intimates the propriety of such reflections, saying,

**Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.
Hebrews 10:24**

Consider one another's sacrifice, to think of each other's imperfections, peculiarities or good qualities, as the case may be. With the Christian brother consideration always means to think kindly, charitably, even of the blemishes which love cannot hide. The natural man may assent to a great deal of what we have here written; yet in some particulars it will be beyond his grasp. It is only for those who approach the study of the divine will from the right direction—only for those who **consider** from the standpoint of the school of Christ, learning of him—only such have the divine assistance which the Apostle mentions, the understanding which comes from the Lord. It requires faith in God and his Word in order to be able to rightly appreciate either the natural or the spiritual things which are ours, and to feed thereon in our hearts and to grow strong thereby in our characters. R. 3312 and R. 3313

This is a faithful saying: for if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.

– 2 Timothy 2:11-12 –

The call of this Age is for sacrificers only—to follow our Redeemer's footsteps of self-denial, even unto death. This was our Lord's proposal:

St. Paul reiterated and expounded this saying, “I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God,” for “If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him.” —Rom. 12:1; 2 Tim. 2:12.

St. Paul directly associates the sufferings of the Church with the sufferings of the Redeemer, and both with the “better sacrifices” of the Day of Atonement. He says, pointing back to the type, “Let us go to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.” (Heb. 13:11-15.) Here the Apostle refers to the fact that as our Lord Jesus fulfilled the antitype of the “bullock,” we should fulfill the antitype of the “Lord’s goat” of the Day of Atonement. As the “bullock” was slain, so our Lord fulfilled that feature by the consecration of His life to death at His baptism. As the “bullock’s” body (except the fat and the blood) was then dragged outside the camp and burned, so our Lord suffered shame, ignominy, destruction of the flesh, to accomplish the antitype.

Likewise we, who have accepted the call of this Age (“Gather together my saints unto Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice”), should fulfill the antitype of the Lord’s goat. As the body of that “Lord’s goat” passed through the same experiences as those of the “bullock,” so we should, like our Lord, first make a full covenant of sacrifice and then fulfill the burning of the flesh of the Lord’s goat by suffering shame, ignominy and revilings, even unto death. Only those who thus suffer with the Redeemer for righteousness’ sake will reign with Him as the Royal Priesthood of the Millennium. R. 4920

He who loses his life for my sake, will find it.

Matthew 10:39

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

– 2 Timothy 3:16-17 –

The best proofs respecting the inspiration of the Scriptures are to be found on the inside—in the divine plan of the ages which it records with such grand harmony. The trouble with the higher critics is that they do not see this internal evidence, but, on the contrary, have accepted the incongruous and unreasonable theories of the dark ages which misrepresent the real teachings of the Bible, and these higher critics are now showing the book (which they believe to be full of inconsistencies) from the outside—endeavoring to prove that it was not written by the people whose names are attached to its various parts. To those who see the divine plan which the book contains, these arguments of the higher critics respecting the authorship of the parts are of little weight; for it matters not to us who wrote the books, so long as we see they contain the elements of a divine plan so stupendously grand that we are confident no human mind conceived it or could have depicted it. That the Apostle was a firm believer in the inspiration of the Scriptures is evidenced by [the above] declaration. R. 3210

See also entry for Isaiah 40:8 on p. 121

There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day and not to me only, but also to all who have loved his appearing.

– 2 Timothy 4:8 –

The Apostles James and John speak of the same crown and call it the crown of life. (James 1:12; Rev. 2:10), and the Apostle Peter speaking of the same calls it the crown of glory. (1 Pet. 5:4.) The thought at the bottom of each of these expressions is evidently the same; namely, the custom in olden times of running races and the giving of a crown to the successful runner at the end of the course. As it was not sufficient to enter a race, or start to run, but it was required that the race be run faithfully and perseveringly to a conclusion, so with this race which we are running as followers of Jesus, it is essential not only that we shall make a consecration to the Lord, but that we persevere to the end, and our reward will be the crown of life in the sense that we will get life on the highest plane, inherent life, immortality. It will be a crown of righteousness in the sense that only those who are approved of God as righteous will thus be rewarded and glorified; and our hope is, therefore, that we may be accepted in the Beloved; that the righteousness of the Lord may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit; and that the rewards which God has promised to those who love him and serve him will be granted to us. The crown of glory is another name for the same grand reward—the glory of the Kingdom, the glory of immortality, the glory of the Father's favor, the glory of being joint-heirs with Christ in his Kingdom. The Apostle declares that his crown is laid up for him; he did not claim to possess it at the time, except by faith, and he had never seen it except by the eye of faith. R. 3211 *See also James 1:12 on p. 299*

The Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom.

– 2 Timothy 4:18 –

He who was faithful in the Apostle's case is none the less so today in respect to our affairs. Furthermore, [this verse] suggests to us the very happy thought that our Lord is not only able to deliver us from all these human enemies and from the Adversary, but that he is able also to preserve us from the last enemy—death. The Apostle at the time of writing these words was in almost hourly expectation of martyrdom—that he would go down into the portals of the tomb—yet he had confidence in the Lord that he would not leave his soul in Hades; he had confidence in our glorious hopes in respect to all the members of the Church, expressed in the words, “The gates of hell [Hades—the state of death] shall not prevail against it.” The grave has prevailed against the Church, not only against the great Head of the flock, but against all the members of his body, and the Adversary has seen to it that many of them came to death ignominiously, as malefactors, as deceivers, although true. But we have the Lord's assurance for it that this was not the end—that in due time, in the resurrection morning, all who have gone down into death will be delivered; that he, the Son of Man, would take unto himself his great power, and open the prison doors and set at liberty the captives of death, his own loved ones being the first to participate in the First Resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, and then being used of him as his co-laborers in the great work of delivering all the captives of the tomb, bringing all to the knowledge of the truth, and permitting as many as will to come back to life everlasting, perfection. In this way the Apostle expected the Lord to preserve him, to keep him unto his heavenly Kingdom: he had no thought of death being an utter extinguishment of life; he had full confidence in the resurrection promise, and that the Lord was able to keep that which he had committed unto him against that day—that glorious Millennial morning. R. 3213

We who have believed do enter that rest.
– Hebrews 4:3 –

Israel's entrance of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua typified the entrance of the Church into the rest of faith and special privilege under the leadership of the antitypical Joshua, Jesus. The Israelites had rest from their wilderness journeyings. It was a wonderful change for them, a blessed change, yet it was not the full realization of all that God had promised them. That full realization will be attained only in Eden itself, and as a result of Messiah's glorious work of Restitution. Following the Apostle's lead, we perceive that the experiences of Israel up to the time when Moses died represented the Law Dispensation, which ended at the Cross. The Gospel Dispensation, beginning at Pentecost, is typified by the crossing of Jordan and the taking possession of the land, Canaan signifying rest.

He who exercises much faith may have much rest, and may conquer, and possess quietude. He who has less faith will have less rest and will be able only partially to enter upon his privileges. The storming of Jericho and the other cities of Canaan typified the warfare of the New Creature, begotten of the Holy Spirit, against the things of the flesh, the desires of the flesh, the weaknesses and depravities of the flesh. The Lord's word to those who would enter into His rest is,

**Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you. I will uphold you with
My righteous right hand.**
Isaiah 41:10

We agree with the Apostle's words that "We who believe do enter into rest." All of God's consecrated people can testify that they have a rest, a peace, a joy, a blessing, which the world can neither give nor take away—and this in proportion to their loyalty and faithfulness. Yet even all this is not sufficient. God has in reservation something far better. Respecting this, the Apostle declares, "There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God." —Hebrews 4:9 R. 5345

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest.
Hebrews 4:11



See also entry for Mark 2:27-28 on p. 188

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

– Hebrews 4:14-16 –

Our Lord, the Captain of our salvation, has been proved perfect through obedience to the things which he suffered; and now, in the completing of his body-members, he stands not only as our Redeemer, to make us fit to stand trial under the high-calling; and also as our Example of how to overcome, but more: he, as our High Priest, makes good our unintentional shortcomings, and also stands ready to succor all his consecrated members—promising that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear, because he will provide, for such, ways of escape.

When we realize that we are not always successful in resisting these temptations, we are to remember that we have a Throne of Grace, to which we may come and find mercy and grace to help in time of need. We may come to our great High Priest. The high priest of old held a very high and honorable position. Our High Priest is far more highly exalted. In considering this, we might at first be inclined to think of Him as very austere, not easily approached. But the Apostle says that we are to remember that this is the One who is our Savior, the One who died for us; and that although He is so greatly exalted and seated upon the Throne of Glory, yet His Throne is also a Throne of Mercy.

Although our Lord taught us to worship the Father in spirit and in truth, and again to pray, “Our Father which art in heaven,” and although the Apostle said, “I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Eph. 3:14), nevertheless the general sentiment of Scripture seems to imply that there will be nothing wrong in our addressing a petition to our Lord Jesus direct if any so desire at any time. As the head of the body it is but the appropriate thing that, as every member of the natural body makes known its desires, its petitions, to its own head, so the Church, the body of Christ, should be permitted to address him, and thus we read that the apostles worshiped the ascended Jesus—they recognized his greatness and dignity and honor as the Messiah, the Son of the living God, the Redeemer of the world, who in due time shall come and receive his faithful to himself and establish his Kingdom for the blessing of the world. The Lord’s own words are appropriate here: he says, “That all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father.”—John 5:23.

Coming to the Savior’s Throne is not the same as coming directly to the Father’s Throne. Jehovah’s Throne is a Throne of Justice, but Jesus’ Throne is a Throne of Mercy. Here we may obtain mercy if we fail to come up to the highest standard. We are to remember that our merciful High Priest knows just what kind of trials we have. If we have tried to do our best, and have been overtaken in a fault, He knows how to make allowance for us and to be very sympathetic. We are to remember that this Mercy Seat is for this very purpose—to show mercy to us.

Thus as we realize that in our temptations and trials the Lord is for us as He sees our earnest struggles and endeavors, it makes us the stronger in resistance another time. “He knows, and loves, and cares.” Therefore we should never grow discouraged, but come to Him again and again, remembering that He is never weary of our coming and that He will not turn us away empty.

R. 1490, R. 3910, R. 5965

God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

– Hebrews 6:10 –

As we read these assurances of tenderest love on the part of our heavenly Father, and then consider our low estate, we can scarcely realize that we are indeed the objects of that love. Yet if we are humbly walking in the narrow way, these assurances are for our comfort and consolation.

Discouragement is a hindrance to growth in grace; St. Paul was seeking to encourage his readers. The context implies that they had experienced some setback, some discouragement. He intimates that while they had begun well, their zeal had cooled to some extent. In this chapter and on to the tenth inclusive, he points out the danger of falling back and away after we have become Christians. And to those who are likely to become discouraged he gives the exhortation of our text.

St. Paul declares that their labors of love were shown toward God's name. This honor toward God's name consisted in their ministering to the saints. This was a proof of their love for the Lord. This ministry, too, had been kept up. The saints represent God in the world. Whatever is done for the saints is, therefore, done for God. There is a distinction to be noted in the Bible as respects those who are in covenant relationship with God and those who are not in covenant relationship with Him. We have certain duties toward the world. We have responsibilities toward them. The Golden Rule is to operate always and toward all men. But we have not the same obligation toward the world that we have toward the saints. Whoever honors the saints and serves them, honors and serves God. This seems to be the Apostle's thought in the matter. We are not to understand that the Lord would be displeased that we should do good to all men. Rather the Apostle urges, "Let us do good unto all men as we have opportunity." Be generous, be kind to everybody, but especially to the saints. (Gal. 6:10.) This is what is particularly pleasing to God. Every service lovingly and gladly rendered to the saints is rendered unto His glory.

The work now being done by those in such [a covenant] relationship with God will be worthy of His notice and reward. And so St. Paul says here to these, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." This is important to have in mind. It is important for us to see to it that our motives are those of love toward the Lord and His Cause and His brethren. Such good works, if persevered in according to our ability and opportunity, will not fail of a blessed reward.

R. 957 and R. 5818

God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

– Hebrews 6:17-18 –

This glorious purpose God set forth to Father Abraham in his oathbound covenant, of which the Apostle here writes in Hebrews. The context shows distinctly that the Apostles and the early Church drew comfort from the Oath-Bound Covenant, and clearly implies that this same comfort belongs to every true Christian down to the end of this age—to every member of the Body of Christ. The Apostle's words imply that God's promise and oath were intended more for us than for Abraham—more for our comfort than for his. HG441



This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.
– Hebrews 6:19 –

If we were to let go this hope, this anchor to our souls, we should be adrift upon a shoreless sea, whose mighty billows would sweep us down to eternal death. A great Time of Trouble is now about to break upon the whole world, and any of the Lord's people whose faith and hope are not firmly anchored to the Rock of Ages, any who are fearful to trust His promises, will be overwhelmed in the storm. Shall this be our experience? Some of the Lord's real children will have their part in the great trouble-time; yet none who are faithful, who are obedient, will suffer thus. These will be kept in perfect safety to the end of their course, and will, we believe, be gathered "within the veil" before the great storm breaks in its fury. Because of our faith in the Master, because of our strong confidence in Him, our knowledge that He has been an overcomer, and that the Father has rewarded Him and that He is now our Advocate, our great High Priest, who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," therefore our hearts have good courage. We know that He will shortly "stand up" in power and great authority to establish His Kingdom and to exalt all His faithful to reign with Him in that Kingdom; therefore our hope is firm; it is indeed an anchor to our souls. We are "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."—Eph. 6:10. R. 5497

Having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

– Hebrews 10:21-22 –

[St. Paul] is speaking to the House of God class. Natural Israel were of the House of God, too, but they were servants. The servants belong to the House, of course, but not in the very special sense, as do the children. We have the suggestion given us that Moses was faithful as a servant over his House, but that the Church of Christ are a House of Sons, and that Christ is Head over this House. It is this House of Sons that may draw near to God. [Heb. 3:5-6]

The assurance with which these may rightly approach is dependent upon certain conditions here indicated. They must have a true heart, and are not to be double-minded. Entire heart loyalty must be theirs; they must fully demonstrate that they meant what they said when they gave their lives to God. Then they may come to the Lord with holy boldness, in full assurance of faith. All the steps of God's true people are steps of faith, of realization of His care. But there is a full assurance of faith in contrast with a lesser faith. A faith that is only partial will bring us somewhat near to God. A faith that is strong will bring us nearer. But a full assurance of faith is that faith which, if retained, will bring us off "more than conquerors," and make us at last members in full of the Royal Priesthood—in glory.

This full assurance of faith cannot be attained in a day. It requires quite a degree of information. And God has provided this information by instructing us in His Word as to what Christ did for us, and what He is willing to do; why He died for us, etc. All this is furnished us as a basis for faith. Then to further strengthen our faith, we have all the exceeding great and precious promises, and His daily providences over us. Therefore this fully consecrated class may draw near, and have the full assurance that they may attain all the glorious things to which God has invited them—to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." R. 5424

For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.

– Hebrews 10:36 –

When, where, what is the Promise? Undoubtedly the promise will be received in the resurrection. The promise includes all that God has in reservation for them that love Him—that love Him more than they love houses and lands, or children, or parents, or friends, or husbands or wives, or self, or any other thing.

The particular promise that the Apostle refers to here is The Promise. All our hopes and blessings are centered in the original Promise made to Abraham, when God brought him out of the land of Chaldea into the land of Canaan. God promised Abraham that in His Seed should all the families of the earth be blessed. That has been the great Promise for encouragement to the Seed, to give them patience and fortitude.

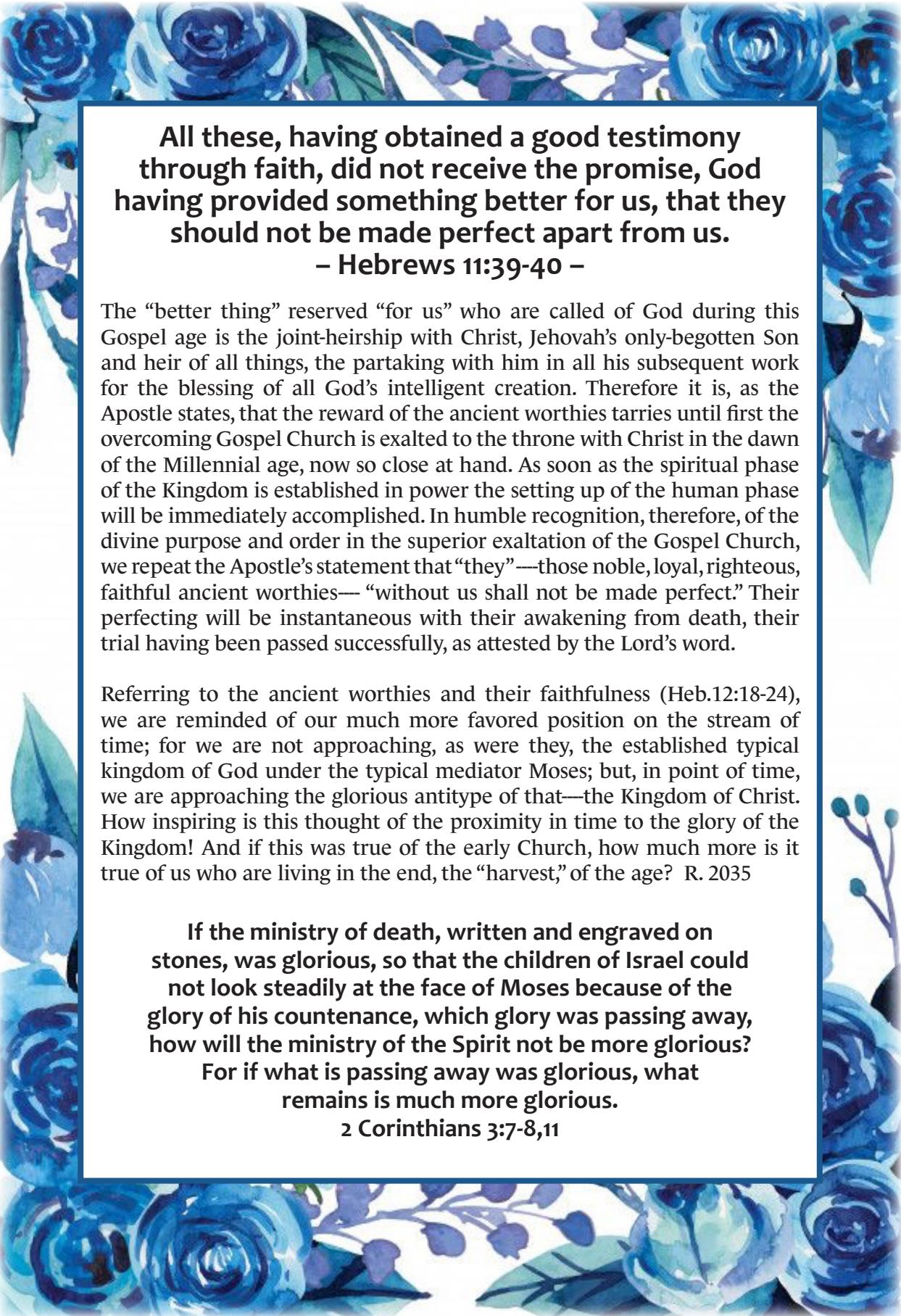
When we think of the fact that Israel did not receive that great privilege of being the spiritual Seed from which primarily that blessing should go forth, and that the "elect" are receiving it; when we think of the fact that God has been nearly nineteen centuries in selecting the "elect" from Israel and from all nations, it is enough to stagger our faith unless we hold firmly to the Divine promise and remember that God confirmed it with an Oath. By these two immutable, unchangeable things, the Divine Word and the Divine Oath, we know that the Seed of Abraham is to be developed, and that eventually it is to bless all the families of the earth. It is the Divine will that we allow our faith in this great promise of God to be "an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil." —Heb. 6:19. R. 5332 and R. 5137

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

– Hebrews 11:13 –

Four hundred and seventy years had elapsed from the time God gave Canaan to Abraham, by promise, before his descendants actually crossed Jordan and began to inherit the land. The promise had been long of fulfillment, and doubtless had severely taxed the faith of the people to whom it belonged; yet even in this respect the delay was a blessing to them, as serving to stimulate and develop faith. Nor are we to forget that the original promise has not yet been fulfilled; because the land was promised, not only to Abraham's seed, but also to himself, and the noble patriarch still rests and waits in the sleep of death for the accomplishment of the divine promise, which will be fulfilled on a far larger scale when the people of God shall have passed the antitypical Jordan into the antitypical Canaan—the Millennial Kingdom condition. We are not left in doubt upon this matter. We have the Apostle's words in Heb. 11:13; Heb. 11:39-40, that Abraham and other faithful servants of the Lord still wait for the fulfillment of the promise made to them, until first the still higher, spiritual, heavenly promises, made to the Gospel Church, the Christ, shall have been accomplished...

If in all this there was a lesson of patient waiting on the Lord and confident trust in his promise, to Abraham and his natural seed, there is a still larger and fuller lesson in it to Spiritual Israel, the spiritual Seed, along the same lines of faithful, patient waiting on the Lord for the fulfillment of the exceeding great and precious things he has promised us. R. 3084



All these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.
– Hebrews 11:39-40 –

The “better thing” reserved “for us” who are called of God during this Gospel age is the joint-heirship with Christ, Jehovah’s only-begotten Son and heir of all things, the partaking with him in all his subsequent work for the blessing of all God’s intelligent creation. Therefore it is, as the Apostle states, that the reward of the ancient worthies tarries until first the overcoming Gospel Church is exalted to the throne with Christ in the dawn of the Millennial age, now so close at hand. As soon as the spiritual phase of the Kingdom is established in power the setting up of the human phase will be immediately accomplished. In humble recognition, therefore, of the divine purpose and order in the superior exaltation of the Gospel Church, we repeat the Apostle’s statement that “they”—those noble, loyal, righteous, faithful ancient worthies—“without us shall not be made perfect.” Their perfecting will be instantaneous with their awakening from death, their trial having been passed successfully, as attested by the Lord’s word.

Referring to the ancient worthies and their faithfulness (Heb.12:18-24), we are reminded of our much more favored position on the stream of time; for we are not approaching, as were they, the established typical kingdom of God under the typical mediator Moses; but, in point of time, we are approaching the glorious antitype of that—the Kingdom of Christ. How inspiring is this thought of the proximity in time to the glory of the Kingdom! And if this was true of the early Church, how much more is it true of us who are living in the end, the “harvest,” of the age? R. 2035

If the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.
2 Corinthians 3:7-8,11

If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons.
– Hebrews 12:7 –

Ordinarily the word chastisement is used to signify correction for wrongdoing. But in the Bible, it is especially used to convey the thought of discipline or instruction in righteousness. Sometimes we use it in this way in the ordinary affairs of life. If we sin, we receive punishment indeed. But those who are trying to do right are continually receiving discipline of the Lord. There is a purpose in this training, or chastisement. The Church is learning how to build character pleasing in the Father's sight, to be well qualified for particular service; and discipline is the means employed for that instruction.

With those who are to be associated with the Redeemer and ultimately to be exalted to the Divine nature and glory, it is necessary that they make special manifestations of loyalty, of self-abasement and of self-sacrifice. What was true of Christ is also true of the Church, which is His Body, and which He purchased with His own precious blood. (Col. 1:24; Acts 20:28.) We are called to follow in His footsteps; hence every son whom the Father receives is chastised. —Heb. 12:6-7.

Every child of God will need chastening. If we wander from the paths of righteousness, we are chastened to bring us back; but even if we did not wander, we should still need chastisement, that we might learn obedience. Our Lord Himself learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

**Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by
the things which He suffered.**
Hebrews 5:8

Of St. Paul the Lord said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:16.) The Apostle was put through disciplinary experiences because he was a favored child of God.

The sons of God during this Gospel Age are under special favor of God and under special Covenant with Him. He has engaged to treat them as sons, not as servants; not as opposers or enemies, but as children. "God dealeth with you as with sons." (Heb. 12:7.) With this assurance that God will deal with His people as with sons, we might be surprised that the saintly people have not been blessed, as those who are unsaintly, with money, health, temporal prosperity. We inquire how this is. Is God neglecting His part when He has promised that He will deal with these as with sons? We are not sons of God according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. Having been begotten of the Spirit, we are sons of God according to the New Creation, the interests of which are often best served by experiences which are not favorable to the flesh.

With these sons of God, the New Creature is the special thing in God's sight. The flesh matters little. And God wishes these sons to have the proper experiences that will bring them to the required development as sons of God on the spirit plane. This means that they must ultimately die according to the flesh. There is no other way of entering into the spirit nature than by dying according to the flesh. We must all follow in the footsteps of the Master.

Our chastisements are not in the nature of penalties for the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh, which Jesus has graciously covered for us; but our standing as new creatures is on the perfect plane, and the majority, at least, of our chastisements, like those of the Master, our elder Brother, are disciplinary, and to the intent that we may be ultimately complete in him, meet for the "inheritance of the saints in light." R. 5147, R. 5624, R. 3133



WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

It does not matter what it means, poor heart,
The dear Lord knows, to bear it is your part;
Nor think some strange thing happens unto you
Which He would not allow so if He knew.
He does know. In His all-wise Fatherhood
He knows it, and allows it for your good.
He is not hard; you do not think He is
When in the dark you find your Hand in His;
When it was light you tried to walk alone,
And thought the strength He gave you all your own.

You did not ask what that last blessing meant;
Just smiled and took it, satisfied, content.
You did not think it strange. You thought He knew
And planned the sweet surprise which came to you.
Tried one, then do you take life's sweet and good,
Yet cannot trust that tender Fatherhood,
But think it makes mistakes whene'er it sends
Some hindrance which your eager haste offends?

Or when He lets the wicked plot you harm,
And stir a whirlwind when you seek a calm,
You think it strange, this trial swift and keen,
And in your weakness ask, 'What does it mean?'

I think the language of God's heart would read:
'I love My child, I note his slightest need;
I long to prosper him in all his ways,
To give him quiet nights and peaceful days,
But if I do, he'll lose himself from Me,
My outstretched hand he will not wait to see;
I'll place a hindering wall before his feet;
There He will wait, and there we two will meet.'

I do it not in wrath for broken laws,
Or willful disobedience, but because
I want him nearer, and I cannot wait
For him to come, for he might wander late.
My child will wonder, will not understand,
Still half in doubt he'll clasp My outstretched hand;
But when at last upon My heart he leans
He will have ceased to wonder what it means.'

-R. 4923

For He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU.” So we may boldly say: “THE LORD IS MY HELPER. I WILL NOT FEAR. WHAT CAN MAN DO TO ME?”

– Hebrews 13:5-6 –

Should the child of God, the heir of glory, the inheritor of all the exceeding great and precious promises, and the present companion of Divinity itself which condescends to our low estate, ever feel desolate or forsaken or alone? or fear that his love will ever forsake or leave him to be tossed helplessly upon the billows of misfortune at the mercy of the prince of this world who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience? Ah, no! Greater is he that is for us than all they that can be against us. We are not alone in the world; for we have the blessed promise, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” (Heb. 13:5.) Nor is the smallest interest of ours overlooked:

Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore. You are of more value than many sparrows.

Matthew 10:29-31

How truly “exceeding great” is this present “reward” of the faithful saints who are daily and hourly walking with God—going about the Father’s business, spreading abroad the honor of his name, meekly bearing the reproaches of Christ, enduring hardness as good soldiers in his service and taking up their cross daily and following in the Master’s footprints. Truly we can say to the world, as did our Lord, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of.” The world cannot comprehend our joy, nor know the sweets of this fellowship with God and with his dear Son; for “The secret of the Lord is [only] with them that fear him.” —Psa. 25:14.

The LORD is on my side. I will not fear. What can man do to me?
Psalm 118:6

With this confidence in God, then, these have no fear. He has assured them that He is able to make all things work together for their good. If at first they found that as followers of Jesus they had more trials, more difficulties from the world, the flesh and the Adversary than any other people in the world, this realization may have filled them with alarm and intimidated them. But as they have gone to the Father in the spirit of prayer and hearkened to the message which He has sent through the Prophets and Apostles, they have learned that He is dealing with them as New Creatures. Gradually they learn that “no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

The Father will not withhold anything necessary for the proper development of His children. He also promises that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to endure, lest some injury come to us. Thus we see that He is supplying all our needs, enabling us to lay down our earthly lives. And as we learn the proper lessons from our experiences, we find that perfect love casts out all servile fear of our Heavenly Father; for we love and trust Him. R. 1906 and R. 5296



Blessed is the man who endures temptation, for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

– James 1:12 –

Temptations come from a variety of sources. They may come from friends, who may tempt us to live a life of more or less self-indulgence, to relax in a measure our fidelity to the Lord. The enticements of wealth or worldly society, a natural love of ease and disinclination of the flesh to endure hardness—any or all of these may prove strong and subtle temptations to the Christian.

But if we love the Lord supremely, that love will become the chief impulse of our lives. Our one aim will be that we may glorify God in our spirit and in our body. We know that there are things which are displeasing to God, and if we love Him we will seek to keep His commandments. The child of God might fail once, or he might fail repeatedly along the same line, until in deep humiliation and anguish of soul because of his continued manifestation of the same weakness, he would be led to cry out with strong crying and tears to the Lord; and his pain and distress of heart might so impress upon him his need of greater watchfulness along that line that he would become strengthened for further attacks of the same nature, and thus be enabled to gain the victory over his besetment, his special weakness.

While we shall never reach the point of perfection in the flesh, nevertheless this power to endure temptation should become more marked day by day, as the New Creature remains loyal, still resisting and striving still harder to resist and be true to the Lord in thought and word and deed. Blessed is the man who shall endure—time after time, day after day—thus proving his faithfulness and obedience to God. For when that man is tried, when the trial time is over, when God has seen that he has demonstrated fully his loyalty, then, when God's "due time" has come, that tried and proven one shall receive the crown of life. R. 5499

See also entry for 2 Tim. 4:8 on p. 289

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

– James 4:7 –

Satan cannot overcome a decided human will. God has given every creature this defense; and whoever does not break down this defense by a persistent yielding up of that will to evil influence, can resist the power of sin and of Satan to a considerable degree. But poor humanity needs Divine help to free themselves entirely from this great Adversary and his hosts of evil. The position of the Christian is invulnerable so long as he keeps close to the Source of his strength. Greater is He that is on our part than all that can be against us. If the time were come for the binding of Satan, our Lord would attend to it at once. But it has not yet fully come. God's children need not feel, however, that they must flee from Satan and his hosts. They have no such power that we need to strive to get away from them. But rather we should stand our ground, and should firmly resist their influence, knowing that with every temptation God has promised and provided a way of escape. With this knowledge we may be strong in the presence of any adversary.

When Christians take a decided stand against Satan and his wiles, they are relieved from his attacks—not that he flees from them in the sense that he is fearful of harm to himself, but that he

will leave them. He will retreat just as a general of an army would retreat from a city after having found that its gates were strongly protected and that attack was useless. If the Adversary finds one well protected and resisting him with a firm will, he will at once retreat. But if there be any parley with sin, any tendency to consider a matter when it is seen to be sin, an entrance is at once made for the Adversary; and he will renew the attack and press the matter, placing it in the most alluring light, in order that he may take control, that he may enter the heart where he has found the weakness.

Those who take their stand for the Lord, who give themselves fully and unreservedly to Him, He has agreed to protect. He may permit them to be assailed for a time, but He will deliver them so long as they remain loyal and true; and they will be made stronger as the result of the temptations. R. 5896

**The Lord is faithful, who will establish you and
guard you from the evil one.
2 Thessalonians 3:3**

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.
– James 4:8 –

During this Gospel Age he proffers himself as Advocate to all who may have the hearing ears and appreciative hearts and who may turn from sin to serve the living God to the best of their ability, and who may exercise faith in the Redeemer, and approach the Father through him. Such as thus approach God are approaching justification by their faith and by their obedience. To such God declares, “Draw nigh to me and I will draw nigh to you.” (James 4:8.) Every step that these advance from sin toward righteousness is a step toward God, toward justification, based upon their faith in God; toward Covenant relationship. To such God draws nigh in the same proportion. At first they are justified to fellowship with God, as Abraham was justified by his faith and obedience. But the call of this present time is to sonship and joint-heirship with Christ in his Kingdom.

Hence the Father points these who draw nigh to him to Jesus as “The way, the truth and the life,” and his message is, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” Those desiring fellowship with God to the full, to have his blessing of eternal life, may hope to attain it only through accepting the merit of Christ’s sacrifice by faith and by making a consecration of themselves to be his disciples, and to walk in his steps. Faith such as Abraham had and exercised so beautifully could not bring him nearer to God than justification to fellowship and to receive a certain blessing promised, a “better resurrection.” But those who come now to God, in view of the sacrifice of Christ, may accept him as their Advocate, and through him have full presentation to the Father, and may enter fully into covenant relationship with him as sons. There is no other invitation at the present time than that of the spirit of full devotion to the Father’s will; these alone are now sought.

Let us cultivate the Lord’s acquaintance more, drawing near to him in prayer, in the study of his precious Word, in meditation upon all his goodness, his providential care, the marked manifestations of his grace in our own individual experiences, and his precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Thus “draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you” (James 4:8), he will manifest himself to you and take up his abode with you. R. 4632 and R. 1949

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.
– James 4:10 –

This is a great lesson applicable, not only to the natural man, seeking progress back to fellowship and harmony with God, but there is in it also a lesson to the “new creature” all through life’s journey,—that if divine favor is desired and to be expected it must be sought; not in pride, not in self-sufficiency, but in humility. The Lord resisteth the proud, the self-sufficient, the boastful, and sheweth his favors unto the humble. The Apostle James likewise calls attention to the importance of this grace of humility, assuring us that no true progress can be made in the way to God, except by the humble. (Jam. 4:10.) And the Apostle Peter, after exhorting to humility, saying, “Yea, all of you, be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility,” adds, “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”—1 Pet. 5:5-6.

To humble ourselves does not necessarily mean to think that we have no talent, no power, no ability. Such an attitude would be foolishness. But we should think soberly of ourselves. We should think of all our powers as coming from God. So if we find that we have some blessings more than our neighbor or our brother or our sister, let us be thankful; but let us not for a moment think that we have anything to make us proud. It is a gift. We should appreciate the gift, but we should not be puffed up over its possession. The fact that we have received the gift indicates that we lacked it, needed it.

The most submissive will receive the greatest blessings. God will test our submission and our humility. We cannot suppose that our Lord Jesus, who was perfect, did not know that He had perfect powers. But no matter what His own ideas were, He submitted Himself to the Father, and said, “Not My will, but Thine, be done.” R. 2700 and R. 5843

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.

– 1 Peter 1:3-4 –

Can mortal man conceive so marvelous a glory? The very thought of such a Calling should cause us to bow our hearts in the dust before our God, realizing our great unworthiness of such stupendous grace—of bliss so transcendent! What can we render unto the Lord that can fittingly demonstrate our gratitude, our thankfulness, for so unspeakable a favor? Surely, the most faithful service we can give is but a very feeble return to Him who has so loved us, so blessed us, so honored us!

We are joint-heirs with the Lord of Glory to this wonderful inheritance, if only we are faithful unto death and keep our garments white. To us “old things have passed away, and all things have become new.” As old creatures we had no standing with God; we were feeding on the beggarly elements of the world. We were dead in trespasses and in sins. It is only as New Creatures that we have any standing, that we can please God, that we can work for Him. R. 5855

Cast all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.
1 Peter 5:7

What can it mean? Is it aught to him
 That the nights are long and the days are dim?
 Can he be touched by the griefs I bear,
 Which sadden the heart and whiten the hair?
 Around his throne are eternal calms,
 And strong, glad music of happy psalms,
 And bliss unruffled by any strife.
 How can he care for my poor life?
 And yet I want him to care for me,
 While I live in this world where the sorrows be;
 When the lights die down on the path I take;
 When strength is feeble, and friends forsake;
 When love and music, that once did bless,
 Have left me to silence and loneliness;
 And life-song changes to sobbing prayers--
 Then my heart cries out for a God who cares.
 When shadows hang o'er me the whole day long,
 And my spirit is bowed with shame and wrong;
 When I am not good, and the deeper shade
 Of conscious sin makes my heart afraid;
 And the busy world has too much to do
 To stay in its course to help me through,
 And I long for a Saviour--can it be
 That the God of the universe cares for me?
 Oh wonderful story of deathless love!
 Each child is dear to that heart above:
 He fights for me when I can not fight;
 He comforts me in the gloom of night;
 He lifts the burden, for he is strong;
 He stills the sigh, and awakens the song;
 The sorrow that bowed me down he bears,
 And loves and pardons, because he cares.
 Let all who are sad take heart again.
 We are not alone in our hours of pain;
 Our Father stoops from his throne above
 To soothe and quiet us with his love.
 He leaves us not when the storm is high,
 And we have safety, for he is nigh.
 Can that be trouble which he doth share?
 Oh, rest in peace, for the Lord does care!

--*Poems of Dawn*, p. 86



Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.

– 2 Peter 1:2-3 –

“Through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” At first it may occur to some that this has but a slight meaning, and that it simply signifies that we come to know that there is a God, and that there is a Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. But the knowledge of God means far more than this to the advancing and developing Christian: to him it means an intimate acquaintance with the Father and with the Son, a knowledge of the “mind of Christ,” which is a full and clear representation to us of the mind of the Father. We are to grow in this knowledge by studying the Word of God, by discerning through that Word the principles which govern the divine conduct, as to how divine justice, wisdom, love and power operate. These are progressive studies.

The Apostle, continuing, assures us that through this knowledge of God is imparted to us as by divine power **“all things that pertain unto life and godliness.”** What an assurance! This statement of the importance of knowledge for our Christian development in every direction reminds us of the words of our Lord, “This is life eternal; that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3.) To **know God**, as the Apostle here explains, signifies an **intimate acquaintance** with “him that hath called us by his own glory and virtue.” It is only as we realize something of the greatness and perfection of the divine character that we are properly able to estimate our own littleness and imperfection; only as we see the beauties of his gracious character can we become intimately acquainted with God, familiar with his graces and virtues. The influence of this knowledge and fellowship with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, reacts upon our own hearts, and has a cleansing and sanctifying effect. Thus the Apostle prays for some that they might grow in the knowledge of God so as to be able to “comprehend with all saints what is the length and the breadth, the depth and the height of the love of Christ which passeth [human] understanding.” (Eph. 3:14-19.) Those beholding the divine character, even though but dimly, as through a glass, are thereby changed from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord.

—2 Cor. 3:18. R. 2136

What then is God seeking? To what has He called us? The Apostle Peter says that God has “called us to glory and virtue.” (2 Peter 1:3.) Certain conditions God requires of those who will run in the race. He requires that none be proud, but that they possess humility. And He will have no one in the Kingdom of His Elect who is weak, vacillating, so far as his *mind* is concerned. He may not have a strong *intellect*; but he must manifest to God that he has a strong *will* and *firm determination*, and that he has cut off everything in life in order to win the prize. He must also demonstrate his loyalty to God. He must not merely seek glory, but he must recognize and appreciate his responsibilities to God.

Loyalty is one of the great tests of character—loyalty to *God*, to His *Word*, loyalty to *principle*. Whatever follows, the Christian must be submissive to God, trustful and faithful. To such alone could we expect God to give the great blessings promised to overcomers. Hence we see that the Apostle was quite right in giving up *all* that he might serve God, that he might please the Father, and thus attain to this glorious reward of joint-heirship with His Son. R. 5081

**5 Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,
6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to
perseverance godliness,
7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.
8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither
barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness,
and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.
10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and
election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble,
11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the
everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

– 2 Peter 1:5-11 –

To those who are of this anointed company and who are striving to attain the glory promised to the faithful followers of Christ, the Apostle Peter issues a word of warning. In the first chapter of his second Epistle, he urges the Church to add quality after quality of character-preparation, that thus they may be fitted for the glorious things that God has promised to the faithful. He specifies **faith** as the primary qualification. To this he says that we are to add fortitude, knowledge, patience, self-control, godliness, brotherly kindness and a broad, generous love for all mankind. The reason why the Scriptures declare that our judgment will be according to our **faith** is that while in the flesh we shall never be able to perform **works** such as God could approve.

What God approves is the New Creature. By exercising faith and by demonstrating loyalty these New Creatures will be able to please Him, and to work out the proper character as enjoined in His Word, developing the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit.

As our text declares, if these things abound and if we give diligence to the making sure of our calling and election and do these things, we shall never fail—we shall in no case fail of securing our election. God seeketh such for joint-heirship with their Redeemer in the Kingdom. God “seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth.”

The grand consummation of our election—our Kingdom honors and glories—is specifically referred to by St. Peter in the next verse, saying, “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” If, dear Brethren, we believe these things, let us permit them to control our lives—our words, our deeds and our thoughts. R. 5460 and HG447



*There will be a glorious welcome, a joyous greeting and a coronation jubilee
among all the heavenly hosts when the laurels of victory are placed upon
the heads of all the overcoming soldiers of the cross, the heroes who
nobly fought the good fight of faith—who kept the faith, fought the fight
against the world, the flesh and the devil, and finished their course in
faithfulness even unto death. All this abundance of grace and glory is
the possible inheritance of even the weakest saint who, trusting not to his
own ability to make his calling and election sure, humbly looks to God for
strength from day to day to endure hardness as a good soldier. R. 2154*

This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

– 1 John 1:5 –

The scope of [God's] mighty intellect reaches to the **utmost bounds of possibility**, comprehends all **causes** and discerns with precision all **effects**; consequently, He knows the end from the beginning, and that, not only from philosophical principles, but also by **intuition**. As the Creator of all things and the originator of all law, He is thoroughly acquainted with all the intricate subtleties of physical, moral and intellectual law, so that no problem could arise the results of which are not manifest to His mind. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." —1 John 1:5.

God, the Creator of all things, is also the competent Sustainer of all things. In silent grandeur, from Age to Age, the whole physical universe fulfills His will, without a suspicion of disorder or mishap; and the same Power is pledged for its sustenance throughout the eternal future.

Thus from His own vast, inherent resources of Power and Wisdom, springs the peace of God. But not from this source alone is the Divine peace; for peace is the certain concomitant of inherent goodness. God is the impersonation of every virtue and every grace; and consequently He has the blessed satisfaction and peace of conscious moral perfection as well as inherent Wisdom and Power. R. 5284

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

– 1 John 1:9 –

Our text undoubtedly refers to those now called of God to be members of the Bride of Christ, and sharers of the liberty and glory of sonship on the spirit plane. Nevertheless it states a principle which will be applicable also during the thousand years of Messiah's reign. None then need expect to make progress on the Highway of Holiness except first they confess their sins and turn from them and accept the proffered blessing of Messiah, who then will be reigning for the very purpose of destroying sin and uplifting sinners.

Those who have become new creatures in Christ by faith and obedience—those who have taken up their cross to follow Him and have been begotten of the Holy Spirit—God has agreed to forgive all their unwilling trespasses upon request. Hence the Apostle John here says that it will be merely just on God's part to fulfill to His holy ones this promise which He has made to them. Reasoning upon the same subject St. Paul urges, "Let us come with courage to the throne of heavenly grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." —Heb. 4:16.

These assurances of Divine favor and willingness to forgive are designed to have upon our hearts a mellowing influence which will make us all the more careful to avoid sin and to maintain fellowship with Him who is the perfection of light and holiness. "These things are written that we sin not"—that we become not boastful of self, self-righteous, self-justified, and thus abominable in the Lord's sight; but that, fleeing from our weaknesses and imperfections, we lay hold upon the grace of God in Christ for their forgiveness, and for grace and strength to fight a good fight against sin. R. 4931 and R. 5939

If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

– 1 John 2:1 –

Our Advocate is more than an advocate, more than a representative at the bar of Divine Justice, interested in our welfare and forgiveness; He is in addition the One who gave Himself for us, who at Calvary finished the work of providing a propitiation (**satisfaction**) for our sins. This is the reason why we may come “with boldness [confidence] to the Throne of Grace,” not only realizing that God is for us, and that the Lord Jesus sympathizes with us, and is our Advocate, but also and especially realizing the merit of the sacrifice which He has already deposited with Justice, and which He fully imputed on behalf of all who love and obey Him, upon their acceptance of the Father’s terms. R. 5939

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

– 1 John 3:2 –

From Sinai to Calvary he dealt with the Jewish nation only but not with the world; and since Calvary to the second advent of our Lord and the completion of the church, he deals not with the world but with the special class who he calls out of the world—the household of faiths from amongst whom he selects the “very elect” to be the bride and joint-heir with their Redeemer, and to be associated with Him in His millennial kingdom glory. The Apostle declares this to be the mystery, the secret of the divine plan which obscures the same from the minds of men in general. Our Lord Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, the King of Israel, of whom it had been written that he should bless all the families of the earth through His glorious kingdom reign. But, instead of beginning that reign, that kingdom, that blessing of the world, that scattering of darkness and binding of Satan as soon as he had paid the ransom price, He instead began another feature of the divine plan, namely, the selection of the kingdom class and company of joint-heirs, a “little flock” to be the bride of Christ, otherwise styled “members of His body.” [Eph. 5:30]

This has been the work of the entire Gospel age, anything else being merely incidental thereto, and as soon as this selection of the church and the polishing and preparation of the individuals thereof is completed, the next work will be in order—the pouring out of a blessing through these upon humanity in general. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is.” (1 John 3:2)

Precious will be the experiences of the Church. Before beholding Him who is declared to be “the express image of the Father’s person,” “whom no man hath seen nor can see, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto”—before this, we shall have been changed, glorified. This will enable us to see Him as He is, for the glory of the Church will be like to the glory of her Lord, and superior to the glory of the angels.

While heavenly glory does not consist exclusively of brightness, nevertheless the Scriptures everywhere seem to associate bright-shining with the heavenly ones, and would imply that the higher the station and rank the brighter will be the sheen, the glory. Thus the glory of the Heavenly

Father is represented as being so great that few could endure it; and angels and seraphim are represented as veiling their faces before the Divine glory, which so greatly transcends their own.

It should not, therefore, surprise us that the Scriptures everywhere represent that our Lord Jesus and the Church, "made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), will have a great honor and brightness, far above that of angels and all others except that of the Heavenly Father. As the Lord Jesus was able to veil the glories of His person and to appear as a man after His resurrection, so undoubtedly He could do as respects the world, during the thousand years of His Messianic Reign.

And, similarly, it would be possible for the Church to appear as men with the glory veiled. It might appear at first as though this was what was signified through the Mosaic type when Moses, representing Messiah in glory, came down from the mountain, his face radiant, but veiled for the sake of the people. Our thought, however, is that Jesus and the Church will never thus appear in the flesh as angels have done in the past, but that on the contrary the Ancient Worthies, perfected on the human plane, will be their agents and representatives in all communications with mankind. Thus, "the Law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the Spirit Kingdom), and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (the earthly Kingdom), to every nation, people, kindred and tongue, that all may be blest if they will and attain everlasting life. NS527 and R. 5035

*The Lord's faithful,
consecrated ones are His sons even
now, though hampered with unfavorable
surroundings and imperfect conditions. They
are waiting for their "change," which shall be
accomplished in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,
and which will constitute their resurrection from human
to spirit conditions. This is the same epoch, this is the
same glorious refreshment coming to the world at our
Lord's second advent and the glorification of the Church
which the Apostle Peter so graphically portrays, saying,
"Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of
the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was
preached unto you: whom the heavens must retain
until the times of restitution of all things which God
hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets
since the world began." Acts 3:19-21 NS527*

**For whatever is born of God overcomes the
world. And this is the victory that has
overcome the world—**

our faith.

1 John 5:4

They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders, and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

– Revelation 14:3 –

Our Lord in symbol pointed out to us the fact that the message of his grace in the closing days of this Gospel Age would be so different from the commonly accepted message, misnamed the Gospel, that it would properly be termed a new song, although it would be the old song of Moses—the message of blessing typified by the writings of Moses and by all the ceremonies of the Law, and the message of the Lamb, the good tidings announced in connection with our Lord's birth, and throughout his own ministry, when all the people “bare him record, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth” (not threats of eternal torment to nine-tenths of the human family); and the testimony of all the apostles respecting the Lamb of God and the great work to be accomplished by him in taking “away the sin of the world.” It is merely this same song that is now being sung by those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of present truth—it is “the joyful sound” which only the people thus blessed know or can sing.

**Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound!
They walk, O LORD, in the light of Your countenance.
Psalm 89:15**

Only here and there can any be found who “know the joyful sound”—who can distinguish the joyful sound of the heavenly message from those by which Satan has “deceived all that dwell upon the earth.”—Rev. 18:23; 19:20; 20:3.

It is a worldly proverb that truth is stranger than fiction, yet this proverb is illustrated throughout “Christendom” today—the vast, vast majority of professed followers of Christ are strangers to the truth, but thoroughly familiar with the fictions of human invention—“traditions of the elders,” which “make void the Word of God.” It is in full accord with this that the angel declares to the Revelator that no man can learn to sing this song except the elect—the 144,000, the “little flock.” (Rev. 14:3.) Indeed, nothing is more manifest than that it is necessary to be somewhat of an “overcomer” of the world and its spirit which pervades nominal Christendom, ere any would have the courage to sing this song—to declare before men the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the goodness and grace of the divine plan, of which Jesus and his sacrifice are the center. To all others “the fear of man bringeth a snare,” and stoppeth their mouths from speaking “forth the praise of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.” “But the people that do know their God [his character and plan] shall be valiant and do exploits,” and like the apostles of old will feel and say, Whether it be right to obey God or men, judge ye; but we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. —Dan. 11:32; Acts 4:19,20.

These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

Revelation 14:4

To her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

– Revelation 19:8 –

Under the symbol of white raiment the Lord throughout his Word represents the righteousness of those whom he accepts as his people. Their righteousness in the future state will be a personal righteousness or holiness; and the guarantee of this is the promise that all who are accounted worthy, as "overcomers" of the world to be joint-heirs with Christ in the heavenly Kingdom, will in the resurrection be granted new, perfect, spiritual bodies, free from sin and impurity of every kind, and fully in harmony with their new wills or characters developed during the trial-time of this present life. That will be a time of which the Apostle speaks, saying, "When that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away." Those who attain to that glorious condition are symbolically represented as being clothed in white linen, representing their personal purity, completeness and perfection at that time: as it is written, "to her [the bride, the victorious Church] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the **righteousness of saints.**" —Rev. 19:8

Thus, seen, the Church in glory will stand arrayed in its own righteousness—the "righteousness of the saints;" but at the present time the saints have no righteousness of their own in which to present themselves at the throne of grace. As expressed by the prophet, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." It was for this very reason, because we were all defiled through sin, and unfit to approach into the divine presence, that God graciously provided, through the sacrifice of his Son, our Lord, a spotless robe of imputed righteousness, for all those who accept of him and the covenant of divine grace sealed with his precious blood. When by repentance and faith we desire to forsake sin and approach God, we are, by reason of obedient faith in the sacrifice, reckoned as covered before the divine eyes with the merit of him who "bought us with his own precious blood," which merit is symbolically represented as a linen garment, **Christ's righteousness**, instead of the filthy rags of our own righteousness. While covered by this robe, we may by faith exercise all the privileges and opportunities, which could be ours if the robe were actually our own—instead of merely a loaned or imputed robe, the property of our Redeemer. So long as by faith we are trusting in the great sacrifice for sin, and seeking to walk worthy of the Lord, this robe is ours, to have and to enjoy; but to lose this faith would be to lose all the advantages which come with the robe, and which continue only to the wearers.

This "wedding garment" [Matt. 22:11-13] when presented to us is clean and white, representing the absolute purity and spotlessness of our Lord's holiness; and the instruction to each one who receives the robe is "to keep his garments unspotted from the world." While our robe covers all our unwilling personal blemishes and uncleanness in our Lord's sight, and in the sight of brethren who see each other from the Lord's standpoint, yet the Lord desires and requires that we shall come into such close sympathy with absolute purity and righteousness in thought, word and deed that we will "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of God." (2 Cor. 7:1) And to this end he grants his sanctified (consecrated) and white robed ones the cleansing power of his truth, that thus his elect bride might be cleansed by

**the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to
Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that
she should be holy and without blemish.**

Ephesians 5:26-27

These, and these alone, walk with the Lord in white and are overcomers, who in due time shall be glorified with him and sit with him in his throne. R. 2159

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

– Revelation 21:9-10 –

The New Jerusalem, as a symbol, represents the new spiritual government of the Millennial age. It is not earth-born, it is not reared by men, but, as here pictured, it descends from God out of heaven—it is spiritual in every sense of the word—of God and not of men. The declaration that the city is adorned as a bride for her husband implies its grandeur and beauty and perfection, as a bride's adornment on such an occasion is particular and elaborate to the last degree. But additionally to this it reminds us that in the government of the future, the judges of the world are the saints, now being selected through faithfulness in trial and tribulation, and that these are frequently called the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir in the Kingdom.

And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Revelation 21:26-27

The bringing of their glory into the city, the Kingdom, signifies [the world's] acknowledgment of this heavenly Kingdom, their rendering of tribute of praise, thanks, worship and obedience to it as God's agency. And this rendering of glory to the Kingdom will continue throughout the entire Millennial age, as the princes throughout the earth will make known to the people that not in their own names or authority do they rule and execute judgment and establish righteousness, but in the name and as the ministers and representatives of the glorified Christ. The result will be that all the people will ascribe honor and praise and majesty and glory to the Lord's Anointed, through whom their redemption and restitution was and is being accomplished; and this is indicated in verse 26. R. 2832 and R. 2834

Then, in consideration of the fact that this book of symbols, while relating to the future, is addressed to God's consecrated elect Church in the present time, and in view of the fact that this message would be communicated to and more or less understood by those who would seek to make their calling and election sure to a part in the glorious city, the 27th verse is added, declaring that "In nowise shall there enter into it anything common, or he that doeth abomination and falsehood—but only they who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." The Lamb's Book of Life we must understand to include those, and only those, who attain to position of joint-heirship with Christ, whose names are written in heaven during this age, and who are faithful to their covenant. What a glorious incentive we have here to faithfulness! What a warning against the slightest sympathy with anything unclean, untrue, or in anywise contrary to the divine standard of holiness! If we appreciate the glorious things of the divine provision for the Church and for the world, these promises and offers will have their influence upon us, that thus we may abide in the Lord's love, and in the due time:

Give thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

Colossians 1:12

Then he said to me, “These words are faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.

– Revelation 22:6 –

Having pictured the work of restitution down to its consummation in the delivery of the kingdom to man, in harmony with the Father's intention, the address of the revelation changes. We are assured that these wonderful promises are faithful and true, that the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. Then the Master speaks to all of his Church who have ears to hear, saying,

Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.

Revelation 22:7

The intimation seems to be that the book being symbolical, none can understand it except as its seals are loosed, as its message opens before the Lord's people; and that when its sayings, its teachings come to be appreciated, it may be recognized by those who do understand it as an evidence that the Lord's second advent and the establishment of his Kingdom are close at hand.

Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”

Revelation 22:8-9

This thought is further borne out by the statement of verse 8. As we have already seen, John the revelator represented those favored members of the Church who, living in this end of the Gospel age, are granted the privilege of seeing and appreciating more and more the things which he saw in symbol. The revelation being complete, John fell down before the angel who had given him the revelation to offer him worship. This may signify that in the end of this Gospel age as the whole Church, the John class, comes to see the unfolding of the divine plan, there might be a spirit or disposition amongst them to do too much honor to the one used of the Lord in communicating to them the divine light now due.

The proprieties of the case are set forth to us in the conduct of the symbolical angel who talked to John and who represented some in the end of this age commissioned to present God's truths to his people. He said, “See thou do it not”—do not worship me, for I am not the author of this plan. I am thy fellow servant, a brother to all the prophets and all those who keep the message of this revelation. God alone should be worshiped: he is the Author of the great plan and will be the finisher of it. It is brought to our attention now by him because it is now “due time” for his people to come to an appreciation of his plans. R. 3572

And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.”

Revelation 22:10



We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
2 Corinthians 4:18



‘From glory unto glory’ that ever lies before,
Still wondering, adoring, rejoicing more and more;
Still following where He leadeth, from shining field to field,
Himself the goal of glory, Revealer and revealed!

Then let our hearts be surely fixed where truest joys are found,
And let our burning, loving praise yet more and more abound;
And gazing on the ‘things not seen’ eternal in the skies,
‘From glory unto glory,’ O Savior, let us rise!

– F. R. Havergal

Epilogue

Hear the Lord's exhortation to the **Bride** class: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear. Forget also thine own people and thy father's house [the ambitions, hopes and aims of the children of Adam]; so shall the King [Jehovah's Anointed] greatly desire thy beauty [beauty of character, of heart-loyalty]; for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him." (Psalm 45:10,11; Canticles 4.)

How unworthy we feel of so great honor and love from our beloved Bridegroom! And no wonder! When we look at all our imperfections, it seems that there is little in us to call forth such love and admiration. To think that the angels with all their purity and faithfulness should have been passed by; and that we poor, blemished mortals, should be chosen instead!

Is there not some mistake? Ah, no! This Bride of Jehovah's Son is to reign with Him in the future over a fallen race; and who could so well sympathize with them in all their weaknesses and frailties as those who have themselves partaken of the same? And who could bear the infinite heights of glory to which the Lamb's Wife will be raised, with such humility as those who realize that it was not through any worthiness of their own that they were chosen to so high an exaltation, but that it was all of Divine grace? Clad in the glorious Robe of our Bridegroom's furnishing, we can stand all complete, even now, in the eyes of Jehovah. And possessing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, the faith that trusts under every condition, the love that delights to do the Father's will, we are lovely in the eyes of our Beloved, our Bridegroom and our King.

Having this confidence, we can with unspeakable joy and gratitude lay hold of the exceeding great and precious promises which are ours through Christ, and without presumption press along the line toward the prize of our High Calling, humbly trusting that He who has begun the good work in us will complete it unto the day of our glorification with our Bridegroom in the Heavenly Kingdom, when we shall be presented before the Father "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," gloriously complete and perfect, in the most absolute sense, fitted and prepared for the wonderful work which we shall share with our blessed Lord and King.

Listen to some of the blessed and inspiring promises with which the Father and the Son cheer the Bride: "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." Ye "shall be Mine, in that Day when I make up My jewels." "I will give thee to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give thee a white stone [a precious token of love], and in the stone a new name written [the name of our Bridegroom, henceforth to be our name] which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." "Lo, I am with you alway." "And if I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also [and He has come, He is even now present, and will soon receive us unto Himself forevermore]." "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "To Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne." —Isaiah 33:17; Malachi 3:17; Revelation 2:17; Matthew 28:20; John 14:3; 15:16; Revelation 2:10; 3:21.

Precious promises are these, wonderful words of life! Let us count them over and over again, that all their sweet significance may sink deep into our hearts and bring forth their blessed fruitage in our lives. May they cheer us in every dark and trying hour and reinforce our waning powers with renewed vigor, courage and zeal, that we may press along the narrow

way until indeed our “eyes shall see the King in His beauty.” What wondrous treasures do we thus find laid up in Heaven for us, because we have left the world and all its delusive fancies and aspirations and have laid hold upon the things eternal! And while this glorious inheritance is to be the possession of all the faithful, the Apostle intimates clearly that our Heavenly treasure may be augmented by special zeal and faithfulness under the peculiar trials of the present time.

One of the treasures which we may lay up in Heaven will be the marks of just approval and distinction among the good and holy beyond the veil, which patient endurance of affliction, unwavering trust under crucial trials and testings, diligence in the King’s business, will secure to us. Treasures of mind and character, too, we shall find laid up in Heaven; for nothing that is good and true and worthy of preservation shall be lost to those who have committed their investments to the Lord. These are incorruptible treasures, which neither the lapse of time nor the exigencies of circumstances will ever wrest from us.

Other treasures will be all the true and noble friendships which have been founded in truth and righteousness here on earth, whether they be on the spiritual or on the natural plane. For instance, one on the spiritual plane will not be disposed to forget or ignore the loving loyalty of a former friend, who from time to time administered the cup of cold water to the thirsty soul battling with the heat and dust of life’s desert way, and who did this because the one ministered to was a disciple of Christ.

But especially sweet will be the spiritual friendships begun and cherished here, which will bloom and blossom in still greater vigor when transplanted into Heavenly soil and atmosphere. And what a treasure we shall find in the gratitude and love of those to whom we have ministered here in times of special need, and to whom we have carried the Living water and broken the Bread of Life! Who can measure the joy unspeakable that shall be the heritage of the faithful when we shall find all these precious treasures beyond the veil! When we view these treasures with unclouded eyes, and realize that they are ours forever, shall we not feel infinitely repaid for any sufferings and hardships we have borne in our brief earthly pilgrimage?

Then, dear brethren and sisters in Christ, let us keep our eyes steadfastly set upon the Heavenly, eternal things. Let us more and more lay up treasures where “moth and rust cannot corrupt and where thieves cannot break through and steal.” (Matthew 6:20.) If our hearts are upon the Heavenly treasures, then the disappointments and afflictions of the present life cannot overwhelm us. Whatsoever things are worthy the aspiration of the spiritual sons of God are our real treasures, and they are the only things that are worth while. What care we for the illusive bubbles of this poor life, so soon to burst and disappear? Then, as sings the poet:

**Let us touch lightly the things of this earth,
Esteeming them only of trifling worth,**

not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, if we faint not by the way, but with our pilgrim’s staff in hand shall press along the Heavenly road until we reach the goal of our hopes. R. 5862



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References

CR	<i>Convention Reports Sermons</i> from C. T. Russell
D	Studies in the Scriptures, Volume 4, <i>The Battle of Armageddon</i> by C. T. Russell
E	Studies in the Scriptures, Volume 5, <i>The Atonement Between God and Man</i> by C. T. Russell
F	Studies in the Scriptures, Volume 6, <i>The New Creation</i> by C. T. Russell
HG	<i>Harvest Gleanings</i> by C. T. Russell
NS	<i>Harvest Gleanings II</i> (Newspaper Sermons) by C. T. Russell
Q	<i>Question Book (What Pastor Russell Said)</i> from C. T. Russell
R	Reprinted article from <i>Zion's Watchtower</i> by C. T. Russell
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Appendix

Other References and Names for The New Creation

- Abraham's Seed (Gal. 3:29)
- Adopted (Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5)
- Alive (Eph. 2:1,5)
- Ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20)
- Anointed (2 Cor. 1:21)
- Begotten (1 Pet. 1:3)
- Believers (Acts 5:14)
- Beloved (Phil. 4:1)
- Body of Christ (Col. 1:18)
- Branches (John 15:5)
- Brethren (Heb. 2:11; Heb. 2:17)
- Bride (Rev. 21:2)
- Brotherhood (1 Pet. 2:17)
- Called (Rom. 8:28)
- Called, Chosen, Faithful (Rev. 17:14)
- Chaste Virgin (2 Cor. 11:2)
- Children of God (Rom. 8:16; 1 John 3:1-2)
- Children of Promise (Gal. 4:28)
- Chosen (Matt. 20:16)
- Chosen Generation (1 Pet. 2:9)
- Church (Eph. 1:22; Eph. 5:27)
- Church of the Firstborn (Heb. 12:23)
- Church of the Living God (1 Tim. 3:15)
- Consecrated (Ex. 30:30; Lev. 11:44)
- Daughter (Psa. 45:10)
- Deliverer (Rom. 11:26)
- Disciples (John 13:35; Acts 6:7)
- Eagles (Matt. 24:28)
- Elect (Matt. 24:31)
- Epistles of Christ (2 Cor. 3:2-3)
- Faithful (Rev. 17:14; Rev. 2:10)
- Feet Members (Isa. 52:7)
- Fellow Citizens (Eph. 2:19)
- Firstfruits (Jam. 1:18; Rev. 14:4)
- Followers of the Lamb (Rev. 14:4)
- Friends (John 15:15)
- Glorified (Rom. 8:17; Rom. 8:30)
- Heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22)
- Heir of God (Gal. 4:7)
- Heirs (Gal. 3:29)
- Heirs of Salvation (KJV) (Heb. 1:14)
- Holy Brethren (Heb. 3:1)
- Holy City (Rev. 21:2)
- Holy Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10)
- Holy Nation (1 Pet. 2:9)
- Holy Priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5)
- Holy Temple (Eph. 2:21)
- House of Sons (Heb. 3:6)
- Inner Man (Eph. 3:16)
- Israelite Indeed (John 1:47)
- Jewels (Mal. 3:17)
- Joint-heirs (Rom. 8:17)
- Justified (Rom. 8:30)
- Kings and Priests (Rev. 1:6)
- Lamb's Wife (Rev. 19:7; Rev. 21:9)
- Little Flock (Luke 12:32)
- Living Sacrifice (Rom. 12:1)
- Living Stones (1 Pet. 2:5)
- Members of the Household of God (Eph. 2:19)
- More Than Conquerors (Rom. 8:37)
- Mount Zion (Psa. 48:2; Heb. 12:22)
- My People (Rev. 18:4)
- New Creatures (KJV) (2 Cor. 5:17)
- New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2)
- One-hundred Forty-four Thousand (Rev. 14:1)
- Overcomers (Rev. 3:12)
- Partakers of the Divine Nature (2 Pet. 1:3-4)
- Partakers of the Heavenly Calling (Heb. 3:1)
- Peculiar People (1 Pet. 2:9)
- People for His Name (Acts 15:14)
- People of God (1 Pet. 2:10)
- Pillar (Rev. 3:12)
- Predestined (Rom. 8:30)
- Quickened (KJV) (Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13)
- Royal Daughter (Psa. 45:13)
- Royal Priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9)
- Saints (Psa. 50:5; Eph. 4:12)
- Sanctified (1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 2:11)
- Seed of Abraham (Heb. 2:16)
- Servant (John 12:26)
- Servants of God (1 Pet. 2:16)
- Servants of Righteousness (KJV) (Rom. 6:18)
- Sheep (John 10:14; Matt. 26:31)
- Slaves of God (Rom. 6:22)
- Soldiers of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 2:3)
- Sons (Gal. 4:6; Heb. 12:7)
- Sons of God (Gal. 3:26)
- Spiritual House (1 Pet. 2:5)
- Stone Cut Without Hands (Dan. 2:45)
- Strangers and Pilgrims (KJV) (1 Pet. 2:11)
- Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2)
- Temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16)
- The LORD Our Righteousness (Jer. 33:16)
- The Righteous (Matt. 13:43)
- The Strong (Isa. 53:12)
- Vessel for Honor (2 Tim. 2:21)
- Vessels of Mercy (Rom. 9:23)
- Virgins (Rev. 14:4)
- Wheat (Matt. 13:30)
- Wise Virgins (Matt. 25:7-9)
- Zion (Psa. 50:2; Isa. 2:3)