



Food For Thinking Christians

A GLIMPSE OF TOMORROW



Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.—Rev. 21:4

Refrain Thine Voice From Weeping and Thine Eyes From Tears

The Lord through the Prophet Jeremiah sends a message of consolation for the heart of every bereaved parent trusting in him. We read, "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy."—Jer. 31:15-17.

Five items in our text fasten our attention:

First. Sorrow for the dead, which is universal; as the Apostle declares, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together."

Second. The nature of the comfort described—the hope of a resurrection, the hope of the recovery of the dead—"They shall come again," they shall be restored to life.

Third. That in death our dear ones are in "the land of the enemy"; in harmony with the Apostle's declaration, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 Cor. 15:26.

Fourth. That the labors of the parents in endeavoring to properly rear their children are not lost, "Thy work shall be rewarded."



Fifth. Last but not least in importance in this text is the declaration that this is the Word of the Lord, which cannot be broken—the Word which is sure of fulfillment, however different it may be from the word of man on this subject.

**Tears Not Weakness—
"Jesus Wept"**

Sorrow for the dead is not a sign of weakness, but rather the re-

verse—a sign of love and sympathy, of something more than selfishness. If any demonstration of this thought were necessary it is furnished us in the statement of the shortest verse in the Bible—"Jesus wept." Our Lord's tears were shed on a funeral occasion, too; Lazarus, his friend, the brother of Martha and Mary, was dead. Our Lord entered fully into the spirit of the occasion, with a deeper appreciation of the awful meaning of the word death than could possibly be entertained by those about him. He appreciated more than any of the fallen, dying race the great blessing and privilege of living, and what a terrible affliction was death—destruction, annihilation.

On the other hand, however, he understood more clearly than any of his hearers the gracious plan of God for the rescue of the race from annihilation. He realized that for this purpose he had come into the world, that he might give his life as the ransom price for Father Adam, and thus incidentally for every member of the Adamic race involved in death through the first transgression in Eden. The Master realized from the standpoint of faith in the Father's plan, and his confident intention to carry out his own part in that plan and to lay down his life as our redemption price, that thus resurrection blessings would come to every member of the race.

"Not Dead But Sleeping"

Let us note carefully the nature of the consolation which our Lord tendered to the sorrowing ones about him on this occasion. Let us be assured that "He who spake as never man spake" gave the soundest and best comfort. The consolation which he gave was that "Lazarus sleepeth." He neither spake of him nor thought of him as being dead in the sense of annihilation, because he had full confidence in the divine plan of redemption and in the resurrection blessings resulting. Hence the interim of death he spoke of as

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TRUTH—WOUNDED IN THE HOUSE OF ITS FRIENDS

"Study to Show Thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."—2 Tim. 2:15.

Although the world is full of denominations, each claiming to be the Church of Christ, we all admit that there is but the one "Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven" (Hebrews 12:23). This conviction is being borne in upon us more and more as the days go by, and as the eyes of our understanding open more widely to the teachings of God's Word. We realize increasingly that our division means our shame in the eyes of the world, and that our Creedal contradictions imply that we are not all led in all things by the Holy Spirit, the teachings of which cannot be Yea and Nay upon the same subject. It is this sentiment which is taking hold of the ministry of all denominations and making them anxious for an outward show of Unity in Church Federation, which will shortly be effected. The Christian public, however, and especially Bible Students, are not deeply sympathetic with the Federation idea. They realize that at most it would be a gloss of deception so far as doctrinal oneness is concerned; and that otherwise it is but a business or worldly combination.

Bible Students are more and more coming to prefer the Lord's way—the Scriptural way. They are coming to realize that what God's people need is not more organization but less organization, not more explicit creeds but the one standard of fellowship which the Bible sets up. They are learning that this simple creed is:—a turning from sin and acceptance of the Lord Jesus as the Redeemer from sin and death and the full consecration of the believer, mind and body, to know and to do the Lord's will to the best of his ability, under the Lord's Providential guidance. We all see that this simple bond of fellowship is the only one laid down in God's Word, and that whatsoever is more than this is injurious—bondage to men and to systems. We all see that "the Church of the Living God whose names are written in heaven" is composed exclusively of such as

conform to the terms of this simple creed—"that these alone will constitute The Church, which is his Body"—"the Bride, the Lamb's Wife," whom he will accept and unite to himself in the end of this age. We all see that this class alone is referred to in the Scriptures as "the elect," who are to be associated with the Savior in his glorious Spiritual Kingdom, which, invisible to men, is shortly to be established in power and great glory for the blessing of natural Israel and through her for the blessing of all the families of the earth—living and dead.

"Workmen Not Ashamed"

Let us consider the latter part of our text first: The Apostle's suggestion is that Timothy and all

the ministers of the Gospel of Christ are professedly workmen, laboring under the guidance of God's Word. In the larger sense every Christian is a minister of the Gospel, or, as St. Peter declares of all the consecrated, "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a Holy People, a Peculiar Treasure." In the end of the age will come a reckoning time, a showing of results, "Every man's work that he hath wrought shall be made manifest" (1 Corinthians 3:13).

Our text urges that Timothy, and every faithful servant of God, should be so loyal to God and his message that in the great time of examination in the end of this age preparatory to the introduction of the Kingdom the showing shall be

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WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN? WHAT ARE HIS STANDARDS?

"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."—Acts 26:28.

A Christian is a person who intelligently believes that he is by nature a sinner, that by Divine grace Jesus Christ the Righteous died for his sins, and that through faith in the atoning blood, and obedience to the Redeemer's teachings he has become "a New Creature in Christ Jesus." For such, "Old things have passed away, and all things have become new." Such New Creatures are separate and distinct from all other members of the race. Instead of earthly aims, ambitions and hopes, theirs are Heavenly.

Getting Into Christ's Body

It is not sufficient that these should make the proper start of faith in Christ and full consecration to do God's will and not their own wills. It is incumbent upon them, after having made such a start and after having been begotten of the Holy Spirit, that they shall grow in grace, knowledge and love. (2 Peter 3:18.) This is styled "putting on Christ"; that

is to say, adding the graces of character which God will accept and reward with association with the Lord Jesus Christ in His Kingdom. For these God has made provision of spiritual food in the Bible—"meat in due season for the Household of Faith." (Matthew 24:45.) These are represented as at first "babes in Christ," requiring "the milk of the Word," but if faithful, gradually attaining full stature—"strong in the Lord and the power of His might."

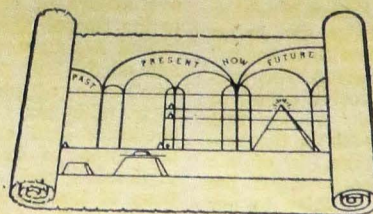
Such spirit-begotten Christians must needs "fight a good fight"—not with others, but with themselves—overcoming the weaknesses and besetments of their own fallen flesh, the allurements of their environment and the wiles of the Adversary. Such as are faithful in these respects are Scripturally styled "overcomers," "the very Elect." The promise to them is that they shall have part in the Chief, or best, Resurrection, and thereafter be no longer humans, but spirit beings of the highest order—"partakers of the Divine nature." These in death are "sown in weakness," "in dishonor," human beings, but are raised from the dead "in glory," "in power," spirit beings.—1 Corinthians 15:43.

Jesus' promise to these overcomers reads, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I overcame and am set down with My Father in His Throne"—"I will give him power over the nations," etc. Again He says, "Blessed and holy are all those who have part in the Chief Resurrection: on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be priests unto God and unto Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."—Revelation 3:21; 2:26; 20:6.

All Jesus' teachings are applicable to this special class; namely, those who become His disciples, His followers, His pupils. He did not assume to be a Teacher of the world, but merely of those who leave the world, sacrificing all to become His disciples. To these He said, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the

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GOD'S PLAN



*No other plan can ...
wipe away all tears
open the prison house of death
and —
reward your life, even now
with a richer faith*

REFRAIN THY VOICE FROM WEeping

Continued

sleep—quiet, restful, waiting sleep.

What a wonderful figure is this, so frequently used throughout the Scriptures by all those who trusted in the divine plan of a resurrection morning. In the Old Testament Scriptures we read frequently of sleep, Abraham slept with his fathers, so did Isaac, so did Jacob, so did all the Prophets, so did all Israel.

In the New Testament it is the same. Not only did our Lord speak of Lazarus sleeping, but the Apostles frequently used this same figure of sleep to represent their hope in a resurrection—that the dear ones who went down into death were not annihilated, but, as our text declares, "Will come again from the land of the enemy"—will awaken in the resurrection morning.

Thus, too, of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, it is written that though stoned to death, he "fell asleep," sweetly, restfully, trusting in Jesus and the great power which he ultimately would exercise to call forth from the power of death all redeemed by the precious blood. This, too, we remember, was the comfort the Apostle set before the early Church, saying, "Comfort one another with these words"—"They that sleep in Jesus shall God bring from the dead by him." (1 Thess. 4:14-18). Referring to the matter on one occasion the Apostle remarked, "We shall not all sleep, but we must all be changed." He referred to those who would be living at the second coming of Christ, whose resurrection "change" will not be preceded by a period of unconsciousness in death.

Let us go back to Jesus and the sorrowing sisters at Bethany, and hearken to the words of comfort extended to the bereaved on that occasion. We cannot improve upon the Great Teacher and the lessons which he presented. Let us hearken to his conversation with Martha. He says: "Thy brother shall live again." He does not say thy brother is living now. He did not say, as some erroneously teach today, thy brother is more alive in death than he was before he died. No! No! The Lord would not thus mock the common sense and reason of his hearers, nor could he thus violate the truth and declare the dead not dead.

Hearken! The Lord admits that a calamity has befallen the household. He says not a word about his friend Lazarus having gone to heaven—not an intimation of the sort. On the contrary, he has tears of sympathy, and holds out as the strongest and only truthful solution of the sorrow, the hope of a resurrection—"Thy brother shall live



again." "I am the resurrection and the life!" The hope of all the dead centers in me. My death will effect the cancellation of the original Adamic condemnation, and I shall have the right then in harmony with the Father's plan to call forth all the dead from the great prison-house of death, from the tomb. "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth."—John 5:28.

The Resurrection Morning

At the close of his conversation with Martha, explaining that her hope must center in a resurrection of the dead and that he was the center of that resurrection hope, our Lord asked for the tomb, intent upon giving an illustration of the power which by and by in the resurrection morning will be exercised toward the whole world of mankind. Standing at the door of the tomb our Lord cried in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" and

the dead came forth—he had been dead, he was quickened by our Lord's power and authority.

This, like other miracles performed by our dear Redeemer at his first advent, we are particularly told, was a fore-manifestation of his coming glory and power, an advance exhibit of what he will do at his second advent, only that the work at the second advent will be universal, higher, deeper, broader every way. "All the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped;" all that are in their graves shall come forth, not merely to relapse again into blindness and death, but a permanent recovery—not only recovery from the loss of natural sight and hearing, but the eyes and ears of their understanding will be opened also; not merely aroused from a sleep of death to a few years more under present conditions, but aroused to the intent that by obedience of the Divine arrangement of the Millennial Age all the awakened ones may attain to all the glorious perfections, mental, moral and physical, lost by Adam's disobedience.

"Times of Refreshing Shall Come"

Glorious hope of a glorious time. What wonder that the Apostle speaks of it as "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord when he shall send Jesus Christ." What wonder that he speaks of those years of the Millennial Age as "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21.

Lazarus died again, Jairus' daughter died again, the son of the widow of Nain died again. Their awakening from the tomb was merely a temporary matter, merely an illustration of the Lord's power; as it is written, "These things did Jesus and manifested forth his glory." These were merely foregleams of the coming power and glory and blessed work of the gracious Prophet, Priest and King whom God has appointed not only to redeem the world, but in due time to grant to all the opportunities secured by that redemption sacrifice.

The great blessing which will ultimately be for the world of mankind, as well as for the Church, centers in the coming of our Lord and Master, our Redeemer and King, and that the great blessings centering in him are not merely temporary, but designed of God to be everlasting and eternal to those who accept Divine favors in the right spirit, reverently, thankfully, obediently.

Death "The Land of the Enemy"

Why should death be called "The land of the enemy"? Why should it be written, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"? All because, disguise the facts as we may, death is an enemy. The suggestion that it is a friend comes not from the Word of God, but from heathen philosophies. The suggestion that it is unreal comes not from the Scriptures, but from heathendom. The suggestion that the dead are more alive than they were before they died is totally out of harmony with the Scriptural declaration—"The dead know not anything, their sons come to honor and they know it not, and to dishonor and they perceive it not of them," because "there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave whither thou goest." (Job 14:21; Eccl. 9:10.) The suggestion that we deceive ourselves and imagine without reason that the moment of death is the moment of greater life, is of the Adversary, who contradicted the Lord's statement in Eden to our first parents. When the Lord had declared, "Ye shall surely die" for your sin, Satan declared in contradiction, "Ye shall not surely die."—Gen. 3:2-4.

The Adversary has kept up this false teaching for 6,000 years, and at last not only heathendom is deceived by his misrepresentation of facts, but very many of Christendom likewise trust to the word of Satan, "Ye shall not surely die," and believe that the dead are not dead, and reject the testimony of God's Word that "the

wages of sin is death," that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," that "death has passed upon all men because all are sinners," and that the hope of the Church as well as the hope for the world lies in the fact that Christ died for our sins and redeemed us from the death sentence, and in the Father's due time is to effect a resurrection of the dead.

The Key of Death's Prison

Let us comfort our hearts with the true comfort, the substantial comfort of the Word of God—there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust.



When we see a precious blossom;
That we tended with such care,
Rudely taken from our bosom,
How our aching hearts despair.

In the dawning of the morning,
When this troubled night is o'er,
All these dead to life returning,
We'll rejoice to see once more.

All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth. The thousands of millions who have gone down into the great prison-house of death shall be released, because the Great Redeemer has the key, the power, the authority, to bid the prisoners come forth, even as the Scriptures declare.

What a glorious resurrection morning that will be! What a glorious reunion! We understand the Scriptural teaching to be that the awakening processes will continue throughout a considerable portion of the Millennial Age, the thousand-year day of resurrection and restitution. First will come the resurrection of the Church, the "Bride," the "Lamb's Wife," the "Body of Christ." These, as the Scriptures declare, will constitute the First Resurrection—not only first in order of time, but first in the sense of chief. In that company will be none except the saints; as it is written, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection; on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6.) Nevertheless that will be but a little flock, as the Scriptures declare, including "not many wise, not many great, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom."—1 Cor. 1:26, 27; Jas. 2:5.

Not long after the First Resurrection (the glorification of the Church), will come the resurrection of the Ancient Worthies—the overcomers of olden times prior to the Gospel Age. The assurance is that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the holy prophets—yes, all who were approved to God by their faith and their efforts to obedience—will come forth from the tomb to human conditions, glorious, grand, earthly illustrations of the heavenly Creator, to constitute the earthly representatives of the Kingdom, the instructors of mankind.

The instruction of the world will forthwith proceed. We are assured that "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep"—to such an extent that "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." We can-

not stop to describe that glorious time and the grand opportunities it will give to every creature to know the Lord, to obey him, to attain to resurrection in its full significance—a raising up to mental, moral and physical perfection.

The Last First, the First Last

After the Kingdom of God shall have been fully established in the earth, and Satan shall have been bound, the time will come for the awakening of all the families of the earth—not all at once, but gradually, "they shall come again from the land of the enemy." The Scriptures do not go into details

in battle. They will wonder at the patience of God in so long permitting the evil.

Then truly they will see what God has wrought: First, his justice, which provided the great redemption price and would not otherwise clear the guilty. Second, his love, manifested in the same connection in the giving of his Son. Third, they will come to understand how that during this Gospel Age God has been selecting his Church to be the Bride of Christ and joint-heir with him in the Kingdom. Fourth, they will perceive that when this election was complete and the members of the glorified company had all been tried and polished and tested and glorified, then the blessing of the world through the glorified Christ, Head and Body, came upon all mankind in the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:20.

"Thy Work Shall Be Rewarded"

Finally, consider the Lord's Word to us all as a race, and particularly his word to parents, "Thy work shall be rewarded." What a blessing and comfort! What a consolation and encouragement are in these words to those parents who, seeking to train up their children in the way they should go, are sadly wounded and discouraged when the arrow of death smites down the dear ones they had so loved and cherished. They are disposed at first to say, Ah, my love, my counsel, my motherly care, my fatherly provision, were wasted. But not so, saith the Lord; thy works shall be rewarded.

How Rewarded?

You shall see the fruit of your labor in the future; we shall know as we are known by and by. Our dear ones will be with us, and to whatever extent time and effort will have been expended upon them to mold and fashion them along the lines of righteousness and truth, uprightness and godliness, these surely have not been spent in vain. The child shall come forth that much more advanced in its mental and moral development; to that much more easy attainment of the grand heights which the Lord will then open up before it.

On the other hand, the parent who has been careless of his children, neglectful of his privileges and obligations as a parent, will undoubtedly have his negligence rewarded in the future as he shall see what he might have done for his children but did not.

And more than this. By a Divine law of reaction, every parent who is faithful in the discharge of his parental duties shall have his work rewarded in himself, and likewise every parent neglectful of his duties shall have his work rewarded in himself. For who does not realize that there is no greater privilege or opportunity for self-development than comes to the parent in his endeavor to train up his children in the way they should go, in the reverence and admonition of the Lord.

Character Building is Included

Undoubtedly it is true, too, that every effort to do good unto others, especially to your own children, has its compensating blessings upon your own hearts. May this blessing deepen as the years go on.

In conclusion, "Comfort one another with these words" of our Lord to the effect that your little ones shall come again from "the land of the enemy," and that their return shall be even much more blessed, under much more favorable conditions than at present. Then, the great King reigning, all evil will be in subjection, all evil doers will be under restraint, all the influences of righteousness will be let loose, and the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the great deep. Blessed prospects are these before us, and to him who loved us and bought us, and to the Heavenly Father, who designed the great plan, we give everlasting thanks and praises, and show this by our daily lives!

The Tragedy of Sin and Death

They will learn, too, of the terrible degradation which came upon their race subsequently to their death; they will read with appalled hearts and bated breath of the terrible famines and pestilences which came upon the race as a part of the original sentence or death curse; they will learn about the mental aberrations which afflicted the world, so that men thought they were doing God service in persecuting one another because of religious differences of opinion, and how others, more or less consumed with selfishness, land hunger, etc., warred and fought and devised engines of destruction against each other, and killed one another by the thousands

TRUTH-WOUNDED BY ITS FRIENDS

Continued

one of which we need not be ashamed. Let us, then, as Christian Bible Students of all denominations anxious for Truth, ask ourselves respecting our own work in the world, and how it must appear to God, to ourselves and to our fellowmen—yea, how it must shortly be made manifest to all!

Let us call the roll. Baptist brethren, What have you to show as workmen who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth? Methodist brethren, what say you? Presbyterians, next. Congregationalists, Lutherans, Catholics—all!

The answer of one is practically the answer of all: "We have—so many hundred Churches. They cost—so many millions of dollars. Their steeples are—so high. Their cost of maintenance is—so much. The number of ministers is—so many. The Church collections amount to—so much. The amount collected for foreign missions is—



so much. The amount expended on fine choirs and elegant organs is—so much. The aggregated debts of all our churches is—so much. The unpaid interest on many of these debts is—so much. The time and energy expended in fairs, bazaars, etc., to help pay the expenditures is—so much. The number of Church membership is—so many. The number in Sunday Schools is—so many."

Many of our dear Christian friends say, What lack we yet? Have we not really attained the goal of our Church ambition? Should we build finer edifices or pay larger salaries? Are we not straining ourselves with collections at every turn? What more could God ask of us? "We are rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing" (Revelation 3:16-19).

In reply we may suppose the Lord to ask, Where did I give you instruction respecting these things? Where in my Word did you find the suggestion that what I desired you to do in the world was to erect great church edifices, piles of stone and iron and mortar, polished woods and stained glass? You are not rightly reading my Word. However good in intention, you have failed to "rightly divide the Word of Truth!" The Temple respecting which I gave instruction is the spiritual one, the Temple of the Holy Spirit—the Body of Christ which is the Church. I fear that you have forgotten the true temple of God while rearing so many temples of earthly materials. Concerning the true Temple I instructed you that "the

temple of God is holy, which temple ye are"—"living stones," being shaped and polished "for the habitation of God through the Spirit." Show me what you have accomplished in this way. Show me to what extent you have rightly divided my Word, and properly instructed mankind respecting my glorious character and my great Divine Plan of the Ages! Show me fruitage of the glorious message!

Who Authorized the Creedal Fences?

How many in all the millions that you report are "New Creatures in Christ Jesus," who "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"? Let me hear the message of my love and grace in Christ as you are proclaiming it! What mean these sectarian divisions amongst you? Why are there so many Church edifices and so few saintly worshippers? Who authorized you to put these creedal fences between my people to divide the flock? Know ye not that I said there is one flock and one Shepherd? Why have you so neglected the spiritual interests of my flock and their instruction in righteousness? Why are you so unable to rightly divide my Word?

Instead of coming together as one Church of the Living God whose names are written in heaven you have divided into hundreds of sects and parties! Instead of taking my Word as a whole and rightly dividing its teachings as between the different ages and dispensations of my work, you have divided my Word in a sectarian manner. One sect has made one selection from my Word and another sect has made another selection. Thus ye array one part of my Word against another part of it, and hence get into confusion and conflict. What have you to answer for these things?

With shame of face we must all acknowledge that "We have done those things which we ought not to have done and have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no help in us." The proper thing for us to do, dear Christian friends, is to get down upon our knees before the Lord and in contrition of heart acknowledge that we have wrought no deliverance in the earth (Isaiah 26:18); that our sectarian differences are our shame; that the ignorance that we have all been in, respecting the Word of God is humiliating. Now that our eyes are open so that we can comprehend as never before the harmony of God's message from Genesis to Revelation, it means a rich feast and blessing to our souls. The Word of God becomes more precious to us daily as we become able to comprehend it. Our duty is to fly to the assistance of our dear brethren and sisters in Christ, of all denominations, and to call upon them to join with us in a determined stand for righteousness, for Truth, for God and for his Word.

We must show them that ignorantly we and they have dishonored our God by misrepresentation of his character and misrepresentations of the real teachings of the Bible. We must point them to the fact that the Bible does not teach that all mankind except the "elect" saints will be consigned to an eternity of torture at the hands of fireproof demons. We must show them that the election of the Church during this age—a saintly little flock—does not mean injury to the non-elect. That, on the contrary, it is the Divine purpose that the elect saints with their great Redeemer in glory shall constitute God's Kingdom; that his Kingdom when established will bind Satan, put down sin, banish ignorance, error and superstition and uplift mankind by "restitution," by resurrection processes, up, up, up, to all that was lost in Eden by disobedience and to all secured for Adam and his race through the great transaction at Calvary (Acts 3:19-21).

"Rightly Dividing The Word of Truth"

Alas, how many intelligent people have turned aside from follow-

THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER

by John Greenleaf Whittier

In the minister's morning sermon,
He told of the primal fall,
And how thenceforth the wrath of God
Rested on each and all.

And how, of His will and pleasure,
All souls, save a chosen few,
Were doomed to eternal torture,
And held in the way thereto.

Yet never, by faith's unreason,
A saintlier soul was tried,
And never the harsh old lesson
A tenderer heart belied.

And after the painful service,
On that pleasant, bright First day,
He walked with his little daughter
Through the apple bloom of May.

Sweet in the fresh green meadow
Sparrow and blackbird sung;
Above him its tinted petals
The blossoming orchard hung.

Around, on the wonderful glory,
The minister looked and smiled:
"How good is the Lord, who gives us
These gifts from His hand, my child.

Behold in the bloom of apples,
And the violets in the sward,
A hint of the old, lost beauty
Of the Garden of the Lord."

Then up spake the little maiden,
Treading on snow and pink,
"O father! these pretty blossoms
Are very wicked, I think.

Had there been no Garden of Eden,
There had never been a fall,
And if never a tree had blossomed
God would have loved us all."

"Hush, child!" the father answered,
"By His decree man fell;
His ways are in clouds and darkness,
But He doeth all things well.

"And whether by His ordaining
To us cometh good or ill,
Joy or pain, or light or shadow,
We must fear and love Him still."

"O, I fear Him!" said the daughter,
"And I try to love Him, too;
But I wish He were kind and gentle,
Kind and loving as you."

The minister groaned in spirit,
As the tremulous lips of pain,
And wide, wet eyes uplifted
Questioned his own in vain.

Bowing his head he pondered
The words of his little one,
Had he erred in his life-long teachings,
Had he wrong to his Master done?

To what grim and dreadful idol
Had he lent the Holiest Name?
Did his own heart, loving and human
The God of his worship shame?

And lo! from the bloom and greenness,
From the tender skies above,
And the face of his little daughter,
He read a lesson of love.

No more as the cloudy terror
Of Sinai's Mount of Law,
But as Christ in the Syrian lilies,
The vision of God he saw.

And as when, in the clefts of Horeb,
Of old was His presence known,
The dread, ineffable glory
Was Infinite goodness alone.

Thereafter his hearers noted
In his prayers a tenderer strain,
And never the message of hatred
Burned on his lips again.

And the scoffing tongue was prayerful,
And the blinded eyes found sight,
And hearts as flint aforetime
Grew soft in his warmth and light.

ing Christ and from hearing the voice of God through the Bible! Alas, how many are looking to Theosophy, to Spiritism, to Christian Science, to Higher Criticism, to Evolution—wandering farther and farther daily from the "faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). We fault them no more than we fault ourselves. As a whole we have been workmen who need to be ashamed. We have dishonored God through misunderstanding and misrepresenting his Word and his Character. We have driven away from God and the Bible some of the most intelligent of our fellows, by reason of the contradictory nonsense of our creeds.

The Apostle urges, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." We are not to suppose, therefore, that the highest of all science, that which pertains to the Divine purpose and the Divine plan, can be acquired without study. We are not in this claiming that study alone would bring the desired results of proper knowledge. We heartily agree in the Scriptural proposition that "the world by wisdom knows not God." We are not therefore to study along the lines of worldly wisdom, but along the lines of "that wisdom that cometh from above"—along the lines of the inspired Scriptures. We must study! Whoever will not study will not know. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him." And reverencing him means the giving of our best thoughts and talents to the study of his Word, that we may "know the things freely given to us of God" (1 Corinthians 2:12).

We should note further as Bible students that we must not study to be approved of men, but to have the Divine approval. This will bring to us, as it did to the Master and his apostles, the disapprobation of the worldly-wise and nominally religious. It was the Chief Priests and Scribes and Pharisees, and not the common people of the Jews, nor the Roman soldiers who instigated the crucifixion of our

Lord. And we must expect similar conditions, because, as the Apostle says, "As he was so are we in this world." The class who called the Master Beelzebub is the same class which will oppose his footstep followers.

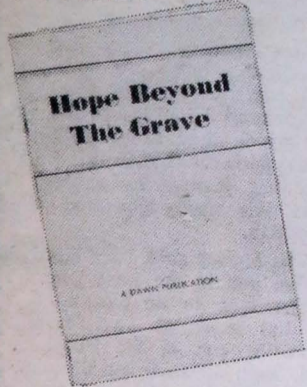
It is those few, that "little flock" zealous for God, for his Word, for righteousness, that he is now marking out as the prospective joint-heirs with Jesus in his glorious Kingdom, which is to bless the world with full opportunities for earthly salvation—"restitution." The trials of the faith, the patience, the love, the devotion of this "little flock" are all designed and not accidental. Satan and his hosts may think to thwart the Divine Plan and may mislead and use humanity as their tools, but it shall yet be seen that all of the Divine purposes shall be accomplished.

St. Paul declared of earthly Israel, that they enjoyed "much advantage every way, because to them were committed the oracles of God." So now, dear friends, it seems that all sincere Christians the world around enjoy much advantage every way. Looking to the past we find great excuse for our dear forefathers who, with sincerity of heart, so misunderstood the Divine Word and so misinterpreted the spirit of the Master that they burned one another at the stake. We should not think so harshly of them for this—as though they lived today under the greater advantages which we possess. We should sympathize with them. We should consider them as blinded by the great Adversary, as was Saul of Tarsus, when he, as a member of the Sanhedrin, authorized the stoning of St. Stephen. We should think of them sympathetically—as St. Peter spoke of the Jews who crucified the Lord. He said, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." So also we should kindly, lovingly cast a mantle of benevolence over similar conduct on the part of John Calvin and others of

our forefathers. But as we would not go to the Jewish rulers, nor to Saul of Tarsus for religious instruction, neither should we go to Brother Calvin or others of our forefathers who were blinded, as he was, respecting the true character of God and the true Spirit of his Word.

Only within the past few centuries have the masses of God's people been able even to read the Bible, if they had possessed it. And only within the same time have they had the Bible to read. Our great hindrance has been that with Bibles in our hands and with ability to use them, we looked for instruction to our well-meaning fathers, instead of going to God's Word itself. Now by God's grace the eyes of our understanding are opened. The wonderful Bibles of our day with their marginal references, their concordances, etc., and other assistances in Bible study, are bringing us in touch with the whole message of God's Word. Now, one passage of Scripture throws light upon another and thus with increasing brightness the Word of the Lord as a lamp gives light upon the pathway of his Church.

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What Is A Christian?

Continued

world." Again, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." The great Teacher did not include the nominal church as His disciples, but rather counted them in with the world. In evidence of this, we note the fact that the world which persecuted Him was the Jewish nation, professedly God's consecrated people; and that those who have persecuted the followers of Jesus have likewise been nominally people of God, but really of the world.

Duties, Rights and Privileges of Christians

These are the Christians addressed by the Master, saying, "I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man shall sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."—Matthew 5:39-42.

The thought of non-resistance is here, yet not to the extreme degree supposed by some. The turning of the other cheek, as illustrated by Jesus' own conduct, was a figurative expression, signifying the willingness to have both cheeks smitten rather than to do injury to another. Christians are to be law-abiding, whether they consider the laws just or unjust. If, therefore, the law deprive them of a coat, they are to yield it up. If it go still further and deprive them of their cloak, they are still to be non-resistant to the law, but submit to it with good grace, knowing that hereunto they were called.

Be it noted that neither the coat nor the cloak was to be given up upon demand merely, but only after the law, justly or unjustly, had so decreed. Similarly with respect to the compulsory walking of a mile; the Christian is not to submit himself to every whim of everybody; but, seeking to do the will of God, he is to go about his own business, unless the opposition to him amount to a compelling. And this compelling, under ordinary circumstances, would mean a legal compelling; for the protection of the laws of the land

in which he lives may be sought to protect his rights and liberties, as St. Paul appealed to governors and kings.

Christians Live for the Future

Christians are to love their enemies in the same sense that God loves the world—sympathetically. They are not to love their enemies in the sense of affectionate love and tenderness, such as they bestow upon their families, friends and lovable persons. Their love for their enemies, as defined by Jesus, should be such as would lead them to feed their bitterest enemy if he were hungry, to clothe him if he were naked. They



should not pray against their enemies, but for their enemies in the sense of wishing, desiring for them enlightenment and true wisdom, which would turn them from being enemies and evil-doers, to make of them followers of Jesus or, at least, well-doers.

Christians are not to lay up for themselves treasures on earth; for they have renounced the earth and all hopes of a future life upon earth. Their walk in the footsteps of Jesus signifies that as He cast aside earthly ambitions, hopes and aims, so would they, taking instead the Heavenly ambitions, hopes and aims. In other words, they live for the future. This will not hinder them from the ordinary pursuits of life to the extent that may be necessary in "providing things honest in the sight of all men"—in providing for their families, etc. But, with these Christians, any overplus above life's necessities represents so much opportunity for serving the Lord and His Cause; and in so doing these are laying up treasure in Heaven—a future reward.

This does not signify that they must live "from hand to mouth" nor that, if they have possessions, they must riotously distribute

these to others. On the contrary, they are to seek in all things to have the mind of the Lord—to do God's will. God's mind is a sound mind; and these Christians, in seeking to do God's will, are said to have "the spirit of a sound mind." This dictates that they should live wisely and economically.

Christian Stewardship and Citizenship

To these Christians, everything that comes to them or that they possess by nature is considered a thing of God, because in becoming followers of Christ they made a full consecration of their wills—their all—to God. Hence from that moment forward these Christians are stewards of God's mercies—stewards of their time; their talents, their influence, their property, their all. According to the way they use their stewardship, investing their talents to the Master's praise, will be His commendation of them, as represented in the parable. Whether many talents are possessed or few, the commendation is to those who have done well, have been good and faithful in the use of their talents, not for self-aggrandizement or show, or worldly accumulations of treasure, but faithful in the service of God, showing forth God's praises in the assisting of others and themselves to the knowing and doing of the Divine will.

Christians are to "lend, hoping for nothing in return," and not, as the world, merely to be willing to do good and to lend to those who would do as much or more in return. Christians are thus to illustrate the fact that they are children of the Highest, that they have His Holy Spirit and disposition, and that it is shining out more and more in their words and conduct as they grow in the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

No Christian Nations

The Bible knows nothing of Christian nations or of a Christian world. The Bible puts the Christian as separate and distinct from the world and from all nations. The term Christian nation comes from a serious doctrinal error which crept into the Church about 800 A.D. At that time Pope Leo III began to recognize as Christian nations all the nations which recognized his Pontificate. The custom has prevailed and is still in vogue amongst Protestants and Catholics; but it is wholly unscriptural.

Nothing in the Bible implies that our civilization is Christian or that the Lord ever expected it to be Christian. God's time for saving the world from its sin and weakness has not yet come. The present is merely the time for calling, finding, testing and delivering the Elect. The Elect, when glorified, will constitute Messiah's Kingdom, and with Him will be empowered fully with spiritual control for the government of the entire world.

Then will come the time for the enlightenment and uplift and blessing of the whole world of mankind—the non-elect. Theirs will not be a blessing of the same kind that the Elect will secure, but a blessing which they will appreciate equally. The world's blessing and salvation will not signify a change of nature from human to spirit, but a Restitution to human perfection.—Acts 3:19-23.

What are today styled "Christian nations" are in the Bible styled "kingdoms of this world"; and their complete disintegration is Scripturally outlined as incidental to the establishment of God's glorious Kingdom under Messiah, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as in Heaven."

Some may wonder how it ever came to pass that all the people of civilized lands are enumerated as Christians—except Jews and professed infidels. The error arose in the now long ago. When Pope Leo III recognized a king as a Christian king and his kingdom

as a Christian kingdom, he recognized that king's subjects as Christian. There we have the matter in a nutshell. The whole thing was a mistake. The king was not a Christian, did not know the meaning of Christianity and was not taught it. His kingdom was not a Christian kingdom, and his people were not Christians.

Meantime, here and there, obscured to the world, there have been true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ in every denomination. They have been out of accord generally with the great leaders of the church systems as well as with the political leaders of the world. It has been true of them

as the Apostle wrote: "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not." (I John 3:1.) The world does not yet know, understand or appreciate that the Church of Christ is not to be found in any one of the professed churches of various names—Roman, English, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, etc. The Church of Christ is composed exclusively of those who have made a covenant with the Lord through faith in the precious blood, who have been accepted of the Lord by the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and who are seeking to walk to the best of their ability in the footsteps of Jesus.—I Peter 2:21.

THE JUDGMENT OF "THE GREAT WHITE THRONE"

"And I saw a great White Throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."—Revelation 20:11.

Sin made moral cowards of our race. From early infancy fear and apprehension, especially in respect to things future, have been impressed upon us. We realize that we are imperfect, that our God is perfect, that perfection is the only standard which He could approve, and that some kind of punishment for sin must be expected. The Adversary, taking advantage of our forefathers, misrepresented the Almighty, and has used our fears to alienate us from Him and to wrest and distort His Message to us in the Bible. St. Paul assures us that this is Satan's general procedure; that he puts light for darkness and darkness for light. Thus it comes that our text, which is really one of the most beautiful and comforting in the whole Bible when understood, has to many become a lash in the hands of their fears.—2 Corinthians 4:4.

Our text is one of the symbolism of a Book filled with symbols. God's people, guided by His Holy Spirit, in due time will appreciate these symbols. For many of them, that due time is already here. The Throne is Messiah's; it represents His Mediatorial Dominion of earth for a thousand years. Its whiteness symbolizes the purity, the justice of His Kingdom of Righteousness under the whole heavens.

The heavens and earth which will flee from the presence of the great Immanuel will not be the Heavens of God's Throne, nor the earth which He has given to the children of men. The heavens and earth which will flee away, and for which no place will be found, are of course, the symbolic ones.

In Bible symbology the earth represents established civilization; the sea, the restless, dissatisfied masses of humanity; and the mountains, human governments, kingdoms, which constitute the backbone of present social institutions. The symbolic heavens represent spiritual influences—Ecclesiasticism, Churchianity. Thus interpreted, our text declares that when Messiah assumes control of the world, the result will be that the social system of today, as well as present-day ecclesiasticism, will pass out of existence—no place will be found for them.

Today we are living at the climax of civilization. Yet we behold more clearly than ever before that the deeply-ingrained selfishness of humanity is a blight upon all our blessings. Selfishness is to be found everywhere. Although a semblance of righteousness is insisted upon and violators of that standard are styled criminals, nevertheless it seems impossible to legislate equity, justice. Men's keen intellects find opportunities for circumventing the laws and committing theft, murder, etc., without danger of punishment.

The Great White Throne Judgment

The New Dispensation which Messiah's Kingdom will usher in is pictured in our text. It will be the world-wide dominion of purity, holiness, righteousness, justice, truth—a Great White Throne. No

wonder we read that the symbolic heavens and earth, representing the old order of things—social, ecclesiastical—will vanish away!

But let no one think for a moment that ecclesiastical princes, financial princes and political princes will voluntarily acknowledge that the hour has come for a full surrender to Messiah and to all the principles of His absolute righteousness. On the contrary, these privileged members of our race will be more and more drawn together for mutual protection—for the preservation of the special privileges which have come into their possession. Even now we see the prophecy of the Second Psalm fulfilling. We are in the very time when the Lord, through the Prophet David, calls the great ones of earth to recognize the true situation of our wonderful day—that the Day of Messiah has arrived, and that He should be recognized and His principles of righteousness obeyed.

But no! The prophecy declares that we are in the day when the people, the masses, will have foolish imaginations—when they will think that by their own strength they can inaugurate a reign of righteousness along the lines of Socialism, or by anarchy. The



people must learn that their help is in the Lord and not in their own frail arm. They must see the force of the words, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Messiah."

On the other hand, the money kings, earthly rulers and ecclesiastical princes are taking counsel together for the preservation of present iniquities of the world, by which they are profiting. The Lord declares that in this they are banding themselves against Him and His newly-appointed King—Messiah.

The Master said, "My Word shall judge you in the Last Day." The books then to be opened will be the words of Jesus, of His Apostles and of the Prophets of old. Then all shall see the oneness of the Divine Message of righteousness, and each who would have everlasting life must conform his living and his thinking to those standards therein contained. At the end of Messiah's Reign, those whose names will have been written upon the new Book of Life will be found worthy of everlasting life; those whose names are not therein written will be destroyed in the Second Death.

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